

The CAELA Guide for Adult ESL Trainers



**Tools for Training Practitioners Working
With Adult English Language Learners**

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CENTER FOR APPLIED LINGUISTICS

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I. Introduction

Who Is the Guide For?

The CAELA Guide for Adult ESL Trainers was prepared for professional developers and training staff to use in training novice and experienced teachers of adult English language learners. This guide contains resources for preparing and implementing professional development activities such as coaching, peer mentoring, study circles, and workshops for local program staff. It also provides information on how to use the CAELA Web site as a resource for professional development activities and references for additional training materials. Topics selected for inclusion in *The CAELA Guide* are based on the needs articulated by the states that participated in the CAELA initiative to increase state capacity for providing professional development to local adult ESL program staff. The materials were developed, piloted, and revised over a 3-year period (2005–2007).

Trainers can use these materials with other ESL teacher trainers, ESL teachers/volunteers/tutors, adult basic education (ABE) teachers who have English language learners in their classes, instructional specialists, ESL/EL civics coordinators, program administrators, resource specialists, and ESL coordinators.

What Is in the Guide? How Is It Organized?

The guide contains a variety of materials to assist trainers in meeting the professional development needs of instructional staff so they can improve English language instruction and positively affect learner achievement.

The guide is divided into the following sections:

- I. Introduction
- II. Information for Trainers
- III. Workshop Modules
- IV. Study Circle Guides
- V. How to Use the CAELA Web Site
- VI. Resources for Trainers

The **Introduction** provides an overview of the guide and how to use it (see discussion below).

Information for Trainers consists of the following materials:

QUALITIES OF A SUCCESSFUL TRAINER—descriptions of each of the qualities that enables a teacher to become a successful trainer.

TRAINING TIPS—information on what the trainer needs to think about before, during, and after training sessions.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY—a survey form to help establish professional development needs among instructional staff. The survey can be used as is or adapted.

TRAINING OBSERVATION FORM—a form that helps trainers-in-training to observe and reflect upon a training experience.

HOW TO CONDUCT A STUDY CIRCLE—guidelines for organizing and facilitating study circles, where research is read and discussed in relation to classroom and program practice.

HOW TO CONDUCT PEER COACHING AND MENTORING—guidelines for organizing practitioners into supportive pairs or groups that collaboratively build knowledge about classroom practice through sharing, reflection, classroom observation, feedback, and shared analysis.

Workshop Modules provide step-by-step guides to conducting 3- to 6-hour workshops and follow-up sessions on the following topics:

ASSESSING LEARNER NEEDS IN THE ADULT ESL CLASSROOM—assessing adult learner needs to determine class content and instructional practice

ASSESSMENT IN THE ADULT ESL CLASSROOM—using alternative assessments to guide the adjustment of class content to meet learner needs and goals and to help learners assess their own progress

EFFECTIVE LESSON PLANNING FOR ADULT ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS—understanding the foundations of effective lesson planning and developing appropriate lessons for adult English language learners

TEACHING READING TO ADULT ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS—understanding the foundations of reading in a second language and developing appropriate reading instruction for adult English language learners

TEACHING WRITING TO ADULT ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS—assisting learners to effectively communicate their ideas in writing and develop an effective voice in their new culture

USING THE TESOL PROGRAM STANDARDS FOR PROGRAM REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT—using the TESOL program standards for reviewing components of an adult ESL program

Study Circle Guides provide suggestions for organizing study circles on the following topics:

PREPARING ADULT ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS FOR THE WORKFORCE—reflecting on research on preparing adult English language learners for the workforce and evaluating the application of research to adult ESL education practice

SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION—reflecting on second language acquisition (SLA) theory and research and evaluating its applications to adult ESL education practice

TEACHING BEGINNING LEVELS—reflecting on research and effective instructional strategies for working with literacy-level learners

TEACHING LISTENING, SPEAKING, AND PRONUNCIATION—reflecting on research on the process of listening, speaking, and pronunciation acquisition and evaluating the pedagogical applications of the research in the classroom

How to Use the CAELA Web Site provides information on the resources available through the CAELA Web site. It describes how the Web site can be used in professional development with teachers of varying levels of expertise and experience.

Resources for the Trainer is an annotated list of Internet and print resources that can be used to prepare professional development sessions. It is divided into two sections: professional development and adult ESL-related content.

How Can the Guide Be Used?

The CAELA Guide provides (1) resource materials to assist in the design of professional development programs, and (2) training materials for professional development sessions on specific topics of interest to adult ESL administrators and teachers.

1. Design of professional development programs

There are many ways to deliver professional development. Professional development staff and trainers can use the information in Section II, “Information for Trainers,” Section V, “How to Use the CAELA Web Site,” and Section VI, “Resources for Trainers,” as they organize and present professional development.

The content of professional development should come from an assessment of the needs and interests of participants. This assessment encompasses a consideration of all stakeholder needs (e.g., learner goals; teacher background and experience; federal, state, or local requirements to be met) and the resources available for training (e.g., time, availability, and expertise of trainers; ability to compensate participants in some way). Information can be gathered from a variety of sources, such as reports to funding agencies, surveys of teachers and learners, and policy papers.

To help you get started, the “Information for Trainers” section contains a Needs Assessment Survey that can be used or adapted for use with teachers. Once needs have been determined, Professional Development Models can be consulted to determine the type of professional

development delivery that matches the content, participants, and time available. Step-by-step guidelines are provided for two less familiar modes of delivery: How to Conduct a Study Circle and How to Conduct Peer Coaching and Mentoring. Once a professional development plan has been designed, Training Tips offers practical information about things to consider before, during, and after training sessions. Checklists are provided that can be copied and used in preparation for each training session, no matter what the delivery mode.

To increase the capacity for professional development in your locality, you may want to consider training additional professional development staff to deliver training sessions. A program may have excellent teachers with expert knowledge on an aspect of instruction or content; however, if the teachers do not have experience as trainers or presenters, they could be mentored by experienced trainers (see How to Conduct Peer Coaching and Mentoring, for ideas). Observation of a training session being delivered by an experienced trainer can be part of the process. The trainer-in-training can use the Training Observation Form (in Section II) to observe and comment on the training and as a springboard for discussion with the experienced trainer or mentor.

Section V, “How to Use the CAELA Web Site,” describes the resources on the site and suggests ways to use them in training ESL practitioners—both experienced and novice. The Web site can also be used as a general resource for information on adult ESL content or as a training tool.

For additional information about conducting professional development, professional development models, and material for the development of training, consult Section VI, “Resources for Trainers.”

2. Topic-specific training materials

The CAELA Guide has two types of topic-specific training materials: workshop modules and study circle guides.

Section III, “Workshop Modules,” contains detailed training instructions and all of the materials necessary to conduct training sessions on the following topics:

ASSESSING LEARNER NEEDS IN THE ADULT ESL CLASSROOM

ASSESSMENT IN THE ADULT ESL CLASSROOM

EFFECTIVE LESSON PLANNING FOR ADULT ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

TEACHING READING TO ADULT ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

TEACHING WRITING TO ADULT ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

USING THE TESOL PROGRAM STANDARDS FOR PROGRAM REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT

Each workshop module has three components:

- ▶ Trainer Guide
- ▶ Trainer Notes
- ▶ Participant Handouts

The workshops range in length from 3 to 6 hours, depending upon the topic.

The Trainer Guide contains step-by-step instructions for presenting the workshop. It begins with an introduction that states the rationale and purpose of the workshop. It also lists the goal, objectives, an overview of workshop sections and timing, trainer preparation instructions, and materials needed. The introduction is followed by detailed sequential instructions for conducting the workshop.

The workshops are organized into the following sections:

- ▶ Introduction and Warm-Up
- ▶ Presentation
- ▶ Practice
- ▶ Application
- ▶ Evaluation and Wrap-Up
- ▶ Follow-Up Activity Suggestions

In the Trainer Guide, following the introduction in each section is a two-column table with instructions for each activity in the first column (Action) and the materials needed in the second column (Materials). All of the materials needed (with the exception of non-CAELA publications) are contained in the Trainer Notes or the Participant Handouts. Materials are listed in the two-column table by title, followed by TN (indicating that they can be found in the Trainer Notes) and the page number or by PH (indicating that they can be found in the Participant Handouts) and the page number. Information for ordering non-CAELA publications is given in the workshop introduction. Materials that need to be made into transparencies for use with an overhead projector or PowerPoint slides are marked “Transparency or PowerPoint Slide.” These materials should be prepared before the training session.

The Trainer Notes include copies of all of the Participant Handouts, answer keys to participant activities, transparencies or PowerPoint slides to be made, and other supplemental handouts as appropriate. These documents are organized according to the order in which they are needed in the session, and their page numbers are indicated in the Materials column in the Trainer Guide. The copies accompany the script of the Trainer Guide.

Participant Handouts contain all of the information and activity sheets that participants need to participate in the session and take with them when they leave. These are also organized

according to the order in which they are used in the session. A copy of the handouts should be made for each participant.

Section IV, “Study Circle Guides,” provides detailed instructions and the essential materials needed to conduct study circles on the following topics:

- ▶ Preparing Adult English Language Learners for the Workforce
- ▶ Second Language Acquisition
- ▶ Teaching Beginning Levels
- ▶ Teaching Listening, Speaking, and Pronunciation

With the exception of Teaching Listening, Speaking, and Pronunciation (which has three sessions), each study circle consists of two sessions of no more than 2½ hours each. In Session 1, participants discuss theory and strategies to implement the theory. Before coming to Session 2, they implement in their classrooms a technique or activity that they discussed in Session 1.

Each Study Circle Guide has two sections:

- ▶ Facilitator Guide
- ▶ Participant Handouts

The Facilitator Guide begins with a brief instruction that states the purpose of the study circle. It lists the readings to be discussed, session lengths, preparation instructions, and session activity instructions.

The Participant Handouts include an information sheet that describes the study circle, expectations for participants, and preparation instructions; all activity worksheets needed for the sessions; and a study circle evaluation form.

II. Information for Trainers

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Qualities of a Successful Trainer

The individuals who train teachers of adult English language learners are often teachers themselves. This is often effective because trainers need to be able to understand the classroom of adult learners of English as a second language (ESL) and the challenges and opportunities that teachers face. Many of the qualities of good teaching are also the qualities of good training. Below is a list of 10 characteristics of good teaching that are also characteristics of good training.

1. Clear goals and objectives.

Teachers have clear goals for classes and objectives that will enable students to reach these goals. These objectives can be seen in the design of lessons and their activities. For example, if a teacher's objective is that students will be able to describe physical symptoms of a sickness to health care personnel, then the activities in the lesson will be designed to teach students "sickness vocabulary" and give them practice using it. The lesson may also include grammar for describing physical symptoms, such as the use of the verb "have" as in "I have _____ (a cold, a fever, a sore back)."

Teachers who are able to organize class lessons and their activities to meet objectives and goals will probably carry this skill into training. This skill is vital for good training, because during a training session a great deal must be accomplished in a short time. If trainers cannot focus participants on what is relevant to accomplish to fulfill the training objectives, then opportunities for learning may be lost. For example, one of the objectives in *The CAELA Guide for Adult ESL Trainers* workshop module on Effective Lesson Planning for Adult English Language Learners is that participants will be able to "develop activities for each stage of a lesson." Several of the activities in the training focus on learning the stages of a lesson and then developing activities for each of the stages. Trainers using this workshop module need to keep this objective, the stages of a lesson, in focus while doing these activities and not get side-tracked on the content of the lessons.

2. Current content knowledge of ESL theories and methodologies.

Similar to a teacher of adult English language learners, it is not sufficient for a trainer to have experience working only with adult learners who are English speakers, because English language learners represent a different set of opportunities and challenges than native-English-speaking students do. Trainers of ESL teachers need to understand second language acquisition and effective methodologies for working with adults learning English in the classroom. For example, a trainer should know the advantages of project-based learning for second language acquisition well enough to be able to give training participants specific suggestions about how to use project-based learning with their classes: What projects would be appropriate for a specific level of adult English language learners, what grammar and vocabulary can be taught with a specific project topic, and what writing and presentation strategies will be appropriate for a specific level of learners.

3. Needs assessments.

Good teachers conduct needs assessments with adult English language learners to ensure that the class meets their needs and goals. Teachers understand the importance of tailoring the curriculum to meet the specific needs that learners bring to class and, by doing so, make the course relevant to learners. For example, if learners need to pass their written drivers' license test, the teacher uses information from the drivers' education manual to teach grammar points (e.g., commands) and language functions (e.g., the procedure to follow if a car breaks down along an interstate highway).

Learners themselves may also be involved in setting the curriculum so that their course is relevant to them. The teacher regularly makes adjustments as new student needs become known and updates class plans to reflect these (Weddel & Van Duzer, 1997).

Trainers who assess participants' needs are more likely to be effective (Eitington, 2001). Often participants come to a training wanting to learn specific information or to try new activities in their classrooms. If a trainer is not aware of participants' needs and hopes for the training, then the training will not be as useful to participants as it might have been. Granted, there is a curriculum that must be followed in a training, but this curriculum should be tailored to the participants' needs and wishes as much as possible so that the training will be relevant. Trainers can also conduct brief needs assessments periodically during a training to learn what is relevant to participants and to ensure that participants are receiving the information and material that they need. In some cases, participants may already be familiar with the information, activities, or techniques being covered, so it would be counterintuitive and counterproductive to continue to present this part of the workshop.

4. An informed understanding of the adult learner.

Adults learn best in ways that value their life experiences (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005). In his *Train the Trainers Manual*, Siebenhuhner (2002) lists five basic principles of training adult educators:

1. Adults have a unique identity. They have a “cognitive map” made up of their lives, education, and experiences so far. During training, they will try to fit the training information into their cognitive map, so a trainer must be able to treat adult participants as unique individuals and give them opportunities to relate new ideas and experiences to what they already know and have experienced.
2. Adults are not empty vessels. Participants come to the training with a wealth of their own experiences, and a trainer needs to integrate new knowledge and skills with the knowledge and skills that teachers have. A variety of factors play a role in participants' learning, and the trainer needs to be aware of these. They include participants' motivation or lack of motivation, the training atmosphere, the training methods, and the trainer's capability to guide the learning process.

3. Adults are not school children. They do not need a trainer to tell them what to do; they are very self-directed in their learning and like to learn from others in the training as well as the trainer. Because of this, a trainer should be able to listen to participants carefully and respectfully and structure opportunities during the training for participants to share their own experiences and learn from others in pairs and small groups.
4. Adults learn through experiences. They learn more by doing than by listening to a lecture. Because of this, a trainer should use participatory training methods.

These characteristics of the adult learner make it important that a trainer know how to work with adults. Trainers should be able to develop knowledge and skills through participant activities and interaction rather than through lecture. They can use experiential, participatory training. A good trainer needs to see education as facilitating participants' acquisition of knowledge and skills. For example, when giving a training about multilevel lesson planning, a trainer should ask participants what experiences, successes, and challenges they have had with planning and delivering lessons in multilevel classes. A trainer who does this will make the training more relevant to and appropriate for the participants.

5. Task-based teaching techniques.

Since adults learn through experiences (Siebenhuhner, 2002), task-based learning is a natural way for adults to learn, both as students in a classroom and as participants in a training. Moss and Ross-Feldman (2003, p. 2) define task-based learning as providing “learners with opportunities for learner-to-learner interactions that encourage authentic use of language and meaningful communication.” If a teacher provides learners with tasks through which they can interact, they learn language in an authentic, meaningful way. Similarly, if a trainer can provide participants with tasks that allow them to talk about their own experience and relate new information and materials to their experiences, then their learning will be relevant to their situations and meaningful to them. For example, in the Effective Lesson Planning for Adult English Language Learners workshop module, training participants are asked to work together in small groups to plan a lesson for a multilevel class. The activity prompts participants about what to include in their lesson plans and gives them scope to design a lesson for a specific class they are teaching. It also gives them the opportunity to talk together and learn from each other as they decide what to include in their lesson plans.

6. Articulate and clear.

A trainer makes new ideas and concepts clear. This includes the ability to break complicated ideas and processes down into smaller parts and the ability to use simple, straightforward language. The most important goal for the trainer is that the participants understand the content of the training, not that the trainer sounds learned and erudite. For example, when a trainer is conducting a training on a standardized test and participants do not understand a grammar point that students are being assessed on, such as subordination, the trainer can teach subordination indirectly through examples. In this way, the concept is taught without the trainer talking down to the participants.

This technique not only shows respect for participants but also creates an atmosphere in which participants will be more likely to ask questions when they do not understand something.

Even very articulate trainers may need to use visuals to make a concept or idea clear. In fact, it is generally necessary to use visuals, as some participants may be visual learners. Visuals may include illustrations, charts, realia, maps, and PowerPoint slides.

7. Well organized and able to keep to a schedule.

Trainers organize themselves, their materials, handouts, space, and time to help keep participants (and themselves) focused on what the session is about, what is happening, and where it is going (Eitington, 2001). Clear objectives and a posted agenda help accomplish this. Sometimes trainers create the training plan and schedule themselves, and sometimes they use prepared workshop modules. Whatever type of plan they use, trainers need to stay with the plan, complete the activities and material in the plan, and finish on time. A major difference between training and teaching is the allocation of time. When teaching, the teacher has the next class to finish up activities; when training, the trainer usually does not have another session with a particular group of participants. So a trainer needs to guide people through activities, hold some questions until break time or through the use of a parking lot (a running list of questions to answer at a later time in the training), and adapt materials and the schedule in light of time constraints.

That said, trainers must also be flexible and sensitive to “the teaching moment.” If participants need more practice or a more complete explanation to understand a concept, then the trainer spends more time in this area and is able to rearrange and juggle other elements in the schedule while making sure that new content is understood. This skill—being sensitive to the teachable moment and juggling content—is very important in training, where information may be new to participants and time is limited.

8. Quick rapport with people, friendly.

Good teachers are able to communicate with learners from diverse cultures with differing linguistic and educational backgrounds. Similarly, a good trainer has a “presence” and is able to field questions and make decisions about changes to the schedule with poise (see #7 above). A good trainer will not get flustered when participants ask difficult questions but will answer them with respect for the questioner. If changes need to be made in the training schedule, an effective trainer is able to understand and respond to participants’ needs, think on her feet, and make a decision. She can prioritize the most important activities that need to be finished and find ways to get the most important information across, even if not all activities can be accomplished in the allotted time.

In this respect, training is often thought of more as an art than a science, because it is difficult to characterize this quality in a trainer and teach a trainer to develop a relationship with participants. All trainers have their individual ways of doing this. Many rely on humor, an understanding of “where participants are coming from,” or an ability to bring their own experiences to bear on the training material. For example, when giving a training about workplace literacy skills, a

trainer who has experience teaching English to hotel employees or transportation employees will be able to use those experiences to make the training materials come alive for participants.

9. Effective questioning techniques.

A good teacher is able to help students understand a question and can rephrase a question so that students can answer it. This implies a lot of student involvement in whole-class discussion, rather than a lot of lecturing. If a teacher teaches through questioning, then students are more actively involved in the discussion (Christensen, 1991; Schaetzel, 2004). Likewise, if a trainer gives information through questioning participants, or intersperses questions with giving information, this involves participants in the learning and helps participants to take new information and make sense of it with what they already know.

If participants do not understand a question that a trainer asks, the trainer needs to be able to rephrase it in a way that is more understandable. This might include giving an example, using different vocabulary, or breaking a long question down into shorter, more simple questions. For example, in the Teaching Reading to Adult English Language Learners workshop module, participants are asked to agree or disagree with the statement “Guessing words from context is an excellent strategy for learning second language vocabulary.” If participants do not know what it means to guess words from context, the trainer can give them some examples of doing this.

A good trainer also uses content-focused questions (e.g., What two different ways can this activity in the lesson plan be done, one for a beginning-level student and one for an intermediate-level student?) to ascertain how well participants understand the material, rather than a global “Do you understand?” Participants often respond to global questions in the affirmative, even when they do not understand.

When teaching, it is also important to ask appropriate and nonthreatening questions of students during pair and group work to make those activities more productive. This skill can be used to frame good questions to make these tasks relevant to participants’ lives.

10. A team player.

Some trainers may have an individually engaging style and are able to bring this style to bear while fulfilling the training’s objectives and goals. But trainers who rely on their individual style and alter the planned training materials and curriculum risk deleting valuable pieces of information, and this may detract from the quality of the training rather than enhance it. For example, if a state department of education wants all teachers of adult English language learners trained using *The CAELA Guide’s* workshop module on Teaching Reading to Adult English Language Learners, all of the trainers doing this training should follow it as it is written. If one trainer decides to skip part of this training and do activities on lesson planning instead, because that is what the trainer believes participants need, then the participants attending that training will not have the same knowledge base as the others in the state.

Some trainers may be asked to cotrain with another person. There are many benefits to cotraining, especially if a training session has many participants. Cotrainers can give participants more individual attention and keep their finger on the pulse of the group (what they understand and what they are having trouble with) more accurately than one individual trainer working with a large group.

Effective teaching and training have many commonalities. These 10 qualities of effective teachers and trainers can be used for self-reflection if a teacher is trying to decide if she wants to become a trainer. They can also be used by administrators who are selecting teachers to become trainers.

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Training Tips

When organizing training, a trainer needs to give thorough attention to a number of issues to ensure that the training is well planned and capably delivered. What follows are suggestions to help make training interesting and successful.

Before the Training

The preparation that a trainer does before the training is invaluable for making the training coherent, engaging, and appropriate for the audience. Pretraining preparation includes more than making a schedule for the training. A trainer needs to think carefully about the audience, the content to be covered, the materials to be used, the presentation format, and the sequencing of the session. If possible, a trainer should conduct a needs assessment of the participants prior to the training to know their familiarity with the topic and their specific questions about it. If there are state or program initiatives regarding the topic, then the trainer should tailor the training to those initiatives to make it more meaningful to the participants. If a needs assessment cannot be conducted prior to the training, the trainer should interview the administrator who arranged the training to know specifically why this training is being offered and what state or program goals this training is meant to fulfill. (A sample of a teacher needs assessment that can be used with teachers in a state or program is found at the end of this section.) The trainer can also do a quick, informal needs assessment of participants at the beginning of the training, asking two or three questions to see what participants already know and what they would like to take away from the training.

If a trainer would like to gain more expertise before giving a training, the trainer can arrange to observe a more experienced trainer. This will help a new trainer to see how an expert trainer interacts with and responds to participants. A Training Observation Form for watching an expert trainer and making notes is located at the end of this section.

Review the material in light of the audience:

While reviewing the materials carefully before trainings, trainers should be able to assess the content with their audience in mind. What areas might this audience know already, and what areas might be new to them? Because adults are purposeful in their learning, it is important that trainers ascertain what aspects of the materials will be most important to a particular audience and make those concepts and ideas prominent. To do this, ask questions of the person arranging the training or ask this person to conduct a short survey of the participants. A training that gives people what they already know will waste their time, and participants may quickly lose interest. It is best if a trainer knows which parts of the training will be most appropriate for a particular audience and tailors the training accordingly.

Decide on a presentation style:

There are many different ways to present material in a training session. A trainer needs to plan in advance how a particular audience might best learn the material and take into consideration the different learning styles that may be represented in the audience (Gardner, 1983). Different people learn in different ways: some teachers learn a new teaching strategy best by watching it demonstrated to them; others learn best by reading about it and trying it out in their own classrooms; still others learn best by discussing the new strategy and then trying it out during the training in a role play. An effective training session uses a variety of presentation styles to include many of the different learning styles that may be in the audience.

- ▶ **Lecture:** A lecture is a quick, easy way to get new information to people, but it is trainer centered with little participation by others. A lecture also requires much preparation time.
- ▶ **Discussion:** A discussion allows an audience to actively participate. However, the trainer may need to do a lot of follow-up work, especially if some new concepts are confused when they are discussed by a large number of people.
- ▶ **Role play:** A role play allows participants to act as other people to try out something new, for example, a new teaching strategy, a new grammar or vocabulary item in a dialogue, or a new questioning technique.
- ▶ **Demonstration:** A demonstration might be very helpful to teachers trying to visualize a new method or teaching practice.
- ▶ **Case study:** A case study is a way of providing participants with a realistic situation; however, a trainer needs to be able to handle conflicting opinions about the case study, should they arise.
- ▶ **Games and learning activities:** Games and learning activities allow active participation, but not everyone likes games. Some feel that games are not serious enough for training; others feel that they add needed variety to sessions.

These are some of the ways to present information. A trainer needs to think carefully about the material to be presented and the characteristics of the audience involved. The choice of a certain type of presentation depends on a careful analysis of the material, the audience (its size and its familiarity with the topic of the presentation), and the length of the training. Using a variety of presentation types may ensure that the audience does not grow bored with the same type of presentation throughout the training.

Related to presentation type is the decision on when to have participants work as a whole or in small groups. There are no strict rules about when to use whole-group interaction and when to use small-group interaction. Whole-group interaction is generally used when a trainer wants to get the audience's opinions about a topic, to gauge the audience's prior knowledge about a topic, or when time is short. Small-group interaction is often used when a trainer wants the audience to discuss and examine a new idea through participatory interaction. Whether whole-group

or small-group interaction is used, the trainer should clearly spell out what participants are to discuss or do. Because participants need something to refer back to when they begin their discussions, instructions are best given both orally and in writing. The instructions can be written on a whiteboard, a handout, a PowerPoint slide, a flip chart, or an overhead transparency.

Tips for small-group work in trainings:

When using small-group work, there are several tips that a trainer can follow to make the group work go smoothly and be meaningful to participants:

1. In addition to stating instructions clearly orally and in writing, state the amount of time that participants have to work. If a trainer is unsure how long an activity will take, it is better to give less time and lengthen it than to give too much time and lose participants' interest.
2. State clearly what each group will need to produce or present at the end of its time working together.
3. Move among groups and listen to what they are doing. This is especially important in the first few minutes of their time to ensure that all groups know what to do. However, do not interrupt group work when circulating. In most cases, the purpose of group work is to develop ideas through discussion. The role of the trainer is to answer clarification questions and monitor the time for the discussion. A trainer should not become a participant in small-group work.
4. Think carefully about the make-up of each group. Is it important that similar people are together, or would it be better to have different people together? (For example, will the activity be more meaningful if teachers and administrators are in the same groups, or if a group is all administrators or all teachers?) Also, should participants work in the same groups for the entire training, or would it be good to vary the groups?
5. Ensure that all groups have a chance to report after they have finished their work. If time is running short, have each group present only a portion of their work so that all groups can make a presentation, or have groups present their work to each other rather than to the whole group. An effective trainer monitors both the time spent in groups and the time each group spends reporting.

In *The CAELA Guide*, the workshop modules and the study circle guides include the type of presentation styles to be used. For example, in the workshop module on Using the TESOL Program Standards for Program Review and Improvement, the session begins with small-group work to have participants think about program, content, and performance standards. This small-group work introduces participants to the major terminology of the workshop, has them obtain information from a CAELA article written on the topic, and helps them get better acquainted with one another at the beginning of the training. This is followed by a lecture to give participants new information and explain it. After the lecture, there is a demonstration to show participants

how to use the standards for self-review. Thus, the workshop uses different presentation styles. Each style is carefully chosen to complement the content of and purpose for the presentation.

Sequence the session:

After a presentation style is selected, it is important to sequence the session. How long a trainer spends on each part of the training will depend on how new or different the content of the training seems to the audience. By thinking through the sequencing of the session carefully and keeping an audience's training needs in mind, the trainer can see which parts of the training should receive more emphasis. The parts of a training session, in order, are

1. **Opening:** When beginning training, participants should know something about the other people in the training and should know the agenda for the training. Introductions are made, and the objectives of the training are presented. The objectives are best expressed positively: Provide a rationale for the work and motivate participants. (This is referred to as “Introduction and Warm-Up” in *The CAELA Guide*.)
2. **Presentation:** New information is introduced in the presentation style the trainer has decided upon. There is time for the audience to ask questions. A trainer may want to relate the new knowledge to participants' prior knowledge.
3. **Practice:** Participants are given an opportunity to practice the new concepts. The trainer can introduce controlled, guided, and free responses and can monitor participant work and give feedback.
4. **Application:** Participants apply the new information in a different situation or setting; they may apply it to their own teaching situation. The trainer monitors their work and provides opportunities for feedback. This step can be done during or after the training. For example, participants can return to their own classrooms and try out their new knowledge. Their peers or an administrator can give them feedback, or they can share their experiences at a subsequent training session.
5. **Closing:** The trainer reviews what has been done in the training and allows time for further questions participants might have. Participants, working alone or with the trainer, decide how they will implement what they have learned in their own classrooms or settings. (This is referred to as “Wrap-Up and Evaluation” in *The CAELA Guide*.)

(Adapted from Mary Ann Christison and Sharron Bassano, “Advanced Teacher Training for Staff Developers and Teacher Facilitators,” presented at TESOL 2003)

Prepare visuals:

It is a good idea to have visuals to support what a trainer says. Visuals include pictures, graphs, videos, film clips, charts, forms, overhead transparencies, and PowerPoint slides. These help participants understand what is being presented and, in rooms where acoustics are a problem, give support for what participants might not be able to hear clearly. Some visuals are used only in

the training room, and some are given to participants to take with them. Trainers may want to reproduce PowerPoint slides or overheads on handouts so that participants can take the information with them. The results of group work, role plays, or any realia used in a trainer's presentation will most likely remain with the trainer at the end of the session. But it is helpful if the trainer can provide handouts of the resources participants need to implement ideas and activities from the training in their classes and report back to the group, either in another training session or by another means (e.g., in online discussions).

When preparing visuals for the whole group to see, keep the following in mind:

- ▶ The font should be simple, clear, and big enough to be seen from the back of the room.
- ▶ Each visual should have enough, but not too much, information on it. Crowded visuals are often difficult for an audience to read. Participants will spend more time trying to figure out what the visual says than listening to the message a trainer is giving.
- ▶ If a visual has a chart or graph on it, all parts of the chart or graph need to be clearly labeled.

Check supplies:

Make a list of all the supplies that are needed for training. Depending on the training, supplies may include pens, pencils, paper, readings, notebooks, poster paper, transparencies, whiteboard markers, Post-its, an overhead projector, a TV, a VCR, and a laptop and projector. (See the Training Checklist at the end of this section.) If the trainer is responsible for bringing the supplies, then a running list of supplies should be kept while preparing for the training. If someone else is responsible for supplies, then the trainer may want to contact this person ahead of the training to ensure that the supplies will arrive on time.

Check the training venue:

Find out what the training venue is like and ask whether the training room can be set up in a way that complements the presentation style. If a training venue cannot accommodate the trainer's preferred presentation style, consider changing the venue or the presentation style. If the trainer is not near the training venue, it is a good idea to have an onsite coordinator who can take care of the logistics before the date(s) of the training and ensure that the room and equipment are set up correctly on the day of the training. It is also a good idea to try the equipment the day before the training to make sure it is functioning properly and to identify a technical person onsite who will be available in the event of technical difficulties.

During the Training

A trainer needs to be aware of the following aspects of the training while it is occurring to ensure that the training is going well and to make adjustments if needed.

Time:

A trainer should be aware of the passage of time throughout the training and try to stay with the original schedule as much as possible. Participants in a training often have different interests and knowledge needs; for example, even though one group may want to spend more time on a topic than has been scheduled, to do so may result in others not getting the information they wanted from a later section of the schedule. The trainer, aware of the group's interest, can make these decisions for the group or negotiate them with the group. If some participants want more time to discuss a topic, or when some digress into an interesting, related topic, the trainer can interrupt these comments and ask that these topics be discussed during a break or at lunch.

Nonparticipation:

If some individuals are not participating in the training, a trainer should consider whether or not it is important to try to bring them into the discussion. As these trainings are for adults, there may be some topics that are more important to some participants than others, and some people may lose interest when topics not of interest to them are being discussed. In most cases, a trainer can simply leave these people alone. Participants may be learning or interested even though they do not appear to be paying attention. A trainer might also try to bring them into the discussion by asking them nonthreatening questions. (For example, do not ask, "What do you think of this?" because they may not know what "this" is. Instead, ask, "What do you think of using mixed-ability grouping for a vocabulary exercise?") However, if a group of participants is not paying attention and creating a disturbance, then a trainer might want to talk to the members individually during a break, asking why the training is not meeting their needs.

Availability:

All trainers need to be available during breaks to talk with participants. Some of the most important questions come from individual conversations during breaks, and questions asked during breaks help the trainer to gauge when a participant has not understood a concept or idea. If one or several participants do not understand an activity or concept, it may be worth repeating that information for the entire group. Trainers also should have time for a break. Whether it be a few minutes away during group work or during lunch, trainers need to think about when they can sit for a moment and regroup during the training day. If two trainers are cotraining, it is much easier to take a break than if a trainer is working alone.

Using visuals:

The role of visuals is to support the work that the trainer and participants are doing. When using a visual aid, be sure that all participants can see it: Do not stand in front of it. Also, put a visual up when it is related to the topic of discussion and take it down when that topic is finished. It can be confusing when a visual is left up after the discussion of a topic has finished.

A list of questions and comments:

During the training, keep a running list of participants' questions and comments on a flip chart or whiteboard that everyone can see. Sometimes this is referred to as a "parking lot." This list is especially important if there is not enough time to answer everything during the training. If a trainer has a list of questions or comments, they can be answered when there might be a few minutes to spare in the schedule. If there are questions on the list that go unanswered during the training, the trainer can refer to these questions at the end of the training, point out other resources participants can use, and respond to participants via email. If there is no list, these questions may be lost, and participants might leave the training feeling that all their questions were not answered.

After the Training

After the training, the trainer should be available for 20–30 minutes, if possible, to answer remaining questions. As participants start to leave, they often start to think about implementing a new method or idea in their own classrooms, and questions are likely to arise. A trainer should give participants his or her contact information so that they can contact the trainer with questions as they are implementing a new concept in their classrooms or institutions.

After the training, a trainer should look over the training evaluations. These can give the trainer an idea of what participants liked and understood easily, what participants did not enjoy so much, and what was more difficult for them. A trainer can use this information to redesign subsequent trainings on this topic.

Finally, if there are remaining questions from the training that there was not time to answer, or if the trainer has promised to send participants more information or material, these should be followed up at the first opportunity, preferably the trainer's first workday after the training. By sending participants information and answers to their questions, the trainer builds credibility and establishes a link with participants beyond the training session. This is especially helpful if the participants will be implementing something new in their classes or programs.

The guidelines discussed above are presented in checklists on the following pages. It is hoped that when these guidelines are followed, participants will find trainings professionally rewarding and personally enjoyable experiences.

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Adult ESL Instructor Needs Assessment

Name _____

Program/Agency _____

Street _____

City/County _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Teaching Assignment

Briefly describe your current teaching assignment, including type (e.g., workplace, EL/civics, family literacy), instructional hours per class, whether there is managed or open enrollment, access to computer technology for instructors and learners, and whether you have paid planning time.

What adult ESL level(s) do you teach? (circle)

literacy

beginning

intermediate low

intermediate high

advanced low

advanced high

What is your teaching situation? (check one box in #1, #2, #3)

1. rural suburban urban mixed

2. isolated collegial

3. part-time full-time

Education

Degrees _____ Fields of study _____

Certificates or endorsements _____

Years Adult ESL Teaching Experience

- Less than 1 year 1–3 years 3–9 years 10+ years

Training and Professional Development

Types of activities:

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Workshops/presentations | <input type="checkbox"/> participant | <input type="checkbox"/> trainer |
| Observation/feedback | <input type="checkbox"/> participant | <input type="checkbox"/> trainer |
| Projects (e.g., curriculum development) | <input type="checkbox"/> participant | <input type="checkbox"/> trainer |
| Inquiry/research | <input type="checkbox"/> participant | <input type="checkbox"/> trainer |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> participant | <input type="checkbox"/> trainer |

Specific topics: _____

Learning Format (check any that apply)

- Large group Online Lecture/reading
- Small group Online/face-to-face hybrid Interactive
- Mentoring Peer coaching Study circle
- Other _____

Professional Development Preferences

If you could select your own mode of professional development, what would be your preference? Please rank-order, with 1 being your top choice and 5 being your last choice.

- Developing your own plan of study with support from the state or program
- Researching an issue, problem, or topic in your own teaching environment
(Please check: alone with others online)
- Practicing classroom strategies with feedback from colleague or supervisor who observes
- Working on a program project (e.g., curriculum development or standards)
- Attending workshops to learn new instructional skills

Professional Development Content

What topics would you like to learn more about? Designate your top three choices (1 = highest priority)

- _____ assessment issues (for placement, National Reporting System [NRS], in-class)
- _____ cultural issues
- _____ communicative strategies
- _____ curriculum (development and use)
- _____ EL/civics and citizenship (content and issues)
- _____ lesson planning
- _____ needs assessment and goal-setting strategies
- _____ managing multilevel classes
- _____ professional concerns (certification, benefits, advancement, outlook)
- _____ program issues (retention, funding, recruitment, type and intensity of classes)
- _____ standards (state, program, content, alignment to curriculum)
- _____ teaching ESL learners in ABE classes
- _____ teaching literacy and beginning levels
- _____ teaching reading to adult English language learners
- _____ teaching writing to adult English language learners
- _____ techniques (role plays, Language Experience Approach [LEA], Total Physical Response [TPR], dialogues, etc.)
- _____ technology
 instructional use teacher use data entry
- _____ other
- _____ other

Comments: _____

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey. We expect to have results of the survey available by _____.

Training Observation Form

The following observation form can be used in training novice trainers. The form asks novice trainers to watch an expert trainer and make notes about what the expert does in a training and how he or she does it. It is especially important that the novice watch carefully and give specific examples of how a trainer carries out each part of the training. By following this form and making detailed notes, a novice trainer will begin to understand both the delivery of content in a training and different methods of content delivery. The novice will also see how an expert trainer gives participants an opportunity to practice what they are learning. Finally, through this process, a novice may begin to notice how an expert trainer interacts with and responds to participants.

Training Observation Form

Trainer: _____ Title/topic of training: _____

Observer: _____ Date: _____

Components of the Training Session

For each item—if observed—indicate what you observed by checking the appropriate box(es) and/or providing a description/example.

Introduction

Did the trainer...

1. provide an opportunity for participants to introduce themselves?

2. state objectives of the training and review the agenda?

3. provide an opportunity for participants to become familiar with the training materials?

4. check the background information participants may have regarding the topic of the training (if this was not done when participants introduced themselves)?

Description/example(s)

- through an activity that allowed the trainer to learn more about the participants' backgrounds
- through an activity that encouraged the group to discover things about each other
- other _____

How? _____

- by walking the participants through the materials
- by using the table of contents

- by asking participants questions about the topic
- by playing a word association game with the topic
- other _____

Presentation

Did the trainer...

1. choose the appropriate presentation style(s) for the content and audience?

Description/example(s)

- lecture
- discussion
- role play
- demonstration
- game or other learning activity
- case study
- other _____

2. give adequate and appropriate explanations of new concepts?

How? _____

3. respond to participants' questions?

- by answering questions immediately
- by deferring questions until later during the training
- by noting the questions on newsprint to get back to later

4. check participants' comprehension periodically?

- by asking general questions (Is there anything you do not understand?)
- by asking content-specific questions
- other _____

5. use visuals that are clear and easy to understand?

Note anything unclear _____

6. review and summarize the main points at the end of the presentation?

- by stating main points
- by showing a visual of the main points
- by asking participants what the main points were
- other _____

Practice

Did the trainer...

1. set up the activities clearly?

2. use the activities to give participants a chance to practice what was learned during the presentation?

3. visit all groups (if the activity required small-group work)?

4. use appropriate methods and materials for the for the reporting of small-group work?

Description/example(s)

- by giving instructions in both speech and writing
- by giving an example or short demonstration
- other _____

How? _____

- by listening to groups work together
- by answering clarifying questions

- each group reported orally
- each group reported orally with a writing visual (flipchart paper, transparency, etc.)
- each group prepared a poster and groups circulated to view each other's work
- other _____

Application

Did the trainer...

1. give participants an opportunity to apply what they learned?

2. give participants time to share their applications?

3. evaluate participants' application of the concepts?

4. give participants an opportunity to comment on/evaluate each other's applications?

Description/example(s)

- in a new situation at the training
- in their own situation after the training
- other _____

- in small groups
- in the whole group
- other _____

How? _____

How? _____

Evaluation

Did the trainer...

1. give participants an opportunity to evaluate the workshop content?

Description/example(s)

written reflection

evaluation forms

other _____

2. give participants an opportunity to evaluate the presenter's skills?

written reflection

evaluation forms

other _____

Follow-Up

Did the trainer...

1. give participants a way to contact him or her after the training?

Description/example(s)

via email

via telephone

other _____

2. keep a "parking lot" (list) of participants' questions and handle all questions in one way or another (either during the training or after it)?

answered all during the training

will follow up via email/telephone

other _____

3. give participants a task to do and offer to follow it up with them?

via email

via telephone

in a subsequent training

other _____

Other observations or questions that you have:

Below are a variety of facilitation and time management strategies to enhance the acquisition of new skills by participants. For those that you observed, describe or give examples of what the trainer did. Add others that you observed.

Facilitation Skills***Description/Example(s)***

Use a method to address off-topic items in order to stay on the topic.

Provide clear explanations and demonstrate sufficient background knowledge of the topic.

Use clear transitions from one section of the training to another.

Use a variety of grouping strategies to encourage participation (e.g., cooperative groups, pair activities).

Clarify and paraphrase main points.

Summarize participants' comments for the whole group as needed.

Time Management***Description/Example(s)***

Allot appropriate amount of time to each section of the training by using time limits for different activities.

Pace training according to the participants' needs.

Make time adjustments on the agenda as needed.

Complete each section of the training.

Start and end on time.

Give participants time to answer questions posed to them.

Give participants time to process the new information.

Other observations or questions that you have:

Training Checklist

Before the Training

Have I...

- _____ reviewed the material in light of the content and audience?
- _____ decided on a presentation style?
 - lecture
 - discussion
 - role play
 - demonstration
 - games and learning activities
 - case study
 - other _____
- _____ decided on the use of group work?
 - small-group work for _____
 - groups will consist of _____
 - whole-group work for _____
- _____ sequenced the session?
 - the opening: _____
 - the presentation: _____
 - the practice: _____
 - the application: _____
 - the closing: _____
- _____ prepared my visuals?
- _____ stocked my supplies? I need:
 - pens/pencils
 - readings
 - poster paper
 - whiteboard and markers
 - overhead projector
 - laptop/projector
 - paper
 - notebooks
 - transparencies or PowerPoint slides
 - Post-its
 - TV/VCR
 - other items: _____
- _____ checked the training venue?

During the Training

Am I...

- assigning amounts of time to each presentation and activity?
- keeping track of time?
- managing the time on each topic as appropriate to the audience's needs and interests?
- aware of which participants are interested in the entire training and which participants are interested in certain topics?
- making myself available to participants during breaks and meals?
- using my visuals well, not standing in front of them or keeping them up longer than necessary?
- keeping a running list ("parking lot") of questions and comments and referring back to this when there is a little extra time?
- giving my contact information to participants?

After the Training

Have I...

- responded to participants' questions at the close of the training?
- read the evaluations and made notes as to what will stay the same and what will change the next time this training is given?
- emailed answers to participants whose questions I did not have the time or the resources to answer during the training?
- sent materials to participants who requested them?

Professional Development Models

Over the last 20 years, the rationale for teachers' professional development has shifted slightly. Twenty years ago, professional development was conducted to help teachers institute new methods and practices in their classrooms. More recently, this purpose has become incorporated into a wider view of professional development, which now has as its goal reflection and inquiry about the implementation of evidenced-based practices. Only after engaging in reflection and inquiry are new methods and practices introduced, implemented, and evaluated.

The Nature of Professional Development

Professional development is no longer seen as a one-shot training, but as systematic steps of adaptation and change that occur on both the program and classroom levels. Professional development for program staff keeps them adapting to changing program needs and expectations over time. With this long-range view, new indicators for quality professional development have been developed (Clair, 2000; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001; Sherman, Dlott, Bamford, McGivern, & Cohn, 2003; Sherman & Kutner, n.d.). These indicators show that quality professional development

- ▶ Has multiple beneficiaries, including instructors, administrators, programs, states, and ultimately, learners
- ▶ Should be driven by an analysis of teachers' needs and goals as related to learners' goals, needs, and performance
- ▶ Is part of a comprehensive plan developed collaboratively by those who will participate in and facilitate that development
- ▶ Focuses on individual, collegial, and organizational improvement
- ▶ Should include opportunities for both theoretical understanding and practical application reflecting the best available research about teaching and learning
- ▶ Should encourage teachers to reflect on social, cultural, and linguistic issues
- ▶ Enables teachers to develop further expertise in subject content, teaching strategies, use of technologies, and other essential elements in teaching to high standards
- ▶ Incorporates evaluation as an integral component
- ▶ Requires substantial time and other resources and is continuous

By keeping these quality indicators in mind when planning a training or writing a professional development plan, the holistic, systemic nature of professional development is sustained.

Recent research has shown that one model of professional development is not necessarily better than the others, though one model may provide the best fit with a particular content, time frame,

and audience. Smith, Hofer, Gillespie, Solomon, and Rowe (2003) studied adult ESL teacher change as a result of three different models of professional development: multisession workshops, mentor teacher groups, and practitioner research groups. They found that teacher change in these three models was minimal, though a larger proportion of mentor teacher and practitioner research group participants, as compared with workshop participants, changed how they feel they learn best. Based on their study, the authors recommend that a trainer keep the following in mind when designing training:

- ▶ Ensure that professional development is of high quality, especially in terms of design, facilitation, and group dynamics.
- ▶ Offer a variety of professional development models for teachers to attend.
- ▶ In recruiting for “reform” models of professional development (e.g., mentor teacher groups, practitioner research groups, study circles, professional learning communities), be clear about what teacher participation will be like.
- ▶ Help teachers acquire skills to build theories of good teaching and student success.
- ▶ Add activities to professional development to help teachers strategize how to deal with factors that affect their ability to take action.

With these ideas in mind, trainers can think strategically about the content to be delivered at the training, the audience for the training, and which model(s) of professional development to use.

Four Professional Development Models

The following describes four different models of professional development: workshop/presentation, observation with feedback, inquiry research, and product/program development. (See Table 1, Comparative Overview of Professional Development Approaches, at the end of this section.) The first type, workshop/presentation, is a “traditional” professional development activity; the others are “reform” types of professional development (Smith et al., 2003). Richardson (1998) defines reform types of professional development as being based on new philosophies about the purpose of professional development: helping teachers acquire a change orientation, rather than just adopt new techniques. With reform types of professional development, Smith et al. emphasize the importance of telling teachers beforehand what their participation will be like. Some of these models are more long term and more intensive than a workshop or presentation, and if teachers do not know this when they enroll, they will be more likely to drop out.

On the following pages, each of these models’ characteristics, strengths, and issues are described. In practice, there is overlap among these models. For example, a workshop may include follow-up in the form of observation with feedback, or a new curriculum (a product) may be the result of the work of a study circle. Even though these types of professional development may be combined, they have been separated here to give a clear picture of each one. This information should help a trainer decide what model(s) of professional development to use in training.

Workshop/Presentation

A workshop or presentation relies on communicating an approach or method and the theory behind it to participants, as well as giving them the opportunity to practice and apply the idea. It can introduce new strategies through a formal presentation, through discovery, or through problem solving. It usually occurs over 1 or 2 days and is therefore referred to as “one-shot” training. Practicing and applying a new idea can be accomplished through demonstration and modeling during the training itself. After the trainer gives a model, participants practice what the trainer has done, coaching and giving feedback to each other. Through these steps, participants benefit by learning proven behaviors and techniques and by practicing them during the training with the expertise of the trainer and their fellow participants. In this way, they are guided to change their behavior in a low-stakes environment through scaffolding and the support of others present.

Practicing and applying a new idea can also be done through problem solving and dialogue. For example, participants may work in small groups to solve a problem that has been posed. Instead of the trainer presenting new information, groups can be given this information through a jigsaw reading, applying what is in the reading to a particular problem.

A workshop or presentation is the first step in change; it usually only makes participants aware of a new or different idea. After the workshop, participants need to return to their programs and apply and practice the new idea in their own environment. Change takes time. To ensure that change is happening, workshops and presentations should be followed with observations, feedback, and further discussion.

The implementation of a workshop or presentation is usually the responsibility of a trainer and involves several steps: conducting a needs assessment, planning the workshop, conducting the workshop, and evaluating the workshop. Evaluation should be done both during the workshop itself and as part of long term follow-up for the participants involved (through observations, online discussion, or a subsequent training). More information on each of these steps can be found in the Training Tips section in this guide. By carefully going through the process described in Training Tips, a workshop or presentation can be meaningful to the participants and provide an opportunity to increase participants’ knowledge and skills.

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The workshop or presentation model of professional development has both strengths and weaknesses. It appears to be the most effective approach for learning discrete skills, such as how to comment on students' writing, but it is not very effective in helping teachers examine multiple ways to solve a problem, such as how to motivate their particular group of students to read more. There also may be logistical and funding problems with a trainer's ability to provide adequate follow-up with participants after the training. Without this follow-up, changes and gains will be minimal.

The workshop/presentation model remains the most popular model for professional development. However, with the recent emphasis on lifelong learning that results in gains in student learning, workshops and presentations can no longer be delivered as one-shot events. They should be integrated into more comprehensive professional development plans that are sustained and systematic.

Observation With Feedback

The observation with feedback model is grounded in the literature on teacher supervision and evaluation, peer coaching, and cognitive processes. In these training situations, a novice participant works with an expert who guides the novice and gives comments and suggestions directly after observing the novice teacher teach a class. An observation may focus on the development of one teaching skill (e.g., the way the teacher responds to questions from students), or it may look at the novice's skills holistically (e.g., presentation of material, interaction skills, and general teaching style). One of the strengths of the observation with feedback model is that the advice of the expert is tailored to the level and needs of the participant being observed. Also, because observation and feedback are done over time, the expert can make sure that the participant has understood and applied new concepts appropriately. There is ample opportunity for quality control and for the participant to ask questions and receive advice pertinent to his or her particular teaching situation.

The implementation of observation with feedback is the responsibility of an expert (trainer). It involves identifying the purpose of the observation with feedback, designing the approach, selecting the participants (both expert and novice), preparing and supporting the participants, developing and implementing plans, evaluating the process, and planning next steps. (See *How to Conduct Peer Coaching and Mentoring* in this guide for more information about each of these steps.)

Another strength of the observation with feedback model is that it helps participants become more reflective about their own teaching. By listening to someone else's comments on their teaching, they can begin to see themselves as practitioners and concentrate not just on the message they are delivering, but also on how they are delivering it. Observation with feedback also increases collaboration between an expert and a participant and among participants, and increases their ability to see more than one way to teach a concept, broadening the horizons of all who participate. If participants observe one another's classes, they are exposed to many different teaching styles. This is especially helpful for novice teachers if they are still in the process of developing their own teaching style.

The main challenge with the observation with feedback model is that it is time-consuming for the participants. They must find time in their schedules for the observations and pre- and post-observation conferences. Also, an expert must be very flexible and know that there are many ways of delivering a lesson. The expert should be sensitive in guiding the participant in how to incorporate a new concept into his or her own teaching style in the classroom. If an expert is too rigid, the participant will not permanently incorporate anything new and will begin to question the teaching style he or she has developed.

Inquiry Research

The inquiry research model of professional development is grounded in reflective practice. Through their own teaching practice, participants work collaboratively to formulate research questions that they would like to investigate. They then look at educational theory and think critically about the theory and the teaching and learning that is happening in their own classrooms. Through this collaborative critical inquiry, they formulate research questions and design research methodology and data collection from which they hope to gain answers to their questions. This process requires the involvement of someone who is knowledgeable about research. This could be one of the teachers or an administrator. It may be less taxing, however, if there are several people, both teachers and administrators, who have a good understanding of research. They can work together with participants to design their research methodology and data collection instruments, and all will learn through their collaboration.

After the data collection procedures or instruments are designed, participants can carry out the research in their own classrooms, programs, or throughout their state, either alone or with colleagues. By engaging in this research process with students and a curriculum they know well, participants are able to reflect on their own teaching situations and see how a theory of language acquisition may or may not be the best explanation for what is happening in their classrooms. If the answers they get are definitive, then they have a greater understanding of what to do next in

their classrooms; however, if their answers are not definitive, they will have a better understanding of the situation and can ask more specific questions if they choose to do another round of research.

The research methods that are most often used in the inquiry research model of professional development are qualitative and include interviews, surveys, observations (occasionally video recorded), focus group discussions, pretests, posttests with different methods, and discourse analyses. This research is often self-directed, with the teacher using this as an opportunity to learn more about him- or herself as a teacher and the ways students respond to what the teacher does in the classroom. The cycle of inquiry is based on eight steps:

1. Identify problem, issue, and question.
2. Explore data collection methods.
3. Implement data collection.
4. Analyze data.
5. Plan action.
6. Implement action.
7. Monitor and evaluate.
8. Share results.

Through this process, participants can gain valuable knowledge about themselves as teachers, their students, and their classes. They can also see for themselves how theory can inform practice and how practice can inform theory. They come to understand the research process firsthand and, through it, may contribute to the knowledge base at their institutions. By doing classroom-based research and considering its results carefully, they and their institutions become more informed decision makers, using the results of research as the basis for classroom and institutional decisions.

The challenges to the inquiry research model of professional development are that it requires time and a staff ready to undertake research. Both of these areas may be challenging for programs with many part-time staff members. Also, as mentioned above, someone on staff needs to be knowledgeable about research design and methodology. Such a person may not be found in some programs.

Variations on the inquiry research model of professional development are study circles and professional learning communities. In both of these, staff members work together to decide on a question and then embark on a program of study and discussion to try to answer their question. Their program of study is usually built around reading books and articles together, trying new ideas in their classrooms, and discussing how they went. Their program of study may also include classroom research.

Study circles and professional learning communities differ from one another mainly in how formal they are and the amount of time they involve. A study circle is a group that meets at least two times to reflect on the meaning of theory and research and to explore its applications to their own work. The group chooses a topic that it would like to study in hopes of resolving a problem in the classrooms or program, or a topic about which group members would like to learn more. (For more information about study circles, see the section on How to Conduct a Study Circle in this guide.)

A professional learning community is a group of educators—teachers and administrators—who “continuously seek and share learning, and act on their learning. The goal of their actions is to enhance their effectiveness as professionals for the students’ benefit . . .” (Hord, 1997). Professional learning communities adopt many different formats, but all have as their goal enhanced student learning. Schmoker (2004, p. 430) states that “there is broad, even remarkable, concurrence among members of the research community on the effects of carefully structured learning teams on the improvement of instruction.” Professional learning communities, however, are more than having teachers and an administrator sit together and study. After study, teachers and administrators help each other implement what they have learned through observation, conferencing, and other methods of giving and receiving feedback.

There are many benefits of participating in a professional learning community. Hord (1997) reports that results for teachers include a reduced sense of isolation, an increased commitment to the mission and goals of the program, a sense of shared responsibility for the development of students, learning that exemplifies good teaching and classroom practice, and the sense that “teachers will be well informed, professionally renewed, and inspired to inspire their students.” Hord also reports that students benefit when their teachers and program administrators are part of professional learning communities. This is demonstrated by decreased dropout rates, fewer absences, increased learning, larger academic gains, and smaller achievement gaps between students from different backgrounds. Professional learning communities are an excellent way to ensure that the professional development activities of teachers and administrators result in enhanced student learning.

The challenges to participating in a professional learning community are that it requires a very supportive administration, and it is time-consuming. Administrators need to be seen as members of the group, not as directors of the group (Hord, 1997). In addition, all members of the professional learning community need to commit to spending the needed time and determine a regular time and place to meet. Members of the community also make a commitment to doing classroom observations and giving peer feedback.

Product/Program Development

The product/program development model is grounded in the literature on educational change and is most frequently used in K–12 settings (Boyle, Lamprinou, & Boyle, n.d.; Richardson, 1998). It is professional development that takes a teacher, a group of teachers, or an entire institution through a change process. The change process is usually implemented in response to an assessment of teachers’ needs, students’ needs, or both. The needs assessment may highlight a problem

that needs to be solved or an area in which teachers feel they need more information. Teachers and administrators should select together the change they want to implement based on the results of this needs assessment. However, sometimes this process is initiated as the result of a directive. This may or may not be as successful in motivating change, depending on the teaching/learning situation and the personalities involved. Products that may be developed through this process include a new curriculum, a new textbook, new or streamlined processes within an institution, improved student learning, and improved student retention. Through participating in this model of professional development, teachers and administrators can have their ideas validated as they acquire important attitudes and skills.

The product/program development model takes participants through a four-step process:

1. Identify a need or problem.
2. Develop an action plan.
3. Implement the plan.
4. Assess/evaluate the results of the plan.

The process works best if teachers and administrators collaborate throughout, with administrators being group members rather than group leaders, similar to their role in a professional learning community. For the process to be carried out smoothly, participants also need to identify situational conditions (administrative commitment, funding for product development and publication, time, resources, and flexibility) that will help them meet their goals. Participants need to think carefully about the time that is needed for this process; however, if a product is to be produced from it, this is often an incentive for participants. If participants need professional development work for their performance evaluations, working on product/program development is a good way for them to increase their knowledge as well as document their learning.

Adapting the Models

Workshop/presentation, observation with feedback, inquiry research, and product/program development are the main models of professional development used to train teachers today. A trainer should think carefully about the steps that each model requires, his or her own strengths and weaknesses, and the needs of participants, and choose the one that is most appropriate. The challenges of implementing these models, such as the time commitment involved for inquiry research or the level of expertise required for observation with feedback, may cause some programs to be reluctant to conduct professional development activities or to go beyond the traditional one-shot workshop model. These professional development models may be adapted, however, depending on a program's needs, available resources, and teacher qualifications and experiences. The following ideas present ways to adapt these models:

- ▶ **Adaptations of the workshop/presentation model:** Workshops can be a cost-effective way to train a large group of teachers on a specific topic or skill in a relatively short amount of time. However, finding a qualified trainer to lead the workshop can be difficult for some programs. In a large workshop setting, teachers may not feel connected

to the trainer or the topic; once the workshop is over, the trainer is often limited in the ability to follow-up with the attendees. Programs may adapt the workshop model to be more teacher centered and systematic by conducting mini peer-coaching sessions, which have been referred to as “coaching corners” in some schools. Coaching corners are small group activities that focus on a particular strategy that a teacher would like to share. Teachers sign up both to lead and participate in the groups. After the teacher-coach presents the strategy, each participant discusses how it can work in his or her class. Teachers can rotate through several “corners” in one session. After an established amount of time, they can reconvene to evaluate how the strategy worked in different classes. The teacher-coach benefits from the experience of presenting materials and receives feedback on the strategy presented, and the teachers are exposed to different ideas and topics that they have chosen to learn about from a colleague whom they can communicate with on a regular basis.

- ▶ **Adaptations of the observation with feedback model:** When the time and resources are available for pairs of teachers (novice and expert) to engage in observation with feedback activities, the benefits are many. If a program does not have the resources or the expert mentors to facilitate and lead the observations and feedback in an effective way, this model of professional development can still be modified and used by individual teachers. Teachers can identify an area of their instruction that they would like to examine or improve (e.g., based on their student performance data, curriculum and materials, or a research topic of interest such as error correction). They can then videotape themselves teaching and use a checklist or observation sheet they develop to guide their own self-reflection. (See Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Nunan, 1992; and Wajnryb, 1992 for ideas.) The benefits of teacher self-observation and reflection using video have been documented (Tomkins, 2006).
- ▶ **Adaptations of the inquiry research model:** Teachers who are not able to participate in the intensive inquiry research process or the study circle/professional learning community variations at the local program level can be encouraged to participate in other accessible communities, such as electronic discussion lists, online courses, or Internet bulletin boards. For example, the National Institute for Literacy’s Adult English Language Learners electronic discussion list covers a range of topics for teachers to follow and contribute to, from research to promising instructional practices. (See www.nifl.gov to subscribe.) (See Mathews-Aydinli & Taylor, 2005 for an extensive list of online courses and learning communities.)
- ▶ **Adaptations of the product/program development model:** The development of a product/program, such as a new curriculum or assessment, can be challenging to undertake and see through to completion. However, this valuable process can be carried out on a smaller scale through a collection of teacher resources, such as lesson plans and informal assessment ideas and related reflections. This type of product can emerge as a follow-up to a coaching corners session or in response to an analysis of student performance data that indicate student weaknesses in a particular language skill or at a proficiency level.

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Table 1. Comparative Overview of Professional Development Approaches

Approach	Underlying Assumptions	Theory and Background	Implementation	Results	Issues
<p>Workshop/Presentation</p>	<p><i>Practitioners</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefit by learning proven behaviors and techniques; and Change their behavior and learn new behavior not in their present repertoire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowing theory is essential but not sufficient to bring about change. Also need <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstration/modeling, Practice, Feedback, and Coaching or other approach. Change requires time. Only awareness can be gained in a single training session. 	<p>Usually the responsibility of a coordinator and involves the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a needs assessment; Plan the workshop/presentation session(s); Conduct workshops incorporating elements of effective professional development (see previous column); Evaluate results (both short and long term). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-documented in K-12 arena. When all elements in place, see significant gains in knowledge, skills, and transfer of learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While often the easiest and most inexpensive approach, especially for large numbers of staff, adequate time frequently not provided for conducting needs assessment, planning, and implementing workshops/presentations. Appears most effective for learning discrete skills. When coaching is involved, there are logistical and funding problems for adult education; but without this element, gains are minimal.
<p>Observation/Feedback</p>	<p><i>Practitioners</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance ability to reflect upon own practices through observation of others; Enhance growth through reflection and analysis of instructional practices; and Continue to improve when they see positive results from their efforts to change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grounded in literature on teacher evaluation, clinical supervision, cognitive processes, and peer coaching. Alternating focused and unfocused observations. Applicable to practitioners at different levels of cognition. 	<p>Two major processes: observation and feedback.</p> <p>Four steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a preobservation conference, Observe instruction, Analyze data, and Conduct postobservation conference. <p>Each step has guidelines for successful implementation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observation/ feedback approach successful in a small number of studies. Anecdotal information cites benefits, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved self-analysis, Professional skill, Increased collaboration, Improved teaching performance, and Increased student growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observation/feedback is often time-consuming for participants. Experts who are giving feedback need to understand that there are many ways to deliver a lesson.

Table 1. Comparative Overview of Professional Development Approaches (Continued)

Approach	Underlying Assumptions	Theory and Background	Implementation	Results	Issues
<p>Inquiry/ Research</p>	<p><i>Practitioners</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can control own professional practices; • Have legitimate expertise and experience; • Will search for answers to important questions and reflect on that data; and • Can see theory as informing practice and vice versa. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grounded in reflective practice. • Describes relationship between inquiry and critical thought. • Relates theory to practice. • Builds knowledge for teaching from the inside-out. 	<p>Methods most often qualitative and self-directed. Cycle of inquiry based on eight steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify problem, issue, question. 2. Explore data collection methods. 3. Implement data collection. 4. Analyze data. 5. Plan action. 6. Implement action. 7. Monitor and evaluate. 8. Share results. 	<p>Benefits for practitioners, mostly anecdotal, include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn research process, • Become more critical users of information, • Contribute to the knowledge base, • Become more informed decision makers, • Improve instruction, and • Promote collegial interaction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires time and staff readiness. • May be difficult for part-time adult educators to fit in schedules. • Need research skills. • Requires support (financial and administrative). • Based on staff procedures.
<p>Product/ Program Development</p>	<p><i>Practitioners</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn best when they have a need to know or problem to solve; • Understand best what is needed to improve their practice; and • Acquire important attitudes and skills through participation in school-improvement or curriculum-development activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grounded in literature on change. • Most frequently used in K-12. • Helps improve group dynamics and ability to think. • Five-stage models include readiness, planning, training, implementation, and maintenance (others include evaluation). 	<p>Often developed as a result of directives, funding, research data, or problems. Steps include</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify need or problem. 2. Develop an action plan. 3. Implement plan. 4. Assess/evaluate results. <p>Professional development coordinator may serve as trainer. Above four steps should be ongoing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some K-12 data show student gains (reading). • Little research on impact on adult programs. • Often a “product” results. (Some studies have assessed satisfaction with product.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to identify situational conditions (i.e., administrative commitment, funding, time, resources, and flexibility). • Adult education’s part-time nature creates problems for widespread instructor participation. • Commitment from practitioners (often without collegiality or benefits) presents problem for adult education. • Criteria for success include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dispersed power, – Stress on professional development, – Broad dissemination, – Involved leadership, – Well-defined goals and “vision,” – Accomplishments, and rewarded at all levels.

From Sherman, R., & Kutner, M. (n.d.). *Professional Development Resource Guide for Adult Education*. Washington, DC: Building Professional Development Partnership Project (Pro-Net), Pelavin Research Institute. Adapted with permission.

How to Conduct a Study Circle

What Is a Study Circle?

A study circle is a process where a group of practitioners read and discuss educational theory and research and consider its implications for classroom and program practice. Led by a facilitator, the group members meet multiple times to reflect on the meaning of theory and research and to explore its applications to their own work. A study circle is not a training session on a given topic, but rather a way to study with colleagues and, in the process, to use research to improve one's practice. (Note: In other sections of *The CAELA Guide*, we use the term “trainer” to describe the leader of the sessions. In this section on study circles, we use the term “facilitator,” because these are facilitated discussions rather than trainings.)

CAELA materials (briefs, digests, Q&As) synthesize research on a range of adult ESL topics. They are effective for introducing practitioners to current research and to strategies for applying that research. For several of these topics, CAELA has produced study circle guides. The guides are built on the principles and practices that are described below. These same principles can be used by facilitators to create new study circle guides based on CAELA materials or to create other research-based materials.

CAELA provides study circle guides on the following topics:

SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

TEACHING BEGINNING LEVELS

TEACHING LISTENING, SPEAKING, AND PRONUNCIATION

WORKPLACE EDUCATION

Organizing a Study Circle

For study circles based on CAELA materials, we recommend a group of 6–12 participants that meets at 2-week intervals for two or more 1.5- to 2-hour sessions. The CAELA study circle guides are written for such a design but can be adapted for varied contexts. They are intended for practitioners (both new and experienced) who are actively engaged in adult ESL education who have direct experience to draw from and can test new ideas in their classrooms.

The organization and structure of a study circle depends on several variables.

Size of the group

It is important to have enough people involved (6–12) to be able to break into at least two smaller groups at times to allow for varied discussion formats and group dynamics. A small-group size of 3 or 4 people is ideal for supporting equal participation in discussion. In groups larger than

that, it is common for some members to become observers rather than participants. The facilitator needs to take into account the time needed to move in and out of small groups and to allow for reporting from those groups.

Time allotted

If the group is unable to meet for the full session time (1.5–2 hours), the facilitator needs to trim the agenda. It is usually preferable to cut out a full activity than to rush each activity to fit them all in. Where possible, it is a good idea to include the group in resolving this issue, as participants may agree to move an activity to another session, do it as a homework activity, or even stay beyond the scheduled time.

Experience of the participants

The study circle guides are written for groups with mixed levels of experience. For groups with limited experience, the facilitator may need to supplement the participants' experience with examples gathered from other educators or call more upon participants' experience as learners (rather than as educators).

Groups of more experienced educators may want to fully investigate theory or research by supplementing the readings with additional articles or original research reports.

Workplace of the participants

When participants all come from one program, there are added opportunities to collaborate by observing each others' classes, planning joint investigation of a strategy, or working together on program-level changes. When participants come from different programs, the facilitator should be mindful of clustering people purposefully (e.g., cross-program groups for generating ideas and strategies and same-program groups for planning program interventions).

Roles and Responsibilities of Study Circle Participants

For a study circle to go smoothly, various roles and responsibilities need to be carried out. The central roles are those of facilitator, program administrator, and participant.

Facilitators

It is the facilitator's job to create an environment in which all feel comfortable participating and to engage participants in reflection that helps them connect theory and research to their own experience. With guidance from the study circle guides, the facilitator supports participants in learning from the research, their own practice, and one another; in making their own discoveries; and in drawing their own conclusions. Following are some guidelines for facilitators.

Before the first session

- ▶ Provide programs with information about the study circle (e.g., the purpose, focus, and duration of the study circle).
- ▶ Communicate with program administrators about the recruitment of participants, logistical arrangements (e.g., time, place), and possible follow-up activities.
- ▶ Send out a prereading packet that includes the goals and agenda for the study circle, the research readings, and expectations of the participants. Limit the length of the readings to four or five pages each and give participants a task, such as noting their own thoughts, questions, or reactions as they read.

During the session

- ▶ Agree on some basic ground rules for the group. Ground rules help establish a respectful environment in which everyone can be heard. Following are suggested ground rules:
 - Try not to interrupt others.
 - Work to understand others' perspectives.
 - Avoid generalizations; speak from personal experience.
 - Avoid judgments, either negative or positive.
 - Respect our limited time; try not to repeat what has already been said.
- ▶ Model a spirit of inquiry, seeking to truly understand each person's views.
- ▶ Encourage participants to think like researchers and to explore why they believe what they believe.
- ▶ Invite quieter participants into the conversation so that many voices can be heard.
- ▶ Allow participants to talk in pairs or small groups before whole-group discussions to give people a chance to refine their ideas before sharing them more publicly.
- ▶ Provide opportunities for participants to express their thoughts or ideas about something without any dialogue until all have spoken.
- ▶ Appreciate that silences might allow necessary thinking time; avoid jumping in to fill them.
- ▶ Minimize your own participation in discussion. Beware of turning the discussion into a dialogue between you and each speaker.
- ▶ Keep the discussion on track, gently pulling the group back to the topic when it has strayed.

- ▶ Remind participants of the ground rules when necessary.
- ▶ End the session on time unless you have negotiated a change with the group.

See the end of this section for resources to support study circle facilitators.

Program Administrators

The program administrator lays the groundwork for a successful study group by

- ▶ Inviting participation and making participation possible by addressing barriers (e.g., providing release time and substitutes for classes)
- ▶ Clearly communicating information about the study group
- ▶ Supporting the sharing and implementation of what is learned in the group by providing time for discussion at staff meetings, encouraging peer observation, or otherwise supporting change
- ▶ Offering follow-up staff discussion to consider program-level changes

Participants

Participation in a study group should be voluntary. Those who attend should

- ▶ Do the assigned prereading
- ▶ Participate in developing and following group ground rules
- ▶ Participate fully (e.g., attend all sessions, try out new strategies between sessions)

Developing the Agenda

CAELA study circle guides, although tailored to specific topics, all follow a similar sequence of activities. The general flow of each session is as follows:

- ▶ Opening activities (welcome, introductions, purpose, agenda, expectations)
- ▶ Thinking about participants' own experiences, interests, or questions related to the topic
- ▶ Understanding and interpreting the theory and research
- ▶ Identifying theory and research-based strategies that participants would like to apply
- ▶ Applying strategies in practice (between sessions)
- ▶ Sharing, reflecting on, and evaluating the application

- ▶ Planning next steps
- ▶ Closing activities

This model can help you create your own study circles for new research materials. Below are suggested activities that you can draw from to effectively carry out each part of the process. The intention is not to squeeze in all of the activities, but rather to select the ones that will best move your particular group through the entire cycle. Choose the ones that suit the needs of your participants, the material, and your time frame. For example, if your readings reflect a strong consensus in the field, you wouldn't use the activity that invites examination of "competing theories." Similarly, if you are working with a group of new instructors, you might not choose activities that focus participants on analyzing their own past teaching experiences.

First Session

Thinking about participants' own experiences, interests, or questions related to the topic

- ▶ If there is time, use an ice breaker that connects the topic of the study circle with participants' knowledge and experiences; for example, have participants share one note they made to themselves as they were reading the material or one point that resonated with them as language *learners*.
- ▶ Do a brainstorm of questions the group has about the topic.
- ▶ Have them talk in pairs about their own experiences (as a teacher or learner) related to the topic.
- ▶ Have them talk in small groups about "Why is this topic important? Why does it matter?"
- ▶ Have them discuss any of the strategies they already use or have tried.

Understanding and interpreting the theory and research

- ▶ Use the topic headings in the materials to divide the text and create topic-focused groups. Give the groups time to review their sections, and then, on flipcharts, have them write the main points of the research in one column and the implications for practice in another. Invite them to discuss and add additional implications they might see. Then post the flipcharts and have participants walk around the room to see what other groups have written. Invite participants to add new ideas they might have as they read the lists of implications for practice. Then discuss any questions that have arisen or general observations.
- ▶ In groups, use discussion questions to help participants consider the value of the research they have read about. Questions might include the following:
 - How would you summarize these ideas for someone else?

- In what ways is what you read in keeping with what you expected?
- Is what you read consistent with your own experience (as a teacher or a learner)? How or how not?
- What in the material was new to you?
- What new questions were raised by what you read?
- How well does what you read describe common practice in programs? What evidence of ideas presented do you see in your program?
- ▶ Select a complex or provocative quote from the reading and discuss what it means and whether or not people agree with it.
- ▶ If competing theories are described, you might
 - Have participants group themselves according to the one they prefer and discuss why, then present their reasons to the larger group.
 - Using statements that reflect the various perspectives, do an agree/disagree/not sure activity, where participants walk to different parts of the room depending on what they think of the statement.
 - Play “doubters and believers,” during which one team generates all the reasons to doubt a theory and one team generates the reasons to believe it. This helps a group examine the theory deeply.

Identifying theory/research-based strategies participants would like to apply

- ▶ Use writing to get participants to reflect on which aspects of the research, or which suggested applications, they feel confident using in their practice and which they don't.
- ▶ Discuss the relevance of suggested strategies for various ESL populations/levels and have participants choose one that makes sense for their students.

Between Sessions: Applying Strategies in Practice

- ▶ Before trying a new strategy, have participants predict and write about what they think will happen. (See the New Activity Planning Form at the end of this section.)
- ▶ If possible, have them organize peer observations with a colleague, looking specifically at the application of the new strategy in the classroom and how it affects the students. (See the Peer Observation Form at the end of this section.)
- ▶ Have participants make notes about what they are trying and what happens. (See the New Notes Form at the end of this section.)

Second Session

Sharing, reflecting on, and evaluating the application

- ▶ Have participants discuss how their results compared to their predictions.
- ▶ Have participants meet in groups to discuss what happened and document factors that affect implementation.
- ▶ Have participants meet in groups by level of students in their classes to discuss what happened and document factors that affect implementation.
- ▶ Have participants write about or discuss the promises and challenges of applying the research they are reading about.

Planning next steps

- ▶ Discuss supports and barriers to implementing change.
- ▶ Discuss, “What are some of the implications of applying the theory and research reviewed in this material? For example, what changes might be tried in your agency or program?”
- ▶ Then, “Which of the above implications for change do you rate as your top three choices? What is the reason for your rankings?”
- ▶ Have participants consider how they might continue to support each other as a group. Does the group want to meet again or stay in touch in other ways, such as through a practice group, a discussion board, or a blog? If the group wants to continue to meet, make sure that there is a clear purpose and focus for the meetings. What do they want more time to talk about?

Closing activities

- ▶ Evaluate the session (or the entire study circle). (See the Evaluation Form at the end of this section.)
- ▶ Ask permission to disseminate a group contact list (and give people a chance to opt out).
- ▶ Draw participants’ attention to other resources available on the study topic. (See Additional Resources at the end of this section.)
- ▶ Thank the group for their work.

Follow-Up

- ▶ Facilitate the study circle's next steps by helping to organize additional meetings and online communication, identifying additional readings, and so on.
- ▶ Disseminate the group contact list.
- ▶ Send out any notes or other group documents that were promised.

Additional Resources

See *Focus on Basics* (www.ncsall.net/index.php?id=31) for articles that discuss research and practice. For study circle groups that are reading original research reports, more time would be needed. See the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL) study guides at www.ncsall.net/index.php?id=769

See, also, CALPRO for guidance on single-session discussion groups at www.calpro-online.org/pubs/DiscGuideResPubs.pdf

For additional tips for facilitating a study circle, look online at any of the following NCSALL study guides, available from www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/teach/lp_f.pdf

KEY FACILITATION SKILLS

GOOD STUDY CIRCLE FACILITATORS

IMPORTANCE OF NEUTRALITY

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE DISCUSSION FACILITATION

DEALING WITH TYPICAL CHALLENGES

RESOURCE BRIEF: LEADING A STUDY CIRCLE

Peer Observation Form

1. What you're looking for

2. What you observe

3. Discussion of observations with teacher

Evaluation Form

1. How useful did you find the study circle material? Please explain.

2. How useful did you find the study circle meetings? Please explain.

3. How useful did you find the new activity or strategy that you tried (including the documentation)? Please explain.

4. What tools or ideas are you taking away that you will continue to use in your practice?

5. In what ways are you going to continue to apply research in your practice?

6. If this study circle were offered again, what advice would you give the facilitator?

7. On what other topics would you like to have a study circle?

How to Conduct Peer Coaching and Mentoring

What Are Peer Coaching and Mentoring?

Peer coaching is a nonevaluative relationship between peers in which there is mutual learning through sharing, reflection, classroom observation, feedback, shared analysis, and support. For teachers, it is an opportunity for colleagues to work together over time to build their knowledge, reflect on their practice, and try new strategies. It traditionally includes a period of learning together through collaborative lesson planning, strategizing, and problem solving, followed by observation of each other's teaching. It may also focus on topics beyond the classroom, such as ways to expand student involvement in a program or ways to design workshops.

Mentoring is a similarly nonevaluative relationship between an experienced, skilled practitioner and one or more less experienced, less skilled practitioners. Both peer coaching and mentoring use similar activities, require comparable support for participants, and aim to deepen teachers' understanding of theories and approaches by taking a focused, shared look at their own practice.

The key difference between the two approaches is that in mentoring, the mentor is chosen because of his or her expertise in a particular area that has been identified as an interest or need of the practitioner. The content focus is usually determined before the mentor and practitioner start their work together. Although they will learn from each other, it is assumed that the mentor has experience and wisdom that can be used to guide learning in the topic area.

In peer coaching, however, the participants usually have the same level of experience and expertise. The focus area may also be predetermined (when, for example, peer coaching is used as a way to follow up a workshop or training), or it may be more open ended (as part of ongoing, inquiry-based professional development within a program).

Why Use Peer Coaching and Mentoring?

Both peer coaching and mentoring build on adult learning theory and incorporate practices supported by research on teacher change. Peer coaching and mentoring

- ▶ Build on practitioners' knowledge and experience
- ▶ Have participants work collaboratively to identify areas of focus and ways to learn
- ▶ Provide options and choices in a participant-directed process
- ▶ Use a problem-solving approach to learning rather than a decontextualized skills approach
- ▶ Provide opportunities to reflect on what is being learned and how it applies to practice

- ▶ Focus on areas that are relevant to the practitioner
- ▶ Have clear goals and objectives and a plan for reaching them

A report that summarizes the literature on teacher change (Smith, Hofer, Gillespie, Solomon, & Rowe, 2003) notes the following practices, which are part of peer coaching and mentoring:

- ▶ The effectiveness of any given professional development activity depends upon how well teachers can tie what they learned in professional development back to their own work situation (Fingeret & Cockley, 1992).
- ▶ Professional development should include a strong emphasis on analysis and reflection rather than just demonstration of techniques (Guskey, 1997, 1999; Sparks, 1994, 1995). Teachers need to know when and why to use a strategy or technique, not just how (Joyce, 1983).
- ▶ Professional development should include a variety of activities, such as discussion of theory and research, demonstration, practice, feedback, and classroom application (Joyce & Showers, 1995; Joyce, Wolf, & Calhoun, 1995; Mazarella, 1980).
- ▶ Teachers are more likely to learn by observing practice and through trial and error in their own classes than from decontextualized examples (Elmore, 1996).

Organizing Peer Coaching or Mentoring Projects

Peer coaching or mentoring projects can be developed on the state, regional, or local program levels. Although the size of the project may vary, someone should be assigned to coordinate the smooth flow of activities, check in with the pairs or groups, and facilitate the initial orientation and closing session. The process of organizing and implementing peer coaching or mentoring projects involves the following steps:

1. Identify the purpose.
2. Design the approach.
3. Select participants (peer coaches, mentors, and mentored teachers).
4. Prepare and support participants.
5. Develop and implement plans.
6. Evaluate the process and plan next steps.

1. Identify the purpose

The first step is to clarify the program goals and ways that peer coaching or mentoring will address them. The goals may have emerged from a program self-assessment, funder mandates

(e.g., curriculum aligned with standards, standards for instructor competencies), program changes, individual or program professional development plans, staff needs assessment, or staff turnover.

Common purposes for using peer coaching or mentoring include the following:

- ▶ Implementing newly mandated activities
- ▶ Assisting new teachers
- ▶ Addressing weaknesses that have been identified through needs assessments and program reviews
- ▶ Building a reflective learning community of practitioners
- ▶ Building program capacity to deliver new services
- ▶ Following up professional development (such as a workshop, study circle)

2. Design the approach

Table 2 summarizes the factors to consider in designing an effective approach.

Table 2. Factors to Consider in Designing Effective Peer Coaching or Mentoring

Factor	Considerations
<p>Budget: How many participants can the budget cover for their time on the project? For how many hours each?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compensation for planning, implementation, and evaluation of activities • Hiring substitutes (or other ways of covering classes while participants observe others)
<p>Inclusion: Will this project be program-based, or will it recruit across programs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program-based projects build a learning community within a program, and coordination may be easier. However, unless the program is large, finding needed expertise in a mentor may be difficult. • Cross-program projects expose practitioners to more varied experiences and resources and provide a larger pool from which to draw mentors. However, distance and schedules may complicate coordination of meetings.
<p>Grouping: Will the work be done in pairs or in small groups?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pairs provide individualized attention to participant needs, and coordination of schedules is less complicated than for a group. Matching must be done carefully so that partners are compatible. (One option is for the practitioner to choose the mentor.) Partners need to be able to stop working together if their collaboration is not productive. • Groups allow for consideration of more perspectives and ideas, and they rely less on individual relationships. In mentoring, a mentor may have limited availability to observe multiple participants.

Factor	Considerations
Scope: How broad will the content focus be (e.g., for the topic of reading instruction, will the approach apply a particular strategy, or will it use more open inquiry)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A narrow focus may be useful in following up professional development on a specific strategy or approach, or for new teachers who are not sure where to start. • A broader scope may be useful for experienced teachers who have their own particular questions about the topic.
Time frame: How many hours per week will be devoted to this project, and for how many weeks or months?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The time frame is based on the project purpose and the program's calendar. • Narrowly focused projects usually need less time than broadly focused projects. All should include at least a kick-off orientation meeting, two classroom observations, and a meeting to reflect on and evaluate the process.

3. Select participants

Mentors can be identified through recommendations or an application process, or they may be informally selected by colleagues who would like to work with them. Depending on the purpose of the project, mentored teachers may be identified either through a needs assessment or self-selected by interest. In some programs, all instructors participate.

Table 3 summarizes the qualities of a good mentor.

Table 3. The Qualities of a Good Mentor

Skill/Knowledge Area	Characteristics of Mentor
Interpersonal	Is patient, open, self-confident, empathetic
Communication	Can read verbal and nonverbal cues, presents ideas constructively, knows the difference between evaluative and nonevaluative feedback
Listening	Is an active listener, can hear what is not said as well as what is said, is open to feedback
Content	Has extensive experience and expertise in content area, broad knowledge of the field, keeps up with current trends and research, doesn't feel the need to know the answers to all questions
Awareness of diversity	Recognizes differences in communication styles and learning styles, has awareness of his or her own communication and learning styles, is open to feedback
Reflective	Is self-reflective, has strong observational skills, helps participants reflect and make connections (to their own experiences, to other knowledge), encourages participants to articulate their thinking and reasoning

From Sherman, J., Voight, J., Tibbits, J. Dobbins, D., Evans, A., & Weidler D. (2000). *Adult educators' guide to designing instructor mentoring*. Washington, DC: Pelavin Research Institute. Adapted with permission.

In addition to these qualities, participants in peer coaching and mentoring ideally share three characteristics: They want to participate in the process, they are open to change, and they are able to articulate their needs and preferences.

Participants in peer coaching need the same skills and knowledge as those in mentoring, although they may not have the extensive content knowledge that mentors have.

4. Prepare and support participants

To prepare participants to engage fully in the project, it is important to have an orientation meeting in which the project is outlined and everyone is included in setting the expectations and procedures. An orientation might include these topics:

- ▶ The purpose of the project
- ▶ Roles and responsibilities (See Guidelines for Mentoring and Classroom Observation at the end of this section.)
- ▶ Support for participants
- ▶ Planning the learning activities
- ▶ Giving and receiving nonjudgmental feedback (See Rules for Peer Coaching at the end of this section.)
- ▶ Observation techniques for data collection (See Ways to Gather Information During Classroom Observations at the end of this section.)
- ▶ Recognizing and working across differences (For strategies for dealing with cross-cultural communication challenges, see DuPraw & Axner, 2003.)
- ▶ Evaluation: what a successful project will look like

By supporting teachers engaged in peer coaching or mentoring, administrators can send the message that this work is valued. There are a number of ways to support participants in peer coaching and mentoring projects. A primary means is compensation for formal meetings and observations, as well as for informal tasks such as prepping a substitute teacher or corresponding with a peer or mentor about a coaching or mentoring issue. Support is usually provided in the form of paid substitutes, release time, or stipends.

In addition, there should be ongoing opportunities for evaluation and mechanisms through which problems or challenges can be addressed. For example, if a mentor project is large enough to have several mentors working at the same time, the project might include time for additional meetings between the mentors and the mentored to share experiences or solve problems. In a peer coaching project, a project coordinator can check in periodically with the coaches to see how their collaboration is doing and to make sure that their communication is clear and open.

5. Develop and implement plans

This step involves a series of three substeps: Identify a focus question, learn about the topic, and observe the classroom application.

Identify a focus question

Whether the content focus of the project has been narrowly or broadly defined, participants will need to find a particular aspect or question that they want to investigate in their own practice. This happens most effectively through discussion of the topic with colleagues, where practitioners can revise their goals and questions as they listen to others.

If the project is following up a workshop or study circle, questions might already have been identified in the action plans that were developed at the close of those professional development activities, or they might emerge from discussion of ideas or strategies that participants learned during those activities but have yet to try out.

If the project is responding to weaknesses identified through a program or staff needs assessment, the participants may need to do some reading first to expand their understanding of current research and practice. Mentors might guide discussion of these new ideas and their applications to the classroom before helping participants hone their questions.

If the project is being used to support practitioner-directed, inquiry-based professional development, participants may have a lot of leeway in choosing their focus topic. They may select a shared question to investigate in their varied classrooms or develop a question specific to their situation and students.

Learn about the topic

Based on the focus questions, participants in a mentoring or peer coaching project work together to develop a plan to learn more about the topic from each other and from outside resources. The plan should include the following:

- ▶ **The topic of inquiry:** What questions about our practice are we going to explore?
- ▶ **Learning activities:** What activities will we engage in to build knowledge and understanding? (See the list below for possible activities.)
- ▶ **Evidence:** What information will we collect to help us answer the questions?

The purpose of the mentoring or peer coaching relationship is for practitioners to help each other be successful in the classroom. It should involve learning activities that build practitioners' understanding of theory and research, as well as their confidence to develop or apply new strategies in practice. In addition to classroom observations, the following activities might be useful learning tools. (The extent to which participants can engage in these activities will depend on the budget and scope of the project.)

- ▶ Participants read and discuss articles on a specific topic.

- ▶ Mentors model teaching strategies or techniques, as well as their reflections on those activities.
- ▶ Colleagues do an observation together (of a teacher or a video demonstration) and discuss their feedback together.
- ▶ Participants critique a case study together or review curriculum materials.
- ▶ Peer coaches attend a professional development activity together and debrief what they learned.
- ▶ Mentors and teachers collaborate on a work task (e.g., designing a workshop or developing a lesson plan).
- ▶ Participants do reflective writing about their focus topic (e.g., what they already know, what they want to know more about, how they want to apply it in their work, what changes they hope to see).
- ▶ Mentors or peers observe classroom instruction, gathering data that will help teachers reflect on their practice.

Observe the classroom application

A mentoring or peer coaching project should include at least two observations, allowing instructors to use the feedback from earlier observations or try a different approach. First observations can be stressful for instructors, and they may feel distracted or self-conscious. Follow-up observations provide opportunities for them to make adaptations and see the changes that can result from their intentional revisions.

Classroom observations are the most challenging part of peer coaching or mentoring, because they require good planning and skill in nonjudgmental observation and feedback. There are three steps to the observation process (see *Teacher Preparation for Classroom Observation* at the end of this section.): preobservation planning of what to observe and how, the observation, and postobservation debriefing of the lesson.

Preobservation planning. The preobservation meeting should take place shortly before the observation so that the teacher has a finalized lesson plan to work from. The meeting requires about 1 hour of uninterrupted time.

In the preobservation meeting, mentors and teachers discuss what the mentor should look for during the observation (and how he or she should conduct the observation) to provide information that will help the teacher answer the inquiry questions. (See *Focus Areas and Sample Questions for Classroom Observations and Preobservation Questions* at the end of this section.) From their work together, observers should already have a good idea of what the teacher wants to focus on. Details (such as how the observer will be introduced) should have been worked out earlier, so that the meeting can focus on how this particular lesson will be observed. (See *Ways to Gather Information During Classroom Observations* at the end of this section.)

Observation. During the observation, the mentor or peer coach should take clear, nonevaluative notes on what he or she has agreed to observe.

Postobservation debriefing. The postobservation meeting should take place right after the observation so that the event is fresh in the minds of both partners. The meeting requires another hour of uninterrupted time.

During the postobservation meeting, it is useful to start with the instructor’s sense of how the class went. Some teachers feel a need to start by stating what didn’t go well or ways they felt they made “mistakes.” Although they need an opportunity to get this off their chests, this kind of self-criticism should not frame the discussion. Stick to the postobservation questions (see Postobservation Questions at the end of this section) and steer the conversation back to a nonjudgmental discussion of what happened in the class. Remind yourselves of the purpose of the collaboration.

Use the observation notes on student learning to anchor the conversation. Look over the notes and interpret the data together, discussing what you learned from the students.

6. Evaluate the process and plan next steps

At the end of the project, it is useful to have a wrap-up meeting during which participants can share what they have learned and articulate how they will build upon it. In addition, this is a time to evaluate the project itself—the structure, the supports, and the results—and to consider what longer-term consequences you will look for to evaluate its impact. Teachers may decide to continue observing each other periodically, or they may use the observation protocol to structure self-observations that they can document and review over time.

One of the aims of peer coaching and mentoring is to support a culture of reflection and to develop the habit of using data to inform practice. It can be helpful to return to this goal to frame discussions of the next steps.

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Resources on Setting Up a Mentoring Process

The following resources provide more detailed information about setting up and conducting a mentoring process.

- National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (2004). *NCSALL mentor teacher group guide (AMI)*. Cambridge, MA: Author. Available from www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/teach/mentor_a.pdf
- Smith, C., Hofer, J., Gillespie, M., Solomon, M., & Rowe, K. (2003). *How teachers change: A study of professional development in adult education*. Cambridge, MA: National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. Available from: www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/research/report25.pdf
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Guidelines for Mentoring and Classroom Observation

Mentoring is

- ▶ thinking and learning together with a colleague,
- ▶ problem solving, or
- ▶ offering suggestions.

Mentoring is not

- ▶ supervision,
- ▶ evaluation, or
- ▶ giving someone the answer.

Classroom observations are

- ▶ based on one issue in the class;
- ▶ designed to collect information about what happens related to that issue;
- ▶ focused on learning, not teaching (i.e., focused on how well students are learning, not how well the teacher is teaching);
- ▶ confidential between mentor teacher and participant teacher; and
- ▶ conducted with students' awareness and permission.

Classroom observations are not

- ▶ opportunities to coteach,
- ▶ opportunities for the observer to form opinions about all aspects of teaching and learning in the class, or
- ▶ formally documented for others' review.

From National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. (2004). *NCSALL Mentor Teacher Group Guide (AMI)*, Appendix A: "Handout C: Guidelines for Mentoring and Classroom Observation." Cambridge, MA: Author. Available from www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/teach/mentor_a.pdf

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Rules for Peer Coaching

The Stance

- ▶ We're engaging in exploration, not criticism. We're unraveling a mystery (teaching and learning) together, not monitoring each other.
- ▶ An observed lesson is a shared resource; both teacher and coach should take something of value away from any discussion of it.
- ▶ Look for, describe, and assess the practice and its results, not the person's competence.

The Talk

- ▶ Describe first, discuss details later. First describe what happened, using your data. Only then discuss what the results were, and only if the teacher initiates the discussion.
- ▶ Talk specifically and concretely. Say, "You called on Will three times," rather than "You tend to call on men a lot."
- ▶ Talk about things that can be changed and are worth changing. Ignore personal mannerisms, unless they are interfering with student learning.
- ▶ Remember to comment on strengths. Important learning comes from building on our strengths as well as from addressing areas of weakness.
- ▶ Check to ensure clear communication. Paraphrase a lot. Say, "Are you saying that...?" "Let me see if I understand you..."
- ▶ Interact. The basic human interaction skills of attending, listening, responding, and acknowledging are important for both the coach and the teacher.

From National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. (2004). *NCSALL Mentor Teacher Group Guide (AMI)*, Appendix A: "Handout C: Guidelines for Mentoring and Classroom Observation." Cambridge, MA: Author. Available from www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/teach/mentor_a.pdf

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Ways to Gather Information During Classroom Observations

Quotes: Word-for-word record of what individual students or the teacher say. For example, the observer records the exact wording of how the teacher asks questions and how a particular learner responds, keeps note of the questions that students ask, and records the exact conversation between specific students.

Anecdotal notes: Descriptions of events or interactions that occur during the class. For example, the observer records what happens among students when the teacher leaves the classroom, or records the behaviors and conversation between students as they negotiate how to work in small groups.

Participation map: A written or visual description of who talks with whom. The observer describes interactions as fully as possible, mapping who initiates the conversation, who responds, who follows, who is silent, who is addressed, and who is left out.

Counting: A record of the number of times a particular event occurs (e.g., the number of times the teacher interrupts a student, the number of times students interrupt one another, the number of times students initiate a discussion, and the number of times there are periods of silence).

Tracking time: A record of how much time is spent on a particular event or activity (e.g., the amount of time students talk informally versus on task, the amount of time the teacher speaks versus the students speak, the amount of time students have to quietly reflect, and the amount of time students have to work with one another).

Following one student: A record of a particular student's behaviors and participation (e.g., what activities engage him/her, how he/she responds to being called upon, and how much he/she participates in small-group work).

From National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. (2004). *NCSALL Mentor Teacher Group Guide (AMI)*, Appendix B: "Ways to Gather Information During Class Observations." Cambridge, MA: Author. Available from www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/teach/mentor_a.pdf

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Teacher Preparation for Classroom Observation

Take the time to consider these questions and points between now and the time of your classroom observation. You and your mentor teacher will discuss your ideas about these questions during the preobservation conference.

- ▶ Before the classroom observation, what do you want to tell learners about who is coming and why? How would you like the mentor teacher to be introduced during the class? What else might you need to do to prepare learners for the mentor teacher's visit? (Note: Let students know that the information being gathered is to help you to learn about your own teaching, and not for any other purposes.)
- ▶ What questions or concerns do you have about the classroom observation?
- ▶ What activity or activities do you plan to do during the class that will be observed?
- ▶ Rather than focusing on everything related to your teaching or on the activity you will be doing, the mentor teacher will focus on and collect information about one specific part of the class related to how the students are learning. For example, the mentor might focus on how students participate in the class or how well they seem to understand the activities. What would you like the mentor teacher to focus on during the class?
- ▶ It is difficult to predict what will happen on any given day. For example, on the day of the observation, too few learners might come to class for you to do the planned activity. Do you have a Plan B?
- ▶ How do you want the mentor teacher to be involved in the class during the observation? Do you want him or her to observe from a distance, sit with learners, or participate in activities but not coteach?
- ▶ Do you have any questions for the mentor teacher about the observation?

Any questions you still have about the process can be discussed during your preobservation conference.

From National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. (2004). *NCSALL Mentor Teacher Group Guide (AMI)*, Appendix C: "Handout G: Preparation for Classroom Observation." Cambridge, MA: Author. Available from www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/teach/mentor_a.pdf

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Focus Areas and Sample Questions for Classroom Observations

Classroom Arrangement

- ▶ What is the set-up of the desks and chairs? How far do students sit from each other? From the teacher?
- ▶ What is on the walls? What resources (e.g., technological, books) are available in the room?
- ▶ Is there a lot of noise in the room? Are there interruptions from outside the room?
- ▶ Are the chairs comfortable? Is there enough lighting and workspace in the room?
- ▶ Where do people choose to sit? (Does it change over time?)

Classroom Management/Authority

- ▶ What is the classroom agenda? Who sets it, and how is it set? When a question is asked or a topic raised that diverges from the agenda, what is the response by the teacher? By students?
- ▶ What is the daily routine (e.g., signing in, signing out)?
- ▶ What are the classroom rules? Who decides them? How are they communicated?
- ▶ How do participants address each other (by name, by title)?
- ▶ In what configurations do students work—individually, as a whole group, or in small groups?

Learner Engagement/Sense of Community

- ▶ How much movement is there in the classroom? What kind?
- ▶ How busy are students, and what are they doing?
- ▶ How do learners elicit help—by asking another student, raising their hand, waiting for the teacher to circulate?

Learner/Classroom Talk

- ▶ What kinds of questions do learners ask? How often?
- ▶ What kinds of answers do learners give? How long are their responses?
- ▶ Are there differences in the amount of learner talk across these variables: male/female, native/nonnative English speaker, age, etc.?
- ▶ What is the interaction pattern: one person talking at a time, many people at one time, or a mix? Who regulates this pattern? How is turn-taking managed? How often do learners initiate new topics or other opinions?

From National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. (2004). *NCSALL Mentor Teacher Group Guide (AMI)*, Appendix B: “Focus Areas and Sample Questions.” Cambridge, MA: Author. Available from www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/teach/mentor_a.pdf

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Preobservation Questions

What specifically do you want me to look for?

What do you want me to know about the class?

Is there a particular student you would like me to watch?

What do you have planned for the lesson?

What are your objectives and expectations for the lesson?

Postobservation Questions

How do you think the lesson went? Explain what makes you think this.

How does this compare with what you expected would happen?

What could be some reasons it happened this way?

Would you like me to share what I observed?

How do you want to use what you're learning from this observation process?

What else would you like to try?

From National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. (2004). *NCSALL Mentor Teacher Group Guide (AMI)*, Appendix B: "Pre-Observation Questions and Post-Observation Questions." Cambridge, MA: Author. Available from www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/teach/mentor_a.pdf

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Notes

III-A. Assessing Learner Needs in the Adult ESL Classroom

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Assessing Learner Needs in the Adult ESL Classroom

This workshop module contains detailed instructions and all of the materials necessary to conduct a training session on assessing learner needs in the adult ESL classroom. The module has three components:

- ▶ Trainer Guide
- ▶ Trainer Notes
- ▶ Participant Handouts

The Trainer Guide is the trainer’s script for the training session. It contains step-by-step instructions for presenting the workshop. It begins with an introduction that states the rationale and purpose of the workshop. It also gives the goal and objectives of the workshop, the workshop agenda, an overview of workshop sections with the amount of time to be spent on each section, trainer preparation instructions, and materials needed. The introduction is followed by detailed sequential instructions for conducting each section of the workshop.

The introduction to each section states the purpose of the activities and the timing of that section. It is followed by a two-column table with instructions for each activity in the first column (Action) and the materials needed in the second column (Materials). Hard copies of all of the materials needed (with the exception of non-CAELA publications) are provided in the Trainer Notes or the Participant Handouts. Materials are listed by title followed by the page number on which they can be found and TN (indicating that it can be found in the Trainer Notes) or PH (indicating that it can be found in the Participant Handouts). Ordering information for non-CAELA publications is given in the workshop introduction. Materials that need to be made into transparencies for use with an overhead projector or PowerPoint slides are marked “Transparency or PowerPoint Slide.” You will need to prepare them before the training session.

The Trainer Notes accompanies the script of the Trainer Guide. It includes copies of all the participant handouts, answer keys to participant activities, transparencies or PowerPoint slides to be made, and other supplemental handouts if appropriate. The contents of the Trainer Notes are organized in the order they are needed in the session, and the place they will be used is indicated in the Materials column in this Trainer Guide.

The Participant Handouts contains all the information and activity sheets that participants need to participate in the session and will take with them when they leave. The contents are also organized in the order they will be used in the session. Make a copy of the handouts for each participant.

Assessing Learner Needs in the Adult ESL Classroom

Introduction to the module: The effective assessment of adult English language learners' needs, goals, and interests is integral to developing curricula and classroom instruction that hold the attention of the learners. Although learners come to class for a variety of reasons, they usually have specific learning goals and needs. Learners are more likely to continue coming to class if their needs are being met. This workshop module includes many examples of needs assessments. These are examples that can be selected and adapted depending on learners' language and literacy levels.

The following Trainer Guide and workshop materials will assist you in conducting a workshop on how practitioners can assess learner needs to determine class content and instructional focus.

Target audience for this workshop: Adult ESL instructors, program administrators, and program coordinators

Goal of the workshop: To establish the purpose of needs assessment and activate participants' prior knowledge about needs assessment in ESL classrooms

Workshop objectives for participants: At the end of the workshop, participants should be able to

- ▶ Identify uses of needs assessment
- ▶ Select appropriate assessment tools for the level of their class and the purpose of the needs assessment
- ▶ Analyze needs assessment results to determine class content and instructional needs
- ▶ Develop needs assessments for their own classes

Length of workshop: 2 to 2½ hours for the basic workshop

The workshop components are as follows

Part 1. Introductions and Warm-Up	25 minutes
Part 2. Presentation: Purposes and Types of Needs Assessment	50 minutes
Part 3. Practice: Developing and Interpreting Needs Assessment Activities	40 minutes
Part 4. Application: Planning Needs Assessment	20 minutes
Part 5. Wrap-Up and Evaluation	15 minutes
Total projected length of workshop	150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes)*

*This does not include a break. It is recommended that a 10-minute break be given halfway through the workshop.

Materials needed for the workshop:

- ▶ Assessing Learner Needs: Trainer Guide
- ▶ Assessing Learner Needs: Trainer Notes (make transparencies or PowerPoint slides as indicated in the Trainer Guide)
- ▶ Assessing Learner Needs: Participant Handouts

Note: In the Trainer Guide, materials to be found in the Trainer Notes are indicated by TN, followed by the page number; materials to be found in the Participant Handouts are indicated by PH, followed by the page number.

1. Introductions and Warm-Up

Purposes:

- ▶ To establish the purpose of the training
- ▶ To establish the purpose of needs assessment
- ▶ To review objectives and agenda for the training
- ▶ To activate prior knowledge about needs assessment in ESL classrooms

Time: 25 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>1. Introductions/Warm-Up (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce yourself and the workshop purpose. • If participants do not know each other, add a short activity here to give them the opportunity to introduce themselves. <p>2. Practitioner needs assessment (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have participants work in pairs. • Have participants take out the Practitioner Needs Assessment handout and instruct them to interview each other using the given questions. They should write down the key points of their partner’s responses, as they will return to this activity later. • When participants have finished interviewing each other, review answers with the whole group. Ask participants what interesting things they learned in their interviews. Elicit their expectations for the training, and record their answers on a flip chart. <p>3. Review of session agenda and objectives (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point out which objectives match participant expectations and explain how you will handle expectations not covered in the workshop (e.g., talk privately at break time, suggest resources). 	<p>Practitioner Needs Assessment (TN p. 14, PH p. 62)</p> <p>Assessing Learner Needs: Goal, Objectives, and Agenda (TN p. 13, PH p. 61)</p>

2. Presentation: Purposes and Types of Needs Assessment

Purposes:

- ▶ To present the purposes and types of needs assessments
- ▶ To present information on how to implement instructional steps based on the results of a needs assessment

Time: 50 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>1. Establish the purpose of needs assessment (20 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide participants into groups of four. • Explain that each person in the group will read one section of the digest and then write down his/her answers to the corresponding discussion questions. • When everyone is finished reading and answering their questions, group members will share their answers with the rest of their group. • When the activity is finished, everyone should have answers to the discussion questions for all four sections of the digest. • Quickly review answers with the whole group. 	<p>Digest: Needs Assessment for Adult ESL Learners (TN pp. 15–19, PH pp. 63–67)</p> <p>Needs Assessment for Adult ESL Learners Digest Discussion Questions (TN p. 20–21, PH p. 68)</p>
<p>2. Discuss the types of needs assessment (20 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide participants into five groups of three or four. Assign each group one type of needs assessment from the participant handouts. If there are more than five groups, some groups will have to work on the same type of needs assessment. • Within each group, participants will read the description and examples and answer discussion questions as a group. Tell participants that these are examples that can be selected and adapted depending on learners' language and literacy levels. • When all groups have finished their discussion questions, each group will present its type of needs assessment to the whole group. Groups should describe their needs assessment activity and discuss their answers to the discussion questions. • After all groups have presented, have participants take out the Needs Assessment Tools Chart. Give them 2 to 3 minutes to look it over. Answer any questions. 	<p>Types of Needs Assessments (TN pp. 22–38, PH pp. 69–85)</p> <p>Needs Assessment Tools Chart (TN pp. 39–42, PH pp. 86–89)</p>

Actions	Materials
<p>3. Examine ways to use the results of needs assessment in planning a program, curriculum, and instructional steps (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have participants take out the sample curriculum and take 2 to 3 minutes to look it over. • Show participants the overhead transparency or PowerPoint slide indicating the results of the sample needs assessment activity. • Using the transparency or PowerPoint slide, conduct an analysis of the needs assessment results with the whole group. Circle topics that large numbers of participants marked “a little difficult” or “very difficult.” Point out that certain topics (employment, banking, housing, health/emergencies, school, and directions) are top priorities. Post office and phone numbers are secondary. • Have participants take out the sample syllabus based on the curriculum and needs assessment. Explain that this represents one way of organizing the 10-week class session based on the above sample needs assessment results. Ask participants how they might have structured their 10-week session differently. Ask them to explain the reasons for a particular structure. 	<p>Sample Intermediate Curriculum (TN pp. 43–44, PH pp. 90–91)</p> <p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Needs Assessment Results (TN pp. 45–46)</p> <p>Syllabus: Intermediate ESL (TN p. 47–48, PH p. 92–93)</p>

3. Practice: Developing and Interpreting Needs Assessment Activities

Purposes:

- ▶ To apply the concepts learned in the presentation of new material
- ▶ To increase skills in planning and analyzing needs assessment

Objectives covered:

- ▶ Select appropriate tools for the level of their class and the purpose of the needs assessment
- ▶ Analyze needs assessment results to determine class content and instructional focus

Time: 40 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>1. Analysis of needs assessment scenarios (20 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have participants take out the worksheet Selecting Needs Assessment Tools: Scenarios. Present the example scenario to the whole group. • Have the whole group discuss which needs assessment tools would be appropriate for the given situation, how best to set up the needs assessment, and what information would be learned from the needs assessment. • Divide participants into small groups. • In groups, participants will work on the five scenarios in the worksheet to determine which type of needs assessment to use and discuss why they chose that tool, how they would set it up, and what they would hope to learn from that particular type of needs assessment. • When groups are finished, briefly review the scenarios and decisions based on the scenarios, as a whole group. 	<p>Selecting Needs Assessment Tools: Scenarios (TN p. 49, PH p. 94)</p>

Actions	Materials
<p>2. Analysis of needs assessment results (20 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have participants take out the Analyzing Needs Assessment Results worksheets. Go over the example as a whole group and discuss which instructional steps would be best to take based on the results. • Divide participants into groups of three or four. If there are more than five groups, some groups will have to work on the same set of needs assessment results. • Assign a set of needs assessment results to each group. In their groups, participants will analyze the sample results by answering the guiding questions provided and coming up with appropriate instructional steps to take. • When all the groups are finished, they will present their sample results and instructional steps to the whole group. 	<p>Analyzing Needs Assessment Results (TN pp. 50–59, PH pp. 95–103)</p>

4. Application: Planning Needs Assessment

Purpose:

- ▶ To discuss application activities

Objective covered:

- ▶ Develop needs assessments for their own class

Time: 20 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>Application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have participants take out the Needs Assessment Planning Sheet. • Discuss the worksheet with participants. Have one or two participants share what their next steps will be in their classrooms or programs. 	<p>Needs Assessment Planning Sheet (TN p. 60, PH p. 104)</p>

5. Wrap-Up and Evaluation

Purpose:

- ▶ To reflect on the training

Time: 15 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>Reflection on practitioner needs assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return to the Practitioner Needs Assessment from the warm-up. • Have participants discuss with their partners how they will use needs assessment in their classrooms. • Have participants focus on the following questions: What has this training confirmed for you about needs assessment? What changes will you make based on this training? What information do you still need? Discuss any unmet expectations of the training. • Ask participants to complete the Workshop Evaluation form. 	<p>Practitioner Needs Assessment</p> <p>Workshop Evaluation Form (PH, p. 105)</p>

Notes

Assessing Learner Needs in the Adult ESL Classroom

Goal, Objectives, and Agenda

Goal:

To establish the purpose of needs assessment and activate participants' prior knowledge about needs assessment in ESL classrooms

Objectives:

At the end of the workshop, participants should be able to

- ▶ Identify the uses of needs assessment
- ▶ Select appropriate tools for the level of their class and the purpose of the needs assessment
- ▶ Analyze needs assessment results to determine class content and instructional needs
- ▶ Develop needs assessments for their own class

Agenda:

- I. **Introductions and Warm-Up**
- II. **Presentation:** Purposes and types of needs assessment
- III. **Practice:** Developing and interpreting needs assessment activities
- IV. **Application:** Planning needs assessment
- V. **Wrap-Up and Evaluation**

Needs Assessment for Adult ESL Learners

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May 1997

Assessment of literacy needs from the learner's perspective is an important part of an instructional program. Learners come to adult English as a second language (ESL) literacy programs for diverse reasons. Although they may say they just want to "learn English," they frequently have very specific learning goals and needs: for example, to be able to read to their children, to get a job, or to become a citizen. If their needs are not met, they are more likely to drop out than to voice their dissatisfaction (Grant & Shank, 1993). The needs assessment process can be used as the basis for developing curricula and classroom practice that are responsive to these needs.

Although learner needs assessment encompasses both what learners know and can do (learner proficiencies) and what they want to learn and be able to do, this digest focuses on ways to determine what learners want or believe they need to learn. Many of the activities described can also include or lead to assessment of proficiencies, and many of the sources cited include both types of assessment. (See Burt & Keenan, 1995, for a discussion of assessment of what learners know.)

What Is Needs Assessment?

The word "assess" comes from the Latin term "assidere," which means to "sit beside." Process-minded and participatory-oriented adult educators "sit beside" learners to learn about their proficiencies and backgrounds, educational goals, and expected outcomes, immersing themselves in the lives and views of their students (Auerbach, 1994).

A needs assessment for use with adult learners of English is a tool that examines, from the perspective of the learner, what kinds of English, native language, and literacy skills the learner already believes he or she has; the literacy contexts in which the learner lives and works; what the learner wants and needs to know to function in those contexts; what the learner expects to gain from the instructional program; and what might need to be done in the native language or with the aid of an interpreter. The needs assessment focuses and builds on learners' accomplishments and abilities rather than on deficits, allowing learners to articulate and display what they already know and can do (Auerbach, 1994; Holt, 1994).

Needs assessment is a continual process and takes place throughout the instructional program (Burnaby, 1989; Savage, 1993), thus influencing student placement, materials selection, curriculum design, and teaching approaches (Wrigley & Guth, 1992). As Burnaby (1989) noted, "The curriculum content and learning experiences to take place in class should be negotiated between learners, teacher, and coordinator at the beginning of the project and renegotiated regularly during the project" (p. 20). At the beginning of the program, needs assessment might be used to determine appropriate program types and course content; during the program, it assures that learner and program goals are being met and allows for necessary program changes; at the end of the program, it can be used for assessing progress and planning future directions for the learners and the program.

Why Is Needs Assessment Important?

A needs assessment serves a number of purposes:

- ▶ It aids administrators, teachers, and tutors with learner placement and in developing materials, curricula, skills assessments, teaching approaches, and teacher training.
- ▶ It assures a flexible, responsive curriculum rather than a fixed, linear curriculum determined ahead of time by instructors.
- ▶ It provides information to the instructor and learner about what the learner brings to the course (if done at the beginning), what has been accomplished (if done during the course), and what the learner wants and needs to know next.

Factors that contribute to learner attrition in adult literacy programs include inappropriate placement and instructional materials and approaches that are not relevant to learners' needs and lives (Brod, 1995). When learners know that educators understand and want to address their needs and interests, they are motivated to continue in a program and to learn.

Assessment Tools

Needs assessments with ESL learners, as well as with those in adult basic education programs, can take a variety of forms, including survey questionnaires on which learners check areas of interest or need, open-ended interviews, or informal observations of performance. In order for needs assessment to be effective, tools and activities should be appropriate for the particular learner or groups of learners. For example, reading texts in English might be translated into the learners' native languages, read aloud by the teacher or an aide (in English or the native language), or represented pictorially. Types of needs assessment tools and activities include:

Survey questionnaires. Many types of questionnaires have been designed to determine learners' literacy needs. Frequently they consist of a list of topics, skills, or language and literacy uses. The learners indicate what they already know or want to know by checking in the appropriate column or box, or they may be asked to use a scale to rank the importance of each item. For beginning learners who do not read English, pictures depicting different literacy contexts (such as using a telephone, buying groceries, driving a car, and using transportation) can be shown, and learners can mark the contexts that apply to them. For example, using transportation could be represented by pictures of a bus, a subway, and a taxi. The list of questionnaire items can be prepared ahead of time by the teacher or generated by the students themselves through class discussion.

Learner-compiled inventories of language and literacy use. A more open-ended way to get the same information that surveys offer is to have learners keep lists of ways they use language and literacy and to update them periodically (McGrail & Schwartz, 1993).

Learner interviews. Interviews with learners, either one-on-one or in small groups, in their native language or in English, can provide valuable information about what learners know, what their interests are, and the ways they use or hope to use literacy.

Review of reading materials. An instructor can spread out a range of reading materials on the table (e.g., newspapers, magazines, children’s books, comics, and greeting cards, and ask learners which they would like to read and whether they would like to work in class on any of them. A similar activity can be done with different types of writing.

Class discussions. Showing pictures of adults in various contexts, the teacher can ask, “What literacy skills does this person want to develop?” and have learners generate a list. The teacher then asks, “Why do you want to develop literacy skills?” Learners might be more willing to express their desires if they move from the impersonal to the personal in this way (Auerbach, 1994).

Personal or dialogue journals. Learners’ journals—where they write freely about their activities, experiences, and plans—can be a rich source of information about their literacy needs (Peyton, 1993).

Timelines. Learners can prepare their own personal timelines, in writing or pictorially, that indicate major events in their lives as well as future goals. Discussion can then focus on how progress towards those goals can be met through the class (Santopietro, 1991).

Needs Assessment in One Adult Esl Program

The Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP) in Arlington, Virginia periodically conducts a program-wide needs assessment to determine the interests and goals of ESL learners in the community. The director and program coordinators collaborate with community agencies, schools, and employers to identify ways in which the REEP program can prepare learners for the economic, civic, and family opportunities available in the community. This information is then used for program planning purposes, such as developing courses, curricula, and materials, and preparing needs assessment tools. Learner interviews and a placement test assessing general language proficiency are used to place learners in an instructional level. Once they are in the classroom, learners participate in a continual needs assessment process to plan what they want to learn and how they want to learn it.

In-class needs assessment is most successful when learners understand its purpose and are comfortable with each other. Because of this, the first curriculum unit in every new class is called “Getting Started” (Arlington Education and Employment Program, 1994). It enables learners to get to know one another through the needs assessment process as they acknowledge shared concerns and begin to build a community in the classroom (Van Duzer, 1995). For several days, some class time may be spent discussing where they use English, what they do with it, what problems they have encountered, and why they feel they need to improve their language skills and knowledge. Through this process, both the learners and the teacher become aware of the goals and needs represented in the class. A variety of level-appropriate techniques, like those mentioned above, are used to come to a consensus on the class instructional plan and to develop individual learning plans. Learners select from both program-established curricular units and from their identified needs. The needs assessment process serves as both a learning and information-gathering process as learners use critical thinking, negotiation, and problem-solving skills to reach this plan.

Once the class instructional plan is selected, ways are discussed to meet individual learner needs apart from the whole class such as through small in-class focus groups, working with a volunteer, time in the program's computer learning lab, assistance obtaining self-study materials, or referral to other programs. The class plan is revisited each time a unit is completed to remind the learners where they have been and where they are going and to enable the teacher to make changes or adjustments to content or instruction as new needs are uncovered.

Conclusion

Needs assessment can take many forms and can be carried out at different times during the instructional process. Whatever the focus and format, the basic purpose is to determine what learners want and need to learn. When curriculum content, materials, and teaching approaches match learners' perceived and actual needs, learner motivation and success are enhanced.

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Assessing Learner Needs in the Adult ESL Classroom

Discussion Questions

1. What Is Needs Assessment?

What should a needs assessment tool examine?

- ▶ From the perspective of the learner, examines skills learner already has, literacy contexts learner lives/works in, what learner wants/needs to know, expectations, what might need to be done in the native language.

When does needs assessment occur and what aspects of instruction does it influence?

- ▶ Continual process. Influences student placement, materials selection, curriculum design, and teaching approaches.

2. Why Is Needs Assessment Important?

What purposes does it serve?

- ▶ Aids administrators, teachers, and tutors with learner placement and in developing materials, curricula, skills assessments, teaching approaches, and teacher training.
- ▶ Ensures a flexible, responsive curriculum rather than a fixed, linear curriculum determined ahead of time by instructors.
- ▶ Provides information to the instructor and learner about what the learner brings to the course, what has been accomplished, and what the learner wants and needs to know next.

How can it contribute to learner motivation?

- ▶ Appropriate placement, materials, and approaches that are relevant to learners' needs and lives. Learners know that educators understand and want to address their needs and interests.

3. Assessment Tools

List the types of needs assessment tools and activities and briefly describe each.

- ▶ Survey questionnaires, learner-compiled inventories of language and literacy use, learner interviews, review of reading materials, class discussions, personal or dialogue journals, timelines.

4. Needs Assessment in One Adult ESL Program

What three types of needs assessment does this program do?

- ▶ Program-wide needs assessment; consult with community agencies, schools, and employers.
- ▶ Learner interviews and placement test.
- ▶ In-class needs assessment.

How is needs assessment used in the individual classroom?

- ▶ Learners discuss where they use English, what they do with it, what problems they have encountered, and why they feel the need to improve their language skills and knowledge.
- ▶ Class consensus on class instructional plan.
- ▶ Individual learning plans.

Sample focus group questions for a new family literacy program

For potential participants:

- ▶ Why do you want to study English?
- ▶ What do you need to read in English?
- ▶ Where do you need to speak English?
- ▶ Who do you need to speak English to?
- ▶ How often do you read with your child? (How often do you tell him/her a story; teach him/her letters, words, numbers; teach him/her songs or music; talk with him/her about family history, family culture, or ethnic heritage?)
- ▶ How often do you visit your child's school (to talk to your child's teacher or principal; to observe classroom activities; to attend a school event such as a play, art show, or party; to meet with a parent-teacher organization; to volunteer; for other reasons)?
- ▶ What are good times to offer English classes?

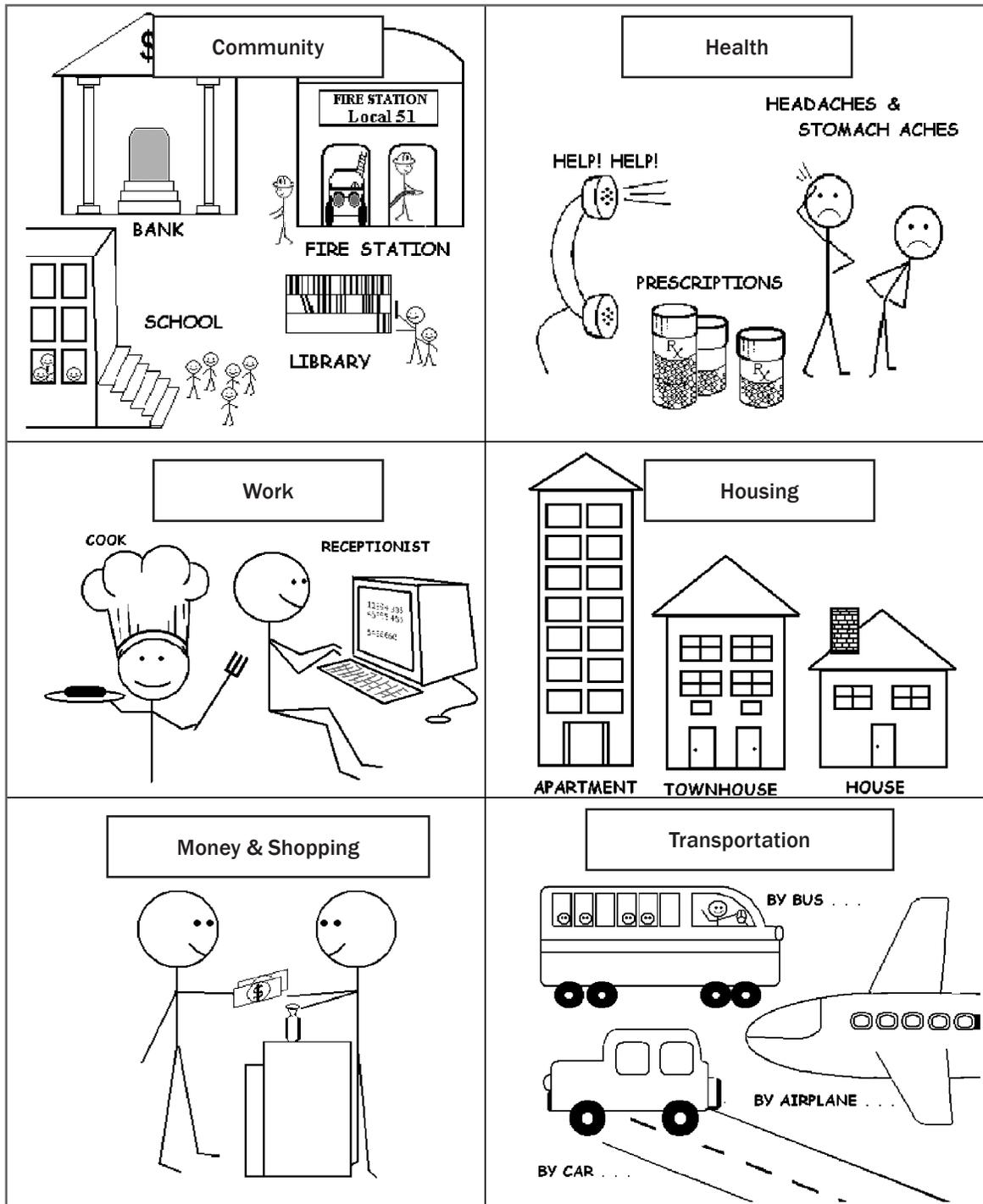
For school representatives:

- ▶ What languages do parents speak in your district?
- ▶ What challenges do you face communicating with the non-English-speaking parents in your district?
- ▶ What systems does the school/school district have in place to facilitate non-English-speaking parents' involvement in school activities?
- ▶ How might the school/school district be able to support a family literacy program (offer space, host events, involve the children's teachers, etc.)?

Sample Questionnaire 1

Figure 1. Questionnaire for Beginning-Level Learners

What do you want to study? Circle three topics.



Note: Adapted from National Center for Family Literacy & Center for Applied Linguistics. (2004). *Practitioner toolkit: Working with adult English language learners*. Louisville, KY & Washington, DC: Author.

Sample Questionnaire 2

Table 1. Questionnaire for Beginning/Intermediate-Level Learners

Name _____ Date _____

What do you already know how to read in English?

What do you want to learn to read? (Check ✓)

	Already know how to read	Want to learn how to read
Newspapers/magazines		
GED textbooks		
Job ads		
Job applications		
Signs at work		
Checks from work		
Housing ads		
Notes from school		
Children's books		
Income tax forms		
Bank statements		
Bus and train schedules		
Dictionaries		
Labels on food		
Labels in clothes		
Medicine labels		
Telephone/utility bills		
Other		
Other		

Sample Questionnaire 3

Table 2. Questionnaire for Intermediate-Level Learners: Family Activities

Purpose: To identify literacy practices in the home, record parent-child interactions, and provide a baseline for documenting changes over time.

Process: As part of either a whole-group or a small-group discussion, have learners discuss activities they currently do with their children. Give the learners the following prompt: “Parents and children can do many things together. They go to the park on Sunday, go fishing, cook, clean the house, go hiking, watch TV, work in the garden, or look at magazines. In many families, parents help their children with homework or check their assignments. What do you do with members of your family?” Record their responses on the lines below.

Luisa and her husband go to church together on Sundays.

Then they watch their son Marcos play soccer.

Note: From Holt, D. D., & Van Duzer, C. H. (Eds.). (2000). *Assessing success in family literacy and adult ESL* (p. 83). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics. Adapted with permission.

Sample Inventory 1

Table 4. Language Log for Beginning-Level Learners

Name _____ Date _____
Where did you speak English this week? _____

Who did you speak English to? _____

What did you read in English this week? _____

What did you need to study this week? _____

This week, _____ was difficult in class.
This week, _____ was easy in class.

Note: From Moss, D. (1994). *Alternative assessment: A fork in the road*. Presented at TESOL. Adapted with permission.

Sample Inventory 2

Table 5. Family Events Log for Beginning-Level Learners

Sample 2: Beginning-Level Family Events Log

Process: Ask the learners to record the activities they do with their children each week. Then have them discuss this record with a partner. At key points in the class cycle, meet with learners to compare their list with their planned activities. Then discuss the plan again and renegotiate, if appropriate.

Name _____	Week of _____

This week I...	

<i>helped my son with his math.</i>	

Note: From Holt, D. D., & Van Duzer, C. H. (Eds.). (2000). *Assessing success in family literacy and adult ESL* (p. 87). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Sample Inventory 3

Table 6. Beginning-Level Language Use Inventory

Process: Give the forms on the next two pages to the students. Display this handout on an overhead transparency or PowerPoint slide. As a large group activity, go over the handout, offering suggestions and asking for examples from the students. Have students work on their handout individually, then have them form pairs and interview each other using the second form.

Write YOUR answers below.

	Who did you speak to?	What did you say?	Was it easy? Difficult?
At home?			
At work?			
At the store?			
Another place?			

Table 7. Beginning-Level Language Use Inventory (Part 2)

Now Write your PARTNER'S answers.

	Who did you speak to?	What did you say?	Was it easy? Difficult?
At home?			
At work?			
At the store?			
Another place?			

Note: From Moss, D. (1994). *Alternative assessment: A fork in the road*. Presented at TESOL. Adapted with permission.

Sample Inventory 4

Table 8. Can-Do List for Self-Assessment for Intermediate to Advanced Levels

Name _____ Date _____

Put a checkmark (✓) in the box that best describes you (one ✓ for each row).

Here's what I can do.	I can do this. No problem.	I do OK most of the time, except when things are complicated.	This is a little difficult for me, but I can do it with some help from others.	This is very difficult for me. I can only do it with a lot of help from others.	I can't do this. No way. It's much too difficult.
Talk about my country and my city with a friend or neighbor					
Ask for directions on the street or ask where something is in a store					
Ask someone to speak more slowly or to say things in a different way					
Fill out a form (name, birth date, address, phone)					
Explain about myself and my work in a job interview					
Understand the notes that my child's teacher sends from school					
Figure out my phone bill or electricity bill					
Explain to the doctor in detail what's wrong with me					
Pick a story in the newspaper and read it					
Understand the news on TV					

Note: Adapted from Holt, D. D., & Van Duzer, C. H. (Eds.). (2000). *Assessing Success in family literacy and adult ESL* (p. 95). McHenry, IL & Washington, DC: Delta Systems & Center for Applied Linguistics.

Types of Needs Assessment

Type 4: Timelines

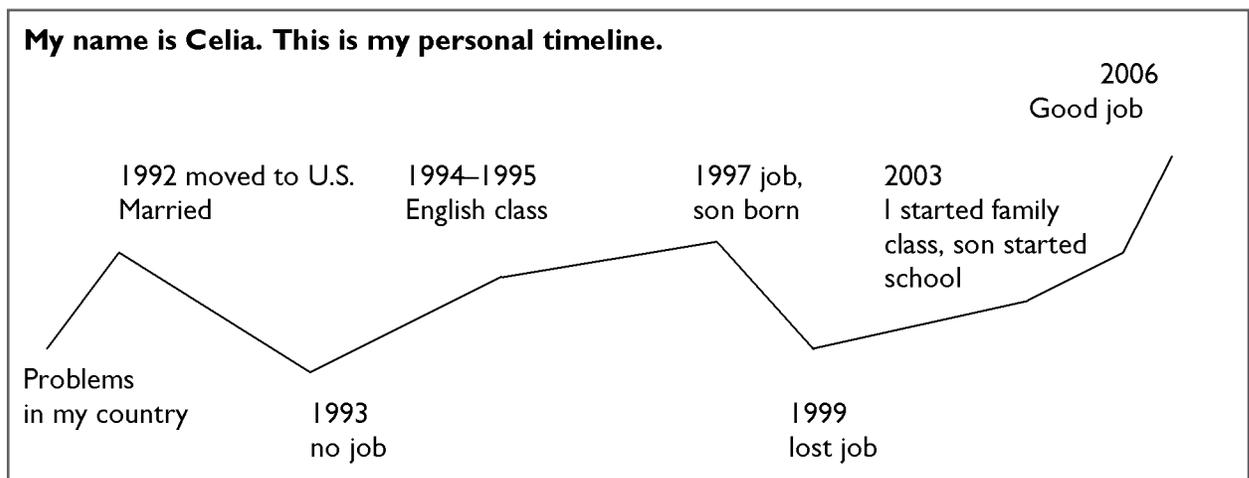
Description

With this kind of assessment, learners make written or pictorial timelines indicating major events in their lives (past and present). They also indicate future goals. Timelines help the teacher become more aware of learners' backgrounds. Class discussion should focus on the learners' goals and how the class can help them attain their goals.

Discussion Questions

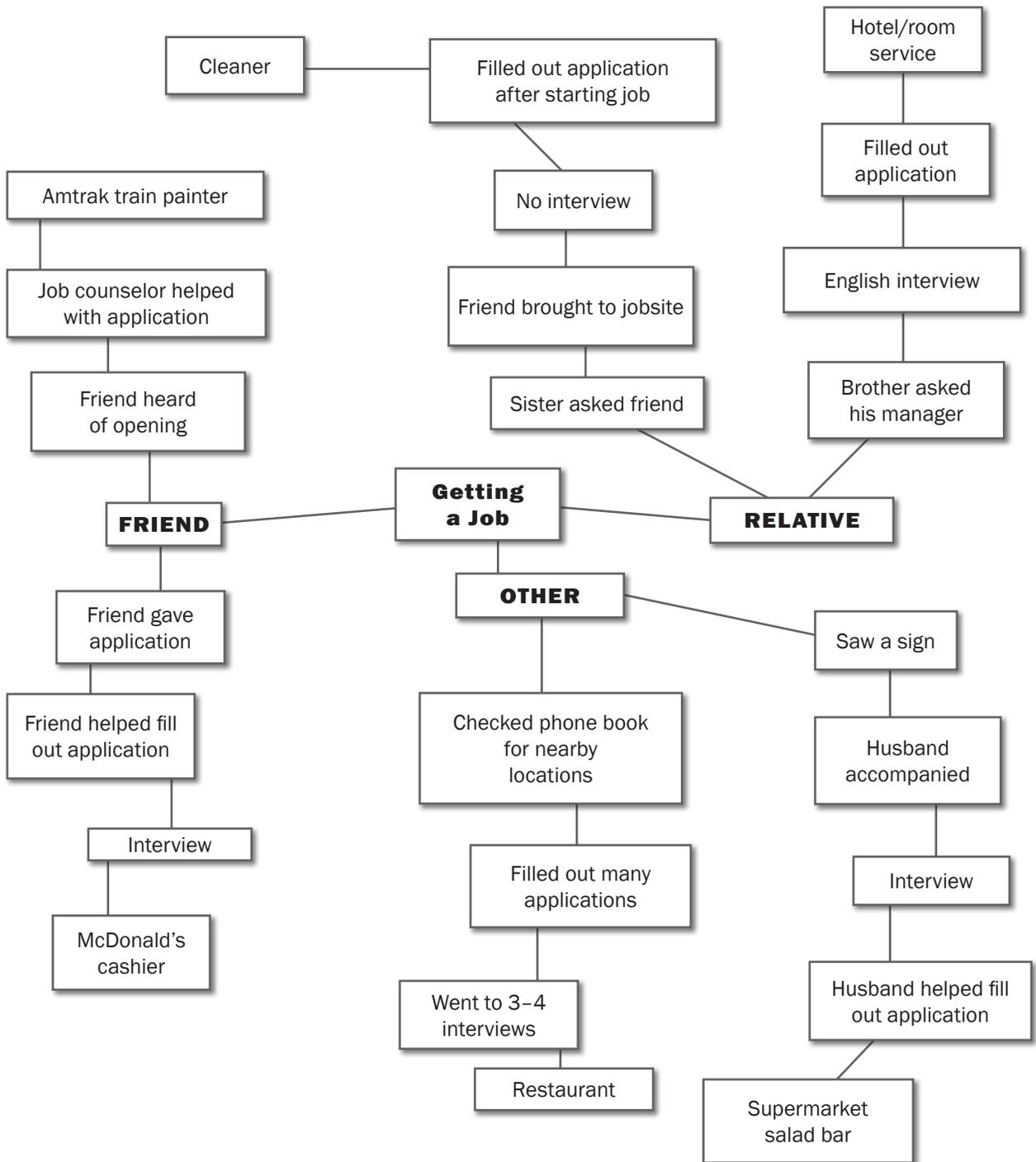
1. How might this type of needs assessment be useful in your class?
2. When would you use this type of needs assessment?
3. Why is it important to know about students' past experiences?

Figure 2. Sample Timeline



From Lynda Terrill, adult ESL teacher (Arlington Education Employment Program, Arlington, VA), 2004. Used with permission.

Figure 3. Sample Mind Mapping 1: Getting a Job



Note: From Grant, S., & Shank, C. (1992). *Discovering and responding to learner needs: Module for ESL teacher training*. Arlington, VA: Arlington Education Employment Program. Adapted with permission.

Figure 4. Sample Mind Mapping 2: Writing

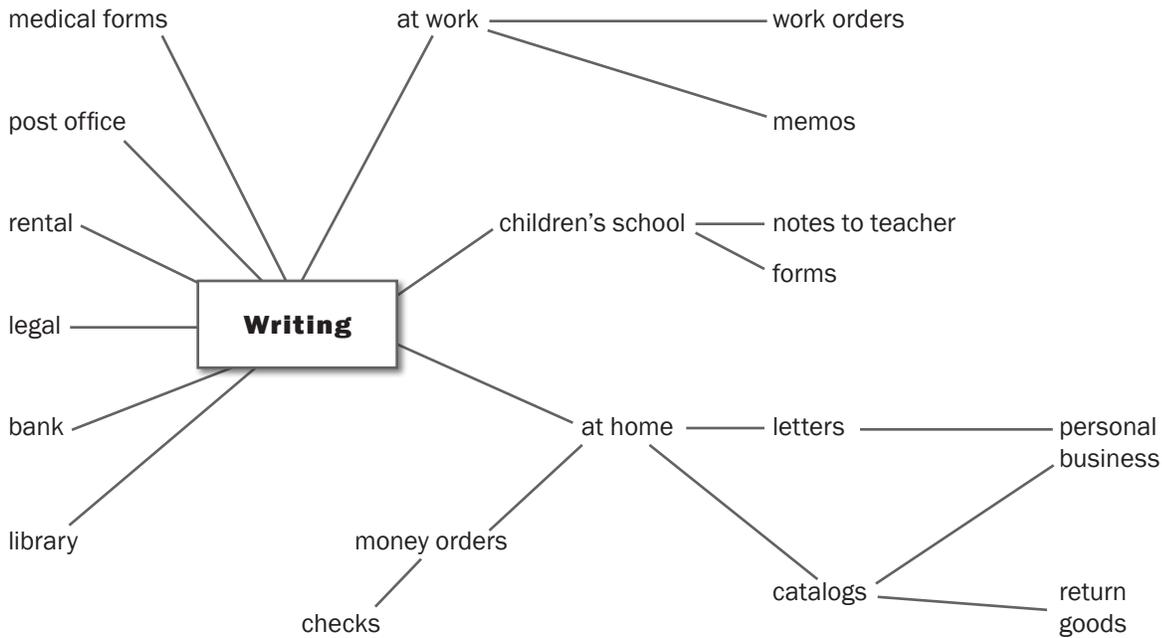
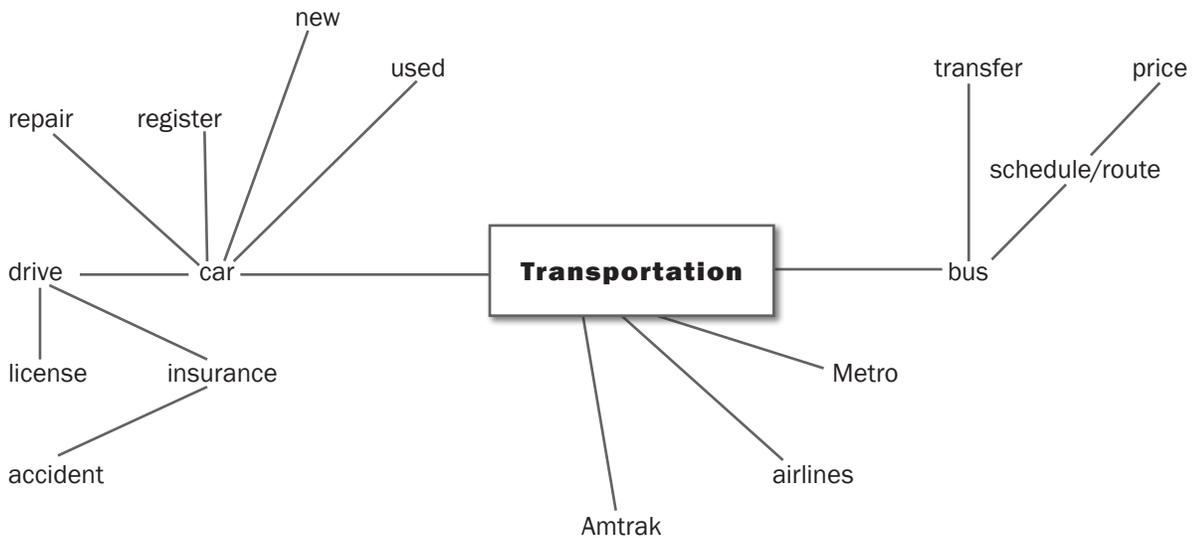


Figure 5. Sample Mind Mapping 3: Transportation



Note: From Grant S., & Shank, C. (1992). *Discovering and responding to learner needs: Module for ESL teacher training*. Arlington, VA: Arlington Education Employment Program. Adapted with permission.

Table 9. Needs Assessment Tools Chart

Tool	Description	Purpose	Analysis
Initial Assessment: Planning a Program or Curriculum			
Surveys	Surveys may consist of a written questionnaire or checklist that is completed by prospective program participants or administered orally by bilingual staff members in English or prospective participants' native language.	Survey results help create a general picture of the needs of adults who may be interested in the program.	Program planners can systematically examine respondents' answers to identify needs that should be targeted.
Focus groups	A focus group discussion is conducted with small groups according to a protocol that focuses on specific topics, procedures, and questions.	Focus group discussions help staff members gather information from a large number of people in a short time. Focus groups can help program planners understand the needs of potential program participants.	Program planners can systematically examine the participants' comments to identify trends or patterns that recur among different individuals or groups.
Interviews	Program staff can conduct individual interviews of existing service providers to obtain detailed information about setting up a program.	Interviews help determine what services already exist for learners and the relative effectiveness of those services.	Program planners can use interviews as an additional source of information about learners' needs and to understand the level of assistance available to meet those needs.
Document and literature reviews	Data can be gathered from school district records, including test scores, grades, and attendance records of participants' children; welfare department statistics on the socioeconomic status of participants; and journals, newsletters, books, and state and national reports that include information about the literacy-related needs of participants.	Document and literature reviews can provide useful information about the specific needs of targeted participants.	Program planners can examine the data to identify trends or patterns that recur among different individuals or groups.

Table 9. Needs Assessment Tools Chart (continued)

Tool	Description	Purpose	Analysis
Information grid	<p>Learners interview each other to complete the grid.</p> <p>Topics and headings for grids are generated by the teacher and/or the learners.</p>	<p>Grids provide initial, pretopic, midcourse, and final information about the learners and their experiences, needs, and preferences.</p> <p>Grids can be adapted for various levels by controlling language or using pictures for literacy-level learners.</p>	<p>Results can be tabulated orally or on a master grid on an overhead or blackboard.</p> <p>If appropriate to the grid, the group prioritizes skills and topics to be covered.</p>
Topic selection	<p>Learners are given a list or a collection of visuals indicating skills, topics, or subtopics, either specified by a curriculum or developed by brainstorming.</p>	<p>Topic selection provides initial, midcourse, or pretopic information about learners' highest priority needs with regard to competencies, skills, and topics.</p>	<p>Teacher and class become aware of high-priority needs. Together they negotiate the selection and ordering of the course content.</p>
1. Priority cards	<p>1. Individuals or small groups create cards, each containing one skill or topic. The cards are placed in order of importance.</p>		<p>1. Individuals or small groups report their top priorities and the class reaches a consensus.</p>
2. Vote with your feet	<p>2. Names or pictures of skills or topics are posted around the classroom, and individuals move to stand near the most important choice. Several rounds of voting may occur.</p>		<p>2. At each round of voting, teacher counts learners who chose a particular skill or topic. A class consensus is reached.</p>

Table 9. Needs Assessment Tools Chart (Continued)

Tool	Description	Purpose	Analysis
<p>Brainstorming</p> <p>1. Learner-generated list</p> <p>2. Mind mapping</p>	<p>1. Small or whole groups generate lists of how they use skills (e.g., Where do you speak/write English?).</p> <p>2. Beginning with a topical question at the center of a diagram, class brainstorms answers. Responses and more-detailed examples are added to the diagram and drawn as branches from the center.</p>	<p>1. Learner lists provide initial and ongoing information about how learners use basic skills.</p> <p>2. Mind mapping provides initial and pretopic information about how learners use basic skills and life skills in a variety of settings and how they would like to be able to use skills.</p>	<p>1. The list may be used to create a questionnaire that individuals complete. The questionnaires can be tallied orally as a group. Identified needs can be prioritized.</p> <p>2. A count is taken of how many learners agree with each identified need. Identified needs can be prioritized as a group.</p>
<p>Questionnaires of learners' needs and goals</p>	<p>Questionnaires frequently consist of a list of topics, skills, or language and literacy uses. The learners indicate what they already know or what they want to know by checking the appropriate column or box, or they may be asked to use a scale to rank the importance of each item.</p> <p>For beginning learners who do not read English, pictures depicting different literacy contexts can be shown, and learners can mark the contexts that apply to them.</p> <p>The list of questionnaire items may be prepared ahead of time by the teacher or generated by the students themselves through class discussion.</p>	<p>Questionnaires provide initial, pretopic information about how learners use language and would like to be able to use language.</p>	<p>Results can be tabulated orally or by small groups.</p> <p>Based on results, the group prioritizes skills and topics to be covered.</p>

Table 9. Needs Assessment Tools Chart (Continued)

Tool	Description	Purpose	Analysis
Timelines	Learners make written or pictorial timelines that indicate major events in their lives (past and present). They also indicate future goals.	Timelines provide initial information about learners' lives and their goals for the future. As a final evaluation, learners indicate progress toward their goals.	Information can be used to tailor the class toward helping learners achieve their goals. Teacher becomes more aware of learners' backgrounds. Class discussion should focus on the learners' goals and how the class can help them attain their goals.
Dialogue journals	Teachers and learners correspond on a regular basis via a written journal. Teacher can ask learners to respond to specific questions in their journals (e.g., What would you like to learn in this class? What did you like best about class this week? What do you still need to learn?). The activity can be adapted to varying levels by controlling the language of the questions and of the responses expected.	Dialogue journals provide initial, ongoing, and final information about learners' learning needs and preferences.	Teachers can respond to individual learners about their needs, goals, and preferences and adapt the course as appropriate.
Inventories of language and literacy use	Checklists may be used, as well as open-ended questions requiring learners to keep lists of ways they use language and literacy and update them periodically.	Inventories provide initial, ongoing, and final information about learners' needs and progress.	Teachers can use the information from the inventories to tailor their classes to the needs of their students.

Note: From Grant, S., & Shank, C. (1992). *Discovering and responding to learner needs. Module for ESL teacher training.* Arlington, VA: Arlington Education Employment Program. Adapted with permission.
Also from Holt, D. D., & Van Duzer, C. H. (Eds.). (2000). *Assessing success in family literacy and adult ESL.* Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Sample Intermediate Curriculum

Basic Language:

- ▶ Clarify by spelling or writing.
- ▶ Repeat instructions for verification.
- ▶ Ask about the meaning or pronunciation of a word.
- ▶ Ask and respond to “how” and “why” questions.

Community Services:

- ▶ Report an emergency outside of home.
- ▶ Answer questions about a child and fill out a simple school enrollment form.
- ▶ Read and respond appropriately to simple written communication from school.
- ▶ Respond appropriately to recorded messages and instructions from school.
- ▶ Ask about correct postage for mailing.
- ▶ Fill out a change-of-address form.
- ▶ Locate telephone numbers in a telephone book or yellow pages.

Consumer Economics:

- ▶ Write a check.
- ▶ Fill out a deposit/withdrawal slip.
- ▶ Use coin-operated machines and report problems in using them.
- ▶ Read unit price labels to compare products for value.
- ▶ State reasons for returning an item to a store.
- ▶ Respond to a cashier’s questions concerning means of payment.
- ▶ Interpret clothing-care labels.

Employment:

- ▶ Ask and answer questions at a job interview (qualifications, experience, preferences, long-term goals, benefits, etc.).
- ▶ Fill out a standard job application.
- ▶ Read want ads and identify skills needed for a job.
- ▶ Modify a task based on changes in instructions.
- ▶ Respond to a supervisor's comments about quality of work (including mistakes, speed, incomplete work).
- ▶ Initiate and respond to social language from co-workers.
- ▶ Report specific problems encountered in completing a work task.
- ▶ Read warnings, storage directions, and emergency instructions.
- ▶ Write a note to explain an absence from work.

Health:

- ▶ Identify common symptoms, illnesses, and health problems.
- ▶ Change or cancel a doctor's appointment.
- ▶ Make or change a doctor's appointment by telephone.
- ▶ Follow oral instructions during a medical exam or about treatment.
- ▶ Fill out a simple insurance form (with assistance).

Housing:

- ▶ Question errors on bills.
- ▶ Ask for information about location, rooms, rent, deposit, utilities.

Transportation and Directions:

- ▶ Identify major streets and landmarks on a map.
- ▶ Use a map to find a place.
- ▶ Give and follow simple oral or written directions to a place.

Note: From Grognet, A. G. (1997). *Performance-based curricula and outcomes: The mainstream English language training project*. Denver: Spring Institute for International Studies. Adapted with permission.

Table 10. Results: Can-Do List for Self-Assessment for Intermediate/Advanced Levels

Put a checkmark (✓) in the box that best describes you (one ✓ for each row).

Here's what I can do.	I can do this. No problem.	I do OK most of the time, except when things are complicated.	This is a little difficult for me, but I can do it with some help from others.	This is very difficult for me. I can only do it with a lot of help from others.	I can't do this. No way. It's much too difficult.
Clarify something I don't understand.	6	9	12	3	
Ask questions.	20	7	3		
Call for emergency help (police, ambulance, fire).		9	6	12	3
Communicate with my child's school.		9	15	5	1
Send something from the post office.	10	5	9	5	1
Find someone's telephone number in the telephone book.	3	10	8	7	2
Use services at a bank.	1	5	17	5	2
Shop for food and clothes.	17	11	1	1	
Apply for a job.	1		9	18	2
Communicate with my supervisor about my work.	6	2	10	10	2
Talk to my co-workers.	15	3	10	2	
Make a doctor's appointment.	3	17	5	3	2
Talk to my doctor.	2	11	8	7	2
Fill out an insurance form.	2	7	8	10	3
Figure out my phone bill or electricity bill.	13	5	12		
Talk to a landlord about apartments and rent.	4	8	16	1	1
Use a map to find places.	10	10	6	3	1
Give directions to help someone find a place.	2	5	11	11	1

Results: Can-Do Self-Assessment: Guiding Questions for Trainers

Show the above transparency on an overhead projector or on a PowerPoint slide. Explain that it represents the results of a needs assessment that an intermediate ESL instructor conducted in her classroom at the beginning of a 10-week session. She based the topics in the “Here’s what I can do” column on the topics in the intermediate curriculum used in her program. With participants, conduct an analysis of the results of the needs assessment activity.

Ask:

“For which topics did a lot of students check ‘This is a little difficult for me, but I can do it with some help from others’?” (Clarify something I don’t understand, Communicate with my child’s school, Use services at a bank, Communicate with my supervisor about my work, Talk to my co-workers, Figure out my phone bill or electricity bill, Talk to a landlord about apartments and rent, Give directions to help someone find a place)

“For which topics did a lot of students check ‘This is very difficult for me. I can only do it with a lot of help from others’?” (Call for emergency help, Apply for a job, Communicate with my supervisor about my work, Fill out an insurance form, Give directions to help someone find a place)

As participants answer the above questions, circle the numbers under the “little difficult” and “very difficult” columns for the topics that have high numbers.

“If this were your class, what topics would you give primary focus in your class?” (Possible answers: employment, banking, housing, health and emergencies, school, directions)

“What topics might be of secondary importance?” (Possible answers: directions, post office, telephone)

Syllabus: Intermediate ESL

(10-week session, class meets two nights a week)

Weeks 1 and 2

Employment

- ▶ Read want ads and identify skills needed for a job.
- ▶ Ask and answer questions at a job interview (qualifications, experience, preferences, long-term goals, benefits, etc.).
- ▶ Fill out a standard job application.
- ▶ Respond to a supervisor's comments about quality of work (including mistakes, speed, incomplete work).
- ▶ Modify tasks based on changes in instructions.
- ▶ Report specific problems encountered in completing a work task.
- ▶ Write a note to explain absence from work.

Weeks 3 and 4

Banking

- ▶ Write a check.
- ▶ Fill out a deposit/withdrawal slip.

Housing

- ▶ Ask for information about location, rooms, rent, deposit, utilities.

Weeks 5 and 6

Health and Emergencies

- ▶ Identify common symptoms, illnesses, and health problems.
- ▶ Follow oral instructions during a medical exam or about treatment.
- ▶ Fill out a simple insurance form (with assistance).
- ▶ Report an emergency outside of the home.

Weeks 7 and 8

School

- ▶ Answer questions about a child and fill out a simple school enrollment form.
- ▶ Read and respond appropriately to simple written communication from school.
- ▶ Respond appropriately to recorded messages and instructions from school.

Weeks 9 and 10

Directions

- ▶ Give and follow simple oral or written directions to a place.

Community Services

- ▶ Ask about correct postage for mailing.
- ▶ Fill out a change-of-address form.
- ▶ Locate telephone numbers in a telephone book or the yellow pages.

Selecting Needs Assessment Tools: Scenarios

Directions: Select an appropriate tool from the Needs Assessment Tools Chart, or suggest a tool not listed on the chart. Discuss why you chose that particular tool, how you would set up the activity, and what you would hope to learn from the activity.

Example: It is the first week of a beginning-level class in a General Life Skills English program. Your students have some oral proficiency but very limited literacy skills. You would like to elicit information about their lives and their goals for the future.

(Possible answers: picture timelines, picture questionnaires. Use pictures because of the limited literacy skills of the students. Timelines are a good way to depict students' lives and future goals, and questionnaires might be a good way to determine students' future goals. One possible way to set up the activity would be to do a timeline using the teacher's life as an example.)

Scenario 1: You teach an intermediate class that has a set competency-based curriculum to follow. At midcourse, you realize that you will not be able to complete all of the competencies. You want the students to prioritize the remaining topics.

Scenario 2: It is the first week of a beginning-level class in a General Life Skills English program. Your students have some oral proficiency but very limited literacy skills. You would like to elicit information about places they want to be able to use English.

Scenario 3: You teach a beginning-level class in a General Life Skills English program. You are just about to start a unit on health. You would like to elicit information about students' health-care habits (e.g., eating habits, health insurance).

Scenario 4: You teach an intermediate-level Workplace Literacy class. The learners have expressed an interest in working on writing. You would like to know what specific tasks require writing in their jobs.

Scenario 5: You are part of a team that is developing a curriculum for a new family literacy program. You want to collect information from potential program participants about their need for family literacy classes. The family literacy classes will serve parents of students at three local elementary schools.

Note: From Grant, S., & Shank, C. (1992). *Discovering and responding to learner needs: Module for ESL teacher training*. Arlington, VA: Arlington Education Employment Program. Adapted with permission.

Analyzing Needs Assessment Results

Figure 6. Example (Mind Mapping)

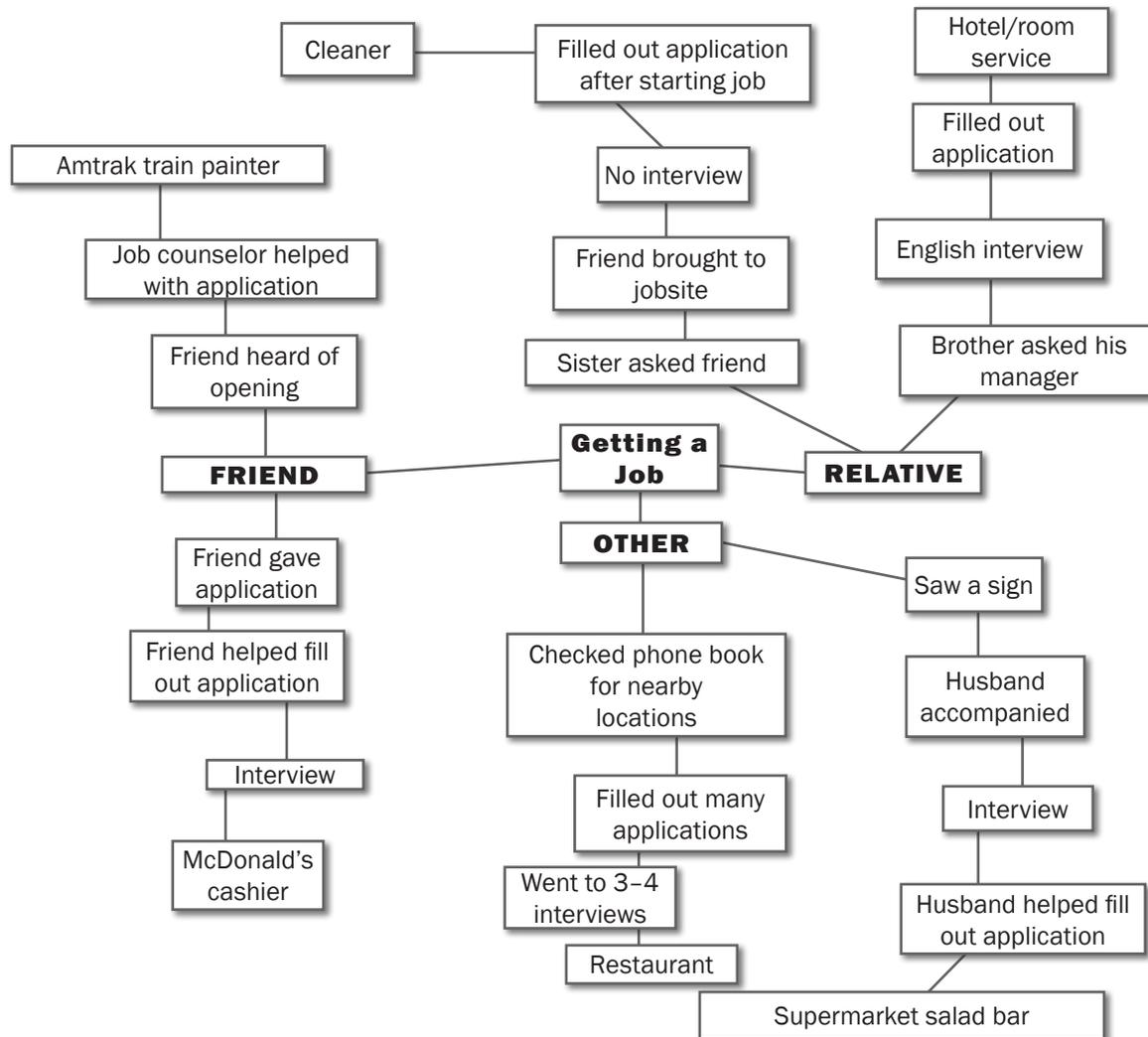


Table 11. Analyzing Results

Information to be tallied/analyzed	Results	Instructional needs
1. How many learners used newspaper ads to find out about the jobs?	0 out of 6	Need to work on reading job announcements
2. How many learners filled out a job application?		
3. How many learners had an interview?		
4. How many learners got their jobs unassisted by a friend, relative, or counselor?		

Note: From Grant, S., & Shank, C. (1992). *Discovering and responding to learner needs: Module for ESL teacher training*. Arlington, VA: Arlington Education Employment Program. Adapted with permission.

Instructions for Trainers: Show the above transparency on an overhead projector or a Power-Point slide. The example represents a pretopic needs assessment activity that was conducted at the beginning of a unit on employment. Each branch of the web represents one student and his/her personal experience getting a job. Six students are represented. Two got their jobs through a friend, two through a relative, and two through other means (phone book and sign).

Explain the example to participants and then go through the questions at the bottom of the page together. Question 1 has been answered already on the participant handouts. Elicit the answers to the remaining questions and write them on the transparency or flip chart.

Answers:

Table 12. Tally Chart Answers

Information to be tallied/ analyzed	Results	Instructional needs
2. How many learners filled out a job application?	3 alone, 3 with help	Need to increase ease/confidence in filling out job applications
3. How many learners had an interview?	4 out of 6	Review interview questions, polish answers
4. How many learners got their jobs unassisted by a friend, relative, or counselor?	1 out of 6	Need to expand strategies for getting jobs

Analyzing Needs Assessment Results

Table 13. Questionnaire for Intermediate/Advanced-Level Class with 10 Students

1. Why do you need to learn more English? Please be specific. Give examples of situations that are difficult for you in English.

To get a better job (6)	To help my children with school (3)
To talk to Americans (2)	To get my GED (4)

2. What specific areas of English would you like to improve before you leave this class?

Reading (5)	Speaking (7)	Writing (6)
Listening (4)	Spelling (4)	

3. When people speak English to you, how much do you understand? Check the amount.

 everything 2 most 7 some 1 a little very little

4. When you watch TV, how much do you understand? Check the amount.

 everything 1 most 7 some 2 a little very little

5. When you speak English, how much do other people understand?

 1 everything 3 most 5 some 1 a little very little

6. Order the skills that you need from 1 to 6. Number 1 is the most important and number 6 is the least important to you at this time. Please use each number only one time.

 Reading (1: 1 student, 2: 1 student, 3: 3 students, 4: 2 students, 5: 2 students, 6: 1 student)

 Writing (1: 2 students, 2: 2 students, 3: 2 students, 4: 3 students, 5: 1 student, 6: none)

 Listening (1: 2 students, 2: 1 student, 3: 1 student, 4: 2 students, 5: 2 students, 6: 2 students)

 Speaking (1: 2 students, 2: 3 students, 3: 2 students, 4: 1 student, 5: 1 student, 6: 1 student)

 Vocabulary (1: none, 2: none, 3: 1 student, 4: 2 students, 5: 2 students, 6: 5 students)

 Pronunciation (1: 2 students, 2: 3 students, 3: 1 student, 4: none, 5: 3 students, 6: 1 student)

Note: From Moss, D. (1994). *Alternative assessment: A fork in the road*. Presented at TESOL Adapted with permission.

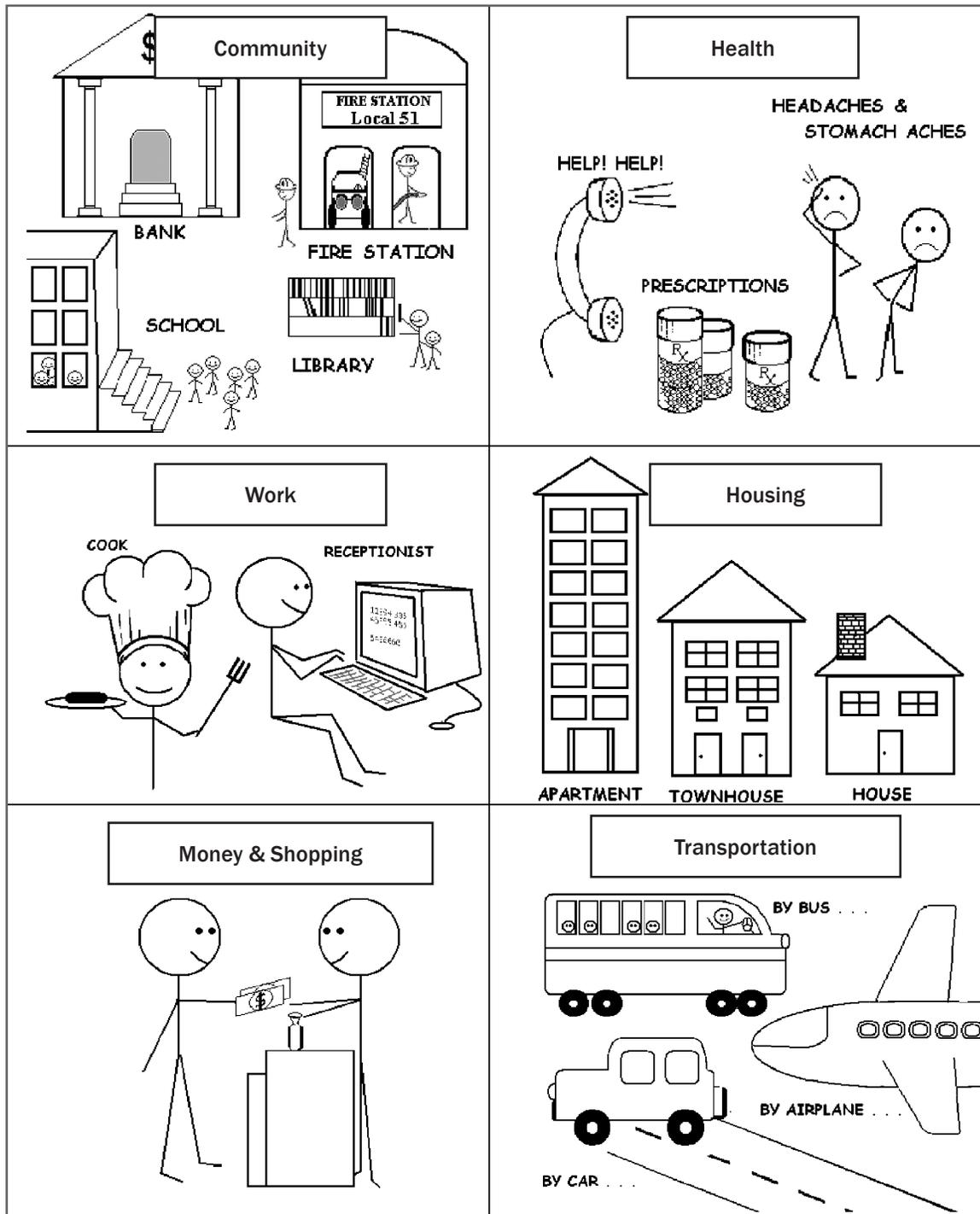
Table 14. Analyzing Results

Information to be tallied/ analyzed	Results	Instructional needs
1. What are the main reasons students in this class are taking English?		
2. How many students understand everything or most of what they hear in person? On TV?		
3. How many students say that people understand everything or most of what they say in English?		
4. Which skill do students rank as being most important to them?		

Analyzing Needs Assessment Results

Figure 7. Questionnaire for Beginning Level-Class with 15 Students

What do you want to study? Circle three topics.



Note: Adapted from National Center for Family Literacy & Center for Applied Linguistics. (2004). *Practitioner toolkit: Working with adult English language learners*. Louisville, KY & Washington, DC: Author.

Table 15. Analyzing Results

Information to be tallied/ analyzed	Results	Instructional needs
1. Which topic was circled by the most students?		
2. What other topics should be prioritized in this class?		
3. Which topic was circled by the fewest students?		

Analyzing Needs Assessment Results

Table 16. Questionnaire for Beginning/Intermediate Class with 20 Students

What do you already know how to read in English?

What do you want to learn to read? (Check ✓)

	Already know how to read	Want to learn how to read
Newspapers/magazines	5	15
GED textbooks	1	10
Job ads	2	18
Job applications	4	16
Signs at work	10	5
Checks from work	9	9
Housing ads	5	13
Notes from school	5	10
Children's books	1	14
Income tax forms	3	17
Bank statements	12	8
Bus and train schedules	15	5
Dictionaries	3	12
Labels on food	15	1
Labels in clothes	20	0
Medicine labels	3	16
Telephone/utility bills	16	4
Other		

Table 17. Analyzing Results

Information to be tallied/ analyzed	Results	Instructional needs
1. Which topics are the most students interested in learning more about?		
2. Which topics are students already familiar with or uninterested in?		

Analyzing Needs Assessment Results

Table 18. Language Use Inventory for Beginning-Level Class with Six Students

Write YOUR answers below.

	Who did you speak to?	What did you say?	Was it easy? Difficult?
At home?	Husband, daughter, son, wife, cousin, aunt		Easy
At work?	Boss – 3 Co-workers – 3 Customers – 2	About work Work Take orders – 1, Help find things – 1	Easy: 2, Difficult: 1 Easy Difficult Difficult
At the store?	Cashier	To buy something	Easy
Another place?	Bank – 1 Son's school – 1 Post office – 1	Cash a check Son is sick Send a package	Difficult Difficult Easy

Table 19. Language Use Inventory for Beginning-Level Class with Six Students

Analyzing Needs Assessment Results

Now write your PARTNER'S answers.

	Who did you speak to?	What did you say?	Was it easy? Difficult?
At home?			
At work?			
At the store?			
Another place?			

Note: From Moss, D. (1994). *Alternative assessment: A fork in the road*. Presented at TESOL Adapted with permission.

Table 20. Analyzing Results

Information to be tallied/ analyzed	Results	Instructional needs
1. What kinds of people are students speaking to in English?		
2. Who do students find it easy to talk to? Difficult?		
3. What topics are students talking about in English?		
4. What topics are easy for them to talk about? Difficult?		

Analyzing Needs Assessment Results

Figure 8. Mind Mapping

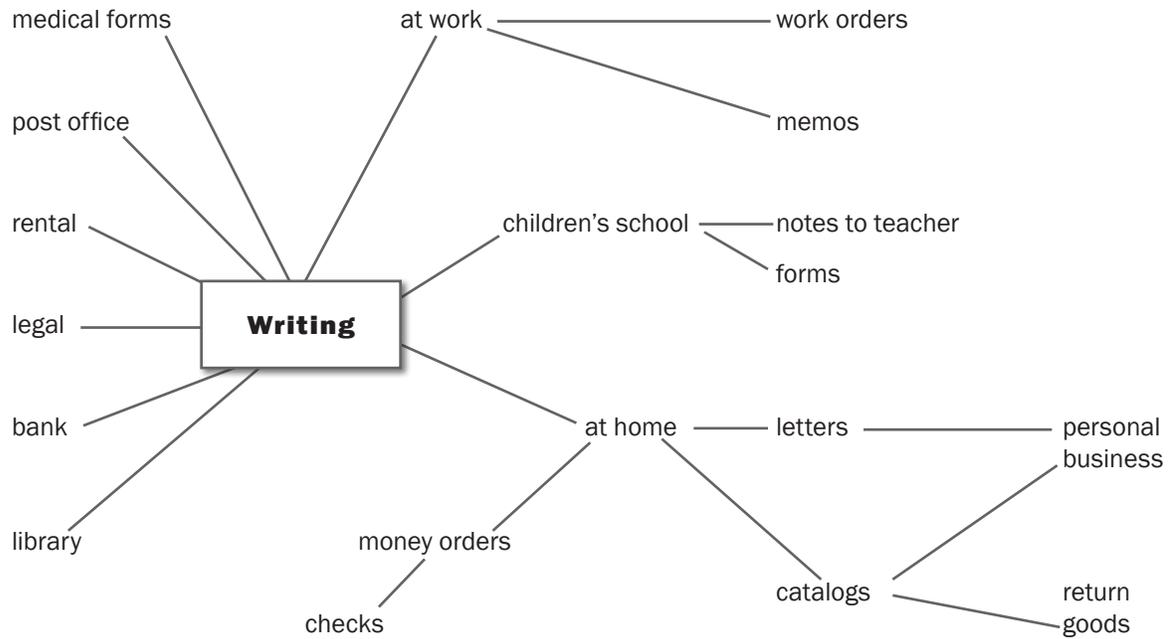


Table 21. Analyzing Results

Information to be tallied/ analyzed	Results	Instructional needs
1. Where do students need to write in English?		
2. What type of writing do students need to do?		

Note: From Grant, S., & Shank, C. (1992). *Discovering and responding to learner needs: Module for ESL teacher training*. Arlington, VA: Arlington Education Employment Program. Adapted with permission.

Needs Assessment Planning Sheet

Level of class: _____

Curriculum in use: _____

Length of session: _____

Purpose of needs assessment: _____

Type of needs assessment: _____

How will you incorporate the needs assessment activity into your class?

How will you analyze the results of your needs assessment activity?

What will you do with the results?

Assessing Learner Needs in the Adult ESL Classroom

Goal, Objectives, and Agenda

Goal:

To establish the purpose of needs assessment and activate participants' prior knowledge about needs assessment in ESL classrooms

Objectives:

At the end of the workshop, participants should be able to

- ▶ Identify the uses of needs assessment
- ▶ Select appropriate tools for the level of their class and the purpose of the needs assessment
- ▶ Analyze needs assessment results to determine class content and instructional needs
- ▶ Develop needs assessments for their own class

Agenda:

- I. **Introductions and Warm-Up**
- II. **Presentation:** Purposes and types of needs assessment
- III. **Practice:** Developing and interpreting needs assessment activities
- IV. **Application:** Planning needs assessment
- V. **Wrap-Up and Evaluation**

Needs Assessment for Adult ESL Learners

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May 1997

Assessment of literacy needs from the learner's perspective is an important part of an instructional program. Learners come to adult English as a second language (ESL) literacy programs for diverse reasons. Although they may say they just want to "learn English," they frequently have very specific learning goals and needs: for example, to be able to read to their children, to get a job, or to become a citizen. If their needs are not met, they are more likely to drop out than to voice their dissatisfaction (Grant & Shank, 1993). The needs assessment process can be used as the basis for developing curricula and classroom practice that are responsive to these needs.

Although learner needs assessment encompasses both what learners know and can do (learner proficiencies) and what they want to learn and be able to do, this digest focuses on ways to determine what learners want or believe they need to learn. Many of the activities described can also include or lead to assessment of proficiencies, and many of the sources cited include both types of assessment. (See Burt & Keenan, 1995, for a discussion of assessment of what learners know.)

What Is Needs Assessment?

The word "assess" comes from the Latin term "assidere," which means to "sit beside." Process-minded and participatory-oriented adult educators "sit beside" learners to learn about their proficiencies and backgrounds, educational goals, and expected outcomes, immersing themselves in the lives and views of their students (Auerbach, 1994).

A needs assessment for use with adult learners of English is a tool that examines, from the perspective of the learner, what kinds of English, native language, and literacy skills the learner already believes he or she has; the literacy contexts in which the learner lives and works; what the learner wants and needs to know to function in those contexts; what the learner expects to gain from the instructional program; and what might need to be done in the native language or with the aid of an interpreter. The needs assessment focuses and builds on learners' accomplishments and abilities rather than on deficits, allowing learners to articulate and display what they already know and can do (Auerbach, 1994; Holt, 1994).

Needs assessment is a continual process and takes place throughout the instructional program (Burnaby, 1989; Savage, 1993), thus influencing student placement, materials selection, curriculum design, and teaching approaches (Wrigley & Guth, 1992). As Burnaby (1989) noted, "The curriculum content and learning experiences to take place in class should be negotiated between learners, teacher, and coordinator at the beginning of the project and renegotiated regularly during the project" (p. 20). At the beginning of the program, needs assessment might be used to determine appropriate program types and course content; during the program, it assures that learner and program goals are being met and allows for necessary program changes; at the end of the program, it can be used for assessing progress and planning future directions for the learners and the program.

Why Is Needs Assessment Important?

A needs assessment serves a number of purposes:

- ▶ It aids administrators, teachers, and tutors with learner placement and in developing materials, curricula, skills assessments, teaching approaches, and teacher training.
- ▶ It assures a flexible, responsive curriculum rather than a fixed, linear curriculum determined ahead of time by instructors.
- ▶ It provides information to the instructor and learner about what the learner brings to the course (if done at the beginning), what has been accomplished (if done during the course), and what the learner wants and needs to know next.

Factors that contribute to learner attrition in adult literacy programs include inappropriate placement and instructional materials and approaches that are not relevant to learners' needs and lives (Brod, 1995). When learners know that educators understand and want to address their needs and interests, they are motivated to continue in a program and to learn.

Assessment Tools

Needs assessments with ESL learners, as well as with those in adult basic education programs, can take a variety of forms, including survey questionnaires on which learners check areas of interest or need, open-ended interviews, or informal observations of performance. In order for needs assessment to be effective, tools and activities should be appropriate for the particular learner or groups of learners. For example, reading texts in English might be translated into the learners' native languages, read aloud by the teacher or an aide (in English or the native language), or represented pictorially. Types of needs assessment tools and activities include:

Survey questionnaires. Many types of questionnaires have been designed to determine learners' literacy needs. Frequently they consist of a list of topics, skills, or language and literacy uses. The learners indicate what they already know or want to know by checking in the appropriate column or box, or they may be asked to use a scale to rank the importance of each item. For beginning learners who do not read English, pictures depicting different literacy contexts (such as using a telephone, buying groceries, driving a car, and using transportation) can be shown, and learners can mark the contexts that apply to them. For example, using transportation could be represented by pictures of a bus, a subway, and a taxi. The list of questionnaire items can be prepared ahead of time by the teacher or generated by the students themselves through class discussion.

Learner-compiled inventories of language and literacy use. A more open-ended way to get the same information that surveys offer is to have learners keep lists of ways they use language and literacy and to update them periodically (McGrail & Schwartz, 1993).

Learner interviews. Interviews with learners, either one-on-one or in small groups, in their native language or in English, can provide valuable information about what learners know, what their interests are, and the ways they use or hope to use literacy.

Review of reading materials. An instructor can spread out a range of reading materials on the table (e.g., newspapers, magazines, children’s books, comics, and greeting cards, and ask learners which they would like to read and whether they would like to work in class on any of them. A similar activity can be done with different types of writing.

Class discussions. Showing pictures of adults in various contexts, the teacher can ask, “What literacy skills does this person want to develop?” and have learners generate a list. The teacher then asks, “Why do you want to develop literacy skills?” Learners might be more willing to express their desires if they move from the impersonal to the personal in this way (Auerbach, 1994).

Personal or dialogue journals. Learners’ journals—where they write freely about their activities, experiences, and plans—can be a rich source of information about their literacy needs (Peyton, 1993).

Timelines. Learners can prepare their own personal timelines, in writing or pictorially, that indicate major events in their lives as well as future goals. Discussion can then focus on how progress towards those goals can be met through the class (Santopietro, 1991).

Needs Assessment in One Adult Esl Program

The Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP) in Arlington, Virginia periodically conducts a program-wide needs assessment to determine the interests and goals of ESL learners in the community. The director and program coordinators collaborate with community agencies, schools, and employers to identify ways in which the REEP program can prepare learners for the economic, civic, and family opportunities available in the community. This information is then used for program planning purposes, such as developing courses, curricula, and materials, and preparing needs assessment tools. Learner interviews and a placement test assessing general language proficiency are used to place learners in an instructional level. Once they are in the classroom, learners participate in a continual needs assessment process to plan what they want to learn and how they want to learn it.

In-class needs assessment is most successful when learners understand its purpose and are comfortable with each other. Because of this, the first curriculum unit in every new class is called “Getting Started” (Arlington Education and Employment Program, 1994). It enables learners to get to know one another through the needs assessment process as they acknowledge shared concerns and begin to build a community in the classroom (Van Duzer, 1995). For several days, some class time may be spent discussing where they use English, what they do with it, what problems they have encountered, and why they feel they need to improve their language skills and knowledge. Through this process, both the learners and the teacher become aware of the goals and needs represented in the class. A variety of level-appropriate techniques, like those mentioned above, are used to come to a consensus on the class instructional plan and to develop individual learning plans. Learners select from both program-established curricular units and from their identified needs. The needs assessment process serves as both a learning and information-gathering process as learners use critical thinking, negotiation, and problem-solving skills to reach this plan.

Once the class instructional plan is selected, ways are discussed to meet individual learner needs apart from the whole class such as through small in-class focus groups, working with a volunteer, time in the program's computer learning lab, assistance obtaining self-study materials, or referral to other programs. The class plan is revisited each time a unit is completed to remind the learners where they have been and where they are going and to enable the teacher to make changes or adjustments to content or instruction as new needs are uncovered.

Conclusion

Needs assessment can take many forms and can be carried out at different times during the instructional process. Whatever the focus and format, the basic purpose is to determine what learners want and need to learn. When curriculum content, materials, and teaching approaches match learners' perceived and actual needs, learner motivation and success are enhanced.

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Assessing Learner Needs in the Adult ESL Classroom

Discussion Questions

1. What Is Needs Assessment?

What should a needs assessment tool examine?

When does needs assessment occur and what aspects of instruction does it influence?

2. Why Is Needs Assessment Important?

What purposes does it serve?

How can it contribute to learner motivation?

3. Assessment Tools

List the types of needs assessment tools and activities and briefly describe each.

4. Needs Assessment in One Adult ESL Program

What three types of needs assessment does this program do?

How is needs assessment used in the individual classroom?

Sample focus group questions for a new family literacy program

For potential participants:

- ▶ Why do you want to study English?
- ▶ What do you need to read in English?
- ▶ Where do you need to speak English?
- ▶ Who do you need to speak English to?
- ▶ How often do you read with your child? (How often do you tell him/her a story; teach him/her letters, words, numbers; teach him/her songs or music; talk with him/her about family history, family culture, or ethnic heritage?)
- ▶ How often do you visit your child's school (to talk to your child's teacher or principal; to observe classroom activities; to attend a school event such as a play, art show, or party; to meet with a parent-teacher organization; to volunteer; for other reasons)?
- ▶ What are good times to offer English classes?

For school representatives:

- ▶ What languages do parents speak in your district?
- ▶ What challenges do you face communicating with the non-English-speaking parents in your district?
- ▶ What systems does the school/school district have in place to facilitate non-English-speaking parents' involvement in school activities?
- ▶ How might the school/school district be able to support a family literacy program (offer space, host events, involve the children's teachers, etc.)?

Sample Questionnaire 1

Figure 1. Questionnaire for Beginning-Level Learners

What do you want to study? Circle three topics.

<p style="text-align: center;">Community</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Health</p> <p style="text-align: right;">HEADACHES & STOMACH ACHES</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Work</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Housing</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Money & Shopping</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Transportation</p>

Note: Adapted from National Center for Family Literacy & Center for Applied Linguistics. (2004). *Practitioner toolkit: Working with adult English language learners*. Louisville, KY & Washington, DC: Author.

Sample Questionnaire 2

Table 1. Questionnaire for Beginning/Intermediate-Level Learners

Name _____ Date _____

What do you already know how to read in English?

What do you want to learn to read? (Check ✓)

	Already know how to read	Want to learn how to read
Newspapers/magazines		
GED textbooks		
Job ads		
Job applications		
Signs at work		
Checks from work		
Housing ads		
Notes from school		
Children's books		
Income tax forms		
Bank statements		
Bus and train schedules		
Dictionaries		
Labels on food		
Labels in clothes		
Medicine labels		
Telephone/utility bills		
Other		
Other		

Sample Questionnaire 3

Table 2. Questionnaire for Intermediate-Level Learners: Family Activities

Purpose: To identify literacy practices in the home, record parent-child interactions, and provide a baseline for documenting changes over time.

Process: As part of either a whole-group or a small-group discussion, have learners discuss activities they currently do with their children. Give the learners the following prompt: “Parents and children can do many things together. They go to the park on Sunday, go fishing, cook, clean the house, go hiking, watch TV, work in the garden, or look at magazines. In many families, parents help their children with homework or check their assignments. What do you do with members of your family?” Record their responses on the lines below.

Luisa and her husband go to church together on Sundays.

Then they watch their son Marcos play soccer.

Note: From Holt, D. D., & Van Duzer, C. H. (Eds.). (2000). *Assessing success in family literacy and adult ESL* (p. 83). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics. Adapted with permission.

Sample Inventory 1

Table 4. Language Log for Beginning-Level Learners

Name _____ Date _____
Where did you speak English this week? _____ _____ _____
Who did you speak English to? _____ _____ _____
What did you read in English this week? _____ _____ _____
What did you need to study this week? _____ _____ _____
This week, _____ was difficult in class.
This week, _____ was easy in class.

Note: From Moss, D. (1994). *Alternative assessment: A fork in the road*. Presented at TESOL. Adapted with permission.

Sample Inventory 2

Table 5. Family Events Log for Beginning-Level Learners

Sample 2: Beginning-Level Family Events Log

Process: Ask the learners to record the activities they do with their children each week. Then have them discuss this record with a partner. At key points in the class cycle, meet with learners to compare their list with their planned activities. Then discuss the plan again and renegotiate, if appropriate.

Name _____	Week of _____

This week I...	

<i>helped my son with his math.</i>	

Note: From Holt, D. D., & Van Duzer, C. H. (Eds.). (2000). *Assessing success in family literacy and adult ESL* (p. 87). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Sample Inventory 3

Table 6. Beginning-Level Language Use Inventory

Process: Give the forms on the next two pages to the students. Display this handout on an overhead transparency or PowerPoint slide. As a large group activity, go over the handout, offering suggestions and asking for examples from the students. Have students work on their handout individually, then have them form pairs and interview each other using the second form.

Write YOUR answers below.

	Who did you speak to?	What did you say?	Was it easy? Difficult?
At home?			
At work?			
At the store?			
Another place?			

Table 7. Beginning-Level Language Use Inventory (Part 2)

Now Write your PARTNER'S answers.

	Who did you speak to?	What did you say?	Was it easy? Difficult?
At home?			
At work?			
At the store?			
Another place?			

Note: From Moss, D. (1994). *Alternative assessment: A fork in the road*. Presented at TESOL. Adapted with permission.

Sample Inventory 4

Table 8. Can-Do List for Self-Assessment for Intermediate to Advanced Levels

Name _____ Date _____

Put a checkmark (✓) in the box that best describes you (one ✓ for each row).

Here's what I can do.	I can do this. No problem.	I do OK most of the time, except when things are complicated.	This is a little difficult for me, but I can do it with some help from others.	This is very difficult for me. I can only do it with a lot of help from others.	I can't do this. No way. It's much too difficult.
Talk about my country and my city with a friend or neighbor					
Ask for directions on the street or ask where something is in a store					
Ask someone to speak more slowly or to say things in a different way					
Fill out a form (name, birth date, address, phone)					
Explain about myself and my work in a job interview					
Understand the notes that my child's teacher sends from school					
Figure out my phone bill or electricity bill					
Explain to the doctor in detail what's wrong with me					
Pick a story in the newspaper and read it					
Understand the news on TV					

Note: Adapted from Holt, D. D., & Van Duzer, C. H. (Eds.). (2000). *Assessing Success in family literacy and adult ESL* (p. 95). McHenry, IL & Washington, DC: Delta Systems & Center for Applied Linguistics.

Types of Needs Assessment

Type 4: Timelines

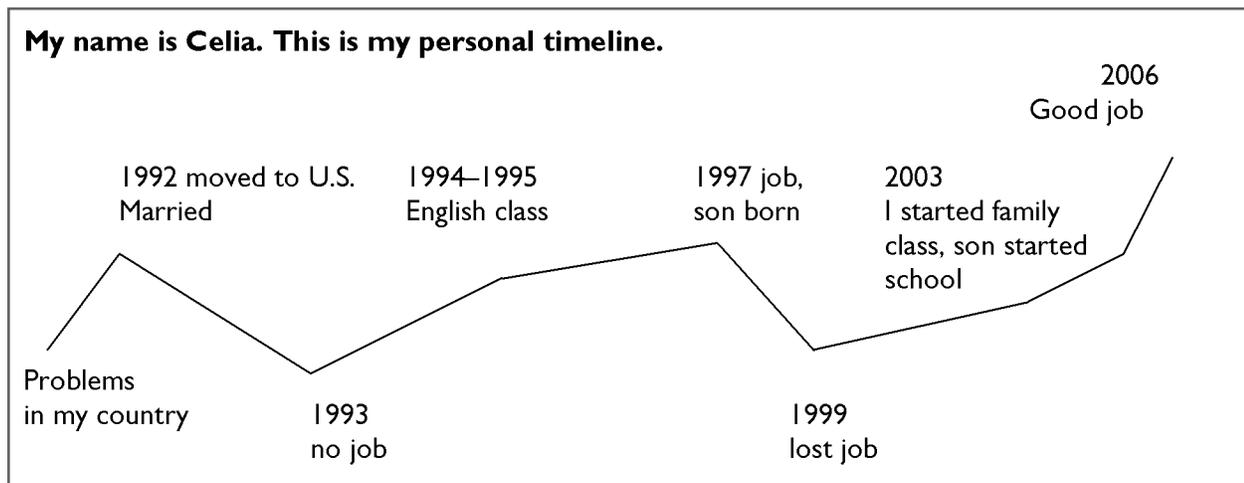
Description

With this kind of assessment, learners make written or pictorial timelines indicating major events in their lives (past and present). They also indicate future goals. Timelines help the teacher become more aware of learners' backgrounds. Class discussion should focus on the learners' goals and how the class can help them attain their goals.

Discussion Questions

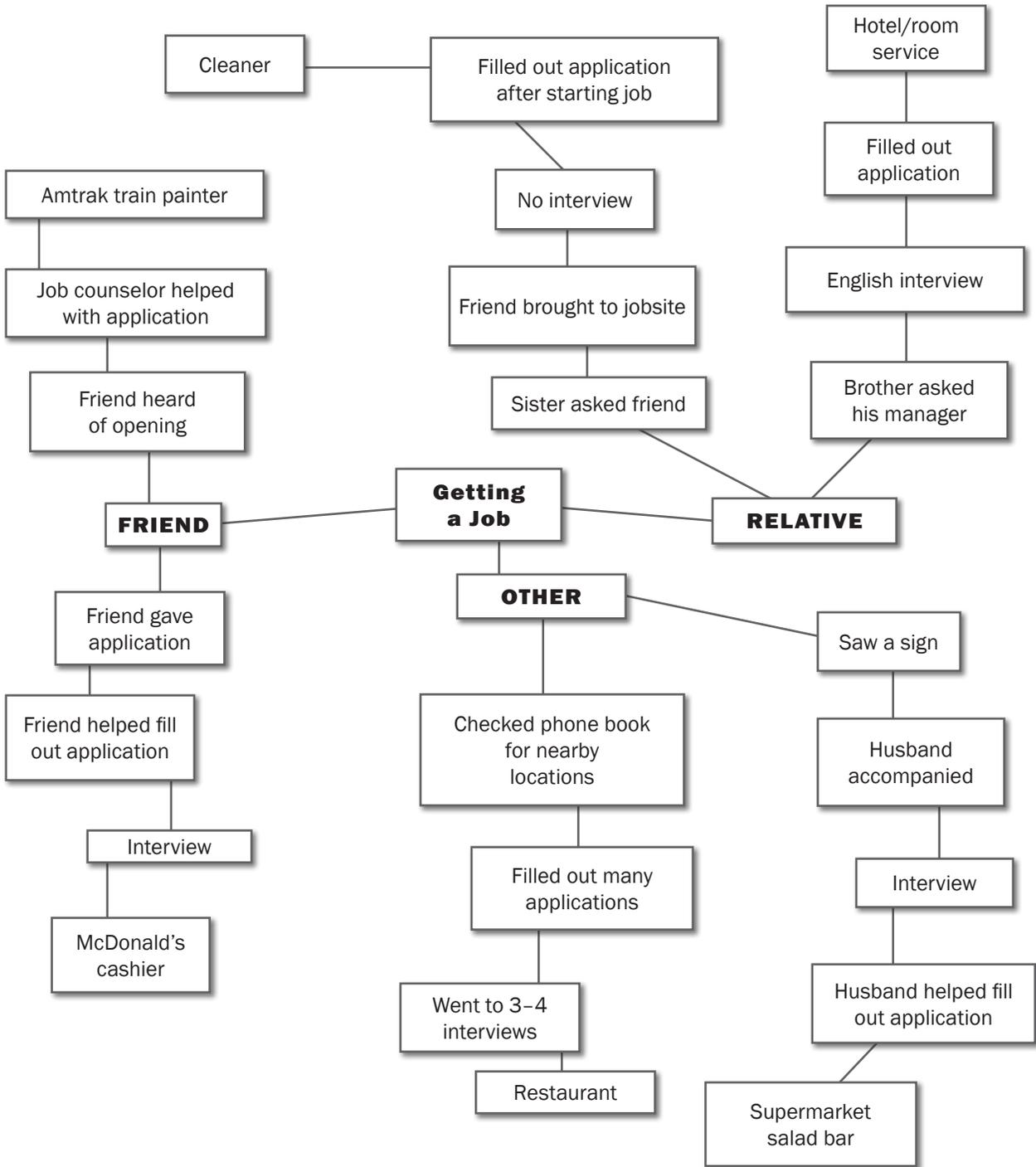
1. How might this type of needs assessment be useful in your class?
2. When would you use this type of needs assessment?
3. Why is it important to know about students' past experiences?

Figure 2. Sample Timeline



From Lynda Terrill, adult ESL teacher (Arlington Education Employment Program, Arlington, VA), 2004. Used with permission.

Figure 3. Sample Mind Mapping 1: Getting a Job



Note: From Grant, S., & Shank, C. (1992). *Discovering and responding to learner needs: Module for ESL teacher training*. Arlington, VA: Arlington Education Employment Program. Adapted with permission.

Figure 4. Sample Mind Mapping 2: Writing

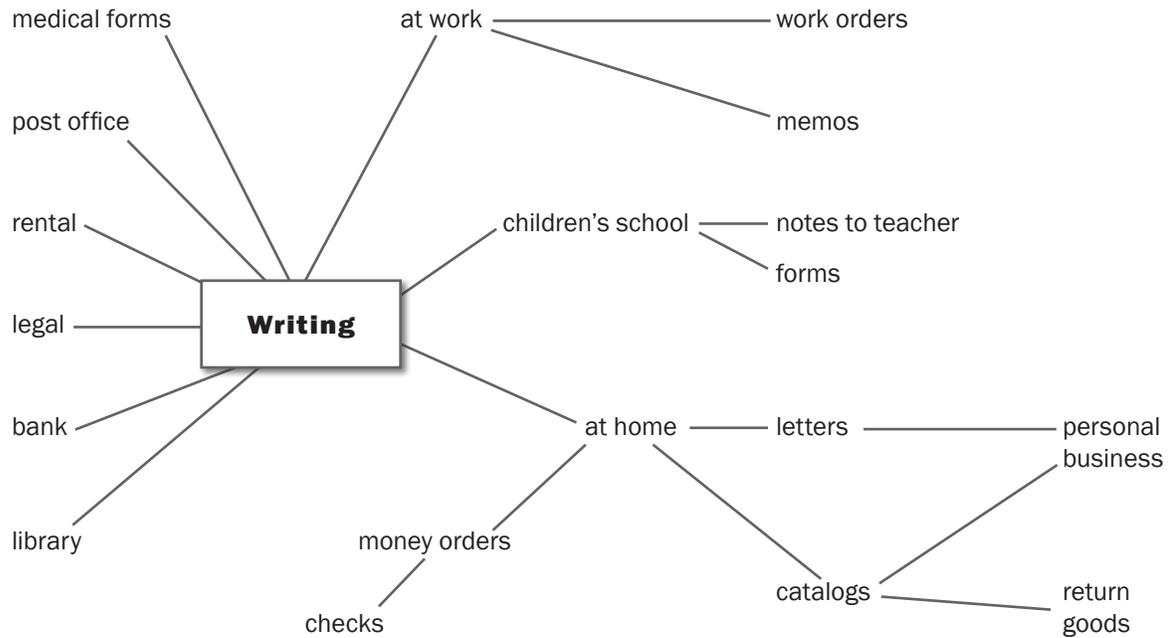
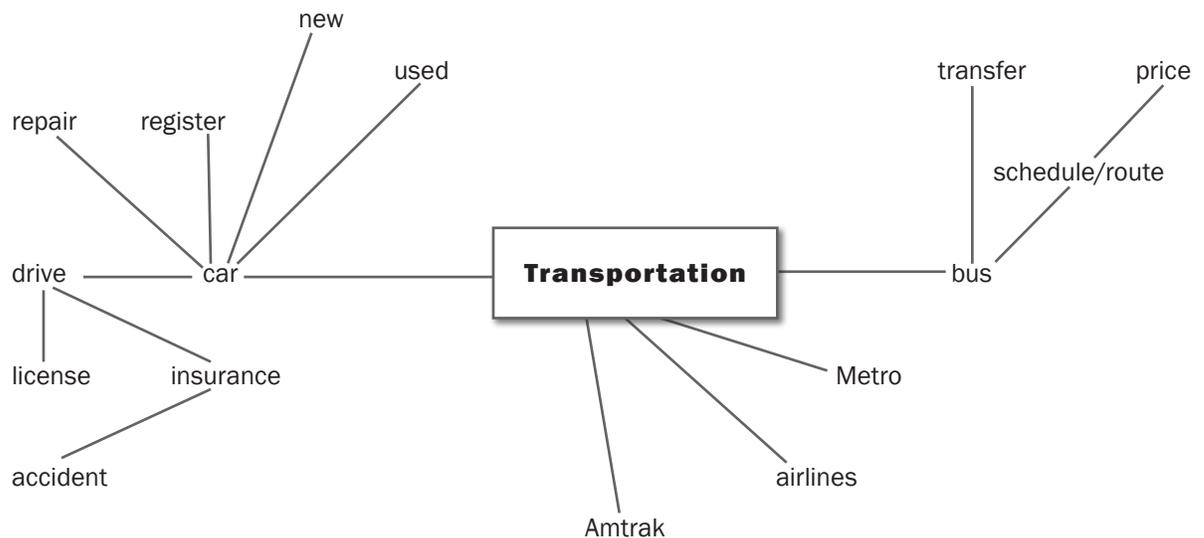


Figure 5. Sample Mind Mapping 3: Transportation



Note: From Grant S., & Shank, C. (1992). *Discovering and responding to learner needs: Module for ESL teacher training*. Arlington, VA: Arlington Education Employment Program. Adapted with permission.

Table 9. Needs Assessment Tools Chart

Tool	Description	Purpose	Analysis
Initial Assessment: Planning a Program or Curriculum			
Surveys	Surveys may consist of a written questionnaire or checklist that is completed by prospective program participants or administered orally by bilingual staff members in English or prospective participants' native language.	Survey results help create a general picture of the needs of adults who may be interested in the program.	Program planners can systematically examine respondents' answers to identify needs that should be targeted.
Focus groups	A focus group discussion is conducted with small groups according to a protocol that focuses on specific topics, procedures, and questions.	Focus group discussions help staff members gather information from a large number of people in a short time. Focus groups can help program planners understand the needs of potential program participants.	Program planners can systematically examine the participants' comments to identify trends or patterns that recur among different individuals or groups.
Interviews	Program staff can conduct individual interviews of existing service providers to obtain detailed information about setting up a program.	Interviews help determine what services already exist for learners and the relative effectiveness of those services.	Program planners can use interviews as an additional source of information about learners' needs and to understand the level of assistance available to meet those needs.
Document and literature reviews	Data can be gathered from school district records, including test scores, grades, and attendance records of participants' children; welfare department statistics on the socioeconomic status of participants; and journals, newsletters, books, and state and national reports that include information about the literacy-related needs of participants.	Document and literature reviews can provide useful information about the specific needs of targeted participants.	Program planners can examine the data to identify trends or patterns that recur among different individuals or groups.

Table 9. Needs Assessment Tools Chart (continued)

Tool	Description	Purpose	Analysis
Classroom Needs Assessment			
Information grid	<p>Learners interview each other to complete the grid.</p> <p>Topics and headings for grids are generated by the teacher and/or the learners.</p>	<p>Grids provide initial, pretopic, midcourse, and final information about the learners and their experiences, needs, and preferences.</p> <p>Grids can be adapted for various levels by controlling language or using pictures for literacy-level learners.</p>	<p>Results can be tabulated orally or on a master grid on an overhead or blackboard.</p> <p>If appropriate to the grid, the group prioritizes skills and topics to be covered.</p>
Topic selection	<p>Learners are given a list or a collection of visuals indicating skills, topics, or subtopics, either specified by a curriculum or developed by brainstorming.</p>	<p>Topic selection provides initial, midcourse, or pretopic information about learners' highest priority needs with regard to competencies, skills, and topics.</p>	<p>Teacher and class become aware of high-priority needs. Together they negotiate the selection and ordering of the course content.</p>
1. Priority cards	<p>1. Individuals or small groups create cards, each containing one skill or topic. The cards are placed in order of importance.</p>		<p>1. Individuals or small groups report their top priorities and the class reaches a consensus.</p>
2. Vote with your feet	<p>2. Names or pictures of skills or topics are posted around the classroom, and individuals move to stand near the most important choice. Several rounds of voting may occur.</p>		<p>2. At each round of voting, teacher counts learners who chose a particular skill or topic. A class consensus is reached.</p>

Table 9. Needs Assessment Tools Chart (Continued)

Tool	Description	Purpose	Analysis
<p>Brainstorming</p> <p>1. Learner-generated list</p> <p>2. Mind mapping</p>	<p>1. Small or whole groups generate lists of how they use skills (e.g., Where do you speak/write English?).</p> <p>2. Beginning with a topical question at the center of a diagram, class brainstorm answers. Responses and more-detailed examples are added to the diagram and drawn as branches from the center.</p>	<p>1. Learner lists provide initial and ongoing information about how learners use basic skills.</p> <p>2. Mind mapping provides initial and pretopic information about how learners use basic skills and life skills in a variety of settings and how they would like to be able to use skills.</p>	<p>1. The list may be used to create a questionnaire that individuals complete. The questionnaires can be tallied orally as a group. Identified needs can be prioritized.</p> <p>2. A count is taken of how many learners agree with each identified need. Identified needs can be prioritized as a group.</p>
<p>Questionnaires of learners' needs and goals</p>	<p>Questionnaires frequently consist of a list of topics, skills, or language and literacy uses. The learners indicate what they already know or what they want to know by checking the appropriate column or box, or they may be asked to use a scale to rank the importance of each item.</p> <p>For beginning learners who do not read English, pictures depicting different literacy contexts can be shown, and learners can mark the contexts that apply to them.</p> <p>The list of questionnaire items may be prepared ahead of time by the teacher or generated by the students themselves through class discussion.</p>	<p>Questionnaires provide initial, pretopic information about how learners use language and would like to be able to use language.</p>	<p>Results can be tabulated orally or by small groups.</p> <p>Based on results, the group prioritizes skills and topics to be covered.</p>

Table 9. Needs Assessment Tools Chart (Continued)

Tool	Description	Purpose	Analysis
Timelines	Learners make written or pictorial timelines that indicate major events in their lives (past and present). They also indicate future goals.	Timelines provide initial information about learners' lives and their goals for the future. As a final evaluation, learners indicate progress toward their goals.	Information can be used to tailor the class toward helping learners achieve their goals. Teacher becomes more aware of learners' backgrounds. Class discussion should focus on the learners' goals and how the class can help them attain their goals.
Dialogue journals	Teachers and learners correspond on a regular basis via a written journal. Teacher can ask learners to respond to specific questions in their journals (e.g., What would you like to learn in this class? What did you like best about class this week? What do you still need to learn?). The activity can be adapted to varying levels by controlling the language of the questions and of the responses expected.	Dialogue journals provide initial, ongoing, and final information about learners' learning needs and preferences.	Teachers can respond to individual learners about their needs, goals, and preferences and adapt the course as appropriate.
Inventories of language and literacy use	Checklists may be used, as well as open-ended questions requiring learners to keep lists of ways they use language and literacy and update them periodically.	Inventories provide initial, ongoing, and final information about learners' needs and progress.	Teachers can use the information from the inventories to tailor their classes to the needs of their students.

Note: From Grant, S., & Shank, C. (1992). *Discovering and responding to learner needs. Module for ESL teacher training.* Arlington, VA: Arlington Education Employment Program. Adapted with permission.
Also from Holt, D. D., & Van Duzer, C. H. (Eds.). (2000). *Assessing success in family literacy and adult ESL.* Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Sample Intermediate Curriculum

Basic Language:

- ▶ Clarify by spelling or writing.
- ▶ Repeat instructions for verification.
- ▶ Ask about the meaning or pronunciation of a word.
- ▶ Ask and respond to “how” and “why” questions.

Community Services:

- ▶ Report an emergency outside of home.
- ▶ Answer questions about a child and fill out a simple school enrollment form.
- ▶ Read and respond appropriately to simple written communication from school.
- ▶ Respond appropriately to recorded messages and instructions from school.
- ▶ Ask about correct postage for mailing.
- ▶ Fill out a change-of-address form.
- ▶ Locate telephone numbers in a telephone book or yellow pages.

Consumer Economics:

- ▶ Write a check.
- ▶ Fill out a deposit/withdrawal slip.
- ▶ Use coin-operated machines and report problems in using them.
- ▶ Read unit price labels to compare products for value.
- ▶ State reasons for returning an item to a store.
- ▶ Respond to a cashier’s questions concerning means of payment.
- ▶ Interpret clothing-care labels.

Employment:

- ▶ Ask and answer questions at a job interview (qualifications, experience, preferences, long-term goals, benefits, etc.).
- ▶ Fill out a standard job application.
- ▶ Read want ads and identify skills needed for a job.
- ▶ Modify a task based on changes in instructions.
- ▶ Respond to a supervisor's comments about quality of work (including mistakes, speed, incomplete work).
- ▶ Initiate and respond to social language from co-workers.
- ▶ Report specific problems encountered in completing a work task.
- ▶ Read warnings, storage directions, and emergency instructions.
- ▶ Write a note to explain an absence from work.

Health:

- ▶ Identify common symptoms, illnesses, and health problems.
- ▶ Change or cancel a doctor's appointment.
- ▶ Make or change a doctor's appointment by telephone.
- ▶ Follow oral instructions during a medical exam or about treatment.
- ▶ Fill out a simple insurance form (with assistance).

Housing:

- ▶ Question errors on bills.
- ▶ Ask for information about location, rooms, rent, deposit, utilities.

Transportation and Directions:

- ▶ Identify major streets and landmarks on a map.
- ▶ Use a map to find a place.
- ▶ Give and follow simple oral or written directions to a place.

Note: From Grognet, A. G. (1997). *Performance-based curricula and outcomes: The mainstream English language training project*. Denver: Spring Institute for International Studies. Adapted with permission.

Syllabus: Intermediate ESL

(10-week session, class meets two nights a week)

Weeks 1 and 2

Employment

- ▶ Read want ads and identify skills needed for a job.
- ▶ Ask and answer questions at a job interview (qualifications, experience, preferences, long-term goals, benefits, etc.).
- ▶ Fill out a standard job application.
- ▶ Respond to a supervisor's comments about quality of work (including mistakes, speed, incomplete work).
- ▶ Modify tasks based on changes in instructions.
- ▶ Report specific problems encountered in completing a work task.
- ▶ Write a note to explain absence from work.

Weeks 3 and 4

Banking

- ▶ Write a check.
- ▶ Fill out a deposit/withdrawal slip.

Housing

- ▶ Ask for information about location, rooms, rent, deposit, utilities.

Weeks 5 and 6

Health and Emergencies

- ▶ Identify common symptoms, illnesses, and health problems.
- ▶ Follow oral instructions during a medical exam or about treatment.
- ▶ Fill out a simple insurance form (with assistance).
- ▶ Report an emergency outside of the home.

Weeks 7 and 8

School

- ▶ Answer questions about a child and fill out a simple school enrollment form.
- ▶ Read and respond appropriately to simple written communication from school.
- ▶ Respond appropriately to recorded messages and instructions from school.

Weeks 9 and 10

Directions

- ▶ Give and follow simple oral or written directions to a place.

Community Services

- ▶ Ask about correct postage for mailing.
- ▶ Fill out a change-of-address form.
- ▶ Locate telephone numbers in a telephone book or the yellow pages.

Selecting Needs Assessment Tools: Scenarios

Directions: Select an appropriate tool from the Needs Assessment Tools Chart, or suggest a tool not listed on the chart. Discuss why you chose that particular tool, how you would set up the activity, and what you would hope to learn from the activity.

Example: It is the first week of a beginning-level class in a General Life Skills English program. Your students have some oral proficiency but very limited literacy skills. You would like to elicit information about their lives and their goals for the future.

Scenario 1: You teach an intermediate class that has a set competency-based curriculum to follow. At midcourse, you realize that you will not be able to complete all of the competencies. You want the students to prioritize the remaining topics.

Scenario 2: It is the first week of a beginning-level class in a General Life Skills English program. Your students have some oral proficiency but very limited literacy skills. You would like to elicit information about places they want to be able to use English.

Scenario 3: You teach a beginning-level class in a General Life Skills English program. You are just about to start a unit on health. You would like to elicit information about students' health-care habits (e.g., eating habits, health insurance).

Scenario 4: You teach an intermediate-level Workplace Literacy class. The learners have expressed an interest in working on writing. You would like to know what specific tasks require writing in their jobs.

Scenario 5: You are part of a team that is developing a curriculum for a new family literacy program. You want to collect information from potential program participants about their need for family literacy classes. The family literacy classes will serve parents of students at three local elementary schools.

Note: From Grant, S., & Shank, C. (1992). *Discovering and responding to learner needs: Module for ESL teacher training*. Arlington, VA: Arlington Education Employment Program. Adapted with permission.

Analyzing Needs Assessment Results

Figure 6. Example (Mind Mapping)

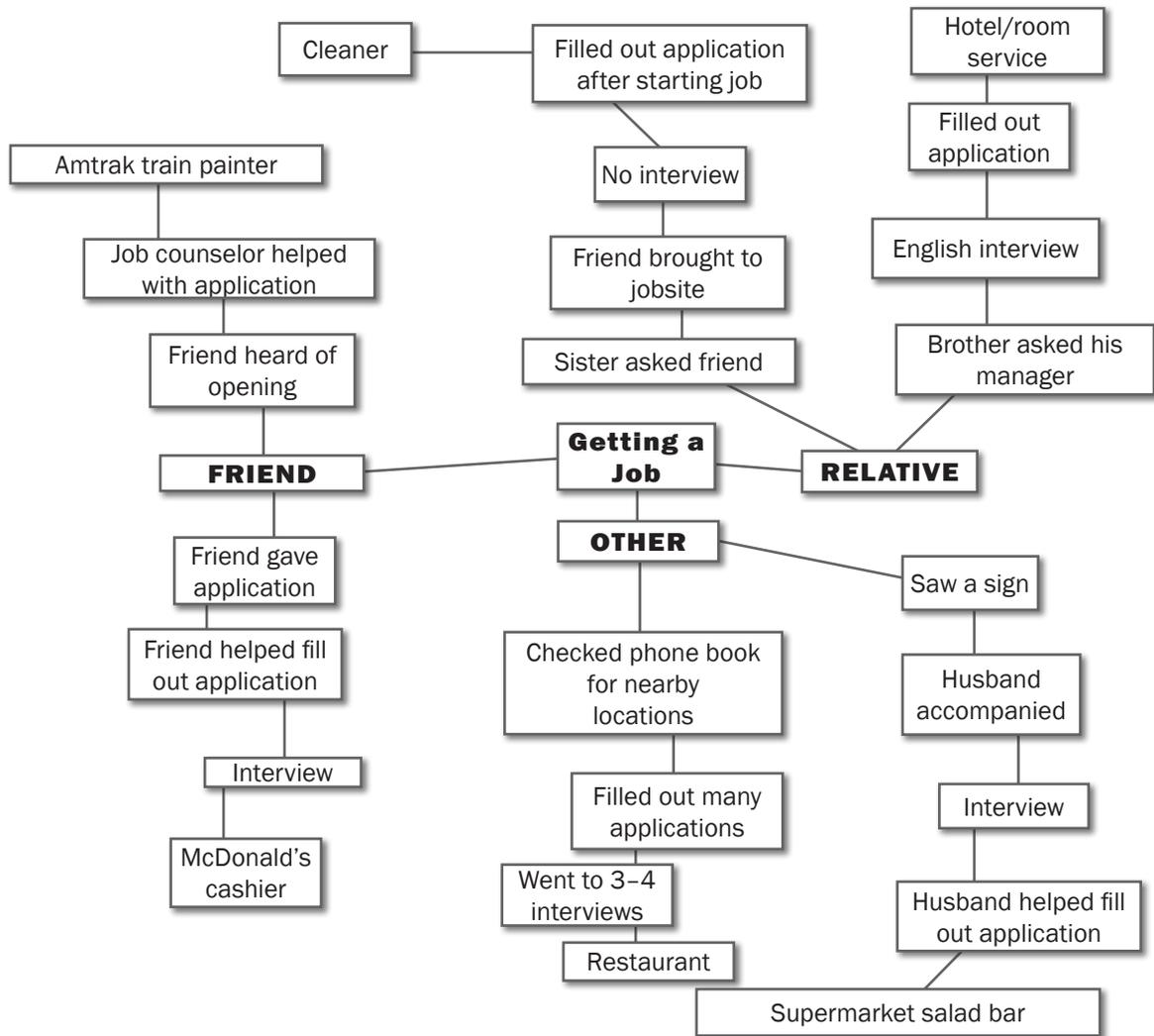


Table 11. Analyzing Results

Information to be tallied/analyzed	Results	Instructional needs
1. How many learners used newspaper ads to find out about the jobs?	0 out of 6	Need to work on reading job announcements
2. How many learners filled out a job application?		
3. How many learners had an interview?		
4. How many learners got their jobs unassisted by a friend, relative, or counselor?		

Note: From Grant, S., & Shank, C. (1992). *Discovering and responding to learner needs: Module for ESL teacher training*. Arlington, VA: Arlington Education Employment Program. Adapted with permission.

Analyzing Needs Assessment Results

Table 13. Questionnaire for Intermediate/Advanced-Level Class with 10 Students

1. Why do you need to learn more English? Please be specific. Give examples of situations that are difficult for you in English.

To get a better job (6)	To help my children with school (3)
To talk to Americans (2)	To get my GED (4)

2. What specific areas of English would you like to improve before you leave this class?

Reading (5)	Speaking (7)	Writing (6)
Listening (4)	Spelling (4)	

3. When people speak English to you, how much do you understand? Check the amount.

 everything 2 most 7 some 1 a little very little

4. When you watch TV, how much do you understand? Check the amount.

 everything 1 most 7 some 2 a little very little

5. When you speak English, how much do other people understand?

 1 everything 3 most 5 some 1 a little very little

6. Order the skills that you need from 1 to 6. Number 1 is the most important and number 6 is the least important to you at this time. Please use each number only one time.

 Reading (1: 1 student, 2: 1 student, 3: 3 students, 4: 2 students, 5: 2 students, 6: 1 student)

 Writing (1: 2 students, 2: 2 students, 3: 2 students, 4: 3 students, 5: 1 student, 6: none)

 Listening (1: 2 students, 2: 1 student, 3: 1 student, 4: 2 students, 5: 2 students, 6: 2 students)

 Speaking (1: 2 students, 2: 3 students, 3: 2 students, 4: 1 student, 5: 1 student, 6: 1 student)

 Vocabulary (1: none, 2: none, 3: 1 student, 4: 2 students, 5: 2 students, 6: 5 students)

 Pronunciation (1: 2 students, 2: 3 students, 3: 1 student, 4: none, 5: 3 students, 6: 1 student)

Note: From Moss, D. (1994). *Alternative assessment: A fork in the road*. Presented at TESOL Adapted with permission.

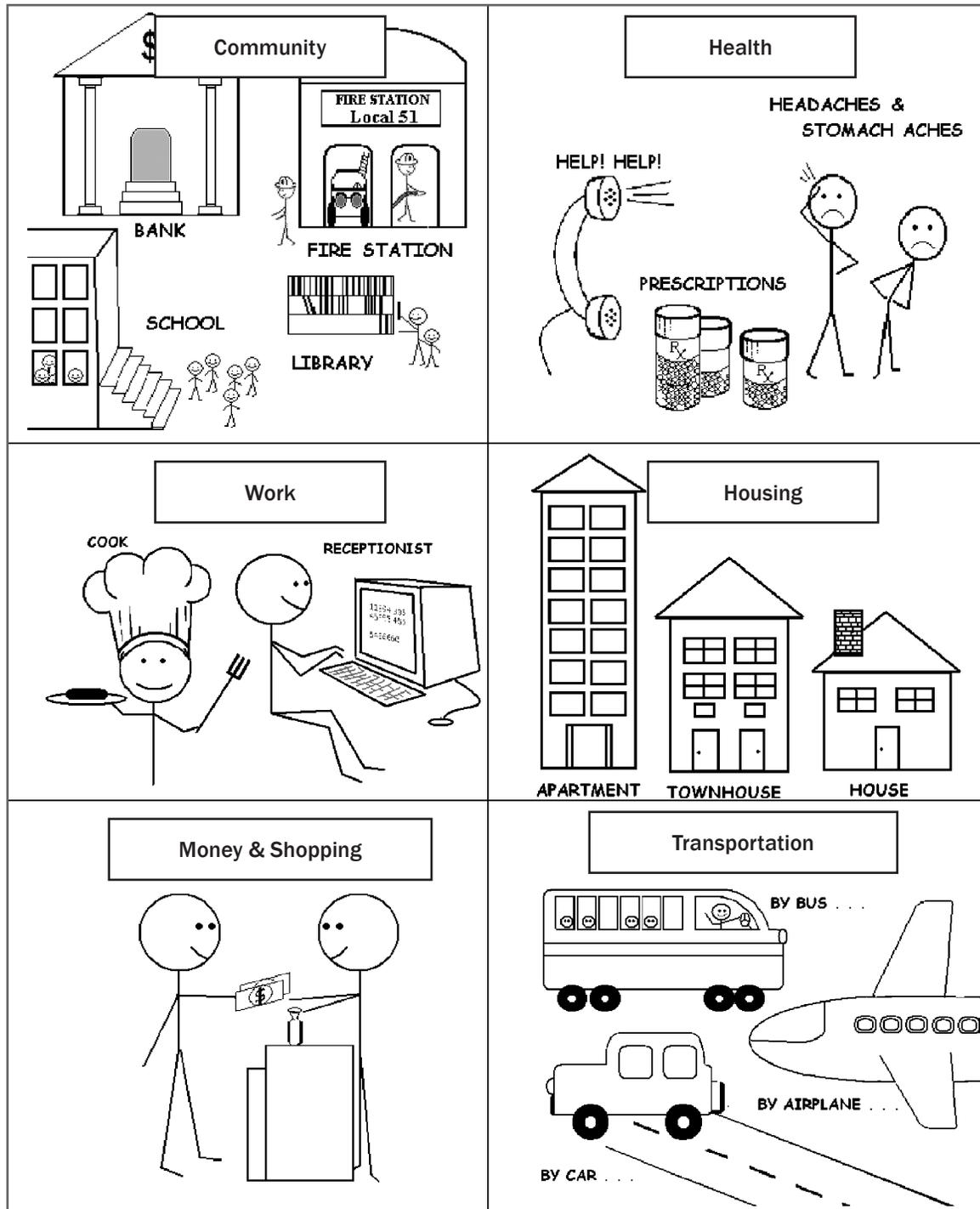
Table 14. Analyzing Results

Information to be tallied/ analyzed	Results	Instructional needs
1. What are the main reasons students in this class are taking English?		
2. How many students understand everything or most of what they hear in person? On TV?		
3. How many students say that people understand everything or most of what they say in English?		
4. Which skill do students rank as being most important to them?		

Analyzing Needs Assessment Results

Figure 7. Questionnaire for Beginning Level-Class with 15 Students

What do you want to study? Circle three topics.



Note: Adapted from National Center for Family Literacy & Center for Applied Linguistics. (2004). *Practitioner toolkit: Working with adult English language learners*. Louisville, KY & Washington, DC: Author.

Table 15. Analyzing Results

Information to be tallied/ analyzed	Results	Instructional needs
1. Which topic was circled by the most students?		
2. What other topics should be prioritized in this class?		
3. Which topic was circled by the fewest students?		

Analyzing Needs Assessment Results

Table 16. Questionnaire for Beginning/Intermediate Class with 20 Students

What do you already know how to read in English?

What do you want to learn to read? (Check ✓)

	Already know how to read	Want to learn how to read
Newspapers/magazines	5	15
GED textbooks	1	10
Job ads	2	18
Job applications	4	16
Signs at work	10	5
Checks from work	9	9
Housing ads	5	13
Notes from school	5	10
Children's books	1	14
Income tax forms	3	17
Bank statements	12	8
Bus and train schedules	15	5
Dictionaries	3	12
Labels on food	15	1
Labels in clothes	20	0
Medicine labels	3	16
Telephone/utility bills	16	4
Other		

Table 17. Analyzing Results

Information to be tallied/ analyzed	Results	Instructional needs
1. Which topics are the most students interested in learning more about?		
2. Which topics are students already familiar with or uninterested in?		

Analyzing Needs Assessment Results

Table 18. Language Use Inventory for Beginning-Level Class with Six Students

Write YOUR answers below.

	Who did you speak to?	What did you say?	Was it easy? Difficult?
At home?	Husband, daughter, son, wife, cousin, aunt		Easy
At work?	Boss – 3 Co-workers – 3 Customers – 2	About work Work Take orders – 1, Help find things – 1	Easy: 2, Difficult: 1 Easy Difficult Difficult
At the store?	Cashier	To buy something	Easy
Another place?	Bank – 1 Son's school – 1 Post office – 1	Cash a check Son is sick Send a package	Difficult Difficult Easy

Table 19. Analyzing Needs Assessment Results

(Language Use Inventory for Beginning-Level Class with Six Students)

Now write your PARTNER'S answers.

	Who did you speak to?	What did you say?	Was it easy? Difficult?
At home?			
At work?			
At the store?			
Another place?			

Note: From Moss, D. (1994). *Alternative assessment: A fork in the road*. Presented at TESOL Adapted with permission.

Table 20. Analyzing Results

Information to be tallied/ analyzed	Results	Instructional needs
1. What kinds of people are students speaking to in English?		
2. Who do students find it easy to talk to? Difficult?		
3. What topics are students talking about in English?		
4. What topics are easy for them to talk about? Difficult?		

Analyzing Needs Assessment Results

Figure 8. Mind Mapping

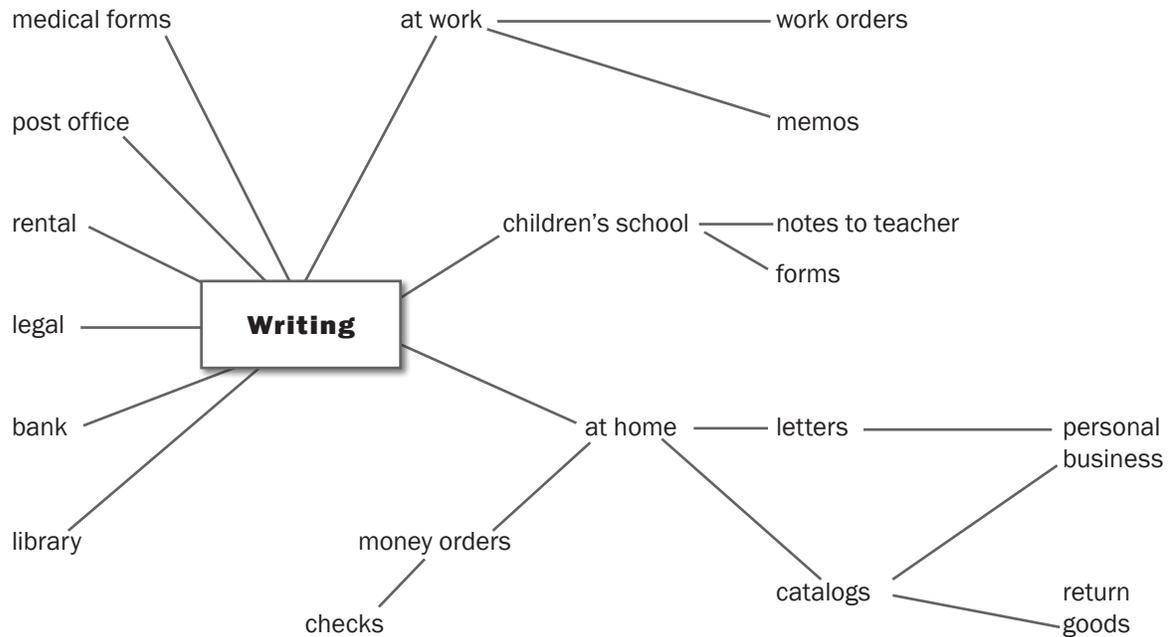


Table 21. Analyzing Results

Information to be tallied/ analyzed	Results	Instructional needs
1. Where do students need to write in English?		
2. What type of writing do students need to do?		

Note: From Grant, S., & Shank, C. (1992). *Discovering and responding to learner needs: Module for ESL teacher training*. Arlington, VA: Arlington Education Employment Program. Adapted with permission.

Needs Assessment Planning Sheet

Level of class: _____

Curriculum in use: _____

Length of session: _____

Purpose of needs assessment: _____

Type of needs assessment: _____

How will you incorporate the needs assessment activity into your class?

How will you analyze the results of your needs assessment activity?

What will you do with the results?

Assessing Learner Needs in the Adult ESL Classroom

Workshop Evaluation

Expectations About Contents of the Workshop

What did you hope to gain from this course or workshop? (please ✓ all that apply)

- Basic introduction or exposure to subject
- In-depth theory or study of subject
- Strategies and ideas about how to implement subject
- Information to take back and share at program
- More general information about subject
- Other _____

Did the workshop fulfill your expectations and needs? (please circle one)

Not at all Barely Sufficiently A great deal Completely

Please explain why you circled the above.

Quality of the Workshop

Area	Quality (please ✓ one)				Comments/Suggestions for Improvement
Trainer style	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Presentation and progress (balance between trainer and participant involvement, kinds of activities, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Materials (handouts, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Organization of workshops (arrangement of content, flow of activities, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	

Follow-Up Activity

As a result of these workshops, what do you hope to try in your classroom or program?

Other Comments

Notes

III-B. Assessment in the Adult ESL Classroom

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Assessment in the Adult ESL Classroom

Trainer Guide Overview

This workshop module contains detailed instructions and all the materials necessary to conduct a training session on assessment in the adult ESL classroom. The module has three components:

- ▶ Trainer Guide
- ▶ Trainer Notes
- ▶ Participant Handouts

The Trainer Guide is the trainer’s script for the training session. The introduction states the rationale and purpose of the workshop. It also gives the goal and objectives of the workshop, the workshop agenda, an overview of workshop sections with the amount of time to be spent on each section, trainer preparation instructions, and materials needed. The introduction is followed by detailed sequential instructions for conducting each section of the workshop.

The introduction to each section states the purpose of the activities and the timing of that section. This is followed by a two-column table with instructions for each activity in the first column (Action) and the materials needed in the second column (Materials). Hard copies of all the materials needed (with the exception of non-CAELA publications) are provided in the Trainer Notes or the Participant Handouts. Materials are listed by title followed by the page number on which they can be found and TN (indicating it can be found in the Trainer Notes) or PH (indicating it can be found in the Participant Handouts). Ordering information for non-CAELA publications is given in the workshop introduction. Materials that need to be made into transparencies for use with an overhead projector or PowerPoint slides are marked “Transparency or PowerPoint Slide.” You will need to prepare them before the training session.

The Trainer Notes accompanies the script of the Trainer Guide. It includes copies of all the participant handouts, answer keys to participant activities, transparencies or PowerPoint slides to be made, and other supplemental handouts if appropriate. The contents of the Trainer Notes are organized in the order they are needed in the session, and the place they will be used is indicated in the Materials column in this Trainer Guide.

The Participant Handouts contains all the information and activity sheets that participants need to participate in the session and will take with them when they leave. The contents are also organized in the order they will be used in the session. Make a copy of the handouts for each participant.

Assessment in the Adult ESL Classroom

Introduction to the module: The purpose of this workshop is to support teachers of English as a second language (ESL) in using assessments to determine class content and instructional practices and to provide feedback to students. Assessment of adult English language learners begins when students enter an adult ESL program: Information is collected during intake and registration processes about students' language and educational backgrounds, literacy levels in their native languages, English language and literacy levels, and goals for learning English. This information should be used to accurately place students in appropriate classes and prepare teachers for working with them. Placement assessments can be purchased (commercial products are available), based on a textbook series, or created locally to meet specific programmatic needs and language focus (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, writing). The types of placement assessments usually used—oral interviews, writing samples, constructed response, reading comprehension passages, and form completion—do not provide extensive diagnostic information on English language abilities, but rather portray a general description of student strengths, areas for improvement, and goals for learning English. In some adult ESL programs, standardized tests are used for placement purposes, as well as to meet the pretest/posttest accountability and reporting requirements of the funding agencies.

Once learners are placed in an appropriate class, needs assessments are used to identify the content topics, language skills, and learning goals that students would like to focus on at the beginning of a course of instruction and periodically throughout. (See the Assessing Learner Needs workshop module in *The CAELA Guide for Adult ESL Trainers* for more information.) Classroom assessments are then used throughout a course of study to guide the teacher in planning instruction that meets learners' needs and goals and to help learners assess their own progress. Through the use of performance objectives, teachers determine what the final learning outcome will be and how it will be assessed, and can then design lesson plans and instructional activities leading up to the final assessment.

This workshop begins with an overview of using and planning assessments, then presents sample performance assessment activities that use rating scales with clearly defined criteria, and then reviews learner self-assessment tools. Workshop participants are given several opportunities to practice evaluating and designing performance assessments for the classroom and are encouraged to create an action plan for applying the information from this workshop in their own classroom practice. This workshop's activities and materials are based on research about assessment for adult English language learners (see National Center for Family Literacy & Center for Applied Linguistics, 2004; Van Duzer, 2002; Van Duzer & Berdán, 2000).

Target audience for this workshop: New and experienced teachers, tutors, and classroom aides

Goal of the workshop: To increase knowledge and skills in designing and using a variety of assessments in the adult ESL classroom to measure progress in language and literacy development

Workshop objectives for participants: At the end of the workshop, participants should be able to

- ▶ Understand classroom assessments and their place in the instructional process
- ▶ Recognize key elements in planning assessments
- ▶ Identify the role of performance objectives in planning assessments
- ▶ Develop effective assessment activities

Length of workshop: 3 hours and 30 minutes

The workshop components are as follows:

Part 1. Introductions and Warm-Up	35 minutes
Part 2. Presentation	90 minutes
Part 3. Practice and Application	55 minutes
Part 4. Wrap-Up and Evaluation	30 minutes
Total projected length of workshop	210 minutes (3 hours and 30 minutes)*

***Note:** This does not include a break. There should be a 15-minute break approximately halfway through the workshop—the exact time for the break will be selected by the trainer and added to the total training time.

Preparation for the workshop:

- ▶ Read “Assessments for the Classroom: Background Reading” from the Participant Handouts or the Trainer Notes.
- ▶ Make transparencies or PowerPoint slides as indicated in the Trainer Notes.
- ▶ Make a copy of the participant handouts for each participant.

Note: In the Trainer Guide, materials to be found in the Trainer Notes are indicated by TN, followed by the page number; materials to be found in the Participant Handouts are indicated by PH, followed by the page number.

Materials needed for the workshop:

- ▶ Assessment in the Adult ESL Classroom: Trainer Guide
- ▶ Assessment in the Adult ESL Classroom: Trainer Notes (make transparencies or PowerPoint slides as indicated in the Trainer Guide)
- ▶ Assessment in the Adult ESL Classroom: Participant Handouts

References

- National Center for Family Literacy & Center for Applied Linguistics. (2004). *Practitioner toolkit: Working with adult English language learners*. Available from www.cal.org/caela/tools/program_development/prac_toolkit.html
- Van Duzer, C. (2002). *Issues in accountability and assessment for adult ESL instruction*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics. Available from www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/accountQA.html
- Van Duzer, C., & Berdán, R. (2000). Perspectives on assessment in adult ESOL instruction. *The annual review of adult learning and literacy*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Available from www.ncsall.net/?id=493

1. Introductions and Warm-Up

Purposes:

- ▶ To activate participants' prior knowledge about classroom assessments for adult ESL instruction
- ▶ To create a baseline of what people currently do to assess students and what they want to learn or improve in their assessments
- ▶ To review the agenda and objectives for this session

Time: 35 minutes

Process:

Actions	Materials
<p>1. Introductions (2 minutes)</p> <p>Presenters introduce themselves (affiliations, experience in teaching adult ESL, etc.) and the workshop.</p>	
<p>2. Activate prior knowledge. (15 minutes)</p> <p>Make an overhead transparency or PowerPoint slide of the Getting Acquainted: Assessment Practices in the Classroom handout and introduce the handout. Instruct participants to answer the questions about themselves in the first column and then to work with a partner and share information. Note the reflection questions they should answer after their discussion.</p>	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Getting Acquainted: Assessment Practices in the Classroom (TN, p. 17)</p> <p>Getting Acquainted: Assessment Practices in the Classroom (PH, p. 37)</p>

Actions	Materials
<p>3. Create a baseline of what people do and what they want to learn. (13 minutes)</p> <p>When they have finished talking to their partner, ask participants to share their answers to Questions 3–6 with the group. Record answers on chart paper.</p> <p>Encourage participants to note the responses of others that resonate with them on their Getting Acquainted handout.</p> <p>Make sure the following points are addressed in the answer to Question 3—Assessments are important because they</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • let all the stakeholders (learners, teachers, program administrators, funders, etc.) know that language and life skills have been identified, practiced, and accomplished; • provide a way to follow learners’ progress; and • inform instruction. <p>Wrap up by telling participants that during the workshop you will refer to their responses to the questions.</p>	<p>Chart paper</p>
<p>4. Review the goal, objectives, and agenda points with the participants. (5 minutes)</p> <p>Workshop goal: To increase knowledge and skills in designing and using a variety of assessments in the adult ESL classroom to measure progress in language and literacy development</p> <p>Workshop objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand classroom assessments and their place in the instructional process • To recognize key elements in planning assessments • To identify the role of performance objectives in planning assessments • To develop effective assessment activities 	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Workshop Goal, Objectives, and Agenda (TN, p. 18)</p> <p>Workshop Goal, Objectives, and Agenda (PH, p. 38)</p>

2. Presentation

Purposes:

- ▶ To understand classroom assessments and their place in the instructional process
- ▶ To introduce level descriptions and understand their role in assessment
- ▶ To review performance objectives and understand their role in planning assessments
- ▶ To understand key elements in planning assessments and identify effective assessment activities
- ▶ To present examples of tools and processes for assessing language development

Time: 90 minutes

Process:

Actions	Materials
<p>1. Understand classroom assessments and their place in the instructional process. (15 minutes)</p> <p>Tell participants to read <i>Assessment in the Adult ESL Classroom: Background Reading</i>. Point out the discussion questions at the end of the reading and tell them to share their answers to these questions with a partner.</p> <p>Ask volunteers to share their answers to the questions. Then, refer to their responses to Question 3 in the warm-up activity. Look for comparisons and elaborations.</p>	<p><i>Assessment in the Adult ESL Classroom: Background Reading</i> (TN, pp. 19–22; PH, pp. 39–42)</p>

Actions	Materials
<p>2. Introduce level descriptions and understand their role in assessment. (10 minutes)</p> <p>Refer to Question 4 in the warm-up activity—How do you know that learners are making progress? Review what participants wrote. Point out that when teachers assess students’ ability to complete a task, students need to be assessed according to their language level, not in comparison to other students.</p> <p>Ask participants what they know about the National Reporting System (NRS) level descriptors. If many are unfamiliar with the NRS descriptors, give a brief introduction to them. For background information, go to www.nrsweb.org or www.nrsonline.org.</p> <p>Instruct participants to think of one of their students, read the NRS descriptors, and identify the student’s NRS levels for speaking, listening, reading, and writing.</p> <p>Point out that the level descriptions create a baseline of what people know and can do. To know how far learners have progressed, teachers need to know where they are at the beginning of instruction.</p> <p>Tell participants that they will do several activities that focus on the level of a student of their choosing.</p>	<p>NRS Level Descriptors (TN, pp. 23–25; PH, pp. 43–45)</p>
<p>3. Review performance objectives and understand their role in planning assessments. (10 minutes)</p> <p>Hand out the Performance Objective worksheet. Using a transparency or PowerPoint slide of the worksheet, review what performance objectives are. Guide the discussion with the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do performance objectives help the teacher do? • What are the essential parts of a performance objective? (condition, performance, and criteria) • What is the condition here? (telephone conversation) • What is the performance? (report a child’s absence) • What are the criteria? (give the child’s name, teacher’s name or class, and reason for absence) <p>Ask participants what kinds of activities might work well in the lesson to help learners achieve this performance objective. Write participant responses on the overhead.</p> <p>Tell participants that assessment activities grow out of the performance objectives and the lesson activities. Learners are assessed on their ability to use the language taught while completing the tasks identified in a specific performance objective.</p> <p><i>Learners are assessed on how well they can perform the task.</i></p>	<p>Performance Objective (TN, p. 26; PH, p. 46)</p> <p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Performance Objective (Telephone the school office and report a child’s absence.) (TN, p. 26; PH, p. 46)</p>

Actions	Materials
<p>4. Understand key elements in planning assessments and identify effective assessment activities. (55 minutes)</p> <p>A. Key elements in planning assessments (10 minutes)</p> <p>Ask participants what kinds of assessment tasks would work well with the above performance task (e.g., role play). How do they prepare assessment tasks? What issues do they consider when developing assessment tasks?</p> <p>Use the transparency or PowerPoint slide, Planning an Assessment Task, to go over the goals of performance tasks and design considerations.</p> <p>Hand out the Planning an Assessment Task worksheet. Instruct participants to complete the task on their own. Discuss a few participants' responses. See Trainer Notes for sample responses.</p> <p>B. Sample assessment activities (30 minutes)</p> <p>Divide participants into three groups. Tell participants that they are going to review three ESL classroom activities and examine how they can be used as assessment activities.</p> <p>Distribute one reading to each group: Readings from <i>Practitioner Toolkit: Working with Adult English Language Learners</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line Dialogue • Information Gap • Conversation Grid <p>Distribute the worksheet, Sample Assessment Activities: Guiding Questions.</p> <p>Tell participants to read the description of the activity and to pay close attention to how the activity can be used as an assessment activity. They should work together asking and answering questions on the worksheet about their activity.</p> <p>Next, form new groups with one participant from each group. Instruct participants to share their instructional activity and to discuss how the activity can also be used as an assessment activity.</p> <p>Monitor the groups' discussions and answer questions. See the Trainer Notes for answers to the guiding questions.</p>	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Planning an Assessment Task (TN, p. 27)</p> <p>Planning an Assessment Task (PH, p. 47)</p> <p>Readings from <i>Practitioner Toolkit: Working with Adult English Language Learners</i>: (PH, p. 48–54)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line Dialogue – pp. 48–49 • Information Gap – pp. 50–51 • Conversation Grid – pp. 52–54 <p>Sample Assessment Activities: Guiding Questions (TN, pp. 28–29; PH, p. 55)</p>

Actions	Materials
<p>5. Present examples of tools and processes for assessing language development. (15 minutes)</p> <p>Review participants’ responses to Question 5 from the warm-up activity. What dimensions of language and literacy development do they want to assess in their classes?</p> <p>Tell them that in this workshop you will focus on observation measures with rating scales, and learner self-assessments.</p> <p>Observation Measures</p> <p>Show participants the observation measures for listening and reading. Ask if they have used or created anything like this for their classroom assessments. Point out the assessment task (follow oral or written instructions to make vanilla pudding) and read the rating scale (with ease, with some support, with great difficulty, not at all). Ask participants—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the task measure what has been taught? <i>Yes. Learners are assessed on their ability to follow oral and/or written recipe instructions.</i> • Does it have a real-world application? <i>Yes. In daily life people read recipes. The structure of recipe directions can be transferred to other types of step-by-step directions.</i> • Does it allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills? <i>Yes, it does. This is a performance task where learners must make the dessert by reading or hearing and following the directions.</i> <p>Next, ask them what the rating criteria—<i>with ease, with some support, with great difficulty, and not at all</i>—mean. (with ease = learners can comprehend and read instructions without asking questions and looking terribly puzzled; with some support = learners occasionally have to have a word provided, a sentence modeled, or help from peers; with great difficulty = learners need to consult a dictionary, ask peers for translation, or constantly observe others)</p> <p>Wrap up by telling participants that it is very important that when they select criteria, they know what the criteria mean. They must define their criteria.</p>	<p>Transparencies or PowerPoint slides from <i>Assessing Success in Family Literacy and Adult ESL</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation Measure for Listening and Reading (TN, p. 30) <p>Handouts from <i>Assessing Success in Family Literacy and Adult ESL</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation Measure for Listening and Reading (PH, p. 56)

Actions	Materials
<p>Student Self-Assessments</p> <p>Tell participants that the discussions are focused on observation measures with rating scales that teachers can use, but that it is important for students to have opportunities to engage in self-assessments as well. Self-assessments should be part of a classroom assessment package. Using an overhead, show an example of a can-do list for self-assessment from <i>Assessing Success in Family Literacy and Adult ESL</i>. Discuss the life-skill tasks in the first column. Point out that these reflect what many learners want to be able to do in English. Discuss the rating scale, which describes a range of performances from <i>Can do it easily</i> to <i>Can't do it</i>.</p> <p>Discuss can-do lists. Highlight the following. Can-do lists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable learners to reflect on what they can and cannot do and what they need to practice. • Allow learners to indicate the degree of difficulty with daily communication tasks. • Can be adapted to assess knowledge and skills for any curriculum topic. Brainstorm with participants about other topic areas (e.g., health, finding employment, technology). • Can act as progress indicators if used several times during the instructional cycle. <p>Wrap up by reviewing what was discussed and learned during the presentation part of the workshop.</p>	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide from <i>Assessing Success in Family Literacy and Adult ESL</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can-Do List for Self-Assessment (TN, p. 31) <p>Handout from <i>Assessing Success in Family Literacy and Adult ESL</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can-Do List for Self-Assessment (PH, p. 57)

3. Practice and Application

Purpose:

- ▶ To apply the concepts learned in the presentation of new material and increase skills in developing classroom assessments

Time: 55 minutes

Process:

Actions	Materials
<p>1. Apply the concepts learned in the presentation of new material and increase skills in developing classroom assessments.</p> <p>A. Practice Activity 1 (25 minutes)</p> <p>Tell participants to think about the student for whom, in Part 2 of the workshop, they identified a language proficiency level using the NRS level descriptors.</p> <p>Group participants into small groups by NRS level descriptor. If groups are large, divide participants so that no more than four or five participants are in each group.</p> <p>Hand out the Planning a Performance Assessment Task: Practice Activity 1 worksheet and go over the directions for the task. Hand out a transparency or PowerPoint slide and marker to each group and tell participants to assign one group member to be the scribe and one to be the reporter. Each group will have up to 2 minutes to share its plans. Check comprehension of the task. Explain that they will use the Presentation Assessment Checklist to evaluate each group’s assessment task.</p> <p>Give groups 12 minutes to complete the task. Use the remainder of the time to have groups share their plans and to provide feedback on their plans.</p>	<p>Planning a Performance Assessment Task: Practice Activity 1 (TN, p. 32; PH, p. 58)</p> <p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Planning a Performance Assessment Task: Practice Activity 1 and overhead marker for each group of participants</p> <p>Presentation Assessment Checklist (TN, p. 33; PH, p. 59)</p>

Actions	Materials
<p>B. Practice Activity 2 (30 minutes)</p> <p>Participants should work in the same groups.</p> <p>Hand out the Planning a Performance Assessment Task: Practice Activity 2 worksheet and go over the directions for the task. Hand out another transparency or PowerPoint slide to each group. Tell participants to assign a group member to be the scribe and another to be the reporter. Each group will have up to 3 minutes to share its plans. Check comprehension of the task. Explain that they will use the Presentation Assessment Checklist to evaluate each group's assessment task.</p> <p>Give groups 20 minutes to complete the task. Use the remainder of the time to have groups share their plans and to provide feedback on their plans.</p> <p>Note: If there is a large group of participants, you can have half of the groups present their work in Practice Activity 1 and the other half present their work in Practice Activity 2.</p> <p>Tell participants that an effective way of planning instruction is to first plan what the assessment will be. Once you know the outcomes you want to achieve, you can easily plan how to achieve them.</p>	<p>Planning a Performance Assessment Task: Practice Activity 2 (TN, pp. 34–35; PH, pp. 60–61)</p> <p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Planning a Performance Assessment Task: Practice Activity 2 and overhead marker for each group of participants.</p> <p>Presentation Assessment Checklist (if additional copies are needed) (TN, p. 33; PH, p. 59)</p>

4. Wrap-Up and Evaluation

Purposes:

- ▶ To reflect on and assess how well participants understood concepts addressed in the workshop
- ▶ To discuss extension activities and to introduce participants to the Trainer Guide for the workshop

Time: 30 minutes

Process:

Actions	Materials
<p>1. Reflect on and assess how well participants understood concepts addressed in the workshop. (15 minutes)</p> <p>Observe and provide appropriate feedback on the presentations of assessment activities.</p> <p>Return to responses to Question 6 in the warm-up activity and ask participants to think about the workshop and what questions have been answered for them. Discuss ways to continue learning about classroom assessments.</p> <p>Ask a few participants to share what they will focus on in using classroom assessments when they return to their programs.</p>	<p>Chart with participant responses to Question 6 of the warm-up activity.</p>
<p>2. Discuss extension activities and introduce participants to the Trainer Guide for the workshop. (15 minutes)</p> <p>Hand out the Action Plan worksheet and instruct participants to complete the four statements. Ask for volunteers to share their statements. Brainstorm about things participants can do to continue building their skills in designing classroom assessments.</p> <p>Review the Trainer Guide with the participants.</p> <p>Ask participants to complete the Workshop Evaluation form.</p>	<p>Handout: My Action Plan worksheet (PH, p. 62)</p> <p>Workshop Evaluation Form (PH, p. 63)</p>

Getting Acquainted: Assessment Practices in the Classroom

Directions:

Answer the following questions for yourself. Next, find a partner and share your responses with each other. Then, reflect on the questions below.

	You	Your Partner
1. Where do you teach?		
2. What level(s) do you teach?		
3. Why is assessment an essential part of the instructional process?		
4. How do you know that learners are making progress? What is evidence of progress in language and literacy development?		
5. What dimensions of language and literacy do you assess? What types of assessment tools do you use in your classes?		
6. What are some specific issues/questions you have regarding classroom assessment?		

Reflection Questions:

Did you find similarities and differences in your assessment practices? Did the exchange bring up any important questions, thoughts, or ideas for you?

Assessment in the Adult ESL Classroom

Workshop Goal, Objectives, and Agenda

Goal:

To increase knowledge and skills in designing and using a variety of assessments in the adult ESL classroom to measure learner progress in language and literacy development

Objectives:

- ▶ To understand classroom assessments and their place in the instructional process
- ▶ To recognize key elements in planning assessments
- ▶ To identify the role of performance objectives in planning assessments
- ▶ To develop effective assessment activities

Agenda:

- I. Introduction and Warm-Up
- II. Presentation
- III. Practice and Application
- IV. Wrap-Up and Evaluation

Assessment in the Adult ESL Classroom

Background Reading

Learner assessments are used in adult ESL programs for many purposes: to place learners in appropriate instructional levels and classes, to measure their progress and motivate them to advance to higher levels, to qualify them to enroll in academic or job training programs, to document program effectiveness, and to demonstrate learner gains to meet accountability requirements. Assessments also are used throughout a program to determine learners' goals and needs and to help learners assess their own progress. To accomplish these purposes, programs often use a variety of assessments—both standardized and classroom measures.

Assessment of adult English language learners begins when students enter an adult ESL program: Information is collected during intake and registration processes about students' language and educational backgrounds, literacy levels in their native languages, English language and literacy levels, and goals for learning English. This information should be used to accurately place students in appropriate classes and prepare teachers for working with them. Placement assessments can be purchased (commercial products are available), based on a textbook series, or created locally to meet specific programmatic needs and language focus (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, writing). The types of placement assessments usually used—oral interviews, writing samples, constructed response, reading comprehension passages, and form completion—do not provide extensive diagnostic information on English language abilities, but rather portray a general description of student strengths, areas for improvement, and goals for learning English. In some adult ESL programs, standardized tests are used for placement purposes, as well as to meet the pretest/posttest accountability and reporting requirements of the funding agencies.

Once learners are placed in an appropriate class, formal needs assessments are conducted to identify the content topics, language skills, and learning goals that students would like to focus on at the beginning of a course of instruction and periodically throughout. Classroom assessments are then used throughout a course of study to guide the teacher in planning instruction that meets learners' needs and goals and to help learners assess their own progress. Through the use of performance objectives, teachers determine what the final learning outcome will be and how it will be assessed, and can then design lesson plans and instructional activities leading up to the final assessment.

Classroom assessments include surveys, interviews, checklists, observations, teacher-developed tests, learner self-assessments, portfolios, and performance-based tests (Van Duzer, 2002). These assessments allow program administrators and teachers to learn what adults need and want to learn (in a needs assessment) and monitor their learning from classroom-based activities (in ongoing assessment). Portfolios or collections of individuals' work can include such items as book reports, notes from interviews, learners' reflection on their progress, writing samples, data from performance-based assessments, and scores on standardized tests. From program-developed performance-based tests, instructors, administrators, and learners can get information about how a learner uses English to accomplish different tasks. Skills such as reading a chart or locating information on a schedule can be related to actual situations that learners might encounter. Authentic materials such as job applications, pay stubs, and union contracts are often used to assess learner knowledge and skills in workplace programs (Holt & Van Duzer, 2000).

Principles of Effective Assessment

For both standardized and classroom assessments, application of the following principles will produce effective assessment procedures:

1. Clearly identify the purpose of the assessment (why the learners are being assessed) and what learning is to be assessed (e.g., increased speaking proficiency).
2. Select assessment instruments and procedures that match the learning goals of the program (e.g., an oral interview to show progress in speaking skills, writing samples to show progress in writing) and that engage learners so they are interested and will strive to do their best.
3. Whenever possible, use multiple measures to present a more complete picture of what has been learned.
4. Ensure that adequate resources are available to carry out the assessments (e.g., enough materials, comfortable environment, adequately trained administrators and scorers).
5. Be aware of the limitations of the assessments selected.
6. Remember that assessment is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. Share assessment results with learners and instructors, as well as administrative staff and funders.

Note: From National Center for Family Literacy & National Center for ESL Literacy. (2004). *Practitioner toolkit: Working with adult English language learners*. Washington, DC: National Center for Family Literacy. Available from www.cal.org/caela/tools/program_development/elltoolkit/CombinedFiles.pdf

Performance Assessment

There is a direct link between instruction and assessment. Performance assessment requires learners to use prior knowledge and recent learning to accomplish tasks that demonstrate what they know and can do. Examples of performance assessment tasks include *oral or written reports* (e.g., on how to become a citizen); *projects* (e.g., researching, producing, and distributing a booklet on recreational opportunities available in the community); and *exhibitions or demonstrations* (e.g., a poster depicting the steps to becoming a U.S. citizen). A variety of performance assessments provide a more complete picture of a learner's abilities than can be gathered from performance on a pencil-and-paper standardized test.

For adult ESL classes, performance assessment reflects current thought about second language acquisition: Learners acquire language as they use it in social interactions to accomplish purposeful tasks (e.g., finding information or applying for a job). The performance may be assessed simply by documenting the successful completion of the task or by the use of rubrics designed to assess various dimensions of carrying out the task (e.g., rating oral presentation skills on a scale of 1–5). Both instructors and learners can be involved in the development of evaluation guidelines and in the evaluation procedure itself (Van Duzer, 2002; Van Duzer & Berdán, 2000).

Conclusion

Assessments are used in the classroom to find out what students know and can do. They are program based and learner centered. They must be part of the overall learning experience and not just a single procedure. They measure what has been taught and learned and often simulate real-world tasks. Finally, they provide feedback that will inform instruction.

Discussion

Discuss the following questions with a partner in a small group.

1. Why do teachers use assessments in the classroom?

To measure learners' progress and motivate them to advance to higher levels, to demonstrate learners' gains, to determine learners' goals and needs, and to help learners assess their own progress.

2. Why do you think it is important to use multiple assessment measures?

It is important to measure progress for a variety of purposes. Standardized tests can provide only part of the information necessary to document learner progress.

3. What is your experience with using classroom assessments?

Responses will vary.

Reading Resources

Holt, D. D., & Van Duzer, C. H. (Eds.). (2000). *Assessing success in family literacy and adult ESL*. McHenry, IL & Washington, DC: Delta Systems & Center for Applied Linguistics.

Moss, D., & Van Duzer, C. (1998). *Project-based learning for adult English language learners*. Washington, DC: National Center for ESL Literacy Education. Available from www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/ProjBase.html

National Center for ESL Literacy Education. (2001). *CAELA resource collections: Assessment and evaluation in adult ESL*. Washington, DC: Author. Available from www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/collections/assessment.html

National Center for Family Literacy & Center for Applied Linguistics. (2004). *Practitioner toolkit: Working with adult English language learners*. Louisville, KY & Washington, DC: Author. Available from www.cal.org/caela/tools/program_development/elltoolkit/CombinedFiles1.pdf

Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. (1997). *School effectiveness for language minority students*. Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education. Available from www.nclg.gwu.edu/pubs/resource/effectiveness

Van Duzer, C. (2002). *Issues in accountability and assessment for adult ESL instruction*. Washington, DC: National Center for ESL Literacy Education. Available from www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/accountQA.html

Van Duzer, C., & Berdán, R. (2000). Perspectives on assessment in adult ESOL instruction. In *The annual review of adult learning and literacy*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Available from www.ncsall.net/?id=493

Table 1. National Reporting System Functioning Level Table

Outcome Measures Definitions
Effective July 1, 2006

Educational Functioning Level Descriptors—English as a Second Language Levels			
Literacy Level	Listening and Speaking	Basic Reading and Writing	Functional and Workplace Skills
<p>Beginning ESL Literacy</p> <p><i>Test Benchmark:</i></p> <p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 180 and below Listening: 180 and below</p> <p>Oral BEST: 0–15 (SPL 0–1)</p> <p>BEST Plus: 400 and below (SPL 0–1)</p> <p>BEST Literacy: 0–7 (SPL 0–1)</p>	<p>Individual cannot speak or understand English, or understands only isolated words or phrases.</p>	<p>Individual has no or minimal reading or writing skills in any language. May have little or no comprehension of how print corresponds to spoken language and may have difficulty using a writing instrument.</p>	<p>Individual functions minimally or not at all in English and can communicate only through gestures or a few isolated words, such as name and other personal information; may recognize only common signs or symbols (e.g., stop sign, product logos); can handle only very routine entry-level jobs that do not require oral or written communication in English. There is no knowledge or use of computers or technology.</p>
<p>Low Beginning ESL</p> <p><i>Test Benchmark:</i></p> <p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 181–190 Listening: 181–190 Writing: 136–145</p> <p>Oral BEST: 16–28 (SPL 2)</p> <p>BEST Plus: 401–417 (SPL 2)</p> <p>BEST Literacy: 8–35 (SPL 2)</p>	<p>Individual can understand basic greetings, simple phrases, and commands. Can understand simple questions related to personal information, spoken slowly and with repetition. Understands a limited number of words related to immediate needs and can respond with simple learned phrases to some common questions related to routine survival situations. Speaks slowly and with difficulty. Demonstrates little or no control over grammar.</p>	<p>Individual can read numbers and letters and some common sight words. May be able to sound out simple words. Can read and write some familiar words and phrases, but has a limited understanding of connected prose in English. Can write basic personal information (e.g., name, address, telephone number) and can complete simple forms that elicit this information.</p>	<p>Individual functions with difficulty in social situations and in situations related to immediate needs. Can provide limited personal information on simple forms, and can read very simple common forms of print found in the home and environment, such as product names. Can handle routine entry-level jobs that require very simple written or oral English communication and in which job tasks can be demonstrated. May have limited knowledge and experience with computers.</p>

Table 1. National Reporting System Functioning Level Table (Continued)

Outcome Measures Definitions
Effective July 1, 2006

Educational Functioning Level Descriptors—English as a Second Language Levels			
Literacy Level	Listening and Speaking	Basic Reading and Writing	Functional and Workplace Skills
<p>High Beginning ESL</p> <p><i>Test Benchmark:</i></p> <p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 191–200 Listening: 191–200 Writing: 146–200</p> <p>Oral BEST: 29–41 (SPL 3) BEST Plus: 418–438 (SPL 3) BEST Literacy: 36–46 (SPL 3)</p>	<p>Individual can understand common words, simple phrases, and sentences containing familiar vocabulary, spoken slowly with some repetition. Individual can respond to simple questions about personal everyday activities and can express immediate needs, using simple learned phrases or short sentences. Shows limited control of grammar.</p>	<p>Individual can read most sight words and many other common words. Can read familiar phrases and simple sentences, but has a limited understanding of connected prose and may need frequent rereading.</p> <p>Individual can write some simple sentences with limited vocabulary. Meaning may be unclear. Writing shows very little control of basic grammar, capitalization, and punctuation and has many spelling errors.</p>	<p>Individual can function in some situations related to immediate needs and in familiar social situations. Can provide basic personal information on simple forms and recognizes simple common forms of print found in the home, workplace, and community. Can handle routine entry-level jobs requiring basic written or oral English communication and in which job tasks can be demonstrated. May have limited knowledge or experience using computers.</p>
<p>Low Intermediate ESL</p> <p><i>Test Benchmark:</i></p> <p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 201–210 Listening: 201–210 Writing: 201–225</p> <p>Oral BEST: 42–50 (SPL 4) BEST Plus: 439–472 (SPL 4) BEST Literacy: 47–53 (SPL 5)</p>	<p>Individual can understand simple learned phrases and limited new phrases containing familiar vocabulary spoken slowly with frequent repetition; can ask and respond to questions using such phrases; can express basic survival needs and participate in some routine social conversations, although with some difficulty, and has some control of basic grammar.</p>	<p>Individual can read simple material on familiar subjects and comprehend simple and compound sentences in single or linked paragraphs containing a familiar vocabulary; can write simple notes and messages on familiar situations, but lacks clarity and focus. Sentence structure lacks variety but shows some control of basic grammar (e.g., present and past tense) and consistent use of punctuation (e.g., periods, capitalization).</p>	<p>Individual can interpret simple directions and schedules, signs, and maps; can fill out simple forms but needs support on some documents that are not simplified; and can handle routine entry-level jobs that involve some written or oral English communication but in which job tasks can be demonstrated. Individual can use simple computer programs and can perform a sequence of routine tasks given directions using technology (e.g., fax machine, computer).</p>

Table 1. National Reporting System Functioning Level Table (Continued)

Outcome Measures Definitions

Effective July 1, 2006

Educational Functioning Level Descriptors—English as a Second Language Levels			
Literacy Level	Listening and Speaking	Basic Reading and Writing	Functional and Workplace Skills
<p>High Intermediate ESL</p> <p><i>Test Benchmark:</i></p> <p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 211–220 Listening: 211–220 Writing: 226–242</p> <p>Oral BEST: 51–57 (SPL 5) BEST Plus: 473–506 (SPL 5) BEST Literacy: 54–65 (SPL 6)</p>	<p>Individual can understand learned phrases and short new phrases containing familiar vocabulary spoken slowly and with some repetition; can communicate basic survival needs with some help; can participate in conversation in limited social situations and use new phrases with hesitation; and relies on description and concrete terms. There is inconsistent control of more complex grammar.</p>	<p>Individual can read text on familiar subjects that have a simple and clear underlying structure (e.g., clear main idea, chronological order); can use context to determine meaning; can interpret actions required in specific written directions; can write simple paragraphs with main idea and supporting details on familiar topics (e.g., daily activities, personal issues) by recombining learned vocabulary and structures; and can self-edit for spelling and punctuation errors.</p>	<p>Individual can meet basic survival and social needs, can follow some simple oral and written instruction, and has some ability to communicate on the telephone on familiar subjects; can write messages and notes related to basic needs; can complete basic medical forms and job applications; and can handle jobs that involve basic oral instructions and written communication in tasks that can be clarified orally. Individual can work with or learn basic computer software, such as word processing, and can follow simple instructions for using technology.</p>
<p>Advanced ESL</p> <p><i>Test Benchmark:</i></p> <p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 221–235 Listening: 221–235 Writing: 243–260</p> <p>Oral BEST: 58–64 (SPL 6) BEST Plus: 507–540 (SPL 6) BEST Literacy: 66 and above (SPL 7)</p> <p><i>Exit Criteria:</i></p> <p>CASAS Reading and Listening: 236 and above CASAS Writing: 261 and above Oral BEST: 65 and above (SPL 7) BEST Plus: 541 and above (SPL 7)</p>	<p>Individual can understand and communicate in a variety of contexts related to daily life and work. Can understand and participate in conversation on a variety of everyday subjects, including some unfamiliar vocabulary, but may need repetition or rewording. Can clarify own or others' meaning by rewording. Can understand the main points of simple discussions and informational communication in familiar contexts. Shows some ability to go beyond learned patterns and construct new sentences. Shows control of basic grammar, but has difficulty using more complex structures. Has some basic fluency of speech.</p>	<p>Individual can read moderately complex text related to life roles and descriptions and narratives from authentic materials on familiar subjects. Uses context and word analysis skills to understand vocabulary, and uses multiple strategies to understand unfamiliar texts. Can make inferences, predictions, and compare and contrast information in familiar texts. Individual can write multiparagraph text (e.g., organizes and develops ideas with clear introduction, body, and conclusion), using some complex grammar and a variety of sentence structures. Makes some grammar and spelling errors. Uses a range of vocabulary.</p>	<p>Individual can function independently to meet most survival needs and to use English in routine social and work situations. Can communicate on the telephone on familiar subjects. Understands radio and television on familiar topics. Can interpret routine charts, tables, and graphs, and can complete forms and handle work demands that require nontechnical oral and written instructions and routine interaction with the public. Individual can use common software, learn new basic applications, and select the correct basic technology in familiar situations.</p>

CASAS: Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems; BEST: Basic English Skills Test; SPL: Student Performance Level.

Note: From National Reporting System for Adult Education: www.nrsweb.org/

Performance Objective

Telephone the school office to report a child's absence. Give the name of the child, the child's teacher or class, and the reason for the absence.

Notes:

Note: From National Center for Family Literacy & Center for Applied Linguistics. (2004). *Practitioner toolkit: Working with adult English language learners*. Louisville, KY & Washington, DC: Author. Available from www.cal.org/caela/tools/program_development/prac_toolkit.html

Planning an Assessment Task

The goal of performance tasks is to acquire evidence that students have achieved the knowledge and skills to complete the learning objective.

When designing a performance task, ask yourself—

- ▶ Does the task measure what has been taught?
- ▶ Does the task mirror a real-world application of the knowledge and skills?
- ▶ Does the task allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills?

Directions

Read the learning objectives and the assessment tasks below. Decide whether or not they are well designed based on the criteria above. Discuss your answers with a partner.

Learning Objective: Telephone the school office to report a child's absence. Give the name of the child, the child's teacher or class, and the reason for the absence.

Performance task: *Give students a contact assignment to call the teacher's voice mail and leave a message; or students can record a message, without a script, using a tape recorder.*

	Yes	No	Because
Does it measure what has been taught?	X		The students need to give required information orally.
Does it mirror real-world problems?	X		Every parent with school-age children needs to do this.
Can students demonstrate their knowledge and skills?	X		The task simulates a real-life task.

Learning Objective: Given visuals of housing problems, students will call and report a problem, request repairs, and make an appointment for repairs.

Performance task: *Students will write a letter to the landlord making a complaint about the housing problems.*

	Yes	No	Because
Does it measure what has been taught?		X	This is an oral skills objective. Writing complaint letters requires other skills not addressed in this learning objective.
Does it mirror real-world problems?	X		There are times when writing a complaint letter is appropriate.
Can students demonstrate their knowledge and skills?		X	The task does not allow student to demonstrate the ability to use language to report a problem, request repairs, and make an appointment.

Directions

Describe another task for this learning objective. Share it with a partner. Your partner will check that it meets the above criteria. Check your partners work.

	Yes	No	Because
Does it measure what has been taught?			
Does it mirror real-world problems?			
Can students demonstrate their knowledge and skills?			

Sample Assessment Activities: Guiding Questions

Line Dialogue

1. What is the purpose of this activity?

Line dialogues give students opportunities for repeated practice using targeted language in short dialogues that they have been taught.

2. How does a line dialogue work?

Students stand in two lines facing each other. In Line A, each person holds a cue card and asks the same question to every student in Line B. The people in Line B listen to the question, look at the cue cards shown to them by the person in Line A, and respond to the question. After each question, students in Line B move down the line. The last person in Line B moves to the beginning of the line. All pairs talk at once.

3. How can it be used as an assessment activity?

Because of the nature of line dialogue activities, the teacher can stand unobtrusively near the lines of students and observe pairs ask and answer questions using the target language that has been taught. Line dialogue assessment tasks can focus on vocabulary knowledge, question formation, and clarification skills.

Information Gap

1. What is the purpose of this activity?

Learners share information by asking and answering questions. In one-way gap activities, one learner has all the information. In two-way gap activities, both learners have information and must share it to complete a task.

2. How do information gap activities work?

Vocabulary and structures used in the gap activities are pretaught. Students must be familiar with question-and-answer formulas. The teacher creates a handout based on the information, language structures, and/or vocabulary that students have been working on. The teacher makes two copies. Then the teacher deletes some information from one copy of the worksheet (or different information from both worksheets). Students work in pairs, and each person gets a different worksheet. Students ask and answer questions to complete their worksheet.

3. How can it be used as an assessment activity?

The teacher can observe pairs of students asking for and giving information. The teacher can observe listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills; vocabulary knowledge; and language structures.

Conversation Grid

1. What is the purpose of this activity?

Conversation grid activities give students repeated practice with language structures, question formation, vocabulary, and cultural aspects related to the topic. Students ask the same questions to several people and record answers on the grid.

2. How does a conversation grid activity work?

The teacher creates a grid with between three and five columns and as many rows as the teacher wants students to practice. Each column has a question that has been pretaught. The teacher models the task with one or two students, asking them the questions and recording their answers on the grid. Students receive their own copies of the grid and then talk to their classmates and complete their grids.

Sample conversation grid

What is your first name?	What is your last name?	Where are you from?

3. How can it be used as an assessment activity?

The teacher can observe students conducting interviews and writing responses. The teacher can also participate. Communicative abilities; vocabulary knowledge; listening, speaking, and writing skills; and clarification skills can be observed and assessed.

Figure 1. Observation Measure for Listening and Reading

Type of assessment: Observation measure.

Purpose: To assess listening and reading skills.

Method: After learners listen to or read instructions, staff members assess their performance and check the appropriate box in the chart.

For example: After learning how to make instant chocolate pudding for a class party, learners are asked to follow oral or written instructions for making vanilla pudding (familiar instructions) and gelatin dessert (new instructions).

Learners who can comprehend and read instructions without asking questions or looking terribly puzzled are rated “With ease.” Those who occasionally ask to have a word provided, a sentence modeled, or seek help from peers are rated “With some support.” Learners who need to consult a dictionary, ask peers for translation, or constantly observe others are checked “With great difficulty.”

	Receptive skills	With ease	With some support	With great difficulty	Not at all
Listening	Follows familiar instructions				
	Follows new instructions				
Reading	Reads familiar instructions				
	Reads new instructions				

Note: From Holt, D. D., & Van Duzer, C. H. (Eds.) (2000). *Assessing success in family literacy and adult ESL*. McHenry, IL & Washington, DC: Delta Systems & Center for Applied Linguistics.

Figure 2. Can-Do List for Self-Assessment

Put a checkmark (✓) in the box that best describes you (one ✓ for each row).

Here's what I can do.	I can do this. No problem.	I do OK most of the time, except when things are complicated.	This is a little difficult for me, but I can do it with some help from others.	This is very difficult for me. I can only do it with a lot of help from others.	I can't do this. No way. It's much too difficult.
Talk about my country and my city with a friend or neighbor					
Ask for directions on the street or ask where something is in a store					
Ask someone to speak more slowly or to say things in a different way					
Fill out a form (name, birth-date, address, phone)					
Explain about myself and my work in a job interview					
Understand the notes that my child's teacher sends home from school					
Figure out my phone bill or electricity bill					
Shop for food and clothes.					
Explain to the doctor in detail what's wrong with me					
Pick a story in the newspaper and read it					
Understand the news on TV					

Note: From Holt, D. D., & Van Duzer, C. H. (Eds.) (2000). *Assessing success in family literacy and adult ESL*. McHenry, IL & Washington, DC: Delta Systems & Center for Applied Linguistics.

Planning a Performance Assessment Task: Practice Activity 1

Directions

1. Think about the students whose levels you identified using the NRS level descriptions.
2. Use the following learning objective to complete the task:

Telephone the school office to report a child's absence. Give the name of the child, the child's teacher or class, and the reason for the absence.

3. Review the Planning an Assessment Task worksheet you completed earlier.
4. Complete the planning sheet below.

Performance Task

Describe the assessment task you will use. *Performance tasks should simulate real-world tasks, be level appropriate, and provide students with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills.*

Observation Measure

What criteria will you use to evaluate performances?

What rating scale will you use to measure performances?

Presentation Assessment Checklist

Group 1	Group 2
<p>The performance task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> simulates real-world tasks <input type="checkbox"/> is level appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> provides students with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills <p>The criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> are measurable <input type="checkbox"/> are appropriate for the task <p>The rating scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> is clear 	<p>The performance task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> simulates real-world tasks <input type="checkbox"/> is level appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> provides students with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills <p>The criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> are measurable <input type="checkbox"/> are appropriate for the task <p>The rating scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> is clear
Group 3	Group 4
<p>The performance task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> simulates real-world tasks <input type="checkbox"/> is level appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> provides students with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills <p>The criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> are measurable <input type="checkbox"/> are appropriate for the task <p>The rating scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> is clear 	<p>The performance task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> simulates real-world tasks <input type="checkbox"/> is level appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> provides students with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills <p>The criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> are measurable <input type="checkbox"/> are appropriate for the task <p>The rating scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> is clear
Group 5	Group 6
<p>The performance task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> simulates real-world tasks <input type="checkbox"/> is level appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> provides students with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills <p>The criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> are measurable <input type="checkbox"/> are appropriate for the task <p>The rating scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> is clear 	<p>The performance task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> simulates real-world tasks <input type="checkbox"/> is level appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> provides students with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills <p>The criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> are measurable <input type="checkbox"/> are appropriate for the task <p>The rating scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> is clear

Planning a Performance Assessment Task: Practice Activity 2

Directions

1. Think about the students whose levels you identified using the NRS level descriptions.
2. Use one of the learning objectives on the next page to complete the task.
3. Review the Planning an Assessment Task worksheet you completed earlier and the ESL activity descriptions.
4. Complete the planning sheet below.

Topic: _____

Proficiency level: _____

Learning objective: _____

The desired result of this objective is that

Therefore, I need evidence that students can

So, my assessment task needs to include some things like

Performance Task

Describe the assessment task you will use.

Observation Measure

What criteria will you use to evaluate performances?

What rating scale will you use to measure performances?

Learning Objectives: Practice Activity 2

1. NRS Level: Beginning ESL Literacy

Identify key dates on a child's school calendar, including holidays, parent/teacher conferences, and report card dates.

2. NRS Level: High Beginning ESL

Schedule a doctor's appointment over the telephone. State the reason for the visit, provide personal information, and set the date and time for the appointment.

3. NRS Level: Low Intermediate ESL

Complete a job application, including personal identification, education, and work history.

Notes

Getting Acquainted: Assessment Practices in the Classroom

Directions:

Answer the following questions for yourself. Next, find a partner and share your responses with each other. Then, reflect on the questions below.

	You	Your Partner
1. Where do you teach?		
2. What level(s) do you teach?		
3. Why is assessment an essential part of the instructional process?		
4. How do you know that learners are making progress? What is evidence of progress in language and literacy development?		
5. What dimensions of language and literacy do you assess? What types of assessment tools do you use in your classes?		
6. What are some specific issues/questions you have regarding classroom assessment?		

Reflection Questions:

Did you find similarities and differences in your assessment practices? Did the exchange bring up any important questions, thoughts, or ideas for you?

Assessment in the Adult ESL Classroom

Workshop Goal, Objectives, and Agenda

Goal:

To increase knowledge and skills in designing and using a variety of assessments in the adult ESL classroom to measure learner progress in language and literacy development

Objectives:

- ▶ To understand classroom assessments and their place in the instructional process
- ▶ To recognize key elements in planning assessments
- ▶ To identify the role of performance objectives in planning assessments
- ▶ To develop effective assessment activities

Agenda:

- I. Introduction and Warm-Up
- II. Presentation
- III. Practice and Application
- IV. Wrap-Up and Evaluation

Assessment in the Adult ESL Classroom

Background Reading

Learner assessments are used in adult ESL programs for many purposes: to place learners in appropriate instructional levels and classes, to measure their progress and motivate them to advance to higher levels, to qualify them to enroll in academic or job training programs, to document program effectiveness, and to demonstrate learner gains to meet accountability requirements. Assessments also are used throughout a program to determine learners' goals and needs and to help learners assess their own progress. To accomplish these purposes, programs often use a variety of assessments—both standardized and classroom measures.

Assessment of adult English language learners begins when students enter an adult ESL program: Information is collected during intake and registration processes about students' language and educational backgrounds, literacy levels in their native languages, English language and literacy levels, and goals for learning English. This information should be used to accurately place students in appropriate classes and prepare teachers for working with them. Placement assessments can be purchased (commercial products are available), based on a textbook series, or created locally to meet specific programmatic needs and language focus (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, writing). The types of placement assessments usually used—oral interviews, writing samples, constructed response, reading comprehension passages, and form completion—do not provide extensive diagnostic information on English language abilities, but rather portray a general description of student strengths, areas for improvement, and goals for learning English. In some adult ESL programs, standardized tests are used for placement purposes, as well as to meet the pretest/posttest accountability and reporting requirements of the funding agencies.

Once learners are placed in an appropriate class, formal needs assessments are conducted to identify the content topics, language skills, and learning goals that students would like to focus on at the beginning of a course of instruction and periodically throughout. Classroom assessments are then used throughout a course of study to guide the teacher in planning instruction that meets learners' needs and goals and to help learners assess their own progress. Through the use of performance objectives, teachers determine what the final learning outcome will be and how it will be assessed, and can then design lesson plans and instructional activities leading up to the final assessment.

Classroom assessments include surveys, interviews, checklists, observations, teacher-developed tests, learner self-assessments, portfolios, and performance-based tests (Van Duzer, 2002). These assessments allow program administrators and teachers to learn what adults need and want to learn (in a needs assessment) and monitor their learning from classroom-based activities (in ongoing assessment). Portfolios or collections of individuals' work can include such items as book reports, notes from interviews, learners' reflection on their progress, writing samples, data from performance-based assessments, and scores on standardized tests. From program-developed performance-based tests, instructors, administrators, and learners can get information about how a learner uses English to accomplish different tasks. Skills such as reading a chart or locating information on a schedule can be related to actual situations that learners might encounter. Authentic materials such as job applications, pay stubs, and union contracts are often used to assess learner knowledge and skills in workplace programs (Holt & Van Duzer, 2000).

Principles of Effective Assessment

For both standardized and classroom assessments, application of the following principles will produce effective assessment procedures:

1. Clearly identify the purpose of the assessment (why the learners are being assessed) and what learning is to be assessed (e.g., increased speaking proficiency).
2. Select assessment instruments and procedures that match the learning goals of the program (e.g., an oral interview to show progress in speaking skills, writing samples to show progress in writing) and that engage learners so they are interested and will strive to do their best.
3. Whenever possible, use multiple measures to present a more complete picture of what has been learned.
4. Ensure that adequate resources are available to carry out the assessments (e.g., enough materials, comfortable environment, adequately trained administrators and scorers).
5. Be aware of the limitations of the assessments selected.
6. Remember that assessment is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. Share assessment results with learners and instructors, as well as administrative staff and funders.

Note: From National Center for Family Literacy & National Center for ESL Literacy. (2004). *Practitioner toolkit: Working with adult English language learners*. Louisville, KY & Washington, DC: National Center for Family Literacy & Center for Applied Linguistics. Available from www.cal.org/caela/tools/program_development/elltoolkit/CombinedFiles1.pdf

Performance Assessment

There is a direct link between instruction and assessment. Performance assessment requires learners to use prior knowledge and recent learning to accomplish tasks that demonstrate what they know and can do. Examples of performance assessment tasks include *oral or written reports* (e.g., on how to become a citizen); *projects* (e.g., researching, producing, and distributing a booklet on recreational opportunities available in the community); and *exhibitions or demonstrations* (e.g., a poster depicting the steps to becoming a U.S. citizen). A variety of performance assessments provide a more complete picture of a learner's abilities than can be gathered from performance on a pencil-and-paper standardized test.

For adult ESL classes, performance assessment reflects current thought about second language acquisition: Learners acquire language as they use it in social interactions to accomplish purposeful tasks (e.g., finding information or applying for a job). The performance may be assessed simply by documenting the successful completion of the task or by the use of rubrics designed to assess various dimensions of carrying out the task (e.g., rating oral presentation skills on a scale of 1–5). Both instructors and learners can be involved in the development of evaluation guidelines and in the evaluation procedure itself (Van Duzer, 2002; Van Duzer & Berdán, 2000).

- Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. (1997). *School effectiveness for language minority students*. Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education. Available from www.ncele.gwu.edu/pubs/resource/effectiveness
- Van Duzer, C. (2002). *Issues in accountability and assessment for adult ESL instruction*. Washington, DC: National Center for ESL Literacy Education. Available from www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/accountQA.html
- Van Duzer, C., & Berdán, R. (2000). Perspectives on assessment in adult ESOL instruction. In *The annual review of adult learning and literacy*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Available from www.ncsall.net/?id=493

Table 1. National Reporting System Functioning Level Table

Outcome Measures Definitions
Effective July 1, 2006

Educational Functioning Level Descriptors—English as a Second Language Levels			
Literacy Level	Listening and Speaking	Basic Reading and Writing	Functional and Workplace Skills
<p>Beginning ESL Literacy</p> <p><i>Test Benchmark:</i></p> <p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 180 and below Listening: 180 and below</p> <p>Oral BEST: 0–15 (SPL 0–1)</p> <p>BEST Plus: 400 and below (SPL 0–1)</p> <p>BEST Literacy: 0–7 (SPL 0–1)</p>	<p>Individual cannot speak or understand English, or understands only isolated words or phrases.</p>	<p>Individual has no or minimal reading or writing skills in any language. May have little or no comprehension of how print corresponds to spoken language and may have difficulty using a writing instrument.</p>	<p>Individual functions minimally or not at all in English and can communicate only through gestures or a few isolated words, such as name and other personal information; may recognize only common signs or symbols (e.g., stop sign, product logos); can handle only very routine entry-level jobs that do not require oral or written communication in English. There is no knowledge or use of computers or technology.</p>
<p>Low Beginning ESL</p> <p><i>Test Benchmark:</i></p> <p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 181–190 Listening: 181–190 Writing: 136–145</p> <p>Oral BEST: 16–28 (SPL 2)</p> <p>BEST Plus: 401–417 (SPL 2)</p> <p>BEST Literacy: 8–35 (SPL 2)</p>	<p>Individual can understand basic greetings, simple phrases, and commands. Can understand simple questions related to personal information, spoken slowly and with repetition. Understands a limited number of words related to immediate needs and can respond with simple learned phrases to some common questions related to routine survival situations. Speaks slowly and with difficulty. Demonstrates little or no control over grammar.</p>	<p>Individual can read numbers and letters and some common sight words. May be able to sound out simple words. Can read and write some familiar words and phrases, but has a limited understanding of connected prose in English. Can write basic personal information (e.g., name, address, telephone number) and can complete simple forms that elicit this information.</p>	<p>Individual functions with difficulty in social situations and in situations related to immediate needs. Can provide limited personal information on simple forms, and can read very simple common forms of print found in the home and environment, such as product names. Can handle routine entry-level jobs that require very simple written or oral English communication and in which job tasks can be demonstrated. May have limited knowledge and experience with computers.</p>

Table 1. National Reporting System Functioning Level Table (Continued)

Outcome Measures Definitions
Effective July 1, 2006

Educational Functioning Level Descriptors—English as a Second Language Levels			
Literacy Level	Listening and Speaking	Basic Reading and Writing	Functional and Workplace Skills
<p>High Beginning ESL</p> <p><i>Test Benchmark:</i></p> <p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 191–200 Listening: 191–200 Writing: 146–200</p> <p>Oral BEST: 29–41 (SPL 3) BEST Plus: 418–438 (SPL 3) BEST Literacy: 36–46 (SPL 3)</p>	<p>Individual can understand common words, simple phrases, and sentences containing familiar vocabulary, spoken slowly with some repetition. Individual can respond to simple questions about personal everyday activities and can express immediate needs, using simple learned phrases or short sentences. Shows limited control of grammar.</p>	<p>Individual can read most sight words and many other common words. Can read familiar phrases and simple sentences, but has a limited understanding of connected prose and may need frequent rereading.</p> <p>Individual can write some simple sentences with limited vocabulary. Meaning may be unclear. Writing shows very little control of basic grammar, capitalization, and punctuation and has many spelling errors.</p>	<p>Individual can function in some situations related to immediate needs and in familiar social situations. Can provide basic personal information on simple forms and recognizes simple common forms of print found in the home, workplace, and community. Can handle routine entry-level jobs requiring basic written or oral English communication and in which job tasks can be demonstrated. May have limited knowledge or experience using computers.</p>
<p>Low Intermediate ESL</p> <p><i>Test Benchmark:</i></p> <p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 201–210 Listening: 201–210 Writing: 201–225</p> <p>Oral BEST: 42–50 (SPL 4) BEST Plus: 439–472 (SPL 4) BEST Literacy: 47–53 (SPL 5)</p>	<p>Individual can understand simple learned phrases and limited new phrases containing familiar vocabulary spoken slowly with frequent repetition; can ask and respond to questions using such phrases; can express basic survival needs and participate in some routine social conversations, although with some difficulty, and has some control of basic grammar.</p>	<p>Individual can read simple material on familiar subjects and comprehend simple and compound sentences in single or linked paragraphs containing a familiar vocabulary; can write simple notes and messages on familiar situations, but lacks clarity and focus. Sentence structure lacks variety but shows some control of basic grammar (e.g., present and past tense) and consistent use of punctuation (e.g., periods, capitalization).</p>	<p>Individual can interpret simple directions and schedules, signs, and maps; can fill out simple forms but needs support on some documents that are not simplified; and can handle routine entry-level jobs that involve some written or oral English communication but in which job tasks can be demonstrated. Individual can use simple computer programs and can perform a sequence of routine tasks given directions using technology (e.g., fax machine, computer).</p>

Table 1. National Reporting System Functioning Level Table (Continued)

Outcome Measures Definitions
Effective July 1, 2006

Educational Functioning Level Descriptors—English as a Second Language Levels			
Literacy Level	Listening and Speaking	Basic Reading and Writing	Functional and Workplace Skills
<p>High Intermediate ESL</p> <p><i>Test Benchmark:</i></p> <p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 211–220 Listening: 211–220 Writing: 226–242</p> <p>Oral BEST: 51–57 (SPL 5)</p> <p>BEST Plus: 473–506 (SPL 5)</p> <p>BEST Literacy: 54–65 (SPL 6)</p>	<p>Individual can understand learned phrases and short new phrases containing familiar vocabulary spoken slowly and with some repetition; can communicate basic survival needs with some help; can participate in conversation in limited social situations and use new phrases with hesitation; and relies on description and concrete terms. There is inconsistent control of more complex grammar.</p>	<p>Individual can read text on familiar subjects that have a simple and clear underlying structure (e.g., clear main idea, chronological order); can use context to determine meaning; can interpret actions required in specific written directions; can write simple paragraphs with main idea and supporting details on familiar topics (e.g., daily activities, personal issues) by recombining learned vocabulary and structures; and can self- and peer edit for spelling and punctuation errors.</p>	<p>Individual can meet basic survival and social needs, can follow some simple oral and written instruction, and has some ability to communicate on the telephone on familiar subjects; can write messages and notes related to basic needs; can complete basic medical forms and job applications; and can handle jobs that involve basic oral instructions and written communication in tasks that can be clarified orally. Individual can work with or learn basic computer software, such as word processing, and can follow simple instructions for using technology.</p>
<p>Advanced ESL</p> <p><i>Test Benchmark:</i></p> <p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 221–235 Listening: 221–235 Writing: 243–260</p> <p>Oral BEST: 58–64 (SPL 6)</p> <p>BEST Plus: 507–540 (SPL 6)</p> <p>BEST Literacy: 66 and above (SPL 7)</p> <p><i>Exit Criteria:</i></p> <p>CASAS Reading and Listening: 236 and above</p> <p>CASAS Writing: 261 and above</p> <p>Oral BEST: 65 and above (SPL 7)</p> <p>BEST Plus: 541 and above (SPL 7)</p>	<p>Individual can understand and communicate in a variety of contexts related to daily life and work. Can understand and participate in conversation on a variety of everyday subjects, including some unfamiliar vocabulary, but may need repetition or rewording. Can clarify own or others' meaning by rewording. Can understand the main points of simple discussions and informational communication in familiar contexts. Shows some ability to go beyond learned patterns and construct new sentences. Shows control of basic grammar, but has difficulty using more complex structures. Has some basic fluency of speech.</p>	<p>Individual can read moderately complex text related to life roles and descriptions and narratives from authentic materials on familiar subjects. Uses context and word analysis skills to understand vocabulary, and uses multiple strategies to understand unfamiliar texts. Can make inferences, predictions, and compare and contrast information in familiar texts. Individual can write multiparagraph text (e.g., organizes and develops ideas with clear introduction, body, and conclusion), using some complex grammar and a variety of sentence structures. Makes some grammar and spelling errors. Uses a range of vocabulary.</p>	<p>Individual can function independently to meet most survival needs and to use English in routine social and work situations. Can communicate on the telephone on familiar subjects. Understands radio and television on familiar topics. Can interpret routine charts, tables, and graphs, and can complete forms and handle work demands that require nontechnical oral and written instructions and routine interaction with the public. Individual can use common software, learn new basic applications, and select the correct basic technology in familiar situations.</p>

CASAS: Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems; BEST: Basic English Skills Test; SPL: Student Performance Level.
Note: From National Reporting System for Adult Education: www.nrsweb.org/

Performance Objective

Telephone the school office to report a child's absence. Give the name of the child, the child's teacher or class, and the reason for the absence.

Notes:

Note: From National Center for Family Literacy & Center for Applied Linguistics. (2004). *Practitioner toolkit: Working with adult English language learners*. Louisville, KY & Washington, DC: Author. Available from www.cal.org/caela/tools/program_development/prac_toolkit.html

Planning an Assessment Task

The goal of performance tasks is to acquire evidence that students have achieved the knowledge and skills to complete the learning objective.

When designing a performance task, ask yourself—

- ▶ Does the task measure what has been taught?
- ▶ Does the task mirror a real-world application of the knowledge and skills?
- ▶ Does the task allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills?

Directions

Read the learning objectives and the assessment tasks below. Decide whether or not they are well designed based on the criteria above. Discuss your answers with a partner.

Learning Objective: Telephone the school office to report a child's absence. Give the name of the child, the child's teacher or class, and the reason for the absence.

Performance task: *Give students a contact assignment to call the teacher's voice mail and leave a message; or students can record a message, without a script, using a tape recorder.*

	Yes	No	Because
Does it measure what has been taught?			
Does it mirror real-world problems?			
Can students demonstrate their knowledge and skills?			

Learning Objective: Given visuals of housing problems, students will call and report a problem, request repairs, and make an appointment for repairs.

Performance task: *Students will write a letter to the landlord making a complaint about the housing problems.*

	Yes	No	Because
Does it measure what has been taught?		X	
Does it mirror real-world problems?	X		
Can students demonstrate their knowledge and skills?		X	

Directions

Describe another task for this learning objective. Share it with a partner. Your partner will check that it meets the above criteria. Check your partners work.

	Yes	No	Because
Does it measure what has been taught?			
Does it mirror real-world problems?			
Can students demonstrate their knowledge and skills?			

Sample Assessment Activities: Line Dialogue

Highlights: This activity is good for a change of pace and gets learners out of their chairs and interacting with everyone in the class. A great deal of peer teaching and friendly conversation can happen throughout this activity.

Objectives: Learners get intensive (repeated many times) practice using the targeted language in short dialogues. Learners may get to know one another in an atmosphere where peer teaching is naturally supported.

Context: This activity can be used in all levels or multilevel classes. It is suitable for general ESL classes as well as specific classes such as those designed for the workplace or family literacy. This activity works best for classes with at least 10–12 learners.

Estimated time: The first time this activity is used, the explanation may require several repetitions and demonstrations. Afterward, line dialogues should take no more than 15 minutes. After 15 minutes, the activity may become a little tedious.

Materials: Learners in one line have cue cards that are used to elicit responses from learners in the other line. Cue cards can contain word or picture clues for responses to questions. Realia (authentic items) are also effective for beginning-level classes. If learners are using familiar questions such as “What is your name?” or “How are you?” no cue card prompts may be necessary. For higher-level students, cue cards will probably not be needed. Questions for higher-level students come from the targeted language. “What would you do if you won one million dollars?” or “What would you like to be doing 10 years from now?” might be questions asked and answered in a line dialogue with intermediate or advanced learners.

Procedure:

1. Preteach the dialogue.
2. Learners form two lines face each other. Hand out cue cards to learners in Line A. These cue cards are used to elicit responses from learners in Line B.
3. Line A remains stationary, repeating the same questions to every learner in Line B. Learners in Line B listen to the question, look at the cue cards, respond to the question, and then move to the right and face another learner in Line A. All pairs talk at once. The last person in Line B moves to the beginning of the line. The activity continues until everyone in Line A has asked a question to everyone in Line B. **Example:** Task: Learners will identify body parts from visuals. Dialogue: A (showing cue card to person in Line B): What’s wrong? B: My back hurts.

Note: There are a variety of ways to set up a line dialogue. Only one line can ask questions, or both lines can ask questions. As discussed above, cue cards may or may not be used. In classes where learners have some comfort and familiarity with everyday language, learners decide on their own what questions to ask. In all cases, one line remains stationary and the other moves.

Evaluation: This activity provides the teacher with an excellent opportunity to unobtrusively evaluate learners; once learners understand how to conduct a line dialogue, they usually have so much fun that they don't pay attention to the teacher at all. During this activity, the teacher can observe learners' speaking and listening skills, vocabulary knowledge, question formation, clarification skills, and even comfort level using English.

Extension activities: To give learners an opportunity to speak English with others, two small classes could participate in the line dialogue. These classes could be at approximately the same level, or the less advanced class could be in the stationary line and practice the questions in advance.

Note: From *ESL Curriculum for Adults*. (n.d.). Arlington, VA: Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP). Adapted with permission. Available from www.arlington.k12.va.us/instruct/ctae/adult_ed/REEP/reepcurriculum

Sample Assessment Activities: Information Gap

Highlights: In this activity two learners share information to complete a task. In one-way gap activities, one learner has all the information (e.g., one learner describes a picture and the other learner draws it). In two-way gap activities, both learners have some information and must share it with the other to complete the task. Because this activity usually combines speaking and listening with reading and writing, all the skills are practiced.

Objective: Learners find and share information by asking and answering questions to complete a task.

Context: This activity can be used in all levels or with multilevel groups. It is suitable for general ESL classes as well as specific classes such as those designed for family literacy or the workplace.

Estimated time: The time varies but usually ranges between 20 and 35 minutes.

Materials: The teacher prepares a master handout based on information, language structures, and vocabulary the students have been working on. Then, the teacher deletes pieces of information on two sets of handouts. For example, Handout A will have some information deleted that Handout B will provide. Handout B will have other pieces of information deleted that Handout A will provide. In a workplace context, the master could be a weekly schedule or list of work tasks with different items or tasks missing from Handout A and Handout B. Types and amounts of missing information can be varied to meet the needs of learners at different levels.

Procedure:

1. Preteach and practice vocabulary and structures for the particular task. Learners should also be familiar with question-and-answer formulas (e.g., “What time is ___” and “It’s at ___”) and ways to ask for clarification (e.g., “Excuse me, can you repeat,” or “I’m sorry, I don’t understand”). These can be introduced in the beginning days of a class and recycled, adapted, and extended over time.
2. Explain the information-gap procedures by modeling a sample gap activity with an able volunteer from the class.
3. Have learners work with a partner. One learner in each pair gets Handout A and the other gets Handout B. Ask two learners to model asking and answering questions in the gap activity before the whole class begins the activity.

Note: For a multilevel class, you can make the A form more difficult than the B form. Be sure to pass out the papers to the appropriate person. The first time you do this activity, some learners may be somewhat confused, but as you repeat this activity in other contexts, learners will feel comfortable. Ask learners not to show each other their forms, but don’t worry when that occurs.

4. Learners ask and answer questions and record answers until both handouts A and B have been completed.

5. When they are finished, learners compare their papers with each other.
6. To complete the activity as a whole group, you can ask volunteers to come up to the board or overhead projector to fill in information they've gathered from their partner. This helps solidify the knowledge and gives some slower learners or pairs a chance to catch up and check their work without stress.

Evaluation: Walking around the room observing learners during the activity will let you know how well individual learners use and understand English in the activity.

Variations: The handouts may be menus, store ads, maps, pictures, or charts, as well as readings.

Extension activities: Let learners create their own information-gap activities.

Sample Assessment Activities: Conversation Grid

Highlights: The power of using conversation grid activities is that learners are involved in authentic, independent, and cooperative conversation without direct teacher involvement. These grids can be used with any topic as teaching or assessment activities. Learners usually enjoy them greatly.

Objective: Learners practice and increase knowledge of language structures (such as what, when, where, and why questions and their typical answers), vocabulary (as related to a particular topic such as “on the job”), and cultural aspects related to a topic. They ask questions, listen to answers, and record information on the grid.

Context: This activity is suitable for general ESL classes as well as specific classes such as those designed for family literacy or the workplace.

Estimated time: The time varies but usually ranges between 20 and 30 minutes.

Draw a large grid on the board or have an overhead transparency or PowerPoint slide with a sample of the grid to explain the activity. Learners need conversation grids to record answers. (See examples that follow.) Grids can have complete questions (e.g., What is your job now? What do you like to do in your free time?) or cue phrases (e.g., job in United States; hobbies).

Procedure:

1. Review language structures and key vocabulary that have been taught previously and are needed to successfully complete this activity. The review should be oral and written with plenty of input from the learners. For example, if one of the questions is going to be about their native country, with learner input put the names of all the countries that learners are from up on the board or on flipchart paper so this information will be easily accessible when learners begin to work on their own grids.
2. Hand out the grids and explain the task: “Today you’re going to interview five classmates. You will write their answers to your questions on this form.”
3. Discuss conversation questions, e.g., “What is your job now?” “What do you like to do in your free time?” “What else do you like to do?”
4. Talk about possible answers such as *construction worker*, *play soccer*, *watch soccer on TV*.
5. Model the task with one or two learner volunteers. It’s important to model several questions and answers so that learners know that full-sentence answers such as “I am a construction worker” or short answers such as “construction worker” are both acceptable.

Note: As in all activities, modeling correct responses to structures, such as “her name” vs. “she name,” is more effective than giving a big explanation about the correct grammar. This is especially true with formulaic phrases that use structures not yet discussed in class.

6. Check comprehension of instructions. For example, ask, “How many questions are you asking each classmate?” “How many people will you speak with today?”
7. Once learners begin the activity, monitor the process and be ready to assist learners if they ask for help.
Note: Some will finish only one conversation, while others may do several. That’s okay; people process, learn, and interact at different rates.
8. When the general buzz quiets down, it is time to stop the activity. Discuss the information with the class, for example, “Tell the class something you learned about one of your classmates.” You can tabulate information on a master grid or have learners work in small groups to do a tabulation of their grid information.

Evaluation: Evaluation is ongoing and informal. The teacher can participate in or just observe the conversations to note communicative abilities (as well as observe writing abilities from the grid). It is particularly useful to watch individual learners progress from week to week.

Conversation Grid: Personal Identification (All Levels)

What is your first name? (spell it please)	Where are you from?	What is your address?
Rosario	Mexico	701 N. Oak St.

Conversation Grid: Work (Intermediate and Advanced Levels)

What's your name?	What's your job now?	How long have you had this job?	What was your job in your home country?
Jose Gomez	construction worker	5 months	engineer

Conversation Grid: Free Time (Intermediate and Advanced Levels)

What's your name?	What do you like to do in your free time?	When do you have free time?	What did you do in your free time in your country?
Hajib Mansoor	play soccer	on Sunday afternoon	play soccer and go fishing

Note: From National Center for Family Literacy & Center for Applied Linguistics. (2004). *Practitioner toolkit: Working with adult English language learners*. Louisville, KY & Washington, DC: Author. Available from www.cal.org/caela/tools/program_development/elltoolkit/CombinedFilesI.pdf

Sample Assessment Activities: Guiding Questions

Line Dialogue

1. What is the purpose of this activity?
2. How does a line dialogue work?
3. How can it be used as an assessment activity?

Information Gap

1. What is the purpose of this activity?
2. How do information-gap activities work?
3. How can it be used as an assessment activity?

Conversation Grid

1. What is the purpose of this activity?
2. How does a conversation-grid activity work?
3. How can it be used as an assessment activity?

Figure 1. Observation Measure for Listening and Reading

Type of assessment: Observation measure.

Purpose: To assess listening and reading skills.

Method: After learners listen to or read instructions, staff members assess their performance and check the appropriate box in the chart.

For example: After learning how to make instant chocolate pudding for a class party, learners are asked to follow oral or written instructions for making vanilla pudding (familiar instructions) and gelatin dessert (new instructions).

Learners who can comprehend and read instructions without asking questions or looking terribly puzzled are rated “With ease.” Those who occasionally ask to have a word provided, a sentence modeled, or seek help from peers are rated “With some support.” Learners who need to consult a dictionary, ask peers for translation, or constantly observe others are checked “With great difficulty.”

Receptive skills		With ease	With some support	With great difficulty	Not at all
Listening	Follows familiar instructions				
	Follows new instructions				
Reading	Reads familiar instructions				
	Reads new instructions				

Note: From Holt, D. D., & Van Duzer, C. H. (Eds.) (2000). *Assessing success in family literacy and adult ESL*. McHenry, IL & Washington, DC: Delta Systems & Center for Applied Linguistics.

Figure 2. Can-Do List for Self-Assessment

Put a checkmark (✓) in the box that best describes you (one ✓ for each row).

Here's what I can do.	I can do this. No problem.	I do OK most of the time, except when things are complicated.	This is a little difficult for me, but I can do it with some help from others.	This is very difficult for me. I can only do it with a lot of help from others.	I can't do this. No way. It's much too difficult.
Talk about my country and my city with a friend or neighbor					
Ask for directions on the street or ask where something is in a store					
Ask someone to speak more slowly or to say things in a different way					
Fill out a form (name, birth-date, address, phone)					
Explain about myself and my work in a job interview					
Understand the notes that my child's teacher sends home from school					
Figure out my phone bill or electricity bill					
Shop for food and clothes.					
Explain to the doctor in detail what's wrong with me					
Pick a story in the newspaper and read it					
Understand the news on TV					

Note: From Holt, D. D., & Van Duzer, C. H. (Eds.) (2000). *Assessing success in family literacy and adult ESL*. McHenry, IL & Washington, DC: Delta Systems & Center for Applied Linguistics.

Planning a Performance Assessment Task: Practice Activity 1

Directions

1. Think about the students whose levels you identified using the NRS level descriptions.
2. Use the following learning objective to complete the task:

Telephone the school office to report a child's absence. Give the name of the child, the child's teacher or class, and the reason for the absence.

3. Review the Planning an Assessment Task worksheet you completed earlier.
4. Complete the planning sheet below.

Performance Task

Describe the assessment task you will use. *Performance tasks should simulate real-world tasks, be level appropriate, and provide students with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills.*

Observation Measure

What criteria will you use to evaluate performances?

What rating scale will you use to measure performances?

Presentation Assessment Checklist

Group 1	Group 2
<p>The performance task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> simulates real-world tasks <input type="checkbox"/> is level appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> provides students with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills <p>The criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> are measurable <input type="checkbox"/> are appropriate for the task <p>The rating scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> is clear 	<p>The performance task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> simulates real-world tasks <input type="checkbox"/> is level appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> provides students with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills <p>The criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> are measurable <input type="checkbox"/> are appropriate for the task <p>The rating scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> is clear
Group 3	Group 4
<p>The performance task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> simulates real-world tasks <input type="checkbox"/> is level appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> provides students with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills <p>The criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> are measurable <input type="checkbox"/> are appropriate for the task <p>The rating scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> is clear 	<p>The performance task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> simulates real-world tasks <input type="checkbox"/> is level appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> provides students with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills <p>The criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> are measurable <input type="checkbox"/> are appropriate for the task <p>The rating scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> is clear
Group 5	Group 6
<p>The performance task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> simulates real-world tasks <input type="checkbox"/> is level appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> provides students with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills <p>The criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> are measurable <input type="checkbox"/> are appropriate for the task <p>The rating scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> is clear 	<p>The performance task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> simulates real-world tasks <input type="checkbox"/> is level appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> provides students with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills <p>The criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> are measurable <input type="checkbox"/> are appropriate for the task <p>The rating scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> is clear

Planning a Performance Assessment Task: Practice Activity 2

Directions

1. Think about the students whose levels you identified using the NRS level descriptions.
2. Use one of the learning objectives on the next page to complete the task.
3. Review the Planning an Assessment Task worksheet you completed earlier and the ESL activity descriptions.
4. Complete the planning sheet below.

Topic: _____

Proficiency level: _____

Learning objective: _____

The desired result of this objective is that

Therefore, I need evidence that students can

So, my assessment task needs to include some things like

Performance Task

Describe the assessment task you will use.

Observation Measure

What criteria will you use to evaluate performances?

What rating scale will you use to measure performances?

Learning Objectives: Practice Activity 2

1. NRS Level: Beginning ESL Literacy

Identify key dates on a child's school calendar, including holidays, parent/teacher conferences, and report card dates.

2. NRS Level: High Beginning ESL

Schedule a doctor's appointment over the telephone. State the reason for the visit, provide personal information, and set the date and time for the appointment.

3. NRS Level: Low Intermediate ESL

Complete a job application, including personal identification, education, and work history.

My Action Plan

Because of today's workshop I understand

When I plan classroom assessments I will start doing

I have more questions about

I will continue my learning by

Assessment in the Adult ESL Classroom

Workshop Evaluation

Expectations About Contents of the Workshop

What did you hope to gain from this course or workshop? (please ✓ all that apply)

- Basic introduction or exposure to subject
- In-depth theory or study of subject
- Strategies and ideas about how to implement subject
- Information to take back and share at program
- More general information about subject
- Other _____

Did the workshop fulfill your expectations and needs? (please circle one)

Not at all Barely Sufficiently A great deal Completely

Please explain why you circled the above.

Quality of the Workshop

Area	Quality (please ✓ one)				Comments/Suggestions for Improvement
Trainer style	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Presentation and progress (balance between trainer and participant involvement, kinds of activities, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Materials (handouts, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Organization of workshops (arrangement of content, flow of activities, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	

Follow-Up Activity

As a result of these workshops, what do you hope to try in your classroom or program?

Other Comments

Notes

III-C. Effective Lesson Planning for Adult English Language Learners

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Effective Lesson Planning for Adult English Language Learners

This workshop module contains detailed instructions and all of the materials necessary to conduct two training sessions on effective lesson planning for adult English language learners. The module has five components:

- ▶ Trainer Guide
- ▶ Trainer Notes, Part 1
- ▶ Trainer Notes, Part 2
- ▶ Participant Handouts, Part 1
- ▶ Participant Handouts, Part 2

The Trainer Guide is the trainer’s script for the training session. It contains step-by-step instructions for presenting the workshop. It begins with an introduction that states the rationale and purpose of the workshop. It also gives the goal and objectives of the workshop, the workshop agenda, an overview of workshop sections with the amount of time to be spent on each section, trainer preparation instructions, and materials needed. The introduction is followed by detailed sequential instructions for conducting each section of the workshop.

The introduction to each section states the purpose of the activities and the timing of that section. This is followed by a two-column table with instructions for each activity in the first column (Action) and the materials needed in the second column (Materials). Hard copies of all of the materials needed (with the exception of non-CAELA publications) are provided in the Trainer Notes or the Participant Handouts. Materials are listed by title followed by the page number on which it can be found and TN (indicating it can be found in the Trainer Notes) or PH (indicating it can be found in the Participant Handouts). Ordering information for non-CAELA publications is given in the workshop introduction. Materials that need to be made into transparencies for use with an overhead projector or PowerPoint slides are marked “Transparency or PowerPoint Slide.” You will need to prepare them before the training session.

The Trainer Notes accompanies the script of the Trainer Guide. It includes copies of all of the participant handouts, answer keys to participant activities, transparencies or PowerPoint slides to be made, and other supplemental handouts if appropriate. The contents of the Trainer Notes are organized in the order they are needed in the session, and the place they will be used is indicated in the Materials column in this Trainer Guide. When participants are to use materials from Participant Handouts, the page numbers of the handouts that correspond to a section of the Trainer Notes are indicated.

The Participant Handouts contains all of the information and activity sheets that participants need to participate in the session and will take with them when they leave. The contents are also organized in the order they will be used in the session. Make a copy of the handouts for each participant.

Effective Lesson Planning for Adult English Language Learners

Introduction to the module: Planning a language learning lesson is different from planning other types of lessons. This workshop helps participants develop lessons for language learning and introduces them to the stages of a language learning lesson. An effective lesson plan starts with a goal and objectives that meet the needs of the learners and includes activities that lead, step by step, to the completion of the goal. The purpose of this workshop is to help instructors of adult students of English as a second language (ESL) understand the elements of an effective language learning lesson planning for their learners. The workshop activities are based on a variety of well-regarded sources in the field of lesson planning for language lessons. (See Resources at the end of this overview.) The workshop can be tailored for instructors of all levels of adult ESL learners and includes a section on working with multilevel classes.

We recommend that this workshop be held in two sessions, so we have divided the workshop into Part 1 and Part 2. Each session takes approximately 4 hours. Ideally, the second part of the workshop should take place 2–3 weeks (and no later than 4 weeks) after the first part so participants have the opportunity to write a language learning lesson plan and implement it in their own classroom between sessions. However, both parts may also be done in the same day, making the total training time 8 hours, excluding time for breaks and lunch.

If the workshop is done in 1 day (8 hours) with inexperienced teachers, it is best to do the training as it is written because one presentation/activity leads naturally to the next. However, if the workshop is done in two 4-hour sessions, as recommended above, the second session should be modified to allow participants time to discuss the lesson plans that they developed and delivered in their classrooms between the two sessions. Also, if the workshop is attended by experienced teachers, please note the comments in the Trainer Guide for doing the workshop with experienced teachers. The trainer can use the knowledge that experienced teachers bring to the workshop and build on their classroom experience.

Target audience for this workshop: New and experienced teachers, tutors, and classroom aides

Goal of the workshop: To develop skills in planning effective lessons based on promising practices

Workshop objectives for participants: At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to do the following:

Part I	Part II
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize the principles underlying lesson planning for language lessons Identify lesson objectives Identify the stages of a language lesson Select appropriate activities for each stage of the lesson Analyze a lesson in a textbook and identify its stages and activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize the role that varied activities, grouping strategies, and other aspects of classroom practice have in effective language lesson planning Recognize the principles underlying lesson planning for multilevel classes Identify reflective teaching strategies Develop activities for each stage of a lesson and use them to write a lesson

Length of workshop: 4 hours

The workshop components for Part 1 are as follows:

Part 1. Introductions and Warm-Up	30 minutes
Part 2. Presentation: Background information, lesson objectives and enabling skills, stages of a lesson	1 hour, 40 minutes
Part 3. Practice: Activity types and components of a lesson plan	50 minutes
Part 4. Application (in workshop): Analyze a textbook lesson and use textbook activities to develop a lesson plan	40 minutes
Part 5. Wrap-Up and Evaluation	10 minutes
Total projected length of workshop	240 minutes* (4 hours)

***Note:** There is a 10-minute break approximately halfway through the workshop, the exact time for the break to be selected by the trainer.

The workshop components for Part 2 are as follows:

Part 1. Introduction and Warm-Up	20 minutes
Part 2. Presentation: Background information	30 minutes
Part 3. Practice: Stages of a lesson and activities for each stage	2 hours, 5 minutes
Part 4. Application (in workshop): Develop a lesson plan	45 minutes
Part 5. Wrap-Up and Evaluation	10 minutes
Total projected length of workshop	240 minutes* (4 hours)

***Note:** There is a 10-minute break approximately halfway through the workshop, the exact time for the break to be selected by the trainer.

Preparation for Part 1

To do before the workshop:

- ▶ Read Effective Lesson Planning Background Information, Part 1 and Part 2 (pp. 38 and 93 of the Trainer Guide).
- ▶ Make transparencies or PowerPoint slides as indicated in the Trainer Guide.
- ▶ Prepare matching strips for Practice 1, Section A on p. 47 of the Trainer Notes.
- ▶ Make a copy of the participant handouts for each participant.
- ▶ Copy the information-gap activity for participants. Use one color for Part A and another color for Part B.

Materials needed for this workshop:

- ▶ Effective Lesson Planning: Trainer Guide
- ▶ Effective Lesson Planning Part 1: Trainer Notes
- ▶ Effective Lesson Planning Part 1: Participant Handouts

Note: If both parts of the workshop are being conducted on the same day, do not distribute the handouts for Part 2 until the beginning of the second session.

Note: In the Trainer Guide, materials to be found in the Trainer Notes are indicated by TN, followed by the page number; materials to be found in the Participant Handouts are indicated by PH, followed by the page number.

Preparation for Part 2

To do before the workshop:

- ▶ Review Effective Lesson Planning Background Information, Part 2.
- ▶ Make transparencies or PowerPoint slides as indicated in the Trainer Guide.
- ▶ Prepare the appropriate YES/NO bingo sheet.
- ▶ Make a copy of the participant handouts for each participant.

Materials needed for this workshop:

- ▶ Effective Lesson Planning: Trainer Guide
- ▶ Effective Lesson Planning, Part 2: Trainer Notes
- ▶ Effective Lesson Planning Part 2: Participant Handouts

Resources

- Arlington Education and Employment Program. (1994). *The REEP curriculum* (3rd ed.). Arlington, VA: Author. Available from www.arlington.k12.va.us/instruct.ctae.adult_ed/REEP/reepcurriculum/
- Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Longman.
- ESL and Citizenship Programs, Division of Adult and Career Education, Los Angeles Unified School District. (2004). *Tools for ESL lesson planning* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles: Author. Available from http://esl.adultinstruction.org/documents/ToolsforESLLessonPlanning2000revised8-6-2004_000.pdf
- Hunter, M. (1982). *Mastery teaching*. El Segundo, CA: TIP Publications.
- McMullin, M. (1992). *ESL techniques: Lesson planning. Teacher training through video*. White Plains, NY: Longman.
- National Center for Family Literacy & Center for Applied Linguistics. (2004). *Practitioner toolkit: Working with adult English language learners*. Louisville, KY & Washington, DC: Author. Available from www.cal.org/caela/tools/instructional/prac_toolkit.html
- Schaffer, D., & Van Duzer, C. (1984). *Competency-based teacher education workshops in CBE/ESL*. Arlington, VA: Arlington County Public Schools.

Effective Lesson Planning for Adult English Language Learners

Part 1

Overview

1. Introduction and Warm-Up

Purposes:

- ▶ To review the goal, objectives, and agenda for this session
- ▶ To establish awareness of different types of lesson planning
- ▶ To activate prior knowledge about lesson planning
- ▶ for adult ESL classes
- ▶ To identify participants' current practices in lesson planning

Time: 30 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>Note: To save time, put participant handouts and envelopes for Practice 1 at the participants' places before the workshop begins.</p> <p>1. Introduce trainer(s).</p> <p>Trainers introduce themselves, giving their affiliations, professional experience in adult ESL, and the title of the workshop.</p> <p>2. Review the workshop goal, objectives, and agenda with participants.</p>	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Workshop, Part I: Goal, Objectives, and Agenda for both sessions (TN, p. 35; PH, p. 65)</p>

Actions	Materials
<p>3. Group participants.</p> <p>Conduct an activity that creates heterogeneous groups of four to five participants. Here are two examples:</p> <p><i>Line Up:</i> Have participants line up in order of experience. Break the line at the midpoint and have participants stand face to face. Have them discuss one of the following questions in a pair and then have two face-to-face pairs form a group of four. The following questions can be used to help participants begin to think about multilevel classes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are your experiences with being a teacher and a student in a multilevel class? 2. What are the challenges of a multilevel class? 3. What are the opportunities and benefits of a multilevel class? <p>State each question and have the pair discuss the first question; then after a few minutes, have two pairs discuss the question together. At the end of the two-pair discussion, have the first pair in the line go to the end and start the discussion process with the second question. Continue the process through questions two and three.</p> <p>Or when greeting participants at the beginning of the workshop, ask each about their teaching experience and place them in heterogeneous groups.</p> <p>Note: If you do a Line Up activity, name it <i>Line Up</i> for the participants, as this activity name will be used in Part 2 of the workshop.</p> <p>4. Establish the many ways there are to plan a lesson.</p> <p>Set up traveler/lesson planning analogy. Tell participants the following: <i>Just as there are many ways to plan a lesson, so are there many ways to plan a trip. There are basically three kinds of travelers:</i></p> <p>Traveler A packs a suitcase filled with everything she needs. She has reservations for every place she will stay and has planned everything she is going to do.</p> <p>Traveler B makes a hotel reservation for the first night and packs an overnight bag. He has a few places to see, but might change his mind once he gets there.</p> <p>Traveler C has decided to leave today. She has packed a toothbrush and some pajamas, but will buy the rest of the things once she is there. She has no reservations or plans, but will decide what to do and where to stay once she gets there.</p>	

Actions	Materials
<p>5. Have participants get to know one another.</p> <p><i>Round Robin:</i> In their groups, have participants briefly introduce themselves by name, agency, and position, and have each take a number 1–4 (or 5).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that each person will have 15 seconds to say the kind of traveler he/she is and why. Stress that teammates will not comment during this part of the activity, but that after all teammates have spoken, there will be a 2-minute discussion period for the teammates to discuss the points that came up. • Direct #1 in each group to begin, and set the first 15-second time limit. Call time and direct #2 to speak. • Continue until all participants have spoken, and then set the 2-minute time limit for the discussion. • Summarize the activity and link it to lesson planning. <p>Note: Name this activity <i>Round Robin</i> for the participants, as this activity name will be used in Part 2 of the workshop.</p> <p>If the group of participants is small and they know each other well already, they can write the kind of traveler they are as part of their reflection.</p> <p>6. Allow for individual reflection on lesson planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the Reflection worksheet as an opportunity for participants to consider the ways that they plan lessons. Let participants know that throughout the workshop they will have opportunities to reflect on their own practices and relate them to the material being presented. • Have participants individually write the answer to the first question on the Reflection worksheet. 	<p>Reflection (TN, p. 37; PH, p. 67)</p>

2. Presentation

Purposes:

- ▶ To present the essential elements of an effective language learning lesson plan
- ▶ To identify meaningful lesson objectives
- ▶ To identify enabling skills that support a lesson
- ▶ To identify the stages of a lesson and activities for each stage

Time: 1 hour and 40 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>1. Read background information. (15 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are working with experienced teachers, begin with a whole-group discussion about what is meant by the term “multilevel.” You may ask them to draw upon statements they made in their pair or group of four during the Line-Up activity and their own experiences with teaching and learning in a multilevel class. • Have participants turn to the reading, Planning Lessons to Meet Students’ Needs, and preview it (i.e., look at reading subtitles and questions). • Write this question on the transparency or board: Which section of the reading holds the greatest interest for you and why? Ask participants to work with a partner to discuss this question. Elicit responses from two or three participants. • Point out the questions after each section of the reading. Direct participants to read the background information and highlight or underline the answers to the questions within the text. Tell participants they will have 10 minutes to read the piece. If they finish early, they can answer the follow-up questions on PH, p. 71. After 10 minutes, check to see where participants are and, if necessary, give them up to 5 more minutes to complete the reading and answer the questions. <p>Note: The follow-up questions on PH, p. 71, are designed for more experienced teachers. It is assumed that experienced teachers will read or skim the background information more quickly and will have time to answer the questions on PH, p. 71. The in-text questions are comprehension questions and can be used with inexperienced teachers to make sure they understand what they have read. These questions will probably be too “basic” for experienced teachers, so they should concentrate on the follow-up questions at the end of the reading.</p>	<p>Background Information: Effective Lesson Planning, Part I (TN, pp. 38–42; PH, pp. 68–72)</p> <p>Planning Lessons to Meet Students’ Needs. (TN, p. 38; PH, p. 68)</p>

Actions	Materials
<p>If participants are all new teachers, you may not wish to assign the follow-up questions on PH, p. 71. Or you may have them discuss the questions, with you leading the discussion. If participants are all experienced teachers, you may want to encourage them to read the passage more quickly and spend more time on the questions on PH, p. 71.</p> <p>2. Discuss background information. (15 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have participants select a facilitator in their groups to guide them in checking their answers to the questions after each section and in choosing one question from PH, p. 71, to discuss. • Have one participant from each group share the group's responses to the section questions and to the question on PH, p. 71, that the group selected. Whether working with new or experienced teachers, or a combination, when reporting out the reading, it is important to briefly answer the in-text questions to ensure that all participants have the same basic knowledge. • You may want to take the time to discuss the Comparative Lesson Planning Model Chart on PH, p. 81, if participants are accustomed to using one of the models on the chart instead of the WIPPEA model (Warm-Up, Introduction, Presentation, Practice, Evaluation, Application) upon which this workshop is based. The chart indicates the similarities among different models and notes that all the models begin with an assessment of learner needs and/or goals and move through similar stages. 	<p>(optional transparency or PowerPoint slide) Table 1. Comparative Lesson Plan Model (TN, p. 43; PH, p. 81)</p>

Actions	Materials
<p>3. Work with lesson objectives. (30 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct participants' attention to the objectives section of the background information and reiterate that the objectives are stated at the beginning of the lesson plan. They indicate what learners will be able to do at the end of the lesson. These objectives function as the starting point for lesson planning, the reference point to which teacher and learners will return throughout the lesson, and the means for evaluating what has been accomplished. • Refer participants to the handout on Identifying Meaningful ESL Lesson Objectives. Present or have them read the information on objectives, noting the four elements that will be worked with in the practice activity: context, communicative task, language skill proficiencies, and evaluation. • Once participants have read the information and you have answered any questions that have arisen, assign participants to work in their same groups to circle the elements they find in each proposed objective. <p>Note: In a group of all experienced teachers, participants could answer individually and then check their answers with their group members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk around the room to make sure participants are on task and to answer any questions. • At the end of the allotted time, ask for any areas of disagreement and lead a discussion on those or any other relevant areas of interest. 	<p>Identifying Meaningful ESL Lesson Objectives (TN, pp. 44–45; PH, pp. 73–74)</p>
<p>4. Identify enabling skills. (20 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead a brief discussion of enabling skills (skills such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation that support the students' ability to accomplish the lesson objectives). Ask participants to recall the definition given to enabling skills in the background reading. Ask participants to look again at the objectives on the Identifying Meaningful Lesson Plan Objectives handout that had all four elements (choose one or two as examples) and ask: <i>Do these objectives assume certain knowledge and skills in order to accomplish them?</i> • Discuss which enabling skills might be relevant for each objective. Point out that unless the enabling skills have been covered before the current lesson or have already been acquired by students (as indicated by assessment), the skills must be incorporated in the lesson so that students have all the tools that they will need to accomplish the lesson's objectives. 	<p>Enabling Skills (TN, p. 46)</p>

Actions	Materials
<p>5. Identify stages of a lesson. (15 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Matching Strips</i>: Have participants form pairs. • Give each pair two envelopes. (To save time, pass envelopes out at the beginning of the workshop or while participants are reading the background information.) One envelope has strips of paper with the names of the stages of a lesson. The other envelope has corresponding definitions. Instruct partners to work together to match the stages with their definitions. <p>Note: Name this activity <i>Matching Strips</i> for the participants, as this activity name will be used in Part 2 of the workshop.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When pairs finish, they can look back at the background reading to check their answers. <p>Note: The time needed for this activity will vary depending on the experience of the participants.</p>	<p>Identify Stages of a Lesson: Matching Strips (TN, p. 47)</p>
<p>6. Reflect on what has been learned. (5 minutes)</p> <p>Have participants turn to the Reflection worksheet on PH, p. 67, of the Participant Handouts and write their answer to Question #2 for this section of the workshop (Presentation). Elicit responses to the question from one or two volunteers.</p>	<p>Reflection (TN, p. 37; PH, p. 67)</p>

3. Practice

Purposes:

- ▶ To apply the concepts learned in the presentation of new material
- ▶ To identify appropriate activities for each stage of the lesson
- ▶ To identify the components of a lesson plan

Time: 50 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>1. Practice 1: Introduce/review lesson activity types. (30 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Information Gap:</i> Tell participants that they will be doing an Information Gap activity that will introduce or review possible activities they can use in different stages of lessons. • Ask participants to turn to PH, p. 75, in their handouts. Put the transparency or PowerPoint slide of the same page on the overhead projector. Note the column headings across the top and down the side. Explain that other skills can and should be integrated into each lesson (especially in the warm-up and guided-practice stages), but that the language skill proficiency focus of the presentation should be carried through the practice and evaluation/application stages, so we test what we teach. For example, if our lesson is on oral language skills, we need to evaluate students' oral skills through a role play or other oral activity, not through a written activity. • Using the sample activity in the evaluation/application stage, describe how this activity type (role play) could be an evaluation, an application, or an application that could also be used as an evaluation. • Have participants read the bulleted directions silently. Ask for a volunteer to ask you for the missing information. Ask participants to form pairs. Distribute one A page and one B page to each pair, or distribute A pages to half the room and B pages to the other half and have everyone find a partner. <p>Note: Color code the pages if possible, and tell participants that color coding helps the teacher make sure that everyone has the correct paper. If the trainer does not color code, ask all As to raise their hands and check that there is one A per pair. Repeat with Bs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the directions for the Information Gap activity and have one pair demonstrate the activity for the group. 	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Lesson Activity Types—Information Gap Introduction (TN, p. 48; PH, p. 75)</p> <p>Prepare sets of A and B for each pair of participants.</p> <p>Lesson Activity Types—Information Gap A (TN, p. 49)</p> <p>Lesson Activity Types—Information Gap B (TN, p. 50)</p> <p>Lesson Activity Types—Information Gap, Complete Version (TN, p. 51)</p>

Actions	Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise participants who are not familiar with the sample activities listed on their charts to read the descriptions in the charts as they work together. Each activity is defined in its description. If the trainer is unfamiliar with some of the terms, check the answer sheet in the Trainer Notes. Set a time limit (about 10 minutes) and direct participants to begin. <p>Note: Name this activity <i>Information Gap</i> for the participants, as this activity name will be used in Part 2 of the workshop.</p> <p>2. Practice 2: Identify the components of a lesson plan. (20 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put the objective of the Model Lesson Plan for a beginning high class about health on the overhead or the board and ask participants to answer the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>What relevance does this lesson have to students' lives?</i> <i>Which enabling skills are necessary to accomplish the objective?</i> Tell participants to read the lesson and answer the following questions in their groups: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What types of grouping strategies are used during the lesson? How do the activities help students achieve the lesson objectives? What other types of activities might you use and in which stage? What do you think the objective(s) of the next lesson will be? Conduct the report back to the whole group. Have each small-group reporter respond to one of the discussion questions. Make a list of the objective(s) for the next lesson so that participants can see the variety of possibilities. <p>Note: Tell participants there is a blank template for their use on PH, p. 78.</p> <p>3. Reflect on what has been learned.</p> <p>Have participants turn to the Reflection worksheet on PH, p. 67, of the Participant Handouts and write their answer to Question #2 again, but now for this portion of the workshop. Elicit responses from one or two volunteers.</p>	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Model Lesson Plan (TN, p. 52)</p> <p>Identify the Components of a Lesson Plan (TN, p. 53)</p> <p>Model Lesson Plan (PH, p. 76)</p> <p>Model Lesson Plan Questions: Answer Key (TN, p. 54 ; PH, p. 77)</p> <p>Reflection (TN, p. 37; PH, p. 67)</p>

4. Application (in workshop)

Purposes:

- ▶ To identify which textbook activities could be selected for which stages and how they might be modified (if necessary)
- ▶ To identify other activities that could be used

Time: 40 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>Fill in Lesson Planning Template with textbook activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put a blank Lesson Planning Template on the overhead and point out the various areas participants will be completing on the form (e.g., enabling skills, materials and equipment). Explain that the topic, lesson objective, and language skill proficiency focus will already be filled in for them in the activity, but that when they plan their own lessons, these elements are critical. • Direct participants to look at the sample textbook pages on PH, p. 79; distribute the Lesson Planning Template partially filled in with the topic, lesson objective, and language skill proficiency focus. • As a whole group, decide whether there is an effective warm-up/review activity in the textbook. If the group decides that there is one, write it on the transparency or PowerPoint slide of the lesson plan. If the group decides that there is no activity for that stage, brainstorm to elicit activity ideas. <p>Note: Point out that there are many possibilities for activities because different activities/exercises can be used at different stages, depending on the lesson objective. Also, the activities can be altered to match the needs of the students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have participants return to their small groups. Tell them they will have 10 minutes to work together to complete the lesson plan based on the textbook pages. Remind participants that they may have to modify existing activities or supply new ones to improve the lesson flow and meet the lesson objective. • Set the 10-minute time limit and have participants continue to work in their groups. Have each group member take on a new role (facilitator, timekeeper, recorder, and reporter). • Evaluate participants' grasp of the information as you circulate among the groups. Note any areas of misunderstanding and clarify after participants have completed the activity. 	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Lesson Planning Template (TN, p. 55; PH, p. 78)</p> <p>“What’s the Matter” textbook pages (TN, p. 56; PH, p. 79)</p> <p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Lesson Planning Template with topic, lesson objective, and language skill proficiency focus filled in. Note: show only these areas. (TN, p. 58)</p>

Actions	Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have each group report on the group activity. Make sure each stage of the lesson plan is discussed. <p>Note: If you have a group of experienced teachers, this exercise may be too basic for them. Instead of having them do this application, refer back to the lesson objectives that the groups wrote at the end of the practice activity (lesson objectives for the lesson after this one). Have each group choose a lesson objective and fill out the lesson planning form, developing their lesson for one of the objectives stated. The lesson planning form can be put on an overhead transparency or PowerPoint slide and each group given a marker to write their lesson. Then groups can present their lessons to each other and learn from each other's knowledge and experience.</p>	

Effective Lesson Planning for Adult English Language Learners

Part 2

Workshop objectives for participants:

At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to

- ▶ Recognize the role that varied activities, grouping strategies, and other aspects such as timing have in effective lesson planning
- ▶ Recognize the principles underlying multilevel lesson planning
- ▶ Identify reflective teaching strategies
- ▶ Develop activities for each stage of a lesson and use them to write a lesson

Length of workshop: 4 hours

The workshop components for Part 2 are as follows:

Part 1. Introduction and Warm-Up	30 minutes
Part 2. Presentation: Effective lesson planning	30 minutes
Part 3. Practice: Identify stages of a lesson and activities for each stage	2 hours and 5 minutes
Part 4. Application (in workshop): Develop a lesson plan	45 minutes
Part 5. Wrap-Up and Evaluation	10 minutes
Total projected length of workshop	240 minutes* (4 hours)

***Note:** There is a 15-minute break approximately halfway through the workshop. The exact time will be selected by the trainer.

Preparation for Part 2

To do before the workshop:

- ▶ Review Effective Lesson Planning Background Information, Part 2.
- ▶ Make transparencies or PowerPoint slides as indicated in the Trainer Guide.
- ▶ Prepare the appropriate YES/NO bingo sheet.
- ▶ Make a copy of the participant handouts for each participant.

Materials needed for this workshop:

- ▶ Effective Lesson Planning Part 2: Trainer Guide
- ▶ Effective Lesson Planning Part 2: Trainer Notes
- ▶ Effective Lesson Planning Part 2: Participant Handouts

1. Warm-Up/Introduction

Purposes:

- ▶ To review the goal, objectives, and agenda for this session
- ▶ To build teams
- ▶ To review elements of lesson planning (if this is a two-part training)

Time: 30 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>Note: To save time, put participant handouts at the participants' places before the workshop begins.</p> <p>1. Reintroduce presenters (2 minutes)</p> <p>If Part 2 is on a separate day, presenters reintroduce themselves (affiliations, experience in teaching adult ESL, etc.) and the workshop (if this is a two-part workshop).</p> <p>If Part 2 is given on the same day, move to Step 2.</p>	
<p>2. Review the goal, objectives, and agenda (3 minutes)</p> <p>Post the agenda for the session, then review the goal, objectives, and agenda with participants. Summarize what was done in Part 1 of the workshop (introduced steps in planning lessons) and how it relates to Part 2 (continue to develop those skills).</p>	<p>Goals, Objectives, and Agenda (TN, p. 89; PH, p. 119)</p>
<p>3. Review concepts of lesson planning (12 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute the YES/NO bingo sheet • Have participants read through the questions, think about their answers, and write a question of their own in the last square. • Tell participants that they will be circulating around the room to ask and answer the questions with their colleagues. Review the directions on the activity sheet. • Set a time limit for the activity of 8 minutes and tell participants to start. • After the activity is over, ask participants to report back by raising their hands if they found someone who did the activity mentioned. Ask about each square of bingo. 	<p>YES/NO Bingo Sheet (TN, p. 90)</p> <p>Note: Use the “between sessions” version if Part 2 is given on a different day than Part 1. Use the “find someone who” version if Parts 1 and 2 of the workshop are given on the same day.</p>

Actions	Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask participants to reflect on the activity and ask at which stages of the lesson they might use an activity like this and with what kind of content. • If using the “between session version,” ask participants to share one or two positive outcomes they experienced from doing the application activities. <p>4. Allow for individual reflection on lesson planning (3 minutes)</p> <p>Reintroduce the Lesson Planning Reflection sheet as an opportunity for participants to consider what language lesson planning behaviors they utilize. Let participants know that throughout the workshop, they will have opportunities to reflect on their own practices and relate them to the material being presented.</p> <p>Have participants individually fill out the first question on the Lesson Planning Reflection sheet.</p> <p>Note: If the second part of the workshop is given as a separate session and participants did the application activities in their own classrooms between Parts 1 and 2 of the workshop, then the trainer needs to build time into Part 2 of the workshop to have participants share what they did in their classrooms. This might be done during the “Application” section at the end of Part 2. Instead of using the template to develop a lesson, participants can share what they did between the two workshops. They might also share what worked well and what they would do differently if they were to teach the same lesson. If participants have written their lessons on overhead transparencies or PowerPoint slides, then they can use those as a focus to go over their lessons. This sharing can be done in small groups or a whole group, depending on how many participants are in the workshop. What is important is that all participants are given time to share what they did in their classrooms and get feedback from others.</p> <p>They can also share their lessons during the first part of the workshop and analyze their own lesson as they do the activities in the second part of the workshop. For example, participants can analyze their own lesson for how it addresses the needs of different levels of language learners after they read the selection on planning for multilevel classes.</p>	<p>Reflection (TN, p. 92; PH, p. 120)</p>

2. Presentation

Purposes:

- ▶ To present more essential components of an effective lesson plan
- ▶ To present information on grouping strategies, activities, and multilevel classes
- ▶ To present information on key aspects of lesson planning, such as sequencing and pacing

Time: 30 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>1. Read background information (30 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group participants heterogeneously by experience in groups of four or five. • Have participants number off in the group from 1–4. If there are five in a group, there will be two number 1 people, and they will share their role and read the same part of the reading. • Review/introduce Jigsaw Reading. (Use transparency or PowerPoint slide.) • Go over the directions for Jigsaw Reading. (Put on an overhead.) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assign parts of reading. Everyone reads <i>The Basics of Lesson Design</i>. 1 reads <i>Managing the Multilevel Class</i>. 2 reads <i>Key Aspects of Lesson Planning</i>. 3 reads <i>Varying Activities/Grouping Strategies</i>. 4 reads <i>Growth Through Reflection</i>. 2. Participants answer the questions related to their portion of the reading. 3. Participants have 5 minutes to read their portions of the background information and answer the questions. (They can do this by underlining or highlighting appropriate portions of the reading.) Tell participants that they should read for main ideas only. At a later time, they can reread the reading for details. 4. When the 5 minutes are up, group members can share what they have read and the answer to their question. (The question about the <i>Basics of Lesson Planning</i> can be discussed by all at the beginning of the discussion.) Once everyone has shared, participants should turn to the follow-up questions on page 124 and select one to discuss as a group. 	<p>Background Part 2: <i>Effective Lesson Planning</i> (TN, pp. 93–98; PH pp. 121–125)</p> <p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: <i>Directions for Jigsaw Reading</i> (TN, p. 99; PH, p. 126)</p>

Actions	Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check comprehension of the instructions and assign the 5-minute time limit for reading. Monitor the amount of time needed. At 4 minutes, ask how much more time is needed. • Assign the discussion portion, giving 10 minutes for the discussion. Monitor the amount of time needed. At 9 minutes, ask how much more time is needed and give up to 5 more minutes. • When the discussion time is complete, elicit questions about the background information and ask reporters to share the answers to the focus questions. <p>Note: The follow-up questions on page 129 are, in general, designed for more experienced teachers. If your participants are all experienced teachers, you may want to encourage them to read the background information more quickly and spend more time on the follow-up questions on page 129. If participants in the workshop are all new teachers, you may decide <i>not</i> to assign the questions on page 129. If you do wish to discuss them, you should lead the discussion for the whole group.</p> <p>After the Jigsaw Reading discussion, the trainer needs to help participants focus on activities in lessons that lend themselves to being restructured for multilevel learners; that is, what activities in a lesson can be made multilevel, and what activities are better taught at one level to the group as a whole? If the participants are experienced teachers, solicit ideas from them. Either make a list of activities that can be modified or categorize them: 1. Activities for Receptive Skills; 2. Activities for Productive Skills; and 3. Project Work Activities.</p> <p>Some activities that may be suitable for multilevel learners are the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Guided practice tasks for grammar: These can be adjusted to focus on different levels of grammatical knowledge—students can choose correct forms from two to five choices (fewer choices for those just learning the skill); fill in the blank (choices or letters can be given as clues); answering questions (partial answers may be given to make an activity easier). These kinds of tasks can also be used with vocabulary. 2. Readings: Students can read different passages on the same topic and then share what they have learned (this activity can also be scaffolded with a chart that students fill in with information from the different readings); students can read the same passage but have different comprehension questions; and students can read less or more of a reading (lower-level students can read the introductory paragraph while more advanced students can read the entire piece). 	

Actions	Materials
<p>3. Peer editing: Ask students to read each other’s writing and comment on the ideas and their clarity. A feedback sheet can be designed for this. It may not be wise to have lower-level students comment on grammar and punctuation as they may make a sentence worse rather than better. However, they can identify sentences and words that are not clear and give suggestions for making them clearer.</p> <p>4. Projects: Assign students pieces of project work that are appropriate to their level. Students can be given Web sites to visit that are appropriate to their level of reading; students can write portions of the final product that are appropriate to their writing skills; students can interview people in pairs so that they have two sets of ears to listen to responses.</p> <p>These are some ideas of ways that teachers can make parts of a lesson multilevel. Participants in the workshop will have other ideas from their own teaching experience.</p> <p>2. Reflect on what you have learned</p> <p>Have participants turn to Effective Lesson Planning—Reflection on page 120 of the Participant Handouts and answer question number 2 for this section of the workshop—Presentation. Elicit responses from one or two volunteers.</p>	<p>Reflection (TN, p. 92; PH, p. 120)</p>

3. Practice

Purpose:

- ▶ To practice the concepts learned in the presentation of new material, including multi-level lesson planning, grouping strategies, and varying activities

Time: 125 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>1. Identify activity types and grouping strategies (15 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask participants to categorize the list of activities into the best grouping strategies to use for each (whole class, half-class teams, small groups, pairs, or individuals). One activity can be placed in more than one category. <p>Note: Participants have seen or experienced each of these activities in Part 1 and/or 2 of this workshop.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign participants to look at the lesson plan for beginning high students (this is the same one they saw in Part 1 of the workshop) and to answer the two questions at the top of the page. <p>2. Identify elements of the multilevel lesson (20 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show participants the Multilevel Lesson Framework transparency or PowerPoint slide and ... <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask participants to look at the Multilevel Lesson Plan and, in pairs, answer the questions on page 131. 2. Lead a discussion about the multilevel lesson by eliciting the answers to the questions from the groups. 3. Refer participants to the annotated version of the framework on page 132 of their handouts. <p>3. Comprehension checks (20 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have participants read the background information about comprehension checks at the top of the worksheet. • Model a comprehension check by asking questions about the material read, such as <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why should teachers use comprehension checks? 2. When is it good to do a comprehension check? 3. What are some characteristics of a good (or bad) question to use for a comprehension check? 4. Why is wait time important? 5. What are some other ways besides asking questions to do a comprehension check? (Yes/no or +/- cards are another way to check comprehension that is not mentioned in the reading.) 	<p>Varying Activities and Grouping Strategies (TN, p. 99; PH, p. 127)</p> <p>Model Lesson Plan: Beginning High (TN, p. 100; PH, p. 128)</p> <p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Multilevel Lesson Framework, (TN, p. 101) Annotated (TN, p. 102)</p> <p>Multilevel Lesson Plan (TN, pp. 103–104; PH, pp. 129–130)</p> <p>Multilevel Lesson Plan Questions (TN, p. 105; PH, p. 131)</p> <p>Multilevel Lesson Framework Annotated (TN, p. 102; PH, p. 132)</p> <p>Comprehension Checks (TN, p. 106; PH, p. 133)</p>

Actions	Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have participants review the directions for the activity. • Set a time limit and have participants pair up and write four or five comprehension check questions in the space provided. • When they are finished, have participants check their answers with another pair or lead the check with the whole group. • If this is the second part of the workshop after a break and participants shared their lessons earlier in this session, they can now analyze their own lessons to see where they did, and possibly need to do, comprehension checks. (Allot more time for this.) 	
<p>4. Giving Directions (15 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have participants read the background information about writing directions on the Directions worksheet. • Do a comprehension check of the material read by asking questions, such as <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are some characteristics of good directions? 2. Why should directions be given orally and in writing? 3. Why should activities be modeled/demonstrated after directions have been given? • Review the directions for the activity. • Set a time limit and have participants pair up and write directions in the space provided. • When they are finished, have participants share their directions with another pair. • If this is the second part of the workshop after a break and participants have their own lessons, they can analyze or write directions for their own lesson. (Allot more time for this.) 	<p>Giving Directions (TN, p. 107; PH, p. 134)</p>
<p>5. Sequencing/pacing/timing (25 minutes)</p> <p>A. Sequencing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the directions on the Sequencing worksheet. 2. Set a time limit and have participants work individually to match the activities to the stage of the lesson. 3. Have participants check their answers with a partner. 4. Elicit any discrepancies and discuss with the group. 	<p>Sequencing (TN, p. 108; PH, p. 135)</p>

Actions	Materials
<p>B. Pacing and Timing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the directions on the Pacing and Timing worksheet with the participants. 2. Have participants form pairs. 3. Have them look at the Beginning Low lesson on page 137. Note that the content is similar to the lesson content in Sequencing, so participants will be familiar with it. 4. Set a time limit for them to fill in the times for the lesson. 5. Have participants compare answers with another pair and discuss their reasoning for the timing. 6. Circulate during the discussion and summarize the activity with some of the reasons that you hear. 7. If this is the second part of the workshop with a break in between and participants have their own lessons, they can now analyze their lessons for sequencing/pacing/timing. (Allot more time for this.) <p>6. Identify teacher talk and learner talk (20 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the directions on the Identify Teacher Talk and Learner Talk worksheet with the participants. • Have participants look back at the lesson they worked with in Pacing and Timing. Have them note when talking is going on versus quiet time. • Set a time limit and have participants individually identify the amount of teacher talk and learner talk in the lesson (this should not include the “quiet times”) and draw a pie chart to represent it in the circle on the bottom page. • Have participants form a small group and share their pie chart. Have them consider the following questions in their groups: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compare the amount of teacher talk/learner talk in the pie chart with that of a typical lesson you teach. 2. How will you change the teacher talk/learner talk ratio in your classes? • If this is the second part of this workshop after a break and participants have their own lessons, they can analyze the amount of teacher talk and learner talk in their own lessons. (Allot more time for this.) 	<p>Pacing and Timing (TN, p. 109; PH, p. 136)</p> <p>Model Lesson Plan: Beginning Low (TN, p. 110; PH, p. 137)</p> <p>Teacher Talk and Learner Talk (TN, p. 111; PH, p. 138)</p>

Actions	Materials
<p>7. Reflect on what you have learned (10 minutes)</p> <p>Have participants turn to Reflection on page 120 of the Participant Handouts and answer question number 2 again for this portion of the workshop—Practice. Elicit responses from one or two volunteers.</p>	<p>Reflection (TN, p. 92; PH, p. 120)</p>

4. Application (in workshop)

Purpose:

- ▶ To write a lesson plan by filling in a lesson plan template with the activities and other elements learned in this workshop

Time: 50 minutes

Time	Actions	Materials
30 min	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the directions on the Application worksheet with the participants. 2. Tell participants that they will have 25 minutes to work together to complete steps 1–5. Ask them to watch their time so that they try to get through all the lesson stages. Check in with them at 20 minutes as to where they are. Ask them to finish up (it’s OK if they haven’t completed the lesson) and move to the comprehension check and directions (step 5) if they have not done so already. You can allow them an extra 5 minutes for a total of 30 minutes on this activity. 3. Evaluate participants’ grasp of the information as you circulate among the groups. Offer guidance to pairs as they complete their task. Note any areas of misunderstanding and clarify after participants have completed the activity, if necessary. 	Application (TN, p. 112; PH, p. 139) Lesson Plan Template (TN, p. 113; PH, p. 140)
15 min	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Ask participants to form small groups with another pair. Set a time limit of 8 minutes and ask them to share their lesson plan (step 6). Tell them to request suggestions from their group on how to improve their plan. 	
5 min	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Summarize the activity and relate it to their future lesson planning, and answer any questions or issues that may have come up. <p>Note: If participants have taken this workshop in two parts with time in between to apply lesson planning in their classrooms, this would be a good place to have them share what they have done and what they learned, instead of using the above application activity. Suggestions for doing this are given at the beginning of Part 2 of this workshop, at the end of the Warm-Up/Introduction section of the Trainer Guide.</p>	

5. Wrap-Up and Evaluation

Purposes:

- ▶ To have participants reflect on and evaluate what was learned in Effective Lesson Planning, Part 2
- ▶ To make an action plan for further lesson planning

Time: 10 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>1. Reflection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have participants answer question 2 on their Reflection sheet about their application activity or anything else they would like to add. • Elicit the reflections of a few volunteer participants on what they have learned and what they are going to take back to their classroom (if they are teaching now) or to their teaching in the future (if they are not teaching now). <p>Note: This activity also acts as a summary of the workshop, because participants are sharing what they have learned.</p>	<p>Reflection (TN, p. 92; PH, p. 120)</p>
<p>2. Summary</p> <p>Review the workshop objectives and summarize what participants have learned.</p> <p>Note: Include objectives from both Parts 1 and 2 if they were given in the same day.</p>	<p>Goals, Objectives, and Agenda (TN, p. 89; PH, p. 119)</p>
<p>3. Application activities</p> <p>If this is an 8-hour workshop that includes both Parts 1 and 2 on the same day, do all of the steps in the Action Plan. If Parts 1 and 2 have taken place on separate days, SKIP TO STEP 3 on the Action Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell participants how important it is for them as well as their students to put into practice what they have learned. Let them know that application activities will help them retain the information they have worked on in this session. • Review the application activities (after-workshop). Ask participants to select at least one of the application activities to try in their programs after the workshop. Direct them to the handouts that can help them carry out these activities. 	<p>Application Activities (After-Workshop) (TN, p. 114; PH, p. 141)</p>

Actions	Materials
<p>Note:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If this is an 8-hour workshop—it's best for participants to do either #1: Analyze a textbook or #3: Develop a lesson. 2. If this is the second session of a two-part workshop—Participants should do # 3: Develop a lesson. <p>4. Action Plan</p> <p>Have participants select something from their Reflection sheets that they will do back in their class. Have participants also write down the application activities they will participate in.</p> <p>5. Evaluation</p> <p>Have participants fill in the workshop evaluation form.</p>	<p>Lesson Planning Template (TN, p. 115; PH, p. 142)</p> <p>Lesson Reflection (TN, p. 116; PH, p. 143)</p> <p>Class Observation (TN, p. 117; PH, p. 144)</p> <p>Action Plan (TN, p. 118; PH, p. 145)</p> <p>Workshop Evaluation (PH, p. 146)</p>

Notes

Effective Lesson Planning for Adult English Language Learners

Workshop Part 1: Goal, Objectives, and Agenda

Goal:

To help new and experienced adult ESL teachers develop skills in lesson planning

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to

- ▶ Recognize the principles underlying lesson planning
- ▶ Identify lesson objectives
- ▶ Identify the stages of a lesson
- ▶ Select appropriate activities for each stage of the lesson
- ▶ Analyze a textbook lesson for stages and activities

Agenda:

- I. **Introduction and Warm-Up**
- II. **Presentation:** Background information on lesson objectives, enabling skills, and stages of a lesson
- III. **Practice:** Components of a lesson plan
- IV. **Application (in workshop):** Lesson planning
- V. **Wrap-Up and Evaluation**

Effective Lesson Planning for Adult English Language Learners

Workshop Part 2: Goal, Objectives, and Agenda

Goal:

To help new and experienced adult ESL teachers develop skills in lesson planning

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to

- ▶ Recognize the roles that varied activities, grouping strategies, and other aspects such as time play in effective lesson planning
- ▶ Recognize the principles underlying multilevel lesson planning
- ▶ Identify reflective teaching strategies
- ▶ Develop activities for each stage of a lesson
- ▶ Write a lesson plan containing all stages

Agenda:

- VI. **Introduction and Warm-Up**
- VII. **Presentation:** Effective lesson planning background information, Part 2
- VIII. **Practice:** Identifying varied activities, grouping strategies, elements of the multilevel class, sequencing, timing, and pacing; writing comprehension checks and directions
- IX. **Application (in workshop):** Develop a lesson plan
- X. **Wrap-Up and Evaluation**

Part I: Background Information: Effective Lesson Planning

- ▶ As you read, think about your answers to the questions.
- ▶ After you read, highlight the answers in the text.

Planning Lessons to Meet Students' Needs

Lesson plans help teachers provide an effective learning experience for their students. These plans ensure that students' time in class results in learning that will help them achieve their goals. Lesson planning also enhances the teaching experience by helping teachers save time, avoid frustration, and analyze and improve their lessons.

There are many ways to plan an effective lesson—the important thing is to make a plan. Writing out a script, completing a chart of lesson stages, matching lesson steps with textbook pages, or visualizing lesson activities are all examples of lesson planning strategies that successful teachers use.

Effective lessons emerge from specific learning objectives and contain a unified set of learning activities. Learning objectives for adult English language learners are based on the needs of the students as well as existing state standards and program curricula. Needs assessments help teachers determine the communication needs of their students, i.e., the situations in which students need to understand, speak, read, and write English. For beginning-level students, a simple needs assessment can be accomplished by showing learners pictures of various situations, like the doctor's office or a job site, and asking them to number the pictures in order of their need to be able to understand, speak, read, or write English. Intermediate and advanced students can be given a questionnaire asking them to identify the situations in which they need to use English.

In addition to students' needs, teachers have to consider other information about the students, such as English language proficiency level, educational background, and language of origin. This information can be gleaned from students' registration materials or from informal discussion.

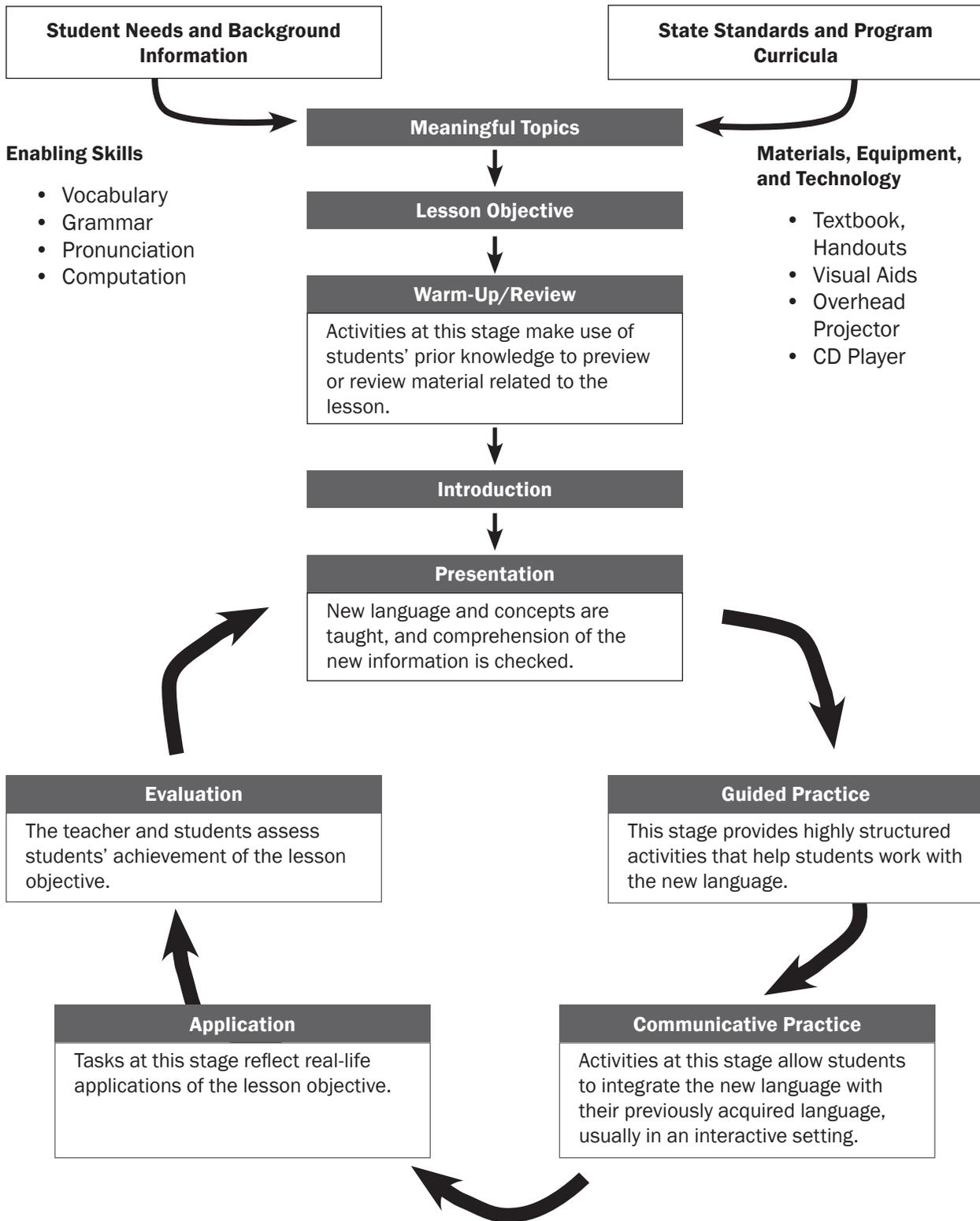
- ▶ According to the reading, what is the value of lesson planning?
Key Points: *Lesson plans help teachers provide an effective learning experience for their students. These plans ensure students that their time in class will result in learning that will help them achieve their goals. Lesson planning also enhances the teaching experience by helping teachers save time, avoid frustration, and analyze and improve their lessons.*
- ▶ How does knowing about students' language needs and background help teachers plan effective lessons?
Key Point: *It helps teachers determine the communication needs of their students, which become the lesson objectives.*

Five Components of Effective Lessons

Once teachers know students' language needs and something about their backgrounds, teachers can begin to plan lessons. There are many teaching styles and many ways to plan lessons. (See the chart on PH, p. 81.) However, the following five components can be found in most effective lesson plans:

- ▶ **Topic.** Communicative or real-life contexts or topics can be gleaned from student needs assessments. If in a needs assessment, beginning-level students select a visual that depicts a doctor talking to a patient, the teacher could choose *Communicating with health personnel* as the topic for a group of lessons.
- ▶ **Lesson objective.** An objective is the goal for a lesson or group of lessons. A well-written objective tells what students will be able to do, rather than what students will know, by the end of the lesson. Learning objectives should relate to the topics chosen by the students during the needs assessment. If the topic of the lesson is *Communicating with health personnel*, one appropriate beginning-level lesson objective might be, *By the end of this lesson, students will be able to describe symptoms to medical personnel.*
- ▶ **Enabling skills.** These are the skills, such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, that support the students' ability to accomplish the lesson objective. For the topic *Communicating with health personnel*, the vocabulary might be *headache, fever, cough, etc.* The grammar could be the simple present tense of the verb to *have*, and the pronunciation work might focus on the *ch* sound in *ache*.
- ▶ **Sequence of stages.** Research has shown that including a series of stages in lessons will help students achieve the lesson objective. Most lessons include warm-up/review, introduction, presentation, practice, evaluation, and application stages. A comprehension check is always included in the presentation stage of the lesson and may occur at other stages as well. (See the chart below for a description of terms.) As teachers plan lessons, they can select activities for each stage that will move the students toward accomplishing the lesson objective. For example, with the health objective *Describe medical symptoms*, a teacher might demonstrate a dialogue between a patient and a nurse for the presentation stage, have students work with the dialogue (substituting various symptoms) as part of the practice stage, and then do a role play activity (working without the dialogue in front of them) for the evaluation and application stages of the lesson.
- ▶ **Materials, equipment, and technology.** Anything needed to execute the lesson should be identified and secured well before class time to ensure that activities can be carried out as planned. This may include realia (real-life materials, such as an appointment card and a medical history form), visual aids, teacher-made handouts, textbooks, flipchart and markers, overhead projector, CD players, and computers.

Figure 1. Single-Level Lesson: Sequence of Stages



Note: The sequence of stages in this chart is based on the Direct Instruction Model, appearing in Hunter, M. (1982). *Mastery teaching*. El Segundo, CA: TIP.

While planning a lesson utilizing these five components, a teacher should also consider other things such as the length of the lesson, the sequencing of the activities, and the amount of time that should be spent on each stage or activity. Other considerations include whether the class is a single-level or multilevel class and whether it is an open entry/exit class (where students can enter and leave at any time during the semester, or whether students are required to attend class on a regular basis [managed enrollment]).

- ▶ What are the five components found in most lesson plans? Describe each.

Key Points: *See arrows on p. 39.*

Experience Makes a Difference

The lesson plan is an aid for both new and seasoned teachers. New teachers often find that it is helpful to write down the details of each activity—perhaps even script each activity. Eventually classroom experience determines how detailed a lesson plan needs to be. Experience also helps teachers decide which types of lesson plan formats work best for them and their students.

The more lesson planning a teacher does, the more efficient the process becomes. Reviewing and evaluating lessons at the end of each class period helps teachers improve their instruction and recycle successful elements from those lessons into future lessons.

- ▶ How does experience with lesson planning affect the planning process?

Key Point: *The more lesson planning a teacher does, the more efficient the process becomes.*

A lesson plan acts as a road map for a class session. It identifies the destination (objective of the lesson) and marks out the route (activities for each stage of the lesson). Sharing this road map with the learners (e.g., by writing the objective and listing lesson activities on the board) keeps both the teacher and the learner focused not only on where they are going, but also how they are going to get there. Perhaps most important, it also helps them know when they have arrived.

Follow-up questions:

Answers vary.

- ▶ What are some of the challenges of planning a lesson?
- ▶ What things are helpful to know about students before planning lessons?
- ▶ If any one of the five components of an effective lesson plan were missing, how do you think the lesson would be affected? Why?
- ▶ What are advantages and disadvantages of recycling material and activities?

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Table 1. Comparative Lesson Plan Models

WIPPEA ¹	Equipped for the Future ²	Backward Lesson Design ³	Into, Through, Beyond ⁴
	<i>Preparation and Planning</i>		
Identify Student Needs and Background	Step 1: Determine individual learner's goals and purposes and identify the standards that will help him/her achieve them.	Step 1: Identifying desired results	Intro: Ascertain what the student knows about the subject matter.
Identify State Standards and Curriculum	Determine the student's prior knowledge about these goals and standards.		
Identify Lesson Objective	Step 2: In a group, identify a shared interest, purpose, or goal and determine the group's prior knowledge of this topic. Identify the standard that will help the group address this shared goal.	Step 2: Determining acceptable evidence of achievement	
(Plan the lesson)	Step 3: Use the standard to design a learning activity to address the real-life goal of the learners. Step 4: With students, develop a plan to capture evidence and report learning.	Step 3: Planning learning experiences and instruction	
	<i>Carrying Out the Plan</i>		
Warm-Up/Review	Step 5: Carry out the learning activity.		Introduce the major concepts that will be covered.
Introduction			Through: Teacher lectures/contributes to learning by utilizing realia, visuals, etc....
Presentation			...and various modes of interaction between students.
Guided Practice			Student takes responsibility for learning by participating in group work and sharing understanding with others.
Communicative Practice			
	<i>Evaluation and Reflection</i>		
Evaluation	Step 6: Observe and document evidence of performance. Step 7: With students, evaluate and reflect on how what was learned is transferable to real-life situations.		Beyond: Student demonstrates real-world application of the newly learned information.
Application	Step 8: With students, determine next steps to help them meet their goals.		

¹ Based on Madeline Hunter's Direct Instruction Model (1982), WIPPEA stands for the stages of a language lesson: Warm-up/review, Introduction, Guided Practice, Communicative Practice, Evaluation, and Application.

² Miller, Susan Finn (2004). 8 steps for lesson planning: From student goals to instruction and assessment. Fieldnotes for ABLE Staff, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Available from www.able.state.pa.us/able/lib/able/fieldnotes04/fn04effplan.pdf

³ Backward Lesson Design as described by SuccessLink, funded by Missouri Department of Education. Available from http://successlink.org/gti/gti_detail.asp?id=101

⁴ Gulack, John, & Sandy Silverstein. (n.d.). SDAIE handbook, TASSI (Teachers Asian Study Summer Institute). Pomona: California State University. Available from www.intranet.csupomona.edu/~tassi/sdate.htm

Identifying Meaningful ESL Lesson Objectives

The lesson objective states what students will be able to do by the close of a lesson. For lesson objectives to have relevance to adult learners' lives, instructors need to think in terms of real-life demonstrable outcomes—behaviors and skills that students will be able to do in the real world upon completion of the lesson.

A meaningful objective for an adult ESL class identifies the *context* in which a specific *communicative task* will be accomplished. It generally focuses on the one or two target *language-skill proficiencies* (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) that are needed to complete the communication task. The achievement of the meaningful ESL objective is *evaluated* in the same language-skill proficiency in which it was taught. For example, in the objective *Students will describe symptoms to a health professional*, the focus would be on speaking-skill development, and the evaluation would ask students to demonstrate their ability to perform the speaking objective in a role play with students or the teacher. An awareness of an objective's language-skill focus is critical to lesson planning in two ways: (1) it dictates which enabling skills need to be reviewed or presented (e.g., pronunciation points, reading skills, writing skills), and (2) it helps determine the nature of the evaluation activity. The evaluation of the objective is not always a pen-and-paper test. For speaking and listening objectives, it is appropriate to use a performance-based assessment (e.g., role plays).

A meaningful objective also contains information about how a teacher is going to determine whether or not the students have met the objective (a method of evaluation). A handy template for writing a lesson objective is:

The student will be able to _____ in order to _____
_____ as evidenced by _____.

For example, "The student will be able to describe common health problems in order to talk to a medical practitioner as evidenced by his/her use of language in role plays completed in class."

1. With a small group, determine which of the elements of a meaningful ESL lesson objective are present in the list below.
2. Mark each proposed objective as follows:
 - ▶ If the objective features a context, write **C** in the blank.
 - ▶ If the objective focuses on one or two language skill proficiencies, write **P** in the blank.
 - ▶ If the objective features a communicative task or purpose, write **CT** in the blank.
 - ▶ If the objective can be evaluated, write **E** in the blank.
3. Once you have finished identifying the elements, make a check (✓) next to the meaningful objectives.

Objective

- ___ 1. The student will be able to contrast the simple present and past tenses of the verb BE.
- ___ 2. The student will be able to write eight new words.
- ___ 3. The student will be able to read a food label in order to understand the ingredients as evidenced by making a grocery list of healthy food choices.
- ___ 4. The student will be able to orally describe the events in a crime in order to report a crime to the police as evidenced by a role play.
- ___ 5. The student will be able to study the housing vocabulary on page__ of the textbook.
- ___ 6. The student will be able to read a narrative paragraph about Cinco de Mayo and answer comprehension questions.
- ___ 7. The student will be able to write a short paragraph.
- ___ 8. The student will be able to ask and answer questions.
- ___ 9. The student will be able to take and leave simple phone messages at home as evidenced by writing a message upon hearing a taped telephone message.
- ___ 10. The student will be able to listen to a taped job interview in order to know the types of questions asked as evidenced by checking on a list of those questions that were asked.

Choose one of the objectives above that you feel is not as good as it could be and rewrite it below to include a context, language skill proficiency(ies), a communicative task/purpose, and a method of evaluation.

Note: Adapted from *An Objective Approach to Lesson Planning Workshop* (Adelson-Goldstein & Owensby, 2005).

Enabling Skills

Notes on enabling skills:

Possible enabling skills for objectives with all four elements are listed below.

C P CT E 3. The student will be able to read a food label to understand the ingredients as evidenced by making a grocery list of healthy food choices.

- ▶ Use grocery item vocabulary
- ▶ Write a list
- ▶ Identify healthy food choices

C P CT E 4. The student will be able to orally describe the events in a crime in order to report a crime to the police as evidenced by a role play.

- ▶ Use vocabulary relating to crimes (e.g., burglary, suspect, etc.)
- ▶ Use chronological order
- ▶ Use adjectives and adverbs appropriately

C P CT E 6. The student will be able to read a narrative paragraph about Cinco de Mayo and answer comprehension questions.

- ▶ Use Cinco de Mayo and holiday vocabulary
- ▶ Use prereading skills

C P CT E 9. The student will be able to take and leave simple phone messages at home as evidenced by writing a message upon hearing a taped telephone message.

- ▶ Use vocabulary and simple sentences related to leaving messages (May I ask who is calling? Call him back, etc.)
- ▶ Use time vocabulary
- ▶ Use imperative, simple past (Joe called), object pronouns (Call him back)

Identifying Stages of a Lesson—Matching Strips

Note. Make enough copies of the following table for each pair of participants to have a copy. Cut the table in two on the vertical line and put the resulting strips in two envelopes—stages in one and definitions in the other.

Stages	Definitions
Warm-Up/Review	Activities at this stage make use of students' prior knowledge to preview or review material related to the lesson.
Introduction	The instructor establishes the purpose of the lesson by focusing students' attention on it (for example, by asking questions or using visuals).
Presentation	New language and concepts are taught, and comprehension of the new information is checked.
Guided Practice	This stage provides highly structured activities that help students work with the new language.
Communicative Practice	Activities at this stage allow students to integrate the new language with their previously acquired language, usually in an interactive setting.
Evaluation	The teacher and students assess students' achievement of the lesson objective.
Application	Tasks at this stage reflect real-life applications of the lesson objective.

Lesson Activity Types—Information Gap

Introduction

Directions:

- ▶ Look at the chart below. What information do you have? What information is missing?
- ▶ Ask the trainer for the information you need. Clarify what you hear and check your information.
- ▶ Use this question to get the information you need.

What kind of activity could I use for the ___ stage of a ___ lesson?

A	Sample SPEAKING Lesson Activities			
	Warm Up/Review	Presentation	Guided Practice	Communicative Practice
	Dialogue	Drills	Role play	
Sample SPEAKING Lesson Activities	Students, in pairs, take turns dictating words or phrases from previous lessons that relate to the topic of the lesson.	The teacher presents a model dialogue to the class, demonstrating the intonation, rhythm, and stress of the language and clarifying the meaning.	Students work with parts of a dialogue, substituting new language or transforming the pieces by substituting different grammar structures.	Students work in pairs or small groups to ask each other questions based on the lesson topic.
				Students work in pairs or small groups to role play a conversation using the dialogue's structure but also using their own ideas.

A Word About These Lesson Activities

All of the activities above focus on **speaking** language skills to demonstrate the progression of speaking activities a teacher might plan for a lesson with a speaking objective. In the complete lesson, activities that practice other language skills would be integrated into the speaking lesson (e.g., reading information about a picture that will later be used as the basis for a dialogue). Also, there might be more than one activity for the presentation, guided practice, or communicative practice stages. In addition, the activities listed here might fit very well at another stage in another kind of lesson. For example, depending on the content, a peer dictation could be a communicative practice activity for a lesson with a listening objective.

Lesson Activity Types—Information Gap A

- ▶ Work with a partner, but don't look at your partner's paper!
- ▶ Ask and answer this question with your partner to fill in the missing activities on your chart:
What kind of activity could I use for the _____ stage of a _____ lesson?

A		Warm-Up/Review	Presentation	Guided Practice	Communicative Practice	Evaluation/Application
Sample LISTENING Lesson Activities		Students, in pairs, take turns dictating words or phrases from previous lessons that relate to the topic of the current lesson.	Storytelling The teacher tells a story that relates to the listening passage students will hear, then asks comprehension questions to help students verify what they heard.	Focused Listening Students hear dialogues, monologues, or announcements and listen for specific information.	Students work in pairs. Partner A has a chart, graph, or table that is missing information that is on Partner B's paper (and vice versa). Partners ask and answer questions to complete their papers.	Authentic Listening Task Students are asked to listen to an authentic listening passage related to the lesson (e.g., an actual voicemail message, a movie schedule) and respond to questions.
	Sample WRITING Lesson Activities	Brainstorm Students, as a class, brainstorm a list of words or phrases associated with the writing topic.	Language Experience Writing Students and teacher together write a paragraph about something that they have experienced. Students dictate ideas, vocabulary, and sentences, and the teachers writes what students say.	Students, working in groups of 3-4, use a pack of word cards and form as many sentences as they can, recording each sentence before they work on the next one.	Students write a first draft of sentences based on prompts, check their work with a partner, and write a final draft	Writing Test Students are given a related prompt and asked to write 5-10 new sentences.
Sample READING Lesson Activities	Scrambled Sentences	Students unscramble sentences based on prior lessons but related to the current lesson topic.	The teacher conducts a previewing task (looking at elements of the reading passage) or a predicting task (e.g., asking students to brainstorm what they already know about the topic and what they think the reading will be about).	Read & Answer Comp. Questions Students read a passage once silently, and once with the teacher reading it aloud. They then answer the comprehension questions and reread the passage to check their answers.	Survey Students survey each other to find out what they think about the ideas in the reading passage. Students can chart the results of the survey in a bar graph.	Multiple-Choice Test Students take a multiple-choice test on the reading topic.

Lesson Activity Types—Information Gap B

- ▶ Work with a partner, but don't look at your partner's paper!
- ▶ Ask and answer this question with your partner to fill in the missing activities on your chart:

What kind of activity could I use for the _____ stage of a _____ lesson?

B		Warm-Up/Review	Presentation	Guided Practice	Communicative Practice	Evaluation/Application
Sample LISTENING Lesson Activities	Peer Dictation	Students, in pairs, take turns dictating words or phrases from previous lessons that relate to the topic of the current lesson.	Storytelling	Students hear dialogues, monologues, or announcements and listen for specific information.	Information Gap	Students are asked to listen to an authentic listening passage related to the lesson (e.g., an actual voicemail message, a movie schedule) and respond to questions.
	Brainstorm	Students, as a class, brainstorm a list of words or phrases associated with the writing topic.		Word Cards	Writing Process	Writing Test
Sample WRITING Lesson Activities		Students and teacher together write a paragraph about something that they have experienced. Students dictate ideas, vocabulary, and sentences, and the teachers writes what students say.				Students are given a related prompt and asked to write 5–10 new sentences.
	Prereading Activity			Read & Answer Comp. Questions		Multiple-Choice Test
Sample READING Lesson Activities		Students look at scrambled sentences on the board and unscramble them. Sentences are based on prior lessons but related to the current lesson topic.	The teacher conducts a previewing task (looking at elements of the reading passage) or a predicting task (e.g., asking students to brainstorm what they already know about the topic or what they think the reading will be about).	Students read a passage once silently, and once with the teacher reading it aloud. They then answer the comprehension questions and reread the passage to check their answers.	Students survey each other to find out what they think about the ideas in the reading passage. Students can chart the results of the survey in a bar graph.	Students take a multiple-choice test on the reading topic.

Lesson Activity Types—Information Gap

Complete Version

- ▶ Work with a partner, but don't look at your partner's paper!
- ▶ Ask and answer this question with your partner to fill in the missing activities on your chart:

What kind of activity could I use for the ____ stage of a ____ lesson?

	Communicative Practice			Evaluation/Application	
	Warm-Up/Review	Presentation	Guided Practice		Information Gap
Sample LISTENING Lesson Activities	Peer Dictation Students, in pairs, take turns dictating words or phrases from previous lessons that relate to the topic of the current lesson.	Storytelling The teacher tells a story that relates to the listening passage students will hear, then asks comprehension questions to help students verify what they heard.	Focused Listening Students hear dialogues, monologues, or announcements and listen for specific information.	Information Gap Students work in pairs. Partner A has a chart, graph, or table that is missing information that is on Partner B's paper (and vice versa). Partners ask and answer questions to complete their papers.	Authentic Listening Task Students are asked to listen to an authentic listening passage related to the lesson (e.g., an actual voicemail message, a movie schedule) and respond to questions.
	Brainstorm Students, as a class, brainstorm a list of words or phrases associated with the writing topic.	Language Experience Writing Students and teacher together write a paragraph about something that they have experienced. Students dictate ideas, vocabulary, and sentences, and the teachers writes what students say.	Word Cards Students, working in groups of 3–4, use a pack of word cards and form as many sentences as they can, recording each sentence before they work on the next one.	Writing Process Students write a first draft of sentences based on prompts, check their work with a partner, and write a final draft.	Writing Test Students are given a related prompt and asked to write 5–10 new sentences.
Sample READING Lesson Activities	Sentence Scramble Students look at scrambled sentences on the board and unscramble them. Sentences are based on prior lessons but related to the current lesson topic.	Prereading Activity The teacher conducts a previewing task (looking at elements of the reading passage) or a predicting task (e.g., asking students to brainstorm what they already know about the topic or what they think the reading will be about).	Read & Answer Comp. Questions Students read a passage once silently and once with the teacher reading it aloud. They then answer the comprehension questions and reread the passage to check their answers.	Survey Students survey each other to find out what they think about the ideas in the reading passage. Students can chart the results of the survey in a bar graph.	Multiple-Choice Test Students take a multiple-choice test on the reading topic.

Model Lesson Plan

Lesson Basics

Class Level: Beg. High	Topic: Health	Class Length: 2.5 hrs.	Date: 11-10-05
Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to describe symptoms to medical personnel</i>			
Enabling Skills: Grammar: use simple present tense, first and third person Vocabulary: parts of the body, symptoms for basic ailments: <i>sore, ache, pain in my _____</i> . Pronunciation: suffix <i>ache</i>			
Language Skill Proficiency Focus L S W R		Materials and Equipment Visuals: parts of body, ailments, doctor and patient in conversation Handout: outline of the body	
<h2>Activity Plan</h2>			
Warm-Up/Review: Whole-class discussion on picture that shows patient talking to a doctor. Play a quick game of yes/no questions (about the picture) using previously acquired language (e.g., <i>Is the patient under the table?</i>).			
Introduction: Put up (or draw) a silhouette of a man. Name him, give him a backstory (with students' suggestions), and then tell the class that he's going to the doctor because he has a pain in his foot. (Have class suggest how he got the pain.) Tell the class the objective of the lesson.			
Presentation	Guided Practice	Communicative Practice	Evaluation
Present (and elicit) a dialogue between the man and his doctor that includes the symptom (pain in <i>foot</i>), possible reason for the symptom (dancing all night), and suggested course of action (rest your <i>feet</i> .) Act out the dialogue and use visuals to support the language. Guide students through the dialogue. Comprehension check: Ask students Y/N, OR, and WH- questions for approximately 5 min. regarding the content of the dialogue and vocabulary usage.	1. Group students for roundtable label of parts of the body on a handout. 2. Have students use labels as substitution for pair practice of dialogue.	Have pairs develop role plays based on the dialogue.	1. Have pairs perform their role plays for the class. Students listen and write down symptoms they hear. 2. Give students time to reflect on/talk about language and skills they've learned.
Application: Guide whole-class discussion of where you go/what you do when you have various symptoms. Prompts: <i>When do you call the doctor? When do you stay home from work? When do you go to the emergency room? When do you call 911?</i>			

Identify the Components of a Lesson Plan

Put the objective of the Model Lesson Plan on the overhead or the board and ask participants to answer the following questions:

- ▶ What application does this lesson have to students' lives?

Students can use the information from this lesson when they visit the doctor's office.

- ▶ Which enabling skills are necessary to accomplish the objective?

Grammar: simple present tense, first and third person

Vocabulary: parts of the body, symptoms for basic ailments, e.g., sore, ache, pain in my _____

Pronunciation: suffix ache

Model Lesson Plan Questions: Answer Key

Tell participants to read the lesson and answer the following questions in their groups:

1. What types of grouping strategies are used during the lesson?

Whole-class (warm-up and application), small-group, pair (guided practice), pair (communicative practice and evaluation)

2. How do the activities help students achieve the lesson objectives?

The activities help students learn a dialogue, a version of which they could use when they visit the doctor. Once they have the opportunity to role play the dialogue, they are one step away from actually using the dialogue with their own doctor or other medical personnel.

The activities are sequenced to first give students practice using the dialogue (its vocabulary and grammar and how its words should be pronounced and stressed). Then the communicative practice, evaluation, and application activities give students the opportunity to vary and personalize the dialogue according to different situations.

3. What other types of activities might you use and in which stage?

Warm-Up: Review of parts of the body or symptoms

Presentation: Focused listening to the dialogue

Guided Practice:

- ▶ *Information Gap with different patients and different pain*
- ▶ *Sentence Maker with He/She/has/doesn't have/a pain/in/his/her/knee/shoulder*

Communicative Practice: Mixer—State problem, get advice, switch cards

Evaluation: Performance-based assessment of learners with teacher taking doctor role

Application: Survey: What do you take for a _____?

4. What do you think the objective(s) of the next lesson will be?

Students will be able to—

- ▶ *Describe more symptoms to medical personnel*
- ▶ *Call for a medical appointment*
- ▶ *Call in sick*
- ▶ *Call 911*

Lesson Planning Template

LESSON BASICS			
Class Level:	Topic:	Class Length:	Date:
Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to</i>			
Enabling Skills:			
Language Skill Proficiency Focus L S W R	Materials and Equipment		
ACTIVITY PLAN			
Warm Up/Review:			
Introduction:			
Presentation	Guided Practice	Communicative Practice	Evaluation
Application:			

What's the Matter?

A. Look at the picture. Answer the questions with your classmates.



1. Where are they? Who are they?
2. How is the man feeling?
3. What is the woman doing? Why?
4. What will happen next?

B. Check true (T) or false (F) or no information (NI).

Listen and read the story.

Samuel Wu is at the doctor's office. He tells the doctor his symptoms. He has a back-ache and a sore shoulder. The doctor checks Samuel's heart and lungs. The doctor tells Sam, "You don't have a fever. Take ibuprofen for your symptoms and get rest."

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ___1. Sam is at the dentist's office. | ___4. Sam's back is always sore. |
| ___2. Sam has two symptoms. | ___5. The doctor wants Sam to rest. |
| ___3. Sam doesn't have a fever. | ___6. Ibuprofen is food. |

C. Work with your classmates. List words you know.

1. How many symptoms can you name?
2. How many medicines can you name?
3. How many different types of doctors can you name?

D. Listen and repeat the conversation.

Doctor: Good afternoon, Mr. Wu. How can I help you today?

Patient: I feel terrible.

Doctor: Really? Tell me your symptoms.

Patient: I have a sore shoulder and a backache, but I don't have a fever.

Doctor: Let me check your heart and lungs. Breathe in. Breathe out.

Patient: What do you think, doctor?

Doctor: I think you have a sore shoulder. Take some ibuprofen and get rest.

Patient: Thanks, doctor.

E. Match the medications to the symptoms.

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| ___1. ibuprofen | a. an earache |
| ___2. cough syrup | b. sore eyes |
| ___3. cold medicine | c. a backache |
| ___4. eye drops | d. a cough |
| ___5. ear drops | e. a cold |

F. Work with a partner. Make new conversations. Use the ideas below or use your own ideas.

Ms. Pawlak
headache
cough

Mr. Kim
cold
sore eyes

Lesson Planning Template

LESSON BASICS			
Class Level: (BH-IL)	Topic: Health	Class Length:	Date:
Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to describe symptoms to health care personnel</i>			
Enabling Skills: Grammar: <i>simple present tense, be and have</i> Vocabulary: <i>ailment, symptoms, and medications</i> Pronunciation: <i>3rd person singular "s"</i>			
Language Skill Proficiency Focus L S W R	Materials and Equipment <i>Answers vary, possible items are OHP, word and picture cards, realia (stethoscope, thermometer, medicines).</i>		
ACTIVITY PLAN			
Warm Up/Review: Exercise A, page 1 (or modification using just the picture and asking the questions orally) OR Exercise C, page 1			
Introduction: <i>e.g., Today we are going to read a story and learn a dialogue about talking to the doctor or to the nurse.</i>			
Presentation	Guided Practice	Communicative Practice	Evaluation
Section B: Listen and read the story. Section D: Listen and repeat the conversation.	Use the items in section E. Match the medications to the symptoms—as substitutions for the dialogue in section D.	Section F: Now You Do It!	Monitor the communicative practice Section F: Now You Do It or Have partners role play the situation in front of the class.
Application: <i>Report back on a time that the student describes symptoms to medical personnel such as a doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.</i>			

Application Activities

To retain what you learned in this workshop, please select at least one application activity.

Select 1

1. **Analyze your textbook** for activity types. **Plan a lesson** by filling out a Lesson Planning Template (PH, p. 83) with the textbook activity/page numbers that match the stages of a lesson. Brainstorm activities to fill in the gaps. **Teach this lesson** (or the one your group developed during the workshop). Soon after you teach the lesson, take time to reflect on how it went. Ask yourself questions such as*

- ▶ What went well? Why?
- ▶ What did not go as planned? Why?
- ▶ If I had to do it over again, what would I change?
- ▶ What have I learned about my students that I can take into account in future lesson planning?

* Use the Lesson Reflection worksheet on PH, p. 84. You can also use the Class Observation worksheet on PH, p. 85.

2. **Observe a lesson** at the same level you teach (or hope to teach). As you observe, fill in the Lesson Planning Template. Then fill in the Class Observation worksheet on PH, p. 85.

3. **Have someone observe your class.** Develop a lesson using the Lesson Planning Template on PH, p. 83. Ask a colleague to observe you as you teach it. Your colleague can fill in the Lesson Planning Template and the Class Observation worksheet. After the lesson, reflect on your own teaching, using questions such as*

- ▶ What went well? Why?
- ▶ What did not go as planned? Why?
- ▶ If I had to do it over again, what would I change?
- ▶ What have I learned about my students that I can address in future lesson planning?

Ask your colleagues for verification or support as necessary.

* Use the Lesson Reflection worksheet on PH, p. 84. You can also use the Class Observation worksheet on PH, p. 85.

Note: For further discussion of reflective teacher practices, see the digest *Reflective Teaching Practice in Adult ESL Settings*, available from www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/reflect.html

Lesson Planning Template

LESSON BASICS			
Class Level:	Topic:	Class Length:	Date:
Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to</i>			
Enabling Skills:			
Language Skill Proficiency Focus L S W R	Materials and Equipment		
ACTIVITY PLAN			
Warm Up/Review:			
Introduction:			
Presentation	Guided Practice	Communicative Practice	Evaluation
Application:			

Class Observation

- ▶ Arrange to observe a class at the same level you teach, if possible.
- ▶ As you observe, fill in the Lesson Planning Template on PH, p. 83.
- ▶ Then answer these questions:

Questions	Yes/No	Answer/Comments
1. Were the objectives clear?	Y N	
2. Did the lesson include all the stages? If not, which ones were missing? How did that affect the lesson?	Y N	
3. Were the activities varied in type and modality?	Y N	
4. Were the activities and materials appropriate for the students' skill level?	Y N	
5. Did the materials support the lesson focus and objectives?	Y N	
6. Was the sequencing of activities logical and appropriate?	Y N	
7. Were the transitions evident and appropriate?	Y N	
8. What worked well?		
9. What would you change?		

Action Plan

Step 1—Reflection into Practice

Look at your reflections about your learning during this workshop on PH, pp. 67 and 120, Question #2. Select three things you have learned that you will implement in your teaching. Write them below.

1.

2.

3.

Step 2—Application

Select one application activity on PH, p. 82, that you will complete. Check the activity you will complete and write the dates by which you will start and complete it.

Activity	Projected Start Date	Projected Completion Date
<input type="checkbox"/> Analyze your textbook/plan and teach a lesson.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Observe a lesson.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Have someone observe your lesson.	_____	_____

Step 3—Report Back

Share your action plan activities with a colleague in one of the following ways:

- ▶ Meet and talk with a colleague at break time.
- ▶ Call or email a network buddy from this workshop.

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email address: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email address: _____

- ▶ Report to your colleagues at a staff meeting.
- ▶ Report to your colleagues at a subsequent workshop.

Notes

Effective Lesson Planning for Adult English Language Learners

Workshop Part 1: Goal, Objectives, and Agenda

Goal:

To help new and experienced adult ESL teachers develop skills in lesson planning

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to

- ▶ Recognize the principles underlying lesson planning
- ▶ Identify lesson objectives
- ▶ Identify the stages of a lesson
- ▶ Select appropriate activities for each stage of the lesson
- ▶ Analyze a textbook lesson for stages and activities

Agenda:

- I. **Introduction and Warm-Up**
- II. **Presentation:** Background information on lesson objectives, enabling skills, and stages of a lesson
- III. **Practice:** Components of a lesson plan
- IV. **Application (in workshop):** Lesson planning
- V. **Wrap-Up and Evaluation**

Effective Lesson Planning for Adult English Language Learners

Workshop Part 2: Goal, Objectives, and Agenda

Goal:

To help new and experienced adult ESL teachers develop skills in lesson planning

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to

- ▶ Recognize the roles that varied activities, grouping strategies, and other aspects such as time play in effective lesson planning
- ▶ Recognize the principles underlying multilevel lesson planning
- ▶ Identify reflective teaching strategies
- ▶ Develop activities for each stage of a lesson
- ▶ Write a lesson plan containing all stages

Agenda:

- VI. **Introduction and Warm-Up**
- VII. **Presentation:** Effective lesson planning background information, Part 2
- VIII. **Practice:** Identifying varied activities, grouping strategies, elements of the multilevel class, sequencing, timing, and pacing; writing comprehension checks and directions
- IX. **Application (in workshop):** Develop a lesson plan
- X. **Wrap-Up and Evaluation**

Part I: Background Information: Effective Lesson Planning

- ▶ As you read, think about your answers to the questions.
- ▶ After you read, highlight the answers in the text.

Planning Lessons to Meet Students' Needs

Lesson plans help teachers provide an effective learning experience for their students. These plans ensure that students' time in class results in learning that will help them achieve their goals. Lesson planning also enhances the teaching experience by helping teachers save time, avoid frustration, and analyze and improve their lessons.

There are many ways to plan an effective lesson—the important thing is to make a plan. Writing out a script, completing a chart of lesson stages, matching lesson steps with textbook pages, or visualizing lesson activities are all examples of lesson planning strategies that successful teachers use.

Effective lessons emerge from specific learning objectives and contain a unified set of learning activities. Learning objectives for adult English language learners are based on the needs of the students as well as existing state standards and program curricula. Needs assessments help teachers determine the communication needs of their students, i.e., the situations in which students need to understand, speak, read, and write English. For beginning-level students, a simple needs assessment can be accomplished by showing learners pictures of various situations, like the doctor's office or a job site, and asking them to number the pictures in order of their need to be able to understand, speak, read, or write English. Intermediate and advanced students can be given a questionnaire asking them to identify the situations in which they need to use English.

In addition to students' needs, teachers have to consider other information about the students, such as English language proficiency level, educational background, and language of origin. This information can be gleaned from students' registration materials or from informal discussion.

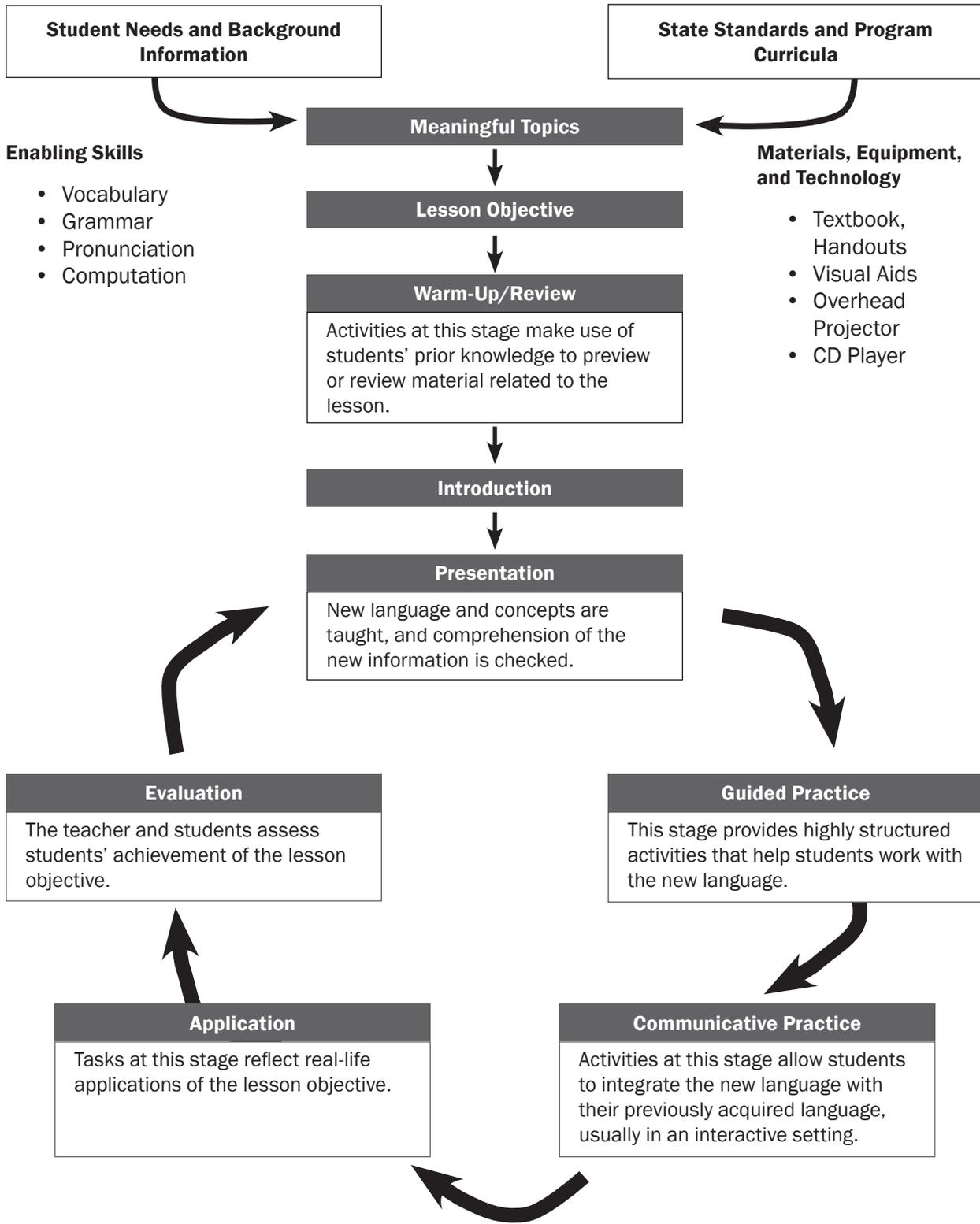
- ▶ According to the reading, what is the value of lesson planning?
- ▶ How does knowing about students' language needs and background help teachers plan effective lessons?

Five Components of Effective Lessons

Once teachers know students' language needs and something about their backgrounds, teachers can begin to plan lessons. There are many teaching styles and many ways to plan lessons. (See the chart on PH, p. 81.) However, the following five components can be found in most effective lesson plans:

- ▶ **Topic.** Communicative or real-life contexts or topics can be gleaned from student needs assessments. If in a needs assessment, beginning-level students select a visual that depicts a doctor talking to a patient, the teacher could choose *Communicating with health personnel* as the topic for a group of lessons.
- ▶ **Lesson objective.** An objective is the goal for a lesson or group of lessons. A well-written objective tells what students will be able to do, rather than what students will know, by the end of the lesson. Learning objectives should relate to the topics chosen by the students during the needs assessment. If the topic of the lesson is *Communicating with health personnel*, one appropriate beginning-level lesson objective might be, *By the end of this lesson, students will be able to describe symptoms to medical personnel.*
- ▶ **Enabling skills.** These are the skills, such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, that support the students' ability to accomplish the lesson objective. For the topic *Communicating with health personnel*, the vocabulary might be *headache, fever, cough, etc.* The grammar could be the simple present tense of the verb *to have*, and the pronunciation work might focus on the *ch* sound in *ache*.
- ▶ **Sequence of stages.** Research has shown that including a series of stages in lessons will help students achieve the lesson objective. Most lessons include warm-up/review, introduction, presentation, practice, evaluation, and application stages. A comprehension check is always included in the presentation stage of the lesson and may occur at other stages as well. (See the chart below for a description of terms.) As teachers plan lessons, they can select activities for each stage that will move the students toward accomplishing the lesson objective. For example, with the health objective *Describe medical symptoms*, a teacher might demonstrate a dialogue between a patient and a nurse for the presentation stage, have students work with the dialogue (substituting various symptoms) as part of the practice stage, and then do a role play activity (working without the dialogue in front of them) for the evaluation and application stages of the lesson.
- ▶ **Materials, equipment, and technology.** Anything needed to execute the lesson should be identified and secured well before class time to ensure that activities can be carried out as planned. This may include realia (real-life materials, such as an appointment card and a medical history form), visual aids, teacher-made handouts, textbooks, flipchart and markers, overhead projector, CD players, and computers.

Figure 1. Single-Level Lesson: Sequence of Stages



Note: The sequence of stages in this chart is based on the Direct Instruction Model, appearing in Hunter, M. (1982). *Mastery teaching*. El Segundo, CA: TIP.

While planning a lesson utilizing these five components, a teacher should also consider other things such as the length of the lesson, the sequencing of the activities, and the amount of time that should be spent on each stage or activity. Other considerations include whether the class is a single-level or multilevel class and whether it is an open entry/exit class (where students can enter and leave at any time during the semester, or whether students are required to attend class on a regular basis [managed enrollment]).

- ▶ What are the five components found in most lesson plans? Describe each.

Experience Makes a Difference

The lesson plan is an aid for both new and seasoned teachers. New teachers often find that it is helpful to write down the details of each activity—perhaps even script each activity. Eventually classroom experience determines how detailed a lesson plan needs to be. Experience also helps teachers decide which types of lesson plan formats work best for them and their students.

The more lesson planning a teacher does, the more efficient the process becomes. Reviewing and evaluating lessons at the end of each class period helps teachers improve their instruction and recycle successful elements from those lessons into future lessons.

- ▶ How does experience with lesson planning affect the planning process?

A lesson plan acts as a road map for a class session. It identifies the destination (objective of the lesson) and marks out the route (activities for each stage of the lesson). Sharing this road map with the learners (e.g., by writing the objective and listing lesson activities on the board) keeps both the teacher and the learner focused not only on where they are going, but also how they are going to get there. Perhaps most important, it also helps them know when they have arrived.

Follow-up questions:

- ▶ What are some of the challenges of planning a lesson?
- ▶ What things are helpful to know about students before planning lessons?
- ▶ If any one of the five components of an effective lesson plan were missing, how do you think the lesson would be affected? Why?
- ▶ What are advantages and disadvantages of recycling material and activities?

References/Resources

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Identifying Meaningful ESL Lesson Objectives

The lesson objective states what students will be able to do by the close of a lesson. For lesson objectives to have relevance to adult learners' lives, instructors need to think in terms of real-life demonstrable outcomes—behaviors and skills that students will be able to do in the real world upon completion of the lesson.

A meaningful objective for an adult ESL class identifies the *context* in which a specific *communicative task* will be accomplished. It generally focuses on the one or two target *language-skill proficiencies* (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) that are needed to complete the communication task. The achievement of the meaningful ESL objective is *evaluated* in the same language-skill proficiency in which it was taught. For example, in the objective *Students will describe symptoms to a health professional*, the focus would be on speaking-skill development, and the evaluation would ask students to demonstrate their ability to perform the speaking objective in a role play with students or the teacher. An awareness of an objective's language-skill focus is critical to lesson planning in two ways: (1) it dictates which enabling skills need to be reviewed or presented (e.g., pronunciation points, reading skills, writing skills), and (2) it helps determine the nature of the evaluation activity. The evaluation of the objective is not always a pen-and-paper test. For speaking and listening objectives, it is appropriate to use a performance-based assessment (e.g., role plays).

A meaningful objective also contains information about how a teacher is going to determine whether or not the students have met the objective (a method of evaluation). A handy template for writing a lesson objective is:

The student will be able to _____ in order to _____
_____ as evidenced by _____.

For example, "The student will be able to describe common health problems in order to talk to a medical practitioner as evidenced by his/her use of language in role plays completed in class."

1. With a small group, determine which of the elements of a meaningful ESL lesson objective are present in the list below.
2. Mark each proposed objective as follows:
 - ▶ If the objective features a context, write **C** in the blank.
 - ▶ If the objective focuses on one or two language skill proficiencies, write **P** in the blank.
 - ▶ If the objective features a communicative task or purpose, write **CT** in the blank.
 - ▶ If the objective can be evaluated, write **E** in the blank.
3. Once you have finished identifying the elements, make a check (✓) next to the meaningful objectives.

Objective

- ___ 1. The student will be able to contrast the simple present and past tenses of the verb BE.
- ___ 2. The student will be able to write eight new words.
- ___ 3. The student will be able to read a food label in order to understand the ingredients as evidenced by making a grocery list of healthy food choices.
- ___ 4. The student will be able to orally describe the events in a crime in order to report a crime to the police as evidenced by a role play.
- ___ 5. The student will be able to study the housing vocabulary on page__ of the textbook.
- ___ 6. The student will be able to read a narrative paragraph about Cinco de Mayo and answer comprehension questions.
- ___ 7. The student will be able to write a short paragraph.
- ___ 8. The student will be able to ask and answer questions.
- ___ 9. The student will be able to take and leave simple phone messages at home as evidenced by writing a message upon hearing a taped telephone message.
- ___ 10. The student will be able to listen to a taped job interview in order to know the types of questions asked as evidenced by checking on a list of those questions that were asked.

Choose one of the objectives above that you feel is not as good as it could be and rewrite it below to include a context, language skill proficiency(ies), a communicative task/purpose, and a method of evaluation.

Note: Adapted from *An Objective Approach to Lesson Planning Workshop* (Adelson-Goldstein & Owensby, 2005).

Lesson Activity Types—Information Gap

Introduction

Directions:

- ▶ Look at the chart below. What information do you have? What information is missing?
- ▶ Ask the trainer for the information you need. Clarify what you hear and check your information.
- ▶ Use this question to get the information you need.

What kind of activity could I use for the ___ stage of a ___ lesson?

A	Sample SPEAKING Lesson Activities				
	Warm Up/Review	Presentation	Guided Practice	Communicative Practice	Evaluation/ Application
	Dialogue	Drills	Communicative Practice	Role play	
Sample SPEAKING Lesson Activities	Students, in pairs, take turns dictating words or phrases from previous lessons that relate to the topic of the lesson.	The teacher presents a model dialogue to the class, demonstrating the intonation, rhythm, and stress of the language and clarifying the meaning.	Students work with parts of a dialogue, substituting new language or transforming the pieces by substituting different grammar structures.	Students work in pairs or small groups to ask each other questions based on the lesson topic.	Students work in pairs or small groups to role play a conversation using the dialogue's structure but also using their own ideas.

A Word About These Lesson Activities

All of the activities above focus on **speaking** language skills to demonstrate the progression of speaking activities a teacher might plan for a lesson with a speaking objective. In the complete lesson, activities that practice other language skills would be integrated into the speaking lesson (e.g., reading information about a picture that will later be used as the basis for a dialogue). Also, there might be more than one activity for the presentation, guided practice, or communicative practice stages. In addition, the activities listed here might fit very well at another stage in another kind of lesson. For example, depending on the content, a peer dictation could be a communicative practice activity for a lesson with a listening objective.

Model Lesson Plan

Lesson Basics

Class Level: Beg. High	Topic: Health	Class Length: 2.5 hrs.	Date: 11-10-05
Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to describe symptoms to medical personnel</i>			
Enabling Skills: Grammar: use simple present tense, first and third person Vocabulary: parts of the body, symptoms for basic ailments: <i>sore, ache, pain in my _____</i> . Pronunciation: suffix <i>ache</i>			
Language Skill Proficiency Focus L S W R		Materials and Equipment Visuals: parts of body, ailments, doctor and patient in conversation Handout: outline of the body	
<h2>Activity Plan</h2>			
Warm-Up/Review: Whole-class discussion on picture that shows patient talking to a doctor. Play a quick game of yes/no questions (about the picture) using previously acquired language (e.g., <i>Is the patient under the table?</i>).			
Introduction: Put up (or draw) a silhouette of a man. Name him, give him a backstory (with students' suggestions), and then tell the class that he's going to the doctor because he has a pain in his foot. (Have class suggest how he got the pain.) Tell the class the objective of the lesson.			
Presentation	Guided Practice	Communicative Practice	Evaluation
Present (and elicit) a dialogue between the man and his doctor that includes the symptom (pain in <i>foot</i>), possible reason for the symptom (dancing all night), and suggested course of action (rest your <i>feet</i> .) Act out the dialogue and use visuals to support the language. Guide students through the dialogue. Comprehension check: Ask students Y/N, OR, and WH- questions for approximately 5 min. regarding the content of the dialogue and vocabulary usage.	1. Group students for roundtable label of parts of the body on a handout. 2. Have students use labels as substitution for pair practice of dialogue.	Have pairs develop role plays based on the dialogue.	1. Have pairs perform their role plays for the class. Students listen and write down symptoms they hear. 2. Give students time to reflect on/talk about language and skills they've learned.
Application: Guide whole-class discussion of where you go/what you do when you have various symptoms. Prompts: <i>When do you call the doctor? When do you stay home from work? When do you go to the emergency room? When do you call 911?</i>			

Lesson Planning Template

LESSON BASICS			
Class Level:	Topic:	Class Length:	Date:
Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to</i>			
Enabling Skills:			
Language Skill Proficiency Focus L S W R	Materials and Equipment		
ACTIVITY PLAN			
Warm Up/Review:			
Introduction:			
Presentation	Guided Practice	Communicative Practice	Evaluation
Application:			

What's the Matter?

A. Look at the picture. Answer the questions with your classmates.



1. Where are they? Who are they?
2. How is the man feeling?
3. What is the woman doing? Why?
4. What will happen next?

B. Check true (T) or false (F) or no information (NI).

Listen and read the story.

Samuel Wu is at the doctor's office. He tells the doctor his symptoms. He has a backache and a sore shoulder. The doctor checks Samuel's heart and lungs. The doctor tells Sam, "You don't have a fever. Take ibuprofen for your symptoms and get rest."

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ___1. Sam is at the dentist's office. | ___4. Sam's back is always sore. |
| ___2. Sam has two symptoms. | ___5. The doctor wants Sam to rest. |
| ___3. Sam doesn't have a fever. | ___6. Ibuprofen is food. |

C. Work with your classmates. List words you know.

1. How many symptoms can you name?
2. How many medicines can you name?
3. How many different types of doctors can you name?

D. Listen and repeat the conversation.

Doctor: Good afternoon, Mr. Wu. How can I help you today?

Patient: I feel terrible.

Doctor: Really? Tell me your symptoms.

Patient: I have a sore shoulder and a backache, but I don't have a fever.

Doctor: Let me check your heart and lungs. Breathe in. Breathe out.

Patient: What do you think, doctor?

Doctor: I think you have a sore shoulder. Take some ibuprofen and get rest.

Patient: Thanks, doctor.

E. Match the medications to the symptoms.

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| ___1. ibuprofen | a. an earache |
| ___2. cough syrup | b. sore eyes |
| ___3. cold medicine | c. a backache |
| ___4. eye drops | d. a cough |
| ___5. ear drops | e. a cold |

F. Work with a partner. Make new conversations. Use the ideas below or use your own ideas.

Ms. Pawlak
headache
cough

Mr. Kim
cold
sore eyes

Table 1. Comparative Lesson Plan Models

WIPPEA ¹		Equipped for the Future ²		Backward Lesson Design ³		Into, Through, Beyond ⁴	
		<i>Preparation and Planning</i>					
Identify Student Needs and Background	Step 1: Determine individual learner's goals and purposes and identify the standards that will help him/her achieve them. Determine the student's prior knowledge about these goals and standards.	Step 1: Identifying desired results	Into: Ascertain what the student knows about the subject matter.	Step 1: Identifying desired results			
Identify State Standards and Curriculum	Step 2: In a group, identify a shared interest, purpose, or goal and determine the group's prior knowledge of this topic. Identify the standard that will help the group address this shared goal.	Step 2: Determining acceptable evidence of achievement		Step 2: Determining acceptable evidence of achievement			
Identify Lesson Objective	Step 3: Use the standard to design a learning activity to address the real-life goal of the learners.	Step 3: Planning learning experiences and instruction		Step 3: Planning learning experiences and instruction			
(Plan the lesson)	Step 4: With students, develop a plan to capture evidence and report learning.						
<i>Carrying Out the Plan</i>							
Warm-Up/Review	Step 5: Carry out the learning activity.					Introduce the major concepts that will be covered.	
Introduction						Through: Teacher lectures/contributes to learning by utilizing realia, visuals, etc....	
Presentation						...and various modes of interaction between students.	
Guided Practice						Student takes responsibility for learning by participating in group work and sharing understanding with others.	
Communicative Practice							
<i>Evaluation and Reflection</i>							
Evaluation	Step 6: Observe and document evidence of performance. Step 7: With students, evaluate and reflect on how what was learned is transferable to real-life situations.					Beyond: Student demonstrates real-world application of the newly learned information.	
Application	Step 8: With students, determine next steps to help them meet their goals.						

¹ Based on Madeline Hunter's Direct Instruction Model (1982), WIPPEA stands for the stages of a language lesson: Warm-up/review, Introduction, Guided Practice, Communicative Practice, Evaluation, and Application.
² Miller, Susan Finn (2004). 8 steps for lesson planning: From student goals to instruction and assessment. Fieldnotes for ABLE Staff, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Available from www.able.state.pa.us/able/lib/able/fieldnotes04/fn04effplan.pdf
³ Backward Lesson Design as described by SuccessLink, funded by Missouri Department of Education. Available from http://successlink.org/gti/gti_detail.asp?id=101
⁴ Gulack, John, & Sandy Silverstein. (n.d.). SDAIE handbook, TASSI (Teachers Asian Study Summer Institute). Pomona: California State University. Available from www.intranet.csupomona.edu/~tassi/sdate.htm

Application Activities

To retain what you learned in this workshop, please select at least one application activity.

Select 1

1. **Analyze your textbook** for activity types. **Plan a lesson** by filling out a Lesson Planning Template (PH, p. 83) with the textbook activity/page numbers that match the stages of a lesson. Brainstorm activities to fill in the gaps. **Teach this lesson** (or the one your group developed during the workshop). Soon after you teach the lesson, take time to reflect on how it went. Ask yourself questions such as*

- ▶ What went well? Why?
- ▶ What did not go as planned? Why?
- ▶ If I had to do it over again, what would I change?
- ▶ What have I learned about my students that I can take into account in future lesson planning?

* Use the Lesson Reflection worksheet on PH, p. 84. You can also use the Class Observation worksheet on PH, p. 85.

2. **Observe a lesson** at the same level you teach (or hope to teach). As you observe, fill in the Lesson Planning Template. Then fill in the Class Observation worksheet on PH, p. 85.

3. **Have someone observe your class.** Develop a lesson using the Lesson Planning Template on PH, p. 83. Ask a colleague to observe you as you teach it. Your colleague can fill in the Lesson Planning Template and the Class Observation worksheet. After the lesson, reflect on your own teaching, using questions such as*

- ▶ What went well? Why?
- ▶ What did not go as planned? Why?
- ▶ If I had to do it over again, what would I change?
- ▶ What have I learned about my students that I can address in future lesson planning?

Ask your colleagues for verification or support as necessary.

* Use the Lesson Reflection worksheet on PH, p. 84. You can also use the Class Observation worksheet on PH, p. 85.

Note: For further discussion of reflective teacher practices, see the digest *Reflective Teaching Practice in Adult ESL Settings*, available from www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/reflect.html

Lesson Planning Template

LESSON BASICS			
Class Level:	Topic:	Class Length:	Date:
Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to</i>			
Enabling Skills:			
Language Skill Proficiency Focus L S W R	Materials and Equipment		
ACTIVITY PLAN			
Warm Up/Review:			
Introduction:			
Presentation	Guided Practice	Communicative Practice	Evaluation
Application:			

Class Observation

- ▶ Arrange to observe a class at the same level you teach, if possible.
- ▶ As you observe, fill in the Lesson Planning Template on PH, p. 83.
- ▶ Then answer these questions:

Questions	Yes/No	Answer/Comments
1. Were the objectives clear?	Y N	
2. Did the lesson include all the stages? If not, which ones were missing? How did that affect the lesson?	Y N	
3. Were the activities varied in type and modality?	Y N	
4. Were the activities and materials appropriate for the students' skill level?	Y N	
5. Did the materials support the lesson focus and objectives?	Y N	
6. Was the sequencing of activities logical and appropriate?	Y N	
7. Were the transitions evident and appropriate?	Y N	
8. What worked well?		
9. What would you change?		

Action Plan

Step 1—Reflection into Practice

Look at your reflections about your learning during this workshop on PH, p. 143, Question #2. Select three things you have learned that you will implement in your teaching. Write them below.

1.

2.

3.

Step 2—Application

Select one application activity on PH, p. 82, that you will complete. Check the activity you will complete and write the dates by which you will start and complete it.

Activity	Projected Start Date	Projected Completion Date
<input type="checkbox"/> Analyze your textbook/ plan and teach a lesson.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Observe a lesson.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Have someone observe your lesson.	_____	_____

Step 3—Report Back

Share your action plan activities with a colleague in one of the following ways:

- ▶ Meet and talk with a colleague at break time.
- ▶ Call or email a network buddy from this workshop.

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email address: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email address: _____

- ▶ Report to your colleagues at a staff meeting.
- ▶ Report to your colleagues at a subsequent workshop.

Effective Lesson Planning for Adult English Language Learners, Part 1

Workshop Evaluation

Expectations About Contents of the Workshop

What did you hope to gain from this course or workshop? (please ✓ all that apply)

- Basic introduction or exposure to subject
- In-depth theory or study of subject
- Strategies and ideas about how to implement subject
- Information to take back and share at program
- More general information about subject
- Other _____

Did the workshop fulfill your expectations and needs? (please circle one)

Not at all Barely Sufficiently A great deal Completely

Please explain why you circled the above.

Quality of the Workshop

Area	Quality (please ✓ one)				Comments/Suggestions for Improvement
Trainer style	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Presentation and progress (balance between trainer and participant involvement, kinds of activities, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Materials (handouts, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Organization of workshops (arrangement of content, flow of activities, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	

Follow-Up Activity

As a result of these workshops, what do you hope to try in your classroom or program?

Other Comments

Notes

Effective Lesson Planning for Adult English Language Learners

Workshop Part 2: Goal, Objectives, and Agenda

Goal:

To help new and experienced adult ESL teachers develop skills in lesson planning

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to

- ▶ Recognize the roles that varied activities, grouping strategies, and other aspects such as time play in effective lesson planning
- ▶ Recognize the principles underlying multilevel lesson planning
- ▶ Identify reflective teaching strategies
- ▶ Develop activities for each stage of a lesson
- ▶ Write a lesson plan containing all stages

Agenda:

VI. Introduction and Warm-Up

VII. Presentation: Effective lesson planning background information, Part 2

VIII. Practice: Identifying varied activities, grouping strategies, elements of the multilevel class, sequencing, timing, and pacing; writing comprehension checks and directions

IX. Application (in workshop): Develop a lesson plan

X. Wrap-Up and Evaluation

Yes/No Bingo!

- ▶ Read through the questions. Think about your answers.
- ▶ Write a question of your own in the last square.
- ▶ Ask and answer the questions with your colleagues.
 - When a colleague answers “yes,” write his or her name in the square.
 - When a colleague answers “no,” ask him or her another question.
- ▶ When you have four squares in a horizontal, vertical, or diagonal row, shout “BINGO!”

Between now and the last session, did you...			
<i>do a needs assessment with your students?</i> Name:	<i>teach a lesson from session 1?</i> Name:	<i>observe a colleague?</i> Name:	<i>reread the background information?</i> Name:
<i>talk to someone from the workshop?</i> Name:	<i>write a lesson plan based on the template?</i> Name:	<i>reflect on your lesson planning?</i> Name:	<i>read more about lesson planning?</i> Name:
<i>do a Round Robin with your class?</i> Name:	<i>do an Info Gap with your class?</i> Name:	<i>do a role-play with your class?</i> Name:	<i>do a Line Up with your class?</i> Name:
<i>pair students?</i> Name:	<i>group students?</i> Name:	<i>assign roles to students in groups?</i> Name:	? Name:

Yes/No Bingo!

- ▶ Read through the questions. Think about your answers.
- ▶ Write a question of your own in the last square.
- ▶ Ask and answer the questions with your colleagues.
 - When a colleague answers “yes,” write his or her name in the square.
 - When a colleague answers “no,” ask him or her another question.
- ▶ When you have four squares in a horizontal, vertical, or diagonal row, shout “BINGO!”

Find someone who...			
<i>speaks Spanish</i> Name:	<i>has lived abroad</i> Name:	<i>has studied another language as an adult</i> Name:	<i>teaches a class of Spanish speakers</i> Name:
<i>teaches students from more than one language group</i> Name:	<i>knows where his/her students work</i> Name:	<i>teaches only ESOL</i> Name:	<i>teaches ESOL and ABE</i> Name:
<i>whose community feels tension about the influx of new immigrants</i> Name:	<i>whose community is welcoming to new immigrants</i> Name:	<i>has moved to this community from elsewhere</i> Name:	<i>was born in this community</i> Name:
<i>has used PowerPoint</i> Name:	<i>has facilitated a workshop</i> Name:	<i>has tried to speak the language of another country when traveling there</i> Name:	<i>has</i> Name:

Background Part 2: Effective Lesson Planning

- ▶ As you read, think about your answers to the questions.
- ▶ After you read, highlight the answers in the text.

The Basics of Lesson Design

Adult English language learners generally have limited time to devote to participating in language classes. A good lesson plan is an important tool that focuses both the instructor and the learners on the purpose of the lesson and, when carefully constructed and followed, enables learners to meet their goals efficiently. There are several things to consider in the design of effective lessons, including matching lesson objectives to students' needs and abilities, identifying the types of activities and grouping strategies that will support the objective, and determining the sequencing and pacing of the lesson.

Good lesson design begins with an assessment of students' needs. Once these needs are identified, teachers select which need(s) they will address in the lesson and determine the matching topic, lesson objective, and enabling skills (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation). While listening, speaking, reading, and writing are integrated into each lesson, teachers need to consider which of these skills is the focus of the lesson objective and be sure that the lesson evaluation tests those skills. After this critical preliminary work is done, the teacher is ready to devise a lesson plan. Effective lessons generally cycle through review, presentation, practice, evaluation, and application stages. Instructors plan activities that review previously learned material; introduce and present the new content and language; and provide opportunities for learners to practice, be evaluated, and apply what they have learned. Instructors also spend time identifying the materials and equipment needed to conduct the lesson.

What are the steps in effective lesson design?

- ▶ Assessment of students' needs
- ▶ Selection of which needs will be addressed, determination of matching topics and objectives, and identification of enabling skills
- ▶ Consideration of which of the four skills is the focus
- ▶ Creation of a lesson plan that follows the stages of warm-up/review, introduction and presentation, practice, evaluation, and application

Varying Activities and Grouping Strategies

Within the sequence of lesson stages, the lesson plan should incorporate a variety of activity types and grouping strategies. This variety will provide each student with the opportunity to learn in an environment best suited to his or her needs. Varying activity types addresses the learning styles of different learners. For example, reading a passage addresses a print-oriented learner, watching a video clip engages a visual learner, and getting up and talking to another student on the other side of the room addresses both kinesthetic and oral/aural learners. Varying

activities also keeps learner interest high. In addition, each activity has an ideal group size (whole class, half-class teams, small groups, pairs, or individuals) that needs to be taken into consideration while planning. Some students learn best in an anonymous, large group; others thrive in the interaction of a small group or pair; and still others need time to work individually—so using a variety of grouping strategies is an important consideration during lesson planning.

The selection of activity types and grouping strategies often depends on the stage of the lesson being planned or the range of proficiency levels within a class. For guided or controlled practice activities, teachers may group students with the same overall proficiency level. When matched with controlled activities, this type of grouping reinforces students' accuracy. Depending on the lesson focus, students can also be grouped according to their proficiency in one skill area (listening, speaking, reading, or writing). During communicative practice activities, however, teachers often create groups of students with different proficiency levels to create a greater range of communicative resources in the group and build fluency.

How does utilizing a variety of activity types and grouping strategies affect the learning environment?

- ▶ It provides each student with the opportunity to learn in an environment best suited to his or her needs, addressing the learning styles of different learners and keeping learner interest high.

Managing the Multilevel Class

Single-level classes usually include students with more than one language-proficiency level, but when the proficiency levels vary widely, a class can be considered multilevel. Multilevel classes often occur because of funding constraints or program logistics. Although common, such classes are not ideal because they require extreme patience and flexibility on both the teacher's and learners' parts. Multilevel classes also require the teacher to do extra planning to provide for the differing needs of students.

To effectively teach a multilevel class, a teacher should start by doing what she or he would do in any class: assess students' abilities and interests. The teacher can then modify the single-level lesson plan format to meet the needs of the multilevel class (see chart on PH, p. 76, and TN, p. 62, for one example). One way for a teacher to design a multilevel lesson plan is to select the same topic for the whole class while identifying different level-appropriate objectives for each proficiency level. For example, if the topic is *Communicate with medical personnel*, the following objectives would be appropriate:

- ▶ Beginning Low—identify the major parts of the body
- ▶ Beginning High—describe symptoms of common illnesses
- ▶ Intermediate Low—ask for and offer health advice

In this type of lesson framework, content for all levels is introduced and presented to the class as a whole (e.g., students listen to a doctor and patient's conversation where parts of the body are

named, symptoms are described, and advice is given). Following the presentation, the teacher has students practice the new content in similar-level groups so that they will be able to meet the objective(s) for their level. Using very guided activities works best at this stage of the lesson because the teacher often must monitor one level's work at a time. Assigning students specific roles or tasks during the activity also helps the lesson go smoothly (e.g., in a pair, student A dictates, student B writes). There are times, of course, when one level may need additional content that the other levels do not need. At those times, the teacher usually assigns a practice activity to the levels that don't need the information and then provides a separate presentation to the other level. The multilevel lesson often combines the communicative practice, evaluation, and application stages by having students work with a role play or other communicative language task. These tasks provide opportunities for students of varying abilities to work together and allow the teacher to evaluate students' success on their individual objectives.

What is one framework for a multilevel lesson?

- ▶ Assess students' needs and interests to determine the lesson topic and a lesson objective for each of the general proficiency levels in the class. Next, introduce and present the content for all levels to the whole class. During the practice stage, have students use guided activities to practice the content in similar-level groups. In some cases, the teacher may present additional information to one level while the other levels work on their similar-level practice activities. At the communicative practice stage, students of varying abilities work together to complete a communicative language task. This task may also serve as an evaluation and/or application activity.

Key Aspects of Lesson Planning

While planning the content of the lesson stages is key to effective instruction, the art of teaching requires attention to other elements as well. These elements are addressed once the lesson plan has been sketched out and play an important role in finalizing the plan.

- ▶ **Time frame.** How long is each class period? How long will it take to teach the lesson objective? Is the amount of time allotted for each part of the lesson sufficient?
- ▶ **Checking comprehension and giving directions.** How will the teacher determine whether students are ready to move from one stage to the next? How will students know what to do during an activity? How does one give clear directions?
- ▶ **Sequencing and pacing.** Do the activities move logically so learners are progressively building on what they already know? Do the activities flow well? Are transitions between activities smooth? Are activities the right length and varied so that learners remain engaged and enthused?
- ▶ **Balancing teacher talk time and learner talk time.** Is the amount of time the teacher speaks in class equal to or less than the amount of time the students speak? Does the lesson allow enough time for learners to practice what they have learned—to interact, produce, and initiate language?

- ▶ **Flexibility.** Does the lesson plan allow for a “teachable moment”? If the lesson is running long, what types of adjustments could be made? If the planned lesson finishes early, is there a backup activity ready?
- ▶ **New or returning students.** How can students catch up to the current lesson? Is there sufficient review of previous instruction? Are there activities that lend themselves to peer tutoring?

Why must teachers consider these elements when planning a lesson?

- ▶ Each of these elements affects the success of the lesson. Timing, sequencing, pacing, and flexibility all ensure that the lesson objective can be met within an appropriate time frame. Identifying where comprehension should be checked and how directions should be given guarantees that learners will be able to move from one stage (or activity) to the next successfully. Balancing teacher talk time and learner talk time within a lesson is key to giving learners sufficient practice with the target language. Awareness of how new and returning students can affect the lesson helps the teacher create warm-up/review activities and practice activities that take these students into account.

Growth Through Reflection

While most aspects of lesson planning are learned by experience, active reflection on each day’s lesson makes it possible to identify those lesson elements that need to be refined. The questions below are examples of the kind of reflection that teachers may find helpful:

- ▶ What went well? Why?
- ▶ What did not go as planned? Why?
- ▶ If I had to do it over again, what would I change?
- ▶ What have I learned about my students that I can incorporate into future lesson planning?

Some teachers may also find it useful to participate in peer observations. These observations can increase each teacher’s awareness of effective and less-effective lesson elements and provide a support system that extends long past the actual observation and reflection session.

How does reflection enhance growth?

- ▶ It helps the instructor identify those lesson elements that are working well and those that need to be revised or refined. With the revision and refinement of these elements comes improvement and growth.

Through the cycle of planning, teaching, and reflecting, teachers can improve their skills and learn to assemble key lesson elements into a cohesive, meaningful sequence of activities that culminates in students’ mastery of the lesson objective.

Follow-up questions:

Answers vary.

1. Which stages of the lesson are the most difficult to plan? Why?
2. What are the inherent challenges of putting students in groups?
3. What other things besides time frame and sequencing need to be considered when planning a lesson?
4. What are the benefits and challenges of the multilevel lesson framework presented in the background information?
5. What are some other things teachers can do or ask themselves to aid reflection and growth?

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Directions for Jigsaw Reading

- A. In your groups, count off 1–4.
- B. Reading assignments:
 Everyone reads *The Basics of Lesson Design*
 AND
 1 reads Managing the Multilevel Class
 2 reads Key Aspects of Lesson Planning
 3 reads Varying Activities/Grouping Strategies
 4 reads Growth Through Reflection
- C. As you read, answer the questions related to your part of the reading by highlighting the answers in your text. Be ready to share answers with the whole group. You will have 5 minutes to read and answer your questions.
- D. When all have finished reading their parts, share answers in the group.

Varying Activities and Grouping Strategies

- ▶ Categorize the activities into the grouping strategies they can be used with. An activity can be put in more than one category.

Activities

Role Play	Jigsaw Reading	Line Up	Roundtable	Information Gap
Sentence Scramble	Brainstorm	Peer Dictation	Yes/No Bingo	Matching Strips

Grouping Strategies

Individuals	Pairs	Small Groups	Half Class	Whole Class
Sentence Scramble	Role Play	Role Play	Sentence Scramble	Line Up
Brainstorm	Jigsaw Reading	Jigsaw Reading		Brainstorm
Matching Strips	Information Gap	Roundtable		Yes/No Bingo
	Sentence Scramble	Sentence Scramble		
	Brainstorm	Brainstorm		
	Peer Dictation			
	Matching Strips			

Model Lesson Plan: Beginning High

- ▶ Look at the lesson plan below and answer these questions.
 1. How many different types of activities are used in this lesson?
Nine: discussion of picture, yes/no question game, elicited dialogue, question comp check, roundtable label, substitution drill, role play, focused listening w/role play, Q&A "Where do you go when...?"
 2. What other activities might you use in this lesson plan?
(various answers such as information gap with symptoms; corners)

Lesson Basics

Class Level: Beg. High	Topic: Health	Class Length: 2.5 hrs.	Date: 11-10-05
Lesson Objective: Students will be able to describe symptoms to medical personnel			
Enabling Skills: Grammar: use simple present tense, first and third person Vocabulary: parts of the body, symptoms for basic ailments: <i>sore, ache, pain in my _____.</i> Pronunciation: suffix <i>ache</i>			
Language Skill Proficiency Focus L S W R		Materials and Equipment Visuals: parts of body, ailments, doctor and patient in conversation Handout: outline of the body	

Activity Plan

Warm-Up/Review: Whole-class discussion on picture that shows patient talking to a doctor. Play a quick game of yes/no questions (about the picture) using previously acquired language (e.g., *Is the patient under the table?*).

Introduction: Put up (or draw) a silhouette of a man. Name him, give him a backstory (with students' suggestions), and then tell the class that he's going to the doctor because he has a pain in his *foot*. (Have class suggest how he got the pain.) Tell the class the objective of the lesson.

Presentation	Guided Practice	Communicative Practice	Evaluation
Present (and elicit) a dialogue between the man and his doctor that includes the symptom (pain in <i>foot</i>), possible reason for the symptom (dancing all night), and suggested course of action (rest your <i>feet</i> .) Act out the dialogue and use visuals to support the language. Guide students through the dialogue. Comprehension check: Ask students Y/N, OR, and WH- questions for approximately 5 min. regarding the content of the dialogue and vocabulary usage.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Group students for roundtable label of parts of the body on a handout. 2. Have students use labels as substitution for pair practice of dialogue. 	Have pairs develop role plays based on the dialogue.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have pairs perform their role plays for the class. Students listen and write down symptoms they hear. 2. Give students time to reflect on/talk about language and skills they've learned.

Application: Guide whole-class discussion of where you go/what you do when you have various symptoms. Prompts: *When do you call the doctor? When do you stay home from work? When do you go to the emergency room? When do you call 911?*

Note: Adapted from Adelson-Goldstein, J. (2006, May). *Mastering the madness and magic of multilevel classes*. Presentation given at the Maryland Association for Adult Community and Continuing Education Conference.

Figure 0. Multilevel Lesson Framework

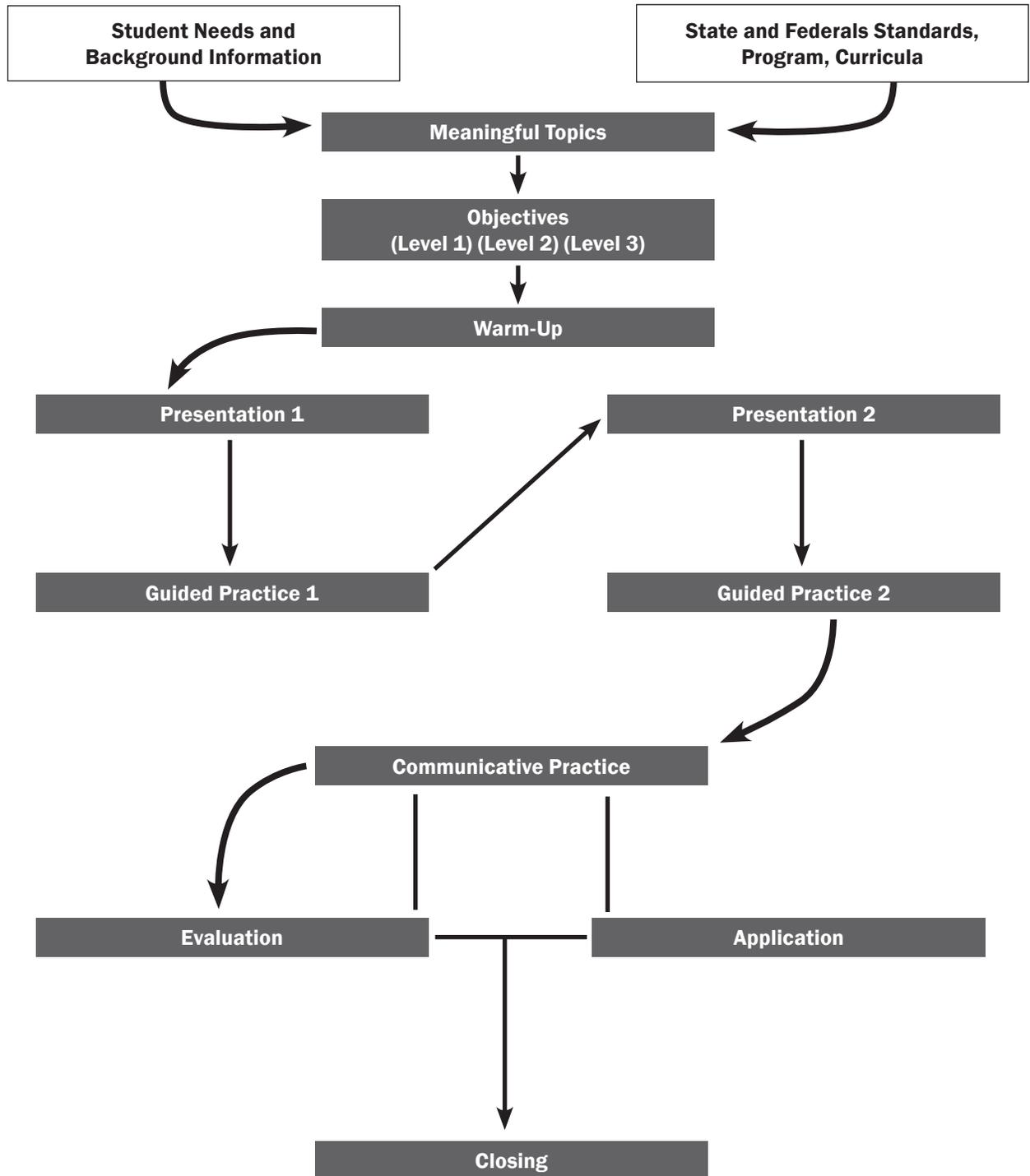
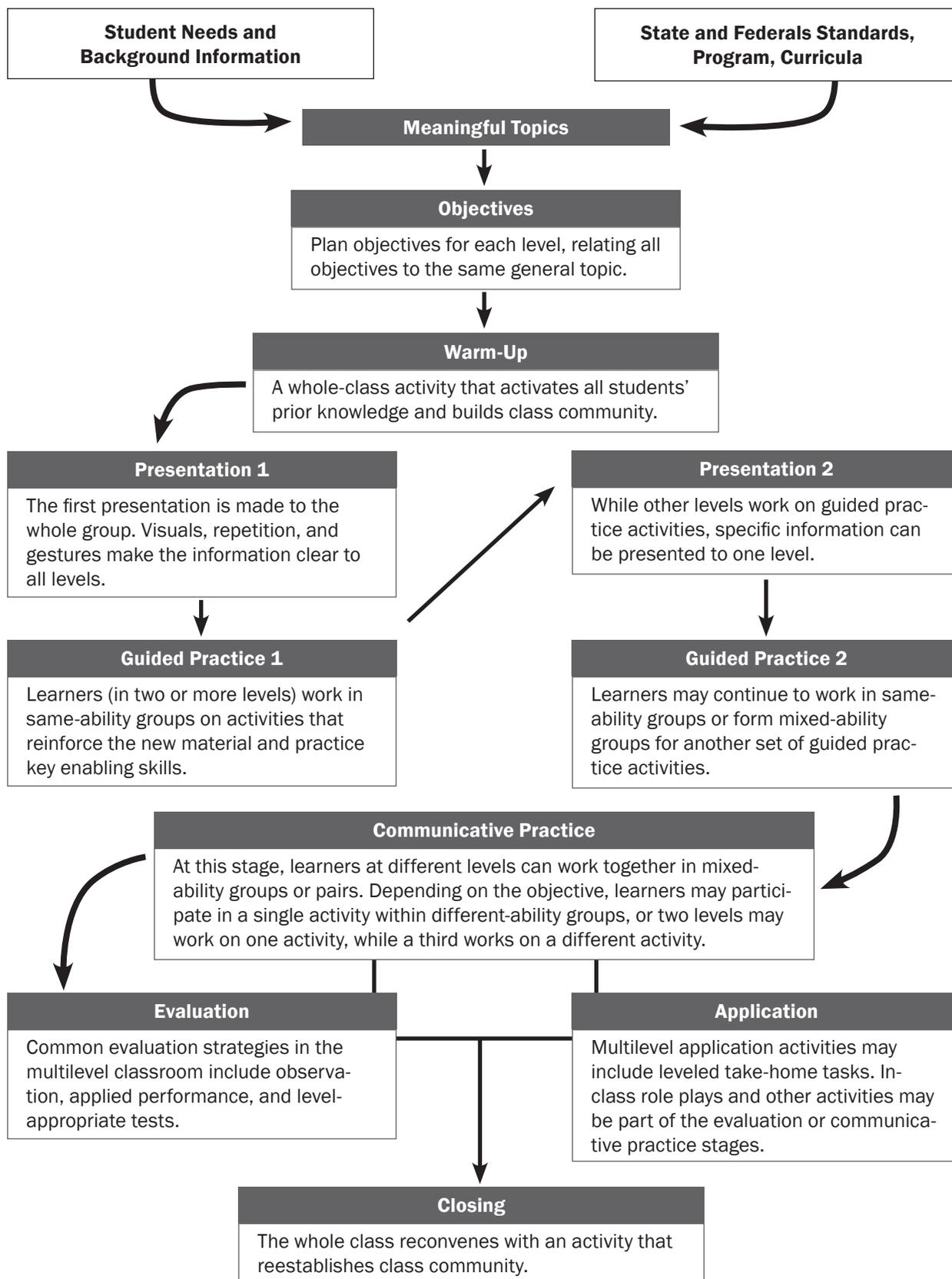


Figure 1. Annotated Multilevel Lesson Framework



Multilevel Lesson Plan

- ▶ Look at the multilevel lesson plan below.
- ▶ Answer the questions on PH, p. 131 (TN, p. 105).

Lesson Basics

Class Level: Multilevel (BL-IL)	Topic: Health	Class Length: 2.5 hrs.*	Date: 11-10-05
Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to</i> BL: identify the major parts of the body BH: describe symptoms to medical personnel IL: offer health advice or recommend over-the-counter (OTC) medications			
Enabling Skills: Grammar: use poss. adj. (BL), simple present tense, first and third person (BH), gerunds with the phrase: "Why don't you stop/start...?" (IL) Vocabulary: parts of the body, symptoms for basic ailments, OTC medications. Pronunciation: suffix "ache," emphasis on "Why don't you...?"			
Language Skill Proficiency Focus L S W R		Materials and Equipment Visuals: parts of body, ailments, doctor and patient in conversation Handout: outline of the body	
Activity Plan—Part 1			
Warm-Up/Review: Whole class discussion on picture that shows patient talking to a doctor. Play a quick game of yes/no questions (about the picture) using previously acquired language (e.g., <i>Is the patient under the table?</i>). Time: 10 minutes			
Introduction: Put up (or draw) a silhouette of a man. Ask the BL students to name him. Elicit his backstory from the class and ask BH students why he's going to the doctor. Ask IL students to say how it happened. Tell the class the lesson objectives. Time: 10 minutes			
Presentation: Present and elicit a dialogue between the man and his doctor that includes the symptom (pain in <i>foot</i> [BL]), possible reason for the symptom (He dances all the time [BH]), and suggested course of action (Why don't you stop dancing? [IL]). Act out the dialogue and use visuals to support the language. Guide students through the dialogue. Model or point out structures within the dialogue (poss. adj, simple pres. and Why don't you stop/start + gerund). Give students a chance to repeat the structures using the language from the dialogue and substitute related vocabulary as well. Time: 15 minutes			
Comprehension check: Ask Y/N, "OR" and WH- questions from students for approximately 5 min. re: the content of the dialogue and vocabulary usage. Time: 5 minutes			

*Includes 15 min. break, opening and closing activities.

<p>Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to</i> BL: identify the major parts of the body BH: describe symptoms to medical personnel IL: offer health advice or recommend over-the-counter (OTC) medications</p>		
Activity Plan – Part 1		
Section 1	Section 2	Section 3
<p><i>Give BH and IL their tasks:</i> BH Guided Practice Have BH students, in small groups, roundtable label parts of the body on a handout and then use labels as substitutions for pair practice of dialogue.</p> <p>IL Guided Practice Have IL students, in small groups, brainstorm different pains and ailments, then matching remedies. Have groups create 10 sentences that follow the pattern, <i>If you have..., why don't you stop...</i></p> <p><i>Facilitate BL group</i> BL Presentation 2 Use TPR to help students acquire names of 8–10 parts of the body and to check comp.</p>	<p><i>Give BL and BH their tasks:</i> BL Guided Practice Students in pairs give each other TPR commands based on picture cues (point to, touch, raise, etc.). Then switch and work with another partner.</p> <p>BH Guided Practice Have students work individually or in pairs to write questions and answers. (<i>Where's the pain? It's in my foot.</i>)</p> <p>IL Presentation 2 Present registers of <i>You should, Why don't you, Maybe you should...</i></p> <p>IL Practice Pairs practice pronunciation skills, especially linking (<i>don't you = donchoo</i>)</p>	<p><i>Give BH/IL and BL their tasks:</i> BH/IL Communicative Practice Different-level pairs develop role play based on dialogue.</p> <p>BL Communicative Practice Pairs role play the dialogue: A: What's the matter?" B: I have a pain in my _____. A: Oh, that's too bad. B: It sure is!</p> <p><i>Observe BL students during role plays.</i></p>
Time: 15 minutes	Time: 20 minutes	Time: 15 minutes
<p>Evaluation: (BH/IL) pairs perform role plays for class while BL and rest of class listen and fill out chart identifying name of the patient, reason for the visit, and the recommendation. Time: 20 minutes</p>		
<p>Application: Guided whole-class discussion of alternative remedies.</p> <p>Prompt: <i>George has a headache. What should he do?</i> Encourage IL students to use advice practiced in lesson to make recommendations (e.g., <i>Why doesn't he start meditating?</i>). Time: 15 minutes</p>		

Note: Adapted from Adelson-Goldstein, J. (2006, May). *Mastering the madness and magic of multilevel classes*. Presentation given at the Maryland Association for Adult Community and Continuing Education Conference.

Multilevel Lesson Plan: Questions

Discuss the following questions with a partner.

1. How does the teacher ensure that all students will understand the first presentation?

The teacher checks all students' comprehension with directed questions.

2. Why does the teacher make separate second presentations to the BL and BH/IL students?

The BL students need additional work with the new language.

The IL students need information on the model grammar structure.

3. How has the teacher grouped learners throughout this lesson? Why?

▶ *Warm-Up/Review through Presentation: Whole group*

▶ *Guided Practice: Level-alike groups*

▶ *Communicative Practice: Different-level groups for BH/IL, level-alike for BL*

▶ *Application: Whole class*

Learners are grouped together at the beginning and end of the lesson to reinforce the class community. Providing a whole-class presentation makes it easier on the teacher, and learners of all proficiency levels get to hear all the facets of the lesson.

Alike-level grouping allows learners to work toward their level objective and practice language at their level. Different-level groups create a more natural, communicative environment. In serving as an audience for the BH/IL role plays, the BL learners can successfully use their receptive skills.

4. Which activities are going on simultaneously in this lesson?

▶ *Teaching of body parts to BL; BH roundtable parts of the body and practice the dialogue; IL brainstorm symptoms and remedies and then write 10 sentences.*

▶ *Teaching IL grammar point and pronunciation practice; BL do TPR pair activity; BH write questions and answers.*

5. What would the teacher have to do to prepare students to work independently during the practice stage of the lesson?

Model or demonstrate the activity, give clear directions, and check learners' comprehension. Circulate, monitor, and facilitate each group, if even for just a few moments.

Note: All learners benefit from hearing what other groups will be doing.

Comprehension Checks

During or after the presentation, it is important to check whether students have understood the new material. A yes/no question such as “Do you understand?” usually results in most students nodding or saying “yes”—even though they may not have understood. To accurately verify students’ comprehension, use one of the techniques listed below. Also, make sure the comprehension questions you ask are at the right language level for your students. Always wait between 10 and 15 seconds for students to respond to a command, question, or request.

1. Ask questions that match the students’ level, for example—
Beginning Low—*Is it red or blue?*
Beginning High—*What color is it?*
2. Ask a question that helps students demonstrate understanding, e.g., *The teacher conference is from 3:00 to 3:30. What time do you need to be at the school?*
3. Ask learners to paraphrase or restate the information presented or directions given.
4. Ask learners to complete a task that demonstrates understanding, e.g., *It’s hot in here. Please open the window.*

Practice Writing a Comprehension Check

1. Review the presentation and comprehension check for the lesson on PH, p. 133 (TN, p. 106).
2. Look at the sample dialogue below.
3. With a partner, write some appropriate questions to check comprehension of the dialogue. Use the examples above to help you.
A: What’s the matter, Mr. Yee?
B: My foot hurts. It hurts every time I dance.
A: Really?
B: Yes, and I dance all the time.
A: Hmmmm. Why don’t you stop dancing so much? I think your foot will feel better.

Sample dialogue from the multilevel lesson on PH, p. 130 (TN, p. 104)

Sample Comprehension Check Questions

1. *Who is the patient? Is Mr. Yee the patient or the doctor?*
2. *What hurts, his foot or his finger?*
3. *Why does it hurt?*
4. *How often does he dance?*
5. *What is the doctor’s advice?*
6. *Does the doctor think Mr. Yee’s condition is very serious?*

Note: Based on the work of Kathleen Santopietro Weddel. (2006). *Classroom Teacher Language for Teacher and Learner Interaction*, Independent Study Module, Northern Colorado Literacy Resource Center.

Giving Directions

Directions can make or break a practice activity. Directions must be clear and concise. When giving directions, use language that learners already know or that is made comprehensible by visuals and meaningful gestures. The fewer words that are used, the better. It is a good idea to write the directions on the board or overhead projector. Once the learners have heard the directions orally and have seen them in writing, demonstrate the activity with one learner. At the very lowest levels, demonstration may be the best way to give directions.

Appropriate directions include

1. Steps given in one- or two-word verbs. Demonstrate each step one at a time.
2. Level-appropriate grammar and vocabulary, for example—
 Beginning Low—*What's this?*
 Beginning High—*What's in the picture?*
 Intermediate—*What do you see in the picture on page__?*

Practice Writing Directions

1. With a partner, choose one of the Guided or Communicative practice activities for Beginning High or Intermediate Low in the lesson plan on PH, p. 130 (TN, p. 104).
2. Write directions for the practice activity you chose.
3. Share the directions you wrote with another pair of students.

Directions

Level _____ Activity _____

Answers vary.

Note: Based on the work of Kathleen Santopietro Weddel. (2006). *Classroom Teacher Language for Teacher and Learner Interaction*, Independent Study Module, Northern Colorado Literacy Resource Center.

Sequencing

1. The activities in the chart below support the following Beginning Low lesson objective.

Students will be able to identify U.S. testing rules and “bubble in” an electronically scored answer sheet for a multiple-choice test on previously learned material.

2. Match the lesson activities to the stages of the lesson.
3. Check your answers with a partner.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <u> d </u> 1. Warm-Up/Review | a. Have small groups of students work together to make a poster of test-taking rules and procedures. (<i>Look at your answer sheet only.</i>) |
| <u> e </u> 2. Introduction | b. Have students demonstrate testing procedures in a TPR activity. |
| <u> f </u> 3. Presentation | c. Have students take a sample test with answer sheets and #2 pencils, bubbling in answers on the answer sheet. |
| <u> b </u> 4. Guided Practice | d. Give students a simple T/F test on material they’ve studied previously . Ask students how they felt about taking the test. |
| <u> a </u> 5. Communicative Practice | e. Lead a class brainstorm of test-taking rules. |
| <u> c </u> 6. Evaluation/Application | f. Demonstrate the rules and procedures for taking a multiple-choice test with an answer sheet. Then check students’ comprehension by asking “OR” questions about the process. <i>Do you write on the test or the answer sheet?</i> |

Pacing and Timing

1. Form a pair.
2. Read through the 2.5-hour Beginning Low lesson on PH, p. 137 (TN, p. 110) and complete the timing chart below. Make notes about pacing or timing issues.
3. Compare your answers with another pair.

Answers will vary—this is one possible way to do it.

Stage	Activity/Demo	Time Frame	Notes
Warm-Up/Review	T/F test	5	Add opening—Meet and greet, 5 min.
	“Show and Tell”	10	
Introduction	Brainstorm rules	10	Extra time for copying rules.
Presentation	Explain and demo test process	5	
	Go over test questions	10	
	Demo incorrect responses	5	
Guided Practice	Work with commands imperatives (TPR)	20	Students respond to, give, and write commands.
	T/F test	5	
Communicative Practice	Team interview	15	5 min. of each activity is model and comp check. Team poster activity includes 1–2 min report back per group.
	Team posters	30	
Evaluation/Application	Sample test	10	Add closing activity—another 10 min.
	Reflection	10	

Total: 2 hr., 30 min. with opening and closing.

Beginning Low Lesson Plan

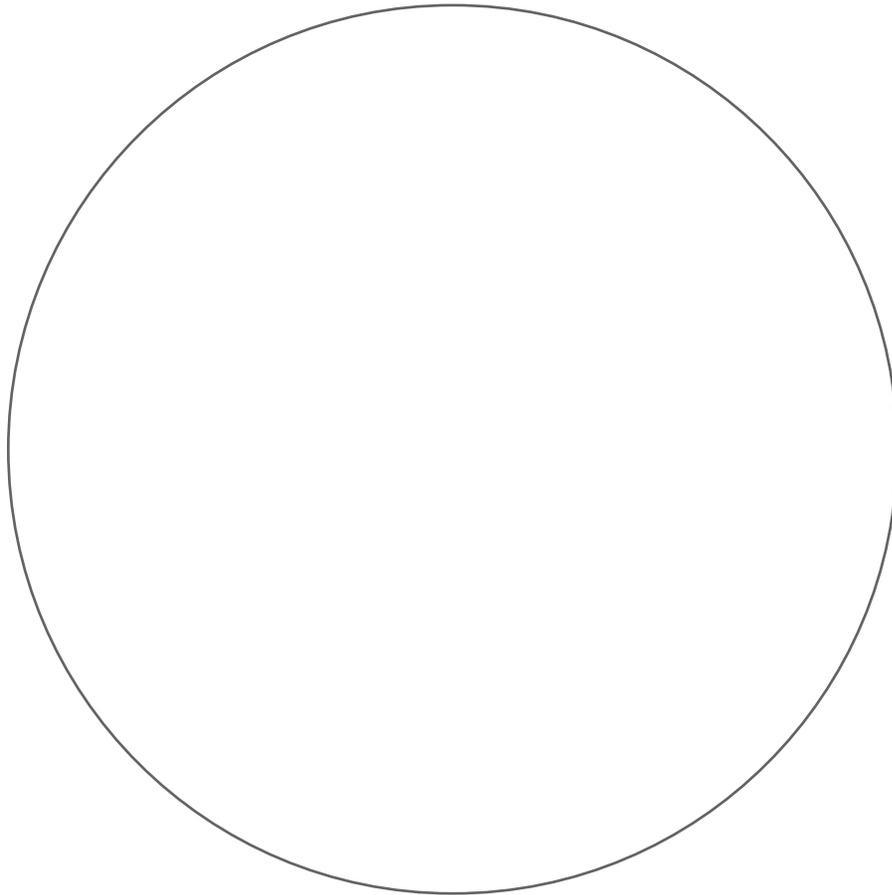
Lesson Planning Template

LESSON BASICS			
Class Level: BL	Topic: Academic Skills	Class Length: 2.5 hrs.	Date: 10-30-06
Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to identify U.S. testing rules and complete an electronically scored answer sheet for a multiple-choice test on previously learned material.</i>			
Enabling Skills: Grammar: <i>Imperatives Mark A, Bubble in, Use a #2 pencil</i> Vocabulary: <i>answer sheet, multiple choice, fill in, bubble in, mark, erase completely, correct, incorrect</i> Pronunciation: <i>word stress: answer, erase</i>			
Language Skill Proficiency Focus L <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> W <input type="checkbox"/> R <input type="checkbox"/>	Materials and Equipment Overhead projector, sample test booklets, mock electronic answer sheets for multiple choice and T/F, #2 pencils.		
ACTIVITY PLAN			
Warm-Up/Review: Give students a simple T/F test on material they've studied previously. Ask students how they felt about taking the test. "Show and tell" with a test booklet, an electronic answer sheet, a pen, and a #2 pencil. Use "OR" questions to verify that students know which is which. <i>Is this the test booklet or the answer sheet? Do you write on the booklet or the answer sheet?</i>			
Introduction: Elicit the rules for taking tests. Write students' ideas on the board. Touch on any of these rules that students do not come up with: 1. Use a #2 pencil. 2. Write your name on your answer sheet. 3. Cover your answers. 4. Don't talk. 5. Don't write on the test booklet.			
Presentation	Guided Practice	Communicative Practice	Evaluation
<p>1. Use sample test questions to demonstrate the process of reading a question in one place and filling in the answer on an answer sheet. Use the first question to teach the concept of "multiple choice."</p> <p>2. Read each question together, and have the students tell you the answer. Demonstrate bubbling in the answer to the first question on the board or overhead projector. Demonstrate incorrect ways to fill in the answer sheet, such as crossing out, circling, or checking the letters on the form.</p>	<p>Work with imperatives. Have students demonstrate the key test commands.</p> <p>1. Write sample test items on the board such as: 1. A B C D</p> <p>2. Give students a sample answer sheet and have them bubble in the correct "answer" for each.</p> <p>3. Circulate to check that students are correctly bubbling in the answers.</p> <hr/> <p>Give a quick T/F test to determine whether students know basic U.S. testing rules. Give students T/F answer sheets so they can bubble in answers (e.g., <i>You can ask your partner for an answer on a test. [F]</i>).</p>	<p>1. Write these three questions: <i>Do you get nervous on test day?</i> <i>How long do you study for tests?</i> <i>What kinds of tests do you like?</i></p> <p>2. Form groups of four. Set a time limit and have teammates take turns interviewing each other. Person #1 asks everyone question #1. Person #2 asks question #2, etc.</p> <p>3. Call time and tally the class answers for each question.</p> <hr/> <p>Have small groups work together to make a poster of test-taking rules.</p>	<p>1. Distribute a sample test, answer sheet, and #2 pencil to each student.</p> <p>2. Give students directions and set a 10-minute time limit for the test.</p> <p>3. Collect the answer sheets only. Then, using the test handout, review the answers with the class. Collect and review the students' test booklets and answer sheets to determine how well they understood the lesson.</p> <hr/> <p>Ask students to identify two things they learned in the lesson.</p>

Teacher Talk and Learner Talk

1. Look back at the Beginning Low lesson.
2. Given the types of activities in the lesson, identify the amount of time the teacher is likely to be talking and the amount of time the learners will probably be talking.
3. Draw a pie chart in the circle below to represent these amounts of teacher talk and learner talk.
4. Form a small group and share your pie chart. Compare the amount of teacher talk/learner talk in the pie chart with that of a typical lesson you teach. How will you change the teacher talk/learner talk ratio in your classes?

Answers will vary.



Application

With a partner, write a lesson plan for learners you may teach.

Using the lesson template on PH, p. 140 (TN, p. 112), do the following:

1. Select from one of the objectives below. Then, fill in the “Lesson Basics.”
 - ▶ Identify different types of jobs in order to state job goals.
 - ▶ Write a note excusing a child’s absence from school.
 - ▶ Clarify instructions to operate common office machines (copier, fax, shredder).
 - ▶ Identify common emergencies and procedures to make a 911 call.
 - ▶ Exchange or return a damaged item to a department store.
 - ▶ Identify acceptable reasons for changing a work schedule and request a change.
 - ▶ Interpret food and nutrition labels to determine healthy choices.
2. Complete the activity plan by briefly describing the activities you would use to help students meet the lesson objective. You may want to select from the activities listed below or use other activities from your repertoire.

Activities Discussed or Used During the <i>Effective Lesson Planning</i> Training		
Brainstorm	Jigsaw Reading	Roundtable
Categorizing	Line Up	Scrambled Sentences
Corners	Language Experience Writing	Sentence Maker
Dialogue	Matching Strips	Storytelling
Drills	Multiple-Choice Test	Survey
Focused Listening	Peer Dictation	True/False Questions
Information Gap	Read & Answer Questions	Word Cards
Interview	Role Play	Yes/No Bingo

3. Identify grouping strategies you would use for each activity (pairs, small group, teams, whole class).
4. Include the time each activity will need. The total time should match the class length.
5. On a separate sheet of paper,
 - a. Write a comprehension check for the presentation.
 - b. Write directions for at least one practice activity.
6. Form a small group with another pair and share your lesson plan. Ask for suggestions from your group on how to improve your plan.

Lesson Planning Template

LESSON BASICS			
Class Level:	Topic:	Class Length:	Date:
Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to</i>			
Enabling Skills:			
Language Skill Proficiency Focus L S W R	Materials and Equipment		
ACTIVITY PLAN			
Warm Up/Review:			
Introduction:			
Presentation	Guided Practice	Communicative Practice	Evaluation
Application:			

Application Activities

To retain what you learned in this workshop, please select at least one application activity.

Select one or more

1. **Analyze your textbook** for activity types. **Plan a lesson** by filling out a Lesson Planning Template Single Level/Single Presentation on page 20 with activity/page numbers that match the stages of a lesson. Brainstorm activities to fill in the gaps. **Teach this lesson** (or you may use the sample lessons on pages 8 or 15 or the one your group developed during the workshop). Soon after you teach the lesson, take time to reflect on how it went. Ask yourself questions such as*
 - ▶ What went well? Why?
 - ▶ What did not go as planned? Why?
 - ▶ If I had to do it over again, what would I change?
 - ▶ What have I learned about my students that I can account for in future lesson planning?

*Use the Lesson Reflection worksheet on page 116. You can also use the Class Observation worksheet on page 117.

2. **Observe a lesson** at the same level you teach (or hope to teach). As you observe, fill in the Lesson Planning Template on PH, p. 142, TN, p. 115. Then, fill in the Class Observation worksheet on PH, p. 144, TN, p. 117.

3. **Develop a lesson** using the same directions you used in the Application (in-class) on PH, p. 139, TN, p. 112. Use the Lesson Planning Template on PH, p. 142, TN, p. 115. Teach the lesson. After you teach the lesson, reflect upon your own teaching, using questions such as*
 - ▶ What went well? Why?
 - ▶ What did not go as planned? Why?
 - ▶ If I had to do it over again, what would I change?
 - ▶ What have I learned about my students that I can account for in future lesson planning?

*Use the Lesson Reflection worksheet on TN, p. 116. You can also use the Class Observation worksheet on TN, p. 117.

4. **Have someone observe your class.** Develop a lesson in section 3 above. Ask a colleague to observe you as you teach it. Your colleague can fill in the Lesson Planning Template on PH, p. 142, TN, p. 115 and the Lesson Observation worksheet on PH, p. 144, TN, p. 117. After the lesson, reflect upon your own teaching, using questions such as*
 - ▶ What went well? Why?
 - ▶ What did not go as planned? Why?
 - ▶ If I had to do it over again, what would I change?
 - ▶ What have I learned about my students that I can account for in future lesson planning?

Ask your colleague for verification or support as necessary.

* Use the Lesson Reflection worksheet on TN, p. 116. You can also use the Class Observation worksheet on TN, p. 117.

Note: For further discussion of reflective teacher practices, see the digest *Reflective Teaching Practice in Adult ESL Settings*, available from www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/reflect.html

Lesson Planning Template

LESSON BASICS			
Class Level:	Topic:	Class Length:	Date:
Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to</i>			
Enabling Skills:			
Language Skill Proficiency Focus L S W R	Materials and Equipment		
ACTIVITY PLAN			
Warm Up/Review:			
Introduction:			
Presentation	Guided Practice	Communicative Practice	Evaluation
Application:			

Class Observation

- ▶ Arrange to observe a class at the same level you teach, if possible.
- ▶ As you observe, fill in the Lesson Planning Template on the next page.
- ▶ Answer the following questions.

Questions	Yes/No	Answer/Comments
1. Were the objectives clear?	Y N	
2. Did the lesson include all the stages? If not, which ones were missing? How did that affect the lesson?	Y N	
3. Were the activities varied in type and modality?	Y N	
4. Were the activities and materials appropriate for the students' skill level?	Y N	
5. Did the materials support the lesson focus and objectives?	Y N	
6. Was the sequencing of activities logical and appropriate?	Y N	
7. Were the transitions evident and appropriate?	Y N	
8. What worked well?		
9. What would you change?		

Action Plan

Step 1—Reflection into Practice

Look at your reflections about your learning during this workshop on page 116, question 2. Select three things you have learned that you will implement in your teaching. Write them below.

1.

2.

3.

Step 2—Application

Select one application activity on page 112 that you will complete. Check the activity you will complete and write the dates by which you will start and complete it.

Activity	Projected Start Date	Projected Completion Date
<input type="checkbox"/> Analyze your textbook/plan and teach a lesson.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop a lesson.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Observe a lesson.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Have someone observe your lesson.	_____	_____

Step 3—Report Back

Share your action plan activities with a colleague in one of the following ways:

- ▶ Meet and talk with a colleague at break time.
- ▶ Call or email a network buddy from this workshop.

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email address: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email address: _____

- ▶ Report to your colleagues at a staff meeting.
- ▶ Report to your colleagues at a subsequent workshop.

Effective Lesson Planning for Adult English Language Learners

Workshop Part 2: Goal, Objectives, and Agenda

Goal:

To help new and experienced adult ESL teachers develop skills in lesson planning

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to

- ▶ Recognize the roles that varied activities, grouping strategies, and other aspects (such as time) play in effective lesson planning
- ▶ Recognize the principles underlying multilevel lesson planning
- ▶ Identify reflective teaching strategies
- ▶ Develop activities for each stage of a lesson
- ▶ Write a lesson plan containing all stages

Agenda:

VI. Introduction and Warm-Up

VII. Presentation: Effective lesson planning background information, Part 2

VIII. Practice: Identifying varied activities, grouping strategies, elements of the multilevel class, sequencing, timing, and pacing; writing comprehension checks and directions

IX. Application (in workshop): Develop a lesson plan

X. Wrap-Up and Evaluation

Part 2: Background Information: Effective Lesson Planning

- ▶ As you read, think about your answers to the questions.
- ▶ After you read, highlight the answers in the text.

The Basics of Lesson Design

Adult English language learners generally have limited time to devote to participating in language classes. A good lesson plan is an important tool that focuses both the instructor and the learners on the purpose of the lesson and, when carefully constructed and followed, enables learners to meet their goals efficiently. There are several things to consider in the design of effective lessons, including matching lesson objectives to students' needs and abilities, identifying the types of activities and grouping strategies that will support the objective, and determining the sequencing and pacing of the lesson.

Good lesson design begins with an assessment of students' needs. Once these needs are identified, teachers select which need(s) they will address in the lesson and determine the matching topic, lesson objective, and enabling skills (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation). While listening, speaking, reading, and writing are integrated into each lesson, teachers need to consider which of these skills is the focus of the lesson objective and be sure that the lesson evaluation tests those skills. After this critical preliminary work is done, the teacher is ready to devise a lesson plan. Effective lessons generally cycle through review, presentation, practice, evaluation, and application stages. Instructors plan activities that review previously learned material; introduce and present the new content and language; and provide opportunities for learners to practice, be evaluated, and apply what they have learned. Instructors also spend time identifying the materials and equipment needed to conduct the lesson.

- ▶ What are the steps in effective lesson design?

Varying Activities and Grouping Strategies

Within the sequence of lesson stages, the lesson plan should incorporate a variety of activity types and grouping strategies. This variety will provide each student with the opportunity to learn in an environment best suited to his or her needs. Varying activity types addresses the learning styles of different learners. For example, reading a passage addresses a print-oriented learner, watching a video clip engages a visual learner, and getting up and talking to another student on the other side of the room addresses both kinesthetic and oral/aural learners. Varying activities also keeps learner interest high. In addition, each activity has an ideal group size (whole class, half-class teams, small groups, pairs, or individuals) that needs to be taken into consideration while planning. Some students learn best in an anonymous, large group; others thrive in the interaction of a small group or pair; and still others need time to work individually—so using a variety of grouping strategies is an important consideration during lesson planning.

The selection of activity types and grouping strategies often depends on the stage of the lesson being planned or the range of proficiency levels within a class. For guided or controlled practice activities, teachers may group students with the same overall proficiency level. When matched with controlled activities, this type of grouping reinforces students' accuracy. Depending on the lesson focus, students can also be grouped according to their proficiency in one skill area (listening, speaking, reading, or writing). During communicative practice activities, however, teachers often create groups of students with different proficiency levels to create a greater range of communicative resources in the group and build fluency.

- ▶ How does utilizing a variety of activity types and grouping strategies affect the learning environment?

Managing the Multilevel Class

Single-level classes usually include students with more than one language-proficiency level, but when the proficiency levels vary widely, a class can be considered multilevel. Multilevel classes often occur because of funding constraints or program logistics. Although common, such classes are not ideal because they require extreme patience and flexibility on both the teacher's and learners' parts. Multilevel classes also require the teacher to do extra planning to provide for the differing needs of students.

To effectively teach a multilevel class, a teacher should start by doing what she or he would do in any class: assess students' abilities and interests. The teacher can then modify the single-level lesson plan format to meet the needs of the multilevel class (see chart on PH, p. 129 and TN, p. 103 for one example). One way for a teacher to design a multilevel lesson plan is to select the same topic for the whole class while identifying different level-appropriate objectives for each proficiency level. For example, if the topic is *Communicate with medical personnel*, the following objectives would be appropriate:

- ▶ Beginning Low—identify the major parts of the body
- ▶ Beginning High—describe symptoms of common illnesses
- ▶ Intermediate Low—ask for and offer health advice

In this type of lesson framework, content for all levels is introduced and presented to the class as a whole (e.g., students listen to a doctor and patient's conversation where parts of the body are named, symptoms are described, and advice is given). Following the presentation, the teacher has students practice the new content in similar-level groups so that they will be able to meet the objective(s) for their level. Using very guided activities works best at this stage of the lesson because the teacher often must monitor one level's work at a time. Assigning students specific roles or tasks during the activity also helps the lesson go smoothly (e.g., in a pair, student A dictates, student B writes). There are times, of course, when one level may need additional content that the other levels do not need. At those times, the teacher usually assigns a practice activity to the levels that don't need the information and then provides a separate presentation to the other level. The multilevel lesson often combines the communicative practice, evaluation,

and application stages by having students work with a role play or other communicative language task. These tasks provide opportunities for students of varying abilities to work together and allow the teacher to evaluate students' success on their individual objectives.

- ▶ What is one framework for a multilevel lesson?

Key Aspects of Lesson Planning

While planning the content of the lesson stages is key to effective instruction, the art of teaching requires attention to other elements as well. These elements are addressed once the lesson plan has been sketched out and play an important role in finalizing the plan.

- ▶ **Time frame.** How long is each class period? How long will it take to teach the lesson objective? Is the amount of time allotted for each part of the lesson sufficient?
- ▶ **Checking comprehension and giving directions.** How will the teacher determine whether students are ready to move from one stage to the next? How will students know what to do during an activity? How does one give clear directions?
- ▶ **Sequencing and pacing.** Do the activities move logically so learners are progressively building on what they already know? Do the activities flow well? Are transitions between activities smooth? Are activities the right length and varied so that learners remain engaged and enthused?
- ▶ **Balancing teacher talk time and learner talk time.** Is the amount of time the teacher speaks in class equal to or less than the amount of time the students speak? Does the lesson allow enough time for learners to practice what they have learned—to interact, produce, and initiate language?
- ▶ **Flexibility.** Does the lesson plan allow for a “teachable moment”? If the lesson is running long, what types of adjustments could be made? If the planned lesson finishes early, is there a backup activity ready?
- ▶ **New or returning students.** How can students catch up to the current lesson? Is there sufficient review of previous instruction? Are there activities that lend themselves to peer tutoring?
- ▶ Why must teachers consider these elements when planning a lesson?

Growth Through Reflection

While most aspects of lesson planning are learned by experience, active reflection on each day's lesson makes it possible to identify those lesson elements that need to be refined. The questions below are examples of the kind of reflection that teachers may find helpful:

- ▶ What went well? Why?
- ▶ What did not go as planned? Why?
- ▶ If I had to do it over again, what would I change?
- ▶ What have I learned about my students that I can incorporate into future lesson planning?

Some teachers may also find it useful to participate in peer observations. These observations can increase each teacher's awareness of effective and less-effective lesson elements and provide a support system that extends long past the actual observation and reflection session.

- ▶ How does reflection enhance growth?

Through the cycle of planning, teaching, and reflecting, teachers can improve their skills and learn to assemble key lesson elements into a cohesive, meaningful sequence of activities that culminates in students' mastery of the lesson objective.

Follow-up questions:

1. Which stages of the lesson are the most difficult to plan? Why?
2. What are the inherent challenges of putting students in groups?
3. What other things besides time frame and sequencing need to be considered when planning a lesson?
4. What are the benefits and challenges of the multilevel lesson framework presented in the background information?
5. What are some other things teachers can do or ask themselves to aid reflection and growth?

References/Resources

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Directions for Jigsaw Reading

- A. In your groups, count off 1–4.

- B. Reading assignments:
Everyone reads *The Basics of Lesson Design*
AND
 - 1 reads Managing the Multilevel Class
 - 2 reads Key Aspects of Lesson Planning
 - 3 reads Varying Activities/Grouping Strategies
 - 4 reads Growth Through Reflection

- C. As you read, answer the questions related to your part of the reading by highlighting the answers in your text. Be ready to share answers with the whole group. You will have 5 minutes to read and answer your questions.

- D. When all have finished reading their parts, share answers in the group.

Model Lesson Plan: Beginning High

- ▶ Look at the lesson plan below and answer these questions.
- 1. How many different types of activities are used in this lesson?
- 2. What other activities might you use in this lesson plan?

Lesson Basics

Class Level: Beg. High	Topic: Health	Class Length: 2.5 hrs.	Date: 11-10-05
Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to describe symptoms to medical personnel</i>			
Enabling Skills: Grammar: use simple present tense, first and third person Vocabulary: parts of the body, symptoms for basic ailments: <i>sore, ache, pain in my _____</i> . Pronunciation: suffix <i>ache</i>			
Language Skill Proficiency Focus L S W R		Materials and Equipment Visuals: parts of body, ailments, doctor and patient in conversation Handout: outline of the body	

Activity Plan

Warm-Up/Review: Whole-class discussion on picture that shows patient talking to a doctor. Play a quick game of yes/no questions (about the picture) using previously acquired language (e.g., *Is the patient under the table?*).

Introduction: Put up (or draw) a silhouette of a man. Name him, give him a backstory (with students' suggestions), and then tell the class that he's going to the doctor because he has a pain in his *foot*. (Have class suggest how he got the pain.) Tell the class the objective of the lesson.

Presentation	Guided Practice	Communicative Practice	Evaluation
Present (and elicit) a dialogue between the man and his doctor that includes the symptom (pain in <i>foot</i>), possible reason for the symptom (dancing all night), and suggested course of action (rest your <i>feet</i> .) Act out the dialogue and use visuals to support the language. Guide students through the dialogue. Comprehension check: Ask students Y/N, OR, and WH- questions for approximately 5 min. regarding the content of the dialogue and vocabulary usage.	1. Group students for roundtable label of parts of the body on a handout. 2. Have students use labels as substitution for pair practice of dialogue.	Have pairs develop role plays based on the dialogue.	1. Have pairs perform their role plays for the class. Students listen and write down "symptoms" they hear. 2. Give students time to reflect on/talk about language and skills they've learned.

Application: Guide whole-class discussion of where you go/what you do when you have various symptoms. Prompts: *When do you call the doctor? When do you stay home from work? When do you go to the emergency room? When do you call 911?*

Note: Adapted from Adelson-Goldstein, J. (2006, May). *Mastering the madness and magic of multilevel classes*. Presentation given at the Maryland Association for Adult Community and Continuing Education Conference.

Multilevel Lesson Plan

- ▶ Look at the multilevel lesson plan below.
- ▶ Answer the questions on PH, p. 131 (TN, p. 105).

Lesson Basics

Class Level: Multilevel (BL-IL)	Topic: Health	Class Length: 2.5 hrs.*	Date: 11-10-05
Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to</i> BL: identify the major parts of the body BH: describe symptoms to medical personnel IL: offer health advice or recommend over-the-counter (OTC) medications			
Enabling Skills: Grammar: use poss. adj. (BL), simple present tense, first and third person (BH), gerunds with the phrase: "Why don't you stop/start...?" (IL) Vocabulary: parts of the body, symptoms for basic ailments, OTC medications. Pronunciation: suffix "ache," emphasis on "Why don't you...?"			
Language Skill Proficiency Focus L S W R		Materials and Equipment Visuals: parts of body, ailments, doctor and patient in conversation Handout: outline of the body	
Activity Plan—Part 1			
Warm-Up/Review: Whole class discussion on picture that shows patient talking to a doctor. Play a quick game of yes/no questions (about the picture) using previously acquired language (e.g., <i>Is the patient under the table?</i>). Time: 10 minutes			
Introduction: Put up (or draw) a silhouette of a man. Ask the BL students to name him. Elicit his backstory from the class and ask BH students why he's going to the doctor. Ask IL students to say how it happened. Tell the class the lesson objectives. Time: 10 minutes			
Presentation: Present and elicit a dialogue between the man and his doctor that includes the symptom (pain in <i>foot</i> [BL]), possible reason for the symptom (He dances all the time [BH]), and suggested course of action (Why don't you stop dancing? [IL]). Act out the dialogue and use visuals to support the language. Guide students through the dialogue. Model or point out structures within the dialogue (poss. adj, simple pres. and Why don't you stop/start + gerund). Give students a chance to repeat the structures using the language from the dialogue and substitute related vocabulary as well. Time: 15 minutes			
Comprehension check: Ask Y/N, "OR" and WH- questions from students for approximately 5 min. re: the content of the dialogue and vocabulary usage. Time: 5 minutes			

*Includes 15 min. break, opening and closing activities.

<p>Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to</i> BL: identify the major parts of the body BH: describe symptoms to medical personnel IL: offer health advice or recommend over-the-counter (OTC) medications</p>		
Activity Plan – Part 2		
Section 1	Section 2	Section 3
<p><i>Give BH and IL their tasks:</i></p> <p>BH Guided Practice Have BH students, in small groups, roundtable label parts of the body on a handout and then use labels as substitutions for pair practice of dialogue.</p> <p>IL Guided Practice Have IL students, in small groups, brainstorm different pains and ailments, then matching remedies. Have groups create 10 sentences that follow the pattern, <i>If you have..., why don't you stop...</i></p> <p><i>Facilitate BL group</i></p> <p>BL Presentation 2 Use TPR to help students acquire names of 8–10 parts of the body and to check comp.</p>	<p><i>Give BL and BH their tasks:</i></p> <p>BL Guided Practice Students in pairs give each other TPR commands based on picture cues (point to, touch, raise, etc.). Then switch and work with another partner.</p> <p>BH Guided Practice Have students work individually or in pairs to write questions and answers. (<i>Where's the pain? It's in my foot.</i>)</p> <p>IL Presentation 2 Present registers of <i>You should, Why don't you, Maybe you should...</i></p> <p>IL Practice Pairs practice pronunciation skills, especially linking (<i>don't you = donchoo</i>)</p>	<p><i>Give BH/IL and BL their tasks:</i></p> <p>BH/IL Communicative Practice Different-level pairs develop role play based on dialogue.</p> <p>BL Communicative Practice Pairs role play the dialogue: A: What's the matter?" B: I have a pain in my _____. A: Oh, that's too bad. B: It sure is!</p> <p><i>Observe BL students during role plays.</i></p>
Time: 15 minutes	Time: 20 minutes	Time: 15 minutes
<p>Evaluation: (BH/IL) pairs perform role plays for class while BL and rest of class listen and fill out chart identifying name of the patient, reason for the visit, and the recommendation. Time: 20 minutes</p>		
<p>Application: Guided whole-class discussion of alternative remedies.</p> <p>Prompt: <i>George has a headache. What should he do?</i> Encourage IL students to use advice practiced in lesson to make recommendations (e.g., <i>Why doesn't he start meditating?</i>). Time: 15 minutes</p>		

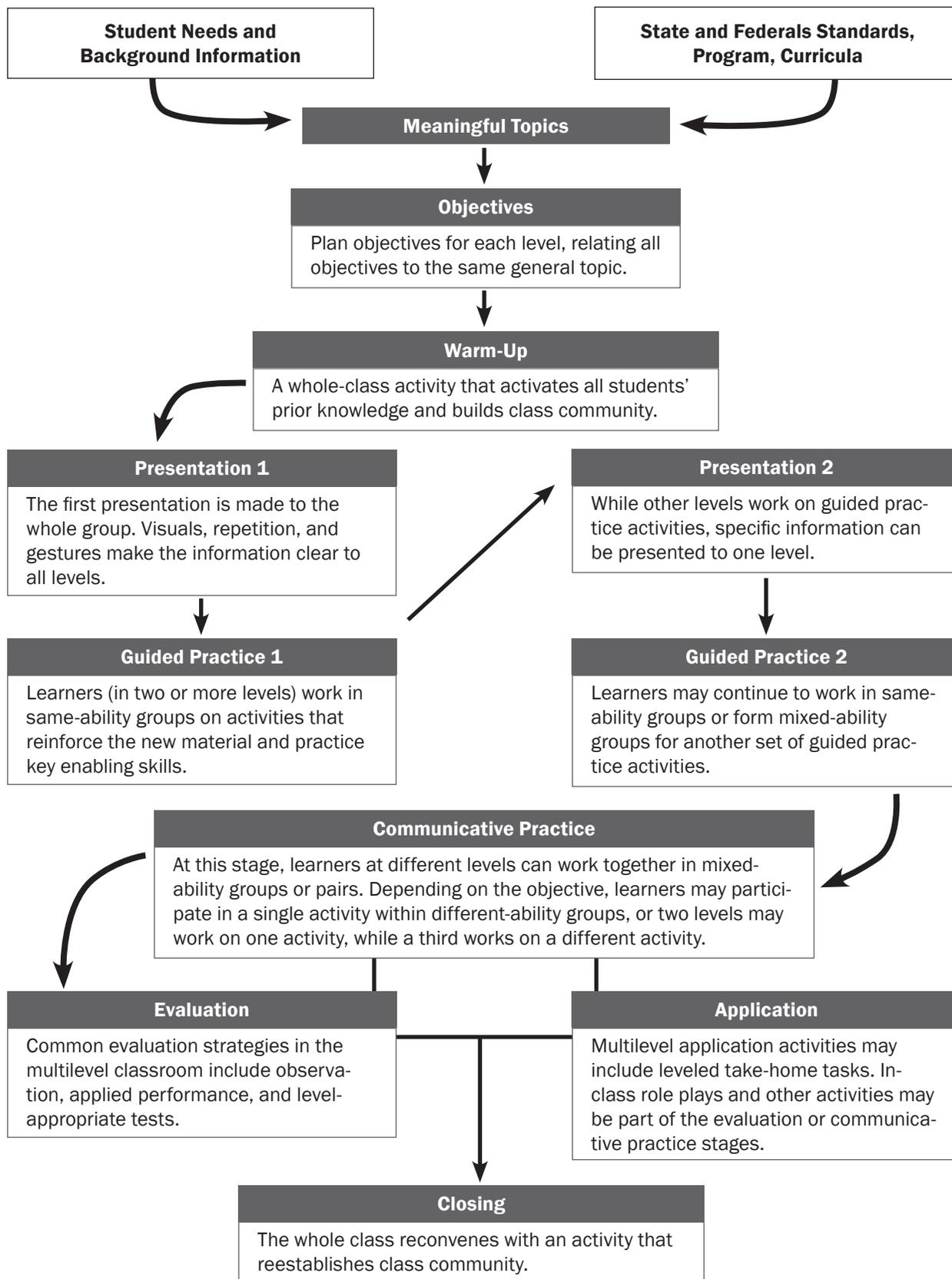
Note: Adapted from Adelson-Goldstein, J. (2006, May). *Mastering the madness and magic of multilevel classes*. Presentation given at the Maryland Association for Adult Community and Continuing Education Conference.

Multilevel Lesson Plan: Questions

Discuss the following questions with a partner.

1. How does the teacher ensure that all students will understand the first presentation?
2. Why does the teacher make separate second presentations to the BL and BH/IL students?
3. How has the teacher grouped learners throughout this lesson? Why?
4. Which activities are going on simultaneously in this lesson?
5. What would the teacher have to do to prepare students to work independently during the practice stage of the lesson?

Figure 1. Annotated Multilevel Lesson Framework



Comprehension Checks

During or after the presentation, it is important to check whether students have understood the new material. A yes/no question such as “Do you understand?” usually results in most students nodding or saying “yes”—even though they may not have understood. To accurately verify students’ comprehension, use one of the techniques listed below. Also, make sure the comprehension questions you ask are at the right language level for your students. Always wait between 10 and 15 seconds for students to respond to a command, question, or request.

1. Ask information questions that match the students’ level, e.g., *Is it red or blue? What color is it?*
2. Ask a question that helps students demonstrate understanding, e.g., *We don’t have childcare at this school. Where can you take your children?*
3. Ask learners to paraphrase or restate the information presented or directions given.
4. Ask learners to complete a task that demonstrates understanding, e.g., *It’s hot in here. Please open the window.*

Practice Writing a Comprehension Check

1. Review the presentation and comprehension check for the lesson on page 129.
2. Look at the sample dialogue below.
3. With a partner, write some appropriate questions to check comprehension of the dialogue. Use the examples above to help you.

A: What’s the matter, Mr. Yee?

B: My foot hurts. It hurts every time I dance.

A: Really?

B: Yes, and I dance all the time.

A: Hmmmm. Why don’t you stop dancing so much? I think your foot will feel better.

Sample dialogue from the multilevel lesson on p. 129

Comprehension Check Questions

Note: Based on the work of Kathleen Santopietro Weddel. (2006). *Classroom Teacher Language for Teacher and Learner Interaction*, Independent Study Module, Northern Colorado Literacy Resource Center.

Giving Directions

Directions can make or break a practice activity. Directions must be clear and concise. When giving directions, use language that learners already know or that is made comprehensible by visuals and meaningful gestures. The fewer words that are used, the better. It is a good idea to write the directions on the board or overhead projector. Once the learners have heard the directions orally and have seen them in writing, demonstrate the activity with one learner. At the very lowest levels, demonstration may be the best way to give directions.

Appropriate directions include

1. Steps given in one- or two-word verbs. Demonstrate each step one at a time.
2. Level-appropriate grammar and vocabulary, for example—
Beginning Low – *What's this?*
Beginning High – *What's in the picture?*
Intermediate – *What do you see in the picture on page__?*

Practice Writing Directions

1. With a partner, choose one of the Guided or Communicative practice activities for Beginning High or Intermediate Low in the lesson plan on page 130.
2. Write directions for the practice activity you chose.
3. Share the directions you wrote with another pair of students.

Directions

Level _____ Activity _____

Answers vary.

Note: Based on the work of Kathleen Santopietro Weddel. (2006). *Classroom Teacher Language for Teacher and Learner Interaction*, Independent Study Module, Northern Colorado Literacy Resource Center.

Sequencing

1. The activities in the chart below support the following Beginning Low lesson objective.

Students will be able to identify U.S. testing rules and “bubble in” an electronically scored answer sheet for a multiple-choice test on previously learned material.

2. Match the lesson activities to the stages of the lesson.
3. Check your answers with a partner.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p><u> d </u> 1. Warm-Up/Review</p> <p><u> </u> 2. Introduction</p> <p><u> </u> 3. Presentation</p> <p><u> </u> 4. Guided Practice</p> <p><u> </u> 5. Communicative Practice</p> <p><u> </u> 6. Evaluation/Application</p> | <p>a. Have small groups of students work together to make a poster of test-taking rules and procedures. (<i>Look at your answer sheet only.</i>)</p> <p>b. Have students demonstrate testing procedures in a TPR activity.</p> <p>c. Have students take a sample test with answer sheets and #2 pencils, bubbling in answers on the answer sheet.</p> <p>d. Give students a simple T/F test on material they’ve studied previously. Ask students how they felt about taking the test.</p> <p>e. Lead a class brainstorm of test-taking rules.</p> <p>f. Demonstrate the rules and procedures for taking a multiple-choice test with an answer sheet. Then check students’ comprehension by asking “OR” questions about the process. <i>Do you write on the test or the answer sheet?</i></p> |
|---|--|

Pacing and Timing

1. Form a pair.
2. Read through the 2.5-hour Beginning Low lesson on page 137 and complete the timing chart below. Make notes about pacing or timing issues.
3. Compare your answers with another pair.

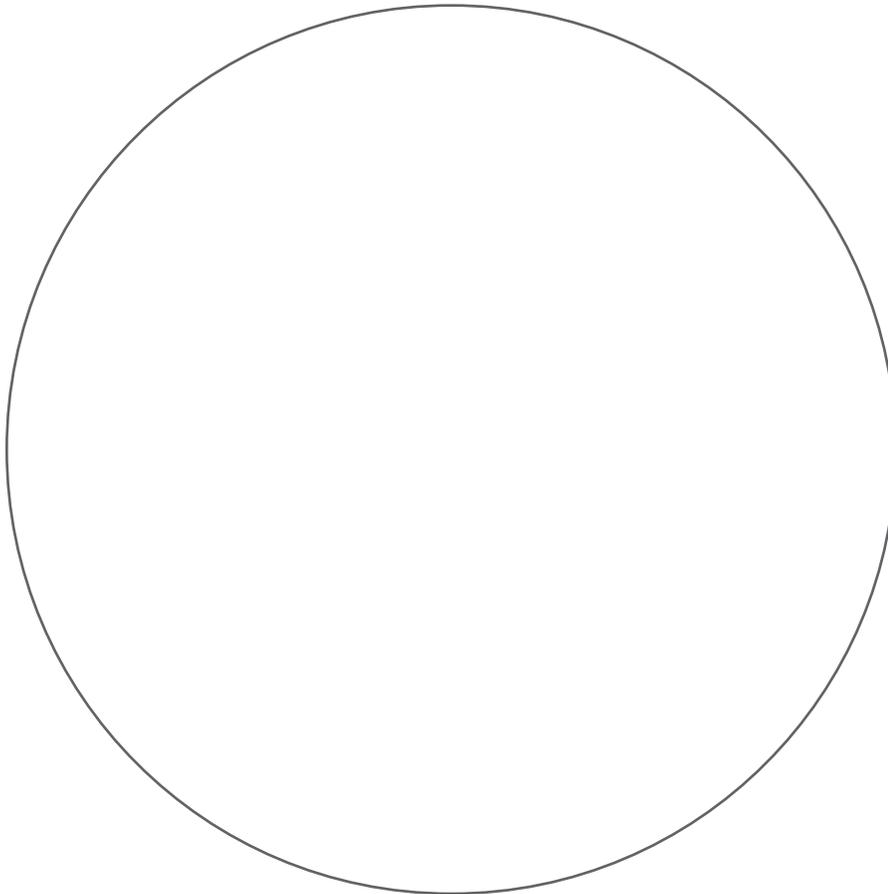
Stage	Activity/Demo	Time Frame	Notes
Warm-Up/Review	T/F test		
	“Show and Tell”		
Introduction	Brainstorm rules		
Presentation	Explain and demo test process		
	Go over test questions		
	Demo incorrect responses		
Guided Practice	Work with commands imperatives (TPR)		
	T/F test		
Communicative Practice	Team interview		
	Team posters		
Evaluation/Application	Sample test		
	Reflection		

Beginning Low Lesson Plan

LESSON BASICS			
Class Level: BL	Topic: Academic Skills	Class Length: 2.5 hrs.	Date: 10-30-06
Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to identify U.S. testing rules and complete an electronically scored answer sheet for a multiple-choice test on previously learned material.</i>			
Enabling Skills: Grammar: <i>Imperatives Mark A, Bubble in, Use a #2 pencil</i> Vocabulary: <i>answer sheet, multiple choice, fill in, bubble in, mark, erase completely, correct, incorrect</i> Pronunciation: <i>word stress: answer, erase</i>			
Language Skill Proficiency Focus L <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> W <input type="checkbox"/> R <input type="checkbox"/>	Materials and Equipment Overhead projector, sample test booklets, mock electronic answer sheets for multiple choice and T/F, #2 pencils.		
ACTIVITY PLAN			
Warm-Up/Review: Give students a simple T/F test on material they've studied previously. Ask students how they felt about taking the test. "Show and tell" with a test booklet, an electronic answer sheet, a pen, and a #2 pencil. Use "OR" questions to verify that students know which is which. <i>Is this the test booklet or the answer sheet? Do you write on the booklet or the answer sheet?</i>			
Introduction: Elicit the rules for taking tests. Write students' ideas on the board. Touch on any of these rules that students do not come up with: 1. Use a #2 pencil. 2. Write your name on your answer sheet. 3. Cover your answers. 4. Don't talk. 5. Don't write on the test booklet.			
Presentation	Guided Practice	Communicative Practice	Evaluation
<p>1. Use sample test questions to demonstrate the process of reading a question in one place and filling in the answer on an answer sheet. Use the first question to teach the concept of "multiple choice."</p> <p>2. Read each question together, and have the students tell you the answer. Demonstrate bubbling in the answer to the first question on the board or overhead projector. Demonstrate incorrect ways to fill in the answer sheet, such as crossing out, circling, or checking the letters on the form.</p>	<p>Work with imperatives. Have students demonstrate the key test commands.</p> <p>1. Write sample test items on the board such as: 1. A B C D</p> <p>2. Give students a sample answer sheet and have them bubble in the correct "answer" for each.</p> <p>3. Circulate to check that students are correctly bubbling in the answers.</p> <hr/> <p>Give a quick T/F test to determine whether students know basic U.S. testing rules. Give students T/F answer sheets so they can bubble in answers (e.g., <i>You can ask your partner for an answer on a test. [F]</i>).</p>	<p>1. Write these three questions: <i>Do you get nervous on test day?</i> <i>How long do you study for tests?</i> <i>What kinds of tests do you like?</i></p> <p>2. Form groups of four. Set a time limit and have teammates take turns interviewing each other. Person #1 asks everyone question #1. Person #2 asks question #2, etc.</p> <p>3. Call time and tally the class answers for each question.</p> <hr/> <p>Have small groups work together to make a poster of test-taking rules.</p>	<p>1. Distribute a sample test, answer sheet, and #2 pencil to each student.</p> <p>2. Give students directions and set a 10-minute time limit for the test.</p> <p>3. Collect the answer sheets only. Then, using the test handout, review the answers with the class. Collect and review the students' test booklets and answer sheets to determine how well they understood the lesson.</p> <hr/> <p>Ask students to identify two things they learned in the lesson.</p>

Teacher Talk and Learner Talk

1. Look back at the Beginning Low lesson.
2. Given the types of activities in the lesson, identify the amount of time the teacher is likely to be talking and the amount of time the learners will probably be talking.
3. Draw a pie chart in the circle below to represent these amounts of teacher talk and learner talk.
4. Form a small group and share your pie chart. Compare the amount of teacher talk/learner talk in the pie chart with that of a typical lesson you teach. How will you change the teacher talk/learner talk ratio in your classes?



Application

With a partner, write a lesson plan for learners you may teach.

Using the lesson template on page 140, do the following:

1. Select from one of the objectives below. Then, fill in the “Lesson Basics.”
 - ▶ Identify different types of jobs in order to state job goals.
 - ▶ Write a note excusing a child’s absence from school.
 - ▶ Clarify instructions to operate common office machines (copier, fax, shredder).
 - ▶ Identify common emergencies and procedures to make a 911 call.
 - ▶ Exchange or return a damaged item to a department store.
 - ▶ Identify acceptable reasons for changing a work schedule and request a change.
 - ▶ Interpret food and nutrition labels to determine healthy choices.
2. Complete the activity plan by briefly describing the activities you would use to help students meet the lesson objective. You may want to select from the activities listed below or use other activities from your repertoire.

Activities Discussed or Used During the <i>Effective Lesson Planning Training</i>		
Brainstorm	Jigsaw Reading	Roundtable
Categorizing	Line Up	Scrambled Sentences
Corners	Language Experience Writing	Sentence Maker
Dialogue	Matching Strips	Storytelling
Drills	Multiple-Choice Test	Survey
Focused Listening	Peer Dictation	True/False Questions
Information Gap	Read & Answer Questions	Word Cards
Interview	Role Play	Yes/No Bingo

3. Identify grouping strategies you would use for each activity (pairs, small group, teams, whole class).
4. Include the time each activity will need. The total time should match the class length.
5. On a separate sheet of paper,
 - a. Write a comprehension check for the presentation.
 - b. Write directions for at least one practice activity.
6. Form a small group with another pair and share your lesson plan. Ask for suggestions from your group on how to improve your plan.

Lesson Planning Template

LESSON BASICS			
Class Level:	Topic:	Class Length:	Date:
Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to</i>			
Enabling Skills:			
Language Skill Proficiency Focus L S W R	Materials and Equipment		
ACTIVITY PLAN			
Warm Up/Review:			
Introduction:			
Presentation	Guided Practice	Communicative Practice	Evaluation
Application:			

Application Activities

To retain what you learned in this workshop, please select at least one application activity.

Select one or more

1. **Analyze your textbook** for activity types. **Plan a lesson** by filling out a Lesson Planning Template Single Level/Single Presentation on page 20 with activity/page numbers that match the stages of a lesson. Brainstorm activities to fill in the gaps. **Teach this lesson** (or you may use the sample lessons on pages 8 or 15 or the one your group developed during the workshop). Soon after you teach the lesson, take time to reflect on how it went. Ask yourself questions such as*
 - ▶ What went well? Why?
 - ▶ What did not go as planned? Why?
 - ▶ If I had to do it over again, what would I change?
 - ▶ What have I learned about my students that I can account for in future lesson planning?

*Use the Lesson Reflection worksheet on page 143. You can also use the Class Observation worksheet on page 144.

2. **Observe a lesson** at the same level you teach (or hope to teach). As you observe, fill in the Lesson Planning Template on page 142. Then, fill in the Class Observation worksheet on page 144.

3. **Develop a lesson** using the same directions you used in the Application (in-class) on page 139. Use the Lesson Planning Template on page 142. Teach the lesson. After you teach the lesson, reflect upon your own teaching, using questions such as*
 - ▶ What went well? Why?
 - ▶ What did not go as planned? Why?
 - ▶ If I had to do it over again, what would I change?
 - ▶ What have I learned about my students that I can account for in future lesson planning?

*Use the Lesson Reflection worksheet on page 143. You can also use the Class Observation worksheet on page 144.

4. **Have someone observe your class.** Develop a lesson in section 3 above. Ask a colleague to observe you as you teach it. Your colleague can fill in the Lesson Planning Template on page 142 and the Lesson Observation worksheet on page 144. After the lesson, reflect upon your own teaching, using questions such as*
 - ▶ What went well? Why?
 - ▶ What did not go as planned? Why?
 - ▶ If I had to do it over again, what would I change?
 - ▶ What have I learned about my students that I can account for in future lesson planning?

Ask your colleague for verification or support as necessary.

* Use the Lesson Reflection worksheet on page 143. You can also use the Class Observation worksheet on page 144.

For further discussion of reflective teacher practices, see the digest, *Reflective Teaching Practice in Adult ESL Settings*, which is available from www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/reflect.htm

Lesson Planning Template

LESSON BASICS			
Class Level:	Topic:	Class Length:	Date:
Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to</i>			
Enabling Skills:			
Language Skill Proficiency Focus L S W R	Materials and Equipment		
ACTIVITY PLAN			
Warm Up/Review:			
Introduction:			
Presentation	Guided Practice	Communicative Practice	Evaluation
Application:			

Class Observation

- ▶ Arrange to observe a class at the same level you teach, if possible.
- ▶ As you observe, fill in the Lesson Planning Template on the next page.
- ▶ Answer the following questions.

Questions	Yes/No	Answer/Comments
1. Were the objectives clear?	Y N	
2. Did the lesson include all the stages? If not, which ones were missing? How did that affect the lesson?	Y N	
3. Were the activities varied in type and modality?	Y N	
4. Were the activities and materials appropriate for the students' skill level?	Y N	
5. Did the materials support the lesson focus and objectives?	Y N	
6. Was the sequencing of activities logical and appropriate?	Y N	
7. Were the transitions evident and appropriate?	Y N	
8. What worked well?		
9. What would you change?		

Action Plan

Step 1—Reflection into Practice

Look at your reflections about your learning during this workshop on page 143, question 2. Select three things you have learned that you will implement in your teaching. Write them below.

1.

2.

3.

Step 2—Application

Select one application activity on page 139 that you will complete. Check the activity you will complete and write the dates by which you will start and complete it.

Activity	Projected Start Date	Projected Completion Date
<input type="checkbox"/> Analyze your textbook/plan and teach a lesson.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop a lesson.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Observe a lesson.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Have someone observe your lesson.	_____	_____

Step 3—Report Back

Share your action plan activities with a colleague in one of the following ways:

- ▶ Meet and talk with a colleague at break time.
- ▶ Call or email a network buddy from this workshop.

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email address: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email address: _____

- ▶ Report to your colleagues at a staff meeting.
- ▶ Report to your colleagues at a subsequent workshop.

Effective Lesson Planning for Adult English Language Learners, Part 2

Workshop Evaluation

Expectations About Contents of the Workshop

What did you hope to gain from this course or workshop? (please ✓ all that apply)

- Basic introduction or exposure to subject
- In-depth theory or study of subject
- Strategies and ideas about how to implement subject
- Information to take back and share at program
- More general information about subject
- Other _____

Did the workshop fulfill your expectations and needs? (please circle one)

Not at all Barely Sufficiently A great deal Completely

Please explain why you circled the above.

Quality of the Workshop

Area	Quality (please ✓ one)				Comments/Suggestions for Improvement
Trainer style	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Presentation and progress (balance between trainer and participant involvement, kinds of activities, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Materials (handouts, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Organization of workshops (arrangement of content, flow of activities, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	

Follow-Up Activity

As a result of these workshops, what do you hope to try in your classroom or program?

Other Comments

III-D. Teaching Reading to Adult English Language Learners

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Teaching Reading to Adult English Language Learners

This workshop module contains detailed instructions and all the materials necessary to conduct a training session on teaching reading to adult English language learners. The module has three components:

- ▶ Trainer Guide
- ▶ Trainer Notes
- ▶ Participant Handouts

The Trainer Guide is the trainer’s script for the training session. It contains step-by-step instructions for presenting the workshop.

The introduction states the rationale and purpose of the workshop. It also gives the goal and objectives of the workshop, the workshop agenda, an overview of workshop sections with the amount of time to be spent on each section, trainer preparation instructions, and materials needed. The introduction is followed by detailed sequential instructions for conducting each section of the workshop.

The introduction to each section states the purpose of the activities and the timing of that section. It is followed by a two-column table with instructions for each activity in the first column (Action) and the materials needed in the second column (Materials). Hard copies of all the materials needed (with the exception of non-CAELA publications) are provided in the Trainer Notes or the Participant Handouts. Materials are listed by their titles followed by the page numbers on which they can be found and marked TN (indicating that they can be found in the Trainer Notes) or PH (indicating that they can be found in the Participant Handouts). Ordering information for non-CAELA publications is given in the workshop introduction. Materials that need to be made into transparencies for use with an overhead projector or into PowerPoint slides are marked “Transparency or PowerPoint Slide.” You will need to prepare them before the training session.

The Trainer Notes accompanies the script of the Trainer Guide. It includes copies of all the participant handouts, answer keys to participant activities, transparencies or PowerPoint slides to be made, and other supplemental handouts, if appropriate. The contents of the Trainer Notes are organized in the order they are needed in the session, and the place they will be used is indicated in the Materials column in this Trainer Guide.

The Participant Handouts contains all the information and activity sheets that participants need to participate in the session and will take with them when they leave. The contents are also organized the order they will be used in the session. Make a copy of the handouts for each participant.

Teaching Reading to Adult English Language Learners

Introduction to the module: Most adult learners of English want to increase their language and literacy proficiency so they can achieve their goals related to family, work, and community. Helping them increase their reading skills is an important task. The purpose of this workshop is to support adult education instructors of English as a second language (ESL) in understanding the foundations of reading in a second language and appropriate reading instruction for their learners. The workshop activities and materials are based on research about reading development of adult English language learners in the United States (see Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003). The workshop can be tailored for instructors of beginning-level learners, advanced learners, and mixed levels of learners. A 15-hour version of this workshop, suitable for use over several weeks with time in between sessions to implement activities in the classroom, is available at www.valrc.org/publications/.

Target audience for this workshop: New and experienced teachers, tutors, and classroom aides

Goal of the workshop: To increase skills in developing coherent, comprehensive, and appropriate reading lessons based on promising practices

Workshop objectives for participants: At the end of the workshop, participants should be able to

- ▶ Identify types of native language literacy
- ▶ Identify models of reading
- ▶ Describe knowledge and skills important to the reading process
- ▶ Identify elements of a good reading lesson
- ▶ Create a coherent, comprehensive, and appropriate reading lesson that develops each of the four skills important to reading

Length of workshop: 5.5 hours

The workshop components are as follows:

Part 1. Introductions and Warm-Up	40 minutes
Part 2. Presentation: What the reading research says	40 minutes
Part 3. Demonstration: Understanding the reading process	30 minutes
Part 4. Presentation: Differences in teaching ABE and ESL reading	45 minutes
Part 5. Demonstration: Reading lessons	45 minutes
Part 6. Practice: Creating reading lessons	40 minutes

Part 7. Application: Lesson presentations	60 minutes
Part 8. Wrap-Up and Evaluation	15 minutes
Total projected length of workshop	315 minutes (about 5.5 hours)*

*This does not include time for lunch and breaks. It is recommended that 15 minutes be scheduled for breaks in the morning and the afternoon and 30 minutes for lunch.

Preparation for the workshop:

- ▶ Read *Reading and Adult English Language Learners: A Review of the Research and How Should Adult ESL Reading Instruction Differ from ABE Reading Instruction?* (a CAELA brief).
- ▶ Order copies of *Reading and Adult English Language Learners: A Review of the Research*, for workshop participants from <http://calstore.cal.org>, or download from www.cal.org/caela/research/RAELL.pdf
- ▶ Secure student reading materials that workshop participants can use for developing reading lessons. A possible source for reading textbooks is local publishing company representatives, who often provide examination copies of texts to teachers. Other reading materials of interest to students include community service information (available from local agencies or on the Internet) and newspaper or magazine articles. Workshop participants could be asked to bring their own reading materials.

Materials needed for this workshop:

- ▶ *Reading and Adult English Language Learners: A Review of the Research* (a copy of this publication for each participant)
- ▶ Student reading materials to be used by workshop participants for developing reading lessons
- ▶ Teaching Reading to Adult English Language Learners: Trainer Guide
- ▶ Teaching Reading to Adult English Language Learners: Trainer Notes (make transparencies or PowerPoint slides as indicated in the guide)
- ▶ Teaching Reading to Adult English Language Learners: Participant Handouts

Note: In the Trainer Guide, materials to be found in the Trainer Notes are indicated by TN, followed by the page number; materials to be found in the Participant Handouts are indicated by PH, followed by the page number.

Reference

Burt, M., Peyton, J., & Adams, R. (2003). *Reading and adult English language learners: A review of the research*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics. Available from www.cal.org/caela/research/RAELL.pdf

1. Introduction and Warm-Up

Purposes:

- ▶ To establish the purpose of the workshop
- ▶ To review the goal and objectives of the workshop
- ▶ To activate participants’ prior knowledge of the reading process for adult English language learners

Time: 40 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>Introduce yourself.</p> <p>If participants don’t know each other, do a short activity in which they introduce themselves to each other.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm-up activity: <i>What do you think about reading?</i> (15 minutes) On the handout, have participants put an X on the scale to show where they stand on the scale for each statement. Then have them discuss their choices with a partner. With the whole group, go over each statement, using the Trainer Notes as a guide. • State the goal of the workshop—to increase skills in developing coherent, comprehensive, and appropriate reading lessons based on promising practices—and the objectives. Post the goal, objectives, and agenda of the workshop. 	<p>What Do You Think about Reading? (TN, pp. 14–16; PH, p. 44)</p> <p>Goal, Objectives, and Agenda for the workshop (TN, p. 13; PH, p. 43)</p>

2. Presentation: What the reading research says

Purposes:

- ▶ To identify factors that affect the literacy development of adults learning English
- ▶ To describe four skills important to reading development: phonological processing, vocabulary recognition, syntactic processing, and schemata activation

Time: 40 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>Have the participants complete the cooperative reading activity in <i>Reading and Adult English Language Learners</i>.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain that part of the workshop is based on this document that synthesizes what is known about how adult English language learners learn to read in English, what types of activities facilitate the process, and what research still needs to be done. The publication stems from a review of the research literature on reading development among adult English language learners. There is not a lot of research on this population, but this review offers valuable insights and includes research on second language acquisition. 2. Set up the cooperative reading activity. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Have participants work in groups of four or five. b. Have each person in the group be responsible for certain questions. c. Have participants read silently and answer assigned questions, then share their answers with their group. d. Circulate among the groups to get a sense of what issues to highlight with the whole group after the group discussions. e. Discuss any issues or questions with the whole group. 	<p>Publication: <i>Reading and Adult English Language Learners: A Review of the Research</i></p> <p>Reading and Adult English Language Learners: A Review of the Research—Cooperative Reading Activity (TN, pp. 17–18; PH, pp. 45–46)</p>

3. Demonstration: Understanding the reading process

Purpose:

- ▶ To describe the knowledge and skills important to the reading process

Time: 30 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>1. Illustrate the skills discussed in the cooperative reading activity and their relationship to the reading process by completing the activity with 26 letters (letters, words, phrase).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Show the 26 random letters (do not show the words and phrase) for 2–3 seconds. Then cover up the letters and ask the participants what they remember. b. Show the next set of 26 letters, arranged in words (do not show the phrase), for 2–3 seconds. Then cover up the words and ask participants what they remember. c. Show the last set of 26 letters, arranged in a phrase, for 2–3 seconds. Cover the phrase and ask what they remember. d. Discuss why the last set was easiest to remember. Point out that it was a single unit of meaningful text. Discuss what skills and knowledge the participants used to understand the phrase—for example, letters combined into meaningful units (words, phrases), cultural information about PTA meetings usually held at night (schemata). Emphasize that reading involves visual symbols (letters forming words), linguistic knowledge (phonology, morphology, syntax), and world knowledge (schema). 	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: 26 Letters (TN, p. 19)</p>
<p>2. Illustrate the importance of vocabulary and meaning by completing the reading comprehension activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Have the participants read the passage and answer the comprehension questions. b. Have the participants, in pairs, discuss the questions. c. After participants have finished discussing the questions, ask them what helped them answer the questions, for example, their knowledge of letters and sounds (phonological processing), their knowledge of grammar (syntactic processing), or their background knowledge (vocabulary and schema). d. Then, even though they could answer the comprehension questions, ask whether they understood the passage and why. Discuss the importance of vocabulary and meaning. Point out how many assessment activities look like this. Someone with good understanding of grammar could answer the questions but still not comprehend the passage. 	<p>Reading Comprehension (TN, p. 20; PH, p. 47)</p>

4. Presentation: Differences in teaching ABE and ESL reading

Purposes:

- ▶ To describe differences in teaching reading to adult native English speakers and adult English language learners
- ▶ To identify activities and strategies for reading instruction for adults learning English

Time: 45 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>1. Explain to participants that in 2002, a review of research related to adult literacy and reading instruction in adult basic education (ABE) was completed by a group convened by the National Institute for Literacy and the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. This study focused on four components of reading—vocabulary, alphabets and word analysis, fluency, and comprehension—and offered suggestions for instruction. The CAELA brief, which participants will now read and discuss, presents the findings of the ABE review and those of the ESL review they looked at earlier. The brief discusses the differences between reading instruction for native English speakers and adult English language learners and the implications for instruction.</p> <p>2. Direct participants to the questions and the CAELA brief in their handouts.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Have participants answer the first question. b. Then have them read the brief and answer the second question. c. In pairs, have them discuss their answers with a partner. d. With the whole group, discuss the third question—what they found interesting about these differences. 	<p>Questions: <i>How Should Adult ESL Reading Instruction Differ from ABE Reading Instruction?</i> (TN, p. 21; PH, p. 48)</p> <p>CAELA brief: <i>How Should Adult ESL Reading Instruction Differ from ABE Reading Instruction?</i> (TN, pp. 22–28; PH, pp. 49–55)</p>

5. Demonstration: Reading lessons

Purpose:

- ▶ To explore and experience a good reading lesson

Time: 45 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>1. Model a good reading lesson. Have the participants act as your reading students. Create your own lesson or use the sample in the Participant Handouts. The sample is based on an actual brochure from a community service agency. It is for use with a multilevel class. If you decide to use it, follow the lesson plan form provided. If you create your own reading material, provide a copy of the lesson plan and any relevant materials for participants. Substitute your lesson for the sample in the Participant Handouts. If possible, demonstrate a lesson that reflects the levels taught by the workshop participants.</p>	<p>If using the multilevel sample:</p> <p>KWL Activity Transparency or PowerPoint slide (TN, p. 29)</p> <p>Summerville Free Clinic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brochure text (TN, p. 30; PH, p. 56) - Questions (TN, p. 31; PH, p. 57) - Focus on Grammar (TN, p. 32; PH, p. 58) - Focus on Phonics (TN, p. 33; PH, p. 59) - Summerville Free Clinic— Multilevel Reading Lesson Plan (TN, p. 34; PH, p. 60)
<p>Note: A beginning reading lesson about jobs, Miguel’s Story, is included in the packet with worksheets attached. Both reading lessons can be used if time permits, or trainers should choose their primary focus based on participants’ needs.</p>	<p>If using the beginning sample:</p> <p>Beginning Lesson Plan (TN, p. 39; PH, p. 61)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conversation Grid (TN, p. 35; PH, p. 62) - Miguel’s Story (TN, p. 36; PH, p. 63) - Comprehension Questions and Vocabulary Practice (TN, p. 37; PH, p. 64) - Conversation Practice and Writing Practice (TN, p. 38; PH, p. 65)
<p>2. After the reading demonstration, have participants complete the evaluation sheet and discuss their answers with the whole group.</p>	<p>Evaluating Reading Lessons (TN, p. 40; PH, p. 66)</p>

6. Practice: Creating reading lessons

Purpose:

- ▶ To create a coherent, comprehensive, and appropriate reading lesson that integrates each of the four skills important to reading

Time: 40 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>Divide participants into groups of three or four. If possible, group them according to instructional level of their students, interest in using a particular text, or other needs they have expressed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distribute reading materials to each group. 2. Using the lesson plan form as a guide, have each group create a lesson plan to present to at least one other group. 3. Have each group assign a recorder to write the lesson stages and activities on flipcharts, an evaluator to make sure they stay on task and create something for each lesson stage, and one or two group members to present the lesson. 4. Tell the groups they will have 20 minutes to present their lessons to another group. 	<p>Reading texts provided by you or the participants</p> <p>Lesson Plan (TN, p. 41; PH, p. 67)</p> <p>Flipchart paper</p>

7. Application: Lesson presentations

Purpose:

- ▶ To evaluate strengths and gaps in participants' reading lessons

Time: 60 minutes

Actions	Materials
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have each group present its lesson. If the number of participants is large, groups can be matched up and can present to each other rather than to the whole group. 2. After each presentation, have the participants critique the lesson. Have them identify which of the four skills were covered in each stage of the lesson. Discuss what changes they might make to use the lessons with their own students. 	

8. Wrap-Up and Evaluation

Purpose:

- ▶ To reflect on ways teaching may be affected by participating in this workshop

Time: 15 minutes

Actions	Materials
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss with participants how they will implement these reading lessons in their own classes. 2. Ask participants to complete the Workshop Evaluation form. 	<p>Reflections on the Workshop (TN, p. 42; PH, p. 68)</p> <p>Workshop Evaluation (PH, p. 69)</p>

Teaching Reading to Adult English Language Learners

Goal, Objectives, and Agenda

Goal:

To increase skills in developing coherent, comprehensive, and appropriate reading lessons based on promising practices

Objectives:

At the end of the workshop, participants should be able to

- ▶ Identify types of native language literacy
- ▶ Identify models of reading
- ▶ Describe knowledge and skills important to the reading process
- ▶ Identify elements of a good reading lesson
- ▶ Create a coherent, comprehensive, and appropriate reading lesson that develops each of the four skills important to reading

Agenda:

- I. **Introductions and Warm-Up**
- II. **Presentation:** What the reading research says
- III. **Demonstration:** Understanding the reading process
- IV. **Presentation:** Differences in teaching ABE and ESL reading
- V. **Demonstration:** Reading lessons
- VI. **Practice:** Creating reading lessons
- VII. **Application:** Lesson presentations
- VIII. **Wrap-Up and Evaluation**

What Do You Think About Reading?

Directions: What do you think about the following statements? Put yourself on the scale following each statement. Discuss your responses with the person(s) sitting next to you.

- 1. Although in everyday life we listen and speak more than we read and write, reading is power.**

Agree _____ Disagree

Every day, we listen to twice as much language as we speak and four to five times more than we read or write (Rivers, 1981), yet to truly get ahead in a job or to be successful, an individual needs good reading skills (Burt, 2003)

- 2. All English language learners, regardless of their native language literacy, need direct teaching in the English symbol system and in English sound-symbol correspondence.**

Agree _____ Disagree

English language learners may have no literacy skills in their native language, or they may have literacy skills in a language such as Chinese that uses characters rather than letters; a language such as Cyrillic or Arabic that uses a different alphabet; or a language such as Spanish that uses the Roman alphabet, but has different pronunciations than English for many of the letters. Therefore, all English language learners need direct teaching in English sound-symbol correspondence (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003). Research conducted with English language learners in K–12 settings confirms the need for direct instruction on the components of reading (August & Shanahan, 2006).

- 3. Reading instruction needs to be planned as a process over time.**

Agree _____ Disagree

Most adult ESL programs do not have a scope and sequence for teaching reading, yet learners need to learn the phonology, vocabulary, and syntax of the language. These components of reading will not just be picked up indirectly (Eskey, 2005).

- 4. Learner needs assessment is not important; what matters is teaching learners what you know they need to know.**

Agree _____ Disagree

All learners, especially adults, learn more when they are motivated to learn. Responding to their expressed needs and desires will motivate them (Moss & Ross-Feldman, 2003). Furthermore, as adults, they have specific purposes for learning the language, and these should be addressed (Florez & Burt, 2001).

5. In learning another language, vocabulary is not as important as grammar.

Agree _____ Disagree

While fluent English speakers possess a written English vocabulary of 10,000–100,000 words, second language learners generally know only 2,000–7,000 English words when they begin their academic studies (Hadley, 1993).

6. Guessing words from context is an excellent strategy for learning second language vocabulary.

Agree _____ Disagree

To successfully use context clues to determine the meaning of unknown vocabulary items, the reader needs to know 95 to 98 percent of the words in the reading passage; this is usually not the case when reading a passage in the second language (Nation, 2005).

7. Direct teaching of grammar and syntax (e.g., word order, past tense markers) has no place in the adult ESL reading class.

Agree _____ Disagree

As with vocabulary items and sound-symbol correspondence, direct teaching of syntax is key to reading comprehension. Consider the case of word order and the difference in meaning between “The man bit the dog” and “The dog bit the man” (Eskey, 2005).

8. Even a good text should be supplemented with additional materials to meet student needs.

Agree _____ Disagree

Good teachers are responsive to the needs of the individual students in their classes. This means using authentic materials and adapting and revising the text to meet these needs (Weddel & Van Duzer, 1997).

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Reading and Adult English Language Learners: A Review of the Research

Cooperative Reading Activity

1. What are some of the factors that affect the literacy development of adults learning English? (p. 7)

Age, motivation, sociocultural background, socioeconomic background, native language literacy, educational background, second language literacy, environment (instructional, living, working), learner goals

2. What are the six types of L1 literacy backgrounds described in this section? (p. 8)

Pre-literate: Literacy is uncommon in everyday life.

Nonliterate: Literacy is available, but sufficient access to it is not.

Semiliterate: Literacy is available, but individual has not achieved a high level.

Non-Roman-alphabet literacy

Roman-alphabet literacy

Nonalphabet literacy

3. How might differences in learners' educational backgrounds affect their expectations about learning to read in L2? (p. 16)

They might be unaccustomed to sitting and interacting in a classroom setting; if highly literate, they might focus more on accuracy than fluency.

4. What component of language proficiency has a strong effect on reading comprehension? What is the difference between breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge? (pp. 17–18)

Vocabulary recognition

Breadth: The number of words a learner knows or the number of content areas in which a learner is familiar with the vocabulary

Depth: The amount of knowledge a learner has about individual words. It includes phonology, orthography, morphology, syntax, connotations, multiple meanings, and register.

5. What are the four models that researchers use to describe the reading process? (pp. 24–25)

Bottom-up: Focus is on extracting information from the text, particularly that letters and sounds form words, words form phrases and sentences; it is also concerned with how sound is represented in print.

Top-down: Focus is on predicting meaning based on clues from the text and the reader's background knowledge.

Interactive: Both top-down and bottom-up processes work together.

Learner's own model: Often subconscious, focus may be on perfecting either top-down or bottom-up models, which may make reading difficult.

6. What four skills are important in reading development? Describe each briefly. (pp. 25–27)

Phonological processing: Interpreting letters as sounds; combining sounds to produce syllables and words.

Vocabulary recognition: Understanding the meaning and pronunciation of written words.

Syntactic processing: Recognizing the grammatical relationships between words.

Schema activating: Using background knowledge to understand reading passages.

7. What are some phonological processing skills and how can they be taught? (pp. 29–30)

Matching letters to sounds; matching morphemes, meanings, and pronunciation. These skills can be taught by oral reading and choral reading.

8. What can teachers do to help learners increase vocabulary recognition? (pp. 30–31)

Preview vocabulary before a text is read; teach high-frequency vocabulary; help learners to use dictionaries (picture, monolingual English); for vocabulary that is beyond the reader's level, use glosses where vocabulary items are highlighted in the text and synonyms are given elsewhere on the page or through hyperlinks in electronic text.

9. How can teachers help learners develop syntactic processing skills? (p. 31)

Use cloze exercises; identify parts of speech and their roles; generate sentences using specific words and grammatical forms.

10. What are some ways to help learners activate schema? (pp. 31–32)

Build on ideas and concepts from the readers' cultures; use visual aids; preview unfamiliar ideas, actions, settings; preview title, pictures, graphics, and any other text structures.

26 Letters

a l x j h e o s u b e l u v g p e m n e g n e t s e

jumps house eleven bagel next

PTA meeting tonight at seven

Reading Comprehension

Directions: Read the passage below and then answer the questions.

Zing quackles and randles estrates were zickled. While zickling the quackles frumpled, zooped, and finally predacked. All quackles generally predack, but if immigted prior to zickling, they sometimes will not predack and may only frumple and zoop.

1. What were zickled?
2. What happened to them during zickling?
3. How do you prevent predacking?
4. In your own words, explain whether you think zickling would be an enjoyable experience.

With a partner, discuss the following:

- ▶ Were you able to read the passage?
- ▶ What knowledge did you use in reading it?
- ▶ Did you understand the passage?
- ▶ What enabled you to understand or not?
- ▶ Were you able to answer the exercise questions?

Note: From Hood, S., Solomon, N., & Burns, A. (1996). *Focus on reading* (new ed., pp. 3–4). Sydney, Australia: National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research (NCELTR). Used with permission.

Questions on How Should Adult ESL Reading Instruction Differ from ABE Reading Instruction?

Directions: Answer this question *before* reading the brief.

1. What do you think are some differences between teaching reading to adult native English speakers and teaching reading to adult English language learners?

This is for the participants' own reflections. There is no need to solicit answers, since this is answered before reading the brief.

Directions: Answer this question *after* reading the brief. Then discuss your answers with someone at your table.

2. What does the article say are the differences between teaching reading to adult native English speakers and teaching reading to adult English language learners?

Circulate among the tables to answer any questions or issues.

In vocabulary: Grouping words in semantic sets can impede the learning of new vocabulary with English language learners. Acquiring the meaning of a new vocabulary item through context clues is not a good strategy for adult English language learners, as their English vocabulary bank is so much smaller than that of native speakers (2,000–7,000 words vs. 10,000–100,000), and one must know at least 95 percent of the words in a passage to benefit from context clues.

In alphabets and word analysis: Alphabets instruction with native speakers generally assumes and relies on high oral language skills and vocabulary, which English language learners may not have. Therefore, when teaching English letter-sound correspondence to English language learners, nonsense words should NOT be used.

In fluency: Accuracy in oral reading with English language learners may be complicated by native language interference; therefore, choral readings in the adult ESL classroom should be short and focused, and learners need to hear a native-speaker-like model of the reading before attempting choral reading.

In reading comprehension: Although learners may understand the vocabulary and syntax of a passage, cultural issues may impede their comprehension of it. For this reason, with English language learners, it is best to initially select readings on topics they are familiar with, to preteach vocabulary, and to preview unfamiliar ideas with the students. Activities that test learner comprehension should be done after preteaching vocabulary, previewing culture contexts, and discussing the text.

Directions: Answer this question after your table discussion and be prepared to discuss it with the whole group.

3. What did you find interesting about these differences?

Solicit feedback from a handful of participants; for example, ask one participant per table to respond. All reasonable answers are acceptable since this is an opinion question.

How Should Adult ESL Reading Instruction Differ from ABE Reading Instruction?

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Center for Adult English Language Acquisition
March 2005

Adult Learners

Adult education programs serve both learners who are native English speakers and those whose first, or native, language is not English. Native English speakers attend adult basic education (ABE) classes to learn basic skills so they can get high school equivalency certificates or to achieve other goals related to job, family, or further education. English language learners attend English as a second language (ESL) or ABE classes to improve their oral and written skills in English and to achieve goals similar to those of native English speakers. Sometimes ABE classes include both native English speakers and English language learners.

Audience for This Brief

This brief is written for the following audiences:

- ▶ Practitioners—teachers, teacher trainers, curriculum writers, and program administrators—who work with adult English language learners in ESL classes or in mixed ABE classes (with native English speakers and English language learners)
- ▶ Educational researchers

Background

Literacy and language proficiency in English seem to be related to economic self-sufficiency. Immigrants who are literate only in a language other than English are more likely to have non-continuous employment and to earn less than those literate in English (Greenberg, Macías, Rhodes, & Chan, 2001). An analysis of the 2000 U.S. Census data on immigrant earnings revealed a positive relationship between earnings and English language and literacy (Chiswick & Miller, 2002).

Increasing the English reading skills of adult immigrants is an important task. Unfortunately, little research exists on how adult immigrants learn to read in English and which instructional practices are the most successful. In order to provide evidence-based suggestions for teaching reading to adult English language learners, this brief summarizes the research base on adult English speakers learning to read and the suggestions for instruction from these studies (Kruidenier, 2002). Then, using findings from a synthesis of research on adult English language learners learning to read (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003), the brief describes how these learners differ from native English speakers and how these differences should affect instruction.

Research Base

A review of research on adult literacy and reading instruction in ABE was conducted by a group convened by the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) and the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL). This Reading Research Working Group looked at approximately 70 research studies (Kruidenier, 2002). Only 5 of the studies addressed English language learners specifically; the rest of the studies were normed on native English speakers.

Another review focused on reading development among adult English language learners in the United States (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003). The review found only 47 studies that addressed this group of learners. Of those, only 24 were conducted in non-postsecondary education settings (adult education programs, community-based programs, and workplace literacy programs). The others were conducted in college-based intensive English programs (IEPs). Although the body of research is small and preliminary, it provides valuable information about English language learners in adult education programs and can be used as the springboard for future research studies.

Research Findings

Kruidenier (2002) discusses the following components of reading:

- ▶ vocabulary
- ▶ alphabets and word analysis
- ▶ fluency
- ▶ comprehension

These components are defined below with corresponding suggestions from Kruidenier for teaching reading to adult learners in ABE programs. Note that the suggestions marked with an asterisk (*) may not be effective with adults learning English. The suggestions are followed by a brief discussion of the marked items and the ways that these might be handled with English language learners. This discussion is informed by the review by Burt, Peyton, and Adams (2003) and writings on second language acquisition by Birch (2002), Eskey (2005), Folse (2004), Hadley (1993), Nation (2000, 2005), and Qian (1999). This literature suggests that the differences between adult English speakers and those learning English may affect both the ways that adults learn and how they should be taught to read.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary refers to the words that a person knows. Reading vocabulary is critical to the comprehension processes of a skilled reader. Kruidenier (2002) makes the following suggestions for teaching ABE learners:

- ▶ Conduct oral assessments, where learners either choose the one correct meaning of a word from multiple choices or define terms in their own words.

- ▶ Teach vocabulary in semantic sets.*
- ▶ Encourage students to get meaning of new vocabulary items through context.*

Issues for English language learners

Folse (2004) reviewed the research on teaching vocabulary in semantic sets (e.g., colors, foods, furniture, days of the week) and found that grouping words in this way can actually impede the learning of vocabulary. This is because if similar new words are presented together, such as a set of colors or the days of the week, the learner is likely to confuse the words. The same is true if antonym pairs such as *hot/cold*, *fat/thin*, *right/left* are presented together. Folse suggests grouping new vocabulary around looser themes, such as going out to eat, planning a trip, or celebrating an anniversary. Nation (2000, 2005) recommends teaching high-frequency vocabulary first. For example, rather than presenting *red*, *yellow*, *blue*, *black*, *white*, etc. at one time, he suggests beginning with one color. In this way, *red*, which is used more frequently than *orange*, would be taught before *orange*. *Tuesday*, which is used more frequently than *Thursday*, would be taught before *Thursday* (Nation, 2000). This separation of *Tuesday* and *Thursday* would also avoid confusion between these two words, which are similar phonologically and in spelling (Folse, 2004).

Acquiring the meaning of a vocabulary item through context clues—a strategy often taught by ABE teachers—is difficult for learners of English as a second language, because they often do not have the vocabulary in English that native speakers have (Eskey, 2005). For example, while fluent English speakers possess a written English vocabulary of 10,000–100,000 words, second language learners generally know only 2,000–7,000 English words when they begin their academic studies (Hadley, 1993). This gap can impede success in listening to lectures, reading academic material, or writing essays. Using context to understand new vocabulary requires an understanding of more than 98% of the words of a passage (Nation, 2005). Furthermore, even if the meaning of a word can be guessed from context, knowledge of the word may be superficial. Truly knowing a word includes knowing its pronunciation, spelling, morphological and syntactic properties (e.g., part of speech, prefixes, and suffixes), and multiple meanings; the contexts in which the word can be used; the frequency with which it is used; and its collocates, or how it combines with other words (e.g., the word *squander* is often paired with resources, time, or money; Folse, 2004). For these reasons, vocabulary teaching needs to be planned and deliberate with English language learners.

Suggestions for teaching adult English language learners

Because English language learners need to acquire more English vocabulary for all aspects of their lives, Birch (2002), Eskey (2005), Folse (2004), and Nation (2000, 2005) suggest the following:

- ▶ Pre-teach the vocabulary in a reading passage.
- ▶ To limit the number of vocabulary items that must be pre-taught, select reading passages that are only slightly above what learners can read independently.
- ▶ Teach high-frequency words first.
- ▶ Provide learners with multiple exposures to specific words in multiple contexts.

- ▶ Provide learners with lists of words for intentional learning.
- ▶ Avoid presenting synonyms, antonyms, or words in the same semantic set together.
- ▶ Teach learners to use both monolingual and bilingual dictionaries. Because even English dictionaries designed specifically for learners contain about 2,000 words with definitions and examples in English, learners at basic reading levels may not understand the definitions and explanations. They will need to use bilingual dictionaries.
- ▶ Encourage learners to use word cards (note cards with the English word on one side and the translation on the back) and to study them frequently.
- ▶ Encourage vocabulary learning through regular tests where students can prove receptive knowledge of words through matching words to definitions or multiple-choice exercises.
- ▶ After reading, students can write sentences in which they use specific words and grammatical forms.

Alphabetics and Word Analysis

Kruidenier (2002) defines *alphabetics* and *word analysis* as the “whole process of using the letters in a written alphabet to represent meaningful spoken words” (p. 35). Adult beginning readers typically have difficulty applying letter-sound knowledge to figure out new words while reading. Word analysis refers to the methods that readers use to recognize words. These methods include understanding letter-sound correspondences and recognizing sight words; using context to determine meaning; knowing prefixes, suffixes, and root words; and using dictionaries. Kruidenier makes the following suggestions for teaching ABE learners:

- ▶ Assess beginning readers’ letter-sound knowledge through their pronunciation of letters, word parts, or whole words that are decodable using common rules or generalizations.
- ▶ Assess knowledge of sight words with lists of regularly and irregularly spelled words.
- ▶ Provide adult beginning readers with explicit instruction in word analysis.
- ▶ When assessing letter-sound knowledge, consider using nonsense words to ensure the reader does not know the words as sight words.*

Issues with English language learners

English language learners may not have literacy skills in any language, or they may be literate in a nonalphabetic system such as Chinese, a non-Roman alphabet such as Cyrillic, or a Roman alphabet such as Spanish. All will experience some difficulties in English sound-symbol relationships (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003). Alphabetics instruction with native English speakers generally assumes high oral language skills and vocabulary. Nonnative English speakers do not have the vocabulary base in English that native speakers have, in either written or oral expression.

As a result, instructional strategies that rely on oral comprehension of vocabulary and use of nonsense words to teach sound-symbol correspondence are not likely to be successful with English language learners (Nation, 2005; Qian, 1999).

Suggestions for teaching adult English language learners

- ▶ Teach English letter-sound correspondences to all learners.
- ▶ When assessing knowledge of letter-sound relationships, use actual English words that follow patterns, such as *bat/pat/sat*. Do not use nonsense words.
- ▶ Teach morphophonemic relationships in the English writing system. For example, point out that while the regular past tense has different pronunciations depending on the phonological structure of the verb, past tense morphology for regular English verbs has only one written form: *-ed* (e.g., *laughed /t/*, *climbed /d/*, *wanted /əd/*).
- ▶ Teach word-analysis skills, including word prefixes and suffixes.
- ▶ Identify parts of speech and their roles.

Fluency

Fluency is the ability to read easily and accurately, with appropriate rhythm, intonation, and expression. For ABE learners, fluency instruction and practice may lead to increased reading ability. Kruidenier (2002) makes the following suggestions for teaching ABE learners:

- ▶ Assess learners' fluency by rating the accuracy and speed of their oral reading.*
- ▶ Involve learners in repeated reading of texts and words, taped and live.*

Issues with English language learners

Extensive individual oral reading and choral reading is of questionable value in the adult ESL classroom. Accuracy in oral reading by adults learning English may be complicated by native language interference at every level from the letter-sound relationship to suprasegmentals of the language (stress, intonation, and pauses).

Suggestions for teaching adult English language learners

- ▶ Consider limited use of choral readings. When they are used, select short segments that emphasize English stress and intonation.
- ▶ When involving learners in oral and choral reading of texts, be certain that they first hear a native-speaker-like model of the reading.

Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the ability to discern meaning from the written text. Skilled readers are purposeful and active and apply comprehension strategies to the text. Kruidenier (2002) makes the following suggestions for teaching ABE learners:

- ▶ Have students complete cloze passages (in which learners fill in specific words that are left out of a text).
- ▶ Provide instruction in comprehension strategies, such as using headings and graphics to predict meaning, summarizing verbally, skimming, and scanning.
- ▶ Assess students' use of strategy by asking them which comprehension strategies they used.
- ▶ Assess learners' reading comprehension by having them read passages and answer comprehension questions about the text in multiple-choice or short answers.*
- ▶ Have students summarize readings.*

Issues with adult English language learners

Cultural issues might impede text comprehension. What seems to be a straightforward text—for example, an article about a tree house or one about a family going to the Dairy Queen in a station wagon—may present the reader with difficulties in comprehension because of cultural differences. It is of limited value to assess reading comprehension when readers lack the cultural knowledge needed to understand the text. Summarizing is difficult and should not be asked of learners until they understand the text (Hood, Solomon, & Burns, 1996).

Suggestions for teaching adult English language learners

- ▶ Find out what students know, need to know, and want to know and then build on ideas and concepts from learners' cultures and experiences whenever possible. Select readings on topics they may be most familiar with.
- ▶ Pre-teach vocabulary and preview unfamiliar ideas, actions, vocabulary, and settings as well as titles, pictures, graphics, text structure, and discourse markers (e.g., words such as *first* or *next*).
- ▶ Use visual aids and physical objects to help learners build background knowledge.
- ▶ Assess learner comprehension through short answers, cloze exercises, and summary writing only after pre-teaching vocabulary, previewing cultural contexts, and discussing the text.

Conclusion

Some of the suggestions presented here for working with adult English speakers may also be used with adult English language learners, such as teaching letter-sound correspondence and word-analysis skills and providing instruction in comprehension strategies. However, other suggestions,

such as using nonsense words in instruction or relying on context clues to build vocabulary knowledge, are not useful with nonnative English speakers. Difficulties arise because of cultural differences, gaps in English oral vocabulary between English speakers and English language learners, and interference from the native language. Practitioners need to consider these differences when planning and delivering instruction for adult English language learners. Researchers might consider further investigation of issues raised in this brief.

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Trainer: Introduce the sample lesson about the Summerville Free Clinic or, preferably, develop your own that uses local information and documents that participants will recognize. Use a Know/Want to know/Learn chart. Explain to participants that this is a lesson topic (Summerville Free Clinic) that students would already know something about.

K-W-L Chart

What do you know about the Summerville Free Clinic?	What do you want to know about the clinic?	What have you learned ?
<p><i>Have participants fill out this part before they begin the lesson.</i></p>	<p><i>Have participants fill out this part before they begin the lesson.</i></p>	<p><i>Have participants fill out this part at the end of the lesson.</i></p>

A. History

In 2001, physicians with the Summerville Medical Society were increasingly aware that the number of people needing free or low cost medical care was growing. It was estimated that approximately 12% of the city's population of 145,000 people were low-income and without health insurance. Through the efforts of these physicians, a planning committee was formed in 2002 to evaluate the possibility of establishing a free clinic in Summerville.

At that time, there were 18 free clinics in other communities around the state. There are now 28 clinics and each is designed with the specific needs of its community in mind. All are staffed by volunteer physicians, nurses, pharmacists and other community health volunteers.

The Summerville Free Clinic opened its doors at Robert F. Kennedy High School on January 15, 2003, treating 15 people on that cold, wintry night. The Pleasant Valley Clinic site opened independently as a result of a grass roots community effort in November, 2003 and became part of the Free Clinic in fall 2004.

The Free Clinic now treats approximately 75 people each week in its four clinics:

- General Medical at Kennedy HS
- General Medical at Pleasant Valley
- Women's Health at Kennedy HS
- Chronic Care at Kennedy HS



B. Volunteers

Nearly 60 volunteers work each week in the clinics, including physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, physician's assistants, pharmacists, radiologists, lab personnel and other non-medical people who act as receptionists, screeners and translators. Please call the clinic if you are interested in becoming a volunteer.

The Mission

Operated primarily by volunteers, the Summerville Free Clinic provides free medical services to low-income, uninsured Summerville residents.

C. Services

- General medical care for adults and children
- Specialized screening services for women

- Education and treatment for persons with chronic illnesses
- Lab tests and X-rays as ordered by physician
- HIV tests
- Medications

The Summerville Free Clinic does not provide any services which are available at the Department of Human Resources. Referrals will be made for those services.

Clinic services are available to low-income residents of Summerville. Patients must bring documentation regarding residency and income level.

D. Hours by Appointment

Call 222-555-1713 for appointments

General Clinic at Kennedy HS

Open Mondays 6-9 PM

Appointments made Fridays at 10:00 AM

General Clinic at Pleasant Valley

Open Tuesdays 6-9 PM

Appointments made Fridays at 10:00 AM

Women's Health Clinic at Kennedy HS

Open 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 6-9 PM

Appointments made anytime

Chronic Care Clinic at Kennedy HS

Open 3rd Thursday 6-9 PM

By referral only

The Summerville Free Clinic: Questions

A. History

1. When did the Summerville Free Clinic open at Robert F. Kennedy High School?
2. When did the Pleasant Valley Clinic open?
3. What are the three clinics at Kennedy High School?

B. The Mission

4. What does the Summerville Free Clinic do?
5. Who works at the clinic?
6. Do the people who work at the clinic get a salary?

C. Services

7. What kind of medical care does the clinic have for adults and children?
8. I have a chronic illness. How can the Summerville Free Clinic help me?
9. Can I get lab tests and x-rays?
10. What do I need to bring with me to the clinic?

D. Hours by Appointment

11. How many clinics are at Kennedy High School?
12. What telephone number do I call to make an appointment?
13. When is the general clinic at Pleasant Valley open?
14. When is the general clinic at Kennedy open?

Name _____ Date _____

The Summerville Free Clinic: Focus on Grammar

Read the following sentence.

Patients must bring documentation regarding residency and income levels.

What does the underlined word mean?

must = _____

Discuss the following questions with a partner in your group. Use your cards to help you form pairs.

1. What are some things you must do today?

2. What are some things you have to do every day?

After you discuss your answers with two people in your group, write your own answers in the space provided under each question.

Name _____ Date _____

The Summerville Free Clinic: Focus on Phonics

In each column, write words that begin with the same letter and same sound.

patient /p/	physician /f/	free /f/

In each line below, circle the two words that begin with the same sound.

1. phone pen pencil
2. paper photo physician
3. pharmacists phone pen
4. principal physician prescription
5. pencil paper phone
6. photo free pen

The Summerville Free Clinic: Multilevel Reading Lesson Plan

Lesson objective: Read a brochure about a community service agency.			
Language Skills: Reading	Life Skills: Access community services	Materials: Brochure from a local service agency KWL (know, want to know, learned) transparency or PowerPoint slide Copies of brochure text divided into four reading sections Questions on each section of the reading	
Stages of the Lesson			
Warm-Up/Review: Review health problem (e.g., fever, flu, broken leg) and when and where to go for help.			
Introduction: Introduce today's lesson by telling the learners what they are going to read.			
Presentation (prereading activities)	Practice (during reading activities)	Evaluation	Expansion (postreading activities)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using the KWL transparency or PowerPoint slide, brainstorm what students already know about the clinic and what they want to know. 2. Show students the brochure. 3. Prepare a jigsaw reading activity. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Divide the students into heterogeneous groups of four (i.e., groups of mixed reading abilities). b. Assign each student a letter (A, B, C, or D): A for highest-level readers and D for lowest-level readers. c. Regroup the students so that all the As are together, all the Bs, etc. d. Hand out the reading sections from the brochure (A being the most difficult, D being the easiest) and the accompanying questions. e. Ask students to read their sections and circle words they do not know, then discuss them in groups. Circulate to help students with words they don't know. 	<p>Have each group read its section and answer the questions. Have them make sure that each member of the group writes down and understands the answer to the questions.</p> <p>When the students have completed their questions, have them regroup to their original groups of four. Hand out complete copies of the brochure text and all the questions. In their groups, have the students share the answers to their reading sections.</p>	<p>Put up a KWL (know, want to know, learned) grid on the board or overhead projector and ask the students what they have learned about the clinic.</p>	

Beginning Reading Conversation Grid

Students work on using *must* and *have to* in everyday contexts and identify words that begin with /f/ and /p/.

What is your name?	What is your job?	Do you like your job? (YES or NO)



Miguel's Job

I'm a painter. I work full-time, five days a week. Usually I paint inside houses. My boss calls me about the job. He drives me to the house. I work alone.

Preparation is important in my job. I cover the furniture and floor. I use a metal scraper to take off old paint. I repair holes and wash the walls.

Now I can start painting! First I paint the wall with a brush. After it is dry, I use a roller to paint again. Finally I clean up. I like my job. The pay is OK. The only problem is sometimes I am bored. In the future, I will look for a new job.

Note: Materials developed by Phil Cackley at REEP, Arlington, Virginia (2002). Used with permission.

Comprehension Questions: Do You Understand the Story?

Write Yes or No for the questions.

Yes/No

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Does Miguel work as a cook? | _____ |
| 2. Is Miguel a painter? | _____ |
| 3. Does Miguel work part-time? | _____ |
| 4. Does Miguel work 40 hours per week? | _____ |
| 5. Does the boss work with Miguel? | _____ |
| 6. Does Miguel paint in a house? | _____ |
| 7. Is preparation important for painting? | _____ |
| 8. Does Miguel wash the wall? | _____ |
| 9. Does Miguel use a roller? | _____ |
| 10. Does Miguel use a spray machine? | _____ |
| 11. Does Miguel like his job? | _____ |
| 12. Is the pay very good? | _____ |

Vocabulary Practice: Action or Thing?

Write the words in the correct group.

work a scraper a roller clean up a brush
 floor a job repair use walls

Action

Thing

Note: Materials developed by Phil Cackley at REEP, Arlington, Virginia (2002). Used with permission.

Conversation Practice

- ▶ Is Miguel's job difficult or easy?
- ▶ Does Miguel have many responsibilities (actions) to do in his job?
- ▶ Does he like his job?
- ▶ What is your job? Is your job easy or difficult?
- ▶ What responsibilities do you have in your job?
- ▶ Do you like your job? Explain.

Writing Practice

Complete the sentences with your information.

1. My job is _____ .
2. I work in a _____ .
3. Every day I _____ at my job.
I also _____ .
4. I _____ (like/don't like) my job.

Now write your own story about your job.

Note: Materials developed by Phil Cackley at REEP, Arlington, Virginia (2002). Used with permission.

Miguel’s Story: Beginning Reading Lesson Plan

Lesson objective: Read a story about a job and identify job titles, responsibilities, and tools.		
Language Skills: Reading Writing Speaking Listening	Life Skills: Describing jobs including duties and tools	Materials: Conversation grid Picture dictionaries Reading—Miguel’s Story Comprehension questions Vocabulary practice Conversation and writing practice Stages of the Lesson

Stages of the Lesson

Warm-Up/Review: Use a conversation grid (see page 35) to prompt students to identify their job titles and their opinion of their job. Students circulate and ask other students questions about their jobs.

Introduction: Review one job description including name of position (title), responsibilities (duties), and tools. Choose a job the students are in contact with such as teacher, secretary, or custodian. If listening practice is a focus, have one of these people come into the class and describe their job. Students then repeat the information for the teacher to make a job chart on the board containing position, responsibilities, and tools (A). Choose only one appropriate term for each item (position or title) and be consistent in your usage.

(A)	Position	Responsibilities	Tools
	secretary	type letters	use a computer
(B)	He is a secretary.	He types letters.	He uses a computer.

Presentation (prereading activities)	Practice (during reading activities)	Evaluation	Expansion (postreading activities)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Using the job chart, have students generate sentences to go with each column (B). The instructor writes the sentences on the board and points out capitals and end punctuation. Divide students into groups of three-to-five and give at least one picture dictionary to each group. Find or create six-to-eight letter-size pictures of people doing particular jobs. Distribute one or two pictures to each small group and ask them to locate the vocabulary in their picture dictionaries to talk about positions, responsibilities, and tools. (Note: If students haven’t practiced finding items by using the contents and index of the picture dictionary, the teacher will have to give a page range for locating this vocabulary.) Assist each group with pronunciation. Student speakers report back to the whole group. This is a speaking/listening activity with minimal writing necessary. Cover the story and show the picture above Miguel’s story and look at the picture. Ask students to identify the position and tool in the picture. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Have students silently read the stories and circle the vocabulary they don’t know. Teacher reads the story and has students read it aloud. In this way, students can draw from their speaking/listening and reading vocabulary knowledge. Then, students work in groups and reread the story to determine the meaning of the remaining vocabulary questions. Teacher circulates and assists as needed. Students write the answers to the comprehension questions (p. 37) and work on the vocabulary practice (p. 37) individually. They then check their work in groups. In pairs, students engage in the conversation practice (p. 38). Students individually write their own stories with the help of their picture dictionary (writing practice, p. 38). 	Using picture dictionary photographs, prepare a matching exercise of pictures and instructed vocabulary. Have students read their partners’ stories and answer comprehension questions about the stories. (See Comprehension Questions for Miguel’s story as a model.)	Students read parts of job descriptions from a Web site or local employment services program.

Evaluating Reading Lessons

Which reading skills are highlighted in each stage of the reading lesson? How are they developed?

Warm-Up/Review

Introduction

Presentation (prereading activities)

Practice (during-reading activities)

Evaluation

Expansion (postreading activities)

Lesson Plan Template

Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to</i>			
Language Skills:	Life Skills:	Materials:	
Stages of the Lesson			
Warm Up/Review:			
Introduction:			
Presentation (prereading activities)	Practice (during- reading activities)	Evaluation	Expansion (postreading activities)

Reflections on the Workshop

1. How have your ideas about reading changed?

2. What has been reinforced?

3. What was the most important thing you learned, and how do you plan to use it?

Teaching Reading to Adult English Language Learners

Goal, Objectives, and Agenda

Goal:

To increase skills in developing coherent, comprehensive, and appropriate reading lessons based on promising practices

Objectives:

At the end of the workshop, participants should be able to

- ▶ Identify types of native language literacy
- ▶ Identify models of reading
- ▶ Describe knowledge and skills important to the reading process
- ▶ Identify elements of a good reading lesson
- ▶ Create a coherent, comprehensive, and appropriate reading lesson that develops each of the four skills important to reading

Agenda:

- I. **Introductions and Warm-Up**
- II. **Presentation:** What the reading research says
- III. **Demonstration:** Understanding the reading process
- IV. **Presentation:** Differences in teaching ABE and ESL reading
- V. **Demonstration:** Reading lessons
- VI. **Practice:** Creating reading lessons
- VII. **Application:** Lesson presentations
- VIII. **Wrap-Up and Evaluation**

What Do You Think About Reading?

Directions: What do you think about the following statements? Put yourself on the scale following each statement. Discuss your responses with the person(s) sitting next to you.

1. **Although in everyday life we listen and speak more than we read and write, reading is power.**

Agree _____ Disagree

2. **All English language learners, regardless of their native language literacy, need direct teaching in the English symbol system and in English sound-symbol correspondence.**

Agree _____ Disagree

3. **Reading instruction needs to be planned as a process over time.**

Agree _____ Disagree

4. **Learner needs assessment is not important; what matters is teaching learners what you know they need to know.**

Agree _____ Disagree

5. **In learning another language, vocabulary is not as important as grammar.**

Agree _____ Disagree

6. **Guessing words from context is an excellent strategy for learning second language vocabulary.**

Agree _____ Disagree

7. **Direct teaching of grammar and syntax (e.g., word order, past tense markers) has no place in the adult ESL reading class.**

Agree _____ Disagree

8. **Even a good text should be supplemented with additional materials to meet student needs.**

Agree _____ Disagree

6. What four skills are important in reading development? Describe each briefly. (pp. 25–27)

7. What are some phonological processing skills and how can they be taught? (pp. 29–30)

8. What can teachers do to help learners increase vocabulary recognition? (pp. 30–31)

9. How can teachers help learners develop syntactic processing skills? (p. 31)

10. What are some ways to help learners activate schema? (pp. 31–32)

Questions on *How Should Adult ESL Reading Instruction Differ from ABE Reading Instruction?*

Directions: Answer this question *before* reading the brief.

1. What do you think are some differences between teaching reading to adult native English speakers and teaching reading to adult English language learners?

Directions: Answer this question *after* reading the brief. Then discuss your answers with someone at your table.

2. What does the article say are the differences between teaching reading to adult native English speakers and teaching reading to adult English language learners?

Directions: Answer this question after your table discussion and be prepared to discuss it with the whole group.

3. What did you find interesting about these differences?

How Should Adult ESL Reading Instruction Differ from ABE Reading Instruction?

Miriam Burt, Joy Kreeft Peyton, and Carol Van Duzer
Center for Adult English Language Acquisition
March 2005

Adult Learners

Adult education programs serve both learners who are native English speakers and those whose first, or native, language is not English. Native English speakers attend adult basic education (ABE) classes to learn basic skills so they can get high school equivalency certificates or to achieve other goals related to job, family, or further education. English language learners attend English as a second language (ESL) or ABE classes to improve their oral and written skills in English and to achieve goals similar to those of native English speakers. Sometimes ABE classes include both native English speakers and English language learners.

Audience for This Brief

This brief is written for the following audiences:

- ▶ Practitioners—teachers, teacher trainers, curriculum writers, and program administrators—who work with adult English language learners in ESL classes or in mixed ABE classes (with native English speakers and English language learners)
- ▶ Educational researchers

Background

Literacy and language proficiency in English seem to be related to economic self-sufficiency. Immigrants who are literate only in a language other than English are more likely to have non-continuous employment and to earn less than those literate in English (Greenberg, Macías, Rhodes, & Chan, 2001). An analysis of the 2000 U.S. Census data on immigrant earnings revealed a positive relationship between earnings and English language and literacy (Chiswick & Miller, 2002).

Increasing the English reading skills of adult immigrants is an important task. Unfortunately, little research exists on how adult immigrants learn to read in English and which instructional practices are the most successful. In order to provide evidence-based suggestions for teaching reading to adult English language learners, this brief summarizes the research base on adult English speakers learning to read and the suggestions for instruction from these studies (Kruidenier, 2002). Then, using findings from a synthesis of research on adult English language learners learning to read (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003), the brief describes how these learners differ from native English speakers and how these differences should affect instruction.

Research Base

A review of research on adult literacy and reading instruction in ABE was conducted by a group convened by the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) and the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL). This Reading Research Working Group looked at approximately 70 research studies (Kruidenier, 2002). Only 5 of the studies addressed English language learners specifically; the rest of the studies were normed on native English speakers.

Another review focused on reading development among adult English language learners in the United States (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003). The review found only 47 studies that addressed this group of learners. Of those, only 24 were conducted in non-postsecondary education settings (adult education programs, community-based programs, and workplace literacy programs). The others were conducted in college-based intensive English programs (IEPs). Although the body of research is small and preliminary, it provides valuable information about English language learners in adult education programs and can be used as the springboard for future research studies.

Research Findings

Kruidenier (2002) discusses the following components of reading:

- ▶ vocabulary
- ▶ alphabets and word analysis
- ▶ fluency
- ▶ comprehension

These components are defined below with corresponding suggestions from Kruidenier for teaching reading to adult learners in ABE programs. Note that the suggestions marked with an asterisk (*) may not be effective with adults learning English. The suggestions are followed by a brief discussion of the marked items and the ways that these might be handled with English language learners. This discussion is informed by the review by Burt, Peyton, and Adams (2003) and writings on second language acquisition by Birch (2002), Eskey (2005), Folse (2004), Hadley (1993), Nation (2000, 2005), and Qian (1999). This literature suggests that the differences between adult English speakers and those learning English may affect both the ways that adults learn and how they should be taught to read.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary refers to the words that a person knows. Reading vocabulary is critical to the comprehension processes of a skilled reader. Kruidenier (2002) makes the following suggestions for teaching ABE learners:

- ▶ Conduct oral assessments, where learners either choose the one correct meaning of a word from multiple choices or define terms in their own words.

- ▶ Teach vocabulary in semantic sets.*
- ▶ Encourage students to get meaning of new vocabulary items through context.*

Issues for English language learners

Folse (2004) reviewed the research on teaching vocabulary in semantic sets (e.g., colors, foods, furniture, days of the week) and found that grouping words in this way can actually impede the learning of vocabulary. This is because if similar new words are presented together, such as a set of colors or the days of the week, the learner is likely to confuse the words. The same is true if antonym pairs such as *hot/cold*, *fat/thin*, *right/left* are presented together. Folse suggests grouping new vocabulary around looser themes, such as going out to eat, planning a trip, or celebrating an anniversary. Nation (2000, 2005) recommends teaching high-frequency vocabulary first. For example, rather than presenting *red*, *yellow*, *blue*, *black*, *white*, etc. at one time, he suggests beginning with one color. In this way, *red*, which is used more frequently than *orange*, would be taught before *orange*. *Tuesday*, which is used more frequently than *Thursday*, would be taught before *Thursday* (Nation, 2000). This separation of *Tuesday* and *Thursday* would also avoid confusion between these two words, which are similar phonologically and in spelling (Folse, 2004).

Acquiring the meaning of a vocabulary item through context clues—a strategy often taught by ABE teachers—is difficult for learners of English as a second language, because they often do not have the vocabulary in English that native speakers have (Eskey, 2005). For example, while fluent English speakers possess a written English vocabulary of 10,000–100,000 words, second language learners generally know only 2,000–7,000 English words when they begin their academic studies (Hadley, 1993). This gap can impede success in listening to lectures, reading academic material, or writing essays. Using context to understand new vocabulary requires an understanding of more than 98% of the words of a passage (Nation, 2005). Furthermore, even if the meaning of a word can be guessed from context, knowledge of the word may be superficial. Truly knowing a word includes knowing its pronunciation, spelling, morphological and syntactic properties (e.g., part of speech, prefixes, and suffixes), and multiple meanings; the contexts in which the word can be used; the frequency with which it is used; and its collocates, or how it combines with other words (e.g., the word *squander* is often paired with resources, time, or money; Folse, 2004). For these reasons, vocabulary teaching needs to be planned and deliberate with English language learners.

Suggestions for teaching adult English language learners

Because English language learners need to acquire more English vocabulary for all aspects of their lives, Birch (2002), Eskey (2005), Folse (2004), and Nation (2000, 2005) suggest the following:

- ▶ Pre-teach the vocabulary in a reading passage.
- ▶ To limit the number of vocabulary items that must be pre-taught, select reading passages that are only slightly above what learners can read independently.
- ▶ Teach high-frequency words first.
- ▶ Provide learners with multiple exposures to specific words in multiple contexts.

- ▶ Provide learners with lists of words for intentional learning.
- ▶ Avoid presenting synonyms, antonyms, or words in the same semantic set together.
- ▶ Teach learners to use both monolingual and bilingual dictionaries. Because even English dictionaries designed specifically for learners contain about 2,000 words with definitions and examples in English, learners at basic reading levels may not understand the definitions and explanations. They will need to use bilingual dictionaries.
- ▶ Encourage learners to use word cards (note cards with the English word on one side and the translation on the back) and to study them frequently.
- ▶ Encourage vocabulary learning through regular tests where students can prove receptive knowledge of words through matching words to definitions or multiple-choice exercises.
- ▶ After reading, students can write sentences in which they use specific words and grammatical forms.

Alphabetics and Word Analysis

Kruidenier (2002) defines *alphabetics* and *word analysis* as the “whole process of using the letters in a written alphabet to represent meaningful spoken words” (p. 35). Adult beginning readers typically have difficulty applying letter-sound knowledge to figure out new words while reading. Word analysis refers to the methods that readers use to recognize words. These methods include understanding letter-sound correspondences and recognizing sight words; using context to determine meaning; knowing prefixes, suffixes, and root words; and using dictionaries. Kruidenier makes the following suggestions for teaching ABE learners:

- ▶ Assess beginning readers’ letter-sound knowledge through their pronunciation of letters, word parts, or whole words that are decodable using common rules or generalizations.
- ▶ Assess knowledge of sight words with lists of regularly and irregularly spelled words.
- ▶ Provide adult beginning readers with explicit instruction in word analysis.
- ▶ When assessing letter-sound knowledge, consider using nonsense words to ensure the reader does not know the words as sight words.*

Issues with English language learners

English language learners may not have literacy skills in any language, or they may be literate in a nonalphabetic system such as Chinese, a non-Roman alphabet such as Cyrillic, or a Roman alphabet such as Spanish. All will experience some difficulties in English sound-symbol relationships (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003). Alphabetics instruction with native English speakers generally assumes high oral language skills and vocabulary. Nonnative English speakers do not have the vocabulary base in English that native speakers have, in either written or oral expression.

As a result, instructional strategies that rely on oral comprehension of vocabulary and use of nonsense words to teach sound-symbol correspondence are not likely to be successful with English language learners (Nation, 2005; Qian, 1999).

Suggestions for teaching adult English language learners

- ▶ Teach English letter-sound correspondences to all learners.
- ▶ When assessing knowledge of letter-sound relationships, use actual English words that follow patterns, such as *bat/pat/sat*. Do not use nonsense words.
- ▶ Teach morphophonemic relationships in the English writing system. For example, point out that while the regular past tense has different pronunciations depending on the phonological structure of the verb, past tense morphology for regular English verbs has only one written form: *-ed* (e.g., *laughed /t/*, *climbed /d/*, *wanted /wəntəd /əd/*).
- ▶ Teach word-analysis skills, including word prefixes and suffixes.
- ▶ Identify parts of speech and their roles.

Fluency

Fluency is the ability to read easily and accurately, with appropriate rhythm, intonation, and expression. For ABE learners, fluency instruction and practice may lead to increased reading ability. Kruidenier (2002) makes the following suggestions for teaching ABE learners:

- ▶ Assess learners' fluency by rating the accuracy and speed of their oral reading.*
- ▶ Involve learners in repeated reading of texts and words, taped and live.*

Issues with English language learners

Extensive individual oral reading and choral reading is of questionable value in the adult ESL classroom. Accuracy in oral reading by adults learning English may be complicated by native language interference at every level from the letter-sound relationship to suprasegmentals of the language (stress, intonation, and pauses).

Suggestions for teaching adult English language learners

- ▶ Consider limited use of choral readings. When they are used, select short segments that emphasize English stress and intonation.
- ▶ When involving learners in oral and choral reading of texts, be certain that they first hear a native-speaker-like model of the reading.

Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the ability to discern meaning from the written text. Skilled readers are purposeful and active and apply comprehension strategies to the text. Kruidenier (2002) makes the following suggestions for teaching ABE learners:

- ▶ Have students complete cloze passages (in which learners fill in specific words that are left out of a text).
- ▶ Provide instruction in comprehension strategies, such as using headings and graphics to predict meaning, summarizing verbally, skimming, and scanning.
- ▶ Assess students' use of strategy by asking them which comprehension strategies they used.
- ▶ Assess learners' reading comprehension by having them read passages and answer comprehension questions about the text in multiple-choice or short answers.*
- ▶ Have students summarize readings.*

Issues with adult English language learners

Cultural issues might impede text comprehension. What seems to be a straightforward text—for example, an article about a tree house or one about a family going to the Dairy Queen in a station wagon—may present the reader with difficulties in comprehension because of cultural differences. It is of limited value to assess reading comprehension when readers lack the cultural knowledge needed to understand the text. Summarizing is difficult and should not be asked of learners until they understand the text (Hood, Solomon, & Burns, 1996).

Suggestions for teaching adult English language learners

- ▶ Find out what students know, need to know, and want to know and then build on ideas and concepts from learners' cultures and experiences whenever possible. Select readings on topics they may be most familiar with.
- ▶ Pre-teach vocabulary and preview unfamiliar ideas, actions, vocabulary, and settings as well as titles, pictures, graphics, text structure, and discourse markers (e.g., words such as *first* or *next*).
- ▶ Use visual aids and physical objects to help learners build background knowledge.
- ▶ Assess learner comprehension through short answers, cloze exercises, and summary writing only after pre-teaching vocabulary, previewing cultural contexts, and discussing the text.

Conclusion

Some of the suggestions presented here for working with adult English speakers may also be used with adult English language learners, such as teaching letter-sound correspondence and word-analysis skills and providing instruction in comprehension strategies. However, other suggestions,

such as using nonsense words in instruction or relying on context clues to build vocabulary knowledge, are not useful with nonnative English speakers. Difficulties arise because of cultural differences, gaps in English oral vocabulary between English speakers and English language learners, and interference from the native language. Practitioners need to consider these differences when planning and delivering instruction for adult English language learners. Researchers might consider further investigation of issues raised in this brief.

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A. History

In 2001, physicians with the Summerville Medical Society were increasingly aware that the number of people needing free or low cost medical care was growing. It was estimated that approximately 12% of the city's population of 145,000 people were low-income and without health insurance. Through the efforts of these physicians, a planning committee was formed in 2002 to evaluate the possibility of establishing a free clinic in Summerville.

At that time, there were 18 free clinics in other communities around the state. There are now 28 clinics and each is designed with the specific needs of its community in mind. All are staffed by volunteer physicians, nurses, pharmacists and other community health volunteers.

The Summerville Free Clinic opened its doors at Robert F. Kennedy High School on January 15, 2003, treating 15 people on that cold, wintry night. The Pleasant Valley Clinic site opened independently as a result of a grass roots community effort in November, 2003 and became part of the Free Clinic in fall 2004.

The Free Clinic now treats approximately 75 people each week in its four clinics:

- General Medical at Kennedy HS
- General Medical at Pleasant Valley
- Women's Health at Kennedy HS
- Chronic Care at Kennedy HS



B. Volunteers

Nearly 60 volunteers work each week in the clinics, including physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, physician's assistants, pharmacists, radiologists, lab personnel and other non-medical people who act as receptionists, screeners and translators. Please call the clinic if you are interested in becoming a volunteer.

The Mission

Operated primarily by volunteers, the Summerville Free Clinic provides free medical services to low-income, uninsured Summerville residents.

C. Services

- General medical care for adults and children
- Specialized screening services for women

- Education and treatment for persons with chronic illnesses
- Lab tests and X-rays as ordered by physician
- HIV tests
- Medications

The Summerville Free Clinic does not provide any services which are available at the Department of Human Resources. Referrals will be made for those services.

Clinic services are available to low-income residents of Summerville. Patients must bring documentation regarding residency and income level.

D. Hours by Appointment

Call 222-555-1713 for appointments

General Clinic at Kennedy HS

Open Mondays 6-9 PM

Appointments made Fridays at 10:00 AM

General Clinic at Pleasant Valley

Open Tuesdays 6-9 PM

Appointments made Fridays at 10:00 AM

Women's Health Clinic at Kennedy HS

Open 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 6-9 PM

Appointments made anytime

Chronic Care Clinic at Kennedy HS

Open 3rd Thursday 6-9 PM

By referral only

The Summerville Free Clinic: Questions

A. History

1. When did the Summerville Free Clinic open at Robert F. Kennedy High School?
2. When did the Pleasant Valley Clinic open?
3. What are the three clinics at Kennedy High School?

B. The Mission

4. What does the Summerville Free Clinic do?
5. Who works at the clinic?
6. Do the people who work at the clinic get a salary?

C. Services

7. What kind of medical care does the clinic have for adults and children?
8. I have a chronic illness. How can the Summerville Free Clinic help me?
9. Can I get lab tests and x-rays?
10. What do I need to bring with me to the clinic?

D. Hours by Appointment

11. How many clinics are at Kennedy High School?
12. What telephone number do I call to make an appointment?
13. When is the general clinic at Pleasant Valley open?
14. When is the general clinic at Kennedy open?

Name _____ Date _____

The Summerville Free Clinic: Focus on Grammar

Read the following sentence.

Patients must bring documentation regarding residency and income levels.

What does the underlined word mean?

must = _____

Discuss the following questions with a partner in your group. Use your cards to help you form pairs.

1. What are some things you must do today?

2. What are some things you have to do every day?

After you discuss your answers with two people in your group, write your own answers in the space provided under each question.

Name _____ Date _____

The Summerville Free Clinic: Focus on Phonics

In each column, write words that begin with the same letter and same sound.

patient /p/	physician /f/	free /f/

In each line below, circle the two words that begin with the same sound.

1. phone pen pencil
2. paper photo physician
3. pharmacists phone pen
4. principal physician prescription
5. pencil paper phone
6. photo free pen

The Summerville Free Clinic: Multilevel Reading Lesson Plan

Lesson objective: Read a brochure about a community service agency.			
Language Skills: Reading	Life Skills: Access community services	Materials: Brochure from a local service agency KWL (know, want to know, learned) transparency or PowerPoint slide Copies of brochure text divided into four reading sections Questions on each section of the reading	
Stages of the Lesson			
Warm-Up/Review: Review health problem (e.g., fever, flu, broken leg) and when and where to go for help.			
Introduction: Introduce today's lesson by telling the learners what they are going to read.			
Presentation (prereading activities)	Practice (during reading activities)	Evaluation	Expansion (postreading activities)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using the KWL transparency or PowerPoint slide, brainstorm what students already know about the clinic and what they want to know. 2. Show students the brochure. 3. Prepare a jigsaw reading activity. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Divide the students into heterogeneous groups of four (i.e., groups of mixed reading abilities). b. Assign each student a letter (A, B, C, or D): A for highest-level readers and D for lowest-level readers. c. Regroup the students so that all the As are together, all the Bs, etc. d. Hand out the reading sections from the brochure (A being the most difficult, D being the easiest) and the accompanying questions. e. Ask students to read their sections and circle words they do not know, then discuss them in groups. Circulate to help students with words they don't know. 	<p>Have each group read its section and answer the questions. Have them make sure that each member of the group writes down and understands the answer to the questions.</p> <p>When the students have completed their questions, have them regroup to their original groups of four. Hand out complete copies of the brochure text and all the questions. In their groups, have the students share the answers to their reading sections.</p>	<p>Put up a KWL (know, want to know, learned) grid on the board or overhead projector and ask the students what they have learned about the clinic.</p>	<p>Students work on using <i>must</i> and <i>have to</i> in everyday contexts and identify words that begin with /f/ and /p/.</p>

Miguel's Story: Beginning Reading Lesson Plan

Lesson objective: Read a story about a job and identify job titles, responsibilities, and tools.

Language Skills:

Reading
Writing
Speaking
Listening

Life Skills:

Describing jobs including duties and tools

Materials:

Conversation grid
Picture dictionaries
Reading—Miguel's Story
Comprehension questions
Vocabulary practice
Conversation and writing practice
Stages of the Lesson

Stages of the Lesson

Warm-Up/Review: Use a conversation grid (see page 62) to prompt students to identify their job titles and their opinion of their job. Students circulate and ask other students questions about their jobs.

Introduction: Review one job description including name of position (title), responsibilities (duties), and tools. Choose a job the students are in contact with such as teacher, secretary, or custodian. If listening practice is a focus, have one of these people come into the class and describe their job. Students then repeat the information for the teacher to make a job chart on the board containing position, responsibilities, and tools (A). Choose only one appropriate term for each item (position or title) and be consistent in your usage.

(A)	Position	Responsibilities	Tools
	secretary	type letters	use a computer
(B)	He is a secretary.	He types letters.	He uses a computer.

Presentation (prereading activities)	Practice (during reading activities)	Evaluation	Expansion (postreading activities)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Using the job chart, have students generate sentences to go with each column (B). The instructor writes the sentences on the board and points out capitals and end punctuation. Divide students into groups of three-to-five and give at least one picture dictionary to each group. Find or create six-to-eight letter-size pictures of people doing particular jobs. Distribute one or two pictures to each small group and ask them to locate the vocabulary in their picture dictionaries to talk about positions, responsibilities, and tools. (Note: If students haven't practiced finding items by using the contents and index of the picture dictionary, the teacher will have to give a page range for locating this vocabulary.) Assist each group with pronunciation. Student speakers report back to the whole group. This is a speaking/listening activity with minimal writing necessary. Cover the story and show the picture above Miguel's story and look at the picture. Ask students to identify the position and tool in the picture. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Have students silently read the stories and circle the vocabulary they don't know. Teacher reads the story and has students read it aloud. In this way, students can draw from their speaking/listening and reading vocabulary knowledge. Then, students work in groups and reread the story to determine the meaning of the remaining vocabulary questions. Teacher circulates and assists as needed. Students write the answers to the comprehension questions (p. 64) and work on the vocabulary practice (p. 64) individually. They then check their work in groups. In pairs, students engage in the conversation practice (p. 65). Students individually write their own stories with the help of their picture dictionary (writing practice, p. 65). 	Using picture dictionary photographs, prepare a matching exercise of pictures and instructed vocabulary. Have students read their partners' stories and answer comprehension questions about the stories. (See Comprehension Questions for Miguel's story as a model.)	Students read parts of job descriptions from a Web site or local employment services program.



Miguel's Job

I'm a painter. I work full-time, five days a week. Usually I paint inside houses. My boss calls me about the job. He drives me to the house. I work alone.

Preparation is important in my job. I cover the furniture and floor. I use a metal scraper to take off old paint. I repair holes and wash the walls.

Now I can start painting! First I paint the wall with a brush. After it is dry, I use a roller to paint again. Finally I clean up. I like my job. The pay is OK. The only problem is sometimes I am bored. In the future, I will look for a new job.

Note: Materials developed by Phil Cackley at REEP, Arlington, Virginia (2002). Used with permission.

Comprehension Questions: Do You Understand the Story?

Write Yes or No for the questions.

Yes/No

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Does Miguel work as a cook? | _____ |
| 2. Is Miguel a painter? | _____ |
| 3. Does Miguel work part-time? | _____ |
| 4. Does Miguel work 40 hours per week? | _____ |
| 5. Does the boss work with Miguel? | _____ |
| 6. Does Miguel paint in a house? | _____ |
| 7. Is preparation important for painting? | _____ |
| 8. Does Miguel wash the wall? | _____ |
| 9. Does Miguel use a roller? | _____ |
| 10. Does Miguel use a spray machine? | _____ |
| 11. Does Miguel like his job? | _____ |
| 12. Is the pay very good? | _____ |

Vocabulary Practice: Action or Thing?

Write the words in the correct group.

work a scraper a roller clean up a brush

floor a job repair use walls

Action

Thing

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Note: Materials developed by Phil Cackley at REEP, Arlington, Virginia (2002). Used with permission.

Conversation Practice

- ▶ Is Miguel's job difficult or easy?
- ▶ Does Miguel have many responsibilities (actions) to do in his job?
- ▶ Does he like his job?
- ▶ What is your job? Is your job easy or difficult?
- ▶ What responsibilities do you have in your job?
- ▶ Do you like your job? Explain.

Writing Practice

Complete the sentences with your information.

1. My job is _____ .
2. I work in a _____ .
3. Every day I _____ at my job.
I also _____ .
4. I _____ (like/don't like) my job.

Now write your own story about your job.

Note: Materials developed by Phil Cackley at REEP, Arlington, Virginia (2002). Used with permission.

Evaluating Reading Lessons

Directions: Which reading skills are highlighted in each stage of the reading lesson? How are they developed?

Warm-Up/Review

Introduction

Presentation (prereading activities)

Practice (during-reading activities)

Evaluation

Expansion (postreading activities)

Lesson Plan Template

Lesson Objective: <i>Students will be able to</i>			
Language Skills:	Life Skills:	Materials:	
Stages of the Lesson			
Warm Up/Review:			
Introduction:			
Presentation (prereading activities)	Practice (during- reading activities)	Evaluation	Expansion (postreading activities)

Teaching Reading to Adult English Language Learners

Workshop Evaluation

Expectations About Contents of the Workshop

What did you hope to gain from this course or workshop? (please ✓ all that apply)

- Basic introduction or exposure to subject
- In-depth theory or study of subject
- Strategies and ideas about how to implement subject
- Information to take back and share at program
- More general information about subject
- Other _____

Did the workshop fulfill your expectations and needs? (please circle one)

Not at all Barely Sufficiently A great deal Completely

Please explain why you circled the above.

Quality of the Workshop

Area	Quality (please ✓ one)				Comments/Suggestions for Improvement
Trainer style	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Presentation and progress (balance between trainer and participant involvement, kinds of activities, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Materials (handouts, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Organization of workshops (arrangement of content, flow of activities, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	

Follow-Up Activity

As a result of these workshops, what do you hope to try in your classroom or program?

Other Comments

Notes

III-E. Teaching Writing to Adult English Language Learners

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Teaching Writing to Adult English Language Learners

This workshop module contains detailed instructions and all of the materials necessary to conduct a training session on teaching writing to adult English language learners. The module has three components:

- ▶ Trainer Guide
- ▶ Trainer Notes
- ▶ Participant Handouts

The Trainer Guide is the trainer’s outline for the training session. It contains step-by-step instructions for presenting the workshop. It begins with an introduction that states the rationale and purpose of the workshop. It also gives the goal and objectives of the workshop, the workshop agenda, an overview of workshop sections with the amount of time to be spent on each section, trainer preparation instructions, and materials needed. The introduction is followed by detailed instructions for conducting each section of the workshop.

The introduction to each section states the purpose of the activities and the timing of that section. This is followed by a two-column table with instructions for each activity in the first column (Actions) and the materials needed in the second column (Materials). Hard copies of all of the materials needed (with the exception of non-CAELA publications) are provided in the Trainer Notes or the Participant Handouts. Materials are listed by title followed by the page number on which they can be found in the Trainer Notes (TN) or the Participant Handouts (PH). Ordering information for non-CAELA publications is given in the workshop introduction. Materials that need to be made into transparencies for use with an overhead projector or into PowerPoint slides are marked “Transparency or PowerPoint Slide.” You will need to prepare them before the training session.

The Trainer Notes accompanies the script of the Trainer Guide. It includes copies of all of the participant handouts, answer keys to participant activities, transparencies or PowerPoint slides to be made, and other supplemental handouts, if appropriate. The contents of the Trainer Notes are organized in the order they are needed in the session, and the place they will be used is indicated in the Materials column in this Trainer Guide.

The Participant Handouts contains all of the information and activity sheets that participants will need to participate in the session and will take with them when they leave. The contents are also organized in the order they will be used in the session. Make a copy of the handouts for each participant.

Teaching Writing to Adult English Language Learners

Introduction to the module: Adult learners of English have many reasons for wanting to write. Many need to write to carry out functional tasks such as filling out forms, taking a message, or writing email messages. Others may need writing skills to succeed in academic studies or to advance in a job. For many learners, writing enhances language acquisition when they put their thoughts on paper and share them with others, because they also are often practicing the language structures and vocabulary they are learning in the classroom.

The purpose of this module is to prepare teachers of adult English language learners to teach writing. This is broadly defined as teaching learners to communicate their ideas effectively in writing and to develop a voice in their new language and culture. The module primarily targets intermediate English language learners; teachers can adjust the materials for higher or lower levels as needed. Because many classes include learners at different English proficiency levels, activities and resources are also provided for beginning and more advanced writers in tables throughout the module, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Prewriting Techniques for Different Levels

Supplementary Teaching Ideas for ADVANCED LEARNERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free writing is similar to brainstorming and listing but may involve writing complete sentences rather than isolated words and phrases. • Clustering is grouping the ideas by relationship. • Journalistic technique asks and answers, “who, what, when, where and why.” [From Kirby, L. (2006). <i>English 090: Basic reading and writing—prewriting strategies</i>. North Carolina Wesleyan College.]
Supplementary Teaching Ideas for BEGINNING LEARNERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A picture, graphic, video, or story can help generate group discussion. • Frequent conversational activities can promote discussion. • The whole class or small groups can brainstorm about a topic, with the teacher writing lists and word meanings. • Students can retell stories to partners and ask each other questions about their stories.

Goal of the workshop: To increase skills in teaching the process of writing based on promising practices

Target audience for the workshop: Workshop participants might be new and experienced teachers, tutors, and classroom aides of adult English language learners. No prerequisites are needed.

Workshop objectives: At the end of the workshop, participants should be able to

1. Describe the steps of the writing process
2. Develop teaching activities for each step in the writing process
3. Identify appropriate error-correction interventions

Length of the workshop: 5 hours (not including time for breaks)

The workshop components are as follows.

Part 1. Introduction and Warm-Up	60 minutes
Part 2. Presentation and Practice I:	
Prewriting and first draft	20 minutes
Brainstorming	10 minutes
Organizing	20 minutes
Writing the first draft	20 minutes
Part 3. Presentation and Practice II:	10 minutes
Revising	30 minutes
Part 4. Presentations and Practices III and IV:	10 minutes
Editing and publishing	45 minutes
Part 5. Evaluation	25 minutes
Part 6. Application and Extension	30 minutes
Part 7. Wrap-Up and Evaluation	20 minutes
Total Length of Workshop	300 minutes (5 hours)

Preparation for the workshop:

1. Read *Writing and the Adult English Language Learner*.
2. Browse the bibliography and check online references.

Materials needed for the workshop:

1. *Writing and the Adult English Language Learner* (one copy for each participant)
2. Teaching Writing to Adult English Language Learners: Trainer Guide
3. Teaching Writing to Adult English Language Learners: Trainer Notes (make transparencies or PowerPoint slides as indicated in the guide)
4. Teaching Writing to Adult English Language Learners: Participant Handouts

Part 1. Introduction and Warm-Up

Purposes:

- ▶ To establish the purpose of the workshop
- ▶ To review the goal and objectives of the workshop
- ▶ To activate participants’ prior knowledge about teaching writing to adult English language learners

Time: 60 minutes

Actions	Materials
A. Introduce yourself. If participants don’t know each other, do a short activity in which participants introduce themselves to each other. (7 minutes)	Nametags (optional)
B. Warm-Up Activity: Readiness for Teaching Writing: KWL Chart. Instruct participants to fill in what they already KNOW about teaching writing and what they WANT TO KNOW. Explain that they will come back to what they LEARNED at the end of the workshop. Give participants 5 minutes to write. Use tear sheets or transparencies to compile participants’ responses for KNOW and WANT TO KNOW. Make note of repeated themes in either category. Set aside a copy that you can review later and point out when the workshop addresses one of the core wants. (Post tear sheet or use a transparency.) Review the Rationale for Process Writing. (15 minutes)	Readiness for Teaching Writing: KWL Chart (TN, p. 13; PH, p. 61)
C. Post and review the goal, objectives, and agenda for the workshop. (3 minutes)	Goal, Objectives, Agenda (TN, p. 15; PH, p. 62)
D. Have participants read <i>Writing and the Adult English Language Learner</i> as background information. This can be assigned as prerequisite work prior to the workshop, possibly online. If time permits, participants can read it all during the workshop. One suggested approach is jigsaw: Divide the reading into sections and have participants work in pairs on questions 1–4 of the focus questions. As a jigsaw activity, have them share their answers in groups of four or six so that all answers are covered. In a full group, discuss questions 5 and 6. Time constraints: The reading can be reduced if participants begin reading at “Process Writing” and go to the end. They answer 3, 4, 5, and 6 in the focus questions and read the introductory materials as follow-up after the workshop. (35 minutes)	Writing and the Adult English Language Learner (TN, pp. 16–23; PH, pp. 63–70) Focus Questions (TN, pp. 24–25; PH, p. 71)

Part 2. Presentation and Practice I: Prewriting and First Draft

Purpose:

- ▶ To give background on and practice with prewriting, including brainstorming, organizing, and using graphic organizers

Time: 70 minutes

Actions	Materials
A. Presentation I: Have participants read Presentation I: Prewriting and First Draft. Use the Focus Questions to do a comprehension check with each section. Check to see if there are any other questions before starting the practice activities. (20 minutes)	Presentation I: Prewriting and First Draft (TN, pp. 26–30; PH, pp. 72–76) Focus Questions (TN, p. 31; PH, p. 77)
B. Practice Activities I: Practice A, Topic 1: Guide participants as a whole group through the Holiday example using a transparency or PowerPoint slide. Underline key words. Brainstorm ideas as a whole group. (5 minutes)	Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Practice A, Topic 1 (TN, p. 32; PH, p. 78)
C. Practice A, Topic 2: Working individually, participants use the same steps to brainstorm about Writing. (5 minutes)	Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Practice A, Topic 2 (TN, p. 33; PH, p. 79)
D. Practice B, Topic 1: As a whole group, organize the Holiday example on a transparency or PowerPoint slide. Go through the four steps. (5 minutes)	Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Practice B, Topic 1 (TN, p. 34; PH, p. 80)
E. Practice B, Topic 2: Participants use the same steps to organize the example about Writing. (10 minutes)	Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Practice B, Topic 2 (TN, p. 35; PH, p. 81)
F. Practice C, Topic 1: Guide participants through the Holiday example using the graphic organizer. (5 minutes)	Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Practice C, Topic 1 (TN, p. 36; PH, p. 82)
G. Practice D, First Draft: Review instructions and remind participants to write about Topic 2: Writing.	Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Practice D, Topic 2 (TN, p. 37; PH, p. 83)
H. When participants finish, they should focus on the discussion questions in groups. If time permits, list ideas on a transparency or PowerPoint slide. Stress the importance of “think aloud” time in class through the writing steps so that students can discover their strong and weak points as part of the process. (10 minutes)	Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Discussion Questions (TN, p. 38; PH, p. 84)

Part 3. Presentation and Practice II: Revising

Purpose:

- ▶ To give background and practice for revising writing

Time: 40 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>A. Presentation II: Revising (10 minutes)</p> <p>Have participants read the background information. Use Focus Questions to do a comprehension check with each section. Check and see if there are any other questions before starting practice.</p>	<p>Presentation II: Revising—Making it Clear (TN, p. 39; PH, p. 85)</p> <p>Revising: Focus Questions (TN, p. 41; PH, p. 87)</p>
<p>B. Practice II: Revising Example 1 (Topic 1) (5 minutes)</p> <p>Participants review Example 1 (Topic 1). Review teacher comments and questions. Ask participants if they have any other questions that would help Walter clarify his ideas.</p>	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Practice II: Revising—Making it Clear (TN, p. 42; PH, p. 88)</p>
<p>C. Repeat these steps with Example 2 (Ana). (5 minutes)</p>	<p>Same transparency or PowerPoint slide as above</p>
<p>D. Practice II: Topic 1—José (15 minutes)</p> <p>Review the instructions aloud with participants and have them review José’s writing. This can be done in pairs or individually.</p> <p>Note: When listing weaknesses, be sure to focus participants on those that are appropriate for the level of the students involved.</p>	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Practice Activities II—José example (TN, p. 43; PH, p. 89)</p>
<p>E. General Revision Comments and Questions (5 minutes)</p> <p>Review the instructions aloud and have small groups or the whole group generate comments and questions.</p>	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Practice II—General revision (TN, p. 44; PH, p. 90)</p>

Part 4. Presentations and Practices III and IV: Editing and Publishing

Purposes:

- ▶ To give background and practice for editing writing
- ▶ To generate ideas for publishing writing

Time: 55 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>A. Presentation III: Editing—Checking Mechanics (10 minutes)</p> <p>Participants read background information. Use Focus Questions to do a comprehension check. Check and see if there are any other questions before starting practice.</p>	<p>Presentation III: Editing—checking mechanics (TN, p. 45; PH, p. 91)</p> <p>Focus Questions (TN, p. 46; PH, p. 92)</p>
<p>B. Practice III: Editing—Checking Mechanics (5 minutes)</p> <p>Editing Example 1 (Topic 1)</p> <p>Walk participants through the errors and highlight the notes under the example.</p>	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Editing Example 1 (Topic 1) (TN, p. 47; PH, p. 93)</p>
<p>C. Practice III: Editing (Topic 1) Juan (15 minutes)</p> <p>Review the instructions aloud with participants and have them review Juan’s writing with partners.</p>	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Editing Example 2 (Topic 1) (TN, p. 48; PH, p. 94)</p>
<p>D. Practice III: Editing Checklist (15 minutes)</p> <p>Review the instructions with participants. Have participants choose four-to-five errors that could be used on a checklist. Highlight the importance of choosing the “teachable” editing points for the specific level.</p>	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Editing Checklist (TN, p. 49; PH, p. 95)</p>
<p>E. Presentation IV: Publishing</p> <p>Participants read background information.</p>	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Presentation IV: Publishing & Practice IV: Publishing (TN, p. 50; PH, p. 96)</p>
<p>F. Practice IV: Publishing—Making it public (10 minutes)</p> <p>Trainer asks, “What forms of publishing can you do on a computer?” Whole-group activity—List ways writing can be published.</p>	

Part 5. Evaluation

Purpose:

- ▶ To refocus participants on goals and evaluation criteria to measure outcomes

Time: 25 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>A. Prewriting Evaluation (10 minutes)</p> <p>Refer to instructions. Have participants work together to fill in criteria.</p>	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Evaluation: Prewriting Evaluation (TN, p. 51; PH, p. 97)</p>
<p>B. Revising Evaluation (5 minutes)</p> <p>Focus on the first question, “How would you evaluate students’ ability to revise their own work?”</p>	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Evaluation of Revising/Evaluation of Editing (TN, p. 52; PH, p. 98)</p>
<p>C. Editing Evaluation (5 minutes)</p> <p>Participants read questions and, if time, fill in the chart describing their own situations.</p>	<p>Same transparency or PowerPoint slide as above.</p>
<p>D. Assessment and Evaluation (5 minutes)</p> <p>Participants read and discuss if time.</p> <p>Extension: Participants create a focus group in their program to look at writing assessment factors.</p>	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Assessment and Evaluation (TN, p. 53; PH, p. 99)</p>

Part 6. Application and Extension Activities

Purposes:

- ▶ To have participants plan a lesson to teach and provide student practice with process writing
- ▶ To have participants plan for using process writing in their programs

Time: 30 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>A. Application and Extension (15 minutes)</p> <p>Have participants read ideas for future planning. Trainer answers questions related to areas 1, 2, and 3.</p> <p>Note: Highlight self-reflection questions as a way to improve instructional practice.</p>	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide: Application and Extension (TN, pp. 54–55; PH, pp. 100–101)</p>
<p>B. Lead a discussion of how participants will implement writing lessons in their own classes. (5 minutes)</p>	

Part 7. Wrap-Up and Evaluation

Purpose:

- ▶ To reflect on ways teaching may be affected by participating in this workshop

Time: 20 minutes

Actions	Materials
A. Go back to the KWL Chart and fill in or discuss what was learned in the workshop	Wrap-Up and Evaluation (Readiness for Teaching Writing: KWL Chart) (TN, p. 56; PH, p. 102)
B. Ask participants to complete the workshop evaluation form.	Workshop evaluation form (PH, p. 103)

Warm-Up

Readiness for Teaching Writing: KWL Chart

Fill in columns 1 and 2. Discuss your answers with the person on your right. Did you find commonalities? Share with the group as time permits. Be prepared to return to column 3 at the end of the workshop.

1. What do I know about teaching writing?	2. What do I want to know about teaching writing?	3. What did I learn about teaching writing?
<i>All answers are acceptable. Use as needs assessment only. This is not an opportunity to offer correction to participants.</i>	<i>All answers are acceptable. Consider how you can incorporate participants' requests into the workshop. Make notes accordingly.</i>	<i>To be answered at the end of the workshop.</i>

Additional Discussion Question:

How do you teach writing in your classroom now? What is working, and what is not? After a brief discussion, introduce the rationale for process writing.

Rationale for Using Process Writing in the ESL Classroom

Process writing allows the teacher and learner to

1. **Simplify and clarify the writing process** (for English language learners) by separating, presenting, and practicing each step.
2. **Emphasize original ideas** throughout the process (especially prewriting and revision) and note the contrast with writing instruction in many other cultures that emphasizes form over original thought and content.
3. **Incorporate all language skills** into instruction and learning.
4. Focus on **fluency and accuracy** in the process.

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Teaching Writing to Adult English Language Learners

Goal, Objectives, and Agenda

Goal:

To increase skills in teaching writing based on the writing process that includes prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing

Objectives:

- ▶ Describe the steps of the writing process.
- ▶ Develop teaching activities for each step in the writing process.
- ▶ Identify appropriate error-correction interventions for the editing step of the writing process.

Agenda:

- I. Introduction and Warm-Up
- II. Presentation and Practice I: Prewriting and first draft
- III. Presentation and Practice II: Revising
- IV. Presentation and Practice III: Editing
- V. Presentation and Practice IV: Publishing
- VI. Evaluation
- VII. Application and Extension Activities
- VIII. Wrap-Up and Evaluation

Writing and the Adult English Language Learner

Introduction

Whether we are conscious of it or not, everything that we as ESL teachers do in the classroom reflects our own understandings and beliefs about the process of language and literacy learning. This holds true for teaching writing as well. Based on our own experiences as writers and our understanding of scholarly research on writing, we develop beliefs about how people learn to write. These beliefs, in turn, affect our decisions about the types of writing tasks we assign, the guidance we provide students as they are writing, and the feedback we give. It is important to be familiar with the research on writing in ESL classes and to consider how we might shift our beliefs and our teaching to reflect current promising practices.

This background information on teaching writing begins with a brief overview of ways that writing has been studied by researchers. It then focuses on the process approach to writing as a practical, appropriate model to use when helping adult English language learners improve their writing skills.

Overview of Recent Writing Research

Research on writing has been grouped according to its focus on four distinct yet interrelated aspects of writing: the written texts themselves, the form of written products, the composing process, and the ways that people interact with their sociocultural contexts when writing (Cumming, 1998). The following are descriptions of these four research focuses.

Focus on the written texts: One group of studies focuses on the texts that writers produce, for example, contrastive rhetorical analyses of how text forms differ across languages. Contrastive rhetorical analyses find their basis in an idea put forth by Kaplan (1966), who argued that writers of different language and cultural backgrounds have different expectations about the forms that texts should take. For example, according to Kaplan, while readers of English expect to see the central argument of a piece stated up front and then developed in subsequent paragraphs, a Chinese reader would be more familiar with a text that gradually pulls together pieces of evidence and concludes with the final argument—almost like a punchline. Contrastive rhetoric study might look at the differences between Korean and English speakers' research paper introductions. (See Connor, 1996, for general information on contrastive rhetoric. For recent examples of contrastive rhetoric studies, see Levi, 2004; Park, 2005.)

Other text-focused studies include genre-based studies exploring the features of specific text types. A genre is a text type with a commonly expected structure. For example, we recognize the difference between a biography, a newspaper editorial, a business letter, and a book review, because these four genres have distinct formats, purposes, and commonly used language forms. Genre analyses explore particular genres (e.g., research papers) to identify their distinguishing features and to develop ways to teach students how to write in different genres. (See Swales, 1990, for a leading theoretical work on genre analysis. See examples of genre studies in the journals *English for Specific Purposes* and *English for Academic Purposes*.)

Focus on form: Some text-focused studies focus on the form of the students' written products. Long (1991) and Long and Robinson (1998) argued that while second language instruction should be based on principles of authentic communication and learner-centeredness, direct study of problematic grammatical forms should be included when necessary. Such overt study does not necessarily mean giving students explicit explanations of the problematic point, but rather involves bringing their attention to a particular form in question. (For an introduction to the argument and the ways of applying form-focused instruction, see Ellis, 2001.) Recent studies have looked at form with respect to using computer-assisted instruction of writing (Gaskell & Cobb, 2004; Lindgren & Sullivan, 2003; Tseng & Liou, 2006). The question of whether focus on form should be primary in writing instruction remains far from completely resolved. We see this in Hillocks (2005, p. 243), who explored the question of form versus content in writing and argued that form has unnecessarily dominated instructional practices—a fact he blamed in large part on an “age of testing and accountability.” He suggested changing state tests to give more weight to content in evaluating writing samples. Then teachers could reflect this focus on content in their instruction.

Focus on the composing process: Research studies of the composing process often find their theoretical basis in the works of Flower and Hayes (1980, 1981) and focus on what writers do when they compose in their native language. Turning to second language writers, works about the composing process can range widely, from those looking at the differences between writing in a first and second language (e.g., McDonough & McDonough, 2001) to those looking at strategy use (such as using graphic organizers) while composing (e.g., Tsai, 2004). Still others have focused on particular aspects of the writing process, such as revising, and studied how second language writers approach these tasks (e.g., Takagaki, 2003; Williams, 2004).

Focus on the ways writers interact with their sociocultural contexts: The fourth group of studies is made up of a broad range of research that attempts to consider the ways in which sociocultural contexts affect writers, their writing processes, and the texts they produce. These studies, the volume of which has soared in recent years, reject the basic premise that we can understand writing by looking only at texts and the mechanics of how people produce them, and argue that we must also consider how we are affected by social issues when we write. Social issues include our personal backgrounds (e.g., is writing a common practice in our family?), our position vis-à-vis the text's intended audience (e.g., in a workplace situation, what is our position vis-à-vis the reader?), and our ideas about how we want others to see us (e.g., are we trying to impress the reader with our vast knowledge of a certain topic? For more on this last aspect and similar questions of social identity, see Ullman, 1997.) Drawing on these issues, we see works on how writing reflects the ways students enter various academic disciplines (Karr, 2003; Krase, 2003), works on the conflicts students face when learning to write in academic contexts (Braxley, 2005; Curry & Lillis, 2004; Mathews, 2004; Rolon, 2004), and studies of the effects on writing of cultural aspects, such as whether the learners' cultures generally place more value on oral or written expression (Dong, 2004; Harklau, 2003; Murie, Collins, & Detzner, 2004; Orr, 2005).

As with research in other areas of adult ESL education, this overview of the research on writing highlights the need for more research to be conducted specifically with adult second language writers in different contexts. Research on second language writing is expanding rapidly, but much

of it still tends to focus on academic writing at the undergraduate- and graduate-student levels. One needs only to skim the annotated bibliography of writing research provided quarterly by the *Journal of Second Language Writing* to see that scores of new studies are being conducted and published each year. However, of the 80 studies listed in two recent issues of the journal—December 2004, 13(4) and March 2005, 14(1)—only three (Currie & Cray, 2004; Rolon, 2004) focus on adult English language learners. While the findings of other writing research may hold insights for language learners in community-based programs or in community colleges, they do not address all of the issues related to the writing of adult English language learners.

Process Writing

Process writing as an approach used in the classroom draws primarily on the findings of studies in the third group discussed above, which focus on the composing process. The approach takes into consideration research showing what proficient writers do when writing and provides a framework for guiding student writers through similar steps. These five steps involve some form of the following:

Steps in the writing process

1. A *prewriting activity* in which learners work together to generate ideas about a topic and organize those ideas, perhaps through the use of graphic organizers (see TN, pp. 27–28; PH, pp. 73–74).
2. Writing a *first draft*, in which the focus is on putting the ideas down on paper without concern for grammatical or spelling errors.
3. *Revising* the draft, often done in pairs or small groups, with a focus on the appropriateness of the ideas and the clarity of their organization.
4. *Editing* the draft, with a focus on grammar, spelling, punctuation, transition words (first, next), and signal words (for example, another reason is). The complexity of the concepts and forms to be edited depends on the level of the students and on the elements they know or have studied. The use of an editing checklist for students is recommended.
5. *Publishing* or in some way sharing the work with a wider audience. This may mean the rest of the class, students' family or friends, the wider community, or even an Internet audience. Publishing can take the form of displays on classroom walls; compilations into books, newsletters, or newspapers; or posting on Web sites.

This writing module provides training for implementing process writing, an approach that can be adapted for use with students from beginning to advanced levels. Suggestions for adapting the approach for students at different levels appear throughout the module. The components of process writing can be worked on together in a unit or individually as separate lessons. Through a process writing approach, students learn to express themselves fluently, clearly, and correctly and work together to help each other develop their writing skills.

The writing process is cyclical, giving students multiple opportunities to improve their writing. The process can be adjusted to accommodate different topics, time frames, and types of writing, including standardized writing tests for advanced writers. Process writing involves practice of all four language skills. When students work together on revision and editing, they practice speaking and listening. As they review other writers' papers, they also read. Components of the writing process include the integration of writing and reading, as well as genres, types, and purposes of writing.

Writing and reading

Reading and composing are interconnected processes. (For more on the research on connecting the two skills, see Eisterhold, Carrell, Silberstein, Kroll, & Kuehn, 1990; Ferris & Hedgecock, 1998; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996; Grabe & Stoller, 2002.) Improvement in writing has been linked to reading development (Saddler, 2004). Reading supports writing across all the levels of instruction and can be used throughout the writing process. For example, students might read a text to help them generate ideas for their writing. They might do research to provide background information for writing. During the revision process, students read and give feedback on a partner's writing to help the writer revise, and they may also do peer editing. During the editing process, students might read a form or style guide or instructions for publishing to help themselves and their peers. Process writing emphasizes the role of the reader as audience and, through development of multiple drafts, often creates a context for communication. Improved reading and writing skills are complementary instructional goals within the process writing framework.

Genres of writing

Process writing can be used in conjunction with other approaches popular among writing theorists and practitioners, such as genre theory (see, for example, Spiegel, 1999). This approach to teaching writing involves exposing students to a particular genre or type of written text, for example, letters, reports, email messages, or descriptive essays. Students are asked first to analyze those texts to discern the common characteristics that distinguish them as belonging to that genre, and then to produce examples of that genre themselves. When using a genre approach, it is possible to apply process writing principles. Having analyzed the key characteristics of a genre, writers can then organize a text of their own according to these characteristics. The steps of a process approach can still take place, regardless of the genre being studied.

Types of writing

Teachers can use process writing in combination with other types of writing, such as free writing in dialogue journals, where learners communicate regularly in writing with the teacher or a writing partner. Dialogue journals are ongoing conversations that allow learners to express themselves in writing without focusing on accuracy (Kim, 2005; Peyton, 2000; Peyton & Staton, 1996). Other forms of free writing include writing a reaction to a piece of music, a picture, a movie, or a field trip. While such texts are generally not corrected or shared with others, they can provide a means for exploring ideas to be later developed into more extensive writing tasks that

include revising, editing, and publishing. Similarly, teachers can combine process writing with a language experience approach (LEA) to writing (Taylor, 1992). The LEA approach generally involves having learners describe an experience orally and the teacher transcribing it. The resulting texts can then be used for subsequent activities, including steps in the writing process.

Purposes of writing

Process writing may be most commonly associated with preparing students for academic writing styles in paragraphs, essays, or research papers. While process writing is particularly valuable for helping adult English language learners to transition to community college or other academic contexts, this writing approach need not be focused only on academic subjects. The topics selected for writing can relate to practical issues relevant to language learners' daily lives, such as completing forms for immigration, banking, insurance, credit cards, or driver's licenses; taking phone messages; and writing thank you notes, lists, letters, and resumes—what the authors of a Canadian study termed “real-world writing” (Currie & Cray, 2004, p. 114). The topics can also reflect the personal side of learners' daily lives and provide them an opportunity to write about their past and current experiences, ideas, and memories. Making texts and topics such as these the focus of process writing is another way of providing the language practice desired by adult learners, while also linking writing to the social aspects of their daily lives. (For more ideas on writing activities with adult English language learners, see Bello, 1997.)

Conclusion

The process writing approach has had its critics, including those who note its failure to consider sociocultural issues (e.g. Kent, 1999; Trimbur, 1994; and several works in a special issue of the *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 12(1), February 2003). There are also critics who maintain that process writing doesn't focus sufficiently on form (Price, 1999). Nevertheless, the steps involved in this approach provide a practical framework for teaching writing to all levels of adult English language learners, from those with only the most basic literacy skills to those transitioning to college-level courses. Moreover, process writing can support a less stressful writing experience because of the emphasis on valuing writers' ideas, not solely their knowledge of writing mechanics. It can teach life skills by giving learners opportunities to practice strategies to improve their own writing, such as revising and editing. It can provide a meaningful context for direct teaching of the structures of texts and the forms of standard written English. Perhaps most important, it can help build confidence by giving voice to learners' ideas and showing them that they too can produce written texts worthy of sharing with others.

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Writing and the Adult English Language Learner

Focus Questions

1. What are the primary differences between the three types of writing research discussed in the background reading?

Some studies have focused on the texts produced by readers (e.g., contrastive analyses of text types), others on the composing processes of writers (e.g., strategy use while composing), and others on the sociocultural contexts of writing (e.g., writing and socialization into academic disciplines).

2. List some examples of social factors and describe how they might affect the ways we write.

Family and cultural backgrounds (e.g., people who frequently have been exposed to writing at home will probably be more comfortable with writing in other contexts); positioning vis-à-vis the intended reader (e.g., we are likely to write differently when addressing someone who is in a more powerful position than we are than when addressing someone in a less powerful position); how we want others to see us (e.g., we will write differently if we are trying to present ourselves as a humble person or as an aggressive go-getter).

3. List the five main steps in a process writing approach and describe how each one is generally conducted.

Prewriting: generating ideas about a topic and organizing them, e.g., orally or in writing, through brainstorming or listing, or by using graphic organizers.

Writing a first draft: focusing on getting ideas on paper.

Revising: in small groups, pairs, or individually, focusing on revising the ideas of the text (are they appropriate, complete, and well ordered) and not the mechanics.

Editing: focusing on the mechanics, using checklists, keeping the level of editing appropriate to the students' language level.

Publishing: sharing with a wider audience: may include displaying the final text in the classroom; putting together a class book, magazine, or newsletter; and posting works on the Internet.

4. Describe how process writing might support reading development.

Answers may vary, but the trainer may review reading as it fits into different components of process writing. For example, students might read a text to help generate ideas or spark their brainstorming. They might read for research to develop their ideas. They may read a form or style guide for publishing. Multiple drafts and peer editing creates an opportunity for reading as well.

5. Describe how a teacher might incorporate elements of free writing, genre-based, and language experience approaches into a process writing approach.

Texts generated through a language experience approach or through free writing can provide starting points for going through stages of drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Analyses of different genre of texts—for example, letters, narrative essays, poems—can provide background for the pre-writing stage of process writing.

6. Based on ideas from the text as well as on your own experiences as a teacher, what are some ways that a process writing approach can benefit adult English language learners in particular?

Answers may vary, but the trainer may wish to note that the stages of process writing can bolster adult ESL learners' confidence, first by emphasizing the value of the learners' ideas, rather than their knowledge of grammar and spelling, and later by showing them that even beginners can produce written texts that can be "published." Repeated practice in the stages of process writing can also provide adult English language learners with valuable life skills they can carry with them after the course, such as strategies for revising and editing their own written texts.

7. The reading points to a lack of research focusing particularly on the writing process and progress of adults learning English. Based on your own experience as teachers of adult English language learners, what unique characteristics of adult English language learners would you identify that might make research focusing on other groups of learners difficult to apply to this population?

Answers may vary, but the trainer might include the following comments: Much of the research seems to focus on students who are literate in their first languages, while some adult English language learners are not. Many of the studies research only advanced academic writing, while many adult English language learners are in basic, vocational, or transition programs and not in academic studies.

PRESENTATION I: Preparing and Prewriting— Brainstorming and Organizing for the First Draft

Preparing to Write

Students need to write with a strong awareness of purpose and audience for their writing. In other words, they need to think about who will read their texts and why they are writing them. The vocabulary, formality, and overall format or genre of their written texts will vary depending on the purpose and the audience. For beginning writers, teachers may give assignments that specify topic, purpose, and audience for the student. For example, an English language student may write a complaint letter to the landlord about a needed repair, or write to a teacher explaining a child’s absence from school. Writing samples can be introduced to illustrate the genre of writing that is appropriate for that purpose and audience. As students advance, they can be asked to practice discerning for themselves the appropriate audience, purpose, and formats for a particular topic or task.

Prewriting: Brainstorming

Prewriting approaches include listing, brainstorming, free writing, clustering, and journalistic technique (Kirby, 2006). Reading and discussion offer a way into these techniques. Instructors need to choose the best approach for students’ proficiency levels and specific assignment (see Table 1). Students at all levels need to be taught to identify key ideas or words from the assignment before prewriting, usually by underlining subject and verbs in the assigned topic sentence. Beginning writers might brainstorm a topic, because this technique begins with the writer listing basic vocabulary and concepts. Students take a topic and list every idea that comes to mind without any censure or evaluation. Then it is often useful to have a group create a list working together. While brainstorming in English is preferable if the writing will be done in English, an occasional word in the first language does not create a problem. All ideas are welcome during brainstorming, because refining and organizing occur in a later stage of prewriting.

Table 1. Prewriting Techniques for Different Levels

<p>Supplementary Teaching Ideas for ADVANCED LEARNERS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free writing is similar to brainstorming and listing but may involve writing complete sentences rather than isolated words and phrases. • Clustering is grouping the ideas by relationship. • Journalistic technique asks and answers, “who, what, when, where, and why” (Kirby, 2006).
<p>Supplementary Teaching Ideas for BEGINNING LEARNERS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A picture, graphic, video, or story can generate discussion. • Frequent conversational activities can promote discussion. • The whole class or small groups can brainstorm about a topic, with the teacher writing lists and word meanings. • Students can retell stories to partners and ask each other questions about the stories.

Prewriting: Organizing

Organizing ideas is the second phase of prewriting and can be accomplished by a variety of methods. Many instructors use visual or graphic organizers to provide guided practice for learners. Charts and diagrams help students gather and divide ideas into what will eventually be specific paragraphs about the topic (see Figure 1). Teachers can choose from a variety of visual organizers available through teaching stores and online (see Figures 1 and 2) (Lamb & Johnson, 2003).

Advanced writers may have to write under time constraints. Writers can simply generate a list of ideas, use numbers or letters to organize them, delete and add new items, and begin their drafts in just a few minutes. Writers need to consider carefully the assignment, audience, and purpose of the writing when adding or deleting ideas. For example, a letter of complaint to a landlord would contain different ideas from an essay about housing. One might use evaluative terms whereas the other would not. Ideas included would address two different audiences with two separate purposes. These factors directly influence the prewriting process—generation, deletion, and addition of ideas.

Figure 1. Cyclical Prewriting—Graphic Organizer

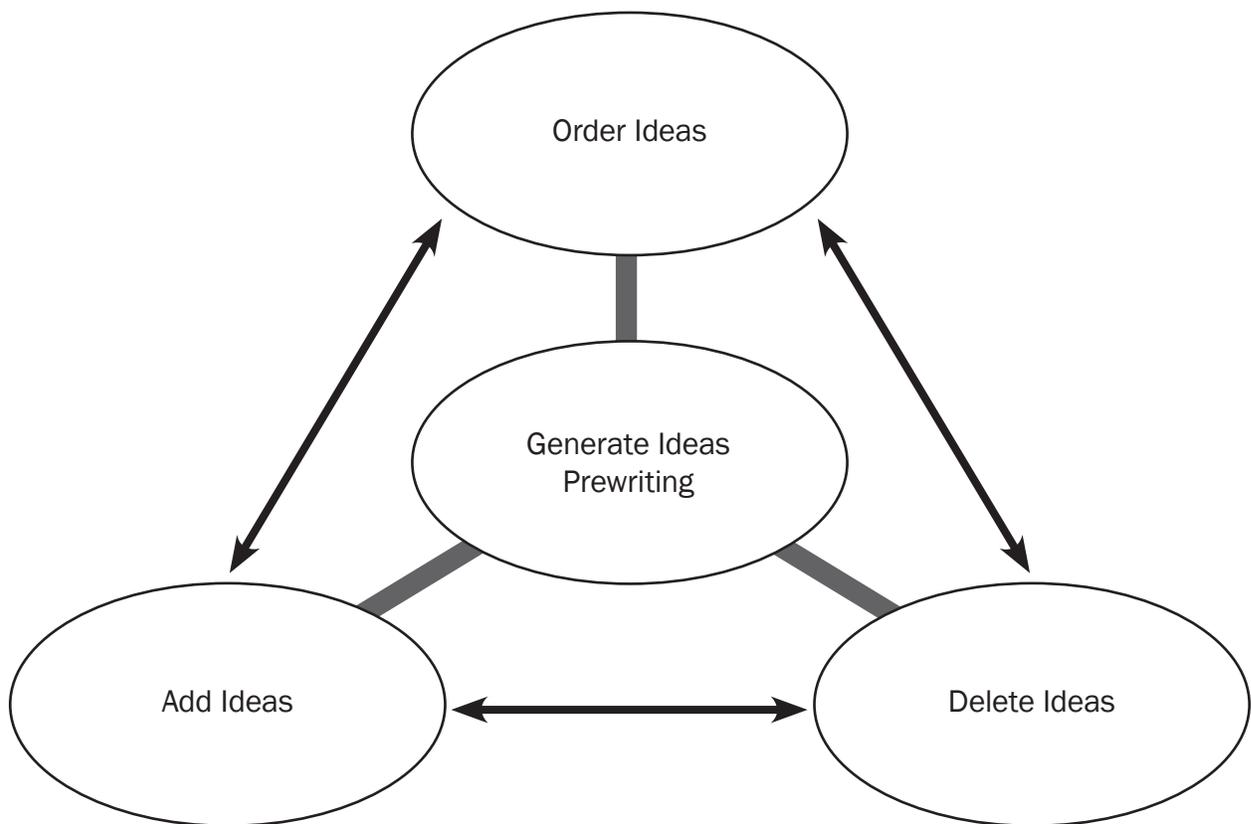
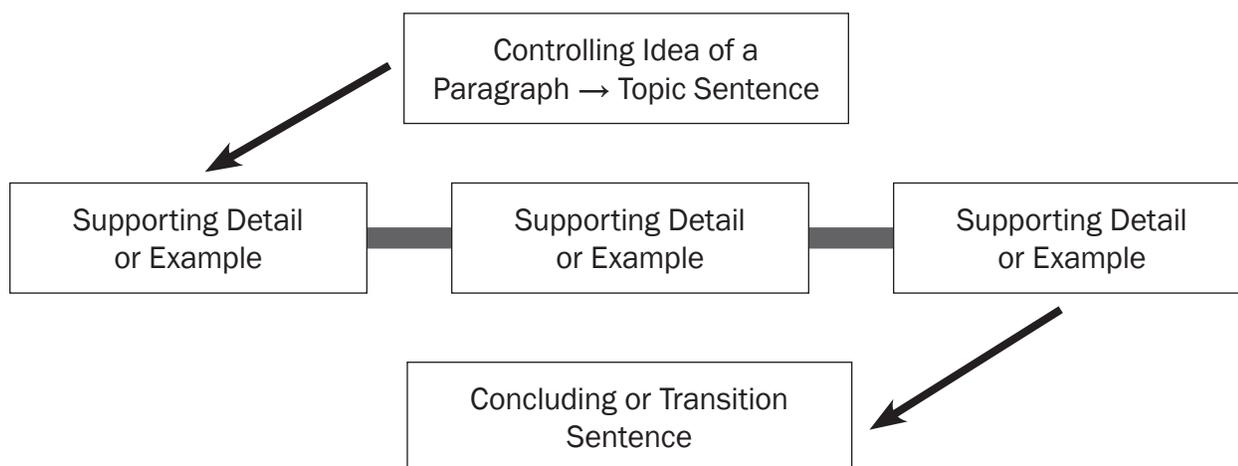


Figure 2. Paragraph Components—Graphic Organizer

Organizing the Paragraph

This workshop module focuses on the paragraph as the unit of writing. If teachers are working with literacy-level students, the units of focus would be words and sentences, and the teacher would gradually build to the paragraph. Advanced-level learners would start with the paragraph and move to the reading and writing of essays and research papers. The paragraph offers the flexibility of being a microstructure for the essay and a macrostructure for sentences. Whatever the proficiency levels of the students in your class, the structure and form of the paragraph can be adjusted to their level. The paragraph also gives the teacher a manageable chunk of writing to teach, support, and evaluate in a limited amount of time.

A paragraph is a unit of writing that consists of one or more sentences that focus on a single idea or topic. A well-written paragraph has a controlling idea, supporting points, and a conclusion related to the idea. A topic sentence makes a statement about the controlling idea, although not all paragraphs have topic sentences (Stern, 1976). The purpose, content, organization, and length of a paragraph can vary widely according to student needs and interests and the level of detail needed to support the controlling idea. Choices about paragraph length and structure should reflect the proficiency levels of the students in the class, as described below.

Adjusting the Paragraph to Learner Levels

Teachers need to make decisions about the appropriate instructional framework for teaching writing based on learners' English language and literacy levels. With beginning writers, teachers might teach each component of the paragraph (e.g., topic sentence) separately and gradually add components. Beginning writers usually need a clearly designated framework to start the writing process. But examples rather than terminology work best for beginners. For Figure 2, a teacher might put sample sentences in the boxes to illustrate the format. The basic components of the paragraph are listed in Table 2 and shown graphically in Figure 2.

Table 2. Paragraph Components

Topic sentence:	This sentence outlines the main idea presented in the paragraph.
Supporting details or examples:	This part of the paragraph presents details, facts, examples, quotes, and arguments that support the main idea.
Concluding sentence:	This sentence summarizes the main idea of the paragraph.
Transition sentence:	This sentence links this paragraph to the next paragraph.

More advanced learners may be able to work on all of the components and also consider issues like organization patterns, development of ideas, coherence, and unity of ideas (Yale College Writing Center, 1996). Students can be given examples of well-written paragraphs and find the components within the examples. These different approaches are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Organizing Techniques for Different Levels

Supplementary Teaching Ideas for ADVANCED LEARNERS	<p>Essays and research papers may include any of the following organizational techniques:</p> <p>Controlling idea: Provides the limits for the ideas in the paragraph. It makes the promise of what you will do in the paragraph.</p> <p>Supporting sentences: Present details, facts, examples, quotes, and arguments that fit in an organizational pattern to support the controlling idea.</p> <p>Organizational pattern: Reflects the rhetorical style and order of ideas of the paragraph.</p> <p>Development: Refers to the amount of information needed for the paragraph to be complete and the ideas fully developed.</p> <p>Coherence: Refers to the degree to which the supporting sentences are logically linked to each other and to the controlling idea.</p> <p>Unity: Refers to the extent to which the paragraph is about one unifying idea.</p> <p>College and University Writing Lab sites provide additional resources for instruction (e.g., Purdue University Online Writing Lab http://owl.english.purdue.edu/).</p>
Supplementary Teaching Ideas for BEGINNING LEARNERS	<p>Early focus will be on individual components of sentences in a paragraph, with a gradual move to the complete paragraph. Suggestions for writing can be found in <i>CAELA Digest: Teaching Low-Level Adult ESL Learners</i> at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/HOLT.html</p> <p>The process of writing a paragraph may be facilitated by using the Language Experience Approach, which can be found in www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/LEA.html (Taylor, 1992), and the <i>CAELA Practitioner Toolkit: Working with Adult English Language Learners</i> at www.cal.org/caela/tools/instructional/prac_toolkit.html (National Center for Family Literacy, 2004, pp. II: 51–53). When students are ready, they can review example paragraphs and note sentence structure, vocabulary patterns, and overall structure of the paragraph before attempting to write these.</p>

Writing the First Draft

When prewriting and basic paragraph organization are complete, students can begin to draft a text. Frequently, the topic sentence or controlling idea creates the most difficulty for writers. Students may wish to leave space on the paper and drop down to start writing supporting sentences first, and go back to the topic sentence later. Some writers choose to write the concluding sentence first and then go back to the topic sentence and supporting sentences. Students might be given paragraph models to review to help them get started. If students will need to write a paragraph in a test situation, they can be shown how to draw language for the controlling idea and topic sentence directly from the assignment given. Timed practice in class will help students prepare to write in response to prompts on standardized writing tests.

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PRESENTATION I: Prewriting and First Draft— Focus Questions

1. When setting up a writing activity, how can the teacher help students focus on topic and content?

Provide students with models of a specific purpose, audience, and genre for the writing assignment. Remind the students to

- *Review the topic assignment while they are writing*
- *Refer back to their brainstorming lists*
- *Focus on their audience and purpose while writing*

2. How would you explain the term “brainstorm” to your English language students?

It can be disorganized and chaotic. All ideas are welcome.

3. What are useful steps for organizing your writing ideas?

*Read and reread the topic.
Brainstorm ideas.
Order the ideas.
Delete inappropriate ideas.
Add new ideas.*

4. What are graphic organizers? How can you use them in class?

Charts that separate and organize ideas. Refer to examples (Figures 1 and 2).

5. How would you teach paragraph organization? Answers will vary.

Beginning instruction: *Focuses on basic elements of a paragraph*

Sentence: *Topic sentence or main idea*

Supporting Sentences: *Examples, explanations, reasons*

Concluding Sentence: *Restated main idea or transition sentence to next paragraph*

Advanced instruction: *Focuses on additional elements of a paragraph*

Controlling idea: *Provides the limits for the ideas in the paragraph; makes the promise of what you will do in the paragraph*

Supporting sentences: *Present details, facts, examples, quotes, and arguments that fit in an organizational pattern to support the controlling idea*

Organizational pattern: *Reflects the rhetorical style and order of ideas of the paragraph*

Development: *Refers to the amount of information needed for the paragraph to be complete and the ideas fully developed*

Coherence: *Refers to the degree to which the supporting sentences are logically linked to each other and to the controlling idea*

Unity: *Refers to the extent to which the paragraph is about one unifying idea*

PRACTICE I: Prewriting and First Draft

Practice A—Topic 1: Brainstorming

As a whole group, read the topic assignment. Underline key words. Let the key words guide you to list as many ideas as come to mind for writing a descriptive paragraph on the topic.

Example: Topic 1: Holidays are celebrated in many different ways. Choose a holiday from your country that is important to you. Explain when it is celebrated, what people do, what they eat, and what they might make for this holiday.

Example: Halloween

Possible Answers

October 31st

candy corn

witches

Trick-or-treat

costumes

black cats

candy

costume parties

cemetery

candy apples

ghosts

skeletons

Practice A—Topic 2: Brainstorming

Working individually, read the topic assignment. Underline key words. Let the key words guide you to list as many ideas as come to mind for writing about the topic.

Example: Topic 2: Writing a paragraph is a complex process. Explain why it is complex.

Possible Answers

getting ideas

writing things that are clear to a reader

organizing ideas

checking grammar and punctuation

choosing vocabulary

time limits

Practice B—Topic 1: Organizing Ideas

As a whole group, go back to Topic 1 (important holiday) and your brainstorming list. Remind participants that time permits practice of only one method of doing prewriting—brainstorming a list. They should try other methods when possible.

1. Using your topic, construct a draft topic sentence.

Participants come up with a topic sentence. Example: Halloween is an exciting holiday with unusual customs.

2. Check and see if any of the ideas from your brainstorming list should be deleted because they don't fit the topic.

Participants go through the list.

3. Do you have any new ideas to add based on the topic sentence?

Participants go through the list.

4. Order your ideas by putting numbers in front of them.

Participants number the ideas.

Practice B—Topic 2: Organizing Ideas

As an individual, go back to Topic 2 (writing a paragraph) and your brainstorming list.

1. Using your topic, construct a draft topic sentence.

Participants come up with a topic sentence.

Example: Writing is complex in nature because many different ideas need to be organized and made clear to a reader.

2. Check and see if any of the ideas on your brainstorming list should be deleted because they don't fit the topic.

Participants go through the list.

3. Do you have any new ideas to add based on the topic sentence?

Participants go through the list.

4. Order your ideas by putting numbers in front of them.

Participants number the ideas.

Practice C—Topic 1: Graphic Organizers

Example: Topic 1: As a whole group, fill in the boxes in the graphic organizer below for Topic 1 (Holiday). Do you think some of your students would benefit from using a graphic organizer to put their thoughts together?

Table 4. Paragraph Parts—Graphic Organizer

A.

Topic Sentence

Supporting Idea 1	Supporting Idea 2	Supporting Idea 3
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Concluding Sentence

Use the overhead transparency or PowerPoint slide from the brainstorming in the Topic 1 example. Fill in the graphic organizer together.

There are many Web sites with graphic organizers for different tasks. Participants may wish to explore them with their students and have the students decide which graphic organizers they prefer to use. A variety of organizers can be found at www.rubistar.com/ (Rubistar, 2006) and <http://eduscapes.com/tap/topic73.htm> (Johnson & Lamb, 2003).

Practice D—Topic 2: First Draft

Take your brainstorming for Topic 2 (writing a paragraph) and use it to write a first draft of a paragraph. Write one sentence for each idea. If you have problems with the topic sentence, leave space and write it last. Focus on ideas first. Don't worry too much about spelling and grammar.

Be sure to double space so that revision and editing will be possible.

Paragraphs will vary. Give participants 5 to 10 minutes to write.

Discussion Questions

Consider these questions individually and then in small groups.

1. What were the difficulties in writing a first draft?

Answers will vary. They might include the following: writing an introduction, getting and staying organized, spelling, writing a conclusion, and time constraints.

2. Do you have any ideas about how to make any of these factors easier? List them below and share with those at your table.

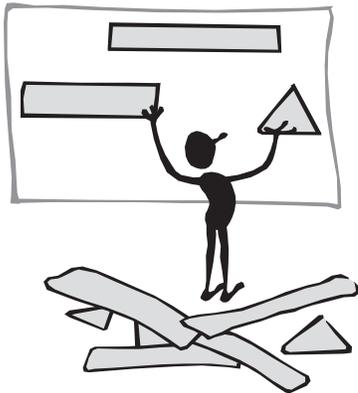
- 1. Participants will probably mention time constraints for writing. Explain the value of timed writing for transition students who will be taking standardized writing tests in GED or college programs. Stress the value of extended first drafts without time constraints for beginning and intermediate writers who are practicing integration of structure and vocabulary with self-expression.*
- 2. They may share that getting started with ideas and writing a topic sentence are problems as well.*
- 3. Ask the participants if their difficulties are similar to or different from their students' difficulties. If time permits, have participants consider how to model and create practice activities for overcoming these difficulties (writer's block, etc.).*

Trainer should keep notes of participants' difficulties to use in planning follow-up activities beyond the workshop.

PRESENTATION II: Revising—Making it Clear

After participants finish reading the following background information, the trainer reviews the underlined points below using focus questions.

Figure 3. Reasons to Revise



“Writing is a process of discovering, and you don’t always produce your best stuff when you first get started. So revision is a chance for you to look critically at what you have written to see

- if it’s really worth saying,
- if it says what you wanted to say, and
- if a reader will understand what you’re saying.”

(UNC-CH Writing Center, www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb)

When the first draft is finished, the next step is revision. The key to this process is in the readers respecting the writer’s ideas. The teacher will make positive comments and ask clarifying questions about the ideas in the draft. The goal is to support the writer with positive feedback and ask questions in a positive way. Hopefully, these questions lead the writer to think carefully about the first draft in order to make changes needed for clarity, order, and support. In the comments and questions, the teacher should model language, structure, and handwriting expected in the student’s draft.

This step does not focus on editing mechanics. Positive feedback and questions about what the reader (teacher or student) doesn’t understand help the writer to make his or her writing better. A checklist is possible (see Table 5), but a model paragraph with comments and questions is often better.

Stress to students to keep ALL the drafts they write. Students need to be reminded that they may change their minds several times and end up using text from their first draft in the final draft. If they are drafting on the computer, they may need ideas about saving multiple drafts efficiently. The number of drafts will vary based on the value placed on the writing and publishing. Because a primary goal is to encourage writing, it is important not to continuously exceed students’ tolerance for revision and editing.

Many students are unfamiliar with revision and usually skip right to editing their own work. Because it involves the writer’s ideas and a chance to practice revision, only the writer actually makes revisions to his or her paper during this process.

When peer feedback is modeled effectively for the class, students can also help with comments and questions as long as the writer retains control of the revisions. The teacher needs to model revision with several archived writing samples and then have students practice with them. Peer revision is tricky and must focus on clarity. The individual and sometime private nature of writing demands that a close-knit community be well established in the classroom before engaging in peer revision. Positive comments about the ideas or order of ideas keep the focus where it should be. Student readers can also formulate questions to ask their writing partners. Developing these questions is a skill that requires modeling and practice time from the teacher. It also is important to discourage students from mixing up revision and editing. Editing refers to mechanics and format and can be done by others. Revision for clarity and order can be suggested by others but must ultimately remain in the hands of the writer. The whole class can develop a set of questions to use as a checklist for the writer and other readers to determine if their ideas are clear and in order.

Some sample questions for different levels can be seen in Table 5. The short question for beginners is to ask if the writer needs to add (+), subtract (-) or move (↔) ideas. More advanced groups may ask more difficult questions such as, Do your ideas have cohesion, coherence, and unity?

Table 5. Revision Checklist for Different Levels

Supplementary Teaching Ideas for ADVANCED LEARNERS	<p>Learners may generate more extensive checklists and include more open-ended questions for peer revision activities. For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What do you want to say? ✓ Did you say it clearly? ✓ Did you choose the best vocabulary? ✓ Are the sentences in the best order? ✓ Is the paragraph well developed? ✓ Did you effectively support your ideas? ✓ Do your ideas have cohesion, coherence, and unity?
Supplementary Teaching Ideas for BEGINNING LEARNERS	<p>Learners may respond well to symbols instead of or in addition to prose questions. For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Do you need to add (+) ideas to make this clear? ✓ Do you need to take out (-) ideas to make this clear? ✓ Do you need to move (↔) ideas to make this clear?

PRESENTATION II: Revising—Focus Questions

1. Why is it important for students to keep all of the drafts that they write?

Over the course of preparing multiple drafts, students may change their minds about what they want to include or discard.

2. Why is it important that only the writers themselves make revisions to their papers?

By having only the writers themselves make revisions on their papers, the instructor models respect for the ideas of the writer and the writer's ownership of the piece.

3. What can the teacher contribute in the revision process, and why are these techniques important?

- a. *Make positive comments. Comments support the student's ideas (and topic).*
- b. *Ask clarifying questions. Such questions can help students think clearly about their writing. Asking clarifying questions (rather than simply telling the students what is wrong) reinforces the importance of focusing on ideas. Choose questions that will help the writer know what to revise.*
- c. *Model the paragraph. Teachers can also model the language, structure, and handwriting they would like to see in their students' paragraphs.*

4. What should be the role of peer feedback in the revision process?

Peer feedback should focus on ideas, basically considering whether the writer's ideas are complete and clearly presented.

It should be conducted after a community atmosphere has been established in the class.

Peers should provide positive feedback and, if possible, ask questions that will help the writer know what to revise.

PRACTICE II: Revising—Making it Clear

Review aloud with a transparency or PowerPoint slide the teacher comments on the student papers in the examples below. For discussion: What similarities and differences did you find in the teacher comments?

Possible answers: positive comments and clarification questions.

*Writers' names are changed throughout this training guide to protect their privacy.

Example 1 (Topic 1): Holidays are celebrated in many different ways. Choose a holiday from your country that is important to you. Explain when it is celebrated, what people do, what they eat, and what they might make for this holiday.

The New Year in my country it's in January, first.
The people do in this day some people go to visit their family,
They ate tamales in the noon with their family.
Some people like to go to the beach with their family or with friends.
I don't have mor idea meabe nex time I do.

Walter

Teacher Comments: This sounds like a great day. I would like to know more about this holiday. Can you say what country you are talking about? What else do the people eat with their families? What do the people do at the beach?

Example 2 (Topic 1):

My favorite holiday is when we celebrate the Mother's Day.
Because everybody are buying something presents for their mother's
In this day all the children go to school with ours mother's.
Because they're prepare foods and small presents for their mom.
But too the children too sing and recite for all the mothers.
This holiday is the only one day to recognize so much all the mothers.

Ana

Teacher Comments: This must be a great holiday for mothers and children. I would like to know more about how you celebrate this holiday in your country. Can you talk more about the presents people buy? Can you say more about the mothers going to school with the children? What happens at school? What foods do you eat? What activities do you have? What kinds of songs or poems do students recite and sing to their mothers?

PRACTICE II: Example—José’s Writing

Practice A (Topic 1):

In small groups, examine the following writing sample. Is there any confusion? Why? Decide where you find the strong and weak areas in the piece and work together to write level-appropriate positive comments and questions to the writer that will help him revise to create a clearer paragraph. Be sure to begin with positive comments that respond to the writing and the writer.

Example 1 (Topic 1): Holidays are celebrated in many different ways. Choose a holiday from your country that is important to you. Explain when it is celebrated, what people do, what they eat, and what they might make for this holiday.

Christmas Holiday is very important in Bolivia.

Um family likes it in specially my daughters and sons because the food is duck diner. The baked duck is traditional in my family.

Independence Holiday in my country is August 6

The military march on the most and big Avenue.

José

Table 6. Paragraph Analysis for Revision

Paragraph Strong Points	Positive Comments
<p><i>(Possible Answers)</i></p> <p><i>Good description of Christmas dinner.</i></p> <p><i>Moving from the general (Bolivia) to the specific (my family).</i></p>	<p><i>(Possible Answers)</i></p> <p><i>This duck dinner sounds great. Can you tell me more about it?</i></p> <p><i>It's great to see your description move from the general to the specific.</i></p>
Paragraph Weak Points	Questions to Lead to Improvement
<p><i>Change of topic to Independence Day</i></p>	<p><i>What day do you celebrate Christmas?</i></p> <p><i>Who eats at your house with you?</i></p> <p><i>Why do you eat duck instead of turkey or steak?</i></p> <p><i>Do you do any other special things on this day?</i></p>

PRACTICE II: General Revision

Practice B: General Revision Comments and Questions: In small groups, add comments and questions to the lists below that you might use to help a student revise. Think about the strengths and weaknesses in the student’s writing when helping the writer revise.

Table 7. Practice Paragraph Analysis for Revision

Positive Comments
<p>You did a good job with _____ .</p> <p>I liked the way you _____ .</p> <p>This is a strong image...</p> <p><i>Answers will vary</i></p> <p><i>Possible Answers:</i></p> <p><i>You did a good job with examples or reasons.</i></p> <p><i>I liked the way you talked about _____ .</i></p> <p><i>This a strong point.</i></p> <p><i>Your image of _____ is very clear.</i></p>
Questions to Guide Revision
<p>Are these the best words to use to express this idea?</p> <p>Did you say everything you want to say about _____ ?</p> <p>Can you add more information about _____ ?</p> <p>Does this go with the paragraph about _____ ?</p> <p><i>Answers will vary</i></p> <p><i>Possible Answers:</i></p> <p><i>Can you explain what you did next?</i></p> <p><i>What kind of _____ was it?</i></p> <p><i>Where did this happen?</i></p>

PRESENTATION III: Editing—Checking Mechanics

After participants finish reading the background information below, the trainer highlights the underlined points below using focus questions.

Editing focuses on the mechanics of writing. This includes grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Teachers can use the editing step to inform their instruction. Student errors can be used to generate mini-lessons in punctuation or grammar. The ultimate goal is effective self-editing and internalizing the mechanics taught in class. However, most writers need a second pair of eyes. Peer editing works very well with English language learners, because it allows for negotiation and reinforces classroom instruction. Teachers model the editing process with several samples. Partners can help each other find corrections to be made. Editing checklists can be developed as a whole-class activity.

The checklist should focus on a limited number of points that have been taught and practiced in class before the writing assignment. In moving from revising to editing, students can continue to make text meaning their priority if checklists are formed on that basis. Checklists should focus on mechanics that affect meaning the most.

Table 8. A Sample Editing Checklist

Subject/verb agreement	___
Correct verb tense	___
Pronoun agreement	___

Table 9. Tips for Editing

Supplementary Teaching Ideas for ADVANCED LEARNERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Many editing symbols and checklists are available for advanced learners (e.g., Azar, 2001). ✓ Tips and recommendations encourage advanced students to read aloud, take breaks, and focus on one point at a time (OWL—Purdue University, 2006).
Supplementary Teaching Ideas for BEGINNING LEARNERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Students need to see many writing samples for each editing point. ✓ Checklists for peer or self-editing should be limited to three items. ✓ It is a good opportunity to look for specific errors that have been recently addressed by direct instruction in class.

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PRESENTATION III: Editing—Checking Mechanics Focus Questions

1. What does the “mechanics of writing” refer to?

Grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

2. Why is peer editing useful for English language learners?

In the process of negotiating with each other over possible errors and how to correct them, students have the opportunity to practice their oral language skills in a meaningful manner and at the same time reinforce what they have learned about the language.

3. What are some main points to keep in mind when developing and using editing checklists?

Checklists can be developed as a whole-class activity and as part of the overall writing process. The checklist should focus on just a few points that have been taught and practiced. With beginning level students, no more than three to five editing points should be included on a given checklist.

PRACTICE III: Editing—Example 1, Topic 1

Look at two writing samples that follow. The errors of grammar, capitalization, and punctuation are identified. Choose four to five common errors that seem to be relevant for students writing at this level and build an editing checklist.

Answers will vary. Some suggestions are underlined, but the trainer should support choices that (1) relate to mechanics that have been taught previously, (2) are general errors that the entire class has been struggling with, and (3) are level appropriate.

Table 10. Editing Topic 1 Example

Student Text	Errors
I like celebrate my country New Year.	Insert word ^ , possessive s
My contry celebrate new Year Sebteber 12.	<u>spelling (sp)</u> , <u>subject/verb agreement (S/VA)</u>
People do drinck beer soda.	spelling (sp), insert word ^
The go night cleb. The eat different caynd	spelling (sp)
food. The take each ather They happy.	spelling (sp), insert word ^
They make like soft Brad very very	spelling (sp), <u>lower case (lc)</u> , insert comma ^
Big deishes food. They cook dero weat.	lower case (lc), ? (dero weat—Ethiopian dish)
Why the holiday important. Becouse	insert word ^, <u>change punct (pnc)</u> , spelling (sp)
New Year. Very Very important hliday	delete punctuation (del), lower case (lc)
New Year to much people happy	insert punctuation ^, word choice (wc)
Tigubu	

Imagine the class level and the mechanics **you would have previously taught** in this student's class. Assume you have read all your student papers and **found the most common errors**. If you decide to use editing checkmarks, be sure students **have a handy list** of what they mean. For **peer editing**, **you would choose only a few items** to have students look for in each other's papers.

PRACTICE III: Editing—Example 2, Topic 1

Table 11. Editing Checklist Example

Insert word ^
lower case (lc) / upper case (uc)
Insert punctuation ^ / Delete punctuation (del)
Spelling (sp)

Look at the writing sample below. List the errors on the right side. Check with a partner and discuss effective editing checkmarks for your classes.

Table 12. Editing Practice A (Topic 1)

Student Text	Errors (possible answers below)
<p>We celebrate Chrsmas in december 24 in the night.</p>	<p><i>spelling (sp) word choice (wc)—in/on upper case (UC) —December word choice (wc)—in the/at</i></p>
<p>All family came, before 2 hours, midnight for eating.</p>	<p><i>verb tense (vt)—comes word order (wo)—two hours before midnight verb form (vf)—to eat</i></p>
<p>When came midnight all peoples given gifts to children.</p>	<p><i>verb tense (vt)—comes word order (wo)—everyone verb tense (vt)—gives</i></p>
<p>Before 2 days for Christmas. my grandmother: starting cook.</p>	<p><i>word order (wo)—Two days before Christmas. verb form (vf)—starts cooking</i></p>
<p>Christmas is very important</p>	<p><i>insert word ^—a</i></p>
<p>Holiday for me because all family came my home with gifts.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Juan</p>	<p><i>lower case (lc)—holiday word choice (wc)—my whole family verb tense (vt)—comes</i></p>

PRACTICE III: Editing—Editing Checklist

Look over the errors you've identified in Jose's paper. Check to make sure they would not be corrected during the revision process. (*Note: Trainer can refer participants back to **Presentation II: Revising—Making It Clear**, paragraph 4, to differentiate revising from editing.*) Remember, you would normally choose appropriate errors from a class set of papers and not a single paper. We are using a single sample for practice only.

Practice B: Working with a partner, choose only four to five types of errors to create your checklist for Juan's writing. Remember the criteria for choosing the errors:

1. Mechanics have been taught previously.
2. The entire class would have been making these errors.
3. The corrections are level appropriate.

Table 13. Editing Checklist Practice B

Answers will vary considerably. Possible answers include

1. *verb tense*
2. *word order*
3. *lower/upper case*
4. *insert word (articles)*

PRESENTATION IV: Publishing—Making It Public

From early history in the United States, “personal” writing has often become “public” as it is transformed into social and political commentary to promote change. For example, tracts written and distributed during the American Revolution promoted personal opinion as publishable social and political writing. The motivation and frame of mind of both the writer and audience can shift and take on greater importance through the publishing of such personal opinions.

For students today, computers provide many new ways of making written pieces available for others to read. Students can email their writing to others or post it to Web sites and blogs. Getting things out in the public eye has never been easier, and computer literacy is growing. We must remain aware of differences in our students’ familiarity with computers and adjust our expectations and approaches accordingly. In any case, there is no doubt that adult English language learners, like the rest of us, are increasingly welcoming the benefits that computers can offer.

Not to be forgotten, hard copy outlets for writing still provide great writing incentives. Bulletin boards, posters, brochures, self-made books, and newspapers can play pivotal roles in creating school community and make wonderful recruiting tools as well.

Many factors can influence how students will make their works available to others, but the primary consideration should be how the writers want their own work to be shown. These three questions may help students make publishing decisions:

1. Do you have a purpose or message in your writing that needs to be made public?
2. Who would you like to read your writing?
3. Where and how long do you want your work to be displayed?

PRACTICE IV: Publishing—Making It Public

Looking at the three questions above, can you think of any other questions you might ask students to help them decide how to publish their written material?

List the ways you could have your students publish their work.

Answers will vary. Some examples may include

1. *bulletin boards*
2. *school newsletter*
3. *community newsletter*
4. *blogs*
5. *school Web site*

Evaluation

In addition to valuing the writing process, instructors must also focus on written products and on evaluating student performance. To do so, certain questions must be asked:

- ▶ What are the instructional goals for each component of the writing?
- ▶ How will you measure the writing outcome in terms of meeting each goal?
- ▶ How do these answers fit into the structure of your state and local curriculum and instruction requirements?

Evaluation of Prewriting and Drafting

In evaluating students' prewriting skills, instructors look at ability to focus on the topic, list ideas, and order the ideas, all in a timely fashion. Teachers can use games and competitions to help students practice working faster and more efficiently.

Here is a sample chart of tasks and evaluation criteria for prewriting and first draft writing.

Table 14. Tasks and Criteria for Evaluation

Skill or task to be evaluated	How would you evaluate? (Criteria)
Follow topic instructions (e.g., List three reasons for).	View the paragraph. It contains three reasons.
Come up with ideas (e.g., through brainstorming).	View the prewriting. Make sure all parts of the topic are addressed in the brainstorming list.
Add and subtract ideas.	View the prewriting. Did the student add and subtract ideas? View the paragraph. Do all of the ideas fit under the umbrella of the topic?
Order ideas.	View the prewriting. Did the student number his/her ideas? View the paragraph. Did the student put the ideas in logical/sequential order?
Look at the ideas and the task. Develop a topic sentence.	View the topic sentence. Does it address the topic and cover the ideas in the paragraph?
Look at the ideas and the task. Develop a concluding sentence.	View the concluding (or transition) sentence. Does it restate the topic sentence using different language? If it's a transition sentence, does it bridge the ideas of the two paragraphs?

Evaluation of Revising

In small groups, the instructor determines basic criteria for evaluating student progress in revising a text, visible signs that the instructor would look for that show an appropriate level of student competence in each component of the revision process.

Table 15. Evaluation of Revisions

Skill or task to be evaluated	How would you evaluate? (Criteria)
The paragraph has a topic sentence (or controlling idea).	<i>The paragraph has one controlling idea in one sentence.</i>
The writing is complete. (The development is appropriate.)	<i>All the ideas suggested in the topic sentence are treated in the paragraph.</i>
The writing is in order. (The writing has coherence.)	<i>There is a logical order. The sequence is not confusing. You could make a list from the ideas in each sentence.</i>
The supporting sentences are relevant to the topic. (The writing has unity.)	<i>All the sentences relate back to the topic sentence. There is a clear connection to the topic sentence.</i>
The writing is clear.	<i>Another student would understand the paragraph.</i>
Participant generated:	

Evaluation of Editing

Focus participants on the considerations below. If there are questions about writing rubrics, refer participants to citations in the paragraph below.

Self-editing is only one step of the editing process. An additional pair of eyes is critical to success, and editors are an important part of the writing and publishing process. When preparing writing rubrics and checklists, be sure to consider your users—the instructor or student writers and editors—and make sure they are appropriate in level and in focus points. The Internet provides a variety of sample rubrics and editing checklists, including

- ▶ TeAchnology.com: The Online Teacher Resource
www.teach-nology.com/web_tools/rubrics/languagearts/
- ▶ National Adult Literacy Database, Canada.
www.nald.ca/CLR/Btg/ed/evaluation/writing.htm
- ▶ SABES Writing Theme: Web Sites, Massachusetts
www.sabes.org/resources/writingwebsites.htm

Whatever system you choose, you should evaluate its use based on your goals and criteria for progress.

Assessment and Evaluation of Writing Beyond the Writing Sample

1. What other kinds of writing are students doing for the class or program?
Is it being evaluated?
2. How do teachers or the program evaluate progress in terms of content and mechanics?
3. What are the criteria for significant improvement over time?
4. What writing do students have to do to complete the class?
5. What content and mechanics does the curriculum require the students to master?
6. What are the local, state, and federal requirements for student writing?
7. What writing do the students need to do in areas of their lives outside the program?

Use these questions to build a table to help you decide how you choose to evaluate student writing performance. (This may be done after the workshop, depending on time constraints.)

Table 16. Criteria for Evaluation of Writing

Criteria for Evaluating Writing	Class requirements	Course promotion requirements	Curriculum requirements	State/federal writing requirements	Other writing
Example:	Correct punctuation and capitalization	Paragraph test, graded holistically, including punctuation	Paragraph test, writing on specific topics, including punctuation	Standardized grammar test, standardized essay test	
Your situation:					

Application and Extension

What can you do when you go back to your program?

1. Designing Lesson Plans

Application A. Create and teach a process writing lesson and compare it to a previous writing lesson. Compare the student products in both lessons. The following chart provides suggestions for criteria on which to base your comparison.

Table 17. Comparing Writing Lesson Plans

Evaluation Criteria	Process Writing Lesson	Previous Writing Lesson
General accuracy (grammar, word choice, and mechanics)		
General fluency (length and strength of ideas)		
Specific Criteria for Evaluation		
Content (ideas)		
Vocabulary (word choice)		
Organization and development of ideas		
Structure (grammar)		
Mechanics (capitalization, punctuation, spelling)		
Strength of voice (personal or social)		
Other		

Application B. Lesson plans often aim to integrate all four language skills, and process writing can provide opportunities for doing this. As an example, develop a lesson plan that integrates reading and practice activities into the prewriting stage of a process writing lesson. Make your initial notes here.

Answers will vary. Make sure they focus on the PREwriting stage of the lesson.

Application C: Self-Reflection

Review process writing lessons as they are developed and taught.

- ▶ What went well? Why?
- ▶ What did not go as planned? Why?
- ▶ If I had to do it over again, what would I change?
- ▶ What have I learned about my students that I can account for in future lesson planning?

Application D: Writing Development Using the Internet

- ▶ Search the Internet for process writing activities. Develop a bibliography of resources for other teachers.
- ▶ Investigate creating Web sites with your students (using Yahoo GEOCITIES <http://geocities.yahoo.com> or some other platform).
- ▶ Investigate reading and creating blogs with your students (using www.blogger.com/start or some other platform)

Teaching Writing to Adult English Language Learners

Workshop Evaluation

Expectations About Contents of the Workshop

What did you hope to gain from this course or workshop? (please ✓ all that apply)

- Basic introduction or exposure to subject
- In-depth theory or study of subject
- Strategies and ideas about how to implement subject
- Information to take back and share at program
- More general information about subject
- Other _____

Did the workshop fulfill your expectations and needs? (please circle one)

Not at all Barely Sufficiently A great deal Completely

Please explain why you circled the above.

Quality of the Workshop

Area	Quality (please ✓ one)				Comments/Suggestions for Improvement
Trainer style	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Presentation and progress (balance between trainer and participant involvement, kinds of activities, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Materials (handouts, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Organization of workshops (arrangement of content, flow of activities, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	

Follow-Up Activity

As a result of these workshops, what do you hope to try in your classroom or program?

Other Comments

Resources on Teaching Writing

Instructional Materials for Beginning through Advanced Levels

- Blanchard, K., & Root, C. (2005). *Get ready to write* (2nd ed.). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
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Links and Web Sites

Instructional and Professional Resources

AlphPlus Index—Focus on Teaching Activities

www.alphaplus.ca/opnhs/english/SiteList.asp?IndNm=364

Guide to writing a basic essay—native speakers and advanced ESL

<http://members.tripod.com/~lklivingston/essay/links.html>

Herod, L. (2001). Introduction to teaching literacy to adults (p. 46–52) Manitoba Education, Training and Youth.

www.edu.gov.mb.ca/aet/all/publications/RevisedDoc.Jan16-02.pdf

Journal of Second Language Writing. Bibliography by topic/issue.

<http://logos.unh.edu/jslw/toc.html>

Journal of Second Language Writing. Bibliography by Author

<http://logos.unh.edu/jslw/author.html>

Michael Buckoffs' Student Writings (Beginning to Advanced)

<http://buckhoff.topcities.com/high%20beginner%20esl%20essays.htm>

Moiles, S. The writing process—A graphic organizer with links

www.siue.edu/~smoiles/writprc2.html

National Adult Literacy Database, Scovil House, Fredericton, Canada.

www.nald.ca/CLR/Btg/ed/evaluation/writing.htm

Resources for teaching writing to ESL students—all levels

<http://iteslj.org/links/ESL/Writing/>

Systems for Adult Basic Education Support (SABES), Massachusetts State Department of Education, Bibliography for Writing.

www.sabes.org/resources/bibwrite.htm

TeAchnology.com: The Online Teacher Resource. New York.

www.teach-nology.com/web_tools/rubrics/languagearts/

University of Minnesota Online Grammar Handbook—Process Writing (Chapter 2)

www.tc.umn.edu/~jewel001/grammar/

Wood, J. (2000). A marriage waiting to happen: Computers and process writing. Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC)

www.edtechleaders.org/Resources/Readings/UpperElemLiteracy/Wood_ComputersWriting.htm

Zieba-Warcholak, A. How to teach writing using the internet. *The Onestop Magazine*.

www.onestopenglish.com/News/Magazine/Archive/teachingwriting_internet.htm

Warm-Up

Readiness for Teaching Writing: KWL Chart

Fill in columns 1 and 2. Discuss your answers with the person on your right. Did you find commonalities? Share with the group as time permits. Be prepared to return to column 3 at the end of the workshop.

1. What do I know about teaching writing?	2. What do I want to know about teaching writing?	3. What did I learn about teaching writing?
<i>All answers are acceptable. Use as needs assessment only. This is not an opportunity to offer correction to participants.</i>	<i>All answers are acceptable. Consider how you can incorporate participants' requests into the workshop. Make notes accordingly.</i>	<i>To be answered at the end of the workshop.</i>

Additional Discussion Question:

How do you teach writing in your classroom now? What is working, and what is not? After a brief discussion, introduce the rationale for process writing.

Rationale for Using Process Writing in the ESL Classroom

Process writing allows the teacher and learner to

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Teaching Writing to Adult English Language Learners

Goal, Objectives, and Agenda

Goal:

To increase skills in teaching writing based on the writing process that includes prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing

Objectives:

- ▶ Describe the steps of the writing process.
- ▶ Develop teaching activities for each step in the writing process.
- ▶ Identify appropriate error-correction interventions for the editing step of the writing process.

Agenda:

- I. Introduction and Warm-Up
- II. Presentation and Practice I: Prewriting and first draft
- III. Presentation and Practice II: Revising
- IV. Presentation and Practice III: Editing
- V. Presentation and Practice IV: Publishing
- VI. Evaluation
- VII. Application and Extension Activities
- VIII. Wrap-Up and Evaluation

Writing and the Adult English Language Learner

Introduction

Whether we are conscious of it or not, everything that we as ESL teachers do in the classroom reflects our own understandings and beliefs about the process of language and literacy learning. This holds true for teaching writing as well. Based on our own experiences as writers and our understanding of scholarly research on writing, we develop beliefs about how people learn to write. These beliefs, in turn, affect our decisions about the types of writing tasks we assign, the guidance we provide students as they are writing, and the feedback we give. It is important to be familiar with the research on writing in ESL classes and to consider how we might shift our beliefs and our teaching to reflect current promising practices.

This background information on teaching writing begins with a brief overview of ways that writing has been studied by researchers. It then focuses on the process approach to writing as a practical, appropriate model to use when helping adult English language learners improve their writing skills.

Overview of Recent Writing Research

Research on writing has been grouped according to its focus on four distinct yet interrelated aspects of writing: the written texts themselves, the form of written products, the composing process, and the ways that people interact with their sociocultural contexts when writing (Cumming, 1998). The following are descriptions of these four research focuses.

Focus on the written texts: One group of studies focuses on the texts that writers produce, for example, contrastive rhetorical analyses of how text forms differ across languages. Contrastive rhetorical analyses find their basis in an idea put forth by Kaplan (1966), who argued that writers of different language and cultural backgrounds have different expectations about the forms that texts should take. For example, according to Kaplan, while readers of English expect to see the central argument of a piece stated up front and then developed in subsequent paragraphs, a Chinese reader would be more familiar with a text that gradually pulls together pieces of evidence and concludes with the final argument—almost like a punchline. Contrastive rhetoric study might look at the differences between Korean and English speakers' research paper introductions. (See Connor, 1996, for general information on contrastive rhetoric. For recent examples of contrastive rhetoric studies, see Levi, 2004; Park, 2005.)

Other text-focused studies include genre-based studies exploring the features of specific text types. A genre is a text type with a commonly expected structure. For example, we recognize the difference between a biography, a newspaper editorial, a business letter, and a book review, because these four genres have distinct formats, purposes, and commonly used language forms. Genre analyses explore particular genres (e.g., research papers) to identify their distinguishing features and to develop ways to teach students how to write in different genres. (See Swales, 1990, for a leading theoretical work on genre analysis. See examples of genre studies in the journals *English for Specific Purposes* and *English for Academic Purposes*.)

Focus on form: Some text-focused studies focus on the form of the students' written products. Long (1991) and Long and Robinson (1998) argued that while second language instruction should be based on principles of authentic communication and learner-centeredness, direct study of problematic grammatical forms should be included when necessary. Such overt study does not necessarily mean giving students explicit explanations of the problematic point, but rather involves bringing their attention to a particular form in question. (For an introduction to the argument and the ways of applying form-focused instruction, see Ellis, 2001.) Recent studies have looked at form with respect to using computer-assisted instruction of writing (Gaskell & Cobb, 2004; Lindgren & Sullivan, 2003; Tseng & Liou, 2006). The question of whether focus on form should be primary in writing instruction remains far from completely resolved. We see this in Hillocks (2005, p. 243), who explored the question of form versus content in writing and argued that form has unnecessarily dominated instructional practices—a fact he blamed in large part on an “age of testing and accountability.” He suggested changing state tests to give more weight to content in evaluating writing samples. Then teachers could reflect this focus on content in their instruction.

Focus on the composing process: Research studies of the composing process often find their theoretical basis in the works of Flower and Hayes (1980, 1981) and focus on what writers do when they compose in their native language. Turning to second language writers, works about the composing process can range widely, from those looking at the differences between writing in a first and second language (e.g., McDonough & McDonough, 2001) to those looking at strategy use (such as using graphic organizers) while composing (e.g., Tsai, 2004). Still others have focused on particular aspects of the writing process, such as revising, and studied how second language writers approach these tasks (e.g., Takagaki, 2003; Williams, 2004).

Focus on the ways writers interact with their sociocultural contexts: The fourth group of studies is made up of a broad range of research that attempts to consider the ways in which sociocultural contexts affect writers, their writing processes, and the texts they produce. These studies, the volume of which has soared in recent years, reject the basic premise that we can understand writing by looking only at texts and the mechanics of how people produce them, and argue that we must also consider how we are affected by social issues when we write. Social issues include our personal backgrounds (e.g., is writing a common practice in our family?), our position vis-à-vis the text's intended audience (e.g., in a workplace situation, what is our position vis-à-vis the reader?), and our ideas about how we want others to see us (e.g., are we trying to impress the reader with our vast knowledge of a certain topic? For more on this last aspect and similar questions of social identity, see Ullman, 1997.) Drawing on these issues, we see works on how writing reflects the ways students enter various academic disciplines (Karr, 2003; Krase, 2003), works on the conflicts students face when learning to write in academic contexts (Braxley, 2005; Curry & Lillis, 2004; Mathews, 2004; Rolon, 2004), and studies of the effects on writing of cultural aspects, such as whether the learners' cultures generally place more value on oral or written expression (Dong, 2004; Harklau, 2003; Murie, Collins, & Detzner, 2004; Orr, 2005).

As with research in other areas of adult ESL education, this overview of the research on writing highlights the need for more research to be conducted specifically with adult second language writers in different contexts. Research on second language writing is expanding rapidly, but much

of it still tends to focus on academic writing at the undergraduate- and graduate-student levels. One needs only to skim the annotated bibliography of writing research provided quarterly by the *Journal of Second Language Writing* to see that scores of new studies are being conducted and published each year. However, of the 80 studies listed in two recent issues of the journal—December 2004, 13(4) and March 2005, 14(1)—only three (Currie & Cray, 2004; Rolon, 2004) focus on adult English language learners. While the findings of other writing research may hold insights for language learners in community-based programs or in community colleges, they do not address all of the issues related to the writing of adult English language learners.

Process Writing

Process writing as an approach used in the classroom draws primarily on the findings of studies in the third group discussed above, which focus on the composing process. The approach takes into consideration research showing what proficient writers do when writing and provides a framework for guiding student writers through similar steps. These five steps involve some form of the following:

Steps in the writing process

1. A *prewriting activity* in which learners work together to generate ideas about a topic and organize those ideas, perhaps through the use of graphic organizers (see pages 73–74).
2. Writing a *first draft*, in which the focus is on putting the ideas down on paper without concern for grammatical or spelling errors.
3. *Revising* the draft, often done in pairs or small groups, with a focus on the appropriateness of the ideas and the clarity of their organization.
4. *Editing* the draft, with a focus on grammar, spelling, punctuation, transition words (first, next), and signal words (for example, another reason is). The complexity of the concepts and forms to be edited depends on the level of the students and on the elements they know or have studied. The use of an editing checklist for students is recommended.
5. *Publishing* or in some way sharing the work with a wider audience. This may mean the rest of the class, students' family or friends, the wider community, or even an Internet audience. Publishing can take the form of displays on classroom walls; compilations into books, newsletters, or newspapers; or posting on Web sites.

This writing module provides training for implementing process writing, an approach that can be adapted for use with students from beginning to advanced levels. Suggestions for adapting the approach for students at different levels appear throughout the module. The components of process writing can be worked on together in a unit or individually as separate lessons. Through a process writing approach, students learn to express themselves fluently, clearly, and correctly and work together to help each other develop their writing skills.

The writing process is cyclical, giving students multiple opportunities to improve their writing. The process can be adjusted to accommodate different topics, time frames, and types of writing, including standardized writing tests for advanced writers. Process writing involves practice of all four language skills. When students work together on revision and editing, they practice speaking and listening. As they review other writers' papers, they also read. Components of the writing process include the integration of writing and reading, as well as genres, types, and purposes of writing.

Writing and reading

Reading and composing are interconnected processes. (For more on the research on connecting the two skills, see Eisterhold, Carrell, Silberstein, Kroll, & Kuehn, 1990; Ferris & Hedgecock, 1998; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996; Grabe & Stoller, 2002.) Improvement in writing has been linked to reading development (Saddler, 2004). Reading supports writing across all the levels of instruction and can be used throughout the writing process. For example, students might read a text to help them generate ideas for their writing. They might do research to provide background information for writing. During the revision process, students read and give feedback on a partner's writing to help the writer revise, and they may also do peer editing. During the editing process, students might read a form or style guide or instructions for publishing to help themselves and their peers. Process writing emphasizes the role of the reader as audience and, through development of multiple drafts, often creates a context for communication. Improved reading and writing skills are complementary instructional goals within the process writing framework.

Genres of writing

Process writing can be used in conjunction with other approaches popular among writing theorists and practitioners, such as genre theory (see, for example, Spiegel, 1999). This approach to teaching writing involves exposing students to a particular genre or type of written text, for example, letters, reports, email messages, or descriptive essays. Students are asked first to analyze those texts to discern the common characteristics that distinguish them as belonging to that genre, and then to produce examples of that genre themselves. When using a genre approach, it is possible to apply process writing principles. Having analyzed the key characteristics of a genre, writers can then organize a text of their own according to these characteristics. The steps of a process approach can still take place, regardless of the genre being studied.

Types of writing

Teachers can use process writing in combination with other types of writing, such as free writing in dialogue journals, where learners communicate regularly in writing with the teacher or a writing partner. Dialogue journals are ongoing conversations that allow learners to express themselves in writing without focusing on accuracy (Kim, 2005; Peyton, 2000; Peyton & Staton, 1996). Other forms of free writing include writing a reaction to a piece of music, a picture, a movie, or a field trip. While such texts are generally not corrected or shared with others, they can provide a means for exploring ideas to be later developed into more extensive writing tasks that

include revising, editing, and publishing. Similarly, teachers can combine process writing with a language experience approach (LEA) to writing (Taylor, 1992). The LEA approach generally involves having learners describe an experience orally and the teacher transcribing it. The resulting texts can then be used for subsequent activities, including steps in the writing process.

Purposes of writing

Process writing may be most commonly associated with preparing students for academic writing styles in paragraphs, essays, or research papers. While process writing is particularly valuable for helping adult English language learners to transition to community college or other academic contexts, this writing approach need not be focused only on academic subjects. The topics selected for writing can relate to practical issues relevant to language learners' daily lives, such as completing forms for immigration, banking, insurance, credit cards, or driver's licenses; taking phone messages; and writing thank you notes, lists, letters, and resumes—what the authors of a Canadian study termed “real-world writing” (Currie & Cray, 2004, p. 114). The topics can also reflect the personal side of learners' daily lives and provide them an opportunity to write about their past and current experiences, ideas, and memories. Making texts and topics such as these the focus of process writing is another way of providing the language practice desired by adult learners, while also linking writing to the social aspects of their daily lives. (For more ideas on writing activities with adult English language learners, see Bello, 1997.)

Conclusion

The process writing approach has had its critics, including those who note its failure to consider sociocultural issues (e.g. Kent, 1999; Trimbur, 1994; and several works in a special issue of the *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 12(1), February 2003). There are also critics who maintain that process writing doesn't focus sufficiently on form (Price, 1999). Nevertheless, the steps involved in this approach provide a practical framework for teaching writing to all levels of adult English language learners, from those with only the most basic literacy skills to those transitioning to college-level courses. Moreover, process writing can support a less stressful writing experience because of the emphasis on valuing writers' ideas, not solely their knowledge of writing mechanics. It can teach life skills by giving learners opportunities to practice strategies to improve their own writing, such as revising and editing. It can provide a meaningful context for direct teaching of the structures of texts and the forms of standard written English. Perhaps most important, it can help build confidence by giving voice to learners' ideas and showing them that they too can produce written texts worthy of sharing with others.

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Writing and the Adult English Language Learner

Focus Questions

1. What are the primary differences between the three types of writing research discussed in the background reading?
2. List some examples of social factors and describe how they might affect the ways we write.
3. List the five main steps in a process writing approach and describe how each one is generally conducted.
4. Describe how process writing might support reading development.
5. Describe how a teacher might incorporate elements of free writing, genre-based, and language experience approaches into a process writing approach.
6. Based on ideas from the text as well as on your own experiences as a teacher, what are some ways that a process writing approach can benefit adult English language learners in particular?
7. The reading points to a lack of research focusing particularly on the writing process and progress of adults learning English. Based on your own experience as teachers of adult English language learners, what unique characteristics of adult English language learners would you identify that might make research focusing on other groups of learners difficult to apply to this population?

PRESENTATION I: Preparing and Prewriting— Brainstorming and Organizing for the First Draft

Preparing to Write

Students need to write with a strong awareness of purpose and audience for their writing. In other words, they need to think about who will read their texts and why they are writing them. The vocabulary, formality, and overall format or genre of their written texts will vary depending on the purpose and the audience. For beginning writers, teachers may give assignments that specify topic, purpose, and audience for the student. For example, an English language student may write a complaint letter to the landlord about a needed repair, or write to a teacher explaining a child's absence from school. Writing samples can be introduced to illustrate the genre of writing that is appropriate for that purpose and audience. As students advance, they can be asked to practice discerning for themselves the appropriate audience, purpose, and formats for a particular topic or task.

Prewriting: Brainstorming

Prewriting approaches include listing, brainstorming, free writing, clustering, and journalistic technique (Kirby, 2006). Reading and discussion offer a way into these techniques. Instructors need to choose the best approach for students' proficiency levels and specific assignment (see Table 1). Students at all levels need to be taught to identify key ideas or words from the assignment before prewriting, usually by underlining subject and verbs in the assigned topic sentence. Beginning writers might brainstorm a topic, because this technique begins with the writer listing basic vocabulary and concepts. Students take a topic and list every idea that comes to mind without any censure or evaluation. Then it is often useful to have a group create a list working together. While brainstorming in English is preferable if the writing will be done in English, an occasional word in the first language does not create a problem. All ideas are welcome during brainstorming, because refining and organizing occur in a later stage of prewriting.

Table 1. Prewriting Techniques for Different Levels

<p>Supplementary Teaching Ideas for ADVANCED LEARNERS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free writing is similar to brainstorming and listing but may involve writing complete sentences rather than isolated words and phrases. • Clustering is grouping the ideas by relationship. • Journalistic technique asks and answers, “who, what, when, where, and why” (Kirby, 2006).
<p>Supplementary Teaching Ideas for BEGINNING LEARNERS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A picture, graphic, video, or story can generate discussion. • Frequent conversational activities can promote discussion. • The whole class or small groups can brainstorm about a topic, with the teacher writing lists and word meanings. • Students can retell stories to partners and ask each other questions.

Prewriting: Organizing

Organizing ideas is the second phase of prewriting and can be accomplished by a variety of methods. Many instructors use visual or graphic organizers to provide guided practice for learners. Charts and diagrams help students gather and divide ideas into what will eventually be specific paragraphs about the topic (see Figure 1). Teachers can choose from a variety of visual organizers available through teaching stores and online (see Figures 1 and 2) (Lamb & Johnson, 2003).

Advanced writers may have to write under time constraints. Writers can simply generate a list of ideas, use numbers or letters to organize them, delete and add new items, and begin their drafts in just a few minutes. Writers need to consider carefully the assignment, audience, and purpose of the writing when adding or deleting ideas. For example, a letter of complaint to a landlord would contain different ideas from an essay about housing. One might use evaluative terms whereas the other would not. Ideas included would address two different audiences with two separate purposes. These factors directly influence the prewriting process—generation, deletion, and addition of ideas.

Figure 1. Cyclical Prewriting—Graphic Organizer

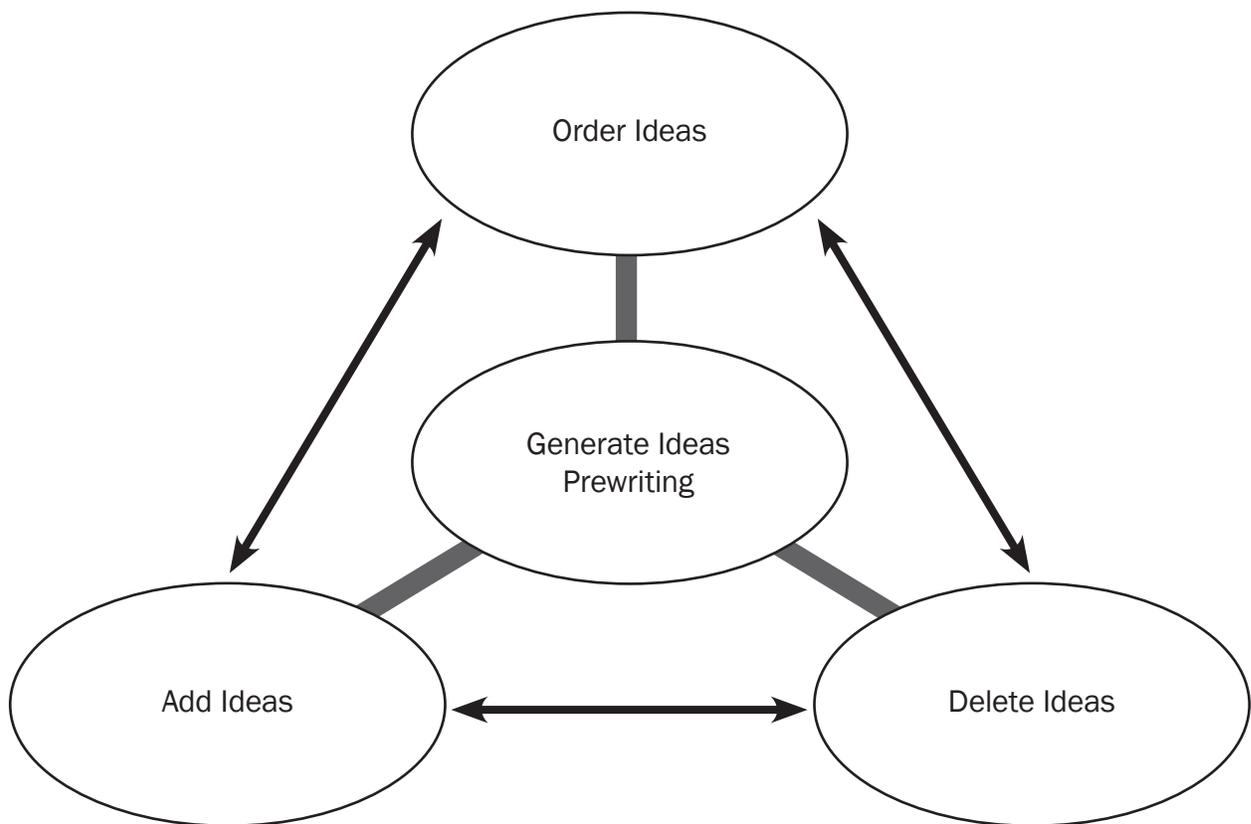
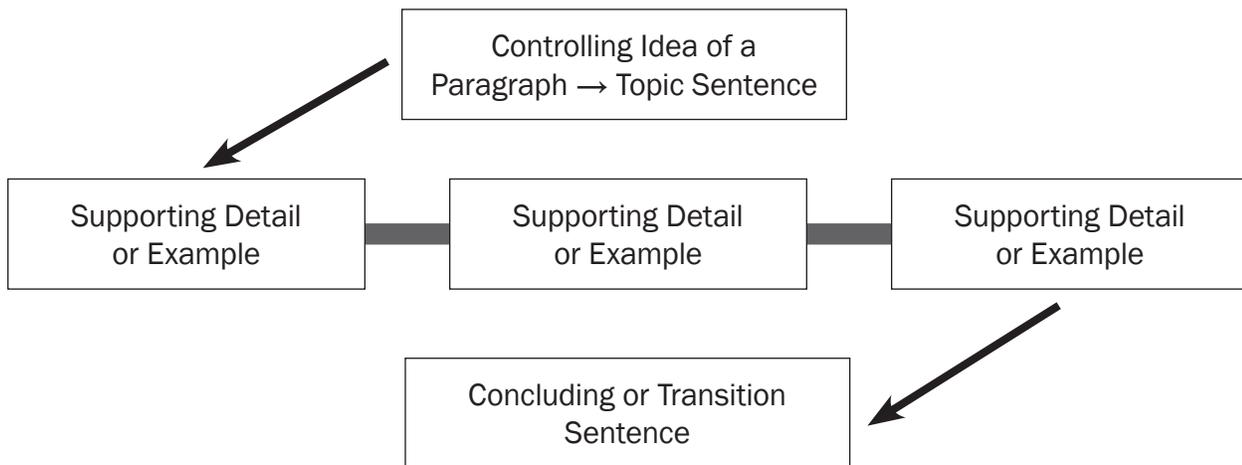


Figure 2. Paragraph Components—Graphic Organizer

Organizing the Paragraph

This workshop module focuses on the paragraph as the unit of writing. If teachers are working with literacy-level students, the units of focus would be words and sentences, and the teacher would gradually build to the paragraph. Advanced-level learners would start with the paragraph and move to the reading and writing of essays and research papers. The paragraph offers the flexibility of being a microstructure for the essay and a macrostructure for sentences. Whatever the proficiency levels of the students in your class, the structure and form of the paragraph can be adjusted to their level. The paragraph also gives the teacher a manageable chunk of writing to teach, support, and evaluate in a limited amount of time.

A paragraph is a unit of writing that consists of one or more sentences that focus on a single idea or topic. A well-written paragraph has a controlling idea, supporting points, and a conclusion related to the idea. A topic sentence makes a statement about the controlling idea, although not all paragraphs have topic sentences (Stern, 1976). The purpose, content, organization, and length of a paragraph can vary widely according to student needs and interests and the level of detail needed to support the controlling idea. Choices about paragraph length and structure should reflect the proficiency levels of the students in the class, as described below.

Adjusting the Paragraph to Learner Levels

Teachers need to make decisions about the appropriate instructional framework for teaching writing based on learners' English language and literacy levels. With beginning writers, teachers might teach each component of the paragraph (e.g., topic sentence) separately and gradually add components. Beginning writers usually need a clearly designated framework to start the writing process. Examples rather than terminology work best for beginners. For Figure 2, a teacher might put sample sentences in the boxes to illustrate the format. The basic components of the paragraph are listed in Table 2 and shown graphically in Figure 2.

Table 2. Paragraph Components

Topic sentence:	This sentence outlines the main idea presented in the paragraph.
Supporting details or examples:	This part of the paragraph presents details, facts, examples, quotes, and arguments that support the main idea.
Concluding sentence:	This sentence summarizes the main idea of the paragraph.
Transition sentence:	This sentence links this paragraph to the next paragraph.

More advanced learners may be able to work on all of the components and also consider issues like organization patterns, development of ideas, coherence, and unity of ideas (Yale College Writing Center, 1996). Students can be given examples of well-written paragraphs and find the components within the examples. These different approaches are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Organizing Techniques for Different Levels

Supplementary Teaching Ideas for ADVANCED LEARNERS	<p>Essays and research papers may include any of the following organizational techniques:</p> <p>Controlling idea: Provides the limits for the ideas in the paragraph. It makes the promise of what you will do in the paragraph.</p> <p>Supporting sentences: Present details, facts, examples, quotes, and arguments that fit in an organizational pattern to support the controlling idea.</p> <p>Organizational pattern: Reflects the rhetorical style and order of ideas of the paragraph.</p> <p>Development: Refers to the amount of information needed for the paragraph to be complete and the ideas fully developed.</p> <p>Coherence: Refers to the degree to which the supporting sentences are logically linked to each other and to the controlling idea.</p> <p>Unity: Refers to the extent to which the paragraph is about one unifying idea.</p> <p>College and University Writing Lab sites provide additional resources for instruction (e.g., Purdue University Online Writing Lab http://owl.english.purdue.edu/).</p>
Supplementary Teaching Ideas for BEGINNING LEARNERS	<p>Early focus will be on individual components of sentences in a paragraph, with a gradual move to the complete paragraph. Suggestions for writing can be found in <i>CAELA Digest: Teaching Low-Level Adult ESL Learners</i> at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/HOLT.html</p> <p>The process of writing a paragraph may be facilitated by using the Language Experience Approach, which can be found in www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/LEA.html (Taylor, 1992), and the <i>CAELA Practitioner Toolkit: Working with Adult English Language Learners</i> at www.cal.org/caela/tools/instructional/prac_toolkit.html (National Center for Family Literacy, 2004, pp. II: 51–53). When students are ready, they can review example paragraphs and note sentence structure, vocabulary patterns, and overall structure of the paragraph before attempting to write these.</p>

Writing the First Draft

When prewriting and basic paragraph organization are complete, students can begin to draft a text. Frequently, the topic sentence or controlling idea creates the most difficulty for writers. Students may wish to leave space on the paper and drop down to start writing supporting sentences first, and go back to the topic sentence later. Some writers choose to write the concluding sentence first and then go back to the topic sentence and supporting sentences. Students might be given paragraph models to review to help them get started. If students will need to write a paragraph in a test situation, they can be shown how to draw language for the controlling idea and topic sentence directly from the assignment given. Timed practice in class will help students prepare to write in response to prompts on standardized writing tests.

References for Preparing and Prewriting

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PRACTICE I: Prewriting and First Draft

Practice A—Topic 1: Brainstorming

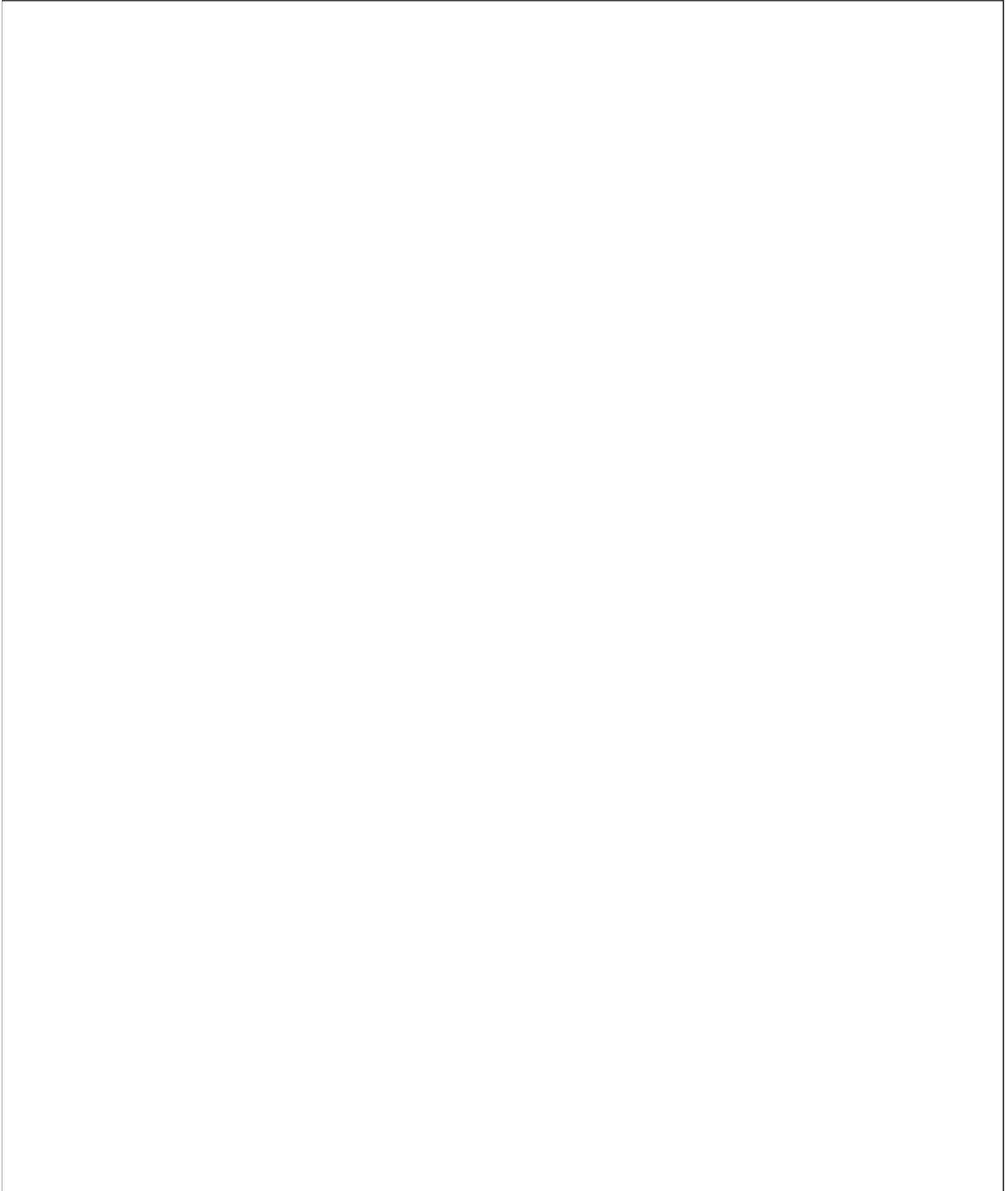
As a whole group, read the topic assignment. Underline key words. Let the key words guide you to list as many ideas as come to mind for writing a descriptive paragraph on the topic.

Example: Topic 1: Holidays are celebrated in many different ways. Choose a holiday from your country that is important to you. Explain when it is celebrated, what people do, what they eat, and what they might make for this holiday.

Practice A—Topic 2: Brainstorming

Working individually, read the topic assignment. Underline key words. Let the key words guide you to list as many ideas as come to mind for writing about the topic.

Example: Topic 2: Writing a paragraph is a complex process. Explain why it is complex.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for students to write their brainstormed ideas for the topic assignment.

Practice C—Topic 1: Graphic Organizers

Example: Topic 1: As a whole group, fill in the boxes in the graphic organizer below for Topic 1 (Holiday). Do you think some of your students would benefit from using a graphic organizer to put their thoughts together?

Table 4. Paragraph Parts—Graphic Organizer

A.

Topic Sentence

Supporting Idea 1	Supporting Idea 2	Supporting Idea 3
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

Concluding Sentence

Use the overhead transparency or PowerPoint slide from the brainstorming in the Topic 1 example. Fill in the graphic organizer together.

There are many Web sites with graphic organizers for different tasks. Participants may wish to explore them with their students and have the students decide which graphic organizers they prefer to use. A variety of organizers can be found at www.rubistar.com/ (Rubistar, 2006) and <http://eduscapes.com/tap/topic73.htm> (Johnson & Lamb, 2003).

Practice D—Topic 2: First Draft

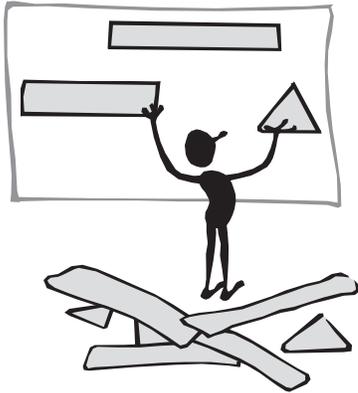
Take your brainstorming for Topic 2 (writing a paragraph) and use it to write a first draft of a paragraph. Write one sentence for each idea. If you have problems with the topic sentence, leave space and write it last. Focus on ideas first. Don't worry too much about spelling and grammar.

Be sure to double space so that revision and editing will be possible.

PRESENTATION II: Revising—Making it Clear

Read the following background information.

Figure 3. Reasons to Revise



“Writing is a process of discovering, and you don’t always produce your best stuff when you first get started. So revision is a chance for you to look critically at what you have written to see

- if it’s really worth saying,
- if it says what you wanted to say, and
- if a reader will understand what you’re saying.”

(UNC-CH Writing Center, www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb)

When the first draft is finished, the next step is revision. The key to this process is in the readers respecting the writer’s ideas. The teacher will make positive comments and ask clarifying questions about the ideas in the draft. The goal is to support the writer with positive feedback and ask questions in a positive way. Hopefully, these questions lead the writer to think carefully about the first draft in order to make changes needed for clarity, order, and support. In the comments and questions, the teacher should model language, structure, and handwriting expected in the student’s draft.

This step does not focus on editing mechanics. Positive feedback and questions about what the reader (teacher or student) doesn’t understand help the writer to make his or her writing better. A checklist is possible (see Table 5), but a model paragraph with comments and questions is often better.

Stress to students to keep ALL the drafts they write. Students need to be reminded that they may change their minds several times and end up using text from their first draft in the final draft. If they are drafting on the computer, they may need ideas about saving multiple drafts efficiently. The number of drafts will vary based on the value placed on the writing and publishing. Because a primary goal is to encourage writing, it is important not to continuously exceed students’ tolerance for revision and editing.

Many students are unfamiliar with revision and usually skip right to editing their own work. Because it involves the writer’s ideas and a chance to practice revision, only the writer actually makes revisions to his or her paper during this process.

When peer feedback is modeled effectively for the class, students can also help with comments and questions as long as the writer retains control of the revisions. The teacher needs to model revision with several archived writing samples and then have students practice with them. Peer revision is tricky and must focus on clarity. The individual and sometime private nature of writing demands that a close-knit community be well established in the classroom before engaging in peer revision. Positive comments about the ideas or order of ideas keep the focus where it should be. Student readers can also formulate questions to ask their writing partners. Developing these questions is a skill that requires modeling and practice time from the teacher. It also is important to discourage students from mixing up revision and editing. Editing refers to mechanics and format and can be done by others. Revision for clarity and order can be suggested by others but must ultimately remain in the hands of the writer. The whole class can develop a set of questions to use as a checklist for the writer and other readers to determine if their ideas are clear and in order.

Some sample questions for different levels can be seen in Table 5. The short question for beginners is to ask if the writer needs to add (+), subtract (-) or move (↔) ideas. More advanced groups may ask more difficult questions such as, Do your ideas have cohesion, coherence, and unity?

Table 5. Revision Checklist for Different Levels

<p>Supplementary Teaching Ideas for ADVANCED LEARNERS</p>	<p>Learners may generate more extensive checklists and include more open-ended questions for peer revision activities. For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What do you want to say? ✓ Did you say it clearly? ✓ Did you choose the best vocabulary? ✓ Are the sentences in the best order? ✓ Is the paragraph well developed? ✓ Did you effectively support your ideas? ✓ Do your ideas have cohesion, coherence, and unity?
<p>Supplementary Teaching Ideas for BEGINNING LEARNERS</p>	<p>Learners may respond well to symbols instead of or in addition to prose questions. For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Do you need to add (+) ideas to make this clear? ✓ Do you need to take out (-) ideas to make this clear? ✓ Do you need to move (↔) ideas to make this clear?

PRACTICE II: Revising—Making it Clear

Review teacher comments on the student papers in the examples below.
What similarities and differences did you find in the teacher comments?

*Writers' names are changed throughout this training guide to protect their privacy.

Example 1 (Topic 1): Holidays are celebrated in many different ways. Choose a holiday from your country that is important to you. Explain when it is celebrated, what people do, what they eat, and what they might make for this holiday.

The New Year in my country it's in January, first.
The people do in this day some people go to visit their family,
They ate tamales in the noon with their family.
Some people like to go to the beach with their family or with friends.
I don't have mor idea meabe nex time I do.

Walter

Teacher Comments: This sounds like a great day. I would like to know more about this holiday. Can you say what country you are talking about? What else do the people eat with their families? What do the people do at the beach?

Example 2 (Topic 1):

My favorite holiday is when we celebrate the Mother's Day.
Because everybody are buying something presents for their mother's
In this day all the children go to school with ours mother's.
Because they're prepare foods and small presents for their mom.
But too the children too sing and recite for all the mothers.
This holiday is the only one day to recognize so much all the mothers.

Ana

Teacher Comments: This must be a great holiday for mothers and children. I would like to know more about how you celebrate this holiday in your country. Can you talk more about the presents people buy? Can you say more about the mothers going to school with the children? What happens at school? What foods do you eat? What activities do you have? What kinds of songs or poems do students recite and sing to their mothers?

PRACTICE II: Example—José’s Writing

Practice A (Topic 1):

In small groups, examine the following writing sample. Is there any confusion? Why? Decide where you find the strong and weak areas in the piece and work together to write level-appropriate positive comments and questions to the writer that will help him revise to create a clearer paragraph. Be sure to begin with positive comments that respond to the writing and the writer.

Example 1 (Topic 1): Holidays are celebrated in many different ways. Choose a holiday from your country that is important to you. Explain when it is celebrated, what people do, what they eat, and what they might make for this holiday.

Christmas Holiday is very important in Bolivia.

Um family likes it in specially my daughters and sons because the food is duck diner. The baked duck is traditional in my family.

Independence Holiday in my country is August 6

The military march on the most and big Avenue.

José

Table 6. Paragraph Analysis for Revision

Paragraph Strong Points	Positive Comments
Paragraph Weak Points	Questions to Lead to Improvement

PRESENTATION III: Editing—Checking Mechanics

Read the background information below and answer the focus questions on the next page.

Editing focuses on the mechanics of writing. This includes grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Teachers can use the editing step to inform their instruction. Student errors can be used to generate mini-lessons in punctuation or grammar. The ultimate goal is effective self-editing and internalizing the mechanics taught in class. However, most writers need a second pair of eyes. Peer editing works very well with English language learners, because it allows for negotiation and reinforces classroom instruction. Teachers model the editing process with several samples. Partners can help each other find corrections to be made. Editing checklists can be developed as a whole-class activity.

The checklist should focus on a limited number of points that have been taught and practiced in class before the writing assignment. In moving from revising to editing, students can continue to make text meaning their priority if checklists are formed on that basis. Checklists should focus on mechanics that affect meaning the most.

Table 8. A Sample Editing Checklist

Subject/verb agreement	___
Correct verb tense	___
Pronoun agreement	___

Table 9. Tips for Editing

Supplementary Teaching Ideas for ADVANCED LEARNERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Many editing symbols and checklists are available for advanced learners (e.g., Azar, 2001). ✓ Tips and recommendations encourage advanced students to read aloud, take breaks, and focus on one point at a time (OWL—Purdue University, 2006).
Supplementary Teaching Ideas for BEGINNING LEARNERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Students need to see many writing samples for each editing point. ✓ Checklists for peer or self-editing should be limited to three items. ✓ It is a good opportunity to look for specific errors that have been recently addressed by direct instruction in class.

PRACTICE III: Editing—Example 1, Topic 1

Look at two writing samples below. The errors of grammar, capitalization, and punctuation are identified. Choose four to five common errors that seem to be relevant for students writing at this level and build an editing checklist.

Table 10. Editing Topic 1 Example

Student Text	Errors
I like celebrate my country New Year.	Insert word ^ , possessive s
My contry celebrate new Year Sebteber 12.	<u>spelling (sp)</u> , <u>subject/verb agreement (S/VA)</u>
People do drinck beer soda.	spelling (sp), insert word ^
The go night cleb. The eat different caynd	spelling (sp)
food. The take each ather They happy.	spelling (sp), insert word ^
They make like soft Brad very very	spelling (sp), <u>lower case (lc)</u> , insert comma ^
Big deishes food. They cook dero weat.	lower case (lc), ? (dero weat—Ethiopian dish)
Why the holiday important. Because	insert word ^, <u>change punct (pnc)</u> , spelling (sp)
New Year. Very Very important hlday	delete punctuation (del), lower case (lc)
New Year to much people happy	insert punctuation ^, word choice (wc)
Tigubu	

Imagine the class level and the mechanics you would have previously taught in this student's class. Assume you have read all your student papers and found the most common errors. If you decide to use editing checkmarks, be sure students have a handy list of what they mean. For peer editing, you would choose only a few items to have students look for in each other's papers.

PRACTICE III: Editing—Example 2, Topic 1

Table 11. Editing Checklist Example

Insert word ^ lower case (lc) / upper case (uc) Insert punctuation ^ / Delete punctuation (del) Spelling (sp)
--

Look at the writing sample below. List the errors on the right side. Check with a partner and discuss effective editing checkmarks for your classes.

Table 12. Editing Practice A (Topic 1)

Student Text	Errors
<p>We celebrate Chrsmas in december 24 in the night.</p> <p>All family came, before 2 hours, midnight for eating.</p> <p>When came midnight all peoples given gifts to children.</p> <p>Before 2 days for Christmas. my grandmother: starting cook.</p> <p>Christmas is very important Holiday for me because all family came my home with gifts.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Juan</p>	

PRACTICE III: Editing—Editing Checklist

Look over the errors you've identified in Jose's paper. Check to make sure they would not be corrected during the revision process. Remember, you would normally choose appropriate errors from a class set of papers and not a single paper. We are using a single sample for practice only.

Practice B: Working with a partner, choose only four to five types of errors to create your checklist for Juan's writing. Remember the criteria for choosing the errors:

1. Mechanics have been taught previously.
2. The entire class would have been making these errors.
3. The corrections are level appropriate.

Table 13. Editing Checklist Practice B

1.
2.
3.
4.

PRESENTATION IV: Publishing—Making It Public

From early history in the United States, “personal” writing has often become “public” as it is transformed into social and political commentary to promote change. For example, tracts written and distributed during the American Revolution promoted personal opinion as publishable social and political writing. The motivation and frame of mind of both the writer and audience can shift and take on greater importance through the publishing of such personal opinions.

For students today, computers provide many new ways of making written pieces available for others to read. Students can email their writing to others or post it to Web sites and blogs. Getting things out in the public eye has never been easier, and computer literacy is growing. We must remain aware of differences in our students’ familiarity with computers and adjust our expectations and approaches accordingly. In any case, there is no doubt that adult English language learners, like the rest of us, are increasingly welcoming the benefits that computers can offer.

Not to be forgotten, hard copy outlets for writing still provide great writing incentives. Bulletin boards, posters, brochures, self-made books, and newspapers can play pivotal roles in creating school community and make wonderful recruiting tools as well.

Many factors can influence how students will make their works available to others, but the primary consideration should be how the writers want their own work to be shown. These three questions may help students make publishing decisions:

1. Do you have a purpose or message in your writing that needs to be made public?
2. Who would you like to read your writing?
3. Where and how long do you want your work to be displayed?

PRACTICE IV: Publishing—Making It Public

Looking at the three questions above, can you think of any other questions you might ask students to help them decide how to publish their written material?

List the ways you could have your students publish their work.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Evaluation

In addition to valuing the writing process, instructors must also focus on written products and on evaluating student performance. To do so, certain questions must be asked:

- ▶ What are the instructional goals for each component of the writing?
- ▶ How will you measure the writing outcome in terms of meeting each goal?
- ▶ How do these answers fit into the structure of your state and local curriculum and instruction requirements?

Evaluation of Prewriting and Drafting

In evaluating students' prewriting skills, instructors look at ability to focus on the topic, list ideas, and order the ideas, all in a timely fashion. Teachers can use games and competitions to help students practice working faster and more efficiently.

Here is a sample chart of tasks and evaluation criteria for prewriting and first draft writing.

Table 14. Tasks and Criteria for Evaluation

Skill or task to be evaluated	How would you evaluate? (Criteria)
Follow topic instructions (e.g., List three reasons for ...).	View the paragraph. It contains three reasons.
Come up with ideas (e.g., through brainstorming).	View the prewriting. Make sure all parts of the topic are addressed in the brainstorming list.
Add and subtract ideas.	View the prewriting. Did the student add and subtract ideas? View the paragraph. Do all of the ideas fit under the umbrella of the topic?
Order ideas.	View the prewriting. Did the student number his/her ideas? View the paragraph. Did the student put the ideas in logical/sequential order?
Look at the ideas and the task. Develop a topic sentence.	View the topic sentence. Does it address the topic and cover the ideas in the paragraph?
Look at the ideas and the task. Develop a concluding sentence.	View the concluding (or transition) sentence. Does it restate the topic sentence using different language? If it's a transition sentence, does it bridge the ideas of the two paragraphs?

Evaluation of Revising

In small groups, the instructor determines basic criteria for evaluating student progress in revising a text, visible signs that the instructor would look for that show an appropriate level of student competence in each component of the revision process.

Table 15. Evaluation of Revisions

Skill or task to be evaluated	How would you evaluate? (Criteria)
The paragraph has a topic sentence (or controlling idea).	
The writing is complete. (The development is appropriate.)	
The writing is in order. (The writing has coherence.)	
The supporting sentences are relevant to the topic. (The writing has unity.)	
The writing is clear.	
Participant generated:	

Evaluation of Editing

Self-editing is only one step of the editing process. An additional pair of eyes is critical to success, and editors are an important part of the writing and publishing process. When preparing writing rubrics and checklists, be sure to consider your users—the instructor or student writers and editors—and make sure they are appropriate in level and in focus points. The Internet provides a variety of sample rubrics and editing checklists, including

- ▶ TeAchnology.com: The Online Teacher Resource
www.teach-nology.com/web_tools/rubrics/languagearts/
- ▶ National Adult Literacy Database, Canada.
www.nald.ca/CLR/Btg/ed/evaluation/writing.htm
- ▶ SABES Writing Theme: Web Sites, Massachusetts
www.sabes.org/resources/writingwebsites.htm

Whatever system you choose, you should evaluate its use based on your goals and criteria for progress.

Assessment and Evaluation of Writing Beyond the Writing Sample

1. What other kinds of writing are students doing for the class or program?
Is it being evaluated?
2. How do teachers or the program evaluate progress in terms of content and mechanics?
3. What are the criteria for significant improvement over time?
4. What writing do students have to do to complete the class?
5. What content and mechanics does the curriculum require the students to master?
6. What are the local, state, and federal requirements for student writing?
7. What writing do the students need to do in areas of their lives outside the program?

Use these questions to build a table to help you decide how you choose to evaluate student writing performance. (This may be done after the workshop, depending on time constraints.)

Table 16. Criteria for Evaluation of Writing

Criteria for Evaluating Writing	Class requirements	Course promotion requirements	Curriculum requirements	State/federal writing requirements	Other writing
Example:	Correct punctuation and capitalization	Paragraph test, graded holistically, including punctuation	Paragraph test, writing on specific topics, including punctuation	Standardized grammar test, standardized essay test	
Your situation:					

Application and Extension

What can you do when you go back to your program?

1. Designing Lesson Plans

Application A. Create and teach a process writing lesson and compare it to a previous writing lesson. Compare the student products in both lessons. The following chart provides suggestions for criteria on which to base your comparison.

Table 17. Comparing Writing Lesson Plans

Evaluation Criteria	Process Writing Lesson	Previous Writing Lesson
General accuracy (grammar, word choice, and mechanics)		
General fluency (length and strength of ideas)		
Specific Criteria for Evaluation		
Content (ideas)		
Vocabulary (word choice)		
Organization and development of ideas		
Structure (grammar)		
Mechanics (capitalization, punctuation, spelling)		
Strength of voice (personal or social)		
Other		

Application B. Lesson plans often aim to integrate all four language skills, and process writing can provide opportunities for doing this. As an example, develop a lesson plan that integrates reading and practice activities into the prewriting stage of a process writing lesson. Make your initial notes here.

Application C: Self-Reflection

Review process writing lessons as they are developed and taught.

- ▶ What went well? Why?
- ▶ What did not go as planned? Why?
- ▶ If I had to do it over again, what would I change?
- ▶ What have I learned about my students that I can account for in future lesson planning?

Application D: Writing Development Using the Internet

- ▶ Search the Internet for process writing activities. Develop a bibliography of resources for other teachers.
- ▶ Investigate creating Web sites with your students (using Yahoo GEOCITIES <http://geocities.yahoo.com> or some other platform).
- ▶ Investigate reading and creating blogs with your students (using www.blogger.com/start or some other platform)

Wrap-Up and Evaluation

A. Know/Want to Know/Learn Chart

- ▶ Go back and look at the KWL chart at the beginning of the workshop module.
- ▶ Complete and discuss the “Learned” portion of the chart.
- ▶ Does this change your “Want to Know” column as well?

B. Reflections on the Workshop

1. How have your ideas about writing changed?

2. What has been reinforced?

3. What was the most important thing you learned, and how do you plan to use it in your teaching?

Teaching Writing to Adult English Language Learners

Workshop Evaluation

Expectations About Contents of the Workshop

What did you hope to gain from this course or workshop? (please ✓ all that apply)

- Basic introduction or exposure to subject
- In-depth theory or study of subject
- Strategies and ideas about how to implement subject
- Information to take back and share at program
- More general information about subject
- Other _____

Did the workshop fulfill your expectations and needs? (please circle one)

Not at all Barely Sufficiently A great deal Completely

Please explain why you circled the above.

Quality of the Workshop

Area	Quality (please ✓ one)				Comments/Suggestions for Improvement
Trainer style	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Presentation and progress (balance between trainer and participant involvement, kinds of activities, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Materials (handouts, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Organization of workshops (arrangement of content, flow of activities, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	

Follow-Up Activity

As a result of these workshops, what do you hope to try in your classroom or program?

Other Comments

Resources on Teaching Writing

Instructional Materials for Beginning through Advanced Levels

- Blanchard, K., & Root, C. (2005). *Get ready to write* (2nd ed.). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
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- Blot, D., and Davidson, D. M. (1995). *Starting lines, beginning writing*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
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- Segal, M. K., & Pavlik, C. (1990). *Interactions II: A writing process book*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Professional References

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- Raimes, A. (1983). *Techniques in teaching writing*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Reid, J. M. (2000). *The process of composition* (3rd ed.). White Plains, NY: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Reid, J. M. (2000). *The process of paragraph writing* (2nd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Thurston, P. (1997). *In their own words: Using student writing as a resource*. Arlington, VA: Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP).

Links and Web Sites

Instructional and Professional Resources

AlphPlus Index—Focus on Teaching Activities

www.alphaplus.ca/opnhs/english/SiteList.asp?IndNm=364

Guide to writing a basic essay—native speakers and advanced ESL

<http://members.tripod.com/~lklivingston/essay/links.html>

Herod, L. (2001). Introduction to teaching literacy to adults (p. 46–52) Manitoba Education, Training and Youth.

www.edu.gov.mb.ca/aet/all/publications/RevisedDoc.Jan16-02.pdf

Journal of Second Language Writing. Bibliography by topic/issue.

<http://logos.unh.edu/jslw/toc.html>

Journal of Second Language Writing. Bibliography by Author

<http://logos.unh.edu/jslw/author.html>

Michael Buckoffs' Student Writings (Beginning to Advanced)

<http://buckhoff.topcities.com/high%20beginner%20esl%20essays.htm>

Moiles, S. The writing process—A graphic organizer with links

www.siue.edu/~smoiles/writprc2.html

National Adult Literacy Database, Scovil House, Fredericton, Canada.

www.nald.ca/CLR/Btg/ed/evaluation/writing.htm

Resources for teaching writing to ESL students—all levels

<http://iteslj.org/links/ESL/Writing/>

Systems for Adult Basic Education Support (SABES), Massachusetts State Department of Education, Bibliography for Writing.

www.sabes.org/resources/bibwrite.htm

TeAchnology.com: The Online Teacher Resource. New York.

www.teach-nology.com/web_tools/rubrics/languagearts/

University of Minnesota Online Grammar Handbook—Process Writing (Chapter 2)

www.tc.umn.edu/~jewel001/grammar/

Wood, J. (2000). A marriage waiting to happen: Computers and process writing. Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC)

www.edtechleaders.org/Resources/Readings/UpperElemLiteracy/Wood_ComputersWriting.htm

Zieba-Warcholak, A. How to teach writing using the internet. *The Onestop Magazine*.

www.onestopenglish.com/News/Magazine/Archive/teachingwriting_internet.htm

III-F. Using the TESOL Program Standards for Program Review and Improvement

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Using the TESOL Program Standards for Program Review and Improvement

This workshop module contains detailed instructions and all of the materials necessary to conduct a training session on using the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) program standards for program review and improvement. The module has three components:

- ▶ Trainer Guide
- ▶ Trainer Notes
- ▶ Participant Handouts

The Trainer Guide is the trainer’s script for the training session. It contains step-by-step instructions for presenting the workshop. It begins with an introduction that states the rationale and purpose of the workshop. It also gives the goal and objectives of the workshop, the workshop agenda, an overview of workshop sections with the amount of time to be spent on each section, trainer preparation instructions, and materials needed. The introduction is followed by detailed sequential instructions for conducting each section of the workshop.

The introduction to each section states the purpose of the activities and the timing of that section. It is followed by a two-column table with instructions for each activity in the first column (Action) and the materials needed in the second column (Materials). Hard copies of all of the materials needed (with the exception of non-CAELA publications) are provided in the Trainer Notes or the Participant Handouts. Materials are listed by title followed by the page number on which they can be found and marked TN (indicating it can be found in the Trainer Notes) or PH (indicating it can be found in the Participant Handouts). Ordering information for non-CAELA publications is given in the workshop introduction. Materials that need to be made into transparencies for use with an overhead projector or into PowerPoint slides are marked “Transparency or PowerPoint slide.” You will need to prepare them before the training session.

The Trainer Notes accompanies the script of the Trainer Guide. It includes copies of all the participant handouts, answer keys to participant activities, transparencies or PowerPoint slides to be made, and other supplemental handouts if appropriate. The contents of the Trainer Notes are organized in the order they are needed in the session, and the place they will be used is indicated in the Materials column in this Trainer Guide.

The Participant Handouts contains all the information and activity sheets that participants need to participate in the session and will take with them when they leave. The handouts are also organized in the order they will be used in the session. Make a copy of the handouts for each participant.

Using the TESOL Program Standards for Program Review and Improvement

Introduction to the module: Read the following two scenarios that demonstrate the need for a workshop on using program standards in adult ESL programs.

Diana has just started a new job to organize ESL classes for a community-based organization that has received a grant to provide ESL instruction for new-immigrant learners in the community. She has been charged with establishing the program from the bottom up, identifying methods for managing the program, identifying curriculum and instructional practices, hiring instructors and support staff, and implementing assessment and methods for evaluating program outcomes. She needs to know what components make up an effective ESL program and how to implement them.

Rudy is a program director for a large ESL program in a community college. The college is up for accreditation and has asked Rudy to facilitate a program review process in each discipline. Rudy needs to implement a process whereby administrators, faculty, and staff will analyze program strengths and weaknesses and develop an action plan for program improvement.

Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs, published by Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL, 2003), is an excellent tool to help Diana set up a new ESL program and help Rudy conduct a program review process in a well-established ESL program.

The following Trainer Guide and workshop materials will assist you in conducting a workshop on using the TESOL program standards for reviewing components of an adult-level ESL program.

Target audience for this workshop: All stakeholders who are charged with program review. They may include any of the following:

- ▶ Adult ESL program administrators and coordinators
- ▶ Teachers, tutors, aides, and counselors
- ▶ Program funders
- ▶ Program partners
- ▶ Program evaluators

Goal of the workshop: To familiarize participants with the contents of the *Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs* publication (TESOL, 2003) and enable them to use the Program Self-Review Instrument to analyze program components

Workshop objectives for participants: At the end of the workshop, participants should be able to

- ▶ Describe the differences between program, content, and performance standards
- ▶ Identify the nine categories of program standards, describing examples in each category
- ▶ Use the self-review instrument to analyze the level of implementation of each standard in a program
- ▶ Use the Summary Scores and Action Plan Chart to identify areas for program improvement
- ▶ Identify a variety of ways the self-review instrument can be used for a program review process

Length of workshop: Three to 4 hours for the basic workshop. The length will vary according to how much practice you would like to provide for each section of the workshop. If participants apply what they have learned and practice using the self-review items to analyze their own program, the workshop could last up to 5 hours. If it is not possible to hold a 3-hour workshop, the workshop could be shortened by modeling how to use the self-review instrument with one standard instead of two and by limiting practice to one standard. In this case, the workshop could be conducted in 1.5 hours.

The workshop components in this guide are as follows:

Part 1. Introduction	50 minutes
Part 2. Presentation: Overview of <i>Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs</i>	30 minutes
Part 3. Demonstration of self-review instrument	20 minutes
Part 4. Practice using the self-review items	40 minutes
Part 5. Summary scores and action plan	20 minutes
Part 6. Application: Using the self-review instrument in one's own program	20 minutes
Part 7. Wrap-up and evaluation	15 minutes
Total projected length of workshop:	195 minutes (3.25 hours)*

*This does not include break time. It is recommended that a 15-minute break be given about halfway through the training.

Preparation for the workshop:

- ▶ Read the CAELA brief, *Using the ESL Program Standards to Evaluate and Improve Adult ESL Programs*, by Joy Kreeft Peyton. This brief provides background information on standards in general, the history of the use of standards in adult-level ESL classes, and possible uses of program standards in adult education. Parts of this brief will be used for presenting information to the participants. www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/briefs/eslprogstandards.html
- ▶ Read the TESOL publication, *Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs*, which can be ordered from www.tesol.org.
- ▶ Order copies of the above publication for workshop participants.
- ▶ Make transparencies or PowerPoint slides as indicated in the workshop guide.

Materials needed for this workshop:

- ▶ A copy of *Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs* for each participant
- ▶ Using the TESOL Program Standards for Program Review and Improvement: Trainer Guide
- ▶ Using the TESOL Program Standards for Program Review and Improvement: Trainer Notes
- ▶ Using the TESOL Program for Program Review: Participant Handouts
- ▶ A copy of the CAELA brief on program standards for each participant

Note: In the Trainer Guide, materials to be found in the Trainer Notes are indicated by TN, followed by the page number; materials to be found in the Participant Handouts are indicated by PH, followed by the page number.

1. Introduction

Purposes:

- ▶ To establish the purpose of the workshop
- ▶ To review the goal and objectives of the workshop
- ▶ To define a program standard and contrast it with other types of standards
- ▶ To activate participants' prior knowledge of characteristics of an effective ESL program

Time: 40–50 minutes

Actions	Materials
A. Introduce yourself and other presenters. If participants don't know each other, do a short activity in which participants introduce themselves to each other.	
B. State the goal and objectives of the workshop: to train participants to use the self-review instrument to evaluate strengths and weaknesses of an adult ESL program. Post the goals and objectives of the workshop.	Goals, objectives, and agenda of workshop (TN, pp. 17–18; PH, 71)
Introduction to Standards	
C. Divide participants into groups of three. Have each group count off so that each member has a number: 1, 2, or 3. Refer participants to the first three pages of the brief, <i>Using the ESL Program Standards to Evaluate and Improve Adult ESL Programs</i> . Assign roles as follows: Person #1: Read definition of program standards and summarize it to your group. Person #2: Read definition of content standards and summarize it to your group. Person #3: Read definition of performance standards and summarize it to your group.	CAELA brief, <i>Using the ESL Program Standards to Evaluate and Improve Adult ESL Programs</i> (TN, pp. 60–70; PH, pp. 99–109)
D. After groups have shared definitions, ask them to complete the worksheet on matching examples of standards with the type of standard they represent.	Types of Standards (TN, p. 20; PH, p. 72)
E. Go over worksheet with participants. Make sure participants understand the differences between these types of standards.	
F. Explain to the whole group that they will be working with program standards to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their program.	Transparency or PowerPoint slide (optional) of “Types of Standards” (TN, p. 20)

Actions	Materials
<p>Characteristics of Effective Programs</p> <p>G. Ask each group of three to brainstorm two or three characteristics of an effective adult ESL program in the area of instruction. Have them write these down.</p> <p>H. Ask each group to report these to the whole group. Post their answers on an overhead transparency, PowerPoint slide, or flipchart paper on the wall. The purpose of this exercise is to activate participants' knowledge of key program characteristics.</p> <p>I. Hand out the book <i>Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs</i> to participants. Ask them to refer to pp. 20–21, Section 2, Standards for Curriculum and Materials, and Section 3, Standards for Instruction, to see if their characteristics are listed.</p> <p>J. Ask groups to report back which standards included their characteristics and which did not. For characteristics not mentioned, refer participants to other standards in the book that may include those points.</p>	<p>Blank transparencies or flipchart paper</p> <p>pp. 20–21 in <i>Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs</i></p> <p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide (optional): pp. 20–21 from <i>Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs</i> (TN, pp. 21–22)</p>

2. Presentation: Overview of the contents of *Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs*

Purposes:

- ▶ To describe the background of the development of program standards.
- ▶ To describe the contents of the *Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs*.
- ▶ To familiarize participants with a variety of program standards in each category.

Time: 30 minutes

Actions	Materials
A. Using PowerPoint slides or overhead transparencies, provide a brief history of how the program standards were created.	Set of PowerPoint slides or overhead transparencies History of TESOL Program Standards (TN, p. 18) Notes on background (TN, p. 23)
B. Identify the purpose of the program standards publication.	
C. Describe the table of contents of <i>Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs</i> (Part 1, “Introduction”; Part 2, “Standards”; Part 3, “Program Narratives”; Part 4, “Program Self-Review Instrument”).	<i>Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs</i> . Table of Contents (TN, p. 19)
D. Describe each of the nine categories of standards, giving an example of each. Refer participants to pp. 19–24 of the book. Have them follow along with you as you point out an example of each type of standard.	pp. 19–24 of <i>Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs</i>

3. Demonstration of how each self-review item is structured and used

Purpose:

- ▶ To model how to use each self-review item

Time: 15 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>A. Using the model self-review item on page 12 of the “Standards” (TN, p. 25), describe how each item is set up and scored. Point out the standard, measures, sample evidence, comments section, scoring section, and place for action plan. Explain what each score means.</p>	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide of page 12 (TN, p. 25) Demonstration of how each self-review item is structured and used (TN, pp. 24, 26)</p>
<p>B. Using pages 88, 89, and 93 of the “Standards” (TN, pp. 27–29), demonstrate how items may have different criteria for scoring. (For some items, all the measures should be in place; for others, one or more of the measures should be in place; and for others, just the asterisked measures should be in place.) Project each example as you describe the differences.</p>	<p>Transparencies or PowerPoint slides of pp. 88, 89, and 93 (TN, pp. 27–29)</p>

4. Practice using the self-review items

Purposes:

- ▶ To practice using the self-review items with a program other than one's own
- ▶ To practice using the self-review items with one's own program

Time: 30–40 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>A. Explain to participants that they will practice completing two self-review items for the two programs described on pages 27–33 and pages 42–46 of the “Standards” book. One describes a large program and one describes a small program. Explain that they will practice first with an item from the assessment section.</p> <p>B. Model the practice activity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project on an overhead projector and read to the participants the focus questions about standard 6H (types of assessment). 2. Then have participants read the assessment section for Program 1 on page 31, looking for answers to the focus questions. 3. With the whole group, discuss the answers to the focus questions for 6H, based on the narrative. 4. With the whole group, use the actual self-review item (pages 113 and 114) to score the information from the narrative. Model how to fill out the self-review item and score it. 5. In small groups or pairs, have participants repeat steps 2–4 for Program 2, described on pages 44 (under Learner Recruitment) and 45 (under Assessment). Come to consensus of the whole group on how to score Program 2 on this self-review item. 6. Next answer with the whole group the same focus question, 6H, but apply it to your own program or a program of one of the participants. 7. With the whole group, complete self-review item 6H based on the answers to the focus question for the targeted program. 8. Brainstorm strategies for an action plan or possible next steps with the whole group, thinking about the participants' own program or programs. 	<p>Focus questions for 6H: Large Program (PH, p. 73) Answers (TN, p. 30)</p> <p>Page 31 of book.</p> <p>Transparencies or PowerPoint slides of book pp. 113–114 (TN, pp. 32–33)</p> <p>From book: Self-review item 6H (PH, pp. 75–76)</p> <p>Focus questions for 6H: Small Program (PH, p. 74) Answers (TN, p. 31)</p>

Actions	Materials
<p>C. Explain that now participants, in small groups, will go through the same process with a different self-review item. Divide the participants into groups of four or five.</p>	
<p>D. Assign roles: Person 1 asks the focus questions. Person 2 answers the questions as they relate to his or her program. Other people in the group score the standard, using the self-review item.</p>	<p>Focus questions for 4E (TN, p. 34; PH, p. 77)</p>
<p>E. Hand out the focus questions for standard 4E and the self-review item for 4E. (Note: You may select any item and focus questions, according to the needs of the group.)</p>	<p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide of self-review item 4E (TN, pp. 35–36)</p>
<p>F. Have groups come to consensus on scoring for item 4E or the item selected by the group and reflect on the process.</p>	<p>From book: Self-review item 4E (PH, pp. 78–79)</p>
<p>G. Ask groups to report their reflections to the whole group. If all groups completed the same item about the same program, have groups share their conclusions with the whole group to see if they agree on the scoring of that item.</p>	
<p>H. Refer participants to their handout of focus questions for all the standards. Participants can use these when they apply the process to their own program.</p>	<p>Focus questions for standards (PH, pp. 81–98)</p>

5. Summary scores and action plan chart

Purpose:

- ▶ To demonstrate use of the summary scores and action plan chart

Time: 15–20 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>A. Demonstrate with overheads the use of the Summary Scores and Action Plan Chart.</p> <p>Explain how scores from individual items can be transferred to this chart. Groups can then arrive at an overall score for the category of standards and make notes of next steps in the “action plan” box under each section.</p> <p>B. As a whole group, review the example of a completed summary chart for the small or large program described in the book and how to identify priority areas for improvement.</p> <p>C. Ask participants to review the summary chart for the large or small program and write down five areas of needed improvement, such as assessment or curriculum. Have participants share their conclusions in their groups.</p>	<p>Overheads of two or three items from book, pp. 143–149 (TN, pp. 37–43)</p> <p>Transparency or PowerPoint slide (optional) of book pp. 36–41 (large program; TN, pp. 44–49) or book, pp. 50–56 (small program; TN, pp. 50–56)</p> <p>Summary scores and action plan chart (TN, p. 57)</p> <p>Book pp. 36–41 (large program) or pp. 50–56 (small program).</p>

6. Application: Using the self-review instrument in one’s own program

Purpose:

- ▶ To plan how to use the self-review process in one’s own program

Time: 15 minutes

Actions	Materials
<p>A. Discuss with participants a variety of ways to use the self-review items for their own program review:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If the program is undergoing an accreditation review, all the program staff as well as external reviewers might complete all the self-review items and summary chart and action plan, with the goal of reviewing implementation of all the standards. 2. If the focus of the program review is on just one segment of the program, such as assessment, the staff might focus on the items in that area and share their conclusions with each other. 3. Another option is to have different groups of teachers or staff complete different sections of the review instrument according to their area of involvement with the program. 4. Refer participants to the CAELA brief, <i>Using the ESL Program Standards to Evaluate and Improve Adult ESL Programs</i>. Ask them to read the section, “Example of Use of the TESOL Program Standards,” or describe what is in this section to the participants. 5. Brainstorm with participants how they will conduct their own program review process using the self-review instrument. Use the program review planning chart to plan future use of the instrument. 	<p>CAELA brief, <i>Using the ESL Program Standards to Evaluate and Improve Adult ESL Programs</i>, p. 4 (TN, pp. 60–70; PH, pp. 99–109)</p> <p>Program Review Planning Chart (TN, p. 58; PH, p. 80)</p>

7. Wrap-up and evaluation

Purposes:

- ▶ To discuss other uses of the standards and self-review process
- ▶ To evaluate mastery of the workshop's objectives

Time: 15 minutes

Actions	Materials
A. Discuss other uses of standards and self-review items. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advocacy 2. Support for grant writing B. Ask participants to complete a workshop evaluation form to assess their ability to use the self-review instrument for program review.	Application: Using the self-review instrument in one's own program (TN, p. 59) Workshop evaluation form (PH, p. 110)

Notes

Using the TESOL Program Standards for Program Review and Improvement

Goal, Objectives, and Agenda

Goal:

To familiarize participants with the content of the *Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs* publication (TESOL, 2003) so that they can use the self-review instrument to evaluate and improved their program.

Objectives:

- ▶ Describe the differences between program, content, and performance standards
- ▶ Identify the nine categories of program standards
- ▶ Use the self-review instrument to analyze the level of implementation of standards in a program
- ▶ Use the summary scores chart to identify areas for program improvement
- ▶ Identify a variety of ways the self-review instrument can be used for a program review process

Agenda:

- I. Introduction to Workshop
- II. Overview of the Standards Publication
- III. Demonstration of the Self-Review Instrument
- IV. Practice using the Self-Review Instrument
- V. Summary Scores and Action Plan Chart
- VI. **Application:** Strategies for using the self-review instrument in own program

History of TESOL Program Standards

- ▶ 1991—Adult Education and Literacy Act required development of program quality indicators
- ▶ 1998—Title II of Workforce Investment Act required program quality standards and learner performance goals
- ▶ 1997—TESOL Task Force appointed to review standards
- ▶ 2000—TESOL Task Force developed program standards
- ▶ 2002—TESOL Task Force added program self-review instrument

Purpose of the Standards Document

- ▶ To provide a descriptive framework for examining any adult education ESL program

Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs

Table of Contents

- Introduction
- Background of the Project
- Goals of the Task Force
- Core Definitions
- Adult English Learners and Programs
- Purpose and Uses of the Volume
 - How to score*
 - Summary scores and action plan*
 - How to use the results*
- Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs
 - 9 categories*
 - Program Structure, Administration, Planning*
 - Curriculum and Instructional Materials*
 - Instruction*
 - Learner Recruitment, Intake, and Orientation*
 - Retention and Transition*
 - Assessment and Learner Gains*
 - Employment Conditions and Staffing*
 - Professional Development and Staff Evaluation*
 - Support Services*
- Program Narratives
 - Large, Institution-Based Program*
 - Volunteer-Based Program*
- For each program:
 - Narrative*
 - Self-review Instrument*
 - Samples*
 - Summary Scores*
 - Action Plan*
 - Discussion of Scores*
- Program Self-Review Instrument
 - Standards under each category*
 - Measures, sample evidence, action plan, comments, and score*
 - Summary scores chart*
- Appendices
 - NRS ESL Educational Functioning Levels*
 - References and Further Reading*

Types of Standards

Key

- ▶ **Program standards:** They describe the components and features of a program that should be in place for the program to be effective.
- ▶ **Content standards:** They define what students should know and be able to do in different content and skill areas as a result of instruction.
- ▶ **Performance standards:** They specify how well students should be able to perform at different levels of content knowledge and language proficiency and describe the measures used to demonstrate how well the students perform.

Directions

Read each standard below and mark the type of standard it is. Use these abbreviations:

Prog = program standard

Cont = content standard

Perf = performance standard

- Cont 1. Give simple, one-step directions.
- Prog 2. Instructional activities are varied to address the different learning styles of the learners.
- Cont 3. Complete a job application form.
- Perf 4. The learner comprehends a few common words and simple phrases in conversations on topics of personal relevance when spoken slowly with frequent rephrasing, repetitions, and contextual clues.
- Prog 5. The program has a plan for outreach, marketing, and public relations to foster awareness and understanding of the program.
- Prog 6. The program has a process whereby learners demonstrate skill-level improvements in listening, speaking, reading, and writing through a variety of assessments.
- Perf 7. The learner demonstrates some control of complex sentence structures in texts up to three paragraphs.
- Cont 8. Report household problems.
- Prog 9. The curriculum specifies measurable learning objectives for each instructional offering for learners and is appropriate for learners in multilevel classes.
- Prog 10. The program supports a safe and clean working environment.

STANDARDS FOR ADULT EDUCATION ESL PROGRAMS

Standards for Curriculum and Instructional Materials.)

- L. The program organizes its instructional offerings to be consistent with the program's mission and goals and with the goals and needs of learners in the community being served. (See 3. Standards for Instruction.)
- M. The program has a comprehensive assessment and evaluation policy and procedures that link assessment to instruction as well as learner goals and needs. (See 6. Standards for Assessment and Learner Gains.)
- N. The program supports employment conditions, compensation, and benefits commensurate with those of other instructional or professional staff with comparable qualifications (e.g., the program employs full-time instructional staff and provides part-time teachers with prorated benefits). (See 7. Standards for Employment Conditions and Staffing.)

PROGRAM PLANNING

- O. The program has a planning process for initial program development and ongoing program improvement that is guided by evaluation and based on a written plan that considers targeted community demographics, retention patterns, learner needs, resources, local economic trends, and educational and technological trends in the field.
- P. The program has a technology plan that is aligned with program goals and learner needs. The plan addresses the use, acquisition, and maintenance of technological resources and the training of program personnel.
- Q. The program has a plan for outreach, marketing, and public relations to foster awareness and understanding of the program.

2. Standards for Curriculum and Instructional Materials

- A. The program has a process for developing curriculum that is based on a needs assessment of learners and includes participation and input from other stakeholders.
- B. The curriculum reflects the mission and philosophy of the program and is compat-

ible with principles of second language acquisition for adult learners.

- C. The curriculum includes goals, objectives, outcomes, approaches, methods, activities, materials, technological resources, and evaluation measures that are appropriate for meeting learners' needs and goals.
- D. The curriculum specifies measurable learning objectives for each instructional offering for learners and is appropriate for learners in multilevel classes.
- E. The curriculum and instructional materials are easily accessible, up to date, appropriate for adult learners, culturally sensitive, oriented to the language and literacy needs of the learners, and suitable for a variety of learning styles.
- F. The program has an ongoing process for curriculum revision in response to the changing needs of the learners, community, and policies.

3. Standards for Instruction

- A. Instructional activities adhere to principles of adult learning and language acquisition. These principles include the following:
 - Adult learners bring a variety of experiences, skills, and knowledge to the classroom that need to be acknowledged and included in lessons.
 - Language acquisition is facilitated through providing a nonthreatening environment in which learners feel comfortable and self-confident and are encouraged to take risks to use the target language.
 - Adult learners progress more rapidly when the content is relevant to their lives.
 - Language learning is cyclical, not linear, so learning objectives need to be recycled in a variety of contexts.
- B. Instructional approaches are varied to meet the needs of adult learners with diverse educational and cultural backgrounds. Examples of these approaches include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - grammar-based (focus on the basic structure of language, e.g., grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation)

PART 2: STANDARDS FOR ADULT EDUCATION ESL PROGRAMS

- competency-based or functional context (focus on application of specific basic language skills in areas needed to function in everyday life or at work)
 - whole language (integrated approach using listening, speaking, reading, and writing in thematic contexts often introduced through learner-generated content)
 - participatory (focus on developing language and literacy skills to facilitate personal empowerment, community involvement, and social change)
 - content-based (focus on developing language to support learner success in specific content areas, such as citizenship or vocational training)
 - project-based (focus on developing language through collaborative work with the goal of completing a task or developing a product)
- C. Instructional activities engage learners so that they take an active role in the learning process.
- D. Instructional activities focus on the acquisition of communication skills necessary for learners to function within the classroom, outside the classroom, or in other educational programs (e.g., ABE, GED preparation, postsecondary education, vocational training programs).
- E. Instructional activities integrate the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), focusing on receptive and productive skills appropriate to learners' needs.
- F. Instructional activities are varied to address the different learning styles (e.g., aural, oral, visual, kinesthetic) and special learning needs of the learners.
- G. Instructional activities incorporate grouping strategies and interactive tasks that facilitate the development of authentic communication skills. These include cooperative learning, information gap activities, role plays, simulations, problem solving, and problem posing.
- H. Instructional activities take into account the needs of multilevel groups of learners, particularly those with minimal literacy skills in their native language and English.
- I. Instructional activities focus on the development of language and culturally appropriate behaviors needed for critical thinking, problem solving, team participation, and study skills.
- J. Instructional activities give learners opportunities to use authentic resources both inside and outside the classroom (e.g., newspapers, telephone books, school notices, library resources, community agencies, work sites, television, and the Internet).
- K. Instructional activities give learners opportunities to develop awareness of and competency in the use of appropriate technologies to meet lesson objectives.
- L. Instructional activities are culturally sensitive to the learners and integrate language and culture.
- M. Instructional activities prepare learners for formal and informal assessment situations, such as test taking, job interviews, and keeping personal learning records.

4. Standards for Learner Recruitment, Intake, and Orientation

- A. A quality ESL program has effective procedures for identifying and recruiting adult English learners. The procedures include strategies for collecting data on community demographics that identify the populations that need to be served, particularly those at the lowest level of literacy and knowledge of English.
- B. The program uses a variety of recruitment strategies (e.g., personal contacts, peer learner referrals, print and broadcast media, outreach to community groups, networking with various institutions, advertising through and participation in community events, use of technological sources such as Web sites and electronic discussion lists).
- C. The program takes steps to ensure that culturally and linguistically appropriate recruitment and program information materials and activities reach the appropriate populations in multiple languages as needed. Recruitment materials suitable for persons with special needs are available (e.g., larger print, audiotapes).

Presentation: Overview of the Contents of Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs

Notes for background of the development of program standards

The following notes were taken from the CAELA brief, *Using the ESL Program Standards to Evaluate and Improve Adult ESL Programs*, by Joy Kreeft Peyton. Refer to these notes and use the enclosed overhead transparencies or PowerPoint slides to summarize the background of the development of program standards.

Interest in program standards in adult education has developed in tandem with the development of standards in K–12 education. This movement started in the late 1980s.

The Adult Education and Literacy Act of 1991 required the U.S. Department of Education to develop indicators of program quality to assist states and local adult education service providers in assessing the effectiveness of their programs. The department developed examples of quality indicators for ABE programs in general, yet did not provide examples specific to ESL. Subsequently, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 included both ABE and ESL programs and required them to establish core indicators of program quality and of learner performance related to educational gain, placement and retention in employment, participation in postsecondary education or training, and high school completion.

Recognizing the need to develop quality standards specifically for ESL programs, in 1997, TESOL convened a task force of ESL professionals from a variety of states to develop program standards. In 2000, TESOL published *Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs*. This document was revised in 2003 to include a self- review instrument to use for program review.

Demonstration of How Each Self-Review Item is Structured and Used

A. Using the model self-review item on page 12 of the book, describe how each item is set up and scored.

Standard: At the top of each page is the standard itself.

Measures: Measures identify the criteria that illustrate the standard is in place. For some standards, all the measures must be in place to meet the criteria for the standard. For other standards, one or more of the measures must be place, and for others, only the * (asterisked) measures need to be in place. One should put a check by the measures that are in place.

Sample evidence: The right-hand column lists types of evidence that will illustrate the degree to which the standard is in place. One should put a check by the types of evidence available that were viewed when assessing implementation of this standard.

Comments: This section allows one to comment on the evidence or the extent to which the measures are in place.

Score: One should circle the appropriate score for the standard, using the scale of 0–3.

0 = The standard is not in place.

1 = The standard is somewhat in place or partially developed.

For example, if only a few teachers were observed addressing a variety of learning styles, instead of the majority of the teachers, then the standard on learning styles may receive a 1 instead of a 2.

2 = The standard is in place. This is a satisfactory score.

3 = The standard is well developed within the program. This is an excellent score.

One can also circle whether the standard has low or high priority in the program at the given time. For example, if counseling support services for students are provided by another agency, this would have a low priority for program improvement in the program being reviewed. If a given standard is not relevant to the program being reviewed, one can circle NA (not applicable) in the score box.

Action plan/next steps: As one or more staff members are reviewing a standard, they can write notes in this section on the next steps they might take to improve implementation of this standard.

Demonstration, continued

B. Using pages 88, 89, and 93 of the book, demonstrate how items may have different criteria for scoring.

Page 88: One or more of the measures should be in place. If any one of these measures is checked, the program standard should be scored with a 2 or 3. All the measures listed describe a variety of ways that multilevel needs can be met in a classroom. It would be satisfactory to have just one of these implemented in multilevel classes.

Page 89: To score a 2 or 3, all the measures should be in place; that is, instructional activities develop critical thinking, problem solving, team participation, and study skills.

Page 93: To score a 2 or 3, all the asterisked measures should be in place, meaning that without these * measures, there isn't satisfactory implementation of the standard. The other measures listed are desirable, but not required for satisfactory implementation.

PART 4: PROGRAM SELF-REVIEW INSTRUMENT

3. Instruction

I. Instructional activities focus on the development of language and culturally appropriate behaviors needed for critical thinking, problem solving, team participation, and study skills.

<p>Measures</p> <p>To score a 2 or 3, all the measures should be in place. Instructional activities are facilitated so that</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Learners acquire and practice the language patterns required to apply their critical thinking skills. Examples of critical thinking skills are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> comparison and contrast <input type="checkbox"/> generalization with examples <input type="checkbox"/> use of the conditional to analyze <input type="checkbox"/> summarization/making conclusions <input type="checkbox"/> expression of feelings or judgments <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Learners use the appropriate language patterns and cultural behaviors to solve problems in the classroom or problems related to their daily lives. They follow the steps of identifying the problem, possible solutions, consequences to those solutions, and selecting the best solution according to the situation.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3 Learners practice the language and behaviors needed to work effectively in teams. For example, they collaborate with shared resources, take on role assignments, negotiate with each other, encourage each other, and practice active listening skills.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4 Learners participate in activities that strengthen their study skills. Examples of possible activities include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> organizing their learning materials <input type="checkbox"/> practicing note taking <input type="checkbox"/> practicing outlining <input type="checkbox"/> practicing test taking <input type="checkbox"/> documenting their own progress <input type="checkbox"/> completing homework assignments <input type="checkbox"/> practicing English outside the classroom <input type="checkbox"/> researching information through technology <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____ <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p>	<p>Sample Evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> classroom observations <input type="checkbox"/> interviews with Instructors <input type="checkbox"/> interviews with learners <input type="checkbox"/> lesson plans <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____ 										
<p>Comments</p>											
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<p>Action Plan/Next Steps</p>											

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Practicing Using the Self-Review Instrument

Answers to questions about standard 6H for Program 1 (large program)

- 1. Who assesses the learners in your program and for what purposes?** In program 1, to identify their needs and goals, learners complete a student profile form at entrance. They also complete a short reading and writing test and do an oral interview in order to be placed into the right level in the program. To assess progress of the learners, teachers use a variety of methods, informal and formal. On a voluntary basis, teachers use performance-based measures to assess mastery of competencies for level exit.
- 2. How are the learners assessed?** In program 1, after they are placed into the program, teachers give informal tests to monitor progress. Some teachers have learners maintain portfolios of their work. They also give standardized CASAS tests to measure achievement for state-mandated accountability requirements. Many classes also use checklists and self-assessment surveys to measure progress and achievement.
- 3. If you use a standardized test, how do you know it is appropriate for your learners?** Learners take Comprehensive Adult Student Achievement System (CASAS) tests, which are calibrated for adult ESL students. Scores are correlated with the National Reporting System levels of proficiency. The Combined English Language Skills Assessment (CELSA) test, which was written for adult English language learners, is also used. [This information is not directly addressed in the program description. Technical reports and supporting documentation should be available from test publishers that show the test is appropriate for adult ESL learners.]

Scoring

Self-review item 6H: According to the description of Program 1 (large program), the self-review item would be filled in as follows:

Measures 1, 2, and 3 are checked.

Under measure 1, the following are checked: placement, progress, achievement, and program or level exit.

Under measure 2, the following are checked: a portfolio, textbook/progress tests, weekly unit tests, teacher-made tests, self-appraised progress on pre- and postsurveys, performance-based tests, checklist of completed competencies, oral interview, standardized tests.

Under measure 3, both items are checked.

Sample evidence: All are checked.

Score: 2

Under action plan, a next step might be to develop standardized level-exit tests and a way to measure nonlinguistic outcomes.

Answers to questions about standard 6H for Program 2 (small program)

- 1. Who assesses the learners in your program and for what purposes?** In this small, volunteer-based literacy program, tutors administer one-to-one oral assessments at the time of placement to determine a learner's level. There are no other formal assessment tools.
- 2. How are the learners assessed?** Only one-to-one oral assessments, such as the ESLOA and John test, are administered to determine a learner's level at the beginning of instruction. There are no other required assessments.
- 3. If you use a standardized test, how do you know it is appropriate for your learners?** The tests that are administered (ESLOA, John test, and the LitStart pretest) are created for ESL learners. [This information is not directly addressed in the program description. Technical reports and supporting documentation should be available from test publishers that show the test is appropriate for adult ESL learners.]

Scoring

Self-review item 6H: According to the description of Program 2 (small program), the self-review item would be filled in as follows:

Measure 1 is checked. Under #1, placement is checked.

Measure 2 is not checked.

Measure 3 is not checked.

Sample evidence: Student learning records, sample assessment instruments, and interviews with staff are checked.

Score: 1

Action plan/next steps: Create a portfolio system to monitor student progress.

6. Assessment and Learner Gains

TYPES OF ASSESSMENT

H. The program uses a variety of appropriate assessments, including authentic, performance-based assessments; standardized tests; learner self-assessment; and assessment of nonlinguistic outcomes (e.g., perceived improvement in self-esteem, participation in teamwork activities). Standardized assessment instruments are valid and reliable, based on studies with the targeted adult-level population.

Measures

To score a 2 or 3, all the measures should be in place.

- 1 Individual learner records include the following information on students (* = highly recommended):
 - * placement
 - * progress
 - diagnosis of skills
 - * achievement
 - nonlinguistic outcomes
 - * program or level exit

- 2 Individual records indicate a variety of assessments are used, such as two or more of the following:
 - writing samples
 - a portfolio of student work
 - textbook progress/completion tests
 - weekly unit test from a text or teacher developed
 - teacher-made, criterion-referenced progress and exit tests
 - self-appraised progress on pre- and post-surveys
 - program-developed pre- and postassessments based on curriculum
 - performance-based tests
 - checklist of documented outcomes
 - checklist of completed competencies correlated to learner needs
 - learner's log or journal
 - oral interview with learner
 - teacher observation checklist
 - standardized tests
 - other: _____

Continued on p. 114

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Focus Questions

Standard 4E: The program has an intake process that provides appropriate assessment of learners' needs, goals, and language proficiency levels; an orientation process that provides learners with information about the program; and if needed, a procedure for referring learners to support services within the program or through other agencies and for accommodating learners waiting to enter the program.

1. What information on entering students is collected during the intake process?
2. Through what procedures is that information collected?
3. What procedures are used for assessing incoming students' levels of English language proficiency?
4. What procedures are used to orient incoming students to the program?
5. If classes are filled, what procedures does the program have to accommodate learners who wish to enter but have to wait?

STANDARDS FOR ADULT EDUCATION ESL PROGRAMS

4. Learner Recruitment, Intake, and Orientation

E. The program has an intake process that provides appropriate assessment of learners' needs, goals, and language proficiency levels; an orientation process that provides learners with information about the program; and, if needed, a procedure for referring learners to support services within the program or through other agencies and for accommodating learners waiting to enter the program.

Measures

To score a 2 or 3, all * measures should be in place.

- *__1 During the intake process, the program collects the following:
- demographic information, such as learner
 - country of origin
 - age
 - language background
 - prior educational background, including literacy in native language
 - current or prior work experience
 - needs and goals of learner
 - English language proficiency levels in
 - listening
 - speaking
 - reading
 - writing
 - need for support services
 - other: _____
- *__2 This information is collected prior to enrollment or in class as part of the registration procedures through one or more of the following ways (in English or the native language):
- one-to-one interview with student
 - registration form
 - needs assessment form
 - student profile form
 - other: _____
- __3 Procedures for assessing English language proficiency levels may include one or more of the following:
- oral interviews
 - writing sample
 - program-developed placement test
 - standardized proficiency test
 - other: _____

Continued on p. 99

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Summary Scores and Action Plan Chart

Directions: Transfer your program’s individual scores for each standard to this chart to analyze the strengths and areas for improvement for each part of your program. Record the proposed steps for improvement in the box titled “Action Plan” at the end of each section. Then under “Priority Areas for Improvement,” list the sections and standards that are most in need of improvement, based on the results of this program review.

Scoring Key:

- 0—Program component not in place
- 1—Program component somewhat in place
- 2—Program component in place
- 3—Program component in place and well developed
- NA—Not applicable to my program or not assessed at this time

I. PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND ADMINISTRATION

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Mission statement, philosophy, and goals					
B. System of governance					
C. Sound financial procedures					
D. Accountability Plan					
E. Clear communication and linkages with internal and external stakeholders					
F. Procedure for ensuring confidentiality					

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STANDARDS FOR ADULT EDUCATION ESL PROGRAMS

G. Equipment for daily operations and efficient record keeping					
H. Appropriate facilities and resources for instruction					
I. Courses of sufficient intensity and duration/ flexible schedules and convenient locations for learners					
J. Student-teacher ratio appropriate to learner needs and goals					
K. (See 2. Standards for Curriculum)					
L. (See 3. Standards for Instruction)					
M. (See 6. Standards for Assessment)					
N. (See 7. Standards for Employment Conditions and Staffing)					

Program Planning

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
O. Planning process					
P. Technology plan					
Q. Plan for outreach, marketing, and public relations					
Overall Score for Standard Category					

Action Plan

2. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Process for developing curriculum					
B. Compatibility with principles of second language acquisition, mission, and philosophy of program					
C. Goals, objectives, outcomes, approaches, methods, activities, materials, resources, and evaluation measures					
D. Measurable learning objectives					

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SUMMARY SCORES AND ACTION PLAN CHART

E. Materials easily accessible, up to date, appropriate for adult learners, suitable for variety of learning styles, culturally sensitive, and oriented to needs of learners					
F. Ongoing process for curriculum revision					
Overall Score for Standard Category					

Action Plan

3. INSTRUCTION

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Activities adhere to adult learning principles and second language acquisition					
B. Varied instructional approaches according to needs of students					
C. Learners take active role in learning process					
D. Focus on acquisition of communication skills					
E. Integration of four language skills					
F. Varied activities according to different learning styles and special learning needs					
G. Variety of grouping strategies and interactive tasks					
H. Activities accommodate multi-level groups of students, especially those with minimal literacy skills					
I. Activities develop language for critical thinking, problem solving, team participation, and study skills					
J. Use of authentic resources					
K. Use of appropriate technologies					
L. Integration of language and culture					
M. Preparation of students for formal and informal assessment					
Overall Score for Standard Category					

Action Plan

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STANDARDS FOR ADULT EDUCATION ESL PROGRAMS

4. LEARNER RECRUITMENT, INTAKE, AND ORIENTATION

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Effective procedures for identifying adult ESOL learners					
B. Variety of recruitment strategies					
C. Materials reach population in multiple languages as needed					
D. Evaluation of effectiveness of recruitment strategies.					
E. Intake process, orientation to the program, and referral services as needed					
Overall Score for Standard Category					

Action Plan

5. LEARNER RETENTION AND TRANSITION

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Enrollment and attendance procedures that support demands on adult learners					
B. Encouragement to reach goals					
C. Accommodation of special needs of learners					
D. Contact with learners with irregular attendance patterns/ acknowledgment of good attendance					
E. Appropriate support for transition to other programs					
Overall Score for Standard Category					

Action Plan

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SUMMARY SCORES AND ACTION PLAN CHART

6. ASSESSMENT AND LEARNER GAINS

Assessment Policy

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Assessment policy					
B. Process of assessment for placement, progress, and exit from program					
C. Ongoing assessment and appropriately scheduled					
D. Procedures for collecting and reporting data on gains and outcomes					
E. Appropriate facilities, equipment, supplies, and personnel for assessment					

Types of Assessment

F. Identification of learners' needs and goals					
G. Assessment of language proficiency levels in listening, speaking, reading, writing, including native language literacy					
H. Variety of assessments including reliable and valid standardized assessment tools					

Uses of Assessment

I. Assessment information aids curriculum development					
J. Assessment results shared with learners					
K. Assessment documents learners' progress toward advancement to other programs					
L. Results provide information about educational gains and outcomes					

Learner Gains

M. Process to identify short and long term goals and progress toward attainment of goals					
N. Process to demonstrate skill level improvements in listening, speaking, reading, and writing					
O. Process to demonstrate progress in nonlinguistic areas					

Overall Score for Standard Category

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Action Plan

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STANDARDS FOR ADULT EDUCATION ESL PROGRAMS

7. EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS AND STAFFING

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Appropriate compensation and benefits					
B. Professional treatment of staff					
C. Safe and clean working environment					
D. Hiring of qualified instructors trained in ESOL					
E. Hiring of staff with appropriate training in cross-cultural communication					
F. Trained support staff for effective program operation					
Overall Score for Standard Category					

Action Plan

8. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND STAFF EVALUATION

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Orientation for new ESOL administrative, instructional, and support staff					
B. Professional development plan including resources to implement plan					
C. Opportunities to expand knowledge of trends and best practices					
D. Opportunities for administrators/ evaluators to gain knowledge of effective strategies in adult level ESOL					
E. Variety of professional development activities, including practice and follow-up					
F. Training in assessment procedures and use of results					
G. Encouragement to join professional ESOL organizations					
H. Support of collaboration of instructors with other programs					
I. Recognition of participation in professional development activities					

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SUMMARY SCORES AND ACTION PLAN CHART

Staff Evaluation

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
J. Process for regular evaluation of staff					
K. Anonymous evaluation of staff by learners					
L. Opportunity to develop performance improvement plans					
Overall Score for Standard Category					

Action Plan

9. SUPPORT SERVICES

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Access to a variety of services					
B. Process for identifying learning disabilities					
C. Linkages with cooperating agencies					
Overall Score for Section					

Action Plan

PRIORITY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Standards Category	Specific Standards

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STANDARDS FOR ADULT EDUCATION ESL PROGRAMS

is little opportunity for instructors to meet with other instructors or representatives from other educational institutions or community groups.

Summary Scores and Action Plan

Directions: Transfer your program’s individual scores for each standard to this chart to analyze the strengths and areas for improvement for each part of your program. Record the proposed steps for improvement in the box titled “Action Plan” at the end of each section. Then, under

“Priority Areas for Improvement,” list the standards category and specific standards that are most in need of improvement, based on the results of this program review.

Scoring Key:

- 0—Program component not in place
- 1—Program component somewhat in place
- 2—Program component in place
- 3—Program component in place and well developed
- NA—Not applicable to my program or not assessed at this time

I. PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND ADMINISTRATION

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Mission statement, philosophy, and goals				✓	
B. Administrative system				✓	
C. Sound financial management procedures				✓	
D. Accountability plan				✓	
E. Clear communication and linkages with internal and external stakeholders				✓	
F. Procedure for ensuring confidentiality				✓	
G. Equipment for daily operations and efficient record keeping				✓	
H. Appropriate facilities and resources for instruction				✓	
I. Courses of sufficient intensity and duration; flexible schedules; and convenient locations for learners				✓	
J. Learner-teacher ratio conducive to meeting learner needs and goals		✓			
K. (See Standard 2, Curriculum and Instructional Materials)					
L. (See Standard 3, Instruction)					
M. (See Standard 6, Assessment and Learner Gains)					
N. (See Standard 7, Employment Conditions and Staffing)					

PART 3: PROGRAM NARRATIVES

Program Planning

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
O. Planning process		✓			
P. Technology plan	✓				
Q. Plan for outreach, marketing, and public relations		✓			
Overall Score for Standard Category			✓		

Action Plan

1. Develop a technology plan.
2. Improve the program planning and review process, eliciting more input from external stakeholders.
3. Improve marketing and outreach.
4. Develop policy for appropriate class size to meet learner needs.

2. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Process for developing curriculum				✓	
B. Compatibility with principles of second language acquisition, mission, and philosophy of program				✓	
C. Goals, objectives, outcomes, approaches, methods, activities, materials, technological resources, and evaluation measures				✓	
D. Measurable learning objectives				✓	
E. Materials easily accessible, up to date, appropriate for adult learners, suitable for variety of learning styles, culturally sensitive, and oriented to needs of learners				✓	
F. Ongoing process for curriculum revision		✓			
Overall Score for Standard Category				✓	

Action Plan

1. Do curriculum review on a more regular basis; reinstate a textbook review committee.
2. Invite external stakeholders to provide input during curriculum review process.

3. INSTRUCTION

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Activities adhere to adult learning principles and second language acquisition				✓	
B. Varied instructional approaches according to needs of learners			✓		

STANDARDS FOR ADULT EDUCATION ESL PROGRAMS

C. Learners take active role in learning process				✓	
D. Focus on acquisition of communication skills				✓	
E. Integration of four language skills				✓	
F. Varied activities according to different learning styles and special learning needs				✓	
G. Variety of grouping strategies and interactive tasks				✓	
H. Activities accommodate multilevel groups of learners, especially those with minimal literacy skills			✓		
I. Activities develop language for critical thinking, problem solving, team participation, and study skills			✓		
J. Use of authentic resources		✓			
K. Use of appropriate technologies		✓			
L. Integration of language and culture				✓	
M. Preparation of learners for formal and informal assessment			✓		
Overall Score for Standard Category			✓		

Action Plan

1. Increase integration of technology into classroom instruction.
2. Train teachers how to incorporate more technology.
3. Increase degree of learner centered instruction by providing more training and coaching for newer teachers.

4. LEARNER RECRUITMENT, INTAKE, AND ORIENTATION

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Effective procedures for identifying and recruiting adult ESL learners			✓		
B. Variety of recruitment strategies			✓		
C. Materials reach population in multiple languages as needed		✓			
D. Evaluation of effectiveness of recruitment strategies			✓		
E. Intake process, orientation to the program, and referral services as needed				✓	
Overall Score for Standard Category			✓		

Action Plan

1. Investigate ways to publicize program in more languages representative of learner population.

PART 3: PROGRAM NARRATIVES

5. LEARNER RETENTION AND TRANSITION

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Enrollment and attendance procedures that support demands on adult learners		✓			
B. Encouragement to reach goals		✓			
C. Accommodation of special needs of learners		✓			
D. Contact with learners with irregular attendance patterns/acknowledgment of good attendance		✓			
E. Appropriate support for transition to other programs		✓			
Overall Score for Standard Category		✓			

Action Plan

1. Develop a distance-education program.
2. Develop some on-line courses.
3. Develop methods to analyze retention patterns and identify strategies to improve retention.
4. Increase staffing to follow up on learners with irregular attendance patterns.

6. ASSESSMENT AND LEARNER GAINS**Assessment Policy**

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Assessment policy			✓		
B. Process of assessment for placement, progress, and exit from program			✓		
C. Ongoing and appropriately scheduled assessment			✓		
D. Procedures for collecting and reporting data on gains and outcomes			✓		
E. Appropriate facilities, equipment, supplies, and personnel for assessment			✓		

Types of Assessment

F. Identification of learners' needs and goals			✓		
G. Assessment of language proficiency levels in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, including native language literacy and learning disabilities		✓			
H. Variety of assessments, including reliable and valid standardized assessment tools			✓		

Uses of Assessment

I. Assessment information aids curriculum development			✓		
J. Assessment results shared with learners			✓		

STANDARDS FOR ADULT EDUCATION ESL PROGRAMS

K. Assessment documents learners' progress toward advancement to other programs		✓			
L. Results provide information about educational gains and outcomes			✓		
Learner Gains					
M. Process to identify short- and long-term goals and progress toward attainment of goals			✓		
N. Process to demonstrate skill-level improvements in listening, speaking, reading, and writing			✓		
O. Process to demonstrate progress in nonlinguistic areas		✓			
Overall Score for Standard Category			✓		

Action Plan

1. Develop program-based criteria and testing for level exit, particularly in listening and speaking skills.
2. Develop ways to document and report progress in nonlinguistic areas.
3. Develop tracking system to document advancement of learners to credit-bearing community college program or other programs.

7. EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS AND STAFFING

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Appropriate compensation and benefits			✓		
B. Professional treatment of staff		✓			
C. Safe and clean working environment				✓	
D. Hiring of qualified teachers trained in ESL				✓	
E. Hiring of staff with appropriate training in cross-cultural communication			✓		
F. Trained support staff for effective program operation			✓		
Overall Score for Standard Category			✓		

Action Plan

1. Develop procedures to provide more advanced warning to teachers of class closures.
2. Work toward providing more 100% contracts to teachers.
3. Increase number of contract-classified staff to support program.

8. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND STAFF EVALUATION

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Orientation for new ESL administrative, instructional, and support staff			✓		

PART 3: PROGRAM NARRATIVES

B. Professional development plan, including resources to implement plan			✓		
C. Opportunities to expand knowledge of trends, technologies, research, and best practices				✓	
D. Opportunities for administrators/ evaluators to gain knowledge of effective strategies in adult-level ESL		✓			
E. Variety of professional development activities, including practice and follow-up			✓		
F. Training in assessment procedures and use of results				✓	
G. Encouragement to join professional ESL organizations		✓			
H. Support of collaboration of teachers with other programs		✓			
I. Recognition of participation in professional development activities				✓	

Staff Evaluation

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
J. Process for regular evaluation of staff			✓		
K. Anonymous evaluation of staff by learners			✓		
L. Opportunity to develop performance improvement plans			✓		
Overall Score for Standard Category			✓		

Action Plan

1. Develop ways to increase awareness among administrators and staff of ESL methodology and learner needs.
2. Improve teaching training for newer teachers and monitor application of new strategies after training.
3. Provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate more with other educational programs and the community.

9. SUPPORT SERVICES

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Access to a variety of services		✓			
B. Process for identifying learning disabilities			✓		
C. Linkages with cooperating agencies		✓			
Overall Score for Standard Category		✓			

Action Plan

1. Increase support services for learners (e.g., babysitting, counseling).
2. Improve linkages with community agencies to provide support services.

STANDARDS FOR ADULT EDUCATION ESL PROGRAMS

Summary Scores and Action Plan

Directions: Transfer your program’s individual scores for each standard to this chart to analyze the strengths and areas for improvement for each part of your program. Record the proposed steps for improvement in the box titled “Action Plan” at the end of each section. Then under “Priority Areas for Improvement,” list the standards category and specific standards that are

most in need of improvement, based on the results of this program review.

Scoring Key:

- 0—Program component not in place
- 1—Program component somewhat in place
- 2—Program component in place
- 3—Program component in place and well developed
- NA—Not applicable to my program or not assessed at this time

I. PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND ADMINISTRATION

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Mission statement, philosophy, and goals			✓		
B. Administrative system				✓	
C. Sound financial management procedures			✓		
D. Accountability plan		✓			
E. Clear communication and linkages with internal and external stakeholders and external stakeholders			✓		
F. Procedure for ensuring confidentiality				✓	
G. Equipment for daily operations and efficient record keeping				✓	
H. Appropriate facilities and resources for instruction			✓		
I. Courses of sufficient intensity and duration; flexible schedules; and convenient locations for learners				✓	
J. Learner-teacher ratio conducive to learner needs and goals		✓			
K. (See Standard 2, Curriculum and Instructional Materials)					
L. (See Standard 3, Instruction)					
M. (See Standard 6, Assessment and Learner Gains)					
N. (See Standard 7, Employment Conditions and Staffing)					

Program Planning

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
O. Planning process		✓			
P. Technology plan			✓		

PART 3: PROGRAM NARRATIVES

Q. Plan for outreach, marketing, and public relations			✓		
Overall Score for Standard Category			✓		

Action Plan

1. Develop process for soliciting input from learners; solicit from broader base of external stakeholders.
2. Improve reporting system.
3. Distribute program newsletter on regular basis to internal and external stakeholders.
4. Review retention records; analyze patterns relative to class size.
5. Ensure input from broad base of stakeholders in planning process; plan for ongoing program review.
6. Evaluate outreach efforts and results; create a more formal plan.

2. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Process for developing curriculum		✓			
B. Compatibility with principles of second language acquisition, mission, and philosophy of program			✓		
C. Goals, objectives, outcomes, approaches, methods, activities, materials, technological resources, and evaluation measures		✓			
D. Measurable learning objectives		✓			
E. Materials easily accessible, up to date, appropriate for adult learners, suitable for variety of learning styles, culturally sensitive, and oriented to needs of learners					✓
F. Ongoing process for curriculum revision		✓			
Overall Score for Standard Category		✓			

Action Plan

1. Conduct organized needs assessment and formal curriculum review; plan for regularly scheduled review.
2. Expand curriculum to make explicit expected outcomes, learning objectives, technological resources.

3. INSTRUCTION

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Activities adhere to adult learning principles and second language acquisition				✓	
B. Varied instructional approaches according to needs			✓		
C. Learners take active role in learning process			✓		
D. Focus on acquisition of communication skills				✓	

STANDARDS FOR ADULT EDUCATION ESL PROGRAMS

E. Integration of four language skills			✓		
F. Varied activities according to different learning styles and special learning needs			✓		
G. Variety of grouping strategies and interactive tasks				✓	
H. Activities accommodate multilevel groups of students, especially those with minimal literacy skills				✓	
I. Activities develop language for critical thinking, problem solving, team participation, and study skills			✓		
J. Use of authentic resources			✓		
K. Use of appropriate technologies			✓		
L. Integration of language and culture				✓	
M. Preparation of learners for formal and informal assessment		✓			
Overall Score for Standard Category			✓		

Action Plan

1. Provide in-service training to help instructors work with greater variety of approaches, techniques.
2. Help instructors build in more reading and writing activities, as appropriate to learners' needs, and more activities in which learners use resources outside of class.
3. Build in greater opportunities for use of varied technologies.

4. LEARNER RECRUITMENT, INTAKE, AND ORIENTATION

Specific Standard	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Effective procedures for identifying and recruiting adult ESL learners				✓	
B. Variety of recruitment strategies				✓	
C. Materials reach population in multiple languages as needed		✓			
D. Evaluation of effectiveness of recruitment strategies			✓		
E. Intake process, orientation to the program, and referral services as needed		✓			
Overall Score for Standard Category			✓		

Action Plan

1. Make recruitment and intake materials available in native languages of potential learners and in forms suitable for persons with special needs.
2. Improve tracking of results of recruitment efforts and review for needed adjustments.
3. Implement an orientation process, including presentation in learners' native languages.

PART 3: PROGRAM NARRATIVES**5. LEARNER RETENTION AND TRANSITION**

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Enrollment and attendance procedures that support demands on adult learners		✓			
B. Encouragement to reach goals		✓			
C. Accommodation of special needs of learners		✓			
D. Contact with learners with irregular attendance patterns/acknowledgment of good attendance		✓			
E. Appropriate support for transition to other programs		✓			
Overall Score for Standards Category		✓			

Action Plan

1. Implement orientation as noted above.
2. Expand ability of program to accommodate learners with special needs.

6. ASSESSMENT AND LEARNER GAINS**Assessment Policy**

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Assessment policy	✓				
B. Process of assessment for placement, progress, and exit from program		✓			
C. Ongoing and appropriately scheduled assessment		✓			
D. Procedures for collecting and reporting data on gains and outcomes		✓			
E. Appropriate facilities, equipment, supplies, and personnel for assessment		✓			

Types of Assessment

F. Identification of learners' needs and goals		✓			
G. Assessment of language proficiency levels in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, including native language literacy and learning disabilities			✓		
H. Variety of assessments, including reliable and valid standardized assessment tools		✓			

Uses of Assessment

I. Assessment information aids curriculum development		✓			
J. Assessment results shared with learners			✓		

STANDARDS FOR ADULT EDUCATION ESL PROGRAMS

K. Assessment documents learners' progress toward advancement to other programs		✓			
L. Results provide information about educational gains and outcomes		✓			
Learner Gains					
M. Process to identify short- and long-term goals and progress toward attainment of goals		✓			
N. Process to demonstrate skill-level improvements in listening, speaking, reading, and writing		✓			
O. Process to demonstrate progress in nonlinguistic areas			✓		
Overall Score for Standard Category		✓			

Action Plan

1. Identify assessment needs for meeting funding requirements; orient all program staff to requirements, importance of assessment to program, options and approaches to assessment.
2. Train instructional staff in assessment methods and materials suitable for learner population; follow up to ensure effective implementation.
3. Develop or adopt a more formal system of data collection; report and interpret results to program staff.
4. Integrate results of assessment into curriculum review and development process.

7. EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS AND STAFFING

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Appropriate compensation and benefits					✓
B. Professional treatment of staff			✓		
C. Safe and clean working environment			✓		
D. Hiring of qualified instructors trained in ESL				✓	
E. Hiring of staff with appropriate training in cross-cultural communication		✓			
F. Trained support staff for effective program operation			✓		
Overall Score for Standard Category			✓		

Action Plan

1. Review and update program policies and procedures.
2. Create opportunities for support staff to expand cross-cultural training and experiences.

PART 3: PROGRAM NARRATIVES

8. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND STAFF EVALUATION

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Orientation for new ESL administrative, instructional, and support staff			✓		
B. Professional development plan including resources to implement plan		✓			
C. Opportunities to expand knowledge of trends, technologies, research, and best practices			✓		
D. Opportunities for administrators/ evaluators to gain knowledge of effective strategies in adult-level ESL		✓			
E. Variety of professional development activities, including practice and follow-up			✓		
F. Training in assessment procedures and use of results		✓			
G. Encouragement to join professional ESL organizations			✓		
H. Support of collaboration of instructors with other programs			✓		
I. Recognition of participation in professional development activities			✓		

Staff Evaluation

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
J. Process for regular evaluation of staff		✓			
K. Anonymous evaluation of staff by learners			✓		
L. Opportunity to develop performance improvement plans		✓			
Overall Score for Standard Category			✓		

Action Plan

1. Within overall program planning process, develop plan for ongoing staff development, including needed resources and budget, ongoing expansion of resource library, and links to community resources for training and professional development.
2. Within overall program planning process, develop a process for regular evaluation of staff, within constraints of program structure.

STANDARDS FOR ADULT EDUCATION ESL PROGRAMS

9. SUPPORT SERVICES

Specific Standards	0	1	2	3	NA
A. Access to a variety of services			✓		
B. Process for identifying learning disabilities		✓			
C. Linkages with cooperating agencies			✓		
Overall Score for Standard Category			✓		

Action Plan

1. Update list of community services, particularly resources in learners' native languages.
2. Provide training and information on learning disabilities and identification in ESL learners.

PRIORITY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Standards Category	Specific Standards
Program Structure and Administration	A, B—increase input from learners
Curriculum and Instructional Materials	A, C, D, F
Assessment and Learner Gains	all

Discussion of Scores for Program 2

Program 2 is part of a volunteer-based adult literacy organization. The organization's philosophy and structure influence the way that Program 2 deals with some areas of standards. In some sections, most or all of the measures are scored as being "in place" (scored with a 2) and in some cases as being "in place and well developed" (scored with a 3). In other sections, however, most of the measures are only "somewhat in place" (scored with a 1). These indicate areas the program needs to work on. For example, because there is no programwide assessment policy and only limited or idiosyncratic use of assessments, most items here receive a score of 2. This area of assessment is therefore one of the priority items for action. The program does, however, have at least some degree of virtually all measures, indicated by the fact that only one measure was marked as "not in place" (scored with a 0). Only one standard is scored as "NA," or not applicable to the pro-

gram, and that is the standard for appropriate compensation and benefits for instructional staff, clearly not applicable to a volunteer program.

At the end of each section on the summary scoring chart there is an opportunity to list proposed action plan items focused on measures that need improvement. For example, the action plan items under Curriculum and Instruction are to conduct an organized needs assessment and formal curriculum review, with plans for regularly scheduled review, and to expand the curriculum in order to make explicit the expected outcomes, learning objectives, and technological resources available.

In the area of Assessment and Learner Gains, Program 2's action plan items are to identify assessment needs in order to meet funding requirements; orient all program staff (particularly volunteer instructors) to those requirements, to the importance of assessment to the program, and to options available for assessment; train staff in assessment methods and materials; develop or adopt a more formal system of data collection; and integrate the results

Summary scores and action plan chart

After demonstrating completed summary charts for programs 1 and 2, participants will identify five areas of needed improvement for each program.

The following are possible answers:

Program 1:

1. Learner retention and transition: Standards A–E
2. Support services: Standards A and C
3. Professional development: Standards D, G, and H
4. Assessment and learner gains: Standards G, K, and O
5. Instruction: Standards J and K

Many of the action plan items after each section of the summary chart for Program 1 relate to integrating more technology into instruction, such as distance learning and online learning options. The results from Program 1's self-review process clearly indicate that integrating technology into instruction is an area for improvement.

Program 2:

1. Program structure and administration: Standards D, J, and O
2. Curriculum and instructional materials: Standards A, C, D, and F
3. Learner retention and transition: Standards A–E
4. Assessment and learning gains: All standards
5. Employment conditions: Standard E
6. Professional development: Standards B, D, and F

Many of the actions plan items for Program 2 relate to improving data collection, formalizing procedures that are done on a very informal basis, and creating opportunities for greater learner input and participation. Perhaps the greatest need for program development is in the area of assessment and learner gains.

Program Review Planning Chart

Section of standards	Standards to be reviewed	Personnel responsible for review (administrators, classified staff, instructors, etc.)	Timeline for review (e.g. January – February, 2007)	Date completed
Program structure, administration, and planning				
Curriculum and instructional materials				
Instruction				
Learner recruitment, intake, and orientation				
Learner retention and transition				
Assessment and learner gains				
Employment conditions and staffing				
Professional development and staff evaluation				
Support services				

Application: Using the self-review instrument in one's own program

Other uses of the standards and self-review items

Refer to page 4 of the CAELA brief, which describes how the program standards could be used by different stakeholders for different purposes. You might describe this example:

A midsize urban adult ESL program, funded totally by private corporate funds, believed that its program was very effective. It had a very experienced teaching staff, which made the program effective, but it had no formal standards or defined structure. The program was concerned how it would maintain its level of effectiveness when teachers retired. To solve this problem, the program hired an external evaluator who used the self-review instrument and ESL program standards to analyze the program. In the process, he interviewed students, faculty, and other stakeholders; observed all segments of the program; and elicited instructors' input during the self-review process. At the end, he and the staff created a 2-year action plan. This was presented to the board of directors of the program and helped secure funding for the future of the program. This example shows how the program review process can lead to advocacy and provide a basis for grant proposals to improve programs.

Using the ESL Program Standards to Evaluate and Improve Adult ESL Programs

Joy Kreeft Peyton

Center for Adult English Language Acquisition

May 2005

Background on Programs for Adult English Language Learners

Adult ESL (English as a second language) programs serve adults whose first language is not English. The primary objective of these programs is to enable adult learners who are not fully fluent and literate in English to become proficient in communicating in English, so that they can meet their personal, employment, community, and academic goals.

Providers of adult education for English language learners include

- ▶ K–12 public schools and districts (local education agencies) that offer adult ESL instruction
- ▶ Community colleges
- ▶ Community-based (CBO), volunteer, and faith-based organizations
- ▶ Family literacy programs
- ▶ Correctional institutions
- ▶ Libraries
- ▶ Workplaces

The types of programs offered include

- ▶ General English language development programs, which focus on developing skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These programs might include content-based ESL classes, which concentrate on a subject area (e.g., civic participation) and, at the same time, develop English language skills related to the subject. They serve a range of learners, from those who are not literate in their native language or in English to those who are highly literate in their native language and are learning English language and literacy.
- ▶ Family ESL literacy, which focuses on knowledge and skills that parents need to help their children succeed in U.S. schools
- ▶ Citizenship preparation, which prepares learners to fulfill the U.S. naturalization requirements

- ▶ Vocational ESL (also VESOL or VESL), designed to prepare learners for job training or employment in specific occupational areas
- ▶ Workplace ESL, which focuses on language and communication skills needed for success in the workplace. Workplace ESL classes are commonly supported by an employer and offered at a work site.
- ▶ English for specific purposes (or ESP), which focuses on developing language and communication skills needed for professional fields of study such as business, agriculture, or medicine
- ▶ Pre-academic ESL, which prepares learners for further education and training in post-secondary institutions, vocational education classes, or ABE and GED classes

Audience for This Brief

This brief is written for the following audiences:

- ▶ Adult ESL program administrators and coordinators
- ▶ Teachers, tutors, and counselors in adult ESL programs
- ▶ Program funders
- ▶ Program partners
- ▶ Program evaluators

Standards in Education: Background

Education standards describe for all stakeholders (program administrators, teachers and other school and district staff, parents, students, and policy makers) the goals, teaching and learning conditions, and expected outcomes of education programs. Education standards include program standards, content standards, and performance standards. This brief focuses on program standards in adult education for English language learners. Therefore, the examples of types of standards are those that pertain to programs that serve adults learning English.

- ▶ **Program standards** can be used for program development and self-review. They describe the components and features of a program that should be in place for the program to be effective and to provide context and resources that support student learning and achievement (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, 2003). They also list examples of the evidence that can be used to demonstrate the existence of these essential feature. The standards and evidence guide
 - administrators and funders in articulating the goals, objectives, and expected outcomes of the program and the resources that support it;

- teachers and other instructional staff in examining how their instructional practice fits into and supports the goals, objectives, and expected outcomes of the program; and
 - learners in identifying the contexts and learner support systems that allow them to meet their goals and needs.
- ▶ **Content standards** define what students should know and be able to do in different content and skill areas as a result of instruction (Stites, 1999; Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, 1997; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, 2003a). Several states (e.g., Arizona, Florida, Maryland, New York, Tennessee, and West Virginia) have developed content standards, curriculum frameworks, and resource guides that provide guidance to local programs in developing effective curriculum and instruction. The Adult Education Content Standards Warehouse is being developed to allow users to search for and review adult education standards in ESL, mathematics, and reading (www.adultedcontentstandards.org).
- ▶ **Performance standards** specify how well students perform at different levels of content knowledge and language proficiency and the measures used to demonstrate how well they perform (National Council on Educational Standards and Testing, 1992; Stites, 1999; U.S. Department of Education, 1994). The *English-as-a second language model standards for adult education programs* (California Department of Education, 1992) include performance standards for listening, speaking, reading, and writing at different English proficiency levels (e.g., Listening, ESL Beginning, Low—“The learner will demonstrate comprehension of simple words in the context of common, everyday situations.” p. 64).

Program Standards in Adult Education

Attention to program standards in adult education grew out of both the interest of adult education professionals and legislation. As early as 1986, the Mainstream English Language Training (MELT) Project described the conditions that affect the movement of learners from one Student Performance Level (SPL) to another (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1995). The conditions included program-related factors such as intensity of instruction (number of hours of instruction per week); entry/exit procedures and policies; and curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices.

Interest in program standards in adult education has developed in tandem with the development of standards in K–12 education. A focus on program standards in K–12 education began in the 1980s with the National Education *Goals Panel and the Goals 2000: Educate America Act*. The National Education Goals included a pledge that by the year 2000, all American students would demonstrate competency in challenging subject matter. Subsequently, the U.S. Department of Education, other federal agencies, and foundations made grants to major professional organizations and academic institutions to develop model standards in different subject areas. Although much of the standards work has focused on *content* standards—what students need to know and

be able to do in different subject areas including math, arts, civics and government, foreign languages, geography, and history – the National Research Council (1999) also has focused attention on the conditions under which students learn and on professional development for teachers.

The Adult Education and Literacy Act of 1991 required the U.S. Department of Education to develop indicators of program quality to assist states and local adult education service providers in assessing the effectiveness of their programs. The legislation specifically called for indicators in the areas of student recruitment, retention, and educational gains. A quality program indicator was defined as a variable reflecting effective and efficient program performance. (See Van Duzer & Berdán, 2000, for discussion.)

The U.S. Department of Education developed examples of quality indicators for ABE programs in general, but did not provide examples specifically related to adult ESL programs (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, 1992). Subsequently, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (H.R. 1385, Pub. L. No. 105-220), also known as the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, included both ABE and ESL programs. The act required adult education agencies to establish core indicators of program quality and of learner performance related to educational gain, placement and retention in employment, participation in postsecondary education or training, and high school completion (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Sec. 212; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, Division of Adult Education and Literacy, 2001; 2003b).

Recognizing the need for quality standards specifically for programs serving adult English language learners, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL) convened a task force to review the accountability requirements in federal adult education legislation and existing program quality indicators and develop a set of standards. The resulting document, *Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs* (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, 2003), here referred to as TESOL program standards, has become a centerpiece in the development of program standards in adult ESL education. In addition to the TESOL program standards, other program standards or program quality indicators have been developed by various states and other organizations. (See a list of some of these at the end of this document.)

Research Base

Although most states have included indicators of program quality in their monitoring and evaluation plans, there has been no evidence-based research carried out to demonstrate the role and impact of specific program standards in adult ESL education. There is some research on standards in K–12 education, primarily on the impact of teacher preparation (e.g., Allen 2003). One document (Apthorp, Dean, Florian, Lauer, Reichardt, Sanders, & Snow-Renner, 2001) summarizes the research on standards-based education in grades K–12, to inform efforts to improve low-performing schools and create or sustain standards-based, high-performing learning communities.

Program Standards in Adult ESL

The *Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs* developed by TESOL provide a framework to guide program staff in analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of their program and in developing a program that will effectively meet their goals for educating adults learning English. These standards are not meant to be prescriptive in any way, but rather to provide a structure and guidance for this analysis. The standards are designed for use in many different types of programs. Programs may differ in size; educational goals; connections with larger institutions and programs; funding sources, requirements, and restrictions; learner goals and characteristics; resources; and staffing.

Standards are grouped into the following nine categories:

1. Program Structure, Administration, and Planning
2. Curriculum and Instructional Materials
3. Instruction
4. Learner Recruitment, Intake, and Orientation
5. Learner Retention and Transition
6. Assessment and Learner Gains
7. Employment Conditions and Staffing
8. Professional Development and Staff Evaluation
9. Support Services

Depending on the goals of the program and the focus of the review, a group of reviewers may choose to work on some or all of the standards. Program narratives describe how staff in a large, institution-based program and a smaller, volunteer-based program used the standards to review their program and develop an action plan.

A program self-review section of the TESOL program standards has a page for each standard. An example page from the self-review instrument is shown in Figure 1.

After the statement of the standard, each page has the following sections:

- ▶ **Measures**—Measures describe the criteria for determining the extent to which the standard is in place and give examples of the many ways that the standard is implemented. Staff (or external evaluators) mark those program features that are in place and list others.
- ▶ **Sample Evidence**—Sample evidence lists specific items that demonstrate that the standard is in place. Staff mark those items that are in place and list others.

- ▶ **Score**—A score is given based on the measures and evidence marked. Scores range from 0, not in place; to 3, in place and well developed. For some standards, it is recommended that all of the measures be in place for a score of 2 or 3. For some, one or more of the measures should be in place. For others, those measures marked with a * should be in place.
- ▶ **Priority**—Staff mark whether this standard has high or low priority for the program.
- ▶ **Comments**—Based on the measures, evidence, and score, staff write comments about the status of this standard in the program.
- ▶ **Action Plan/Next Steps**—Staff describe the next steps that will be taken related to this standard.

Appendix 1 provides a template so that a score, priority, comments, and action plan for each standard can be completed in an electronic file.

Once this work has been accomplished for each standard under review, staff complete the Summary Scores and Action Plan Chart by filling in the scores given for each of the standards and writing an action plan, or continuous improvement plan, for each standard category (e.g., a plan for the category of Program Structure, Administration, and Planning). When this chart is complete, program staff can work together (and with others if appropriate) to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the program and develop and implement the plan for the program. States and local programs can use the plan as part of their ongoing program monitoring and evaluation.

The first page of this chart is shown in Figure 2. A pdf version of this chart, for use by program staff, can be downloaded from www.tesol.org/s_tesol/sec_document.asp?CID=281&DID=1839. In addition, Appendix 2 provides an electronic version of the chart that can be completed in an electronic file.

The TESOL program standards can be used by different stakeholders for different purposes. They might be used by

- ▶ **Program staff** seeking to improve their program; align their program's mission, goals, and outcome measures with federal legislation; or demonstrate the quality of their program to funders
- ▶ **Funders** seeking to identify effective programs or to help improve programs they are funding
- ▶ **Program advocates** seeking to start a new program (to identify what features merit putting in place) or to augment areas in which a program is weak (e.g., salaries and full-time positions for teachers or effective assessment procedures)

- ▶ **State-level educators** seeking guidance for the development of their own standards, aligned with their specific local context and needs. For example, the Maryland State Board of Education developed the *Maryland Adult ESL Program Standards* for this purpose. To view these standards, go to www.umbc.edu/alrc/ESLstand.html. Although not as detailed as the TESOL standards, the Maryland program standards clearly articulate goals in specific areas, such as “The program supports retention through an enrollment policy that reflects program goals, requirements of funding sources, and demands on adult learners,” with sample measures to demonstrate that procedures to achieve the goals are in place (e.g., “The program documents learner retention and transition through use of Literacy Works MIS”) (Maryland State Board of Education, n.d., p. 18). In a parallel effort in another country, Myers (1999) describes the process of developing adult ESL program standards for the province of Alberta, Canada.
- ▶ **Program evaluators** seeking to formally assess the effectiveness of a program (e.g., in a program review for accreditation) or informally document the features of a program. For example, an external evaluator used the TESOL program standards to review a mid-sized, urban adult ESL program that was loosely structured and poorly documented (McCartan, 2005). The standards guided his interviews with teachers, administrators, and students; observations of classroom instruction; and review of program documents. As a result of the evaluation, the program had data to support its claims regarding success and to guide the development of its program improvement plans.

If a program is undergoing accreditation review, all program staff (including administrators, teachers, and support staff) as well as external reviewers might complete the Program Self-Review Instrument and Summary Scores and Action Plan Chart, with the goal of reviewing implementation of all of the standards. If the focus is on one aspect of the program (e.g., instruction), the staff might review only that area, which consists of 13 specific standards, ranging from activities that are aligned with principles of adult learning and language acquisition to activities that prepare learners for formal and informal assessments.

Example of Use of the TESOL Program Standards

As an example of how staff and other stakeholders associated with an adult ESL program might use the TESOL program standards, let’s imagine that a large program in a community college wants to go through a program review and improvement process.

- ▶ **The program director, financial office staff, and representatives from the primary funding agencies** might focus on the standards for Program Structure, Administration, and Planning. Standard 1.C. (one of 10 standards) states that “The program has sound financial management procedures to collect and maintain fiscal information, guide program budgeting, ensure continuity of funding, and meet reporting requirements.”

- ▶ **Curriculum developers and teachers** might go through the same process and focus on the standards for Curriculum and Instructional Materials. For example, standard 2.D. states that “The curriculum specifies measurable learning objectives for each instructional offering for learners and is appropriate for learners in multilevel classes.”
- ▶ **Teachers, classroom aides, and professional developers** working in or with the program might focus on the standards for Instruction. Standard 3.E., for example, states that “Instructional activities integrate the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), focusing on receptive and productive skills appropriate to learners’ needs.”
- ▶ **Program administrators, counselors, and intake staff** might work on the standards for Learner Retention and Transition, for which standard 5.E. states, “The program provides learners with appropriate support for transition to other programs.”
- ▶ **Assessment specialists and test administrators** might focus on the standards for Assessment and Learners Gains, for which standard 6.D. states that, “The program has procedures for collecting and reporting data on educational gains and outcomes.”

In short, the entire community of stakeholders could get involved in evaluating specific components of the program, to identify strengths and areas in which there are weaknesses and gaps and to develop an action plan to improve the program. At the end of this process, when all of the groups have completed the work in their area, a representative group could get together to review and complete the Summary Scores and Action Plan Chart, develop an improvement plan for the program, and develop a timeline based on high- and low-priority areas. When the improvement plan has been implemented, the outcomes can be evaluated according to the standards.

Conclusion

Program quality standards can help program staff and other stakeholders develop, improve, and maintain programs that are consistent with their goals, objectives, and expected outcomes; state and federal requirements; and learners’ goals and needs. Working together to develop program standards or to review progress toward meeting standards can help the entire staff—administrators, coordinators, teachers, aides, and counselors—have a common understanding of the components of their program; the activities, resources, and funding needed to accomplish its objectives; and their roles in the endeavor. Evaluation of success in meeting program standards can inform stakeholders of program gaps and weaknesses and guide the development of a continuous improvement plan that all involved can implement.

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Program Quality Standards: Example Documents

- See the Adult Education Content Standards Warehouse, being developed to provide information about adult education content standards developed by states. (www.adultedcontentstandards.org).
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Appendices

These appendices provide templates that allow staff to complete parts of the Program Self-Review Instrument and the Summary Scores and Action Plan Chart in electronic files. They were developed by William McCartan (McCartan, 2005).

Appendix 1. Program Self-Review Instrument: Electronic File

Appendix 2. Summary Scores and Action Plan Chart: Electronic File

This document was produced by the Center for Adult English Language Acquisition (CAELA) at the Center for Applied Linguistics (4646 40th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20016 202-362-0700) with funding from the U.S. Department of Education (ED), Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), under Contract No. ED-04-CO-0031/0001. The opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of ED. This document is in the public domain and may be reproduced without permission.

Using the TESOL Program Standards for Program Review and Improvement

Goal, Objectives, and Agenda

Goal:

To familiarize participants with the content of the *Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs*¹ publication so they can use the self-review instrument to evaluate their program.

Objectives:

At the end of the workshop, participants should be able to

- ▶ Describe the differences between program, content, and performance standards
- ▶ Identify the nine categories of program standards, giving some examples of standards
- ▶ Use the self-review instrument to analyze the level of implementation of standards in a program
- ▶ Use the Summary Scores and Action Plan Chart to identify areas for program improvement
- ▶ Identify a variety of ways the self-review instrument can be used for a program review process.

Agenda:

- I. Introduction
- II. Overview of the standards publication
- III. Demonstration of the self-review instrument
- IV. Practice using the self-review instrument
- V. Summary scores and action plan chart
- VI. **Application:** Strategies for using the self-review instrument
- VII. Wrap-up and evaluation

¹ *Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs* (2003). Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.

Types of Standards

Program standards:	They describe the components and features of a program that should be in place for the program to be effective.
Content standards:	They define what students should know and be able to do in different content and skill areas as a result of instruction.
Performance standards:	They specify how well students perform at different levels of content knowledge and language proficiency and describe the measures used to demonstrate how well they perform.

Directions

Read each standard below and mark the type of standard it is. Use these abbreviations:

Prog = program standard

Cont = content standard

Perf = performance standard

- _____ 1. Give simple, one-step directions.
- _____ 2. Instructional activities are varied to address the different learning styles of the learners.
- _____ 3. Complete a job application form.
- _____ 4. The learner comprehends a few common words and simple phrases in conversations on topics of personal relevance when spoken slowly with frequent rephrasing, repetitions, and contextual clues.
- _____ 5. The program has a plan for outreach, marketing, and public relations to foster awareness and understanding of the program.
- _____ 6. The program has a process whereby learners demonstrate skill-level improvements in listening, speaking, reading, and writing through a variety of assessments.
- _____ 7. The learner demonstrates some control of complex sentence structures in texts up to three paragraphs.
- _____ 8. Report household problems.
- _____ 9. The curriculum specifies measurable learning objectives for each instructional offering for learners and is appropriate for learners in multilevel classes.
- _____ 10. The program supports a safe and clean working environment.

Focus Questions: Large Program

Standard 6H: The program uses a variety of appropriate assessments, including authentic, performance-based assessments; standardized tests; and nonlinguistic outcomes (e.g., perceived improvement in self-esteem, participation in teamwork activities). Standardized assessment instruments are valid and reliable, based on studies with the targeted adult-level population.

1. Who assesses the learners in your program and for what purposes (e.g., administrative staff at registration for placement, teachers for unit progress)?

2. How are the learners assessed (e.g., teacher-made tests, standardized tests)?

3. If you use a standardized test, how do you know it is appropriate for your learners?

Focus Questions: Small Program

Standard 6H: The program uses a variety of appropriate assessments, including authentic, performance-based assessments; standardized tests; and nonlinguistic outcomes (e.g., perceived improvement in self-esteem, participation in teamwork activities). Standardized assessment instruments are valid and reliable, based on studies with the targeted adult-level population.

1. Who assesses the learners in your program and for what purposes (e.g., administrative staff at registration for placement, teachers for unit progress)?

2. How are the learners assessed (e.g., teacher-made tests, standardized tests)?

3. If you use a standardized test, how do you know it is appropriate for your learners?

PART 4: PROGRAM SELF-REVIEW INSTRUMENT

6. Assessment and Learner Gains**TYPES OF ASSESSMENT**

- H. The program uses a variety of appropriate assessments, including authentic, performance-based assessments; standardized tests; learner self-assessment; and assessment of nonlinguistic outcomes (e.g., perceived improvement in self-esteem, participation in teamwork activities). Standardized assessment instruments are valid and reliable, based on studies with the targeted adult-level population.**

Measures

To score a 2 or 3, all the measures should be in place.

- 1 Individual learner records include the following information on students (* = highly recommended):
- * placement
 - * progress
 - diagnosis of skills
 - * achievement
 - nonlinguistic outcomes
 - * program or level exit
- 2 Individual records indicate a variety of assessments are used, such as two or more of the following:
- writing samples
 - a portfolio of student work
 - textbook progress/completion tests
 - weekly unit test from a text or teacher developed
 - teacher-made, criterion-referenced progress and exit tests
 - self-appraised progress on pre- and post-surveys
 - program-developed pre- and postassessments based on curriculum
 - performance-based tests
 - checklist of documented outcomes
 - checklist of completed competencies correlated to learner needs
 - learner's log or journal
 - oral interview with learner
 - teacher observation checklist
 - standardized tests
 - other: _____

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Focus Questions

Standard 4E: The program has an intake process that provides appropriate assessment of learners' needs, goals, and language proficiency levels; an orientation process that provides learners with information about the program; and if needed, a procedure for referring learners to support services within the program or through other agencies and for accommodating learners waiting to enter the program.

1. What information on entering students is collected during the intake process?
2. Through what procedures is that information collected?
3. What procedures are used for assessing incoming students' levels of English language proficiency?
4. What procedures are used to orient incoming students to the program?
5. If classes are filled, what procedures does the program have to accommodate learners who wish to enter but have to wait?

STANDARDS FOR ADULT EDUCATION ESL PROGRAMS

4. Learner Recruitment, Intake, and Orientation

E. The program has an intake process that provides appropriate assessment of learners' needs, goals, and language proficiency levels; an orientation process that provides learners with information about the program; and, if needed, a procedure for referring learners to support services within the program or through other agencies and for accommodating learners waiting to enter the program.

Measures

To score a 2 or 3, all * measures should be in place.

*__1 During the intake process, the program collects the following:

- demographic information, such as learner
- country of origin
- age
- language background
- prior educational background, including literacy in native language
- current or prior work experience
- needs and goals of learner
- English language proficiency levels in
 - listening
 - speaking
 - reading
 - writing
- need for support services
- other: _____

*__2 This information is collected prior to enrollment or in class as part of the registration procedures through one or more of the following ways (in English or the native language):

- one-to-one interview with student
- registration form
- needs assessment form
- student profile form
- other: _____

__3 Procedures for assessing English language proficiency levels may include one or more of the following:

- oral interviews
- writing sample
- program-developed placement test
- standardized proficiency test
- other: _____

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Program Review Planning Chart

Section of standards	Standards to be reviewed	Personnel responsible for review (administrators, classified staff, instructors, etc.)	Timeline for review (e.g. January – February, 2007)	Date completed
Program structure, administration, and planning				
Curriculum and instructional materials				
Instruction				
Learner recruitment, intake, and orientation				
Learner retention and transition				
Assessment and learner gains				
Employment conditions and staffing				
Professional development and staff evaluation				
Support services				

Focus Questions for All Standards

Section 1: Program Administration and Planning

Standard 1A: The program has a mission statement, a clearly articulated philosophy, and goals developed with input from internal and external stakeholders.

1. Does your program have a written mission statement?
2. Does the mission statement include a philosophy or rationale?
3. Does the mission statement include goals?
4. What internal and/or external stakeholders had input into the development of the mission statement?

Standard 1B: The program has an administrative system that ensures participation of internal stakeholders, accountability, and effective administration of all program activities.

1. What is your program's administrative structure (e.g., director, advisory board)?
2. What program activities are carried out or overseen by each entity listed?
3. What individuals or groups of people internal to your program participate in administration of the program?
4. In what ways do each of these individuals or groups participate in program administration?
5. If I visited your program, what documents would you show me that would describe or show how your program is administered?

Standard 1C: The program has sound financial management procedures to collect and maintain fiscal information, guide program budgeting, ensure continuity of funding, and meet reporting requirements.

1. Does your program have an annual budget and system for tracking expenditures?
2. What process is used for budget development?
3. How does your program keep stakeholders aware of financial issues?
4. What process is used to report financial information to funders?
5. What process is used to manage finances to ensure continued funding from year to year?

Standard 1D: The program has an accountability plan with a system for record keeping and reporting that is consistent with program policies and legal and funding requirements.

1. What record keeping and reporting system is used to maintain accountability in your program?

Standard 1E: The program fosters and maintains linkages and clear communication with internal and external stakeholders.

1. What individuals or groups of people external to your program are involved in program administration?
2. In what ways do each of these individuals or groups participate in program administration?
3. In what ways does communication take place between internal and external individuals and groups involved in the program? How often in each case?
4. If I visited your program, what would you show me to illustrate how you foster and maintain communication between internal and external stakeholders?

Standard 1F: The program has a procedure for ensuring confidentiality in communication with internal and external stakeholders.

1. What are the rules for the release of learners' personal information?
2. How does the program handle a visitor's request for personal student information?

Standard 1G: The program provides equipment for daily operations and efficient record keeping.

1. What equipment is used for daily record keeping?
2. How efficient is the equipment being used?
3. Are sufficient office supplies available to conduct daily operations?

Standard 1H: The program uses facilities and resources appropriate for adult ESL instruction, meeting the needs of learners and instructional staff. If a program is part of a larger institution, facilities meet standards equivalent to those of other programs.

1. What facilities does your program provide for adult ESL instruction and for one-on-one and small-group meetings with students?
2. What instructional equipment is available for adult ESL classes?
3. What spaces and materials are available to adult ESL instructional staff to support their planning and instruction?
4. Who maintains instructional and meeting spaces, equipment, and supplies? How often? In what ways?

Standard 1I: The program provides courses of sufficient intensity and duration with flexible schedules to meet varied learner and community needs in convenient locations within the constraints of program resources.

1. How does your program identify learners' needs related to scheduling of courses?
2. Describe the various course schedules to accommodate learner needs in the areas of course length, intensity, and location.

Standard 1J: The program maintains a learner-teacher ratio conducive to meeting learning needs and goals.

1. What factors determine the expected learner-teacher ratio in instruction?
2. What is the learner-teacher ratio in your program?
3. How does the program analyze its learner-teacher ratio to see if it meets the needs of the learners?
4. Are aides or volunteers recruited to improve the learner-teacher ratio as needed?

Standards K, L, M, and N are included in subsequent sections of standards.

Standard 10: The program has a planning process for initial program development and ongoing program improvement.

1. Does your program have a planning or program review process?
2. Who participates in the process?
3. To what extent are the following reviewed in the process: community demographics, retention patterns, learner needs, local community trends, and educational and technological trends?
4. How often is program planning or review scheduled?

Standard 1P: The program has a technology plan.

1. Does your program have a technology plan?
2. To what extent does the plan address the following: learner needs, acquisition of technology, maintenance of technology, budgeting for technology, and training needs of personnel?
3. How often is the technology plan reviewed?

Standard 1Q: The program has a plan for outreach, marketing, and public relations to foster awareness and understanding of the program.

1. Does your program have an outreach or marketing plan?
2. Who participates in developing this plan?
3. What is addressed in the plan (e.g., audiences, budgeting)?
4. What process is used to review the plan on a regular basis?

Section 2: Curriculum and Instructional Materials

Standard 2A: The program has a process for developing curriculum that is based on a needs assessment of learners and includes participation and input from stakeholders.

1. How are learners' needs assessed to determine what curriculum needs to be developed?
2. When curriculum is developed, what stakeholders are consulted to provide input?

Standard 2B: The curriculum reflects the mission and philosophy of the program and is compatible with principles of second language acquisition for adult learners.

1. Describe how the curriculum used in your program is relevant to the needs and interests of your learners.
2. How are topics and objectives recycled and addressed in the curriculum at a variety of student proficiency levels?
3. Does your program have a mission statement or philosophy? If yes, explain how the curriculum supports the mission statement or philosophy.
4. If I visited your program, what would you show me that proves your curriculum is relevant to learner needs and reflects the program's mission statement or philosophy?

Standard 2C: The curriculum includes goals, objectives, outcomes, approaches, methods, activities, materials, technological resources, and evaluation measures that are appropriate for meeting learners' needs and goals.

1. Describe the curriculum used in your program. Does it include the following?
 - a. Goals
 - b. Objectives
 - c. Approaches or methods

- d. Activities
- e. Materials, including technology
- f. Expected outcomes
- g. Evaluation measures
- h. Other: _____

Standard 2D: The curriculum specifies measurable learning objectives for each instructional offering for learners and is appropriate for learners in multilevel classes.

1. Does your program have measurable learning objectives for each course offering?
2. Do the learning objectives accommodate learners at a variety of levels?

Standard 2E: Curriculum and instructional materials are easily accessible, up to date, appropriate for adult learners, culturally sensitive, oriented to the language and literacy needs of the learners, and suitable for a variety of learning styles.

1. Do the curriculum materials in your program meet the following criteria?
 - a. Easily accessible
 - b. Up to date
 - c. Appropriate for adult learners
 - d. Culturally sensitive
 - e. Oriented to the language and literacy levels of the learners
 - f. Suitable for a variety of learning styles
 - g. User-friendly in layout and formatting
 - h. Contain clear graphics and visuals
 - i. Conducive to being used with a variety of grouping strategies
 - j. Contain exercises that access learners' previous experience with the content
 - k. Contain relevant content
 - l. Use sound and voice in audiovisual components that are clear and appropriate.

Standard 2F: The program has an ongoing process for curriculum revision in response to the changing needs of the learners, community, and policies.

1. How is curriculum reviewed in your program?
2. How often is curriculum reviewed?
3. Who is involved in the curriculum review process?
4. What other ways is new curriculum brought into the program?

Section 3: Instruction

Standard 3A: Instructional activities adhere to principles of adult learning and language acquisition.

1. How do lesson plans or classroom activities allow learners to share their prior knowledge or experience with the language or content to be studied?
2. How is a nonthreatening learning environment provided that makes learners feel relaxed and comfortable?
3. How is the content of the lessons or activities made relevant to the learners' lives?
4. How are learning objectives recycled in a variety of contexts to encourage cyclical learning?
5. What methods are used in the classroom to incorporate learners' experiences into the content of the lessons or activities?

Standard 3B: Instructional approaches are varied to meet the needs of adult learners with diverse educational and cultural backgrounds.

1. What instructional approaches are used in the classroom, and how are they related to the learners' needs? Provide some examples.
2. To what extent can teachers describe the instructional approaches that they are using in the classroom and the theory behind each approach?

Standard 3C: Instructional activities engage learners so that they can take an active role in the learning process.

1. How do learners take an active role in the learning process in the classroom? Provide some examples.

Standard 3D: Instructional activities focus on the acquisition of communication skills necessary for learners to function within the classroom, outside the classroom, or in other educational programs.

1. How do the lesson objectives and activities in the classroom mimic real-life situations of relevance to the students?
2. To what extent are students learning the language and vocabulary necessary to communicate in situations relevant to their goals?

Standard 3E: Instructional activities integrate the four language skills, focusing on receptive and productive skills appropriate to learners' needs.

1. To what extent do instructional activities include listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities related to the same topic? Provide some examples.

Standard 3F: Instructional activities are varied to address the different learning styles and special learning needs of the learners.

1. How do instructional activities address the needs of visual learners?
2. How do instructional activities address the needs of auditory learners?
3. How do instructional activities address the needs of kinesthetic learners?
4. How does the instructor accommodate a variety of learning styles in the presentation of new material?
5. How does the instructor accommodate a variety of learning styles in practice activities?
6. How do assessment activities address a variety of learning styles?

Standard 3G: Instructional activities incorporate grouping strategies and interactive tasks that facilitate the development of authentic communication skills.

1. To what extent do classroom activities include grouping strategies and interactive tasks that include authentic communication? Provide some examples.

Standard 3H: Instructional activities take into account the needs of multilevel groups of learners.

1. How are the needs of learners who are learning at different levels accommodated?
2. How are the needs of learners with minimal skills in both their native language and English met?
3. How would visitors to the program know that the needs of learners at different levels are being met?

Standard 3I: Instructional activities focus on the development of language and culturally appropriate behaviors needed for critical thinking, problem solving, team participation, and study skills.

1. What activities are used in the classroom to promote learners' critical-thinking skills?
2. What activities are used to encourage problem solving among students?
3. To what extent do students work in teams in the classroom?
4. What activities are students engaged in to improve their study skills?

Standard 3J: Instructional activities give learners opportunities to use authentic resources both inside and outside the classroom.

1. To what extent do students use authentic resources in the classroom (e.g., newspapers, community flyers, recorded conversations)? Provide some examples.
2. To what extent do people from the community come in to talk to ESL classes, or how often do classes take field trips into the community?
3. To what extent do students use the Internet to do class assignments?

Standard 3K: Instructional activities give learners opportunities to develop awareness of and competency in the use of appropriate technologies to meet lesson objectives.

1. What opportunities do your ESL students have to use technology in the process of learning English?
2. How do the learners in your program acquire the language needed to use technology effectively?
3. If I visited your program, what would you show me to illustrate the integration of technology with language development in your program?

Standard 3L: Instructional activities are culturally sensitive to the learners and integrate language and culture.

1. How does the instructor facilitate learning in which students learn about the U.S. culture and one another's cultures?
2. To what extent are the instructors' behaviors and customs sensitive to students' cultural values? Provide some examples.

Standard 3M: Instructional activities prepare learners for formal and informal assessment situations.

1. What strategies do the teachers use to teach students how take standardized tests (e.g., multiple-choice tests, essay questions)?
2. How does the teacher enforce testing protocol when administering standardized tests?
3. What opportunities does the instructor provide for the students to monitor their test results or learning gains?

Section 4: Learner Recruitment, Intake, and Orientation

Standard 4A: A quality ESL program has effective procedures for identifying and recruiting adult English learners. The procedures include strategies for collecting data on community demographics that identify the populations that need to be served, particularly those at the lowest level of literacy and knowledge of English.

1. How does your program identify the populations that need to be served by your program?

Standard 4B: The program uses a variety of recruitment strategies.

1. Describe the strategies that your program uses to recruit students.

Standard 4C: The program takes steps to ensure that culturally and linguistically appropriate recruitment and program information materials and activities reach the appropriate populations in multiple languages as needed.

1. To what extent are recruitment materials translated into the languages of the predominant student populations in the program?
2. How are recruitment materials modified for students with special needs?
3. Who reviews recruitment materials before dissemination to make sure they are appropriate and accurate?

Standard 4D: The program evaluates the effectiveness of its recruitment efforts and makes changes as needed.

1. How does your program evaluate the success of its recruitment strategies?
2. Does your program enlist learner expertise or participation in designing recruitment strategies?
3. To what extent are changes made in recruitment materials and strategies according to input from learners?

Standard 4E: The program has an intake process that provides appropriate assessment of learners' needs, goals, and language proficiency levels; an orientation process that provides learners with information about the program; and if needed, a procedure for referring learners to support services within the program or through other agencies and for accommodating learners waiting to enter the program.

1. What information on entering students is collected during the intake process?
2. Through what procedures is that information collected?
3. What procedures are used for assessing incoming students' levels of English language proficiency?
4. What procedures are used to orient incoming students to the program?
5. If classes are filled, what procedures does the program have to accommodate learners who wish to enter but have to wait?

Section 5: Learner Recruitment and Transition

Standard 5A: The program supports retention through enrollment and attendance procedures that reflect program goals, requirements of program funders, and demands on the adult learner.

1. How does the enrollment process support learner retention?
2. What is the average class size ?
3. How are classes scheduled to support learner retention?
4. What process is in place to evaluate factors that support learner retention?

Standard 5B: The program encourages learners to participate consistently and long enough to reach their identified goals. This may be accomplished by adjusting the schedule and location of classes and by providing appropriate support services.

1. What orientation to the school or class does your program provide each learner?
2. How does your program help learners set goals and check progress toward those goals?
3. What support services or referrals to support services does your program provide for students?
4. What learning opportunities (e.g., drop-in centers, distance education) are available through your program to students who are unable to attend regular classes?
5. What online courses does your program provide?

Standard 5C: The program accommodates the special needs of learners as fully as possible.

1. How does your program accommodate the special needs of learners?

Standard 5D: The program contacts learners with irregular attendance patterns and acknowledges learners who attend regularly.

1. How does your program deal with students with irregular attendance patterns?
2. How does your program reward learners with excellent attendance or excellent progress or goal attainment?

Standard 5E: The program provides learners with appropriate support for transition to other programs or to the workplace.

1. How does your program support learners in transitioning to other programs or classes?

Section 6: Assessment and Learner Gains

Standard 6A: The program has a comprehensive assessment policy that reflects the mission and goals of the program.

1. To what extent does your program have an assessment policy? Describe its basis and components.

Standard 6B: The program has a process for assessing learners' skills and goals for placement into the program, documentation of progress within the program, and exit from the program.

1. What is the process for placing students into your program?
2. How is progress documented among the learners?
3. How does your program document criteria for exit from the program?
4. How does your program identify learners with special needs?

Standard 6C: Assessment activities are ongoing and appropriately scheduled.

1. How often and when are learners assessed during the course of a term?

Standard 6D: The program has procedures for collecting and reporting data on educational gains and outcomes. Data are reported in clear and precise language to all stakeholders without violating standards of confidentiality.

1. How does your program assess learning gains for individual learners?
2. To whom are results reported? How are they reported?
3. Who uses the results and for what purposes?

4. How often do you assess for gains?
5. If I visited your program, what data would you show me related to learning gains and outcomes?

Standard 6E: The program provides appropriate facilities, equipment, supplies, and personnel for assessment activities.

1. To what extent are facilities appropriate for assessment activities?
2. To what extent is staff trained to administer and monitor assessments?
3. Where are assessments stored to meet security requirements?
4. In what condition are the assessment materials?
5. How effective is the audiovisual equipment for assessments requiring it?

Standard 6F: The program identifies learners' needs and goals as individuals, family members, community participants, workers, and lifelong learners.

1. How does the program identify learners' needs and goals?
2. How does the program document and monitor needs and goals of the learners?

Standard 6G: The program assesses the language proficiency levels of learners in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

1. What method does your program use to identify learners' skill levels in listening, speaking, reading, and writing?
2. What method does your program use to identify learners' literacy skills in their primary language?
3. What method is used to identify possible learning disabilities?

Standard 6H: The program uses a variety of appropriate assessments, including authentic, performance-based assessments; standardized tests; and nonlinguistic outcomes (e.g., perceived improvement in self-esteem, participation in teamwork activities). Standardized assessment instruments are valid and reliable, based on studies with the targeted adult-level population.

1. Who assesses the learners in your program and for what purposes (e.g., administrative staff at registration for placement, teachers for unit progress)?
2. How are the learners assessed (e.g., teacher-made tests, standardized tests)?
3. If you use a standardized test, how do you know it is appropriate for your learners?

Standard 6I: The information obtained through needs assessment is used to aid administrators, teachers, and tutors in developing curricula, materials, skills assessments, and teaching approaches that are relevant to learners' lives.

1. How are the results from learner needs assessments used?
2. To what extent are the results of needs assessments used to guide the development of curriculum, instructional methodology, and offering of new courses? Provide some examples.

Standard 6J: Assessment results are clearly explained and shared with learners, to the extent permitted by assessment guidelines, in order to help learners progress.

1. What assessment results are shared with the learners?
2. How are results shared?
3. What benefits do you feel your learners receive by knowing about assessment results?

Standard 6K: Assessment activities document learners' progress within the ESL program toward advancement to other training programs, employment, postsecondary education, and attainment of other educational goals.

1. To what extent are assessment activities connected with informing students about assessment requirements for other programs?
2. How are assessment results used to transfer learners to other programs?
3. How is the number of learners who achieve significant learning gains and the number who advance to other programs documented?

Standard 6L: Results of assessment provide information about educational gains and learner outcomes and provide the basis for recommendations for further assessment.

1. How are learner assessment results monitored by instructional staff?
2. Where are learner assessment results recorded and how are the results used?
3. To what extent are assessment results used to make recommendations for further assessment of special needs?

Standard 6M: Learners identify and demonstrate progress toward or attainment of their short- and long-term goals.

1. How do students in your program set and record short-term and long-term goals?
2. How is progress toward meeting goals monitored or documented in your program?
3. How is goal attainment tallied and reported to interested stakeholders?

Standard 6N: Learners demonstrate skill-level improvements in L, S, R, and W through a variety of assessments.

1. How is learner progress in listening, speaking, reading, and writing measured? Describe the different measures that are used.

Standard 6O: Learners demonstrate progress in nonlinguistic areas identified as important toward meeting their goals.

1. To what extent does your program have a process to document progress in nonlinguistic areas (e.g., increased confidence, increased participation in class)?
2. What types of measures are used to document progress in nonlinguistic areas?

Section 7: Employment Conditions and Staffing

Standard 7A: The program supports compensation and benefits commensurate with those of instructional and other professional staff with comparable positions and qualifications within similar institutions.

1. How many full-time instructors does your program have? How many part-time instructors?
2. What benefits are available to full-time employees? To part-time employees?
3. For what types of noninstructional activities are instructors compensated (e.g., staff meetings, student conferences)?
4. What opportunities exist for faculty promotion?

Standard 7B: The program has in place policies and procedures that ensure professional treatment of staff.

1. How are policies and procedures made known to staff?
2. What is the nature of such policies and procedures?
3. What type of support for professional development is available?
4. How are faculty informed of their employment assignments and changes in assignment?
5. What mechanism exists for faculty and staff to negotiate working conditions?

Standard 7C: The program supports a safe and clean working environment.

1. What policies are in place that ensure a safe and clean working environment?
2. Describe the working environment.
3. To what extent do you feel you have a safe and clean working environment?

Standard 7D: The program recruits and hires qualified instructional staff with training in the theory and methodology of teaching ESL. Qualifications may vary according to local agency requirements and type of instructional position (e.g., paid instructor, volunteer).

1. What are the minimum qualifications for instructional staff?
2. If applicable, how do these qualifications compare with the institution's other instructional or professional staff?
3. What training in ESL theory and methodology does staff have?

Standard 7E: The program recruits and hires qualified administrative, instructional, and support staff who have appropriate training in cross-cultural communication, reflect the cultural diversity of the learners in the program, and have experience with or awareness of the specific needs of adult English language learners in their communities.

1. How does staff demonstrate cultural understanding of the program's learner population (e.g., work experience in another country, participation in community forums)?
2. What languages does the staff speak?
3. How does the staff reflect the cultural diversity of the learner population?

Standard 7F: The program recruits and hires qualified support staff to ensure effective program operation.

1. What support staff does the program have (e.g., clerical assistant, technology support technicians)?
2. What training or orientation is provided for new support staff?
3. How does the program ensure that support staff are able to work with and support the learner population?

Section 8: Professional Development and Staff Evaluation

Standard 8A: The program has a process for orienting new ESL administrative, instructional, and support staff to the ESL program, its goals, and its learners.

1. What is the process for orienting new staff to the program and its goals?
2. What information is given to the support staff about the learners?

Standard 8B: The program has a professional development plan, developed with input from staff and stakeholders. The program acquires appropriate resources to implement the plan, including compensation for staff participation.

1. How does the program formulate its professional development plan for staff?
2. For what staff members is professional development provided?
3. What support is provided to the staff members so they can attend professional development?
4. How is the implementation of professional development evaluated?

Standard 8C: The program provides opportunities for its instructional staff to expand their knowledge of current trends, best practices, uses of technology, and research in the field of second language acquisition and adult literacy development.

1. In what areas is professional development offered? Provide some examples.
2. What resources does the instructional staff have access to that support professional development?

Standard 8D: The program provides opportunities for administrators and project evaluators to become knowledgeable about effective teaching strategies in adult ESL and current trends in the field of adult ESL.

1. How do administrative staff and project evaluators remain knowledgeable about effective teaching strategies and current trends in the field?
2. How often do administrators meet with instructional staff?
3. How often are teachers observed? By whom?

Standard 8E: Professional development activities are varied, based on needs of the staff, and provide opportunities for practice and consistent follow-up.

1. What types of professional development were made available to staff over the past year (e.g., workshops, invited speakers, peer coaching)?
2. How is professional development sustained throughout the year?
3. What follow-up activities occur after professional development?

Standard 8F: The program provides training in assessment procedures in the interpretation and use of assessment results.

1. How do the teachers learn about assessment procedures?
2. What is their role in assessing students?
3. What training is provided for those who assess students?

Standard 8G: The program encourages faculty and staff to join professional ESL and adult education organizations and supports staff participation in professional development activities of the organizations.

1. To what professional organizations do staff belong?
2. How does the program support such membership?
3. What conferences have staff attended in the past year?

Standard 8H: The program supports collaboration among adult ESL teachers, instructional personnel in other content areas, K–12 English and ESL teachers, support service providers, workplace personnel, and representatives of programs to which students transition.

1. With whom does staff collaborate (e.g., K–12 teachers, support service providers)?
2. What resources and support exist for carrying out joint projects?

Standard 8I: The program has a process for recognizing the participation of staff in professional development activities.

1. How does your program acknowledge staff participation in professional development?
2. How often does it recognize participation?

Standard 8J: The program has a process for the regular evaluation of administrator, instructor, and support staff performance that is consistent with the program's philosophy. The process is developed with input from staff.

Standard 8K: The program provides learners with opportunities to evaluate program staff anonymously. The tools are user friendly and allow for variety in learners' proficiency, levels, background, cultural diversity, and special needs.

Standard 8L: The program provides opportunities for all staff members to develop performance improvement plans.

1. How is staff evaluated? Who is evaluated, by whom, and how?
2. What opportunities do learners have to evaluate program staff?
3. How frequently is staff evaluated? By whom?
4. How is the information from the evaluations used?

Section 9: Support Services

Standard 9A: The program provides students with access to a variety of services directly or through referrals to cooperating agencies.

1. What support services does the local program provide to students?
2. For what services are referrals made?
3. How does your program communicate with learners about available support?

Standard 9B: The program provides a process for identifying learning disabilities in English language learners and incorporates appropriate accommodations and training of staff either directly through the program or indirectly through referrals to cooperating agencies.

1. How does your program identify learning disabilities in its learners?
2. Once learning disabilities are diagnosed, how are they handled?

Standard 9C: The program develops linkages with cooperating agencies to ensure that referrals to support services result in meeting learners' needs, including those of learners with disabilities.

1. With what community agencies does your program have a relationship to provide support services to students? For what purpose?
2. How do learners learn about available support services?
3. What follow-up is done after referrals to ensure that learners are receiving the services they need?

Using the ESL Program Standards to Evaluate and Improve Adult ESL Programs

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Background on Programs for Adult English Language Learners

Adult ESL (English as a second language) programs serve adults whose first language is not English. The primary objective of these programs is to enable adult learners who are not fully fluent and literate in English to become proficient in communicating in English, so that they can meet their personal, employment, community, and academic goals.

Providers of adult education for English language learners include

- ▶ K–12 public schools and districts (local education agencies) that offer adult ESL instruction
- ▶ Community colleges
- ▶ Community-based (CBO), volunteer, and faith-based organizations
- ▶ Family literacy programs
- ▶ Correctional institutions
- ▶ Libraries
- ▶ Workplaces

The types of programs offered include

- ▶ General English language development programs, which focus on developing skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These programs might include content-based ESL classes, which concentrate on a subject area (e.g., civic participation) and, at the same time, develop English language skills related to the subject. They serve a range of learners, from those who are not literate in their native language or in English to those who are highly literate in their native language and are learning English language and literacy.
- ▶ Family ESL literacy, which focuses on knowledge and skills that parents need to help their children succeed in U.S. schools
- ▶ Citizenship preparation, which prepares learners to fulfill the U.S. naturalization requirements

- ▶ Vocational ESL (also VESOL or VESL), designed to prepare learners for job training or employment in specific occupational areas
- ▶ Workplace ESL, which focuses on language and communication skills needed for success in the workplace. Workplace ESL classes are commonly supported by an employer and offered at a work site.
- ▶ English for specific purposes (or ESP), which focuses on developing language and communication skills needed for professional fields of study such as business, agriculture, or medicine
- ▶ Pre-academic ESL, which prepares learners for further education and training in post-secondary institutions, vocational education classes, or ABE and GED classes

Audience for This Brief

This brief is written for the following audiences:

- ▶ Adult ESL program administrators and coordinators
- ▶ Teachers, tutors, and counselors in adult ESL programs
- ▶ Program funders
- ▶ Program partners
- ▶ Program evaluators

Standards in Education: Background

Education standards describe for all stakeholders (program administrators, teachers and other school and district staff, parents, students, and policy makers) the goals, teaching and learning conditions, and expected outcomes of education programs. Education standards include program standards, content standards, and performance standards. This brief focuses on program standards in adult education for English language learners. Therefore, the examples of types of standards are those that pertain to programs that serve adults learning English.

- ▶ **Program standards** can be used for program development and self-review. They describe the components and features of a program that should be in place for the program to be effective and to provide context and resources that support student learning and achievement (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, 2003). They also list examples of the evidence that can be used to demonstrate the existence of these essential feature. The standards and evidence guide
 - administrators and funders in articulating the goals, objectives, and expected outcomes of the program and the resources that support it;

- teachers and other instructional staff in examining how their instructional practice fits into and supports the goals, objectives, and expected outcomes of the program; and
 - learners in identifying the contexts and learner support systems that allow them to meet their goals and needs.
- ▶ **Content standards** define what students should know and be able to do in different content and skill areas as a result of instruction (Stites, 1999; Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, 1997; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, 2003a). Several states (e.g., Arizona, Florida, Maryland, New York, Tennessee, and West Virginia) have developed content standards, curriculum frameworks, and resource guides that provide guidance to local programs in developing effective curriculum and instruction. The Adult Education Content Standards Warehouse is being developed to allow users to search for and review adult education standards in ESL, mathematics, and reading (www.adultedcontentstandards.org).
 - ▶ **Performance standards** specify how well students perform at different levels of content knowledge and language proficiency and the measures used to demonstrate how well they perform (National Council on Educational Standards and Testing, 1992; Stites, 1999; U.S. Department of Education, 1994). The *English-as-a second language model standards for adult education programs* (California Department of Education, 1992) include performance standards for listening, speaking, reading, and writing at different English proficiency levels (e.g., Listening, ESL Beginning, Low—“The learner will demonstrate comprehension of simple words in the context of common, everyday situations.” p. 64).

Program Standards in Adult Education

Attention to program standards in adult education grew out of both the interest of adult education professionals and legislation. As early as 1986, the Mainstream English Language Training (MELT) Project described the conditions that affect the movement of learners from one Student Performance Level (SPL) to another (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1995). The conditions included program-related factors such as intensity of instruction (number of hours of instruction per week); entry/exit procedures and policies; and curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices.

Interest in program standards in adult education has developed in tandem with the development of standards in K–12 education. A focus on program standards in K–12 education began in the 1980s with the National Education *Goals Panel and the Goals 2000: Educate America Act*. The National Education Goals included a pledge that by the year 2000, all American students would demonstrate competency in challenging subject matter. Subsequently, the U.S. Department of Education, other federal agencies, and foundations made grants to major professional organizations and academic institutions to develop model standards in different subject areas. Although much of the standards work has focused on *content* standards—what students need to know and

be able to do in different subject areas including math, arts, civics and government, foreign languages, geography, and history – the National Research Council (1999) also has focused attention on the conditions under which students learn and on professional development for teachers.

The Adult Education and Literacy Act of 1991 required the U.S. Department of Education to develop indicators of program quality to assist states and local adult education service providers in assessing the effectiveness of their programs. The legislation specifically called for indicators in the areas of student recruitment, retention, and educational gains. A quality program indicator was defined as a variable reflecting effective and efficient program performance. (See Van Duzer & Berdán, 2000, for discussion.)

The U.S. Department of Education developed examples of quality indicators for ABE programs in general, but did not provide examples specifically related to adult ESL programs (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, 1992). Subsequently, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (H.R. 1385, Pub. L. No. 105-220), also known as the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, included both ABE and ESL programs. The act required adult education agencies to establish core indicators of program quality and of learner performance related to educational gain, placement and retention in employment, participation in postsecondary education or training, and high school completion (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Sec. 212; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, Division of Adult Education and Literacy, 2001; 2003b).

Recognizing the need for quality standards specifically for programs serving adult English language learners, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL) convened a task force to review the accountability requirements in federal adult education legislation and existing program quality indicators and develop a set of standards. The resulting document, *Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs* (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, 2003), here referred to as TESOL program standards, has become a centerpiece in the development of program standards in adult ESL education. In addition to the TESOL program standards, other program standards or program quality indicators have been developed by various states and other organizations. (See a list of some of these at the end of this document.)

Research Base

Although most states have included indicators of program quality in their monitoring and evaluation plans, there has been no evidence-based research carried out to demonstrate the role and impact of specific program standards in adult ESL education. There is some research on standards in K–12 education, primarily on the impact of teacher preparation (e.g., Allen 2003). One document (Apthorp, Dean, Florian, Lauer, Reichardt, Sanders, & Snow-Renner, 2001) summarizes the research on standards-based education in grades K–12, to inform efforts to improve low-performing schools and create or sustain standards-based, high-performing learning communities.

Program Standards in Adult ESL

The *Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs* developed by TESOL provide a framework to guide program staff in analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of their program and in developing a program that will effectively meet their goals for educating adults learning English. These standards are not meant to be prescriptive in any way, but rather to provide a structure and guidance for this analysis. The standards are designed for use in many different types of programs. Programs may differ in size; educational goals; connections with larger institutions and programs; funding sources, requirements, and restrictions; learner goals and characteristics; resources; and staffing.

Standards are grouped into the following nine categories:

1. Program Structure, Administration, and Planning
2. Curriculum and Instructional Materials
3. Instruction
4. Learner Recruitment, Intake, and Orientation
5. Learner Retention and Transition
6. Assessment and Learner Gains
7. Employment Conditions and Staffing
8. Professional Development and Staff Evaluation
9. Support Services

Depending on the goals of the program and the focus of the review, a group of reviewers may choose to work on some or all of the standards. Program narratives describe how staff in a large, institution-based program and a smaller, volunteer-based program used the standards to review their program and develop an action plan.

A program self-review section of the TESOL program standards has a page for each standard. An example page from the self-review instrument is shown in Figure 1.

After the statement of the standard, each page has the following sections:

- ▶ **Measures**—Measures describe the criteria for determining the extent to which the standard is in place and give examples of the many ways that the standard is implemented. Staff (or external evaluators) mark those program features that are in place and list others.
- ▶ **Sample Evidence**—Sample evidence lists specific items that demonstrate that the standard is in place. Staff mark those items that are in place and list others.

- ▶ **Score**—A score is given based on the measures and evidence marked. Scores range from 0, not in place; to 3, in place and well developed. For some standards, it is recommended that all of the measures be in place for a score of 2 or 3. For some, one or more of the measures should be in place. For others, those measures marked with a * should be in place.
- ▶ **Priority**—Staff mark whether this standard has high or low priority for the program.
- ▶ **Comments**—Based on the measures, evidence, and score, staff write comments about the status of this standard in the program.
- ▶ **Action Plan/Next Steps**—Staff describe the next steps that will be taken related to this standard.

Appendix 1 provides a template so that a score, priority, comments, and action plan for each standard can be completed in an electronic file.

Once this work has been accomplished for each standard under review, staff complete the Summary Scores and Action Plan Chart by filling in the scores given for each of the standards and writing an action plan, or continuous improvement plan, for each standard category (e.g., a plan for the category of Program Structure, Administration, and Planning). When this chart is complete, program staff can work together (and with others if appropriate) to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the program and develop and implement the plan for the program. States and local programs can use the plan as part of their ongoing program monitoring and evaluation.

The first page of this chart is shown in Figure 2. A pdf version of this chart, for use by program staff, can be downloaded from www.tesol.org/s_tesol/sec_document.asp?CID=281&DID=1839. In addition, Appendix 2 provides an electronic version of the chart that can be completed in an electronic file.

The TESOL program standards can be used by different stakeholders for different purposes. They might be used by

- ▶ **Program staff** seeking to improve their program; align their program’s mission, goals, and outcome measures with federal legislation; or demonstrate the quality of their program to funders
- ▶ **Funders** seeking to identify effective programs or to help improve programs they are funding
- ▶ **Program advocates** seeking to start a new program (to identify what features merit putting in place) or to augment areas in which a program is weak (e.g., salaries and full-time positions for teachers or effective assessment procedures)

- ▶ **State-level educators** seeking guidance for the development of their own standards, aligned with their specific local context and needs. For example, the Maryland State Board of Education developed the *Maryland Adult ESL Program Standards* for this purpose. To view these standards, go to www.umbc.edu/alrc/ESLstand.html. Although not as detailed as the TESOL standards, the Maryland program standards clearly articulate goals in specific areas, such as “The program supports retention through an enrollment policy that reflects program goals, requirements of funding sources, and demands on adult learners,” with sample measures to demonstrate that procedures to achieve the goals are in place (e.g., “The program documents learner retention and transition through use of Literacy Works MIS”) (Maryland State Board of Education, n.d., p. 18). In a parallel effort in another country, Myers (1999) describes the process of developing adult ESL program standards for the province of Alberta, Canada.
- ▶ **Program evaluators** seeking to formally assess the effectiveness of a program (e.g., in a program review for accreditation) or informally document the features of a program. For example, an external evaluator used the TESOL program standards to review a mid-sized, urban adult ESL program that was loosely structured and poorly documented (McCartan, 2005). The standards guided his interviews with teachers, administrators, and students; observations of classroom instruction; and review of program documents. As a result of the evaluation, the program had data to support its claims regarding success and to guide the development of its program improvement plans.

If a program is undergoing accreditation review, all program staff (including administrators, teachers, and support staff) as well as external reviewers might complete the Program Self-Review Instrument and Summary Scores and Action Plan Chart, with the goal of reviewing implementation of all of the standards. If the focus is on one aspect of the program (e.g., instruction), the staff might review only that area, which consists of 13 specific standards, ranging from activities that are aligned with principles of adult learning and language acquisition to activities that prepare learners for formal and informal assessments.

Example of Use of the TESOL Program Standards

As an example of how staff and other stakeholders associated with an adult ESL program might use the TESOL program standards, let’s imagine that a large program in a community college wants to go through a program review and improvement process.

- ▶ **The program director, financial office staff, and representatives from the primary funding agencies** might focus on the standards for Program Structure, Administration, and Planning. Standard 1.C. (one of 10 standards) states that “The program has sound financial management procedures to collect and maintain fiscal information, guide program budgeting, ensure continuity of funding, and meet reporting requirements.”

- ▶ **Curriculum developers and teachers** might go through the same process and focus on the standards for Curriculum and Instructional Materials. For example, standard 2.D. states that “The curriculum specifies measurable learning objectives for each instructional offering for learners and is appropriate for learners in multilevel classes.”
- ▶ **Teachers, classroom aides, and professional developers** working in or with the program might focus on the standards for Instruction. Standard 3.E., for example, states that “Instructional activities integrate the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), focusing on receptive and productive skills appropriate to learners’ needs.”
- ▶ **Program administrators, counselors, and intake staff** might work on the standards for Learner Retention and Transition, for which standard 5.E. states, “The program provides learners with appropriate support for transition to other programs.”
- ▶ **Assessment specialists and test administrators** might focus on the standards for Assessment and Learners Gains, for which standard 6.D. states that, “The program has procedures for collecting and reporting data on educational gains and outcomes.”

In short, the entire community of stakeholders could get involved in evaluating specific components of the program, to identify strengths and areas in which there are weaknesses and gaps and to develop an action plan to improve the program. At the end of this process, when all of the groups have completed the work in their area, a representative group could get together to review and complete the Summary Scores and Action Plan Chart, develop an improvement plan for the program, and develop a timeline based on high- and low-priority areas. When the improvement plan has been implemented, the outcomes can be evaluated according to the standards.

Conclusion

Program quality standards can help program staff and other stakeholders develop, improve, and maintain programs that are consistent with their goals, objectives, and expected outcomes; state and federal requirements; and learners’ goals and needs. Working together to develop program standards or to review progress toward meeting standards can help the entire staff—administrators, coordinators, teachers, aides, and counselors—have a common understanding of the components of their program; the activities, resources, and funding needed to accomplish its objectives; and their roles in the endeavor. Evaluation of success in meeting program standards can inform stakeholders of program gaps and weaknesses and guide the development of a continuous improvement plan that all involved can implement.

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Program Quality Standards: Example Documents

- See the Adult Education Content Standards Warehouse, being developed to provide information about adult education content standards developed by states. (www.adultedcontentstandards.org).
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Appendices

These appendices provide templates that allow staff to complete parts of the Program Self-Review Instrument and the Summary Scores and Action Plan Chart in electronic files. They were developed by William McCartan (McCartan, 2005).

Appendix 1. Program Self-Review Instrument: Electronic File

Appendix 2. Summary Scores and Action Plan Chart: Electronic File

This document was produced by the Center for Adult English Language Acquisition (CAELA) at the Center for Applied Linguistics (4646 40th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20016 202-362-0700) with funding from the U.S. Department of Education (ED), Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), under Contract No. ED-04-CO-0031/0001. The opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of ED. This document is in the public domain and may be reproduced without permission.

Using the TESOL Program Standards for Program Review and Improvement

Workshop Evaluation

Expectations About Contents of the Workshop

What did you hope to gain from this course or workshop? (please ✓ all that apply)

- Basic introduction or exposure to subject
- In-depth theory or study of subject
- Strategies and ideas about how to implement subject
- Information to take back and share at program
- More general information about subject
- Other _____

Did the workshop fulfill your expectations and needs? (please circle one)

Not at all Barely Sufficiently A great deal Completely

Please explain why you circled the above.

Quality of the Workshop

Area	Quality (please ✓ one)				Comments/Suggestions for Improvement
Trainer style	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Presentation and progress (balance between trainer and participant involvement, kinds of activities, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Materials (handouts, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Organization of workshops (arrangement of content, flow of activities, etc.)	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	

Follow-Up Activity

As a result of these workshops, what do you hope to try in your classroom or program?

Other Comments

IV-A. Study Circle on Preparing Adult English Language Learners for the Workforce

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Study Circle on Preparing Adult English Language Learners for the Workforce

Facilitator Guide

Introduction

The purpose of this study circle is to read and discuss research on preparing adult English language learners for the workforce and to evaluate its applications to adult education practice. Participants will read two CAELA articles about workforce instruction for adult English language learners, discuss their content and applications to adult ESL instruction, implement at least one new research- or theory-based strategy in their teaching, and reflect on the impact of that strategy on their thinking and practice.

Readings

- ▶ *Issues in Improving Immigrant Workers' English Language Skills*, by Miriam Burt, identifies issues in improving immigrant workers' language skills and provides suggestions for addressing these issues through workplace instruction. www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/Workplaceissues.html
- ▶ *English That Works: Preparing Adult English Language Learners for Success in the Workforce and Community*, by Brigitte Marshall, describes how to link language instruction to workforce and civics skills. www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/Englishwks.html

Session lengths

Session 1: 2 hours

Session 2: 1.5 hours

Session 1: Preparation

Send participants information about the study circle well in advance of the first session, so that they can plan their schedules and do the prereading. Participants in this study circle should read *Issues in Improving Immigrant Workers' English Language Skills* before the first session (see Participant Handouts). The accompanying assignment asks them to note the workplace issues that resonate with their experiences as either workplace instructors or as workers themselves. At the beginning of Session 1, they will share one phrase or sentence from the text that captures their experience particularly well, and describe why it did so.

1. Opening (5 minutes)

- ▶ Welcome the group and introduce yourself.
- ▶ Review the purpose of this study circle.
- ▶ Review logistical details such as the schedule, breaks, and the location of the bathrooms.
- ▶ Check that all participants have both readings.

2. Participant introductions (15 minutes)

Format: Whole group

Participants introduce themselves and, in one or two sentences, identify an issue (A, B, C, D, or E) from the article *Issues in Improving Immigrant Workers' English Language Skills*, explaining why the issue interests them. Remind participants that they have only 1 or 2 minutes each for this sharing. There is no discussion during this time; discussion will follow in smaller groups.

3. Article review (15 minutes)

Format: Small groups

During this time, small groups discuss their reactions to what was shared during the introductions and review their understanding of the issues in providing workplace instruction to immigrants. Divide the participants into groups of three and then give them the following instructions (which should also be posted on flipchart paper):

During the next 15 minutes, you will have two related discussions. First, please talk about what struck you about the quotes that were read during the introductions. What stood out for you? Did you find that the quotes about your own experience as workplace instructors (or, if you have not yet taught a workplace class, your own experience in the workplace) included comments on all issues discussed in the article, or did they cluster around a few key points? Then, discuss any questions you have about the five issues described in the first half of the article. You can refer to the article as needed.

4. Article review in practice (20 minutes)

Format: Pair/triad activity

For this activity, the group skips to the section in the article entitled “Suggestions.” Divide the group into pairs or triads, depending upon the size of the whole group. You need one group for each of the five suggestions. Explain to the participants that they will be reflecting on what workplace instructors can do regarding the suggestions in the article. Assign a different suggestion from pages 2 and 3 of the article to each group and ask the members to discuss the following questions in 5 minutes:

- ▶ Does this suggestion sound like a good idea to you? Why or why not?
- ▶ What support would workplace instructors need from their programs and/or the employers to do this?

In the next 10 minutes, ask each group to present a 1- to 2-minute synopsis of what they talked about, addressing each of the two questions in no more than one sentence per question. As the groups present their synopses, note on a flipchart the results of the discussion on each suggestion and list the support needed.

Suggestion	Evaluating Suggestion (Good Idea? Why? Why not?)	Support Needed
Provide short, focused classes		
Educate people		
Use native language		
Involve leaders		
Provide English on the job		

In the remaining 5 minutes, ask the participants to comment on all the suggestions. Write on the chart additional information about support needed as it arises.

5. Personal brainstorm: Skills needed in the U.S. workplace (10 minutes)

Format: Whole group, individual, and pair

Explain that we are now moving from the macro level (looking at the big picture) to the micro level—looking at what practitioners can do in their classes (general ESL classes or workplace classes) to help prepare their learners for success in the workplace.

Read the following statement aloud to the participants:

It is impossible to prepare someone adequately for the workplace because each individual job requires specific structures and vocabulary. There are no commonalities among jobs.

In four corners of the room post four signs—one that says “Agree,” a second that says “Disagree,” a third that says “Mostly Agree,” and a fourth that says “Mostly Disagree.”

Ask the participants to stand up and move to the corner of the room that corresponds to how they feel about the statement you read.

Notice where most of the participants are standing. Ask participants to comment briefly on why they are standing in that corner. Then have them sit down.

Ask the participants to individually brainstorm the language and cultural skills needed for the U.S. workplace by writing on a piece of paper all the skills they think workers need to be successful. After 3 minutes, have them compare what they wrote with what the person sitting next to them wrote.

In the remaining 5 minutes, ask each pair to report to the whole group on the similarities between their two lists. Did they find commonalities? Did they agree on any skills needed by all workers? Which ones? Tell them to hold onto the lists they have generated, as they will be able to compare these lists with those created by experts. Skills needed for success at the workplace, and strategies to facilitate the development of these skills, will be discussed in the article they are about to read, *Preparing Adult English Language Learners for Success in the Workforce and Community*.

6. Looking at skills: What the research says (20 minutes)

Format: Whole group, individual, and small group

Hand out the article and ask the participants to read along silently as you read aloud the introduction, found in the third and fourth paragraphs in the first column:

Increasingly in the United States, adult English as a second language (ESL) instructors teach language as a means to an end: to help prepare students for success in the workforce and their communities. In the process, they must balance the needs of different stakeholders: the learners, the employers, the community, and the funding agencies.

This digest discusses efforts in adult ESL education to link language instruction to workforce and civic skills (skills needed for successful participation in the community). It looks at the social forces that underlie these efforts and describes how adult ESL educators can integrate workforce and civic life skills into their curricula and convey these skills to their students through learner-centered instructional strategies and classroom management techniques.

Then tell the participants that they will read the digest in a cooperative learning way, both to save time and to practice a technique they can use in their classes to help prepare learners for the American workplace.

Set up the cooperative reading activity:

- ▶ Ask participants to work in teams of four.
- ▶ Ask participants to take the Jigsaw Reading handout from the participants' packet. Note that there are four sets of questions.
- ▶ Ask each team to assign a set of questions to each person in their group: one person will be responsible for questions in Set I, another in Set II, and so on.
- ▶ Ask participants to read silently and answer assigned questions, then share their answers with their group.
- ▶ Circulate among the groups to get a sense of what issues to highlight with the whole group after the group discussions

Note to facilitator: Key points to be discussed follow each question. If the groups don't raise the key points, the facilitator should.

Jigsaw Reading Questions

English That Works: Preparing Adult English Language Learners for Success in the Workforce and Community

Directions: Answer the questions according to the facilitator's instructions.

Set I: Social Forces, Economic Shifts, Welfare Reform, Accountability Requirements, and Learner Needs

- a. Why has the number of job applicants unable to perform the math and reading tasks of the jobs they are seeking risen so sharply in the past few years?

Key Points: *Higher skills are required in most jobs these days, especially those that pay a living wage; new technologies have increased the math and language skills needed.*

- b. What does SCANS refer to? What was its mission?

Key Points: *Secretary's (of Labor) Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS). The commission was made up of a group of business and education leaders whose mission was to determine what schools can do to better prepare learners for the workforce. To fulfill the mission, they identified the skills needed by today's workforce, such as managing resources, working with others, managing information, operating within organizational systems, and using different technologies. To perform these workforce competencies, workers need literacy and computational skills; higher order thinking skills such as decision making, problem solving, representing information, and learning to learn; and certain personal attributes, such as maturity, honesty, and sociability.*

- c. Why are many welfare recipients unable to find jobs that support them and their families?

Key Points: *Welfare reform has pushed low-skilled workers into the workforce. The jobs they can get do not pay living wages and do not offer opportunities for advancement.*

Set II: Accountability Requirements and Learner Needs

- a. What is the purpose of the National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS)?

Key Points: *The NRS collects data on learner outcomes for states to report to their funder—the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE)—to show that learners are making progress in adult education classes, including adult ESL.*

- b. How are the six NRS ESL levels described?

Key Points: *The six ESL levels are described in terms of learners' competencies, or abilities, in three areas: speaking and listening, basic reading and writing, and functional and workforce skills.*

- c. How are SCANS and Equipped for the Future (EFF) similar? How are they different?

Key Points: *They are similar in that they both list skills needed for the workforce and both include basic skills, interpersonal skills, technology skills, and resource and information management skills. They are different in that SCANS came from business leaders, while EFF was based on what learners said was needed.*

Set III: Developing Workforce and Civic Competencies, Classroom Simulations, and Cooperative Learning

- a. What is the difference between content knowledge and process knowledge? Which kind of knowledge do the SCANS and EFF skills define?

Key Points: *Content knowledge is what people know. Process knowledge is what people do and how they do it. SCANS and EFF define process skills.*

- b. What workplace-related skills might a classroom simulation develop?

Key Points: *Working in teams, analyzing and evaluating information from various sources, basic skills of language and math problem solving (and probably just about any other skills found on the SCANS and EFF lists).*

- c. What are three types of cooperative learning activities to try in the classroom? What workplace-related skills might they develop?

Key Points: *Jigsaw activities develop the skills of teamwork and analyzing and evaluating information. Project assignments develop research skills (organizing and interpreting information, communicating findings, using technology to find information, and presenting information). Surveys develop the skills of working in teams, acquiring facts, and communicating information.*

Set IV: Conveying Workforce and Civic Skills Through Classroom Management Techniques

- a. What are three common behavioral expectations in the U.S. workplace? Why might they be problematic to the adult English language learner?

Key Points: *Punctuality, accountability, initiative, individual responsibility, integrity, self-management. Some of them may be problematic because they may not coincide with attitudes, values, and behaviors in the learners' home countries.*

- b. How might the teacher model these behaviors in the classroom?

Key Points: *The teacher arrives on time and with an instructional plan. The plan is shared with the learners. Learners are invited to reflect on the plan throughout the course of the lesson and to consider what has been accomplished throughout the lesson. The teacher sets up systems in the classroom where learners keep checklists of tasks, procedures, and classroom rules. The teacher posts expectations in the classroom.*

- c. How can teamwork in the classroom simulate the workplace environment?

Key Points: *Students can form teams that manage classroom maintenance tasks. In open-entry classrooms, it can be the responsibility of student teams to orient new students.*

7. Discussion of workforce skills (10 minutes)

Format: Whole group

After the small-group activity is over, discuss any issues or questions with the whole group. Then ask the participants to take out the insert “EFF Standards and SCANS Competencies” from the Marshall article. Ask them to compare it to the lists they generated themselves before reading the article. Are all of their skills included? Which are not? Which lists do they prefer—theirs or the experts’? Are the lists mutually compatible? Have the participants changed any of their ideas about skills needed for all jobs in the workplace? Discuss briefly as a whole group.

8. Considering application (15 minutes)

Format: Individual and then pairs

Post the following on flipchart paper:

Classroom Activities to Build Workforce Skills
Classroom simulation
Cooperative assignment: jigsaw
Project assignments
Surveys
Classroom Management Techniques to Build Workforce Skills
Agenda
Student responsibilities
Teamwork

Ask participants to look over the posted strategies taken from the Marshall article and reflect on which activities or management techniques they would like to implement between study circle sessions. Ask them to share with a partner what they chose and why. What do they hope happens or changes? After they have talked through their ideas, have them fill out the Activity Planning Form. Encourage participants to consider peer observation in their plans if there are co-workers in the study circle. (See the Peer Observation Form and also the guide on Peer Coaching and Mentoring.)

9. Closing (5 minutes)

Format: Whole group

Review the intersession assignment and the page participants will use for their New Activity Notes. Remind participants of the next meeting.

10. Evaluation (5 minutes)

Format: Whole group

Do a quick evaluation to identify the main strengths and weaknesses of the session. Ask participants these questions:

- ▶ What was the most useful aspect of today’s session?
- ▶ What might we change if we do this study circle again?

Session 2: Preparation

Post the flipchart list of activities and techniques from the last session. Also post (but covered with a flipchart page) the following quote for later discussion:

It’s not just the work that has to be learned in each situation. Each job presents a self-contained social world with its own personalities, hierarchy, customs, and standards. It was left to me to figure out such essentials as who was in charge, who was good to work with, who could take a joke... I usually enter new situations in some respected, even attention-getting role like “guest lecturer,” or “workshop leader.” It’s a lot harder, I found, to sort out a human microcosm from the bottom, and of course, a lot more necessary to do so.

—Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed*
(New York: Henry Holt & Company, 2001), p. 194

Note: It is recommended, but not required, that you read or at least look through the Ehrenreich book before leading the study circle.

1. Opening (5 minutes)

Welcome the group back and check on how their activities went.

2. Debriefing the activities (25 minutes)

Format: Pairs or small groups clustered according to similar focus of the new activity tried during the interim. Ask participants to refer to their New Activity Notes as they debrief with the following (posted) questions:

- ▶ What did you try? What happened? What factors had an impact on your implementation?

- ▶ What did you conclude from implementing this new activity or strategy?
- ▶ What advice would you have for other practitioners about implementing this strategy?

Write the answers to this last question on a sticky note and put it up next to the strategy on the posted flipchart. This advice will be typed up and sent out to participants.

3. Reflecting on workplace issues as an entry-level worker (25 minutes total)

a. Introduction (5 minutes)

Format: Whole group discussion and/or mini-lecture

Explain that participants are now going to think a little more deeply about cultural issues in the U.S. workplace, especially as they relate to entry-level workers, which is what most of the immigrants and refugees are, at least initially.

Ask participants if they are familiar with the book *Nickel and Dimed*, by Barbara Ehrenreich. If no one has heard of the book, give a mini-lecture covering the following points:

- ▶ Ehrenreich is a highly educated journalist who decided in the late 1990s to see if she could survive as an entry-level worker.
- ▶ She “went undercover” and held a series of entry-level jobs in Maine, Florida, and Minnesota, working as a hotel maid, waitress, housekeeper, and stacker of clothes in a Wal-Mart.
- ▶ She found that the work was physically and mentally exhausting and that she could not survive on the salaries.
- ▶ She describes her experiences in the book *Nickel and Dimed*.

If some participants know of the book, lead a brief discussion that covers these points.

Next, uncover the flipchart with the quote and explain to the participants that this quote is from the last chapter in her book, where she evaluates her experiences. Read it aloud:

It’s not just the work that has to be learned in each situation. Each job presents a self-contained social world with its own personalities, hierarchy, customs, and standards. It was left to me to figure out such essentials as who was in charge, who was good to work with, who could take a joke... I usually enter new situations in some respected, even attention-getting role like “guest lecturer,” or “workshop leader.” It’s a lot harder, I found, to sort out a human microcosm from the bottom, and of course, a lot more necessary to do so.

—Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed*
(New York: Henry Holt & Company, 2001) p. 194

b. Reflection (10 minutes)**Format:** Small-group activity

Ask the participants to consider their own experiences working in both entry-level jobs and in higher-level, more professional positions. In groups of three, they discuss the quotation using the following questions as guides:

- ▶ Do you agree that each job presents a “self-contained, social world with its own personalities, hierarchy, customs, and standards?” Can you give an example from a job you have had?

Possible Answers: *Examples would vary depending on the job. For example, in some workplaces you aren't allowed to prepare popcorn in the microwave at the water cooler, but you are allowed to do so in the microwaves in the kitchens; in some offices the administrative secretary has more power than those she does clerical tasks for, and so on.*

- ▶ Ehrenreich says “It was left for me to figure out such essentials as who was in charge, who was good to work with, who could take a joke...” What special challenges might this bring to second language learners?

Possible Answers: *Second language learners might not pick up the verbal or visual cues because of a lack of familiarity with U.S. customs at the workplace. For example, although everyone is generally on a first-name basis, some people have more titular and actual power than others.*

- ▶ Ehrenreich finishes by saying, “It’s a lot harder, I found, to sort out a human microcosm from the bottom, and of course, a lot more necessary to do so.” What does she mean by this? Do you agree? How does this relate to immigrants at the workplace?

Possible Answers: *It is harder for entry-level workers to figure out the hierarchy, customs, and standards of a job than it is for those at higher levels who may be privy to inside information. It is key that those at “the bottom” do understand the workplace social structure, however, as they may be more likely to lose their jobs if they do not. It is especially hard for immigrants to sort out these issues because they have less familiarity and facility with the customs and language of the U.S. workplace.*

Note: If the possible answers are not raised in the small-group discussions or in the whole-group discussion that follows, you may want to bring them up.

c. Discussion (10 minutes)**Format:** Whole group

Ask each group to report briefly to the whole group three interesting points made or issues raised during the small-group discussions—one for each of the three questions. Also discuss the implications the above quotations might have for classroom instruction.

4. Final reflection: Inkshed exercise (15 minutes)

Format: Individual and small groups

An inkshed is an opportunity for people to exchange ideas on a topic, through writing, in a short time. Responding to a prompt, participants write an initial reaction or idea on a piece of paper and place it in a central location in the room. They should not write their name on the paper. From the central location, they then take another person's paper, quickly read it, write a short response to it on the same piece of paper, and return it to the center table. They then take another paper, read the original reaction and subsequent responses on it, and add to them, and so on. Encourage participants to read and respond to as many papers as they can. After 5 to 10 minutes, all papers must be returned. Participants then find their own original response paper and look over the other participants' comments.

For this study circle, give participants 3 to 5 minutes to write a response to the following statement:

Through this study circle I have learned/changed my ideas about...

After 3 minutes, they put their papers (without names) on the center table, and for the next 7 minutes comment on other participants' papers. Participants should respond to at least two or three additional papers.

After participants have commented on other people's responses, they look over their own papers. Then invite them to share some of their thoughts about their own feelings or about the comments they received on their inksheds.

5. Planning next steps (10 minutes)

Format: Whole group

Ask whether anyone in the group would like to pursue follow-up ideas from their interim session activities. Talk about what these might be (e.g., making lesson plans available to colleagues or posting activity results to a state or regional professional development Web site). Invite participants to consider how they might continue to support each other as a group. Does the group want to meet again or stay in touch in other ways? If the group wants to continue to meet, make sure that there is a clear purpose and focus for the meetings.

6. Closing (5 minutes)

Draw participants' attention to other resources available on the topic of workforce preparation for immigrant learners. (See the attached reading list.) Thank the group for their work.

7. Evaluation (5 minutes)

Format: Individual and whole group, time permitting

Ask the participants to fill out the Evaluation Form, which asks for feedback about the entire study circle. If there is time, provide an opportunity for volunteers to comment on their experiences in the study circle.

Resources for Additional Reading

- Capps, R., Fix, M. E., Passel, J. S., Ost, J., & Perez-Lopez, D. (2005, June.) *A profile of the low-wage immigrant workforce*. Available from www.urban.org/Template.cfm?Section=ByAuthor&NavMenuID=63&template=/TaggedContent/ViewPublication.cfm&PublicationID=9349
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Issues in Improving Immigrant Workers' English Language Skills

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According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau (2003), at the beginning of the 21st century, 12% of the U.S. labor force were foreign born. Of the foreign-born workers in the United States, 22% held jobs in the service industry, 18.3% worked in factories and as laborers, and 12.6% worked in construction, mechanics, and repairs. Statistics further showed that immigrants were under represented in managerial and high-level sales positions and that their salaries remained lower than those of native-born workers: 54% of the foreign-born population working full time held low-income jobs compared to only 38% of native-born working full time.

Literacy and fluency in English seem to be related to economic self-sufficiency. Immigrants who are literate only in a language other than English are more likely to have noncontinuous employment and to earn less than those literate in English (Greenberg, Mac'as, Rhodes, & Chan, 2001). An analysis of the 2000 U.S. Census data on immigrant earnings revealed a positive relation between earnings and English language ability (Chiswick & Miller, 2002). For this and many other reasons, immigrants want to learn English. Forty-two percent of the participants in federally funded adult education programs are studying English (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). Yet barriers such as time, transportation, and childcare may keep many from attending classes (Van Duzer, Moss, Burt, Peyton, & Ross-Feldman, 2003).

Offering English as a second language (ESL) classes on the job is a way to provide instruction to those who have problems accessing programs outside of work. Learning in the context of work can improve work skills while improving language skills (see, e.g., ABC Canada, 1999; Burt, 1997; Hayflich, 1995; Mikulecky, 1992). Yet it appears that few employers provide this instruction (National Institute for Literacy, n.d.). Reasons that employers do not offer training include scheduling issues, cost, perceived lack of benefit to the company, and a sense that it is not their responsibility (Burt, 1997; Kavanaugh, 1999; Pierce, 2001).

This brief identifies five issues to be addressed in improving the English language skills of immigrant workers and provides suggestions for addressing these issues through workplace instruction.

Issue A: The Length of Time It Takes to Learn English

Both employers and employees often have unrealistic ideas of the amount of time it takes to learn English (Burt, 1997; Kavanaugh, 1999; Mikulecky, 1997; Pierce, 2001). Research is limited regarding adults learning English (Van Duzer, et al., 2003), but studies with children reveal that it takes from 2-5 years to become socially adept in a second language and from 5-8 years to become academically on par with native speakers (Cummins, 1991; Thomas & Collier, 1997). Clearly, a workplace ESL class of 40-60 hours is unlikely to result in great gains in language acquisition. When workers continue to speak to one another in their native language during

breaks and on the work floor, employers may become disillusioned. Then, when the workplace classes are over or when economic support for the classes is no longer available, employers often discontinue the classes (ABC Canada, 1999; Burt, 1997; Kavanaugh; Pierce).

Issue B: Language Use in the Workplace and Elsewhere

Sometimes there is a naivete about the use of language in general. Even if it were possible for workers to learn enough English in 50 hours to express themselves clearly and to understand everything that is said, it is unlikely that many workers would use the new language when speaking to other native speakers of their language. In order to choose to speak a language, there must be a need to speak that language (Burt, 2002; Hayflich, 1995). In the workplace, code switching (shifting from one language to another language in the course of a conversation) can occur with bilingual workers. For example, in a conversation held in Spanish, workers may give names of workplace machines and procedures in English. In a conversation in English, abstract concepts and personal opinions may be better expressed in Spanish. Code-switching and choosing to speak one language with one person and another language with another person to facilitate ease and comprehensibility of communication, can indicate bilingual proficiency rather than linguistic deficiency (Milroy & Muysken, 1995).

Recent research looks at how instructional contexts also affect motivation. A learner's motivation may vary from day to day and even from task to task (Dornyei, 2002b; Dornyei & Kormos, 2000). Using varied and challenging instructional activities helps learners stay focused and engaged in instructional content (Dornyei & Csizer, 1998). Research examining how to improve learner motivation suggests that social factors (e.g., group dynamics, learning environment, and a partner's motivation) affect a learner's attitude, effort, classroom behavior, and achievement (Dornyei, 2002b). Therefore, teachers should create an environment that is conducive to learning by encouraging group cohesion in the classroom. Pair and group work activities can provide learners with opportunities to share information and build a sense of community (Florez & Burt, 2001).

Issue C: Language and Identity

The decision to use or to not use the target language and the accompanying (in this case, mainstream U.S.) workplace behaviors may also be affected by a desire to maintain one's identity. Some immigrant workers may feel empowered when they use English and try out new workplace behaviors on the job (see, e.g., ABC Canada, 1999; Li, 2000). Others, however, may make a conscious decision to not use the new language as a way of asserting their own social identity (Moore, 1999; Pierce, 2001). In her ethnographic study of a cable manufacturing company in California, Katz (2000) reported that even though workers were instructed to speak up on the job and they understood that this was a behavior that could lead to promotions, many chose to hold on to their behaviors of not standing out in the crowd.

Research on the relationship between motivation and second language acquisition is ongoing. Current research looks at instructional practices that teachers use to generate and maintain learner motivation and strategies through which learners themselves take control of factors that

have an impact on their motivation and learning, such as lack of self-confidence, change of goals, or distractions (Dornyei, 2003; Noels, Clement, & Pelletier, 2003).

The decision to not use the new language and behaviors may also be affected by the attitude displayed by employers and co-workers when immigrant workers try out what they have learned. At one work site, learners trying to speak English at team meetings reported being laughed at by native English-speaking co-workers for demonstrating nonnative-like pronunciation (Moore, 1999).

Issue D: Relationship Between Training and Worker Performance

Not all workplace misunderstandings are due to poor English skills. Problems can arise from diverse causes such as poor organization of work flow; poor supervision; and poorly written workplace materials, e.g., signs, manuals, and memos (Westerfield & Burt, 1996). Worker productivity deficits may also be due to the way the workplace itself is structured. For example, use of technology, labor-management relations, and compensation offered may affect worker performance. Basic skills or English language training will not ameliorate these issues (Sarmiento & Schurman, 1992).

Empirical research with second language learners supports the contention that engaging in language interactions facilitates second language development. Findings from a study to determine how conversational interaction affects the acquisition of question formation indicate that interaction can increase the pace of acquisition (Mackey, 1999). Research on interaction includes studies of *task-based language learning and teaching and focus on form*.

Even in situations where worker improvement is noticed, it may not be due solely to workplace training. An analysis of a database developed by the American Society of Training and Development (ASTD) to explore the connection between employer investment in training and company performance concluded that, although firms that invested in training seemed to be more productive than those that did not, it was difficult to tie higher performance levels directly to the training offered (Bassi, Harrison, Ludwig, & McMurrer, 2001). In any case, those involved in workplace training report that when there is little or no opportunity provided for the workers to use the new learning, it will not be retained (Kavanaugh, 1999; Pierce, 2001; Sarmiento & Schurman, 1992).

Issue E: Measuring Outcomes

Measuring training and instructional outcomes can be problematic (Affholter, 1995). In classes for immigrant workers, there can be a lack of clarity about the outcomes being sought, i.e., an uncertainty about whether the instructional goals are improved productivity or workers speaking English on the job (Kavanaugh, 1999). Often goals are not clearly stated at the outset of the course, monitored throughout the course, and then evaluated at the end (Affholter). In short, program providers may not know what to measure, how to measure, or when to measure outcomes of the training.

Suggestions

Offer short, highly focused classes with clearly stated, measurable, and attainable objectives

Providing short, targeted classes with limited goals can be effective in the workplace (Burt, 1997; Kavanaugh, 1999). A 6-week course on accent reduction in Pima County, Arizona, for example, has been popular both with employers and with immigrant workers who have at least an intermediate level of English. Similarly, with pre-literate Latino housekeepers, a 3-week course with the three goals of greeting residents, supervisors, and co-workers; expressing lack of comprehension; and asking for clarification has been successful at a nursing home in Falls Church, Virginia (Burt, 2002).

When classes are focused and objectives are clearly stated and realistic as to what can be accomplished in a short time, it is easier to assess and monitor outcomes. Workers are more likely to complete a 6-week course than one that lasts 4 months. Furthermore, if the classes are carefully scheduled so as not to be held during rush times, there is less likelihood that the worker will be pulled from the class to go back to work (Kavanaugh, 1999).

Educate everyone about the process of learning a second language

Few people in this country appreciate the difficulty of learning and using a second language. More than 82% of the people in the United States speak only English (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003). Employers, native-English-speaking workers, and immigrant workers all need to appreciate the challenges of learning to speak English on the job. Educators report the value of using “shock language” classes (a short lesson taught entirely in a language unknown to anyone in the room except the instructor) with employers to give them a brief introduction to what foreign-born workers face in an English-speaking environment (Schrage, 1997). Giving native-speaking workers a shock-language experience could likewise increase their understanding of the complexity of learning a new language and help them become more supportive of the immigrant workers’ attempts to try out new language and behaviors on the job. This, in turn, would motivate the immigrant workers to use what they have learned on the job.

Use the native language

Limited use of the native language in workplace instruction, particularly in work sites where much of the workforce speaks the same native language, can help avoid miscommunication and can deepen learner comprehension of difficult concepts (Katz, 2000; Moore, 1999; Taggart & Martinez, 2003). Because bilingual instruction does not imply translation of all course content but rather a judicious choice of which language to use for which purposes, bilingual teachers need explicit criteria concerning when to use the native language and when to use English (Taggart & Martinez). The workers’ native language should be used to teach difficult content that they need to know in order to do a task. Then the English vocabulary and structures they need to read, listen to, write, and talk about the tasks should be taught (Taggart & Martinez).

Huerta-Mac'as (2003) offers another model for using two languages: A topic is introduced in the native language; key English vocabulary items are taught; hands-on activities (such as those involving workplace machines) are carried out in English and assessed in English; technology activities follow, with discussion in the native language; and the final discussion and question and answer activity is carried out in whichever language each individual student prefers. When the class has speakers of several different languages, Huerta-Mac'as suggests dividing the class into same-language small groups for discussion of the workplace issues in their native language. Each group then, in English, frames questions about the workplace issues for the teacher.

Get the leaders involved

It is professional wisdom in workplace instruction that, before beginning the classes, the instructor needs to get all the support of all employer stakeholders including chief officers, human resource personnel, and direct supervisors of the workers (Alamprese & Kay, 1993; Burt, 1997). However, worker leaders need to be involved as well—if not directly in the classes, as least as advocates to encourage others to attend (Pierce, 2001). They also need to be involved in planning the classes, setting the goals, and advising the educational service provider. The message that needs to be sent to the immigrant workers is that value is placed on learning English both by the employers and by fellow employees (ABC Canada, 1999).

Provide opportunities to use English on the job

Pierce (2001) describes a workplace where the company established and publicized a process for achieving promotions or higher pay. One of the skills workers had to demonstrate was a certain level of English literacy and oral proficiency. There are other ways, however, to encourage the use of English on the job that do not involve formal assessment of skills: Instructors can invite supervisors to visit classes; they can also encourage supervisors to have conversations in English with the learners about what they are learning and about their job tasks. Employers can promote discussion among native and nonnative English speakers on the job through English language discussion tables at breaks (Burt, 2002) and mentoring or tutoring by the native speakers (Pierce). This tutoring should not be seen as a substitute for language instruction given by a trained instructor but rather as ancillary support. Because merely speaking a language does not give one the skills to teach someone else to speak the language, native speakers who are tutoring co-workers in English should be given training. This training can often be provided for a modest fee through local literacy agencies or other English language service providers (Stuart, 1994).

Conclusion

English language ability is related to higher wages and more stable employment, yet little training is currently offered to immigrants at the workplace. Issues in providing this instruction include unrealistic expectations both of what can be learned in a short workplace class and how quickly language and cultural behaviors can and should be changed; difficulties in defining and assessing outcomes; and a lack of value placed on the instruction. Research is needed on the use of the native language in workplace instruction; on the efficacy of short-term classes; and on creative ways of providing, monitoring, and assessing English language instruction on the job.

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English That Works: Preparing Adult English Language Learners for Success in the Workforce and Community

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“Today in the class you said something important for me because I do it yesterday in my work. You’ll said is a good idea take notes when somebody explain something to you. And that’s what I did yesterday when my boss explained to me how to use the cash register. I telled her when I don’t understand I’m confused to explain me again and I repeat to her what I understand to know if it’s right or wrong. I asked her if sometimes can I see my notes to check if I’m doing it right. Her answer was yes because the notes can help you a lot in you work.”

—Logbook excerpt by a vocational ESL student,
San Diego Community College (D. Price-Machado,
personal communication, April 15, 2000)

The author of this logbook entry has not learned all the grammar rules of English, but she has mastered skills that are more likely to result in success in the workforce than will a demonstration of perfect grammar. She has learned how to take notes, how to ask for clarification, and how to restate instructions.

Increasingly in the United States, adult English as a second language (ESL) instructors teach language as a means to an end: to help prepare students for success in the workforce and their communities. In the process, they must balance the needs of different stakeholders: the learners, the employers, the community, and the funding agencies.

This digest discusses efforts in adult ESL education to link language instruction to workforce and civic skills (skills needed for successful participation in the community). It looks at the social forces that underlie these efforts and describes how adult ESL educators can integrate workforce and civic life skills into their curricula and convey these skills to their students through learner-centered instructional strategies and classroom management techniques.

Social Forces

Behind current efforts to link language instruction to workforce and civic skills are several social forces: economic shifts, welfare reform, new accountability requirements, and a greater sensitivity among adult ESL educators to learner needs.

Economic Shifts

The United States is shifting from an economy based on industry and manufacturing to one based on services and information (Stuart, 1988). High-paying unskilled jobs are increasingly difficult to find. In today's post-industrial economy, unskilled workers "may get work, but their earnings will not keep them out of poverty and their employment future remains precarious" (D'Amico, 1997, p. 5).

A recent survey found that more than 33% of job applicants nationwide lacked the math and reading skills to do the jobs they were seeking, up from 19% in 1996 (American Management Association, 2001). The sharp increase was attributed to the higher skill levels required in today's workforce, where new technologies have raised the bar for job applicants in terms of literacy and math.

The survey confirmed a trend found by the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS), a group of business and education leaders convened in 1990 by the U.S. Department of Labor to determine what schools can do to better prepare students for the workforce (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, 1991). Describing successful workers as "creative and responsible problem solvers" (p. v), the commission identified the specific skills needed in today's workforce: Successful workers are able to manage resources, work with others, manage information, operate within organizational systems, and use different technologies. To perform these workforce competencies, workers need literacy and computational skills; higher order thinking skills such as decision making, problem solving, representing information, and learning to learn; and certain personal attributes, such as maturity, honesty, and sociability.

Welfare Reform

Recent welfare reform legislation has pressured welfare recipients to find work and leave public assistance. Yet many welfare recipients lack the skills needed for jobs that lead to self-sufficiency (Carnevale & Desrochers, 1999). The jobs they get offer little opportunity for training and advancement. As a result, learners turn to adult education programs to provide the training that they need to advance.

Accountability Requirements

In 1998 the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) established accountability requirements for states receiving federal funds for adult education. The National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS), designed to collect information on adult education learner outcomes, became the vehicle for states reporting performance data (National Reporting System for Adult Education, 2001). NRS identifies five core outcome measures that meet the AEFLA requirements for core performance indicators: educational gain, employment, employment retention, placement in postsecondary education or training, and receipt of a secondary school diploma or GED. For educational gain, NRS identifies six ESL levels from beginning to high advanced. Each level is described in terms of competencies across three skill areas: speaking and listening, basic reading and writing, and functional and workforce skills.

Using the NRS descriptors as guidelines, adult ESL programs assess learners at intake. After a predetermined amount of instruction, programs assess learners again, using the level descriptors to determine progress. States have the option to use either a competency-based standardized test, such as the Basic English Skills Test (BEST; Center for Applied Linguistics, 1984); the CASAS Life Skills Tests (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System, 1996); or performance assessments, as long as the procedure is the same for all programs.

Learner Needs

In recent years adult ESL education has developed the tools to assess learner needs and interests. Today, curriculum developers take into account the expectations not only of employers, funding agencies, and the community but those of learners and workers as well (Burt, 1997).

In 1994 the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) launched the Equipped for the Future (EFF) initiative in response to the National Education Goals Panel challenge for a literate nation by 2000 (National Education Goals Panel, 1993). EFF asked from the perspective of adult learners, “What is it that adults need to know and be able to do in the 21st century?” SCANS had asked from the perspective of employers, “What does work require of schools?” The answers were similar, indicating enough overlap between the two for programs to develop curricula that reflect the needs of both the worker and the workforce. From the responses to the EFF question, NIFL identified 16 core skills organized in four major areas: communication, decision-making, interpersonal, and lifelong learning (National Institute for Literacy, 2000). A comparison of the EFF Standards and the Scans Competencies is provided at the end of this brief.

Developing Workforce and Civic Competencies

The SCANS competencies and the EFF standards combine basic communication, interpersonal, and thinking skills (such as problem solving, making inferences, and predicting outcomes) that form a part of any good adult education curriculum. Often a competency is embedded in the existing curriculum of an adult ESL program. It simply needs to be emphasized and its relevance to the workforce or the community made explicit.

The adult ESL classroom is a natural place to develop workforce and civic skills. This happens when instructors view learners the way that today’s workforce increasingly views successful workers as active, creative, and self-directed problem solvers who can work effectively on their own and with others.

The following ESL methods and techniques can be used to develop workforce and civic skills.

Classroom Simulations

The SCANS and EFF workforce and civic skills do not define content knowledge (what people know) but rather process knowledge (what people do and how they do it). The most direct way for instructors to help learners develop these skills is to create a learning environment that simulates the situations in which these skills are used in the outside world. For example, if talking

and reading about foods is a topic of interest to learners, the instructor can teach the necessary language (e.g., food-related vocabulary, comparative and superlative statements, and language functions for expressing preferences) within the real-life context of making a budget and comparing prices of food items at different supermarkets in order to plan a reception.

In the process, learners practice a variety of workforce and civic skills. When they determine what their budget will cover, learners are making decisions and allocating resources. When they compare food prices at different stores, they are acquiring and organizing information and using math to calculate. When they select and reserve a location for the reception and develop a timetable for setup and cleanup, learners are developing an organized approach, evaluating alternatives, and anticipating problems. Throughout the process, they are working as part of a team.

Cooperative Learning

In cooperative learning, small groups of learners work together to accomplish a task, with each member playing a role needed to complete the task. As learners interact, they seek and offer input, advocate and influence, negotiate, and teach one another—all valuable civic and workforce skills and all part of SCANS and EFF frameworks.

Jigsaw activities provide practice for cooperative learning skills by requiring students to learn new information and teach it to others.

Jigsaw Activity

1. Learners form “home” teams of four members each.
2. In their home teams, learners number off one through four. Learners with the same number form “expert” teams.
3. Each expert team studies a specified segment of information.
4. Home teams come together again. Learners teach each other the segment of information they have learned in their expert teams or contribute their knowledge to complete a team project.

Project assignments allow students to learn independently and with others as they research, organize and interpret information, and communicate their findings. Students can use technology (e.g., the Internet and videos) to research and present their projects, thereby developing information management and technology competencies.

Information gathering and reporting activities, such as surveys, also promote independent learning and effective interaction skills in the classroom. For example, a simple survey idea is “Who are you and where are you from?”

Survey Activity

1. Learners interview their classmates to learn names, the spelling of names, countries of origin, and the spelling of the country names.
2. Learners record the information in a table: last name, first name, and country of origin.
3. Learners tally the figures, listing the countries represented and the number of learners from each country.
4. Learners create a graph, such as a bar graph or pie chart, to present the information in the tally.

Conveying Workforce and Civic Skills Through Classroom Management Techniques

Standards of expected behavior exist within every society, both in the workforce and in everyday interactions with individuals in the community. Through classroom management techniques, instructors can create an environment for English language learners that prepares them for the behaviors that will help them achieve success in the workforce and the community.

Establishing Behavioral Expectations

In the United States, employees are expected to be on time, to be accountable for their actions, and to show initiative. Individual responsibility, integrity, and self-management are also fundamental to success.

These expected behaviors reflect the culture of the United States and may or may not coincide with attitudes, values, and behaviors that learners bring with them from their countries of origin. Discussing cultural differences helps learners understand and develop the patterns of behavior and interaction skills expected of them in their new communities. Another benefit of understanding cultural differences is that in this country's increasingly diverse society, people need to work well with individuals from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Price-Machado, 1996).

The basic requirement for effective classroom management is for instructors to model the expected behavior. The instructor arrives on time and comes prepared with an organized instructional plan that is communicated to learners. An effective way to do this is to start each class session with an agenda that can be referred to at various times throughout the session. This draws students' attention to organization and class structure, invites them to reflect on what has been achieved within an allocated time period, and keeps them aware that they are functioning within a system.

Building Skills Through Classroom Rules and Routines

Classroom routines provide a context in which organizational skills, self-management, appropriate attitude, and personal responsibility can be modeled and practiced. Rules and routines enable learners to be systematic as they learn and operate effectively within social, professional, and technological systems. Procedures and rules can be documented and displayed in the classroom, and learners can be asked to accept responsibility for informing new students about the procedures and rules.

Instructors can create systems in the classroom that set expectations for personal organization, preparedness, and responsibility, and also provide opportunities for learners to document that they are meeting those expectations. For example, learners can maintain weekly checklists to keep track of what they need to bring to class and tasks they need to complete in class. Those with school-age children can compare their own charts and checklists with the ones their children bring home from school. In this way, parents can help their children learn as they themselves are learning.

Generating Learner Involvement

The foremost goal of classroom management techniques should be student responsibility. Involving learners in the establishment of class rules and procedures helps develop student responsibility as well as the student support that is critical to the success of classroom management techniques. Simple strategies can give learners control over how a classroom functions and can encourage them to make decisions collaboratively, solve problems, think creatively, and exercise responsibility. Suggestion boxes provide opportunities for student input on issues from interpersonal conflicts in the classroom to furniture layout. Instructors and learners together can develop a list of classroom jobs and a job-assignment rotation.

Using Teamwork to Simulate the Work Environment

Another way to simulate the work environment is to create teams to perform classroom maintenance tasks, such as erasing the board, turning off the computers, and training new students. Teams provide a real-life context for learners to practice workforce and civic competencies. Each team role has duties and responsibilities attached to it, with clear performance criteria established in advance. Job descriptions can be posted in the classroom or printed on cards and distributed to team members as jobs are assigned. In open-entry classes, where there are frequent arrivals and departures, learners can experience a typical workforce situation where team members train new employees or fill in for absentees.

Criteria for grouping learners into teams will vary depending on the makeup of the class and the priorities of the teacher. Instructors may group learners on the basis of mixed language backgrounds, ability levels, or gender, or learners may form their own groups. No matter how the groups are formed, interpersonal challenges will exist within them, just as they exist in a workforce team. Managing these conflicts helps build interpersonal skills.

Conclusion

Instructional activities and classroom management techniques provide opportunities for learners to develop workforce and civic competencies and to apply what they are learning to the reality of their everyday lives. A successful program produces outcomes that are responsive to the goals of all stakeholders, and in doing so, prepares students for success in the workforce and in the wider community.

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EFF Standards and SCANS Competencies

EFF Standards	SCANS Competencies
Communication Skills	
<p>Reading—Determine purpose, select strategies, monitor comprehension, analyze and integrate information</p> <p>Writing—Determine purpose, organize and present information, use language correctly and appropriately, revise</p> <p>Speaking—Determine purpose, organize information, use language correctly and appropriately, monitor effectiveness</p> <p>Listening—Attend, use appropriate strategies, monitor comprehension, integrate new information with prior knowledge</p> <p>Observing—Attend, use appropriate strategies, monitor comprehension, analyze and integrate information</p>	<p>Basic Skills—Read, write, do math, listen, speak, interpret, organize information and ideas</p> <p>Thinking Skills—Think creatively, make decisions, solve problems, visualize, know how to learn and reason</p> <p>Personal Qualities—Responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, integrity, honesty</p>
Decision-Making Skills	
<p><i>Math</i>—Understand and work with symbolic information, apply math to solve problems, select data, use symbols to communicate</p> <p>Problems and Decisions—Anticipate problems, understand causes, identify and evaluate solutions, establish criteria for solution selection</p> <p>Planning—Set and prioritize goals, develop organized approach, carry out and monitor plan, evaluate effectiveness</p>	<p>Resource Management—Identify, organize, plan, and allocate time, money, materials, staff</p>
Interpersonal Skills	
<p>Cooperate—Interact courteously and respectfully, seek and give input, adjust actions to others’ needs and group goals</p> <p>Advocate and Influence—Define goals, gather supporting information, make a case, revise</p> <p>Conflict Resolution—Identify areas of agreement/disagreement, generate win/win options, engage parties in negotiation, evaluate and revise approach</p> <p>Guide Others—Assess others’ needs and own ability, use appropriate strategies, build on others’ strengths</p>	<p>Interpersonal Skills—Work on teams, teach others, serve customers, lead, negotiate, work in culturally diverse settings</p> <p>Information Management—Acquire and evaluate facts, organize and maintain data, interpret and communicate information, use computers</p>

EFF Standards	SCANS Competencies
Lifelong Learning Skills	
<p>Responsibility—Establish goals, identify own strengths/weaknesses, employ range of strategies, monitor progress, test in real life</p> <p>Reflect and Evaluate—Assess extent and relevance of current knowledge, make inferences, predictions, judgments</p> <p>Research—Pose questions, use multiple lines of inquiry, organize/analyze findings</p> <p>Technology—Use electronic tools to acquire, process, and manage information and practice skills</p>	<p>Systems—Understand social, organizational, and technological systems, monitor and correct performance, improve/design systems</p> <p>Technology—Select appropriate technology, apply technology to tasks, maintain and troubleshoot equipment</p>

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IV-A. Study Circle on Preparing Adult English Language Learners for the Workforce

Participant Handouts

Readings

- ▶ *Issues in Improving Immigrant Workers' English Language Skills*, by Miriam Burt www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/Workplaceissues.html
- ▶ *English That Works: Preparing Adult English Language Learners for Success in the Workforce and Community*, by Brigitte Marshall www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/Englishwks.html

Description

In this study circle, we will read and discuss research on preparing adult English language learners for the workforce and evaluate its applications to adult education practice. Participants will read two articles that discuss preparing adult English language learners for the workforce:

- ▶ *Issues in Improving Immigrant Workers' English Language Skills*, by Miriam Burt, identifies issues in improving immigrant workers' language skills and suggests ways to address these issues through workplace instruction.
- ▶ *English That Works: Preparing Adult English Language Learners for Success in the Workforce and Community*, by Brigitte Marshall, describes how to link language instruction to workforce skills.

The study group begins by reading and discussing research on issues related to workplace education for adult English language learners. The group then examines strategies to help provide English language learners in an English as a second language (ESL) class with the language and the cultural skills needed for success in the U.S. workplace. Participants are expected to reflect on their implementation of at least one strategy in between sessions.

Where:

When:

Study Circle Preparation

Before the first meeting of the study circle, please prepare by reading *Issues in Improving Immigrant Workers' English Language Skills*.

As you read the brief, please note ideas that stand out or questions that it raises for you. Highlight or write notes about the theories that resonate with your experience. During the first session of the study group, you will be asked to identify an issue (A, B, C, D, or E) from the brief and explain why it is interesting to you (in 1 or 2 minutes).

Jigsaw Reading Questions

English That Works: Preparing Adult English Language Learners for Success in the Workforce and Community

Directions: Answer the questions according to the facilitator's instructions.

Set I: Social Forces, Economic Shifts, Welfare Reform, Accountability Requirements, and Learner Needs

- a. Why has the number of job applicants unable to perform the math and reading tasks of the jobs they are seeking risen so sharply in the past few years?

- b. What does SCANS refer to? What was its mission?

- c. Why are many welfare recipients unable to find jobs that support them and their families?

Set II: Accountability Requirements and Learner Needs

- a. What is the purpose of the National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS)?

- b. How are the six NRS ESL levels described?

- c. How are SCANS and Equipped for the Future (EFF) similar? How are they different?

Set III: Developing Workforce and Civic Competencies, Classroom Simulations, and Cooperative Learning

- a. What is the difference between content knowledge and process knowledge?
Which kind of knowledge do the SCANS and EFF skills define?

- b. What workplace-related skills might a classroom simulation develop?

- c. What are three types of cooperative learning activities to try in the classroom?
What workplace-related skills might these activities develop?

Set IV: Conveying Workforce and Civic Skills Through Classroom Management Techniques

- a. What are three behavioral expectations that are quite common in the U.S. workplace?
Why might they be problematic to the adult English language learner?

- b. How might the teacher model these behaviors in the classroom?

- c. How can teamwork in the classroom simulate the workplace environment?

Peer Observation Form

1. What are you looking for?

2. What do you observe?

Discussion of observations with teacher

Evaluation Form

1. How useful did you find the study circle material? Please explain.

2. How useful did you find the study circle meetings? Please explain.

3. How useful did you find the new activity or strategy (including the documentation)? Please explain.

4. What tools or ideas are you taking away that you will continue to use in your practice?

5. In what ways are you going to continue to apply research in your practice?

6. If this study circle is offered again, what advice would you give the facilitator?

7. On what other topics would you like to have a study circle?

Resources for Additional Reading

- Capps, R., Fix, M. E., Passel, J. S., Ost, J., & Perez-Lopez, D. (2005, June.) *A profile of the low-wage immigrant workforce*. Available from www.urban.org/Template.cfm?Section=ByAuthor&NavMenuID=63&template=/TaggedContent/ViewPublication.cfm&PublicationID=9349
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Issues in Improving Immigrant Workers' English Language Skills

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According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau (2003), at the beginning of the 21st century, 12% of the U.S. labor force were foreign born. Of the foreign-born workers in the United States, 22% held jobs in the service industry, 18.3% worked in factories and as laborers, and 12.6% worked in construction, mechanics, and repairs. Statistics further showed that immigrants were under represented in managerial and high-level sales positions and that their salaries remained lower than those of native-born workers: 54% of the foreign-born population working full time held low-income jobs compared to only 38% of native-born working full time.

Literacy and fluency in English seem to be related to economic self-sufficiency. Immigrants who are literate only in a language other than English are more likely to have noncontinuous employment and to earn less than those literate in English (Greenberg, Mac'as, Rhodes, & Chan, 2001). An analysis of the 2000 U.S. Census data on immigrant earnings revealed a positive relation between earnings and English language ability (Chiswick & Miller, 2002). For this and many other reasons, immigrants want to learn English. Forty-two percent of the participants in federally funded adult education programs are studying English (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). Yet barriers such as time, transportation, and childcare may keep many from attending classes (Van Duzer, Moss, Burt, Peyton, & Ross-Feldman, 2003).

Offering English as a second language (ESL) classes on the job is a way to provide instruction to those who have problems accessing programs outside of work. Learning in the context of work can improve work skills while improving language skills (see, e.g., ABC Canada, 1999; Burt, 1997; Hayflich, 1995; Mikulecky, 1992). Yet it appears that few employers provide this instruction (National Institute for Literacy, n.d.). Reasons that employers do not offer training include scheduling issues, cost, perceived lack of benefit to the company, and a sense that it is not their responsibility (Burt, 1997; Kavanaugh, 1999; Pierce, 2001).

This brief identifies five issues to be addressed in improving the English language skills of immigrant workers and provides suggestions for addressing these issues through workplace instruction.

Issue A: The Length of Time It Takes to Learn English

Both employers and employees often have unrealistic ideas of the amount of time it takes to learn English (Burt, 1997; Kavanaugh, 1999; Mikulecky, 1997; Pierce, 2001). Research is limited regarding adults learning English (Van Duzer, et al., 2003), but studies with children reveal that it takes from 2-5 years to become socially adept in a second language and from 5-8 years to become academically on par with native speakers (Cummins, 1991; Thomas & Collier, 1997). Clearly, a workplace ESL class of 40-60 hours is unlikely to result in great gains in language acquisition. When workers continue to speak to one another in their native language during

breaks and on the work floor, employers may become disillusioned. Then, when the workplace classes are over or when economic support for the classes is no longer available, employers often discontinue the classes (ABC Canada, 1999; Burt, 1997; Kavanaugh; Pierce).

Issue B: Language Use in the Workplace and Elsewhere

Sometimes there is a naivete about the use of language in general. Even if it were possible for workers to learn enough English in 50 hours to express themselves clearly and to understand everything that is said, it is unlikely that many workers would use the new language when speaking to other native speakers of their language. In order to choose to speak a language, there must be a need to speak that language (Burt, 2002; Hayflich, 1995). In the workplace, code switching (shifting from one language to another language in the course of a conversation) can occur with bilingual workers. For example, in a conversation held in Spanish, workers may give names of workplace machines and procedures in English. In a conversation in English, abstract concepts and personal opinions may be better expressed in Spanish. Code-switching and choosing to speak one language with one person and another language with another person to facilitate ease and comprehensibility of communication, can indicate bilingual proficiency rather than linguistic deficiency (Milroy & Muysken, 1995).

Recent research looks at how instructional contexts also affect motivation. A learner's motivation may vary from day to day and even from task to task (Dornyei, 2002b; Dornyei & Kormos, 2000). Using varied and challenging instructional activities helps learners stay focused and engaged in instructional content (Dornyei & Csizer, 1998). Research examining how to improve learner motivation suggests that social factors (e.g., group dynamics, learning environment, and a partner's motivation) affect a learner's attitude, effort, classroom behavior, and achievement (Dornyei, 2002b). Therefore, teachers should create an environment that is conducive to learning by encouraging group cohesion in the classroom. Pair and group work activities can provide learners with opportunities to share information and build a sense of community (Florez & Burt, 2001).

Issue C: Language and Identity

The decision to use or to not use the target language and the accompanying (in this case, mainstream U.S.) workplace behaviors may also be affected by a desire to maintain one's identity. Some immigrant workers may feel empowered when they use English and try out new workplace behaviors on the job (see, e.g., ABC Canada, 1999; Li, 2000). Others, however, may make a conscious decision to not use the new language as a way of asserting their own social identity (Moore, 1999; Pierce, 2001). In her ethnographic study of a cable manufacturing company in California, Katz (2000) reported that even though workers were instructed to speak up on the job and they understood that this was a behavior that could lead to promotions, many chose to hold on to their behaviors of not standing out in the crowd.

Research on the relationship between motivation and second language acquisition is ongoing. Current research looks at instructional practices that teachers use to generate and maintain learner motivation and strategies through which learners themselves take control of factors that

have an impact on their motivation and learning, such as lack of self-confidence, change of goals, or distractions (Dornyei, 2003; Noels, Clement, & Pelletier, 2003).

The decision to not use the new language and behaviors may also be affected by the attitude displayed by employers and co-workers when immigrant workers try out what they have learned. At one work site, learners trying to speak English at team meetings reported being laughed at by native English-speaking co-workers for demonstrating nonnative-like pronunciation (Moore, 1999).

Issue D: Relationship Between Training and Worker Performance

Not all workplace misunderstandings are due to poor English skills. Problems can arise from diverse causes such as poor organization of work flow; poor supervision; and poorly written workplace materials, e.g., signs, manuals, and memos (Westerfield & Burt, 1996). Worker productivity deficits may also be due to the way the workplace itself is structured. For example, use of technology, labor-management relations, and compensation offered may affect worker performance. Basic skills or English language training will not ameliorate these issues (Sarmiento & Schurman, 1992).

Empirical research with second language learners supports the contention that engaging in language interactions facilitates second language development. Findings from a study to determine how conversational interaction affects the acquisition of question formation indicate that interaction can increase the pace of acquisition (Mackey, 1999). Research on interaction includes studies of *task-based language learning and teaching and focus on form*.

Even in situations where worker improvement is noticed, it may not be due solely to workplace training. An analysis of a database developed by the American Society of Training and Development (ASTD) to explore the connection between employer investment in training and company performance concluded that, although firms that invested in training seemed to be more productive than those that did not, it was difficult to tie higher performance levels directly to the training offered (Bassi, Harrison, Ludwig, & McMurrer, 2001). In any case, those involved in workplace training report that when there is little or no opportunity provided for the workers to use the new learning, it will not be retained (Kavanaugh, 1999; Pierce, 2001; Sarmiento & Schurman, 1992).

Issue E: Measuring Outcomes

Measuring training and instructional outcomes can be problematic (Affholter, 1995). In classes for immigrant workers, there can be a lack of clarity about the outcomes being sought, i.e., an uncertainty about whether the instructional goals are improved productivity or workers speaking English on the job (Kavanaugh, 1999). Often goals are not clearly stated at the outset of the course, monitored throughout the course, and then evaluated at the end (Affholter). In short, program providers may not know what to measure, how to measure, or when to measure outcomes of the training.

Suggestions

Offer short, highly focused classes with clearly stated, measurable, and attainable objectives

Providing short, targeted classes with limited goals can be effective in the workplace (Burt, 1997; Kavanaugh, 1999). A 6-week course on accent reduction in Pima County, Arizona, for example, has been popular both with employers and with immigrant workers who have at least an intermediate level of English. Similarly, with pre-literate Latino housekeepers, a 3-week course with the three goals of greeting residents, supervisors, and co-workers; expressing lack of comprehension; and asking for clarification has been successful at a nursing home in Falls Church, Virginia (Burt, 2002).

When classes are focused and objectives are clearly stated and realistic as to what can be accomplished in a short time, it is easier to assess and monitor outcomes. Workers are more likely to complete a 6-week course than one that lasts 4 months. Furthermore, if the classes are carefully scheduled so as not to be held during rush times, there is less likelihood that the worker will be pulled from the class to go back to work (Kavanaugh, 1999).

Educate everyone about the process of learning a second language

Few people in this country appreciate the difficulty of learning and using a second language. More than 82% of the people in the United States speak only English (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003). Employers, native-English-speaking workers, and immigrant workers all need to appreciate the challenges of learning to speak English on the job. Educators report the value of using “shock language” classes (a short lesson taught entirely in a language unknown to anyone in the room except the instructor) with employers to give them a brief introduction to what foreign-born workers face in an English-speaking environment (Schrage, 1997). Giving native-speaking workers a shock-language experience could likewise increase their understanding of the complexity of learning a new language and help them become more supportive of the immigrant workers’ attempts to try out new language and behaviors on the job. This, in turn, would motivate the immigrant workers to use what they have learned on the job.

Use the native language

Limited use of the native language in workplace instruction, particularly in work sites where much of the workforce speaks the same native language, can help avoid miscommunication and can deepen learner comprehension of difficult concepts (Katz, 2000; Moore, 1999; Taggart & Martinez, 2003). Because bilingual instruction does not imply translation of all course content but rather a judicious choice of which language to use for which purposes, bilingual teachers need explicit criteria concerning when to use the native language and when to use English (Taggart & Martinez). The workers’ native language should be used to teach difficult content that they need to know in order to do a task. Then the English vocabulary and structures they need to read, listen to, write, and talk about the tasks should be taught (Taggart & Martinez).

Huerta-Mac'as (2003) offers another model for using two languages: A topic is introduced in the native language; key English vocabulary items are taught; hands-on activities (such as those involving workplace machines) are carried out in English and assessed in English; technology activities follow, with discussion in the native language; and the final discussion and question and answer activity is carried out in whichever language each individual student prefers. When the class has speakers of several different languages, Huerta-Mac'as suggests dividing the class into same-language small groups for discussion of the workplace issues in their native language. Each group then, in English, frames questions about the workplace issues for the teacher.

Get the leaders involved

It is professional wisdom in workplace instruction that, before beginning the classes, the instructor needs to get all the support of all employer stakeholders including chief officers, human resource personnel, and direct supervisors of the workers (Alamprese & Kay, 1993; Burt, 1997). However, worker leaders need to be involved as well—if not directly in the classes, as least as advocates to encourage others to attend (Pierce, 2001). They also need to be involved in planning the classes, setting the goals, and advising the educational service provider. The message that needs to be sent to the immigrant workers is that value is placed on learning English both by the employers and by fellow employees (ABC Canada, 1999).

Provide opportunities to use English on the job

Pierce (2001) describes a workplace where the company established and publicized a process for achieving promotions or higher pay. One of the skills workers had to demonstrate was a certain level of English literacy and oral proficiency. There are other ways, however, to encourage the use of English on the job that do not involve formal assessment of skills: Instructors can invite supervisors to visit classes; they can also encourage supervisors to have conversations in English with the learners about what they are learning and about their job tasks. Employers can promote discussion among native and nonnative English speakers on the job through English language discussion tables at breaks (Burt, 2002) and mentoring or tutoring by the native speakers (Pierce). This tutoring should not be seen as a substitute for language instruction given by a trained instructor but rather as ancillary support. Because merely speaking a language does not give one the skills to teach someone else to speak the language, native speakers who are tutoring co-workers in English should be given training. This training can often be provided for a modest fee through local literacy agencies or other English language service providers (Stuart, 1994).

Conclusion

English language ability is related to higher wages and more stable employment, yet little training is currently offered to immigrants at the workplace. Issues in providing this instruction include unrealistic expectations both of what can be learned in a short workplace class and how quickly language and cultural behaviors can and should be changed; difficulties in defining and assessing outcomes; and a lack of value placed on the instruction. Research is needed on the use of the native language in workplace instruction; on the efficacy of short-term classes; and on creative ways of providing, monitoring, and assessing English language instruction on the job.

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English That Works: Preparing Adult English Language Learners for Success in the Workforce and Community

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July 2002

“Today in the class you said something important for me because I do it yesterday in my work. You’ll said is a good idea take notes when somebody explain something to you. And that’s what I did yesterday when my boss explained to me how to use the cash register. I telled her when I don’t understand I’m confused to explain me again and I repeat to her what I understand to know if it’s right or wrong. I asked her if sometimes can I see my notes to check if I’m doing it right. Her answer was yes because the notes can help you a lot in you work.”

—Logbook excerpt by a vocational ESL student,
San Diego Community College (D. Price-Machado,
personal communication, April 15, 2000)

The author of this logbook entry has not learned all the grammar rules of English, but she has mastered skills that are more likely to result in success in the workforce than will a demonstration of perfect grammar. She has learned how to take notes, how to ask for clarification, and how to restate instructions.

Increasingly in the United States, adult English as a second language (ESL) instructors teach language as a means to an end: to help prepare students for success in the workforce and their communities. In the process, they must balance the needs of different stakeholders: the learners, the employers, the community, and the funding agencies.

This digest discusses efforts in adult ESL education to link language instruction to workforce and civic skills (skills needed for successful participation in the community). It looks at the social forces that underlie these efforts and describes how adult ESL educators can integrate workforce and civic life skills into their curricula and convey these skills to their students through learner-centered instructional strategies and classroom management techniques.

Social Forces

Behind current efforts to link language instruction to workforce and civic skills are several social forces: economic shifts, welfare reform, new accountability requirements, and a greater sensitivity among adult ESL educators to learner needs.

Economic Shifts

The United States is shifting from an economy based on industry and manufacturing to one based on services and information (Stuart, 1988). High-paying unskilled jobs are increasingly difficult to find. In today's post-industrial economy, unskilled workers "may get work, but their earnings will not keep them out of poverty and their employment future remains precarious" (D'Amico, 1997, p. 5).

A recent survey found that more than 33% of job applicants nationwide lacked the math and reading skills to do the jobs they were seeking, up from 19% in 1996 (American Management Association, 2001). The sharp increase was attributed to the higher skill levels required in today's workforce, where new technologies have raised the bar for job applicants in terms of literacy and math.

The survey confirmed a trend found by the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS), a group of business and education leaders convened in 1990 by the U.S. Department of Labor to determine what schools can do to better prepare students for the workforce (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, 1991). Describing successful workers as "creative and responsible problem solvers" (p. v), the commission identified the specific skills needed in today's workforce: Successful workers are able to manage resources, work with others, manage information, operate within organizational systems, and use different technologies. To perform these workforce competencies, workers need literacy and computational skills; higher order thinking skills such as decision making, problem solving, representing information, and learning to learn; and certain personal attributes, such as maturity, honesty, and sociability.

Welfare Reform

Recent welfare reform legislation has pressured welfare recipients to find work and leave public assistance. Yet many welfare recipients lack the skills needed for jobs that lead to self-sufficiency (Carnevale & Desrochers, 1999). The jobs they get offer little opportunity for training and advancement. As a result, learners turn to adult education programs to provide the training that they need to advance.

Accountability Requirements

In 1998 the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) established accountability requirements for states receiving federal funds for adult education. The National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS), designed to collect information on adult education learner outcomes, became the vehicle for states reporting performance data (National Reporting System for Adult Education, 2001). NRS identifies five core outcome measures that meet the AEFLA requirements for core performance indicators: educational gain, employment, employment retention, placement in postsecondary education or training, and receipt of a secondary school diploma or GED. For educational gain, NRS identifies six ESL levels from beginning to high advanced. Each level is described in terms of competencies across three skill areas: speaking and listening, basic reading and writing, and functional and workforce skills.

Using the NRS descriptors as guidelines, adult ESL programs assess learners at intake. After a predetermined amount of instruction, programs assess learners again, using the level descriptors to determine progress. States have the option to use either a competency-based standardized test, such as the Basic English Skills Test (BEST; Center for Applied Linguistics, 1984); the CASAS Life Skills Tests (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System, 1996); or performance assessments, as long as the procedure is the same for all programs.

Learner Needs

In recent years adult ESL education has developed the tools to assess learner needs and interests. Today, curriculum developers take into account the expectations not only of employers, funding agencies, and the community but those of learners and workers as well (Burt, 1997).

In 1994 the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) launched the Equipped for the Future (EFF) initiative in response to the National Education Goals Panel challenge for a literate nation by 2000 (National Education Goals Panel, 1993). EFF asked from the perspective of adult learners, “What is it that adults need to know and be able to do in the 21st century?” SCANS had asked from the perspective of employers, “What does work require of schools?” The answers were similar, indicating enough overlap between the two for programs to develop curricula that reflect the needs of both the worker and the workforce. From the responses to the EFF question, NIFL identified 16 core skills organized in four major areas: communication, decision-making, interpersonal, and lifelong learning (National Institute for Literacy, 2000). A comparison of the EFF Standards and the Scans Competencies is provided at the end of this brief.

Developing Workforce and Civic Competencies

The SCANS competencies and the EFF standards combine basic communication, interpersonal, and thinking skills (such as problem solving, making inferences, and predicting outcomes) that form a part of any good adult education curriculum. Often a competency is embedded in the existing curriculum of an adult ESL program. It simply needs to be emphasized and its relevance to the workforce or the community made explicit.

The adult ESL classroom is a natural place to develop workforce and civic skills. This happens when instructors view learners the way that today’s workforce increasingly views successful workers as active, creative, and self-directed problem solvers who can work effectively on their own and with others.

The following ESL methods and techniques can be used to develop workforce and civic skills.

Classroom Simulations

The SCANS and EFF workforce and civic skills do not define content knowledge (what people know) but rather process knowledge (what people do and how they do it). The most direct way for instructors to help learners develop these skills is to create a learning environment that simulates the situations in which these skills are used in the outside world. For example, if talking

and reading about foods is a topic of interest to learners, the instructor can teach the necessary language (e.g., food-related vocabulary, comparative and superlative statements, and language functions for expressing preferences) within the real-life context of making a budget and comparing prices of food items at different supermarkets in order to plan a reception.

In the process, learners practice a variety of workforce and civic skills. When they determine what their budget will cover, learners are making decisions and allocating resources. When they compare food prices at different stores, they are acquiring and organizing information and using math to calculate. When they select and reserve a location for the reception and develop a timetable for setup and cleanup, learners are developing an organized approach, evaluating alternatives, and anticipating problems. Throughout the process, they are working as part of a team.

Cooperative Learning

In cooperative learning, small groups of learners work together to accomplish a task, with each member playing a role needed to complete the task. As learners interact, they seek and offer input, advocate and influence, negotiate, and teach one another—all valuable civic and workforce skills and all part of SCANS and EFF frameworks.

Jigsaw activities provide practice for cooperative learning skills by requiring students to learn new information and teach it to others.

Jigsaw Activity

1. Learners form “home” teams of four members each.
2. In their home teams, learners number off one through four. Learners with the same number form “expert” teams.
3. Each expert team studies a specified segment of information.
4. Home teams come together again. Learners teach each other the segment of information they have learned in their expert teams or contribute their knowledge to complete a team project.

Project assignments allow students to learn independently and with others as they research, organize and interpret information, and communicate their findings. Students can use technology (e.g., the Internet and videos) to research and present their projects, thereby developing information management and technology competencies.

Information gathering and reporting activities, such as surveys, also promote independent learning and effective interaction skills in the classroom. For example, a simple survey idea is “Who are you and where are you from?”

Survey Activity

1. Learners interview their classmates to learn names, the spelling of names, countries of origin, and the spelling of the country names.
2. Learners record the information in a table: last name, first name, and country of origin.
3. Learners tally the figures, listing the countries represented and the number of learners from each country.
4. Learners create a graph, such as a bar graph or pie chart, to present the information in the tally.

Conveying Workforce and Civic Skills Through Classroom Management Techniques

Standards of expected behavior exist within every society, both in the workforce and in everyday interactions with individuals in the community. Through classroom management techniques, instructors can create an environment for English language learners that prepares them for the behaviors that will help them achieve success in the workforce and the community.

Establishing Behavioral Expectations

In the United States, employees are expected to be on time, to be accountable for their actions, and to show initiative. Individual responsibility, integrity, and self-management are also fundamental to success.

These expected behaviors reflect the culture of the United States and may or may not coincide with attitudes, values, and behaviors that learners bring with them from their countries of origin. Discussing cultural differences helps learners understand and develop the patterns of behavior and interaction skills expected of them in their new communities. Another benefit of understanding cultural differences is that in this country's increasingly diverse society, people need to work well with individuals from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Price-Machado, 1996).

The basic requirement for effective classroom management is for instructors to model the expected behavior. The instructor arrives on time and comes prepared with an organized instructional plan that is communicated to learners. An effective way to do this is to start each class session with an agenda that can be referred to at various times throughout the session. This draws students' attention to organization and class structure, invites them to reflect on what has been achieved within an allocated time period, and keeps them aware that they are functioning within a system.

Building Skills Through Classroom Rules and Routines

Classroom routines provide a context in which organizational skills, self-management, appropriate attitude, and personal responsibility can be modeled and practiced. Rules and routines enable learners to be systematic as they learn and operate effectively within social, professional, and technological systems. Procedures and rules can be documented and displayed in the classroom, and learners can be asked to accept responsibility for informing new students about the procedures and rules.

Instructors can create systems in the classroom that set expectations for personal organization, preparedness, and responsibility, and also provide opportunities for learners to document that they are meeting those expectations. For example, learners can maintain weekly checklists to keep track of what they need to bring to class and tasks they need to complete in class. Those with school-age children can compare their own charts and checklists with the ones their children bring home from school. In this way, parents can help their children learn as they themselves are learning.

Generating Learner Involvement

The foremost goal of classroom management techniques should be student responsibility. Involving learners in the establishment of class rules and procedures helps develop student responsibility as well as the student support that is critical to the success of classroom management techniques. Simple strategies can give learners control over how a classroom functions and can encourage them to make decisions collaboratively, solve problems, think creatively, and exercise responsibility. Suggestion boxes provide opportunities for student input on issues from interpersonal conflicts in the classroom to furniture layout. Instructors and learners together can develop a list of classroom jobs and a job-assignment rotation.

Using Teamwork to Simulate the Work Environment

Another way to simulate the work environment is to create teams to perform classroom maintenance tasks, such as erasing the board, turning off the computers, and training new students. Teams provide a real-life context for learners to practice workforce and civic competencies. Each team role has duties and responsibilities attached to it, with clear performance criteria established in advance. Job descriptions can be posted in the classroom or printed on cards and distributed to team members as jobs are assigned. In open-entry classes, where there are frequent arrivals and departures, learners can experience a typical workforce situation where team members train new employees or fill in for absentees.

Criteria for grouping learners into teams will vary depending on the makeup of the class and the priorities of the teacher. Instructors may group learners on the basis of mixed language backgrounds, ability levels, or gender, or learners may form their own groups. No matter how the groups are formed, interpersonal challenges will exist within them, just as they exist in a workforce team. Managing these conflicts helps build interpersonal skills.

Conclusion

Instructional activities and classroom management techniques provide opportunities for learners to develop workforce and civic competencies and to apply what they are learning to the reality of their everyday lives. A successful program produces outcomes that are responsive to the goals of all stakeholders, and in doing so, prepares students for success in the workforce and in the wider community.

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EFF Standards and SCANS Competencies

EFF Standards	SCANS Competencies
Communication Skills	
<p>Reading—Determine purpose, select strategies, monitor comprehension, analyze and integrate information</p> <p>Writing—Determine purpose, organize and present information, use language correctly and appropriately, revise</p> <p>Speaking—Determine purpose, organize information, use language correctly and appropriately, monitor effectiveness</p> <p>Listening—Attend, use appropriate strategies, monitor comprehension, integrate new information with prior knowledge</p> <p>Observing—Attend, use appropriate strategies, monitor comprehension, analyze and integrate information</p>	<p>Basic Skills—Read, write, do math, listen, speak, interpret, organize information and ideas</p> <p>Thinking Skills—Think creatively, make decisions, solve problems, visualize, know how to learn and reason</p> <p>Personal Qualities—Responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, integrity, honesty</p>
Decision-Making Skills	
<p><i>Math</i>—Understand and work with symbolic information, apply math to solve problems, select data, use symbols to communicate</p> <p>Problems and Decisions—Anticipate problems, understand causes, identify and evaluate solutions, establish criteria for solution selection</p> <p>Planning—Set and prioritize goals, develop organized approach, carry out and monitor plan, evaluate effectiveness</p>	<p>Resource Management—Identify, organize, plan, and allocate time, money, materials, staff</p>
Interpersonal Skills	
<p>Cooperate—Interact courteously and respectfully, seek and give input, adjust actions to others’ needs and group goals</p> <p>Advocate and Influence—Define goals, gather supporting information, make a case, revise</p> <p>Conflict Resolution—Identify areas of agreement/disagreement, generate win/win options, engage parties in negotiation, evaluate and revise approach</p> <p>Guide Others—Assess others’ needs and own ability, use appropriate strategies, build on others’ strengths</p>	<p>Interpersonal Skills—Work on teams, teach others, serve customers, lead, negotiate, work in culturally diverse settings</p> <p>Information Management—Acquire and evaluate facts, organize and maintain data, interpret and communicate information, use computers</p>

EFF Standards	SCANS Competencies
Lifelong Learning Skills	
<p>Responsibility—Establish goals, identify own strengths/weaknesses, employ range of strategies, monitor progress, test in real life</p> <p>Reflect and Evaluate—Assess extent and relevance of current knowledge, make inferences, predictions, judgments</p> <p>Research—Pose questions, use multiple lines of inquiry, organize/analyze findings</p> <p>Technology—Use electronic tools to acquire, process, and manage information and practice skills</p>	<p>Systems—Understand social, organizational, and technological systems, monitor and correct performance, improve/design systems</p> <p>Technology—Select appropriate technology, apply technology to tasks, maintain and troubleshoot equipment</p>

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Notes

IV-B. Study Circle on Second Language Acquisition

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Study Circle on Second Language Acquisition

Facilitator Guide

Introduction

The purpose of this study circle is to read and discuss second language acquisition (SLA) theory and research and to evaluate its applications to adult education practice. Participants will read two CAELA publications about SLA, explore the meaning and applications of SLA research to adult ESL instruction, implement at least one new research- or theory-based strategy in their teaching, and reflect on the impact of that experimentation on their thinking and practice.

Readings

- ▶ *Beginning to Work With Adult English Language Learners: Some Considerations*, by MaryAnn Cunningham Florez and Miriam Burt, describes SLA theory and suggests several theory-based teaching strategies. www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/beginQA.html
- ▶ *Second Language Acquisition in Adults: From Research to Practice*, by Donna Moss and Lauren Ross-Feldman, describes SLA research and offers research-based strategies. www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/SLA.html

Study Circle Session lengths

Session 1: 2 hours

Session 2: 1.5 hours

Session 1: Preparation

Send participants information about the study circle well in advance of the first session. Participants in this study circle should read *Beginning to Work With Adult English Language Learners* before the first session (see Participant Handouts). The accompanying assignment asks them to make note of the theories that resonate with their experiences as *learners* of an additional language. At the beginning of Session 1, they will share one phrase or sentence from the text that captures their experience particularly well, and describe why.

1. Opening (5 minutes)

- ▶ Welcome the group and introduce yourself.
- ▶ Review the purpose of this study circle.
- ▶ Review logistical details such as the schedule, breaks, and location of bathrooms.
- ▶ Check that all participants have both readings.

2. Participant introductions (15 minutes)

Format: Whole group

As noted in the pre-session reading assignment, participants introduce themselves and read a phrase or sentence selected from the first two sections of *Beginning to Work With Adult English Language Learners* and explain how it resonates with their experience as language learners. Remind participants that they have only 1 or 2 minutes for this sharing. There is no discussion during this time; discussion will follow in smaller groups.

3. Reviewing the theory (15 minutes)

Format: Small groups

During this time, small groups discuss their reactions to what was shared during the introductions and review their understanding of SLA theory. Divide the participants into groups of three and give them these instructions (also post the instructions on flip chart paper):

During the next 15 minutes you will have two related discussions. First, please talk about what struck you about the quotes that were read during the introductions. What stood out for you? Did you find that the quotes about our own learning touched on the full range of SLA theory, or did they cluster around a few key points? (Refer to the readings as needed.) Next, think about the students in your class or program. Which parts of the SLA theory you read seemed most relevant for those students? Discuss any questions you have about the SLA theory described in the first two sections of the reading.

4. Self-assessment (20 minutes)

Format: Individual and small group

For this activity, the group skips to the section entitled “What instructional approaches support second language development in adults?” Explain that the groups will be reflecting on their own use of these instructional approaches. Ask participants to read over the 10 suggested approaches and use the self-assessment form to note how comfortable and intentional they are (i.e., how consciously they apply the approaches) in their practice. If there are administrators in the group, they can answer in terms of what they observe in their programs. The ratings are the following:

- 1 – I don’t use this approach.
- 2 – I am not very intentional or comfortable with this approach.
- 3 – I am somewhat intentional or comfortable with this approach.
- 4 – I am very intentional and comfortable with this approach.

Provide these instructions:

When everyone in your group is finished, go down the list and discuss areas of greater or lesser comfort. Discuss any patterns you notice. As you go, share any specific strategies or activities you use to implement the various approaches in your own work, and also any barriers you’ve encountered in trying to use the approaches.

There is no report out from these small groups. You will return to the self-assessments later.

5. Shifting to the research (5 minutes)

Format: Mini-lecture

The group will now shift over to the other brief on *Second Language Acquisition in Adults*. Summarize the introduction briefly. Note the three areas of SLA discussed in the research. If definitions are needed, clarify the distinctions among experimental, correlational, and descriptive studies by giving the following information adapted from James Dean and Ted Rodgers, *Doing Second Language Research* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003):

In descriptive research, no attempt is made to change behaviors or conditions—you measure things as they are. Descriptive studies are also called observational, because you observe without otherwise intervening.

In experimental research, you take measurements or observations, try some sort of intervention, then observe again to see what happened. Some experimental research compares control groups (which do not receive the intervention) with experimental groups (which do receive the intervention).

Correlational research asks, “What is the relationship between two or more variables in a given set of subjects or situations?” Correlational research looks at the degree of relationship between the variables but not the effect of one variable on another variable.

6. Focus on the research (25 minutes)

Format: Small group

Break the group into three groups, each of which will focus on one area of the research (such as learner motivation, the role of interaction, or the role of vocabulary knowledge in learning). Try to divide the group by interest area, but ask volunteers to move if the groups are too unevenly split. Each group should have some flipchart paper and a marker. Their tasks are as follows:

1. Read the section on your research topic.
2. On flipchart paper, create a chart such as the one below, filling it in with information from the reading.

Research Findings	Related Strategies

3. When the chart has been filled in, discuss your use of these strategies in your own practice, adding other strategies you use that you believe relate to the research.
4. Discuss these questions (posted by facilitator for all groups): Do you see all of these strategies being used in common practice? Are there any that challenge common practice? Are there level-specific applications of these strategies? Population- or context-specific applications?

7. Sharing strategies (20 minutes)

Format: Whole group

After the groups have posted their charts on the wall, ask participants to walk around and review what other groups have written. Then invite each group to share some thoughts about any of the questions they discussed in Step 4 above.

8. Considering application (10 minutes)

Format: Individual and then pairs

Ask participants to look over the posted strategies as well as the approaches listed on the self-assessment page and to reflect on which strategy or strategies they'd like to experiment with between sessions. Have them share what they chose and why with a partner. What do they hope happens or changes? After they've talked through their ideas, have them fill out the New Activity Planning Form. Encourage participants to consider peer observation in their plans if there are co-workers in the study circle. (See the Peer Observation Form and How to Conduct Peer Coaching and Mentoring.)

9. Closing (5 minutes)

Review the intersession assignment, and show participants the page they will use for their New Activity Notes.

10. Evaluation (5 minutes)

Do a quick evaluation to identify the main strengths and weaknesses of the session. Ask participants these questions:

- ▶ What was the most useful aspect of today's session?
- ▶ What might we change if we do this study circle again?

Session 2: Preparation

Post a flipchart list of the 10 instructional approaches from the self-assessment and the charts that the groups created during Session 1.

1. Opening (10 minutes)

Welcome the group back and check on how their activities went. Have them form groups according to the kind of strategy they experimented with between sessions:

- ▶ Strategies related to learner motivation
- ▶ Strategies related to interaction
- ▶ Strategies related to vocabulary development
- ▶ SLA-supportive approaches from the self-assessment chart

2. Debriefing the new activities or strategies (25 minutes)

Format: Pairs or small groups clustered according to strategy types listed above

Ask participants to refer to their New Activity Notes as they debrief with the following (posted) questions:

- ▶ What did you try? What happened? What factors affected your implementation?
- ▶ What did you conclude from implementing this activity or strategy?
- ▶ What advice would you have for other practitioners about implementing this strategy?

Write the answers to the last question on a sticky note and put it up next to the strategy on the posted flipchart. This advice will be typed up and sent out to participants.

3. Reflecting in writing (15 minutes)

Format: Individual

Now that participants have tested a new strategy, talked about it with colleagues, and heard about others' activities, they need to consider what's next. Ask them to write for 10 minutes about what they've discovered through their own experimentation or what they learned from the experiences of others, and what they see as their next steps. What new questions have been raised? What other strategies do they want to try? Then invite volunteers to read their writing to the group.

4. Cross-cultural issues (35 minutes)

Format: Pairs or small groups

There is one section of *Beginning to Work With Adult English Language Learners* that the group has not yet discussed—the section entitled, “What do instructors need to know about culture and working with multicultural groups?”

Introduce this section by reading the opening paragraph to the group.

Have participants return to their small groups. Explain that this part of the text is organized into three bulleted suggestions. For each bullet, they have 10 minutes to read the text and discuss a related question, which will be posted. Each group should have a note taker writing down the group's ideas. Announce when to move to the next bullet and post the next discussion question.

As noted below, the groups will have a chance afterwards to report on key points raised during their discussions. Many creative ideas will emerge. However, there are some key points that you should raise if they have not surfaced naturally during the discussion. These points are noted in italics following each discussion question.

Discussion questions

1. It can be challenging to be respectful of cultural beliefs and practices while also being careful not to see individuals in terms of cultural stereotypes. Talk about a time you have erred one way or the other. What can you do to avoid this?

One of the most effective ways to raise awareness of culture and cultural stereotypes is to be mindful of how we talk about our own cultures. For example, we can acknowledge that we live in a multicultural society by remembering to say, “In the dominant culture, it is common . . .” when we talk about the ways that most (but not all) Americans think or behave. To avoid perpetuating cultural stereotypes, we can train ourselves to check in with people (“I’ve heard that, in the Japanese culture, it is considered disrespectful to look the teacher in the eye. Is that true for you?”) rather than assuming that everyone follows these cultural norms.

2. Try as you might, you cannot anticipate everything that might make others uncomfortable or trigger difficult memories. What can you do if you make that mistake?

What makes something a “safe” environment will differ from culture to culture; it is helpful to acknowledge this at the beginning of a course and to explain that you will do your best to respond to students’ needs. If you accidentally offend someone or make them uncomfortable, apologize for the distress you have caused and communicate what your true intention was. It is important to respond—do not ignore someone who is upset.

3. Response time is one way that culture may influence communication style. What other culturally shaped differences have you noticed regarding communication styles or learning styles? How have you worked with these differences?

This is another topic to talk about at the beginning of a course, with examples of people’s varied ways of communicating and learning. Use humor to illustrate some possible misunderstandings and to convey that, in an ESL class, differences are to be expected. Help students become aware of and articulate their own styles.

5. Strategy sharing (15 minutes)

Format: Whole group

For each question, ask the note takers to report on one strategy, issue, or question that was discussed in their groups. When all groups have reported out, use the remaining time for groups to ask each other questions or comment on the issues raised.

6. Planning next steps (10 minutes)

Format: Whole group

Invite participants to consider how they might continue to support each other as a group. Does the group want to meet again or to stay in touch in other ways? If the group wants to continue to meet, make sure that there is a clear purpose and focus for the meetings. What do they want more time to talk about?

7. Closing (5 minutes)

- ▶ Make sure you have contact information so that you can send participants the promised notes. Ask permission to also disseminate a group contact list (and give people a chance to opt out).
- ▶ Thank the group for their work.

8. Evaluation (10 minutes)

Ask participants to fill out the Evaluation Form, which asks for feedback about the entire study circle. If there is time, ask volunteers to comment on any aspect of the study circle.

Beginning to Work with Adult English Language Learners: Some Considerations

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National Center for ESL Literacy Education
October, 2001*

In many parts of the United States, the number of nonnative adult learners seeking English language instruction is growing. States such as North Carolina, Arkansas, Georgia, Tennessee, Nebraska, and Iowa, not historically associated with immigrant influxes, have been experiencing increased growth rates with these populations in the last decade (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). In 1998, 47% of the participants in federally funded adult education programs were there to learn English as a second language (ESL) (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, 1999). As immigrant populations seek English language instruction, the need for teachers to serve them is drawing people into the adult ESL teaching field. Some of these teachers have training and experience working with adults learning English. However, many are working with these learners for the first time.

What do teachers who are beginning to work with adult English language learners need to know? This Q&A discusses recommendations in four areas: application of principles of adult learning in ESL contexts, second language acquisition, culture and working with multicultural groups, and instructional approaches that support language development in adults. It is not intended to be comprehensive. Rather, it gives teachers an overview of important points, suggests basic strategies to use, and provides resources to consult for further information.

How do the principles of adult learning apply to adult English language learners?

Malcolm Knowles' (1973) principles of andragogy, the art and science of facilitating adult learning, are still seminal to many of today's theories about learning and instruction for adults.

- ▶ Adults are self-directed in their learning.
- ▶ Adults have reservoirs of experience that serve as resources as they learn.
- ▶ Adults are practical, problem-solving-oriented learners.
- ▶ Adults want their learning to be immediately applicable to their lives.
- ▶ Adults want to know why something needs to be learned.

In general, this picture of the practical, purposeful, self-directed learner is representative of adults, whether they are native or nonnative English speakers. All adult learners need adult-appropriate content, materials, and activities that speak to their needs and interests and allow them to demonstrate their knowledge and abilities.

So what is different for English language learners? Obviously, they need help with the language as they learn content. Teachers working with English language learners also need to think about how Knowles' adult learner characteristics are filtered through culture, language, and experience. For example, it is not uncommon to find nonnative learners who may be hesitant to take charge of their own learning. Their educational experiences in their countries may have taught them that the teacher is the unquestioned expert. They may be resistant to a learner-centered classroom where they are expected to develop goals and work in groups with other learners (Shank & Terrill, 1995).

Nonnative learners also may resist the lifeskill-oriented instruction that is common in many adult ESL programs. Coming from cultures where learning is a high-status, academic endeavor, they may expect a more academically oriented environment (Hardman, 1999). Because of this, teachers should explain to learners why they are learning what they are learning in this new way. Similarly, because many English language learners may have studied English grammar and are familiar with the terms describing language components, instructors should be prepared, when appropriate, to answer learners' questions about sentence structure and vocabulary.

What do instructors need to know about second language acquisition (SLA)?

Theories about how languages are learned can be complex. However, having some understanding of how people acquire and use languages can be useful to the teachers of adult English language learners.

Second language acquisition theories address cognitive issues (how the brain processes information in general and language in particular), affective issues (how emotions factor into second language processing and learning), and linguistic issues (how learners interact with and internalize new language systems). The following are some suggestions that instructors can use in the classroom. They are drawn from theories of second language acquisition generally accepted as relevant for most second language learners (summarized from Brown, 2001; Lightbown, 2000; Krashen, 1981).

- ▶ **Meaningful interaction and natural communication in the target language are necessary for successful language acquisition.**

Learners need to use the language, not simply talk about it. Give learners opportunities and purposes for communication that reflect or relate to their lives (e.g., role-playing a doctor/patient exchange or creating a chart with information on local medical services). Use authentic materials in activities whenever possible (e.g., listening for details in a recorded telephone message or reading classified ads from the local newspaper).

- ▶ **Effective language use involves an automatic processing of language.**

To become proficient, learners need to move from a concentrated focus on grammar, forms, and structures to using language as a tool to accomplish communication tasks. Think about the purpose of each lesson (e.g., is it important that the learner produce a

specific grammar point or communicate an idea?) and interject error correction to serve those purposes. For example, if the activity is an oral substitution drill practicing the correct use of irregular past tense forms, it is appropriate to correct the verb form being used. However, if the focus of the lesson is making small talk on the job—a communication that involves use of irregular past tense verbs—correction may simply consist of a repetition of the correct form by the teacher (e.g., “I go to a movie last Saturday” is corrected by, “Oh, you went to a movie. What movie did you see?”).

▶ **Language learners can monitor their speech for correctness when they have time to focus their attention on form and know the language rules involved.**

Give learners sufficient time for activities, to communicate, and to monitor their performance. Integrate lessons on grammar, structures, and language rules that are relevant to the communication task at hand (e.g., present lessons on imperatives when discussing giving directions) so that learners become familiar with correct structures. Focus activity objectives so that learners are not asked to process and monitor too many points at one time (e.g., asking learners to use new vocabulary and correctly use present and present progressive verb forms in an unfamiliar dialogue format can be overwhelming).

▶ **Second language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to language that is at and slightly above their level of comprehension.**

In the materials you use and in your own speech, expose learners to language that is both at and slightly above what they can comfortably understand. Offer a balance of easier reading and listening activities with more challenging ones. Provide pictures, gestures, and prompts when learners are asked to use more complex language.

▶ **People have affective filters (created by a variety of factors such as motivation, self-confidence, or anxiety) that can support or disrupt acquisition of a second language.**

Create a classroom environment in which learners feel comfortable using and taking risks with English. Use activities that ask learners to work together or share information to build a sense of familiarity and community. Make sure the physical environment is as comfortable as possible. Avoid constant error correction and include activities that focus on overall ability to communicate meaning. Recycle topics or activities that motivate learners.

▶ **There are “interlanguage” periods during which learners make systematic errors that are a natural part of language learning.**

These may be similar to those of a child learning a first language (e.g., adding ed to signify all past tense verbs) or similar to patterns in a learner’s native language (e.g., Spanish speakers placing adjectives after nouns, such as shirt blue). If errors appear to be normal and developmental, provide feedback and modeling of correct structures to support learners as they move through these steps. If an error persists, consider more structured practice on the point.

- ▶ **There is a silent period during which learners are absorbing the new language prior to producing it.**

The length of this period may vary for each learner. Allow learners time to adjust to the new language and begin to internalize its sounds and patterns. Use activities that allow them to demonstrate comprehension without having to produce language (e.g., say new vocabulary and ask learners to hold up picture cards that illustrate each word).

- ▶ **Second language acquisition theories are based on research that investigates specific questions with specific populations in defined circumstances.**

Some theories may be accepted as applicable across populations and contexts; the broad application of others may be debatable. Evaluate how a theory may or may not relate to adult English language learners in general and to learners in your class specifically. Use second language acquisition theories to help make decisions about balancing different language learning activities; observe and respond to learner progress; and set realistic expectations of what learners can accomplish.

What do instructors need to know about culture and working with multicultural groups?

Culture and language are closely related. Learning a new language involves learning about (but not necessarily wholeheartedly embracing) new ways of thinking, feeling, and expressing. This process can put tremendous pressure on an adult who has a well-developed sense of self in the native language and culture. Because immigrants are, to varying degrees and not always consciously, re-configuring their views of themselves in relation to a new social context, they may at times be ambivalent, confused, or even hostile to the process of adapting to a new culture (Ullman, 1997). This includes language learning. Teachers can help ease this process in a variety of ways:

- ▶ Become acquainted with learners' cultures to better understand their perspectives and expectations both inside and outside the classroom (e.g., traditional literacy practices, gender roles, teacher and learner roles, historic interactions with other cultural groups, rhetorical patterns, religious beliefs and customs). Avoid generalizing and stereotyping learners. Acknowledge and respect differences. When discussing cultural differences and traditions in class, focus on descriptions rather than judgments.
- ▶ Learners may not be willing or able to participate in activities that involve discussion of taboo subjects, revelation of personal information, or reliving of painful experiences. For example, a refugee who lost family in a war may be very uncomfortable when a teacher asks learners to bring in pictures of their families for an activity. Be aware of the possible implications of activities or topics and offer learners options through which they can respond neutrally, such as bringing a photo of a family from a magazine instead of a personal photo.

- ▶ Remember that culture can play a role in all facets of language, including response time. Many English language learners will come from cultures where silence is not uncomfortable. When this factor is coupled with the reality of a slower processing time for listening comprehension in a second language, it suggests that waiting after asking a question (possibly as long as 10 seconds) before repeating or restating the question is advisable.

What instructional approaches support second language development in adults?

Adult English language learners come to ESL classes to master a tool that will help them satisfy other needs, wants, and goals. Therefore, they need to learn about the English language, to practice it, and to use it.

A variety of instructional approaches and techniques support language learning and language use (see Crandall & Peyton, 1993). Teachers need to examine these options and decide which approaches are most appropriate for them, their learners, and their settings. The following is a summary of general strategies to use with learners:

- 1. Get to know your students and their needs.** English language learners' abilities, experiences, and expectations can affect learning. Get to know their backgrounds and goals as well as proficiency levels and skill needs.
- 2. Use visuals to support your instruction.** English language learners need context in their learning process. Using gestures, expressions, pictures, and realia makes words and concepts concrete and connections more obvious and memorable. Encourage learners to do the same as they try to communicate meaning.
- 3. Model tasks before asking your learners to do them.** Learners need to become familiar with vocabulary, conversational patterns, grammar structures, and even activity formats before producing them. Demonstrate a task before asking learners to respond.
- 4. Foster a safe classroom environment.** Like many adult learners, some English language learners have had negative educational experiences. Many will be unfamiliar with classroom activities and with expectations common in the United States. Include time for activities that allow learners to get to know one another.
- 5. Watch both your teacher talk and your writing.** Teacher talk refers to the directions, explanations, and general comments and conversations that a teacher may engage in within the classroom. Keep teacher talk simple and clear; use pictures, gestures, demonstrations, and facial expressions to reinforce messages whenever possible. Use print letters, with space between letters and words, and do not overload the chalkboard with too much or disorganized text.

Although it is important for the teacher to understand the structure of the English language, it may not always be appropriate to provide complex explanations of vocabulary and grammar rules, especially to beginning-level learners. In other words, don't feel you have to explain everything at all times. At times it is enough for learners to know the response needed.

- 6. Use scaffolding techniques to support tasks.** Build sequencing, structure, and support in learning activities. Ask learners to fill in words in a skeletal dialogue and then create a dialogue of a similar situation, or supply key vocabulary before asking learners to complete a form. Recycle vocabulary, structures, and concepts in the course of instruction. Build redundancy into the curriculum to help learners practice using learned vocabulary or skills in new situations or for different purposes.
- 7. Bring authentic materials to the classroom.** Use materials like newspapers, signs, sale flyers, telephone books, and brochures in the classroom. These help learners connect what they are learning to the real world and familiarize them with the formats and information in such publications. However, do prepare learners beforehand (e.g., pre-teach vocabulary) and carefully structure lessons (e.g., select relevant, manageable chunks of the authentic material) to make this work.
- 8. Don't overload learners.** Strike a balance in each activity between elements that are familiar and mastered and those that are new. Asking learners to use both new vocabulary and a new grammatical structure in a role-playing activity where they have to develop original dialogue may be too much for them to do successfully.
- 9. Balance variety and routine in your activities.** Patterns and routines provide familiarity and security and support learners as they tackle new items. But English language learners, like all learners, have a variety of preferences for processing and learning information. They also can get bored. Give learners opportunities to experience and demonstrate their mastery of language in different ways. Challenge them with activities that speak to their lives, concerns, and goals as adults.
- 10. Celebrate success.** Progress for language learners can be slow and incremental. Learners need to know that they are moving forward. Make sure expectations are realistic; create opportunities for success; set short-term as well as long-term goals; and help learners recognize and acknowledge their own progress.

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Second Language Acquisition in Adults: From Research to Practice

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Second language acquisition (SLA) is the study of how second languages are learned and the factors that influence the process. SLA researchers examine how *communicative competence*—the ability to interpret the underlying meaning of a message, understand cultural references, use strategies to keep communication from breaking down, and apply the rules of grammar—develops in a second language (Savignon, 1997). They also study nonlinguistic influences on SLA such as age, anxiety, and motivation. (See Ellis, 1997; Gass & Selinker, 2001; & Pica, 2002 for extensive discussions of SLA theory and research.)

Little research has been conducted on SLA with English language learners in adult education contexts. The complexities of adult English as a second language (ESL) instruction make research in this field challenging. Investigating issues of culture, language, and education and tracking learner progress over time are not easy when complicated by diverse and mobile learner populations and varied learning contexts (e.g., workplace classes, general ESL classes, family literacy classes). However, knowing about the SLA research that has been conducted can be helpful to adult ESL teachers because the findings may be applicable to their populations and contexts.

The purpose of this Q&A is to show how SLA research can inform adult ESL instruction. Research in three areas of second language acquisition are discussed: (1) the effect of learner motivation, (2) the role of interaction, and (3) the role of vocabulary. The research presented here includes experimental, correlational, and descriptive studies, as well as theoretical CAEarticles that analyze the results of other research.

What does research say about learner motivation in SLA?

Motivation has been a focus of SLA research for many years. Dsrnyei (2002a, p. 8) identifies motivation as “why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity [and] how hard they are going to pursue it.” Linguist Robert Gardner (1985; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003) examined factors that affected French- and English-speaking Canadians learning the language of the other community. His studies support the theory that *integrative motivation* (wanting to learn a language in order to identify with the community that speaks the language) promotes SLA. This motivation seems to promote SLA regardless of the age of the learner or whether the language is being learned as a second or foreign language. Even if individuals do not have this positive attitude toward learning the language, they may have *instrumental motivation*—that is, they may want to learn the language to meet their needs and goals, such as to get a job or to talk to their children’s teachers (Oxford & Shearin, 1994). Whatever the learners’ motivation, research seems to support the practice of teachers discovering and responding to learners’ needs and goals when planning instruction (Dsrnyei & Csizer, 1998; Weddel & Van Duzer, 1997).

Teachers can facilitate motivation by helping learners identify short-term goals and reflect on their progress and achievements. For example, teachers can provide learners with self-assessment checklists to identify skill strengths and weaknesses, weekly checklists to track their progress on meeting a learning goal, and self-reflection tools (e.g., learning diaries) to help learners build autonomy and take charge of their learning (Marshall, 2002).

Recent research looks at how instructional contexts also affect motivation. A learner's motivation may vary from day to day and even from task to task (Dsrnyei, 2002b; Dsrnyei & Kormos, 2000). Using varied and challenging instructional activities helps learners stay focused and engaged in instructional content (Dsrnyei & Csizer, 1998). Research examining how to improve learner motivation suggests that social factors (e.g., group dynamics, learning environment, and a partner's motivation) affect a learner's attitude, effort, classroom behavior, and achievement (Dsrnyei, 2002b). Therefore, teachers should create an environment that is conducive to learning by encouraging group cohesion in the classroom. Pair and group work activities can provide learners with opportunities to share information and build a sense of community (Florez & Burt, 2001).

Research also suggests that teachers cultivate opportunities that continue to stimulate language use when learners are not in class (Clement, Dsrnyei, & Noels, 1994). Project work provides learners with a bridge between practice in and outside of class. In addition, projects provide opportunities for learners to work with others to accomplish tasks, using English in real-life situations (Moss & Van Duzer, 1998).

Research on the relationship between motivation and second language acquisition is ongoing. Current research looks at instructional practices that teachers use to generate and maintain learner motivation and strategies through which learners themselves take control of factors that have an impact on their motivation and learning, such as lack of self-confidence, change of goals, or distractions (Dsrnyei, 2003; Noels, Clement, & Pelletier, 2003).

What is the role of interaction in SLA?

Another area of SLA research focuses on how interaction contributes to second language acquisition. *Interaction* refers to communication between individuals, particularly when they are negotiating meaning in order to prevent a breakdown in communication (Ellis, 1999). Research on interaction is conducted within the framework of the Interactive Hypothesis, which states that conversational interaction “facilitates [language] acquisition because it connects input [what learners hear and read]; internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention; and output [what learners produce] in productive ways” (Long, 1996, pp. 451–452). Interaction provides learners with opportunities to receive comprehensible input and feedback (Gass, 1997; Long, 1996; Pica, 1994) as well as to make changes in their own linguistic output (Swain, 1995). This allows learners to “notice the gap” (Schmidt & Frota, 1986, p. 311) between their command of the language and correct, or target-like, use of the language.

Empirical research with second language learners supports the contention that engaging in language interactions facilitates second language development. Findings from a study to determine how conversational interaction affects the acquisition of question formation indicate that

interaction can increase the pace of acquisition (Mackey, 1999). Research on interaction includes studies of *task-based language learning and teaching and focus on form*.

What is task-based language learning and teaching?

Researchers have used tasks to understand both the second language learning and teaching processes (Bygate, 2000). Task-based teaching provides learners with opportunities for learner-to-learner interactions that encourage authentic use of language and meaningful communication. The goal of a task is to “exchange meaning rather than to learn the second language” (Ellis, 1999, p. 193). Research suggests that learners produce longer sentences and negotiate meaning more often in pair and group work than in teacher-fronted instruction (Doughty & Pica, 1986). Interactive tasks may be most successful when they contain elements that

- ▶ are new or unfamiliar to the participants;
- ▶ require learners to exchange information with their partners or group members;
- ▶ have a specific outcome;
- ▶ involve details;
- ▶ center on a problem, especially an ethical one, such as deciding in a small group who should take the last spot in a lifeboat, a nuclear physicist or a pregnant woman; and
- ▶ involve the use of naturally occurring conversation and narrative discourse. (Ellis, 2000)

Teachers can use problem-solving tasks to provide learners with opportunities to share ideas, build consensus, and explain decisions about real-life issues important to them (see, for example, Van Duzer & Burt, 1999).

Information gap tasks, in which two people share information to complete a task, can be more structured than problem-solving tasks and give learners an opportunity to ask and answer questions. In one-way information gap tasks, one learner has all the information (e.g., one learner describes a picture while the other draws it). In two-way information gap tasks, both learners have information they must share with the other to complete the task. (See McKay & Tom, 1999, for examples.) When designing tasks, teachers should consider the learners’ language proficiency, goal of the lesson, language to be practiced, skill and content areas, feedback opportunities, and classroom logistics.

What is focus on form?

SLA researchers have examined the role of focus on the grammatical forms of language in instruction. In a focus-on-form approach to language teaching, rather than grammar being taught in isolation, learners’ attention is drawn to grammatical forms in the context of meaningful activities, and the teacher’s attention to form is triggered by learners’ problems with comprehension or production (Long, 2000). An analysis of research studies suggests that instruction that uses a focus-on-form approach—incorporating form with meaning—is as effective as more

traditional grammar-teaching approaches (Norris & Ortega, 2001). Focus on form in communicative lessons can result in learners incorporating new and more correct structures into their language use (Ellis, Basturkmen, & Loewen, 2001).

When focusing on form, teachers need to consider learners' needs and goals and their developmental readiness to understand the instruction. Teachers then need to make decisions about the best way to draw learners' attention to a form and provide opportunities for practice of the form in meaningful activities (Doughty & Williams, 1998). For example, in a workplace class with intermediate- or advanced-level learners, a memo from an employer could be used to highlight the use of the passive voice.

What is the role of vocabulary in SLA?

Word knowledge is an essential component of communicative competence, and it is important for production and comprehension in a second language (Coady & Huckin, 1997). What does it mean to know a word? Vocabulary knowledge is the size of the vocabulary and the depth of vocabulary, which includes knowledge of pronunciation, spelling, multiple meanings, the contexts in which the word can be used, the frequency with which it is used, morphological and syntactical properties, and how the word combines with other words (Qian, 1999).

Recent research has focused on *incidental vocabulary*—vocabulary that second language learners develop while they are focused on a task other than on learning new words (see Gass, 1999, for a summary of research on incidental vocabulary acquisition). However, learners need to understand about 3,000 word families (e.g., the family of “think” includes think, thinks, thought, thoughtful, thoughtfully) in order to understand meaning from context (Laufer, 1997). Teachers can help learners build sight vocabulary by teaching word families and using word association activities such as semantic mapping (DeCarrico, 2001). In semantic mapping, teachers identify key terms in a text and learners list other words in the text that relate to the key terms.

Research also suggests that learners gain vocabulary knowledge through extensive reading. (See Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003, for a detailed discussion of vocabulary knowledge and its relationship to reading in adult second language learners.) Moreover, reading accompanied by vocabulary building activities can increase vocabulary knowledge (Paribakht & Wesche, 1997; Wesche & Paribakht, 2000). Teachers should include reading opportunities in class and assist learners by selecting texts that are of high interest and level appropriate. They should preview the key vocabulary in a reading passage, teach high-frequency words, and help learners use dictionaries effectively (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003).

Active meaning negotiation seems to have a positive effect on vocabulary acquisition (de la Fuente, 2002; Ellis & He, 1999; Ellis, Tanaka, & Yamazaki, 1994). Teachers can provide learners with multiple opportunities to use new vocabulary in tasks such as those involving problem solving and information gap. Teachers can use games such as Bingo, Password, and Concentration and provide tasks for learners to pursue outside of class such as keeping vocabulary journals (learners keep a log of new words they encounter and the strategies they use to learn them).

Conclusion

Research seems to support many practices that are currently employed in adult ESL instruction. Giving students the opportunity to interact with the teacher and with each other, planning instruction to include tasks that promote these opportunities, and teaching language forms and vocabulary in the context of meaningful learning activities are all ways in which second language acquisition research is applied in the classroom.

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Notes

IV-B. Study Circle on Second Language Acquisition

Participant Handouts

Readings

- ▶ *Beginning to Work With Adult English Language Learners: Some Considerations*
www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/beginQA.html
- ▶ *Second Language Acquisition in Adults: From Research to Practice*
www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/SLA.html

Description

This study circle will be reading two pieces that discuss second language acquisition (SLA): *Beginning to Work With Adult English Language Learners: Some Considerations* describes SLA theory and suggests several theory-based teaching strategies; *Second Language Acquisition in Adults: From Research to Practice* describes SLA research and offers research-based strategies. The study group begins by reading and discussing SLA theory and then examines how the research supports the theory. Participants are expected to reflect on their implementation of at least one strategy in between sessions.

Where:

When:

Study Circle Preparation

Before the first meeting of the study circle, please prepare by reading *Beginning to Work With Adult English Language Learners*.

Task: As you read this brief, please make notes of ideas that stand out for you or of questions that it raises for you. As you read the first two sections, “How do the principles of adult learning apply to adult English language learners?” and “What do instructors need to know about second language acquisition?” think about your own experience as a language learner. If you haven’t learned an additional language, or if you learned it at a very young age, think about math as an additional language. (Math is the systematic use of symbols to communicate meaning and can be considered a language.) Highlight or make notes about the theories that resonate with your experience. During the first session of the study group, you will be asked to read one phrase or sentence from the text that captures your experience particularly well, and to describe why (in 1 or 2 minutes).

Self-Assessment on Use of Instructional Approaches That Support SLA

- 1 – I don’t use this approach.
- 2 – I am not very intentional or comfortable with this approach.
- 3 – I am somewhat intentional or comfortable with this approach.
- 4 – I am very intentional and comfortable with this approach.

Instructional approaches that support SLA	Rating
1. Get to know your students and their needs.	
2. Use visuals to support your instruction.	
3. Model tasks before asking your learners to do them.	
4. Foster a safe classroom environment.	
5. Watch both your teacher talk and your writing.	
6. Use scaffolding techniques to support tasks.	
7. Bring authentic materials to the classroom.	
8. Don’t overload learners.	
9. Balance variety and routine in your activities.	
10. Celebrate success.	

Peer Observation Form

1. What are you looking for?

2. What do you observe?

Discussion of observations with teacher

Evaluation Form

1. How useful did you find the study circle material? Please explain.
2. How useful did you find the study circle meetings? Please explain.
3. How useful did you find the activity or strategy (including the documentation)? Please explain.
4. What tools or ideas are you taking away that you will continue to use in your practice?
5. In what ways are you going to continue to apply research in your practice?
6. If this study circle is offered again, what advice would you give the facilitator?
7. On what other topics would you like to have a study circle?

Beginning to Work with Adult English Language Learners: Some Considerations

*MaryAnn Cunningham Florez and Miriam Burt
National Center for ESL Literacy Education
October, 2001*

In many parts of the United States, the number of nonnative adult learners seeking English language instruction is growing. States such as North Carolina, Arkansas, Georgia, Tennessee, Nebraska, and Iowa, not historically associated with immigrant influxes, have been experiencing increased growth rates with these populations in the last decade (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). In 1998, 47% of the participants in federally funded adult education programs were there to learn English as a second language (ESL) (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, 1999). As immigrant populations seek English language instruction, the need for teachers to serve them is drawing people into the adult ESL teaching field. Some of these teachers have training and experience working with adults learning English. However, many are working with these learners for the first time.

What do teachers who are beginning to work with adult English language learners need to know? This Q&A discusses recommendations in four areas: application of principles of adult learning in ESL contexts, second language acquisition, culture and working with multicultural groups, and instructional approaches that support language development in adults. It is not intended to be comprehensive. Rather, it gives teachers an overview of important points, suggests basic strategies to use, and provides resources to consult for further information.

How do the principles of adult learning apply to adult English language learners?

Malcolm Knowles' (1973) principles of andragogy, the art and science of facilitating adult learning, are still seminal to many of today's theories about learning and instruction for adults.

- ▶ Adults are self-directed in their learning.
- ▶ Adults have reservoirs of experience that serve as resources as they learn.
- ▶ Adults are practical, problem-solving-oriented learners.
- ▶ Adults want their learning to be immediately applicable to their lives.
- ▶ Adults want to know why something needs to be learned.

In general, this picture of the practical, purposeful, self-directed learner is representative of adults, whether they are native or nonnative English speakers. All adult learners need adult-appropriate content, materials, and activities that speak to their needs and interests and allow them to demonstrate their knowledge and abilities.

So what is different for English language learners? Obviously, they need help with the language as they learn content. Teachers working with English language learners also need to think about how Knowles' adult learner characteristics are filtered through culture, language, and experience. For example, it is not uncommon to find nonnative learners who may be hesitant to take charge of their own learning. Their educational experiences in their countries may have taught them that the teacher is the unquestioned expert. They may be resistant to a learner-centered classroom where they are expected to develop goals and work in groups with other learners (Shank & Terrill, 1995).

Nonnative learners also may resist the lifeskill-oriented instruction that is common in many adult ESL programs. Coming from cultures where learning is a high-status, academic endeavor, they may expect a more academically oriented environment (Hardman, 1999). Because of this, teachers should explain to learners why they are learning what they are learning in this new way. Similarly, because many English language learners may have studied English grammar and are familiar with the terms describing language components, instructors should be prepared, when appropriate, to answer learners' questions about sentence structure and vocabulary.

What do instructors need to know about second language acquisition (SLA)?

Theories about how languages are learned can be complex. However, having some understanding of how people acquire and use languages can be useful to the teachers of adult English language learners.

Second language acquisition theories address cognitive issues (how the brain processes information in general and language in particular), affective issues (how emotions factor into second language processing and learning), and linguistic issues (how learners interact with and internalize new language systems). The following are some suggestions that instructors can use in the classroom. They are drawn from theories of second language acquisition generally accepted as relevant for most second language learners (summarized from Brown, 2001; Lightbown, 2000; Krashen, 1981).

- ▶ **Meaningful interaction and natural communication in the target language are necessary for successful language acquisition.**

Learners need to use the language, not simply talk about it. Give learners opportunities and purposes for communication that reflect or relate to their lives (e.g., role-playing a doctor/patient exchange or creating a chart with information on local medical services). Use authentic materials in activities whenever possible (e.g., listening for details in a recorded telephone message or reading classified ads from the local newspaper).

- ▶ **Effective language use involves an automatic processing of language.**

To become proficient, learners need to move from a concentrated focus on grammar, forms, and structures to using language as a tool to accomplish communication tasks. Think about the purpose of each lesson (e.g., is it important that the learner produce a

specific grammar point or communicate an idea?) and interject error correction to serve those purposes. For example, if the activity is an oral substitution drill practicing the correct use of irregular past tense forms, it is appropriate to correct the verb form being used. However, if the focus of the lesson is making small talk on the job—a communication that involves use of irregular past tense verbs—correction may simply consist of a repetition of the correct form by the teacher (e.g., “I go to a movie last Saturday” is corrected by, “Oh, you went to a movie. What movie did you see?”).

▶ **Language learners can monitor their speech for correctness when they have time to focus their attention on form and know the language rules involved.**

Give learners sufficient time for activities, to communicate, and to monitor their performance. Integrate lessons on grammar, structures, and language rules that are relevant to the communication task at hand (e.g., present lessons on imperatives when discussing giving directions) so that learners become familiar with correct structures. Focus activity objectives so that learners are not asked to process and monitor too many points at one time (e.g., asking learners to use new vocabulary and correctly use present and present progressive verb forms in an unfamiliar dialogue format can be overwhelming).

▶ **Second language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to language that is at and slightly above their level of comprehension.**

In the materials you use and in your own speech, expose learners to language that is both at and slightly above what they can comfortably understand. Offer a balance of easier reading and listening activities with more challenging ones. Provide pictures, gestures, and prompts when learners are asked to use more complex language.

▶ **People have affective filters (created by a variety of factors such as motivation, self-confidence, or anxiety) that can support or disrupt acquisition of a second language.**

Create a classroom environment in which learners feel comfortable using and taking risks with English. Use activities that ask learners to work together or share information to build a sense of familiarity and community. Make sure the physical environment is as comfortable as possible. Avoid constant error correction and include activities that focus on overall ability to communicate meaning. Recycle topics or activities that motivate learners.

▶ **There are “interlanguage” periods during which learners make systematic errors that are a natural part of language learning.**

These may be similar to those of a child learning a first language (e.g., adding ed to signify all past tense verbs) or similar to patterns in a learner’s native language (e.g., Spanish speakers placing adjectives after nouns, such as shirt blue). If errors appear to be normal and developmental, provide feedback and modeling of correct structures to support learners as they move through these steps. If an error persists, consider more structured practice on the point.

- ▶ **There is a silent period during which learners are absorbing the new language prior to producing it.**

The length of this period may vary for each learner. Allow learners time to adjust to the new language and begin to internalize its sounds and patterns. Use activities that allow them to demonstrate comprehension without having to produce language (e.g., say new vocabulary and ask learners to hold up picture cards that illustrate each word).

- ▶ **Second language acquisition theories are based on research that investigates specific questions with specific populations in defined circumstances.**

Some theories may be accepted as applicable across populations and contexts; the broad application of others may be debatable. Evaluate how a theory may or may not relate to adult English language learners in general and to learners in your class specifically. Use second language acquisition theories to help make decisions about balancing different language learning activities; observe and respond to learner progress; and set realistic expectations of what learners can accomplish.

What do instructors need to know about culture and working with multicultural groups?

Culture and language are closely related. Learning a new language involves learning about (but not necessarily wholeheartedly embracing) new ways of thinking, feeling, and expressing. This process can put tremendous pressure on an adult who has a well-developed sense of self in the native language and culture. Because immigrants are, to varying degrees and not always consciously, re-configuring their views of themselves in relation to a new social context, they may at times be ambivalent, confused, or even hostile to the process of adapting to a new culture (Ullman, 1997). This includes language learning. Teachers can help ease this process in a variety of ways:

- ▶ Become acquainted with learners' cultures to better understand their perspectives and expectations both inside and outside the classroom (e.g., traditional literacy practices, gender roles, teacher and learner roles, historic interactions with other cultural groups, rhetorical patterns, religious beliefs and customs). Avoid generalizing and stereotyping learners. Acknowledge and respect differences. When discussing cultural differences and traditions in class, focus on descriptions rather than judgments.
- ▶ Learners may not be willing or able to participate in activities that involve discussion of taboo subjects, revelation of personal information, or reliving of painful experiences. For example, a refugee who lost family in a war may be very uncomfortable when a teacher asks learners to bring in pictures of their families for an activity. Be aware of the possible implications of activities or topics and offer learners options through which they can respond neutrally, such as bringing a photo of a family from a magazine instead of a personal photo.

- ▶ Remember that culture can play a role in all facets of language, including response time. Many English language learners will come from cultures where silence is not uncomfortable. When this factor is coupled with the reality of a slower processing time for listening comprehension in a second language, it suggests that waiting after asking a question (possibly as long as 10 seconds) before repeating or restating the question is advisable.

What instructional approaches support second language development in adults?

Adult English language learners come to ESL classes to master a tool that will help them satisfy other needs, wants, and goals. Therefore, they need to learn about the English language, to practice it, and to use it.

A variety of instructional approaches and techniques support language learning and language use (see Crandall & Peyton, 1993). Teachers need to examine these options and decide which approaches are most appropriate for them, their learners, and their settings. The following is a summary of general strategies to use with learners:

- 1. Get to know your students and their needs.** English language learners' abilities, experiences, and expectations can affect learning. Get to know their backgrounds and goals as well as proficiency levels and skill needs.
- 2. Use visuals to support your instruction.** English language learners need context in their learning process. Using gestures, expressions, pictures, and realia makes words and concepts concrete and connections more obvious and memorable. Encourage learners to do the same as they try to communicate meaning.
- 3. Model tasks before asking your learners to do them.** Learners need to become familiar with vocabulary, conversational patterns, grammar structures, and even activity formats before producing them. Demonstrate a task before asking learners to respond.
- 4. Foster a safe classroom environment.** Like many adult learners, some English language learners have had negative educational experiences. Many will be unfamiliar with classroom activities and with expectations common in the United States. Include time for activities that allow learners to get to know one another.
- 5. Watch both your teacher talk and your writing.** Teacher talk refers to the directions, explanations, and general comments and conversations that a teacher may engage in within the classroom. Keep teacher talk simple and clear; use pictures, gestures, demonstrations, and facial expressions to reinforce messages whenever possible. Use print letters, with space between letters and words, and do not overload the chalkboard with too much or disorganized text.

Although it is important for the teacher to understand the structure of the English language, it may not always be appropriate to provide complex explanations of vocabulary and grammar rules, especially to beginning-level learners. In other words, don't feel you have to explain everything at all times. At times it is enough for learners to know the response needed.

- 6. Use scaffolding techniques to support tasks.** Build sequencing, structure, and support in learning activities. Ask learners to fill in words in a skeletal dialogue and then create a dialogue of a similar situation, or supply key vocabulary before asking learners to complete a form. Recycle vocabulary, structures, and concepts in the course of instruction. Build redundancy into the curriculum to help learners practice using learned vocabulary or skills in new situations or for different purposes.
- 7. Bring authentic materials to the classroom.** Use materials like newspapers, signs, sale flyers, telephone books, and brochures in the classroom. These help learners connect what they are learning to the real world and familiarize them with the formats and information in such publications. However, do prepare learners beforehand (e.g., pre-teach vocabulary) and carefully structure lessons (e.g., select relevant, manageable chunks of the authentic material) to make this work.
- 8. Don't overload learners.** Strike a balance in each activity between elements that are familiar and mastered and those that are new. Asking learners to use both new vocabulary and a new grammatical structure in a role-playing activity where they have to develop original dialogue may be too much for them to do successfully.
- 9. Balance variety and routine in your activities.** Patterns and routines provide familiarity and security and support learners as they tackle new items. But English language learners, like all learners, have a variety of preferences for processing and learning information. They also can get bored. Give learners opportunities to experience and demonstrate their mastery of language in different ways. Challenge them with activities that speak to their lives, concerns, and goals as adults.
- 10. Celebrate success.** Progress for language learners can be slow and incremental. Learners need to know that they are moving forward. Make sure expectations are realistic; create opportunities for success; set short-term as well as long-term goals; and help learners recognize and acknowledge their own progress.

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Second Language Acquisition in Adults: From Research to Practice

Donna Moss, National Center for ESL Literacy Education
Lauren Ross-Feldman, Georgetown University
December, 2003

Second language acquisition (SLA) is the study of how second languages are learned and the factors that influence the process. SLA researchers examine how *communicative competence*—the ability to interpret the underlying meaning of a message, understand cultural references, use strategies to keep communication from breaking down, and apply the rules of grammar—develops in a second language (Savignon, 1997). They also study nonlinguistic influences on SLA such as age, anxiety, and motivation. (See Ellis, 1997; Gass & Selinker, 2001; & Pica, 2002 for extensive discussions of SLA theory and research.)

Little research has been conducted on SLA with English language learners in adult education contexts. The complexities of adult English as a second language (ESL) instruction make research in this field challenging. Investigating issues of culture, language, and education and tracking learner progress over time are not easy when complicated by diverse and mobile learner populations and varied learning contexts (e.g., workplace classes, general ESL classes, family literacy classes). However, knowing about the SLA research that has been conducted can be helpful to adult ESL teachers because the findings may be applicable to their populations and contexts.

The purpose of this Q&A is to show how SLA research can inform adult ESL instruction. Research in three areas of second language acquisition are discussed: (1) the effect of learner motivation, (2) the role of interaction, and (3) the role of vocabulary. The research presented here includes experimental, correlational, and descriptive studies, as well as theoretical CAEarticles that analyze the results of other research.

What does research say about learner motivation in SLA?

Motivation has been a focus of SLA research for many years. Dsrnyei (2002a, p. 8) identifies motivation as “why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity [and] how hard they are going to pursue it.” Linguist Robert Gardner (1985; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003) examined factors that affected French- and English-speaking Canadians learning the language of the other community. His studies support the theory that *integrative motivation* (wanting to learn a language in order to identify with the community that speaks the language) promotes SLA. This motivation seems to promote SLA regardless of the age of the learner or whether the language is being learned as a second or foreign language. Even if individuals do not have this positive attitude toward learning the language, they may have *instrumental motivation*—that is, they may want to learn the language to meet their needs and goals, such as to get a job or to talk to their children’s teachers (Oxford & Shearin, 1994). Whatever the learners’ motivation, research seems to support the practice of teachers discovering and responding to learners’ needs and goals when planning instruction (Dsrnyei & Csizer, 1998; Weddel & Van Duzer, 1997).

Teachers can facilitate motivation by helping learners identify short-term goals and reflect on their progress and achievements. For example, teachers can provide learners with self-assessment checklists to identify skill strengths and weaknesses, weekly checklists to track their progress on meeting a learning goal, and self-reflection tools (e.g., learning diaries) to help learners build autonomy and take charge of their learning (Marshall, 2002).

Recent research looks at how instructional contexts also affect motivation. A learner's motivation may vary from day to day and even from task to task (Dsrnyei, 2002b; Dsrnyei & Kormos, 2000). Using varied and challenging instructional activities helps learners stay focused and engaged in instructional content (Dsrnyei & Csizer, 1998). Research examining how to improve learner motivation suggests that social factors (e.g., group dynamics, learning environment, and a partner's motivation) affect a learner's attitude, effort, classroom behavior, and achievement (Dsrnyei, 2002b). Therefore, teachers should create an environment that is conducive to learning by encouraging group cohesion in the classroom. Pair and group work activities can provide learners with opportunities to share information and build a sense of community (Florez & Burt, 2001).

Research also suggests that teachers cultivate opportunities that continue to stimulate language use when learners are not in class (Clement, Dsrnyei, & Noels, 1994). Project work provides learners with a bridge between practice in and outside of class. In addition, projects provide opportunities for learners to work with others to accomplish tasks, using English in real-life situations (Moss & Van Duzer, 1998).

Research on the relationship between motivation and second language acquisition is ongoing. Current research looks at instructional practices that teachers use to generate and maintain learner motivation and strategies through which learners themselves take control of factors that have an impact on their motivation and learning, such as lack of self-confidence, change of goals, or distractions (Dsrnyei, 2003; Noels, Clement, & Pelletier, 2003).

What is the role of interaction in SLA?

Another area of SLA research focuses on how interaction contributes to second language acquisition. *Interaction* refers to communication between individuals, particularly when they are negotiating meaning in order to prevent a breakdown in communication (Ellis, 1999). Research on interaction is conducted within the framework of the Interactive Hypothesis, which states that conversational interaction “facilitates [language] acquisition because it connects input [what learners hear and read]; internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention; and output [what learners produce] in productive ways” (Long, 1996, pp. 451–452). Interaction provides learners with opportunities to receive comprehensible input and feedback (Gass, 1997; Long, 1996; Pica, 1994) as well as to make changes in their own linguistic output (Swain, 1995). This allows learners to “notice the gap” (Schmidt & Frota, 1986, p. 311) between their command of the language and correct, or target-like, use of the language.

Empirical research with second language learners supports the contention that engaging in language interactions facilitates second language development. Findings from a study to determine how conversational interaction affects the acquisition of question formation indicate that

interaction can increase the pace of acquisition (Mackey, 1999). Research on interaction includes studies of *task-based language learning and teaching and focus on form*.

What is task-based language learning and teaching?

Researchers have used tasks to understand both the second language learning and teaching processes (Bygate, 2000). Task-based teaching provides learners with opportunities for learner-to-learner interactions that encourage authentic use of language and meaningful communication. The goal of a task is to “exchange meaning rather than to learn the second language” (Ellis, 1999, p. 193). Research suggests that learners produce longer sentences and negotiate meaning more often in pair and group work than in teacher-fronted instruction (Doughty & Pica, 1986). Interactive tasks may be most successful when they contain elements that

- ▶ are new or unfamiliar to the participants;
- ▶ require learners to exchange information with their partners or group members;
- ▶ have a specific outcome;
- ▶ involve details;
- ▶ center on a problem, especially an ethical one, such as deciding in a small group who should take the last spot in a lifeboat, a nuclear physicist or a pregnant woman; and
- ▶ involve the use of naturally occurring conversation and narrative discourse. (Ellis, 2000)

Teachers can use problem-solving tasks to provide learners with opportunities to share ideas, build consensus, and explain decisions about real-life issues important to them (see, for example, Van Duzer & Burt, 1999).

Information gap tasks, in which two people share information to complete a task, can be more structured than problem-solving tasks and give learners an opportunity to ask and answer questions. In one-way information gap tasks, one learner has all the information (e.g., one learner describes a picture while the other draws it). In two-way information gap tasks, both learners have information they must share with the other to complete the task. (See McKay & Tom, 1999, for examples.) When designing tasks, teachers should consider the learners’ language proficiency, goal of the lesson, language to be practiced, skill and content areas, feedback opportunities, and classroom logistics.

What is focus on form?

SLA researchers have examined the role of focus on the grammatical forms of language in instruction. In a focus-on-form approach to language teaching, rather than grammar being taught in isolation, learners’ attention is drawn to grammatical forms in the context of meaningful activities, and the teacher’s attention to form is triggered by learners’ problems with comprehension or production (Long, 2000). An analysis of research studies suggests that instruction that uses a focus-on-form approach—incorporating form with meaning—is as effective as more

traditional grammar-teaching approaches (Norris & Ortega, 2001). Focus on form in communicative lessons can result in learners incorporating new and more correct structures into their language use (Ellis, Basturkmen, & Loewen, 2001).

When focusing on form, teachers need to consider learners' needs and goals and their developmental readiness to understand the instruction. Teachers then need to make decisions about the best way to draw learners' attention to a form and provide opportunities for practice of the form in meaningful activities (Doughty & Williams, 1998). For example, in a workplace class with intermediate- or advanced-level learners, a memo from an employer could be used to highlight the use of the passive voice.

What is the role of vocabulary in SLA?

Word knowledge is an essential component of communicative competence, and it is important for production and comprehension in a second language (Coady & Huckin, 1997). What does it mean to know a word? Vocabulary knowledge is the size of the vocabulary and the depth of vocabulary, which includes knowledge of pronunciation, spelling, multiple meanings, the contexts in which the word can be used, the frequency with which it is used, morphological and syntactical properties, and how the word combines with other words (Qian, 1999).

Recent research has focused on *incidental vocabulary*—vocabulary that second language learners develop while they are focused on a task other than on learning new words (see Gass, 1999, for a summary of research on incidental vocabulary acquisition). However, learners need to understand about 3,000 word families (e.g., the family of “think” includes think, thinks, thought, thoughtful, thoughtfully) in order to understand meaning from context (Laufer, 1997). Teachers can help learners build sight vocabulary by teaching word families and using word association activities such as semantic mapping (DeCarrico, 2001). In semantic mapping, teachers identify key terms in a text and learners list other words in the text that relate to the key terms.

Research also suggests that learners gain vocabulary knowledge through extensive reading. (See Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003, for a detailed discussion of vocabulary knowledge and its relationship to reading in adult second language learners.) Moreover, reading accompanied by vocabulary building activities can increase vocabulary knowledge (Paribakht & Wesche, 1997; Wesche & Paribakht, 2000). Teachers should include reading opportunities in class and assist learners by selecting texts that are of high interest and level appropriate. They should preview the key vocabulary in a reading passage, teach high-frequency words, and help learners use dictionaries effectively (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003).

Active meaning negotiation seems to have a positive effect on vocabulary acquisition (de la Fuente, 2002; Ellis & He, 1999; Ellis, Tanaka, & Yamazaki, 1994). Teachers can provide learners with multiple opportunities to use new vocabulary in tasks such as those involving problem solving and information gap. Teachers can use games such as Bingo, Password, and Concentration and provide tasks for learners to pursue outside of class such as keeping vocabulary journals (learners keep a log of new words they encounter and the strategies they use to learn them).

Conclusion

Research seems to support many practices that are currently employed in adult ESL instruction. Giving students the opportunity to interact with the teacher and with each other, planning instruction to include tasks that promote these opportunities, and teaching language forms and vocabulary in the context of meaningful learning activities are all ways in which second language acquisition research is applied in the classroom.

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Notes

IV-C. Study Circle on Teaching Beginning Levels

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Study Circle on Teaching Beginning Levels

Facilitator Guide

Introduction

The purpose of this study circle is to read and discuss research and information about instructional strategies for working with beginning-level learners, especially literacy-level learners (i.e., those who are not literate in their native language). Participants will read two CAELA articles that discuss effective strategies for literacy-level classes and provide examples of activities that support these strategies. Using the articles as a guide, they will discuss the implications of the research for their own classroom practice, implement at least one new research- or theory-based strategy in their teaching, and reflect on the impact of that experimentation on their thinking and practice.

Readings

- ▶ *Working With Literacy-Level Adult English Language Learners*, by MaryAnn Cunningham Florez and Lynda Terrill, describes literacy-level learners and the skills they need to develop. www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/litQA.html
- ▶ *Teaching Low-Level Adult ESL Learners*, by Grace Massey Holt, provides information on how to identify and assess the instructional needs of adults learning to become literate in a second language. www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/HOLT.html

Session Lengths

Session 1: 2 hours

Session 2: 1.5 hours

Session 1: Preparation

Participants should be sent information about the study circle well in advance of the first session so that they can plan their schedules and do the pre-session reading, *Working with Literacy-Level Adult English Language Learners*. The accompanying assignment asks them to make note of the strategies that resonate with their experiences working with beginning-level learners. At the beginning of Session 1, they will describe their experiences with beginning-level learners and briefly talk about something in the reading that stood out for them.

1. Opening (5 minutes)

- ▶ Welcome the group and introduce yourself.
- ▶ Review the purpose of this study circle.
- ▶ Review logistical details such as the schedule, breaks, and the location of the bathrooms.
- ▶ Check that all participants have both readings.

2. Participant introductions (15 minutes)

Format: Whole group

Participants introduce themselves, briefly describe their experiences with beginning-level learners, and mention one strategy they have already used with their beginning-level students. Remind participants that they have only 1 or 2 minutes each for this sharing. There is no discussion during this time; discussion will follow in smaller groups.

3. Reviewing the research (20 minutes)

Format: Small groups

Break the group into three small groups, each of which will focus on one of the three sections of the reading: Who are literacy-level learners? What skills do literacy-level learners need to develop? What are effective practices in the literacy class? Each group should have flipchart paper and a marker. Their task is to read their section and then create a chart on the flipchart paper such as the one below, filling it in with information from the reading and from their own experience:

Research Findings	Related Strategies

4. Sharing strategies (25 minutes)

Format: Whole group

After the groups have posted their flipchart papers on the wall, ask participants to walk around and review what other groups have written. When everyone has seen all the charts, discuss aspects of your own experience with literacy-level learners that relate to the research. As a whole group, discuss the following questions: Do you see all of these research findings commonly addressed in practice? Are there any that challenge common practice? Are there population- or context-specific applications to these research findings?

5. Self-assessment (25 minutes)

Format: Individual and small group

For this activity, divide the group into small groups of three or four. Half of the groups will focus on needs assessment strategies, and the other half will focus on classroom strategies. Try to divide participants by interest area, but ask volunteers to move if the groups are too unevenly split. The needs assessment group will focus on sections from both readings: “What Are Effective Needs Assessment Activities for Literacy Learners?” (Florez and Terrill) and “Assessing the Needs of Low-Level Learners” (Holt). The classroom strategies group will also focus on sections from both readings: “What Additional Activities Are Effective With Literacy-Level Learners?” (Florez and Terrill) and “Techniques for Working With Adults” (Holt).

Explain to the groups that they will be reflecting on their own use of these instructional strategies. Ask participants to read over the suggested strategies in both readings and use the Self-Assessment Form to make note of those that stand out for them. Have participants place a plus sign next to three strategies or activities that they use frequently in their own classrooms or that they especially like, and a minus sign next to three that they use infrequently or do not like.

When everyone in the group is finished, instruct participants (still in their small groups) to do the following (write the instructions on a flipchart so that participants can refer back to them):

- ▶ Go down the lists and discuss the most popular and least popular strategies. Discuss any patterns you notice. Share any specific techniques you have used to implement the strategies and any barriers you have encountered in trying to implement the strategies.
- ▶ Discuss the relevance of suggested strategies for various ESL populations. Identify strategies that you haven’t used before, and describe how you might implement those strategies in your classroom.

6. Sharing strategies (10 minutes)

Format: Whole group

After the small groups have finished, ask them to briefly share with the whole group some of the strategies that they would like to try with their students and explain why they think these strategies might work well with their students.

7. Considering application (10 minutes)

Format: Individual and pairs

Ask participants to look over the strategies listed on their self-assessment pages and to reflect on which strategies they would like to experiment with between sessions. Then have them pair up with a partner and explain what they chose and why: What do they hope will happen or change?

After they have talked through their ideas, have them fill out the New Activity Planning Form. Encourage participants to consider peer observation in their plans if there are co-workers in the study circle. (See the Peer Observation Form and also the guide on Peer Coaching and Mentoring.)

Note which strategies participants are trying out so that you can prepare a flipchart with this information for the next session.

8. Closing (5 minutes)

Remind participants of the next meeting. Review the intersession assignment and the page they will use for their notes.

9. Evaluation (5 minutes)

Do a quick evaluation to identify the main strengths and weaknesses of the session by asking participants the following:

- ▶ What was the most useful aspect of today's session?
- ▶ What might we change if we do this study circle again?

Session 2: Preparation

Post on the wall a flipchart with participants' chosen activities or strategies written on it and the charts that the groups created during the last session .

1. Opening (5 minutes)

Welcome the group back and ask them how their activities went.

2. Debriefing the activities (20 minutes)

Format: Pairs or small groups clustered according to a similar focus of activities or strategies.

Ask participants to refer to their New Activity Notes as they debrief by answering the following questions:

- ▶ What did you try? What happened? What factors impacted your implementation?
- ▶ What did you conclude from implementing this new activity or strategy?
- ▶ What advice would you have for other practitioners about implementing this strategy?

Write the answer to this last question on a sticky note and put it up next to the strategy. This advice will be typed and sent to participants.

3. Reflecting in writing (15 minutes)

Format: Individual

Now that participants have tested a new strategy, talked about it with colleagues, and heard about others' activities, they need to consider what is next. Ask them to write for 10 minutes about what they discovered through their experimentation, what they learned from others in the group, and what they see as their next steps. Then invite volunteers to read their writing.

4. Classroom materials (25 minutes)

Format: Individual and small groups

There is one section of the readings that the group has not yet discussed—the section in Holt entitled, “Selecting Appropriate Classroom Materials.” For this activity, divide the group into groups of three or four. Explain that they will be reflecting on their own use of the materials listed in the reading. Ask participants to read the list and check off those that they have used successfully with their students. When they have gone through the whole list, they should put a star by one or two materials that they really like or use frequently. They should then add any materials that they use that are not on the list.

When everyone is finished, have participants discuss in their small groups the materials they have used in class. They should share the one or two materials that they really like, describing

how they have used these materials with their students. These can be materials from the list or materials that they have added to the list.

5. Strategy sharing (10 minutes)

Format: Whole group

When the small groups are finished, each group will report on one or two of the materials and how they have used them.

6. Planning next steps (5 minutes)

Format: Whole group

Invite participants to consider how they might continue to support each other as a group. Does the group want to meet again or stay in touch in other ways? If the group wants to continue to meet, make sure that there is a clear purpose and focus for the meetings.

7. Closing (5 minutes)

- ▶ Make sure that you have contact information so that you can send participants the promised notes. Ask permission to also disseminate a group contact list (and give people a chance to opt out).
- ▶ Draw participants' attention to other resources available on the topic of teaching beginning levels (see Appendix A for additional resources).
- ▶ Thank the group for their work.

8. Evaluation (5 minutes)

Ask participants to fill out the Evaluation Form, which asks for feedback about the entire study circle. If there is time, provide an opportunity for volunteers to comment on their experiences in the study circle.

Working With Literacy-Level Adult English Language Learners

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Many adult English language learners in the United States are placed in literacy-level classes. It is difficult to estimate the exact number of adult English language learners at this level across the variety of program contexts that offer adult English instruction (e.g., volunteer literacy groups, libraries, adult education programs, family literacy programs, community colleges, community-based or faith-based organizations). Furthermore, the percentage cited (55%) of beginning-level participants in state-administered adult English as a second language (ESL) programs includes those enrolled in regular beginning classes as well as those in literacy-level classes (U.S. Department of Education, 2002).

Anecdotal information, such as postings on Internet discussion lists and requests for training, suggest that teachers are not confident in their abilities to address the needs of literacy-level learners. (NIFL-ESL, 2003). Federally funded programs must demonstrate learner progress yearly, according to the National Reporting System (<http://www.nrsweb.org/>). Practitioners are concerned that sufficient progress is difficult to achieve with literacy-level learners. The Mainstream English Language Training (MELT) project, which developed ESL curriculum and assessment instruments for Southeast Asian refugees in the early 80s, posited that it takes from 500-1,000 hours of instruction for adults who are literate in their native language but have had no prior English instruction to reach a level where they can satisfy their basic needs, survive on the job, and have limited social interaction in English (MELT, 1985). For adults without a literacy background, it may take longer.

Research on effective interventions with this population in the United States is limited. The American Institutes for Research and Aguirre International conducted a 6-year What Works Study for Adult ESL Literacy Students, supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) and the Planning and Evaluation Service. The study focuses on adult English language learners who lack literacy skills in both their native language and English. Although the final report was not available at publication of this paper, background information about this study and preliminary findings are available online (Condelli, 2001; Wrigley, 2002).

This paper describes literacy-level learners and the skills they need to develop. It discusses effective practices for literacy-level classes and gives examples of activities and techniques that support these practices.

Who are literacy-level learners?

Literacy learners are generally those with 6 or fewer years of education in their native countries who need focused instruction on learning to read and write English. The population participating in literacy-level classes is diverse: These classes may include men and women with different native languages, ages, length of time in country, life and language learning goals, and access to previous education (Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, 2000; Shank & Terrill, 1997). Literacy learners also have a wide range of oral skills in English. (For a more detailed description of the varieties of first language literacy and effects on second language literacy, see Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003.) The learners are further differentiated by their experiences. Many have experienced trauma related to events in their native countries and to resettlement in the United States, and this trauma may affect the speed and facility with which they learn English (Adkins, Sample, & Birman, 1999). The following learners might attend the same literacy class:

- ▶ **Preliterate** (The native language does not yet have a writing system.) Wanankhucha, a Bantu from Somalia, entered the class as a recent refugee. She knows her native Af-Maay only orally, as a written form of the language is just now being developed. Furthermore, as a refugee, Wanankhucha shows evidence of trauma.
- ▶ **Nonliterate** (The native language has a written form, but the learner has no literacy.) Trang is a young, single mother from rural Vietnam who grew up without access to education. Here in the United States, she lacks many of the educational and cultural supports earlier Vietnamese refugees enjoyed.
- ▶ **Semiliterate** (The learner has minimal literacy in native language.) Roberto attended a rural school in El Salvador for 3 years. Although he wanted to continue, his family needed him to work on the family farm.
- ▶ **Nonalphabet literate** (The learner is literate in a language that is not alphabetic.) Xian is a retired minor bureaucrat from China. He is highly literate in the Mandarin script, but he is unfamiliar with any alphabet, including Roman.
- ▶ **Non-Roman alphabet literate** (The learner is literate in an alphabetic language other than Roman.) Khalil comes from Jordan. He completed 2 years of secondary school and is literate in Arabic.
- ▶ **Roman-alphabet literate** (The learner is literate in a language that is written in the Roman alphabet). Alex is a senior from Russia. As a young man, he studied French. Even though he was a professional (engineer) in his own country, he does not want to move to a higher level class.

Others who may benefit from a literacy-level class are individuals with learning disabilities or individuals who, because of age, physical or mental health issues, or family situations, find that the slow and repetitive pace of such a class better meets their needs and goals (Holt, 1995).

What skills do literacy-level learners need to develop?

At the most basic level, literacy learners need to understand that texts have a beginning, a middle, and an end; that English is read from left to right and from up to down; and that written words can represent a story, just as pictures do. They need to be ready to learn, to see patterns, and to associate symbols with objects.

Then, they need to be able to develop four key reading skills: phonological processing, vocabulary development, syntactical processing, and schema activation (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003). Relating to these four skills, learners need to be able to do the following (Brod, 1999; Florez, 2002; Van Duzer, 1999):

- ▶ **Phonological processing.** Recognize and reproduce letters and other graphic symbols related to the language; manipulate sound-symbol correspondences efficiently.
- ▶ **Vocabulary development.** Develop a vocabulary bank.
- ▶ **Syntactical processing.** Understand and apply grammar and usage conventions; identify and use structural and organizational features common to English.
- ▶ **Schema activation.** Initiate appropriate strategies for reading comprehension (e.g., identify a purpose for reading, use pictures and graphics, predict, and skim/scan or develop a piece of writing by brainstorming, outlining, drafting, using feedback, and editing).

Preliterate learners may find two-dimensional graphic literacy—letters, maps, graphs, charts, even pictures—difficult to interpret (Hvitfeldt, 1985). All non-English speakers will be challenged to hear and replicate the sounds of English, a necessary element in the sound-symbol correspondence skills deployed in successful reading (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003). Because of the difficulty some learners experience with these basic tasks, instructors may be tempted to spend all the classroom time working to master these skills. However, in order to apply literacy skills to real tasks, such as reading and understanding a note from a child’s teacher, a work schedule, or safety stickers on a medicine bottle, instruction must balance basic skills development with the fostering of higher level comprehension skills (Brod, 1999; Van Duzer, 1999).

What are effective practices in the literacy class?

Utilize the principles of adult learning

Malcolm Knowles’ (1973) principles of adult learning are applicable to planning instruction for adult English language learners: Adults are self-directed, practical, and problem solving; they have reservoirs of experience to help them learn new things; and they want to know why something needs to be learned and how it will be applicable to their lives.

Integrate the four language skills

Literacy-level classes vary because of program type (general, family, workplace, or corrections); intensity; and learner needs and goals. Yet, no matter the context, in real life, language tasks involve integrating the four skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. For example, a trip to the health clinic includes reading and filling out health forms, explaining symptoms, and understanding the doctor's response. Furthermore, research suggests that for beginning readers of a second language, oral proficiency in the target language is key to developing reading ability (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003).

Ask learners what they want to learn

Learners have many purposes for developing English literacy. Needs assessment assures learners a voice in their instruction and keeps content relevant to their lives and goals. It also gives the teacher an opportunity to learn what skills learners bring to class and which ones they feel they need to strengthen (Brod, 1999; Shank & Terrill, 1997).

Connect to the outside world

There should be opportunities in literacy-level classes to connect learning to real-world practices. For example, class field trips to a library, post office, supermarket, or museum provide a venue to practice speaking and reading skills while the learner is engaged in real-life activities (Brod, 1999; Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, 2000; Florez, 2002; Holt, 1995; Wrigley, 2002).

What are effective needs assessment activities for literacy learners?

Suggested activities for needs assessment with literacy-level learners include the following:

- ▶ Ask learners to look through their textbooks or picture dictionaries and place five Post-it notes on pages with information they think is most important to learn.
- ▶ Practice a pictorial strip story about a non-English speaker who has three specific needs for learning English (Ivan needs to learn English for work, to listen to music, and to make friends); then ask learners to brainstorm and substitute why they need to learn English.
- ▶ Have learners complete a simplified or pictorial checklist of what they want to read or write, e.g., grocery lists, job applications, notes to child's teacher, etc. (Holt, 1995; Shank & Terrill, 1997).

What additional activities are effective with literacy-level learners?

Once learner needs are determined, there are a number of activities that provide meaningful, relevant practice:

- ▶ **Dialogues with related activities.** Oral dialogues can be springboards for literacy-oriented activities such as cloze or substitution where learners supply the missing words in written dialogue or exercise where learners substitute different vocabulary words in structured dialogues, sentence strips, role plays, or dictations.
- ▶ **Vocabulary-building activities.** For literacy-level learners, matching pictures to words is key for vocabulary development. Flash cards, concentration games, labeling, vocabulary journals, picture dictionaries, and bingo activities can be used to practice vocabulary.
- ▶ **Class surveys** One type of class survey requires learners to ask the other students one or two questions, such as “What month were you born?” or “What is your last name?” and record the answers on a form. The class can debrief the answers to make a chart or graph. If learner names were gathered, the list can be used for alphabetizing practice. A second kind of survey asks learners to find “someone who likes soccer” or “someone who comes from Bolivia.” To find the information, learners need to ask questions such as “Do you like soccer?” and record the information on a form. Class surveys are useful for community building as well as for practicing the four language skills.
- ▶ **Language Experience Approach (LEA).** The teacher records text that learners generate from a shared picture or event, drawing out vocabulary that is relevant to the learners. Other activities based on the learner-generated text follow, such as vocabulary development, phonics exercises, choral reading, or dictation.
- ▶ **Phonics exercises.** Exercises such as minimal pairs (e.g., hat/cat, pan/fan) or identifying initial word sounds are important components of literacy-level lessons. Relating such exercises to the vocabulary being taught in a lesson contextualizes the learning and makes it relevant. Whenever possible, use authentic materials (flyers, schedules, advertisements, bills) to connect literacy development to real-world tasks.
- ▶ **Dictations of students’ names, phone numbers, and addresses.** These activities can provide interesting, meaningful content while developing encoding skills. Tactile activities such as drawing the letters in sand with the fingers, coloring letters, or manipulating plastic cutouts of letters may offer some variety (Brod, 1999; Florez, 2002; Holt, 1995; Moss, Shank, & Terrill, 1997; Tom, Tiller, & Bigelow, 1998; Wrigely, 2002).

What does an effective literacy lesson look like?

Following is a sample lesson that employs activities to develop the four key reading skills (*phonological processing, vocabulary development, syntactical processing, schema activation*):

1. As a class, learners brainstorm vocabulary on a specific topic, such as food shopping (*schema activation*).
2. Flashcard practice (whole group and pair) familiarizes learners with food vocabulary (*vocabulary development*).
3. The class groups food words that begin with similar sounds, *e.g., cheese, chicken, and cherries* (*phonological processing*).
4. Learners practice a three-line scripted dialogue (“I am going shopping.” “What do you need?” “I need bread, beans, and chicken.”) first as a whole group, then acted out by volunteers, and finally as pairs where learners substitute other food vocabulary (*vocabulary development*).
5. Learners complete cloze worksheets, inserting words that have been deleted from the dialogue or, alternately, learners can create pair dictations of the dialogue (*syntactical processing*).
6. For homework, learners create their own shopping list of five items they actually need; they can copy new food words from packages, etc. (*vocabulary development; schema activation*).

How can learner progress be assessed?

Learner assessment keeps both the teacher and learners informed of what has been achieved and what still needs work. Teachers can use many of the activities in this paper to assess learner progress (e.g., cloze exercises, substitution drills, and role plays). Ongoing teacher observation is also part of assessment. For learners, progress assessment provides a venue to develop self-reflection and self-evaluation skills. Learners can engage in self-assessment by completing checklists (e.g., indicating skills they feel they have improved: “X I can read the safety signs at work”). Meetings between teachers and individual learners to discuss progress are also helpful (Florez, 2002; Holt, 1995).

Conclusion

Literacy-level learners “may be beginning learners, but they are not beginning thinkers” (Brod, 1999, p. 5). Like all learners, they bring diverse strengths and needs to the adult ESL classroom. Teachers need to provide instruction that acknowledges and addresses these strengths and needs, engages learners in challenging and relevant topics, and provides them with tools they can use to meet their responsibilities and goals.

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Additional Selected Teacher and Learner Resources

- Bell, J., & Burnaby, B. (1984). *A handbook for ESL literacy*. Toronto, Canada: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/Hodder and Stoughton. (Available from Pippin Publishing, 1-888-889-000, www.pippinpub.com)
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The following online resources demonstrate the scope, strategies, and activities for successfully working with literacy-level learners:

- Arlington Education and Employment Program. (2003). *The REEP ESL Curriculum For Adults*. Provides information about needs assessment, goal-setting, course and lesson planning, and offers sample lessons on health and work. (To find curriculum for literacy level-learners, go to “Resources,” click on “Lesson Plans,” and look for “Level 100.”)

Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks. *ESL for Literacy Learners* and ancillary materials. Defines ESL literacy and suggests appropriate methodology. www.language.ca/display_page.asp?page_id=255

Department of Education (MA). *Framework for Adult ESOL in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts* (1999/2002). Offers basic principles for working with adult learners www.doe.mass.edu/acls/frameworks/esol.pdf or www.doe.mass.edu/acls/frameworks/esol.doc

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Teaching Low-Level Adult ESL Learners

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January 1995

Prior to the late 1970's, instructional methods and materials for adults learning English as a second language (ESL) assumed the presence of literacy in a first language (Wrigley & Guth, 1992). After 1975 the United States experienced an influx of refugees from Southeast Asia. Many had minimal or no experience in reading and writing in their native languages and, as the learners joined ESL classes, educators saw that existing methods and materials were not appropriate for these learners. Ten years later, during the implementation of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), educators were again faced with teaching adult learners who had little or no schooling in their native countries.

What has the field learned about offering instruction to literacy level (low or beginning) adult ESL learners? This digest provides information on how to identify and assess the instructional needs of adults learning to become literate in a second language; it discusses general techniques that facilitate instruction for these learners; it provides a sample procedure for combining some of these techniques; and it describes classroom materials appropriate for low-level adult ESL learners.

Low-Level Learners

There are several categories of adult ESL learners who can benefit from the approaches and techniques used in instruction for low-level learners (Crystal, 1982; California Department of Education, 1992; Savage, 1993). These categories include the following:

- ▶ learners who are nonliterate and have had little or no prior schooling in their native language;
- ▶ learners, such as speakers of Chinese, Arabic, or Khmer, who may not be familiar with the Roman alphabet;
- ▶ learners who may have learning disabilities; and
- ▶ learners who are literate in their native language but who may want (for various reasons such as age, health, family situation) to participate in a slower-paced class and who would benefit from classroom activities that characterize a literacy class.

Assessing the Needs of Low-Level Learners

Assessing the needs of learners who may not speak even minimal English and may not read or write in any language can be difficult. Holt (1994), Crystal (1982), and Bell (1988) offer suggestions, recommending a variety of ways to assess learners orally, through reading and writing, and through classroom observation.

Assessing Orally

Educators who speak the native language of the adult learners should ask them about their educational backgrounds. Persons with three or fewer years of formal education will probably be nonliterate.

Assessing Through Reading

Reading readiness tasks can be used for literacy screening. For example, learners can be asked to complete the following tasks. (The literacy skills being assessed appear in parentheses.)

- ▶ Complete an alphabet cloze (for example, A B__D__F G H__J), supplying the missing letters. (familiarity with Roman alphabet)
- ▶ Copy a sentence. (speed and ease in forming words)
- ▶ Read two simple sentences. (basic sight vocabulary in context)
- ▶ Point to letters corresponding to the sounds made by the teacher. (simple consonant sounds not easily confused)
- ▶ Read several unfamiliar or nonsense words. (blending sounds)

A learner who can recognize basic sight words or use a knowledge of phonics to approximate the sounds of unfamiliar words probably does not need basic literacy instruction.

Assessing Through Writing

The completion of a simple application form on which learners are asked to fill in basic information such as name, address, phone number, date, social security number, birth date, birthplace, age, and gender is a quick way to determine reading and writing ability, especially when a large number of learners have to be assessed in a short period of time. Someone who has difficulty filling out the form could probably benefit from basic literacy instruction.

A writing sample in the learner's first language is useful in determining the literacy level of the learner in his or her native language.

A writing sample in English, done at intake, can be used to compare later writing samples and to monitor the progress of each learner's writing.

Assessing Through Classroom Observation

Informal assessment through classroom observation can continue to assist the teacher in determining an individual learner's needs. Attention should be paid to how learners hold their pencils (awkwardly? too tightly?) and their books (upside down?), how they move their eyes (Do the eyes move to follow words?), how quickly they write (Do they hesitate? take time? labor over each letter?), and how they interact in large and small groups (Do they offer to help each other? Are they comfortable in groups?).

Techniques for Working With Adults

Knowles and other educators maintain that adult education is most effective when it is “experience centered, related to learners’ real needs, and directed by learners themselves” (Auerbach, 1992, p. 14). Bell and Burnaby (1984), Holt (1988), Holt and Gaer (1993), and Wrigley and Guth (1992) list techniques that involve beginning level learners as active participants in selecting topics, language, and materials.

1. Build on the experiences and language of learners. Invite them to discuss their experiences and provide activities that will allow them to generate language they have already developed.
2. Use learners as resources. Ask them to share their knowledge and expertise with others in the class.
3. Sequence activities in an order that moves from less challenging to more challenging, such as progressing from listening to speaking, reading, and writing skills. Move from language experience activities to picture-word connections to all-print exercises.
4. Build redundancy into curriculum content, providing repetition of topics. This will help overcome problems related to irregular attendance common in adult classes.
5. Combine enabling skills (visual discrimination of letters and words, auditory discrimination of sounds and words, spacing between letters and words, letter-sound correspondences, blending letters to sound out words, sight vocabulary) with language experience and whole language approaches.
6. Combine life-skill reading competencies (reading medicine labels, writing notes to the children’s teachers, filling out forms) with phonics, word recognition, word order, spacing words in a sentence, reading words in context, and reading comprehension.
7. Use cooperative learning activities that encourage interaction by providing learners with situations in which they must negotiate language with partners or group members to complete a task (See Bell, 1988).
8. Include a variety of techniques to appeal to diverse learning styles. For example, merge holistic reading approaches such as language experience with discrete approaches such as phonics.

An Integrated Approach to Literacy Instruction

The language experience approach (LEA)—which uses learner experiences as lesson content—is a way to introduce multiple activities that appeal to learners’ diverse backgrounds and preferred learning styles while offering instruction in language that is both comprehensible and interesting (Taylor, 1992). The following is an example of a modified LEA lesson that could be used with low-level learners.

1. A shared experience, such as a field trip, a common situation, or a meaningful picture is a stimulus for class discussion.
2. Learners volunteer sentences about the experience and the teacher writes the sentences on the chalkboard.
3. The teacher reads each sentence aloud, running her finger under words as each is pronounced, verifying that she has written what the student has said.
4. When the story is completed, the teacher reads it aloud.
5. Learners are encouraged to join in a second and third reading of the story.
6. A number of activities can follow at this point:
 - Learners copy the story;
 - Learners underline all the parts they can read;
 - Learners circle specific words (e.g., words that begin with a designated sound, common sight words such as *the*);
 - Choral cloze: The teacher erases some words, reads the story, and asks learners to supply the missing words;
 - Writing cloze: The teacher types the story, leaving out every fifth word. During the next class the teacher passes out the cloze and asks learners to fill in the missing words;
 - Scrambled sentences: The teacher types the story. During the next class the teacher distributes copies of the story to the class. Each learner cuts the story into strips so that there is one sentence on each strip of paper. Learners scramble the sentences and rearrange them in the proper sequence;
 - Scrambled words: More advanced learners can cut sentences into words, scramble the words, and rearrange them in order.

Selecting Appropriate Classroom Materials

Using concrete but age-appropriate materials with adult learners enhances instruction by providing a context for language and literacy development. A basic kit of materials might consist of the following objects, games, and materials.

1. Realia: clocks, food items, calendars, plastic fruits and vegetables, maps, household objects, real and play money, food containers, abacus, manual for learning to drive, and classroom objects;
2. Flash cards: pictures, words, and signs;
3. Pictures or photographs: personal, magazine, and others;
4. Tape recorder and cassette tapes, including music for imagery and relaxation;
5. Overhead projector, transparencies, and pens; video player and videos;
6. Pocket chart for numbers, letters, and pictures;
7. Alphabet sets;
8. Camera for language experience stories to create biographies and autobiographies;
9. Games such as bingo and concentration: commercial or teacher-made;
10. Colored index cards to teach word order in sentences, to show when speakers change in dialogue, to illustrate question/answer format, and to use as cues for a concentration game;
11. Cuisenaire rods to teach word order in sentences, to use as manipulatives in dyad activities, and to teach adjectives;
12. Colored chalk to teach word order, to differentiate between speakers in a dialogue, and to illustrate question and answer format;
13. Poster, butcher, and construction paper;
14. Felt-tipped pens, colored pencils, and crayons;
15. Scissors, glue, and masking tape; and
16. Children's literature: for learning techniques for reading or telling stories to children (See Smallwood, 1992, for ideas on using children's literature with adults.).

Conclusion

Providing instruction to adults acquiring ESL literacy is a challenge. When approaches, techniques, and materials are suitable for adults, are related to their real needs, and promote involvement in their own learning, there is a greater chance of success.

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IV-C. Study Circle on Teaching Beginning Levels

Participant Handouts

Readings

- ▶ *Working With Literacy-Level Adult English Language Learners*
www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/litQA.html
- ▶ *Teaching Low-Level Adult ESL Learners*
www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/HOLT.html

Description

This study circle will be reading two pieces that discuss working with beginning-level learners, especially literacy-level learners (i.e., those who are not literate in their native language). *Working With Literacy-Level Adult English Language Learners* describes literacy-level learners and the skills they need to develop. *Teaching Low-Level Adult ESL Learners* provides information on how to identify and assess the instructional needs of adults learning to become literate in a second language. Both articles discuss effective strategies for literacy-level classes and provide examples of activities that support these strategies. The study group begins by reading and discussing research on literacy-level learners and then moves to instructional strategies. Participants are expected to implement at least one research-based strategy between sessions and to reflect on the implementation.

Where:

When:

Study Circle Preparation

Before the first meeting of the study circle, prepare by reading *Working With Literacy-Level Adult English Language Learners*.

Task: As you read this piece, please take note of ideas that stand out for you or questions it raises for you. Think about your own experiences working with beginning-level learners. Highlight or make notes about the theories that resonate with your experience. During the first session of the study group, you will be asked to talk about something from the reading that stood out for you and to describe why (in 1 or 2 minutes).

Self-Assessment on the Use of Needs Assessment Strategies

From *Working With Literacy-Level Adult English Language Learners*

- ▶ Ask learners to look through their textbooks or picture dictionaries and prioritize topics of interest.
- ▶ Use a pictorial strip story to elicit learner needs.
- ▶ Have learners complete a simplified or pictorial checklist of what they want to read, study, or write.

From *Teaching Low-Level Adult ESL Learners*

- ▶ Conduct an interview in the learners' native language to find out about educational backgrounds.
- ▶ Have learners complete an alphabet cloze (for example, A B __ D __ F G H __ J), supplying the missing letters.
- ▶ Have learners copy a sentence.
- ▶ Have learners read two simple sentences.
- ▶ Have learners point to letters corresponding to the sounds made by the teacher.
- ▶ Have learners read several unfamiliar or nonsense words.
- ▶ Have learners complete a simple form asking for basic information.
- ▶ Have learners do a writing sample in their native language.
- ▶ Have learners do a writing sample in English.
- ▶ Use classroom observation to determine learner needs.

Self-Assessment on the Use of Classroom Strategies for Literacy Learners

From *Working With Literacy-Level Adult English Language Learners*

- ▶ Dialogues with related activities
- ▶ Vocabulary-building activities
- ▶ Class surveys
- ▶ Language Experience Approach (LEA)
- ▶ Phonics exercises
- ▶ Dictations of students' names, phone numbers, and addresses

From *Teaching Low-Level Adult ESL Learners*

- ▶ Build on the experiences and language of learners.
- ▶ Use learners as resources.
- ▶ Sequence activities in an order that moves from less challenging to more challenging.
- ▶ Build redundancy into curriculum content, providing repetition of topics.
- ▶ Combine enabling skills with language experience or life-skill reading.
- ▶ Use cooperative learning activities that encourage interaction.
- ▶ Include a variety of techniques to appeal to diverse learning styles.

Peer Observation Form

1. What are you are looking for?

2. What do you observe?

Discussion of observations with teacher

Evaluation Form

1. How useful did you find the study circle material? Please explain.

2. How useful did you find the study circle meetings? Please explain.

3. How useful did you find the new activity or strategy (including the documentation)? Please explain.

4. What tools or ideas are you taking away that you will continue to use in your practice?

5. In what ways are you going to continue to apply research in your practice?

6. If this study circle is offered again, what advice would you give the facilitator?

7. On what other topics would you like to have a study circle?

Working With Literacy-Level Adult English Language Learners

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Many adult English language learners in the United States are placed in literacy-level classes. It is difficult to estimate the exact number of adult English language learners at this level across the variety of program contexts that offer adult English instruction (e.g., volunteer literacy groups, libraries, adult education programs, family literacy programs, community colleges, community-based or faith-based organizations). Furthermore, the percentage cited (55%) of beginning-level participants in state-administered adult English as a second language (ESL) programs includes those enrolled in regular beginning classes as well as those in literacy-level classes (U.S. Department of Education, 2002).

Anecdotal information, such as postings on Internet discussion lists and requests for training, suggest that teachers are not confident in their abilities to address the needs of literacy-level learners. (NIFL-ESL, 2003). Federally funded programs must demonstrate learner progress yearly, according to the National Reporting System (<http://www.nrsweb.org/>). Practitioners are concerned that sufficient progress is difficult to achieve with literacy-level learners. The Mainstream English Language Training (MELT) project, which developed ESL curriculum and assessment instruments for Southeast Asian refugees in the early 80s, posited that it takes from 500-1,000 hours of instruction for adults who are literate in their native language but have had no prior English instruction to reach a level where they can satisfy their basic needs, survive on the job, and have limited social interaction in English (MELT, 1985). For adults without a literacy background, it may take longer.

Research on effective interventions with this population in the United States is limited. The American Institutes for Research and Aguirre International conducted a 6-year What Works Study for Adult ESL Literacy Students, supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) and the Planning and Evaluation Service. The study focuses on adult English language learners who lack literacy skills in both their native language and English. Although the final report was not available at publication of this paper, background information about this study and preliminary findings are available online (Condelli, 2001; Wrigley, 2002).

This paper describes literacy-level learners and the skills they need to develop. It discusses effective practices for literacy-level classes and gives examples of activities and techniques that support these practices.

Who are literacy-level learners?

Literacy learners are generally those with 6 or fewer years of education in their native countries who need focused instruction on learning to read and write English. The population participating in literacy-level classes is diverse: These classes may include men and women with different native languages, ages, length of time in country, life and language learning goals, and access to previous education (Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, 2000; Shank & Terrill, 1997). Literacy learners also have a wide range of oral skills in English. (For a more detailed description of the varieties of first language literacy and effects on second language literacy, see Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003.) The learners are further differentiated by their experiences. Many have experienced trauma related to events in their native countries and to resettlement in the United States, and this trauma may affect the speed and facility with which they learn English (Adkins, Sample, & Birman, 1999). The following learners might attend the same literacy class:

- ▶ **Preliterate** (The native language does not yet have a writing system.) Wanankhucha, a Bantu from Somalia, entered the class as a recent refugee. She knows her native Af-Maay only orally, as a written form of the language is just now being developed. Furthermore, as a refugee, Wanankhucha shows evidence of trauma.
- ▶ **Nonliterate** (The native language has a written form, but the learner has no literacy.) Trang is a young, single mother from rural Vietnam who grew up without access to education. Here in the United States, she lacks many of the educational and cultural supports earlier Vietnamese refugees enjoyed.
- ▶ **Semiliterate** (The learner has minimal literacy in native language.) Roberto attended a rural school in El Salvador for 3 years. Although he wanted to continue, his family needed him to work on the family farm.
- ▶ **Nonalphabet literate** (The learner is literate in a language that is not alphabetic.) Xian is a retired minor bureaucrat from China. He is highly literate in the Mandarin script, but he is unfamiliar with any alphabet, including Roman.
- ▶ **Non-Roman alphabet literate** (The learner is literate in an alphabetic language other than Roman.) Khalil comes from Jordan. He completed 2 years of secondary school and is literate in Arabic.
- ▶ **Roman-alphabet literate** (The learner is literate in a language that is written in the Roman alphabet). Alex is a senior from Russia. As a young man, he studied French. Even though he was a professional (engineer) in his own country, he does not want to move to a higher level class.

Others who may benefit from a literacy-level class are individuals with learning disabilities or individuals who, because of age, physical or mental health issues, or family situations, find that the slow and repetitive pace of such a class better meets their needs and goals (Holt, 1995).

What skills do literacy-level learners need to develop?

At the most basic level, literacy learners need to understand that texts have a beginning, a middle, and an end; that English is read from left to right and from up to down; and that written words can represent a story, just as pictures do. They need to be ready to learn, to see patterns, and to associate symbols with objects.

Then, they need to be able to develop four key reading skills: phonological processing, vocabulary development, syntactical processing, and schema activation (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003). Relating to these four skills, learners need to be able to do the following (Brod, 1999; Florez, 2002; Van Duzer, 1999):

- ▶ **Phonological processing.** Recognize and reproduce letters and other graphic symbols related to the language; manipulate sound-symbol correspondences efficiently.
- ▶ **Vocabulary development.** Develop a vocabulary bank.
- ▶ **Syntactical processing.** Understand and apply grammar and usage conventions; identify and use structural and organizational features common to English.
- ▶ **Schema activation.** Initiate appropriate strategies for reading comprehension (e.g., identify a purpose for reading, use pictures and graphics, predict, and skim/scan or develop a piece of writing by brainstorming, outlining, drafting, using feedback, and editing).

Preliterate learners may find two-dimensional graphic literacy—letters, maps, graphs, charts, even pictures—difficult to interpret (Hvitfeldt, 1985). All non-English speakers will be challenged to hear and replicate the sounds of English, a necessary element in the sound-symbol correspondence skills deployed in successful reading (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003). Because of the difficulty some learners experience with these basic tasks, instructors may be tempted to spend all the classroom time working to master these skills. However, in order to apply literacy skills to real tasks, such as reading and understanding a note from a child’s teacher, a work schedule, or safety stickers on a medicine bottle, instruction must balance basic skills development with the fostering of higher level comprehension skills (Brod, 1999; Van Duzer, 1999).

What are effective practices in the literacy class?

Utilize the principles of adult learning

Malcolm Knowles’ (1973) principles of adult learning are applicable to planning instruction for adult English language learners: Adults are self-directed, practical, and problem solving; they have reservoirs of experience to help them learn new things; and they want to know why something needs to be learned and how it will be applicable to their lives.

Integrate the four language skills

Literacy-level classes vary because of program type (general, family, workplace, or corrections); intensity; and learner needs and goals. Yet, no matter the context, in real life, language tasks involve integrating the four skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. For example, a trip to the health clinic includes reading and filling out health forms, explaining symptoms, and understanding the doctor's response. Furthermore, research suggests that for beginning readers of a second language, oral proficiency in the target language is key to developing reading ability (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003).

Ask learners what they want to learn

Learners have many purposes for developing English literacy. Needs assessment assures learners a voice in their instruction and keeps content relevant to their lives and goals. It also gives the teacher an opportunity to learn what skills learners bring to class and which ones they feel they need to strengthen (Brod, 1999; Shank & Terrill, 1997).

Connect to the outside world

There should be opportunities in literacy-level classes to connect learning to real-world practices. For example, class field trips to a library, post office, supermarket, or museum provide a venue to practice speaking and reading skills while the learner is engaged in real-life activities (Brod, 1999; Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, 2000; Florez, 2002; Holt, 1995; Wrigley, 2002).

What are effective needs assessment activities for literacy learners?

Suggested activities for needs assessment with literacy-level learners include the following:

- ▶ Ask learners to look through their textbooks or picture dictionaries and place five Post-it notes on pages with information they think is most important to learn.
- ▶ Practice a pictorial strip story about a non-English speaker who has three specific needs for learning English (Ivan needs to learn English for work, to listen to music, and to make friends); then ask learners to brainstorm and substitute why they need to learn English.
- ▶ Have learners complete a simplified or pictorial checklist of what they want to read or write, e.g., grocery lists, job applications, notes to child's teacher, etc. (Holt, 1995; Shank & Terrill, 1997).

What additional activities are effective with literacy-level learners?

Once learner needs are determined, there are a number of activities that provide meaningful, relevant practice:

- ▶ **Dialogues with related activities.** Oral dialogues can be springboards for literacy-oriented activities such as cloze or substitution where learners supply the missing words in written dialogue or exercise where learners substitute different vocabulary words in structured dialogues, sentence strips, role plays, or dictations.
- ▶ **Vocabulary-building activities.** For literacy-level learners, matching pictures to words is key for vocabulary development. Flash cards, concentration games, labeling, vocabulary journals, picture dictionaries, and bingo activities can be used to practice vocabulary.
- ▶ **Class surveys** One type of class survey requires learners to ask the other students one or two questions, such as “What month were you born?” or “What is your last name?” and record the answers on a form. The class can debrief the answers to make a chart or graph. If learner names were gathered, the list can be used for alphabetizing practice. A second kind of survey asks learners to find “someone who likes soccer” or “someone who comes from Bolivia.” To find the information, learners need to ask questions such as “Do you like soccer?” and record the information on a form. Class surveys are useful for community building as well as for practicing the four language skills.
- ▶ **Language Experience Approach (LEA).** The teacher records text that learners generate from a shared picture or event, drawing out vocabulary that is relevant to the learners. Other activities based on the learner-generated text follow, such as vocabulary development, phonics exercises, choral reading, or dictation.
- ▶ **Phonics exercises.** Exercises such as minimal pairs (e.g., hat/cat, pan/fan) or identifying initial word sounds are important components of literacy-level lessons. Relating such exercises to the vocabulary being taught in a lesson contextualizes the learning and makes it relevant. Whenever possible, use authentic materials (flyers, schedules, advertisements, bills) to connect literacy development to real-world tasks.
- ▶ **Dictations of students’ names, phone numbers, and addresses.** These activities can provide interesting, meaningful content while developing encoding skills. Tactile activities such as drawing the letters in sand with the fingers, coloring letters, or manipulating plastic cutouts of letters may offer some variety (Brod, 1999; Florez, 2002; Holt, 1995; Moss, Shank, & Terrill, 1997; Tom, Tiller, & Bigelow, 1998; Wrigely, 2002).

What does an effective literacy lesson look like?

Following is a sample lesson that employs activities to develop the four key reading skills (*phonological processing, vocabulary development, syntactical processing, schema activation*):

1. As a class, learners brainstorm vocabulary on a specific topic, such as food shopping (*schema activation*).
2. Flashcard practice (whole group and pair) familiarizes learners with food vocabulary (*vocabulary development*).
3. The class groups food words that begin with similar sounds, *e.g., cheese, chicken, and cherries* (*phonological processing*).
4. Learners practice a three-line scripted dialogue (“I am going shopping.” “What do you need?” “I need bread, beans, and chicken.”) first as a whole group, then acted out by volunteers, and finally as pairs where learners substitute other food vocabulary (*vocabulary development*).
5. Learners complete cloze worksheets, inserting words that have been deleted from the dialogue or, alternately, learners can create pair dictations of the dialogue (*syntactical processing*).
6. For homework, learners create their own shopping list of five items they actually need; they can copy new food words from packages, etc. (*vocabulary development; schema activation*).

How can learner progress be assessed?

Learner assessment keeps both the teacher and learners informed of what has been achieved and what still needs work. Teachers can use many of the activities in this paper to assess learner progress (e.g., cloze exercises, substitution drills, and role plays). Ongoing teacher observation is also part of assessment. For learners, progress assessment provides a venue to develop self-reflection and self-evaluation skills. Learners can engage in self-assessment by completing checklists (e.g., indicating skills they feel they have improved: “X I can read the safety signs at work”). Meetings between teachers and individual learners to discuss progress are also helpful (Florez, 2002; Holt, 1995).

Conclusion

Literacy-level learners “may be beginning learners, but they are not beginning thinkers” (Brod, 1999, p. 5). Like all learners, they bring diverse strengths and needs to the adult ESL classroom. Teachers need to provide instruction that acknowledges and addresses these strengths and needs, engages learners in challenging and relevant topics, and provides them with tools they can use to meet their responsibilities and goals.

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Additional Selected Teacher and Learner Resources

- Bell, J., & Burnaby, B. (1984). *A handbook for ESL literacy*. Toronto, Canada: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/Hodder and Stoughton. (Available from Pippin Publishing, 1-888-889-000, www.pippinpub.com)
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- Silliman, A., & Tom, A. (2000). *Practical resources for adult ESL*. Burlingame, CA: ALTA Book Centers.

The following online resources demonstrate the scope, strategies, and activities for successfully working with literacy-level learners:

- Arlington Education and Employment Program. (2003). *The REEP ESL Curriculum For Adults*. Provides information about needs assessment, goal-setting, course and lesson planning, and offers sample lessons on health and work. (To find curriculum for literacy level-learners, go to “Resources,” click on “Lesson Plans,” and look for “Level 100.”)

Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks. *ESL for Literacy Learners* and ancillary materials. Defines ESL literacy and suggests appropriate methodology. www.language.ca/display_page.asp?page_id=255

Department of Education (MA). *Framework for Adult ESOL in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts* (1999/2002). Offers basic principles for working with adult learners www.doe.mass.edu/acls/frameworks/esol.pdf or www.doe.mass.edu/acls/frameworks/esol.doc

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Teaching Low-Level Adult ESL Learners

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Prior to the late 1970's, instructional methods and materials for adults learning English as a second language (ESL) assumed the presence of literacy in a first language (Wrigley & Guth, 1992). After 1975 the United States experienced an influx of refugees from Southeast Asia. Many had minimal or no experience in reading and writing in their native languages and, as the learners joined ESL classes, educators saw that existing methods and materials were not appropriate for these learners. Ten years later, during the implementation of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), educators were again faced with teaching adult learners who had little or no schooling in their native countries.

What has the field learned about offering instruction to literacy level (low or beginning) adult ESL learners? This digest provides information on how to identify and assess the instructional needs of adults learning to become literate in a second language; it discusses general techniques that facilitate instruction for these learners; it provides a sample procedure for combining some of these techniques; and it describes classroom materials appropriate for low-level adult ESL learners.

Low-Level Learners

There are several categories of adult ESL learners who can benefit from the approaches and techniques used in instruction for low-level learners (Crystal, 1982; California Department of Education, 1992; Savage, 1993). These categories include the following:

- ▶ learners who are nonliterate and have had little or no prior schooling in their native language;
- ▶ learners, such as speakers of Chinese, Arabic, or Khmer, who may not be familiar with the Roman alphabet;
- ▶ learners who may have learning disabilities; and
- ▶ learners who are literate in their native language but who may want (for various reasons such as age, health, family situation) to participate in a slower-paced class and who would benefit from classroom activities that characterize a literacy class.

Assessing the Needs of Low-Level Learners

Assessing the needs of learners who may not speak even minimal English and may not read or write in any language can be difficult. Holt (1994), Crystal (1982), and Bell (1988) offer suggestions, recommending a variety of ways to assess learners orally, through reading and writing, and through classroom observation.

Assessing Orally

Educators who speak the native language of the adult learners should ask them about their educational backgrounds. Persons with three or fewer years of formal education will probably be nonliterate.

Assessing Through Reading

Reading readiness tasks can be used for literacy screening. For example, learners can be asked to complete the following tasks. (The literacy skills being assessed appear in parentheses.)

- ▶ Complete an alphabet cloze (for example, A B__D__F G H__J), supplying the missing letters. (familiarity with Roman alphabet)
- ▶ Copy a sentence. (speed and ease in forming words)
- ▶ Read two simple sentences. (basic sight vocabulary in context)
- ▶ Point to letters corresponding to the sounds made by the teacher. (simple consonant sounds not easily confused)
- ▶ Read several unfamiliar or nonsense words. (blending sounds)

A learner who can recognize basic sight words or use a knowledge of phonics to approximate the sounds of unfamiliar words probably does not need basic literacy instruction.

Assessing Through Writing

The completion of a simple application form on which learners are asked to fill in basic information such as name, address, phone number, date, social security number, birth date, birthplace, age, and gender is a quick way to determine reading and writing ability, especially when a large number of learners have to be assessed in a short period of time. Someone who has difficulty filling out the form could probably benefit from basic literacy instruction.

A writing sample in the learner's first language is useful in determining the literacy level of the learner in his or her native language.

A writing sample in English, done at intake, can be used to compare later writing samples and to monitor the progress of each learner's writing.

Assessing Through Classroom Observation

Informal assessment through classroom observation can continue to assist the teacher in determining an individual learner's needs. Attention should be paid to how learners hold their pencils (awkwardly? too tightly?) and their books (upside down?), how they move their eyes (Do the eyes move to follow words?), how quickly they write (Do they hesitate? take time? labor over each letter?), and how they interact in large and small groups (Do they offer to help each other? Are they comfortable in groups?).

Techniques for Working With Adults

Knowles and other educators maintain that adult education is most effective when it is “experience centered, related to learners’ real needs, and directed by learners themselves” (Auerbach, 1992, p. 14). Bell and Burnaby (1984), Holt (1988), Holt and Gaer (1993), and Wrigley and Guth (1992) list techniques that involve beginning level learners as active participants in selecting topics, language, and materials.

1. Build on the experiences and language of learners. Invite them to discuss their experiences and provide activities that will allow them to generate language they have already developed.
2. Use learners as resources. Ask them to share their knowledge and expertise with others in the class.
3. Sequence activities in an order that moves from less challenging to more challenging, such as progressing from listening to speaking, reading, and writing skills. Move from language experience activities to picture-word connections to all-print exercises.
4. Build redundancy into curriculum content, providing repetition of topics. This will help overcome problems related to irregular attendance common in adult classes.
5. Combine enabling skills (visual discrimination of letters and words, auditory discrimination of sounds and words, spacing between letters and words, letter-sound correspondences, blending letters to sound out words, sight vocabulary) with language experience and whole language approaches.
6. Combine life-skill reading competencies (reading medicine labels, writing notes to the children’s teachers, filling out forms) with phonics, word recognition, word order, spacing words in a sentence, reading words in context, and reading comprehension.
7. Use cooperative learning activities that encourage interaction by providing learners with situations in which they must negotiate language with partners or group members to complete a task (See Bell, 1988).
8. Include a variety of techniques to appeal to diverse learning styles. For example, merge holistic reading approaches such as language experience with discrete approaches such as phonics.

An Integrated Approach to Literacy Instruction

The language experience approach (LEA)—which uses learner experiences as lesson content—is a way to introduce multiple activities that appeal to learners’ diverse backgrounds and preferred learning styles while offering instruction in language that is both comprehensible and interesting (Taylor, 1992). The following is an example of a modified LEA lesson that could be used with low-level learners.

1. A shared experience, such as a field trip, a common situation, or a meaningful picture is a stimulus for class discussion.
2. Learners volunteer sentences about the experience and the teacher writes the sentences on the chalkboard.
3. The teacher reads each sentence aloud, running her finger under words as each is pronounced, verifying that she has written what the student has said.
4. When the story is completed, the teacher reads it aloud.
5. Learners are encouraged to join in a second and third reading of the story.
6. A number of activities can follow at this point:
 - Learners copy the story;
 - Learners underline all the parts they can read;
 - Learners circle specific words (e.g., words that begin with a designated sound, common sight words such as *the*);
 - Choral cloze: The teacher erases some words, reads the story, and asks learners to supply the missing words;
 - Writing cloze: The teacher types the story, leaving out every fifth word. During the next class the teacher passes out the cloze and asks learners to fill in the missing words;
 - Scrambled sentences: The teacher types the story. During the next class the teacher distributes copies of the story to the class. Each learner cuts the story into strips so that there is one sentence on each strip of paper. Learners scramble the sentences and rearrange them in the proper sequence;
 - Scrambled words: More advanced learners can cut sentences into words, scramble the words, and rearrange them in order.

Selecting Appropriate Classroom Materials

Using concrete but age-appropriate materials with adult learners enhances instruction by providing a context for language and literacy development. A basic kit of materials might consist of the following objects, games, and materials.

1. Realia: clocks, food items, calendars, plastic fruits and vegetables, maps, household objects, real and play money, food containers, abacus, manual for learning to drive, and classroom objects;
2. Flash cards: pictures, words, and signs;
3. Pictures or photographs: personal, magazine, and others;
4. Tape recorder and cassette tapes, including music for imagery and relaxation;
5. Overhead projector, transparencies, and pens; video player and videos;
6. Pocket chart for numbers, letters, and pictures;
7. Alphabet sets;
8. Camera for language experience stories to create biographies and autobiographies;
9. Games such as bingo and concentration: commercial or teacher-made;
10. Colored index cards to teach word order in sentences, to show when speakers change in dialogue, to illustrate question/answer format, and to use as cues for a concentration game;
11. Cuisenaire rods to teach word order in sentences, to use as manipulatives in dyad activities, and to teach adjectives;
12. Colored chalk to teach word order, to differentiate between speakers in a dialogue, and to illustrate question and answer format;
13. Poster, butcher, and construction paper;
14. Felt-tipped pens, colored pencils, and crayons;
15. Scissors, glue, and masking tape; and
16. Children's literature: for learning techniques for reading or telling stories to children (See Smallwood, 1992, for ideas on using children's literature with adults.).

Conclusion

Providing instruction to adults acquiring ESL literacy is a challenge. When approaches, techniques, and materials are suitable for adults, are related to their real needs, and promote involvement in their own learning, there is a greater chance of success.

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Notes

IV-D. Study Circle on Teaching Listening, Speaking, and Pronunciation

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Study Circle on Teaching Listening, Speaking, and Pronunciation

Facilitator Guide

Introduction

The purpose of this study circle is to familiarize participants with the existing research on the processes of listening, speaking, and pronunciation acquisition, and to explore the pedagogical implications of this research in their own classrooms.

Readings

- ▶ *Improving Adult English Language Learners' Speaking Skills*, by MaryAnn Cunningham Florez. www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/Speak.html
- ▶ *Improving ESL Learners' Listening Skills: At the Workplace and Beyond*, by Carol Van Duzer. www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/LISTENQA.html
- ▶ *Improving Adult ESL Learners' Pronunciation Skills*, by MaryAnn Cunningham Florez. www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/Pronun.html

Session Lengths

Session 1: 2 hours

Session 2: 2.5 hours

Session 3: 1.5 hours

Session 1

Facilitator Preparation for Session 1

1. Two weeks before the first session, send participants information about the study circle (location, times, etc.).
2. At that time, ask them to do the following within 1 week:
 - ▶ Write a short reaction/response to at least two of these statements:
 - The most effective way to teach languages is to combine all of the skills in every lesson rather than trying to teach them separately.
 - Strategy use in language learning can and should be taught explicitly.
 - For adult ESL learners, speaking and listening are the most important skills.
 - ▶ Email their reactions (no more than half a page in total) to you, the facilitator. You should then print these email responses *without names on them* and bring them to the first session.
3. After Step 2 has been completed, send one group of participants the CAELA digest on listening skills and the others the digest on speaking skills. Instruct them to read the digests before coming to the first session.
4. Remind participants to bring all participant handouts with them to each session.

1. Opening (5 minutes)

- ▶ Welcome the group and introduce yourself.
- ▶ Review the purpose of this study circle.
- ▶ Review logistical details such as the schedule, breaks, and the location of the bathrooms.
- ▶ Agree on the basic ground rules. (See How to Conduct a Study Circle in the “Information for Trainers” section.)

2. Participant introductions (5 minutes)

Format: Whole group

- ▶ Have participants briefly introduce themselves.

3. Inkshed exercise on listening and speaking skills (15–20 minutes)

Format: Individual and small groups

An inkshed is an opportunity for people to exchange ideas on a topic, through writing, in a short time. Responding to a prompt, participants write an initial reaction or idea on a piece of paper and place it in a central location in the room. They should not write their names on the paper. From the central location, they then take another person's paper, quickly read it, write a short response to it on the same piece of paper, and return it to the center table. They then take another paper, read the original reaction and subsequent response(s) on it, and add their comments, and so on. Encourage participants to read and respond to as many papers as they can. At the end of 5 to 10 minutes, all papers must be returned. Participants then find their own original response paper and look over the other participants' comments.

For this study circle inkshed, the facilitator should place on a central table the printed-out email responses that the facilitator received before the session (after first checking that no names are on the responses). Since the starting text has already been prepared, a 5- to 7-minute inkshed should allow enough time for each paper to have at least two or perhaps three comments added to it. After the writing part is finished, participants can read over the comments on their own original response paper. They then break into small groups (three or four people) and discuss the results. Participants might consider these thoughts:

- ▶ Did the initial responses of the participants tend to resemble or differ from one another?
- ▶ Were they surprised by any of the reactions to their initial thoughts?
- ▶ Since they have read one of the CAELA digests after writing their initial response paper, did anything in that reading confirm or change their original ideas?

4. Reviewing the theory on listening and speaking (20 minutes)

Format: Jigsaw activity in pairs

In this section, participants share with each other the contents of the readings on listening and speaking.

First, provide participants with the questions below and give them 2 to 3 minutes to quickly review on their own the CAELA piece that they read before coming to the session.

Then, instruct participants to pair up with someone who read the other piece, and, based on the questions, brief the other person on the information provided in the piece.

Note to facilitator: Key points to be raised are provided after the questions below.

Questions for the digest on speaking skills:

- ▶ What does it mean to say that speaking is an “interactive process of constructing meaning”?

Key Points: *Speaking is not only about producing words and sentences; it is a process that involves receiving messages, processing them, and producing appropriate responses. The resulting content is dependent on the particular people involved, the context in which they are speaking, and the purpose of the communication.*

- ▶ What is an example of a language pattern that tends to recur in a particular situation or context—such as when declining an invitation, requesting time off work, or asking for help in a department store?

Key Points: *When asking for help in a store (to take one example), the patterns may include*

- *Question (“May I help you?”)*
 - *Statement of need (“Yes, I’m looking for socks.”)*
 - *Response to the statement of need (“They’re in the women’s clothing section, up one floor, turn right when you get off the escalator.”)*
 - *Statement of appreciation (“Thanks.”)*
 - *Acknowledgment of the appreciation (“You’re welcome.”)*
- ▶ According to the digest, in addition to familiarizing themselves with the language patterns of particular situations, learners need to be familiar with skills and strategies that “enhance comprehensibility.” These include emphasizing key words, rephrasing, redirecting, providing feedback, or checking for listener comprehension. Using the language patterns from the previous question, what are some possible examples of these skills and strategies?

Key Points: *An example of rephrasing is, “You said to go up to the second floor, right?” An example of checking for comprehension is, “Did you say you wanted socks?”*

- ▶ What is the difference between linguistic and sociolinguistic competence?

Key Points: *Linguistic competence refers to the learners’ ability to produce specific features of language such as grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Sociolinguistic competence refers to their ability to understand when, why, and in what ways to use the language.*

Questions for the digest on listening skills:

- ▶ The digest notes four factors affecting the listening process. Briefly review ways in which each one may affect listening comprehension.

Key Points: *The four factors are*

- *The listener's level of interest in the topic and ability to use negotiation skills (e.g., asking for clarification, repetition, or definition of points not understood)*
 - *The speaker's use of colloquial language and reduced forms and the rate of delivery*
 - *The familiarity of the content to the listener*
 - *The existence and form of visual support*
- ▶ What are the basic processes involved in listening, and how do they interact with one another?

Key Points: *The processes are*

- *Determining a reason for listening*
- *Depositing an image in short-term memory*
- *Organizing information according to speech type*
- *Predicting information in message*
- *Recalling background information*
- *Assigning meaning to message*
- *Checking that the message has been understood*
- *Choosing information to keep in long-term memory*
- *Deleting message in short-term memory*

These processes generally occur unconsciously. They may occur at the same time, in succession, and not necessarily in the order written above.

- ▶ What is the difference between top-down and bottom-up processing?

Key Points: *Top-down processing uses background knowledge and broad understandings to derive the meaning of a text, while bottom-up processing derives meaning from the incoming language information (e.g., sounds, words, grammatical relationships, and intonation).*

5. Classroom practice reflections (50 minutes)

Format: Individual, small groups, and whole group

This activity encourages participants to think about their own classroom practices in relation to the information provided in the two digests. It comprises three basic steps—individual reflection, small-group discussion, and whole-group discussion—which should be completed first for listening and then for speaking. Broad, guiding questions are provided below for each step of the activity. Possible answers to questions raised are in italics.

Individual reflection, digest on listening skills (5 minutes)

Participants look at the section in the digest on listening tasks (“What kinds of listening tasks are appropriate?”). Have participants take out the handout on listening tasks entitled “Reflections on Listening Tasks” and fill it out while thinking about two questions:

- ▶ Which of the tasks have you used in your classroom and which have you not used?
- ▶ What are your reasons for using some and not others?

Small-group discussion, digest on listening skills (15 minutes)

In small groups, the participants compare and discuss their responses to the two questions above, considering the similarities and differences in their responses and the possible reasons for them. In their discussion of the reasons for these similarities and differences, participants may consider these two questions:

- ▶ Do you feel some tasks are more or less important/appropriate/challenging/appealing/easy than others? If so, which ones, and why?
- ▶ Do you feel that the level or the context of your class affects the use of these various tasks? If so, in what ways?

In their discussion, encourage participants to also think about how these various tasks can be used to address the broader-level suggestions offered in the listening digest section on selecting techniques and activities (*tasks should be relevant; material should be authentic; both top-down and bottom-up processing skills should be developed; listening strategies should be encouraged; activities should teach, not test*). For example, in what ways might a combination of tasks be used to help develop listening strategies, or to focus students on the process of listening or speaking rather than simply on memory, so that instruction might improve rather than merely test students’ listening and speaking skills?

Whole-group discussion, digest on listening skills (15 minutes)

Invite each group to briefly share any thoughts or questions that arose in the small-group discussions.

Following the whole-group discussion, have participants go through the same three-step process for the digest on speaking skills, with just a few differences. For the individual reflection, have participants fill out the handout entitled “Reflections on Speaking Tasks.” For the small-group discussion, have them consider the following additional questions: Can the broader-level considerations suggested in the listening digest also be relevant when selecting speaking techniques and activities? If so, in what ways might the various speaking tasks be used to address these broader-level considerations?

6. Considering application (20 minutes)

Format: Individual and pairs

Now that participants have had the chance to think about their own use of these tasks and to share some ideas about them, ask them to once again look over the tasks—both for listening and speaking—and reflect on which ones they might like to experiment with, either for the first time or simply in different ways, contexts, or combinations (5 minutes).

Next, have participants pair up and share what they chose and why with a partner. What do they hope will happen or change by using this task or this combination of tasks? After they have talked through their ideas with a partner, have them fill out the New Activity Planning Form. Encourage participants to consider peer observation in their plans if there are co-workers in the study circle. (See the Peer Observation Form and the Peer Coaching and Mentoring Guide.) Ask participants to complete the New Activity Notes for Listening and Speaking Tasks when they have tried the activity in their classroom. Point out that if participants would like to do additional reading between sessions for ideas on listening and speaking tasks, a list of suggested references is available in their handouts (15 minutes).

7. Evaluation (5 minutes)

Do a quick evaluation to identify the main strengths and weaknesses of the session. Ask participants two questions:

- ▶ What was the most useful aspect of today’s session?
- ▶ What might we change if we do this study circle again?

8. Closing (2 minutes)

Remind participants of the next meeting and its time and place. Answer any last-minute questions. Ask participants to bring their completed New Activity Notes to the next session.

Session 2

Facilitator Preparation for Session 2

1. Bring to the session a selection of textbooks for teaching pronunciation. They can be made available to participants who want additional information or ideas during the exercise on Preparation for Interim Activity.
2. Bring copies of the reading *Improving Adult ESL Learners' Pronunciation Skills*.

1. Opening (5 minutes)

Welcome the group back.

2. Debriefing the interim activities (30 minutes)

Format: Small groups

In small groups, participants use their New Activity Planning and Notes Forms for Listening and Speaking Tasks to discuss the activity they tried in their classes between the sessions. They focus on the following questions:

- ▶ What tasks did you teach? What happened? What factors affected your implementation?
- ▶ What did you conclude from implementing this activity or strategy?
- ▶ What advice would you have for other practitioners about using this task or combination of tasks?

A volunteer from each group presents to the whole group the main points from the small-group discussion, summarizing each group's basic assessment of how the tasks worked and the group members' advice for other practitioners. Problems that emerged or requests for ideas and advice can be the subject of discussion. Overall, participants discuss their impressions of using the various listening and speaking tasks in their classrooms.

3. Reflecting in writing (15 minutes)

Format: Individual

Now that participants have tried teaching a new task or combination of tasks, talked about it with colleagues, and heard about others' teaching experiences, they need to think about what to do next. Ask participants to write for 10 minutes about what they discovered through their experimentation, what they learned from the experiences of others, and what they see as their next steps. In terms of next steps, specific questions could include the following:

- ▶ Based on your experience and the experiences of others, will you try using the same task(s) again? Will you modify it? How?
- ▶ Will you try using other tasks?

Invite volunteers to read aloud what they have written.

4. Inkshed exercise on pronunciation skills (35 minutes)

Format: Individual and whole group

See Session 1 for a general description of an inkshed exercise.

For this inkshed activity, give participants 3 to 5 minutes to write a response to the following statement:

Unlike children, adult second language learners will always retain an accent. Therefore, explicit pronunciation practice with them is an impractical use of class time.

After 5 to 7 minutes of responding to others' papers, give participants a minute to find and read over their own initial response. The participants then discuss as a whole group their thoughts about teaching pronunciation. The following are possible guiding questions:

- ▶ What are your general thoughts about teaching pronunciation explicitly to your adult English language learners?
- ▶ Did anyone have any changes of opinion after reading the comments and responses of their colleagues?
- ▶ What are your ideas about factors other than age that may or may not limit pronunciation learning? For example, what do you think about the idea that the aptitude for achieving native-like pronunciation differs among learners? Do you have examples of this from your personal or professional experience?
- ▶ What do you think about the idea that learner *attitude* and *motivation* can support or impede the development of pronunciation skills? Examples?
- ▶ What do you think about the idea that a learner's *native language* influences the pronunciation of the target language? Examples?

5. Reading (10 minutes)

Format: Individual

Give participants the third article (*Improving Adult ESL Learners' Pronunciation Skills*) and ask them to read it.

6. Discussion (20 minutes)

Format: Small group and whole group

First in small groups (10 minutes) and then as a whole group (10 minutes), have the participants discuss the reading. Questions to be considered in the discussion may include the following:

- ▶ Did the reading confirm or change anyone's ideas about factors affecting pronunciation mastery?
- ▶ Did anyone's ideas about the importance of teaching pronunciation skills change?
- ▶ What level of emphasis do you feel should be placed on pronunciation with your learners, taking into consideration factors such as learners' own characteristics and institutional, linguistic, and methodological variables? (See the digest section on *Incorporating Pronunciation into the Curriculum*.)

7. Preparation for interim activity (35 minutes)

Format: Whole group, small group, and individual

For the interim activity, the participants will be asked to try incorporating some explicit pronunciation instruction in their classrooms—or if they are already doing so, to experiment with a different technique or approach. The following activity is intended to help them begin to think about what type of pronunciation teaching technique or approach they might try.

First, have the whole group discuss (5 minutes) the following questions:

- ▶ How have you tried incorporating pronunciation instruction in your classes?
- ▶ What methods have you tried using to teach pronunciation?

Next, break the participants into small groups to work through the following exercise. If possible, group participants with similar work contexts and student populations together. Pronunciation textbooks can be made available to participants at this time.

- a. Based on their students' needs, participants decide on a pronunciation feature that they think would be useful to practice explicitly in their classroom. Examples can be drawn from the section in the digest on Language Features Involved in Pronunciation. They can include *segmentals* (particular sounds that the students have difficulties in distinguishing and producing in English) or *suprasegmentals* (e.g., stress, rhythm, adjustments in connected speech, prominence, and intonation).

- b. Following the framework provided in the digest section on Incorporating Pronunciation in Instruction, have participants write on a flipchart a sample lesson to teach this pronunciation feature, including any suggested exercises or specific methods. Post the flipcharts (20 minutes for Steps a and b).
- c. Have the participants walk around and look at the other groups' lesson plans. Provide time for them to ask questions, give suggestions, and take notes (5 minutes).
- d. Hand out the New Activity Planning and Notes Forms for Pronunciation Instruction and explain that, as in the exercise they have just done, they will be choosing a pronunciation feature to focus on in their classrooms, designing appropriate lesson plans to highlight that feature, and teaching these lessons in their classrooms between this and the next study circle session. Give participants 5 minutes to begin thinking about what this pronunciation feature might be. They may work alone, talk to their colleagues, or use the posted flip sheets to come up with ideas. They may begin to fill out their New Activity Planning Form, but it does not need to be completed at this time. Both forms, however, should be completed and brought to the next study circle session.
- e. Remind participants that they can look for sources on teaching pronunciation on the resource sheet in their handouts.
- f. Ask whether anyone has any final questions about the intersession activity.

8. Evaluation (5 minutes)

Do a quick evaluation to identify the main strengths and weaknesses of the session. Ask participants

- ▶ What was the most useful aspect of today's session?
- ▶ What might we change if we do this study circle again?

9. Closing (2 minutes)

Remind participants of the next meeting and its time and place. Answer any last-minute questions. Ask participants to bring their completed New Activity Notes to the next session.

Session 3

1. Opening (5 minutes)

Welcome the group back, asking participants how their interim activity went.

2. Debriefing the interim activity (45 minutes)

Format: Small groups and whole group

After grouping participants with others who experimented with the same or with a similar pronunciation feature, ask them to refer to their New Activity Notes as they share their experiences. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:

- ▶ What did you try? What happened? What factors affected your implementation?
- ▶ What did you conclude from implementing this activity or strategy?
- ▶ What advice would you have for other practitioners about implementing this strategy?

Have a volunteer from each small group report to the whole group the main conclusions and discoveries from their small-group debriefing.

- ▶ What were the group members' general impressions about pronunciation instruction?
- ▶ What factors had the most impact (positive or negative) on their implementation?
- ▶ Were there any surprises?

Encourage discussion and comparison of results between groups.

3. Concluding inkshed (15 minutes)

Format: Individual and whole group

Have the participants write for 3 minutes in response to the following prompt:

Through this study circle I have learned/changed my ideas about ...

At the end of 3 minutes, they put their papers (without names) on the center table and, for the next 7 minutes, comment on other participants' papers. Then, they look over their own papers for a few minutes. Invite participants to share some of their thoughts about their own feelings or about the comments they received on their inksheds.

4. Planning next steps (10 minutes)

Format: Whole group

Ask whether any of the participants would like to pursue follow-up ideas from their interim session activities. Talk about what these might be. Examples might include making lesson plans available to colleagues or posting activity results on a state or regional professional development Web site. Invite participants to consider how they might continue to support each other as a group. Does the group want to meet again or stay in touch in other ways? If the group wants to continue to meet, make sure that there is a clear purpose and focus for the meetings.

5. Closing (5 minutes)

Draw participants' attention to other resources available on teaching listening, speaking, and pronunciation. (See reading list at the end of the Participant Handouts.)

Thank the group for their work.

6. Evaluation (5 minutes)

Ask the participants to fill out the Evaluation Form, requesting feedback about the entire study circle. If there is time, provide an opportunity for volunteers to comment on their experiences in the study circle.

Improving Adult English Language Learners' Speaking Skills

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Communicative and whole language instructional approaches promote integration of speaking, listening, reading, and writing in ways that reflect natural language use. But opportunities for speaking and listening require structure and planning if they are to support language development. This digest describes what speaking involves and what good speakers do in the process of expressing themselves. It also presents an outline for creating an effective speaking lesson and for assessing learners' speaking skills.

Oral communication skills in adult ESL instruction

Outside the classroom, listening is used twice as often as speaking, which in turn is used twice as much as reading and writing (Rivers, 1981). Inside the classroom, speaking and listening are the most often used skills (Brown, 1994). They are recognized as critical for functioning in an English language context, both by teachers and by learners. These skills are also logical instructional starting points when learners have low literacy levels (in English or their native language) or limited formal education, or when they come from language backgrounds with a non-Roman script or a predominantly oral tradition. Further, with the drive to incorporate workforce readiness skills into adult ESL instruction, practice time is being devoted to such speaking skills as reporting, negotiating, clarifying, and problem solving (Grognet, 1997).

What speaking is

Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing *and* receiving and processing information (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997). Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs, including the participants themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment, and the purposes for speaking. It is often spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving. However, speech is not always unpredictable. Language functions (or patterns) that tend to recur in certain discourse situations (e.g., declining an invitation or requesting time off from work), can be identified and charted (Burns & Joyce, 1997). For example, when a salesperson asks "May I help you?" the expected discourse sequence includes a statement of need, response to the need, offer of appreciation, acknowledgement of the appreciation, and a leave-taking exchange. Speaking requires that learners not only know how to produce specific points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary (*linguistic competence*), but also that they understand when, why, and in what ways to produce language (*sociolinguistic competence*). Finally, speech has its own skills, structures, and conventions different from written language (Burns & Joyce, 1997; Carter & McCarthy, 1995; Cohen, 1996). A good speaker synthesizes this array of skills and knowledge to succeed in a given speech act.

What a good speaker does

A speaker's skills and speech habits have an impact on the success of any exchange (Van Duzer, 1997). Speakers must be able to anticipate and then produce the expected patterns of specific discourse situations. They must also manage discrete elements such as turn-taking, rephrasing, providing feedback, or redirecting (Burns & Joyce, 1997). For example, a learner involved in the exchange with the salesperson described previously must know the usual pattern that such an interaction follows and access that knowledge as the exchange progresses. The learner must also choose the correct vocabulary to describe the item sought, rephrase or emphasize words to clarify the description if the clerk does not understand, and use appropriate facial expressions to indicate satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the service. Other skills and knowledge that instruction might address include the following:

- ▶ producing the sounds, stress patterns, rhythmic structures, and intonations of the language;
- ▶ using grammar structures accurately;
- ▶ assessing characteristics of the target audience, including shared knowledge or shared points of reference, status and power relations of participants, interest levels, or differences in perspectives;
- ▶ selecting vocabulary that is understandable and appropriate for the audience, the topic being discussed, and the setting in which the speech act occurs;
- ▶ applying strategies to enhance comprehensibility, such as emphasizing key words, rephrasing, or checking for listener comprehension;
- ▶ using gestures or body language; and
- ▶ paying attention to the success of the interaction and adjusting components of speech such as vocabulary, rate of speech, and complexity of grammar structures to maximize listener comprehension and involvement (Brown, 1994).

Teachers should monitor learners' speech production to determine what skills and knowledge they already have and what areas need development. Bailey and Savage's *New Ways in Teaching Speaking* (1994), and Lewis's *New Ways in Teaching Adults* (1997) offer suggestions for activities that can address different skills.

General outline of a speaking lesson

Speaking lessons can follow the usual pattern of preparation, presentation, practice, evaluation, and extension. The teacher can use the *preparation* step to establish a context for the speaking task (where, when, why, and with whom it will occur) and to initiate awareness of the speaking skill to be targeted (asking for clarification, stressing key words, using reduced forms of words). In *presentation*, the teacher can provide learners with a preproduction model that furthers learner

comprehension and helps them become more attentive observers of language use. *Practice* involves learners in reproducing the targeted structure, usually in a controlled or highly supported manner. *Evaluation* involves directing attention to the skill being examined and asking learners to monitor and assess their own progress. Finally, *extension* consists of activities that ask learners to use the strategy or skill in a different context or authentic communicative situation, or to integrate use of the new skill or strategy with previously acquired ones (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997; Carter & McCarthy, 1995).

Example of a speaking lesson

Choosing appropriate topics for small talk

- 1. Preparation.** Show the learners a picture of two people conversing in a familiar casual setting. (The setting will be determined by a prior needs assessment.) Ask them to brainstorm what the people might be discussing (i.e., what topics, vocabulary, typical phrases).
- 2. Presentation.** Present several video clips of small talk in casual situations. Have learners complete a worksheet in which they describe or list the topics discussed, the context in which the speech is occurring, and any phrases that seem to typify small talk. Follow up with a discussion of the kinds of topics that are appropriate for small talk, the factors in the specific situations that affect topic selection (e.g., relationships of participants, physical setting), and typical phrases used in small talk. Chart this information.
- 3. Practice.** Give learners specific information about the participants and the setting of a scenario where small talk will take place. In pairs, have them list topics that might be discussed by the participants and simple phrases they might use. Learners then engage in improvised dialogues based on these simple phrases.
- 4. Evaluation.** Give pairs a teacher-prepared dialogue based on their scenario from 3. Ask them to compare their improvised dialogues with the prepared dialogue, analyzing the similarities, differences, and reasons for both.
- 5. Extension.** Have learners go individually or in small groups into various contexts in the community (work, school, church, bus stop) and record the conversations they hear. Ask them to report their findings back to the class, and then have the class discuss these findings.

In-class speaking tasks

Although dialogues and conversations are the most obvious and most often used speaking activities in language classrooms, a teacher can select activities from a variety of tasks. Brown (1994) lists six possible task categories:

- 1. Imitative**—Drills in which the learner simply repeats a phrase or structure (e.g., “Excuse me.” or “Can you help me?”) for clarity and accuracy;
- 2. Intensive**—Drills or repetitions focusing on specific phonological or grammatical points, such as minimal pairs or repetition of a series of imperative sentences;

3. **Responsive**—Short replies to teacher or learner questions or comments, such as a series of answers to yes/no questions;
4. **Transactional**—Dialogues conducted for the purpose of information exchange, such as information-gathering interviews, role plays, or debates;
5. **Interpersonal**—Dialogues to establish or maintain social relationships, such as personal interviews or casual conversation role plays; and
6. **Extensive**—Extended monologues such as short speeches, oral reports, or oral summaries.

These tasks are not sequential. Each can be used independently or they can be integrated with one another, depending on learners' needs. For example, if learners are not using appropriate sentence intonations when participating in a *transactional* activity that focuses on the skill of politely interrupting to make a point, the teacher might decide to follow up with a brief *imitative* lesson targeting this feature.

When presenting tasks, teachers should tell learners about the language function to be produced in the task and the real context(s) in which it usually occurs. They should provide opportunities for interactive practice and build upon previous instruction as necessary (Burns & Joyce, 1997). Teachers should also be careful not to overload a speaking lesson with other new material such as numerous vocabulary or grammatical structures. This can distract learners from the primary speaking goals of the lesson.

Assessing speaking

Speaking assessments can take many forms, from oral sections of standardized tests such as the Basic English Skills Test (BEST) or the English as a Second Language Oral Assessment (ESLOA) to authentic assessments such as progress checklists, analysis of taped speech samples, or anecdotal records of speech in classroom interactions. Assessment instruments should reflect instruction and be incorporated from the beginning stages of lesson planning (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996). For example, if a lesson focuses on producing and recognizing signals for turn-taking in a group discussion, the assessment tool might be a checklist to be completed by the teacher or learners in the course of the learners' participation in the discussion. Finally, criteria should be clearly defined and understandable to both the teacher and the learners.

Conclusion

Speaking is key to communication. By considering what good speakers do, what speaking tasks can be used in class, and what specific needs learners report, teachers can help learners improve their speaking and overall oral competency.

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Observations that limited pronunciation skills can undermine learners' self-confidence, restrict social interactions, and negatively influence estimations of a speaker's credibility and abilities are not new (Morley, 1998). However, the current focus on communicative approaches to English as a second language (ESL) instruction and the concern for building teamwork and communication skills in an increasingly diverse workplace are renewing interest in the role that pronunciation plays in adults' overall communicative competence. As a result, pronunciation is emerging from its often marginalized place in adult ESL instruction. This digest reviews the current status of pronunciation instruction in adult ESL classes. It provides an overview of the factors that influence pronunciation mastery and suggests ways to plan and implement pronunciation instruction.

Historical Perspective

Pronunciation instruction tends to be linked to the instructional method being used (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 1996). In the grammar-translation method of the past, pronunciation was almost irrelevant and therefore seldom taught. In the audio-lingual method, learners spent hours in the language lab listening to and repeating sounds and sound combinations. With the emergence of more holistic, communicative methods and approaches to ESL instruction, pronunciation is addressed within the context of real communication (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 1996; Morley, 1991).

Factors Influencing Pronunciation Mastery

Research has contributed some important data on factors that can influence the learning and teaching of pronunciation skills. Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, (1996), Gillette (1994), Graham (1994) and Pennington (1994) discuss the following factors.

Age. The debate over the impact of age on language acquisition and specifically pronunciation is varied. Some researchers argue that, after puberty, lateralization (the assigning of linguistic functions to the different brain hemispheres) is completed, and adults' ability to distinguish and produce native-like sounds is more limited. Others refer to the existence of sensitive periods when various aspects of language acquisition occur, or to adults' need to re-adjust existing neural networks to accommodate new sounds. Most researchers, however, agree that adults find pronunciation more difficult than children do and that they probably will not achieve native-like pronunciation. Yet experiences with language learning and the ability to self-monitor, which come with age, can offset these limitations to some degree.

Amount and type of prior pronunciation instruction. Prior experiences with pronunciation instruction may influence learners' success with current efforts. Learners at higher language proficiency levels may have developed habitual, systematic pronunciation errors that must be identified and addressed.

Aptitude. Individual capacity for learning languages has been debated. Some researchers believe all learners have the same capacity to learn a second language because they have learned a first language. Others assert that the ability to recognize and internalize foreign sounds may be unequally developed in different learners.

Learner attitude and motivation. Nonlinguistic factors related to an individual's personality and learning goals can influence achievement in pronunciation. Attitude toward the target language, culture, and native speakers; degree of acculturation (including exposure to and use of the target language); personal identity issues; and motivation for learning can all support or impede pronunciation skills development.

Native language. Most researchers agree that the learner's first language influences the pronunciation of the target language and is a significant factor in accounting for foreign accents. So-called interference or negative transfer from the first language is likely to cause errors in aspiration, intonation, and rhythm in the target language.

The pronunciation of any one learner might be affected by a combination of these factors. The key is to be aware of their existence so that they may be considered in creating realistic and effective pronunciation goals and development plans for the learners. For example, native-like pronunciation is not likely to be a realistic goal for older learners; a learner who is a native speaker of a tonal language, such as Vietnamese, will need assistance with different pronunciation features than will a native Spanish speaker; and a twenty-three year old engineer who knows he will be more respected and possibly promoted if his pronunciation improves is likely to be responsive to direct pronunciation instruction.

Language Features Involved in Pronunciation

Two groups of features are involved in pronunciation: segmentals and suprasegmentals. *Segmentals* are the basic inventory of distinctive sounds and the way that they combine to form a spoken language. In the case of North American English, this inventory is comprised of 40 phonemes (15 vowels and 25 consonants), which are the basic sounds that serve to distinguish words from one another. Pronunciation instruction has often concentrated on the mastery of segmentals through discrimination and production of target sounds via drills consisting of minimal pairs like /bæd/-/bæt/ or /sIt/-/sit/.

Suprasegmentals transcend the level of individual sound production. They extend across segmentals and are often produced unconsciously by native speakers. Since suprasegmental elements provide crucial context and support (they determine meaning) for segmental production, they

are assuming a more prominent place in pronunciation instruction (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 1996; Gilbert, 1990; Morley, 1991). Suprasegmentals include the following:

- ▶ **stress**—a combination of length, loudness, and pitch applied to syllables in a word (e.g., Happy, FOOTball);
- ▶ **rhythm**—the regular, patterned beat of stressed and unstressed syllables and pauses (e.g., with weak syllables in lower case and stressed syllables in upper case: they WANT to GO Later.);
- ▶ **adjustments in connected speech**—modifications of sounds within and between words in streams of speech (e.g., “ask him,” /æsk hɪm/ becomes /æs kɪm/);
- ▶ **prominence**—speaker’s act of highlighting words to emphasize meaning or intent (e.g., Give me the BLUE one. (not the yellow one); and
- ▶ **intonation**—the rising and falling of voice pitch across phrases and sentences (e.g., Are you REAdy?).

Incorporating Pronunciation in the Curriculum

In general, programs should start by establishing long range oral communication goals and objectives that identify pronunciation needs as well as speech functions and the contexts in which they might occur (Morley, 1998). These goals and objectives should be realistic, aiming for functional intelligibility (ability to make oneself relatively easily understood), functional communicability (ability to meet the communication needs one faces), and enhanced self-confidence in use (Gillette, 1994; Jordan, 1992; Morley, 1998). They should result from a careful analysis and description of the learners’ needs (Jordan, 1992; Morley, 1998). This analysis should then be used to support selection and sequencing of the pronunciation information and skills for each sub-group or proficiency level within the larger learner group (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 1996).

To determine the level of emphasis to be placed on pronunciation within the curriculum, programs need to consider certain variables specific to their contexts.

- ▶ **the learners** (ages, educational backgrounds, experiences with pronunciation instruction, motivations, general English proficiency levels)
- ▶ **the instructional setting** (academic, workplace, English for specific purposes, literacy, conversation, family literacy)
- ▶ **institutional variables** (teachers’ instructional and educational experiences, focus of curriculum, availability of pronunciation materials, class size, availability of equipment)
- ▶ **linguistic variables** (learners’ native languages, diversity or lack of diversity of native languages within the group)
- ▶ **methodological variables** (method or approach embraced by the program)

Incorporating Pronunciation in Instruction

Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (1996) propose a framework that supports a communicative-cognitive approach to teaching pronunciation. Preceded by a planning stage to identify learners' needs, pedagogical priorities, and teachers' readiness to teach pronunciation, the framework for the teaching stage of the framework offers a structure for creating effective pronunciation lessons and activities on the sound system and other features of North American English pronunciation.

- ▶ description and analysis of the pronunciation feature to be targeted (raises learner awareness of the specific feature)
- ▶ listening discrimination activities (learners listen for and practice recognizing the targeted feature)
- ▶ controlled practice and feedback (support learner production of the feature in a controlled context)
- ▶ guided practice and feedback (offer structured communication exercises in which learners can produce and monitor for the targeted feature)
- ▶ communicative practice and feedback (provides opportunities for the learner to focus on content but also get feedback on where specific pronunciation instruction is needed).

A lesson on word stress, based on this framework, might look like the following:

1. The teacher presents a list of vocabulary items from the current lesson, employing both correct and incorrect word stress. After discussing the words and eliciting (if appropriate) learners' opinions on which are the correct versions, the concept of word stress is introduced and modeled.
2. Learners listen for and identify stressed syllables, using sequences of nonsense syllables of varying lengths (e.g., da-DA, da-da-DA-da).
3. Learners go back to the list of vocabulary items from step one and, in unison, indicate the correct stress patterns of each word by clapping, emphasizing the stressed syllables with louder claps. New words can be added to the list for continued practice if necessary.
4. In pairs, learners take turns reading a scripted dialogue. As one learner speaks, the other marks the stress patterns on a printed copy. Learners provide one another with feedback on their production and discrimination.
5. Learners make oral presentations to the class on topics related to their current lesson. Included in the assessment criteria for the activity are correct production and evidence of self-monitoring of word stress.

In addition to careful planning, teachers must be responsive to learners needs and explore a variety of methods to help learners comprehend pronunciation features. Useful exercises include the following:

- ▶ Have learners touch their throats to feel vibration or no vibration in sound production, to understand voicing.
- ▶ Have learners use mirrors to see placement of tongue and lips or shape of the mouth.
- ▶ Have learners use kazoos to provide reinforcement of intonation patterns
- ▶ Have learners stretch rubber bands to illustrate lengths of vowels.
- ▶ Provide visual or auditory associations for a sound (a buzzing bee demonstrates the pronunciation of /z/).
- ▶ Ask learners to hold up fingers to indicate numbers of syllables in words.

Conclusion

Pronunciation can be one of the most difficult parts of a language for adult learners to master and one of the least favorite topics for teachers to address in the classroom. Nevertheless, with careful preparation and integration, pronunciation can play an important role in supporting learners' overall communicative power.

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Improving ESL Learners' Listening Skills: At the Workplace and Beyond

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Listening is a critical element in the competent language performance of adult second language learners, whether they are communicating at school, at work, or in the community. Through the normal course of a day, listening is used nearly twice as much as speaking and four to five times as much as reading and writing (Rivers, 1981). In a recent study of Fortune 500 Corporations, Wolvin and Coakley (1991) found that listening was perceived to be crucial for communication at work with regards to entry-level employment, job success, general career competence, managerial competency, and effectiveness of relationships between supervisors and subordinates. Yet listening remains one of the least understood processes in language learning despite the recognition of the critical role it plays both in communication and in language acquisition (Morley, 1991). As language teaching has moved toward comprehension-based approaches, listening to learn has become an important element in the adult English as a second language (ESL) classroom (Lund, 1990).

This Q&A summarizes what is known about the listening process as it relates to adult second language learners; it discusses the factors affecting listening; it describes the listening process; it suggests guidelines to consider in teaching listening; and it gives examples of activities for practicing and developing listening skills in adults learning English as a second language. Although most of the activities described have a workplace program context, the same types of activities could be used in any adult ESL class to improve learners' listening in all facets of life: at school, at work, or in the community.

What are some factors that affect the listening process?

Listening is a demanding process, not only because of the complexity of the process itself, but also due to factors that characterize the listener, the speaker, the content of the message, and any visual support that accompanies the message (Brown & Yule, 1983).

The Listener

Interest in a topic increases the listener's comprehension; the listener may tune out topics that are not of interest. A listener who is an active participant in a conversation generally has more background knowledge to facilitate understanding of the topic than a listener who is, in effect, eavesdropping on a conversation between two people whose communication has been recorded on an audiotape. Further, the ability to use negotiation skills, such as asking for clarification, repetition, or definition of points not understood, enable a listener to make sense of the incoming information.

The Speaker

Colloquial language and reduced forms make comprehension more difficult. The extent to which the speaker uses these language forms impacts comprehension. The more exposure the listener has to them, the greater the ability to comprehend. A speaker's rate of delivery may be too fast, too slow, or have too many hesitations for a listener to follow. Awareness of a speaker's corrections and use of rephrasing ("er. . . I mean . . . That is . . .") can assist the listener. Learners need practice in recognizing these speech habits as clues to deciphering meaning.

Content

Content that is familiar is easier to comprehend than content with unfamiliar vocabulary or for which the listener has insufficient background knowledge.

Visual Support

Visual support, such as video, pictures, diagrams, gestures, facial expressions, and body language, can increase comprehension if the learner is able to correctly interpret it.

What happens when we listen?

Although once labeled a passive skill, listening is very much an active process of selecting and interpreting information from auditory and visual clues (Richards, 1983; Rubin, 1995). Most of what is known about the listening process stems from research on native language development; however, as the importance of teaching listening comprehension has increased, so has the inquiry into second language listening comprehension. (See Rubin, 1994, for a comprehensive review of recent studies.)

There are several basic processes at work in listening. These do not necessarily occur sequentially; they may occur simultaneously, in rapid succession, or backward and forward as needed. The listener is not usually conscious of performing these steps, nor of switching back and forth between them. The listener:

1. determines a reason for listening;
2. takes the raw speech and deposits an image of it in short-term memory;
3. attempts to organize the information by identifying the type of speech event (conversation, lecture, radio ad) and the function of the message (persuade, inform, request);
4. predicts information expected to be included in the message;
5. recalls background information (schemata) to help interpret the message;
6. assigns a meaning to the message;
7. checks that the message has been understood;

8. determines the information to be held in long-term memory;
9. deletes the original form of the message that had been received into short-term memory (Brown 1994; Dunkel, 1986).

Each of these steps influences the techniques and activities a teacher might choose to incorporate into instruction in order to assist learners in learning to listen as well as listening to learn.

What other processes are at work?

At the same time, two types of cognitive processing are also occurring: bottom-up and top-down processing.

Top-down processing

Top-down processing refers to utilizing schemata (background knowledge and global understanding) to derive meaning from and interpret the message. For example, in preparing for training on the operation of a new floor polisher, top-down processing is activated as the learner engages in an activity that reviews what the learner already knows about using the old floor polisher. This might entail discussing the steps in the polishing process; reviewing vocabulary such as switch, on, off, etc.; or generating a list of questions that the learner would like answered in the training.

Bottom-up processing

Bottom-up processing refers to deriving the meaning of the message based on the incoming language data, from sounds, to words, to grammatical relationships, to meaning. Stress, rhythm, and intonation also play a role in bottom-up processing. Bottom-up processing would be activated as the learner is signaled to verify comprehension by the trainer/teacher asking a question using the declarative form with rising intonation (“You see that switch there?”). Practice in recognizing statements and questions that differ only in intonation help the learner develop bottom-up processing skills.

Learners need to be aware that both of these processes affect their listening comprehension, and they need to be given opportunities to practice employing each of them.

How can listening help the adult learner acquire English?

Current research and theory point to the benefit of providing a silent or pre-speaking period for the beginning-level learner (Dunkel, 1991). Delaying production gives learners the opportunity to store information in their memories. It also spares them the trauma of task overload and speaking before they are ready. The silent period may be long or short. It could comprise several class periods of listening activities that foster vocabulary and build comprehension such as in the Total Physical Response (TPR) approach. In this approach, the teacher gives a series of commands while demonstrating each one. Learners then show their comprehension by acting out the commands as repeated by the teacher. Learners themselves begin to give the commands as they feel

comfortable speaking. Or, the silent period may consist of learners listening to a tape-recorded conversation two or three times before answering questions about the content. A listening period consistent with the demands of the following productive task works to enhance rather than inhibit language acquisition and helps the more advanced-level learner as well as the beginner.

What should be considered when selecting listening techniques and activities?

What is known about the listening process and the factors that affect listening can be a guide when incorporating listening skill development into adult ESL classes. The following guidelines have been adapted from a variety of sources including Brod (1996), Brown (1994), Dunkel (1991), Mendelsohn (1994), Morley (1991), Peterson (1991), Richards (1983), and Rost (1991).

Listening should be relevant.

Because learners listen with a purpose and listen to things that interest them, accounting for the goals and experiences of the learners will keep motivation and attention high. For example, if learners at a worksite need to be able to understand new policies and procedures introduced at staff meetings, in class they should be helped to develop the abilities to identify main ideas and supporting details, to identify cause and effect, to indicate comprehension or lack of comprehension, and to ask for clarification.

Material should be authentic.

Authenticity should be evident both in language and in task. The language should reflect real discourse, including hesitations, rephrasing, and a variety of accents. Although the language needs to be comprehensible, it does not need to be constantly modified or simplified to make it easier for the level of the listener. Level of difficulty can be controlled by the selection of the task. For example, in a unit on following instructions, at the beginning level, the learner might hear a command (“May I borrow your hammer?”) and respond by choosing the correct item. At an intermediate level, the learner might hear a series of instructions (“Go to the broom closet, get the floor polisher, take it to the hall in front of the cafeteria, polish the floor there, then go to the . . .”) and respond appropriately by tracing the route on a floor plan of the worksite. An advanced-level learner might listen to an audio tape of an actual work meeting and write a summary of the instructions the supervisor gave the team. Use of authentic material, such as workplace training videos, audio tapes of actual workplace exchanges, and TV and radio broadcasts, increases transferability to listening outside of the ESL classroom context—to work and to community.

Opportunities to develop both top-down and bottom-up processing skills should be offered.

As mentioned above, top-down oriented activities encourage the learners to discuss what they already know about a topic, and bottom-up practice activities give confidence in accurate hearing and comprehension of the components of the language (sounds, words, intonation, grammatical structures).

The development of listening strategies should be encouraged.

Predicting, asking for clarification, and using non-verbal cues are examples of strategies that increase chances for successful listening. For example, using video can help learners develop cognitive strategies. As they view a segment with the sound off, learners can be asked to make predictions about what is happening by answering questions about setting, action, and interaction; viewing the segment again with the sound on allows them to confirm or modify their hypothesis (Rubin, 1995).

Activities should teach, not test.

Teachers should avoid using activities that tend to focus on memory rather than on the process of listening or that simply give practice rather than help learners develop listening ability. For example, simply having the learners listen to a passage followed by true/false questions might indicate how much the learners remembered rather than helping them to develop the skill of determining main idea and details. Pre- and post-listening task activities would help the learners to focus attention on what to listen for, to assess how accurately they succeeded, and to transfer the listening skill to the world beyond the classroom.

What are the steps in a listening lesson? The teacher can facilitate the development of listening ability by creating listening lessons that guide the learner through three stages: pre-listening, the listening task, and post-listening.

Engage the learners in a pre-listening activity.

This activity should establish the purpose of the listening activity and activate the schemata by encouraging the learners to think about and discuss what they already know about the content of the listening text. This activity can also provide the background needed for them to understand the text, and it can focus attention on what to listen for.

Do the listening task itself.

The task should involve the listener in getting information and in immediately doing something with it.

Engage in a post-listening activity.

This activity should help the listener to evaluate success in carrying out the task and to integrate listening with the other language skills. The teacher should encourage practice outside of the classroom whenever possible.

For example, at a worksite where schedule changes are announced at weekly team meetings, learners may need practice recognizing details such as their names, times, and dates within a longer stream of speech. A tape of such announcements may be used along with any pertinent forms or a weekly calendar. The lesson stages might proceed as follows:

Listening Lesson Example

Do a pre-listening activity: Ask the learners questions about what happens at the weekly meetings. Ask specifically about schedule changes. Show any form or the weekly calendar. Discuss its use and demonstrate how to fill it out if necessary.

Describe the task: Tell the learners they will be listening to a tape of a meeting. On the form/calendar they are to write down the schedule they hear. Demonstrate.

Have the learners do the task: Play the tape while they fill out the form.

Do a post-listening activity: Ask the learners how they thought they did. Was it easy or difficult? Why? They may listen again if they want to. Have them compare their forms with a partner or check the information by filling a form out as a whole class.

Then have the learner be the boss and write a script with schedule changes. Have them practice in pairs or small groups giving and recording schedule changes.

What kinds of listening tasks are appropriate?

There are numerous activities to choose from for developing listening skills. Lund (1990) has categorized them according to nine responses that can be observed as comprehension checks:

1. **Doing:** the listener responds physically such as in Total Physical Response (TPR);
2. **Choosing:** the listener selects from alternatives such as pictures, objects, texts, or actions;
3. **Transferring:** the listener transforms the message such as drawing a route on map, or filling in a chart;
4. **Answering:** the listener answers questions about the text;
5. **Condensing:** the listener takes notes or makes an outline;
6. **Extending:** the listener goes beyond the text by continuing the story or solving a problem;
7. **Duplicating:** the listener simply repeats or translates the message;
8. **Modeling:** the listener performs a similar task, e.g. gives instructions to a coworker after listening to a model or;
9. **Conversing:** the listener is an active participant in a face-to-face conversation.

A listening component can be built into an adult ESL lesson based on these activity response types in concert with the guidelines mentioned above. For example, choosing as a response may be used to develop bottom-up skills as learners listen to series of sentence patterns with rising and falling intonation and check column 1 (rising) or column 2 (falling) according to the pattern heard; or, the top-down skill of getting the gist of the message may be developed as learners hear

sentences describing a work task and select the appropriate picture (Peterson, 1991). An activity involving conversing might be to set up projects which call for learners to conduct interviews with native speakers outside of class on a theme related to a particular unit of study. For example, in a unit on Problem Solving on the Job, learners might ask questions about where and to whom coworkers go for help when they have a problem with a piece of equipment or with another worker or with understanding internal memos. (See Nunan and Miller (1995) and Rost (1991) for descriptions of listening tasks.)

Conclusion

Assisting learners in the development of listening comprehension is a challenge. It is a challenge that demands both the teacher's and the learner's attention because of the critical role that listening plays, not only in communication, but also in the acquisition of language. Knowledge of the listening process and factors that affect listening enable teachers to select or create listening texts and activities that meet the needs of their adult ESL learners. Teachers, then, must weave these listening activities into the curriculum to create a balance that mirrors the real-world integration of listening with speaking, reading, and writing.

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IV-D. Study Circle on Teaching Listening, Speaking, and Pronunciation

Participant Handouts

Information for Participants

Readings

- ▶ *Improving Adult English Language Learners' Speaking Skills*, by MaryAnn Cunningham Florez. www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/Speak.html
- ▶ *Improving ESL Learners' Listening Skills: At the Workplace and Beyond*, by Carol Van Duzer. www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/LISTENQA.html
- ▶ *Improving Adult ESL Learners' Pronunciation Skills*, by MaryAnn Cunningham Florez. www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/Pronun.html

Description

In this study circle, participants will be reading three pieces that explore teaching listening, speaking, and pronunciation skills in the adult ESL classroom. All three pieces briefly outline current research findings on the processes of listening, speaking, and pronunciation acquisition, and then offer practical teaching suggestions based on these findings. This study circle will allow you to familiarize yourself with scholarship from the field and provide you an opportunity to explore some of the findings in your own classroom.

Where:

When:

Study Circle Preparation

Before the first meeting of the study circle, please complete the following tasks:

- ▶ Write a short (no more than half a page) response to at least two of the following three prompts, and email your response by _____ (date) to the study circle facilitator at _____@_____:
 - The most effective way to teach languages is to combine all the skills in every lesson rather than trying to teach them separately.
 - Strategy use can and should be taught explicitly.
 - For adult ESL learners, speaking and listening are the most important skills.
- ▶ Read the CAELA article sent to you by the study circle facilitator and bring it with you to the first session.

Reflections on Listening Tasks (Session 1)

Tasks	Use often	Use some-times	Use rarely	Never use	Comments
Doing					
Choosing					
Transferring					
Answering					
Condensing					
Extending					
Duplicating					
Modeling					
Conversing					

Reflections on Speaking Tasks (Session 1)

Tasks	Use often	Use some-times	Use rarely	Never use	Comments
Imitative					
Intensive					
Responsive					
Transactional					
Interpersonal					
Extensive					

Suggested Reading List

The following journals and their searchable archives are available online. A sample of relevant articles from each is provided.

ELT Journal, <http://eltj.oxfordjournals.org>

An international journal, published by Oxford University Press, linking theory and practice in ELT. Full text is available online in PDF.

Eastment, D. (2004). Listening materials...and how to find them. *ELT Journal*, 58(1), 97–99.

Ho, Y. K. (2003). Audiotaped dialogue journals: An alternative form of speaking practice. *ELT Journal*, 57(3), 269–277.

Ridgway, T. (2000). Listening strategies—I beg your pardon? *ELT Journal*, 54(2), 179–185.

The Internet TESL Journal, <http://iteslj.org>

A monthly Web journal including articles, research papers, lesson plans, and teaching techniques as well as links of interest to teachers of English as a second language.

Chou, Y. L. (2004). Promoting learners' speaking ability by socioaffective strategies. *ITESLJ*, 10(9).

Fryer, L. K. (2005). Minimal pair card game for improving pronunciation and listening. *ITESLJ*, 11(9).

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Improving Adult English Language Learners' Speaking Skills

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Communicative and whole language instructional approaches promote integration of speaking, listening, reading, and writing in ways that reflect natural language use. But opportunities for speaking and listening require structure and planning if they are to support language development. This digest describes what speaking involves and what good speakers do in the process of expressing themselves. It also presents an outline for creating an effective speaking lesson and for assessing learners' speaking skills.

Oral communication skills in adult ESL instruction

Outside the classroom, listening is used twice as often as speaking, which in turn is used twice as much as reading and writing (Rivers, 1981). Inside the classroom, speaking and listening are the most often used skills (Brown, 1994). They are recognized as critical for functioning in an English language context, both by teachers and by learners. These skills are also logical instructional starting points when learners have low literacy levels (in English or their native language) or limited formal education, or when they come from language backgrounds with a non-Roman script or a predominantly oral tradition. Further, with the drive to incorporate workforce readiness skills into adult ESL instruction, practice time is being devoted to such speaking skills as reporting, negotiating, clarifying, and problem solving (Grognet, 1997).

What speaking is

Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing *and* receiving and processing information (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997). Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs, including the participants themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment, and the purposes for speaking. It is often spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving. However, speech is not always unpredictable. Language functions (or patterns) that tend to recur in certain discourse situations (e.g., declining an invitation or requesting time off from work), can be identified and charted (Burns & Joyce, 1997). For example, when a salesperson asks "May I help you?" the expected discourse sequence includes a statement of need, response to the need, offer of appreciation, acknowledgement of the appreciation, and a leave-taking exchange. Speaking requires that learners not only know how to produce specific points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary (*linguistic competence*), but also that they understand when, why, and in what ways to produce language (*sociolinguistic competence*). Finally, speech has its own skills, structures, and conventions different from written language (Burns & Joyce, 1997; Carter & McCarthy, 1995; Cohen, 1996). A good speaker synthesizes this array of skills and knowledge to succeed in a given speech act.

What a good speaker does

A speaker's skills and speech habits have an impact on the success of any exchange (Van Duzer, 1997). Speakers must be able to anticipate and then produce the expected patterns of specific discourse situations. They must also manage discrete elements such as turn-taking, rephrasing, providing feedback, or redirecting (Burns & Joyce, 1997). For example, a learner involved in the exchange with the salesperson described previously must know the usual pattern that such an interaction follows and access that knowledge as the exchange progresses. The learner must also choose the correct vocabulary to describe the item sought, rephrase or emphasize words to clarify the description if the clerk does not understand, and use appropriate facial expressions to indicate satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the service. Other skills and knowledge that instruction might address include the following:

- ▶ producing the sounds, stress patterns, rhythmic structures, and intonations of the language;
- ▶ using grammar structures accurately;
- ▶ assessing characteristics of the target audience, including shared knowledge or shared points of reference, status and power relations of participants, interest levels, or differences in perspectives;
- ▶ selecting vocabulary that is understandable and appropriate for the audience, the topic being discussed, and the setting in which the speech act occurs;
- ▶ applying strategies to enhance comprehensibility, such as emphasizing key words, rephrasing, or checking for listener comprehension;
- ▶ using gestures or body language; and
- ▶ paying attention to the success of the interaction and adjusting components of speech such as vocabulary, rate of speech, and complexity of grammar structures to maximize listener comprehension and involvement (Brown, 1994).

Teachers should monitor learners' speech production to determine what skills and knowledge they already have and what areas need development. Bailey and Savage's *New Ways in Teaching Speaking* (1994), and Lewis's *New Ways in Teaching Adults* (1997) offer suggestions for activities that can address different skills.

General outline of a speaking lesson

Speaking lessons can follow the usual pattern of preparation, presentation, practice, evaluation, and extension. The teacher can use the *preparation* step to establish a context for the speaking task (where, when, why, and with whom it will occur) and to initiate awareness of the speaking skill to be targeted (asking for clarification, stressing key words, using reduced forms of words). In *presentation*, the teacher can provide learners with a preproduction model that furthers learner

comprehension and helps them become more attentive observers of language use. *Practice* involves learners in reproducing the targeted structure, usually in a controlled or highly supported manner. *Evaluation* involves directing attention to the skill being examined and asking learners to monitor and assess their own progress. Finally, *extension* consists of activities that ask learners to use the strategy or skill in a different context or authentic communicative situation, or to integrate use of the new skill or strategy with previously acquired ones (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997; Carter & McCarthy, 1995).

Example of a speaking lesson

Choosing appropriate topics for small talk

1. **Preparation.** Show the learners a picture of two people conversing in a familiar casual setting. (The setting will be determined by a prior needs assessment.) Ask them to brainstorm what the people might be discussing (i.e., what topics, vocabulary, typical phrases).
2. **Presentation.** Present several video clips of small talk in casual situations. Have learners complete a worksheet in which they describe or list the topics discussed, the context in which the speech is occurring, and any phrases that seem to typify small talk. Follow up with a discussion of the kinds of topics that are appropriate for small talk, the factors in the specific situations that affect topic selection (e.g., relationships of participants, physical setting), and typical phrases used in small talk. Chart this information.
3. **Practice.** Give learners specific information about the participants and the setting of a scenario where small talk will take place. In pairs, have them list topics that might be discussed by the participants and simple phrases they might use. Learners then engage in improvised dialogues based on these simple phrases.
4. **Evaluation.** Give pairs a teacher-prepared dialogue based on their scenario from 3. Ask them to compare their improvised dialogues with the prepared dialogue, analyzing the similarities, differences, and reasons for both.
5. **Extension.** Have learners go individually or in small groups into various contexts in the community (work, school, church, bus stop) and record the conversations they hear. Ask them to report their findings back to the class, and then have the class discuss these findings.

In-class speaking tasks

Although dialogues and conversations are the most obvious and most often used speaking activities in language classrooms, a teacher can select activities from a variety of tasks. Brown (1994) lists six possible task categories:

1. **Imitative**—Drills in which the learner simply repeats a phrase or structure (e.g., “Excuse me.” or “Can you help me?”) for clarity and accuracy;
2. **Intensive**—Drills or repetitions focusing on specific phonological or grammatical points, such as minimal pairs or repetition of a series of imperative sentences;

3. **Responsive**—Short replies to teacher or learner questions or comments, such as a series of answers to yes/no questions;
4. **Transactional**—Dialogues conducted for the purpose of information exchange, such as information-gathering interviews, role plays, or debates;
5. **Interpersonal**—Dialogues to establish or maintain social relationships, such as personal interviews or casual conversation role plays; and
6. **Extensive**—Extended monologues such as short speeches, oral reports, or oral summaries.

These tasks are not sequential. Each can be used independently or they can be integrated with one another, depending on learners' needs. For example, if learners are not using appropriate sentence intonations when participating in a *transactional* activity that focuses on the skill of politely interrupting to make a point, the teacher might decide to follow up with a brief *imitative* lesson targeting this feature.

When presenting tasks, teachers should tell learners about the language function to be produced in the task and the real context(s) in which it usually occurs. They should provide opportunities for interactive practice and build upon previous instruction as necessary (Burns & Joyce, 1997). Teachers should also be careful not to overload a speaking lesson with other new material such as numerous vocabulary or grammatical structures. This can distract learners from the primary speaking goals of the lesson.

Assessing speaking

Speaking assessments can take many forms, from oral sections of standardized tests such as the Basic English Skills Test (BEST) or the English as a Second Language Oral Assessment (ESLOA) to authentic assessments such as progress checklists, analysis of taped speech samples, or anecdotal records of speech in classroom interactions. Assessment instruments should reflect instruction and be incorporated from the beginning stages of lesson planning (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996). For example, if a lesson focuses on producing and recognizing signals for turn-taking in a group discussion, the assessment tool might be a checklist to be completed by the teacher or learners in the course of the learners' participation in the discussion. Finally, criteria should be clearly defined and understandable to both the teacher and the learners.

Conclusion

Speaking is key to communication. By considering what good speakers do, what speaking tasks can be used in class, and what specific needs learners report, teachers can help learners improve their speaking and overall oral competency.

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Improving Adult ESL Learners' Pronunciation Skills

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Observations that limited pronunciation skills can undermine learners' self-confidence, restrict social interactions, and negatively influence estimations of a speaker's credibility and abilities are not new (Morley, 1998). However, the current focus on communicative approaches to English as a second language (ESL) instruction and the concern for building teamwork and communication skills in an increasingly diverse workplace are renewing interest in the role that pronunciation plays in adults' overall communicative competence. As a result, pronunciation is emerging from its often marginalized place in adult ESL instruction. This digest reviews the current status of pronunciation instruction in adult ESL classes. It provides an overview of the factors that influence pronunciation mastery and suggests ways to plan and implement pronunciation instruction.

Historical Perspective

Pronunciation instruction tends to be linked to the instructional method being used (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 1996). In the grammar-translation method of the past, pronunciation was almost irrelevant and therefore seldom taught. In the audio-lingual method, learners spent hours in the language lab listening to and repeating sounds and sound combinations. With the emergence of more holistic, communicative methods and approaches to ESL instruction, pronunciation is addressed within the context of real communication (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 1996; Morley, 1991).

Factors Influencing Pronunciation Mastery

Research has contributed some important data on factors that can influence the learning and teaching of pronunciation skills. Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, (1996), Gillette (1994), Graham (1994) and Pennington (1994) discuss the following factors.

Age. The debate over the impact of age on language acquisition and specifically pronunciation is varied. Some researchers argue that, after puberty, lateralization (the assigning of linguistic functions to the different brain hemispheres) is completed, and adults' ability to distinguish and produce native-like sounds is more limited. Others refer to the existence of sensitive periods when various aspects of language acquisition occur, or to adults' need to re-adjust existing neural networks to accommodate new sounds. Most researchers, however, agree that adults find pronunciation more difficult than children do and that they probably will not achieve native-like pronunciation. Yet experiences with language learning and the ability to self-monitor, which come with age, can offset these limitations to some degree.

Amount and type of prior pronunciation instruction. Prior experiences with pronunciation instruction may influence learners' success with current efforts. Learners at higher language proficiency levels may have developed habitual, systematic pronunciation errors that must be identified and addressed.

Aptitude. Individual capacity for learning languages has been debated. Some researchers believe all learners have the same capacity to learn a second language because they have learned a first language. Others assert that the ability to recognize and internalize foreign sounds may be unequally developed in different learners.

Learner attitude and motivation. Nonlinguistic factors related to an individual's personality and learning goals can influence achievement in pronunciation. Attitude toward the target language, culture, and native speakers; degree of acculturation (including exposure to and use of the target language); personal identity issues; and motivation for learning can all support or impede pronunciation skills development.

Native language. Most researchers agree that the learner's first language influences the pronunciation of the target language and is a significant factor in accounting for foreign accents. So-called interference or negative transfer from the first language is likely to cause errors in aspiration, intonation, and rhythm in the target language.

The pronunciation of any one learner might be affected by a combination of these factors. The key is to be aware of their existence so that they may be considered in creating realistic and effective pronunciation goals and development plans for the learners. For example, native-like pronunciation is not likely to be a realistic goal for older learners; a learner who is a native speaker of a tonal language, such as Vietnamese, will need assistance with different pronunciation features than will a native Spanish speaker; and a twenty-three year old engineer who knows he will be more respected and possibly promoted if his pronunciation improves is likely to be responsive to direct pronunciation instruction.

Language Features Involved in Pronunciation

Two groups of features are involved in pronunciation: segmentals and suprasegmentals. *Segmentals* are the basic inventory of distinctive sounds and the way that they combine to form a spoken language. In the case of North American English, this inventory is comprised of 40 phonemes (15 vowels and 25 consonants), which are the basic sounds that serve to distinguish words from one another. Pronunciation instruction has often concentrated on the mastery of segmentals through discrimination and production of target sounds via drills consisting of minimal pairs like /bæd/-/bæt/ or /sIt/-/sit/.

Suprasegmentals transcend the level of individual sound production. They extend across segmentals and are often produced unconsciously by native speakers. Since suprasegmental elements provide crucial context and support (they determine meaning) for segmental production, they

are assuming a more prominent place in pronunciation instruction (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 1996; Gilbert, 1990; Morley, 1991). Suprasegmentals include the following:

- ▶ **stress**—a combination of length, loudness, and pitch applied to syllables in a word (e.g., Happy, FOOTball);
- ▶ **rhythm**—the regular, patterned beat of stressed and unstressed syllables and pauses (e.g., with weak syllables in lower case and stressed syllables in upper case: they WANT to GO Later.);
- ▶ **adjustments in connected speech**—modifications of sounds within and between words in streams of speech (e.g., “ask him,” /æsk hɪm/ becomes /æs kɪm/);
- ▶ **prominence**—speaker’s act of highlighting words to emphasize meaning or intent (e.g., Give me the BLUE one. (not the yellow one); and
- ▶ **intonation**—the rising and falling of voice pitch across phrases and sentences (e.g., Are you REAdy?).

Incorporating Pronunciation in the Curriculum

In general, programs should start by establishing long range oral communication goals and objectives that identify pronunciation needs as well as speech functions and the contexts in which they might occur (Morley, 1998). These goals and objectives should be realistic, aiming for functional intelligibility (ability to make oneself relatively easily understood), functional communicability (ability to meet the communication needs one faces), and enhanced self-confidence in use (Gillette, 1994; Jordan, 1992; Morley, 1998). They should result from a careful analysis and description of the learners’ needs (Jordan, 1992; Morley, 1998). This analysis should then be used to support selection and sequencing of the pronunciation information and skills for each sub-group or proficiency level within the larger learner group (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 1996).

To determine the level of emphasis to be placed on pronunciation within the curriculum, programs need to consider certain variables specific to their contexts.

- ▶ **the learners** (ages, educational backgrounds, experiences with pronunciation instruction, motivations, general English proficiency levels)
- ▶ **the instructional setting** (academic, workplace, English for specific purposes, literacy, conversation, family literacy)
- ▶ **institutional variables** (teachers’ instructional and educational experiences, focus of curriculum, availability of pronunciation materials, class size, availability of equipment)
- ▶ **linguistic variables** (learners’ native languages, diversity or lack of diversity of native languages within the group)
- ▶ **methodological variables** (method or approach embraced by the program)

Incorporating Pronunciation in Instruction

Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (1996) propose a framework that supports a communicative-cognitive approach to teaching pronunciation. Preceded by a planning stage to identify learners' needs, pedagogical priorities, and teachers' readiness to teach pronunciation, the framework for the teaching stage of the framework offers a structure for creating effective pronunciation lessons and activities on the sound system and other features of North American English pronunciation.

- ▶ description and analysis of the pronunciation feature to be targeted (raises learner awareness of the specific feature)
- ▶ listening discrimination activities (learners listen for and practice recognizing the targeted feature)
- ▶ controlled practice and feedback (support learner production of the feature in a controlled context)
- ▶ guided practice and feedback (offer structured communication exercises in which learners can produce and monitor for the targeted feature)
- ▶ communicative practice and feedback (provides opportunities for the learner to focus on content but also get feedback on where specific pronunciation instruction is needed).

A lesson on word stress, based on this framework, might look like the following:

1. The teacher presents a list of vocabulary items from the current lesson, employing both correct and incorrect word stress. After discussing the words and eliciting (if appropriate) learners' opinions on which are the correct versions, the concept of word stress is introduced and modeled.
2. Learners listen for and identify stressed syllables, using sequences of nonsense syllables of varying lengths (e.g., da-DA, da-da-DA-da).
3. Learners go back to the list of vocabulary items from step one and, in unison, indicate the correct stress patterns of each word by clapping, emphasizing the stressed syllables with louder claps. New words can be added to the list for continued practice if necessary.
4. In pairs, learners take turns reading a scripted dialogue. As one learner speaks, the other marks the stress patterns on a printed copy. Learners provide one another with feedback on their production and discrimination.
5. Learners make oral presentations to the class on topics related to their current lesson. Included in the assessment criteria for the activity are correct production and evidence of self-monitoring of word stress.

In addition to careful planning, teachers must be responsive to learners needs and explore a variety of methods to help learners comprehend pronunciation features. Useful exercises include the following:

- ▶ Have learners touch their throats to feel vibration or no vibration in sound production, to understand voicing.
- ▶ Have learners use mirrors to see placement of tongue and lips or shape of the mouth.
- ▶ Have learners use kazoos to provide reinforcement of intonation patterns
- ▶ Have learners stretch rubber bands to illustrate lengths of vowels.
- ▶ Provide visual or auditory associations for a sound (a buzzing bee demonstrates the pronunciation of /z/).
- ▶ Ask learners to hold up fingers to indicate numbers of syllables in words.

Conclusion

Pronunciation can be one of the most difficult parts of a language for adult learners to master and one of the least favorite topics for teachers to address in the classroom. Nevertheless, with careful preparation and integration, pronunciation can play an important role in supporting learners' overall communicative power.

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Improving ESL Learners' Listening Skills: At the Workplace and Beyond

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Listening is a critical element in the competent language performance of adult second language learners, whether they are communicating at school, at work, or in the community. Through the normal course of a day, listening is used nearly twice as much as speaking and four to five times as much as reading and writing (Rivers, 1981). In a recent study of Fortune 500 Corporations, Wolvin and Coakley (1991) found that listening was perceived to be crucial for communication at work with regards to entry-level employment, job success, general career competence, managerial competency, and effectiveness of relationships between supervisors and subordinates. Yet listening remains one of the least understood processes in language learning despite the recognition of the critical role it plays both in communication and in language acquisition (Morley, 1991). As language teaching has moved toward comprehension-based approaches, listening to learn has become an important element in the adult English as a second language (ESL) classroom (Lund, 1990).

This Q&A summarizes what is known about the listening process as it relates to adult second language learners; it discusses the factors affecting listening; it describes the listening process; it suggests guidelines to consider in teaching listening; and it gives examples of activities for practicing and developing listening skills in adults learning English as a second language. Although most of the activities described have a workplace program context, the same types of activities could be used in any adult ESL class to improve learners' listening in all facets of life: at school, at work, or in the community.

What are some factors that affect the listening process?

Listening is a demanding process, not only because of the complexity of the process itself, but also due to factors that characterize the listener, the speaker, the content of the message, and any visual support that accompanies the message (Brown & Yule, 1983).

The Listener

Interest in a topic increases the listener's comprehension; the listener may tune out topics that are not of interest. A listener who is an active participant in a conversation generally has more background knowledge to facilitate understanding of the topic than a listener who is, in effect, eavesdropping on a conversation between two people whose communication has been recorded on an audiotape. Further, the ability to use negotiation skills, such as asking for clarification, repetition, or definition of points not understood, enable a listener to make sense of the incoming information.

The Speaker

Colloquial language and reduced forms make comprehension more difficult. The extent to which the speaker uses these language forms impacts comprehension. The more exposure the listener has to them, the greater the ability to comprehend. A speaker's rate of delivery may be too fast, too slow, or have too many hesitations for a listener to follow. Awareness of a speaker's corrections and use of rephrasing ("er. . . I mean . . . That is . . .") can assist the listener. Learners need practice in recognizing these speech habits as clues to deciphering meaning.

Content

Content that is familiar is easier to comprehend than content with unfamiliar vocabulary or for which the listener has insufficient background knowledge.

Visual Support

Visual support, such as video, pictures, diagrams, gestures, facial expressions, and body language, can increase comprehension if the learner is able to correctly interpret it.

What happens when we listen?

Although once labeled a passive skill, listening is very much an active process of selecting and interpreting information from auditory and visual clues (Richards, 1983; Rubin, 1995). Most of what is known about the listening process stems from research on native language development; however, as the importance of teaching listening comprehension has increased, so has the inquiry into second language listening comprehension. (See Rubin, 1994, for a comprehensive review of recent studies.)

There are several basic processes at work in listening. These do not necessarily occur sequentially; they may occur simultaneously, in rapid succession, or backward and forward as needed. The listener is not usually conscious of performing these steps, nor of switching back and forth between them. The listener:

1. determines a reason for listening;
2. takes the raw speech and deposits an image of it in short-term memory;
3. attempts to organize the information by identifying the type of speech event (conversation, lecture, radio ad) and the function of the message (persuade, inform, request);
4. predicts information expected to be included in the message;
5. recalls background information (schemata) to help interpret the message;
6. assigns a meaning to the message;
7. checks that the message has been understood;

8. determines the information to be held in long-term memory;
9. deletes the original form of the message that had been received into short-term memory (Brown 1994; Dunkel, 1986).

Each of these steps influences the techniques and activities a teacher might choose to incorporate into instruction in order to assist learners in learning to listen as well as listening to learn.

What other processes are at work?

At the same time, two types of cognitive processing are also occurring: bottom-up and top-down processing.

Top-down processing

Top-down processing refers to utilizing schemata (background knowledge and global understanding) to derive meaning from and interpret the message. For example, in preparing for training on the operation of a new floor polisher, top-down processing is activated as the learner engages in an activity that reviews what the learner already knows about using the old floor polisher. This might entail discussing the steps in the polishing process; reviewing vocabulary such as switch, on, off, etc.; or generating a list of questions that the learner would like answered in the training.

Bottom-up processing

Bottom-up processing refers to deriving the meaning of the message based on the incoming language data, from sounds, to words, to grammatical relationships, to meaning. Stress, rhythm, and intonation also play a role in bottom-up processing. Bottom-up processing would be activated as the learner is signaled to verify comprehension by the trainer/teacher asking a question using the declarative form with rising intonation (“You see that switch there?”). Practice in recognizing statements and questions that differ only in intonation help the learner develop bottom-up processing skills.

Learners need to be aware that both of these processes affect their listening comprehension, and they need to be given opportunities to practice employing each of them.

How can listening help the adult learner acquire English?

Current research and theory point to the benefit of providing a silent or pre-speaking period for the beginning-level learner (Dunkel, 1991). Delaying production gives learners the opportunity to store information in their memories. It also spares them the trauma of task overload and speaking before they are ready. The silent period may be long or short. It could comprise several class periods of listening activities that foster vocabulary and build comprehension such as in the Total Physical Response (TPR) approach. In this approach, the teacher gives a series of commands while demonstrating each one. Learners then show their comprehension by acting out the commands as repeated by the teacher. Learners themselves begin to give the commands as they feel

comfortable speaking. Or, the silent period may consist of learners listening to a tape-recorded conversation two or three times before answering questions about the content. A listening period consistent with the demands of the following productive task works to enhance rather than inhibit language acquisition and helps the more advanced-level learner as well as the beginner.

What should be considered when selecting listening techniques and activities?

What is known about the listening process and the factors that affect listening can be a guide when incorporating listening skill development into adult ESL classes. The following guidelines have been adapted from a variety of sources including Brod (1996), Brown (1994), Dunkel (1991), Mendelsohn (1994), Morley (1991), Peterson (1991), Richards (1983), and Rost (1991).

Listening should be relevant.

Because learners listen with a purpose and listen to things that interest them, accounting for the goals and experiences of the learners will keep motivation and attention high. For example, if learners at a worksite need to be able to understand new policies and procedures introduced at staff meetings, in class they should be helped to develop the abilities to identify main ideas and supporting details, to identify cause and effect, to indicate comprehension or lack of comprehension, and to ask for clarification.

Material should be authentic.

Authenticity should be evident both in language and in task. The language should reflect real discourse, including hesitations, rephrasing, and a variety of accents. Although the language needs to be comprehensible, it does not need to be constantly modified or simplified to make it easier for the level of the listener. Level of difficulty can be controlled by the selection of the task. For example, in a unit on following instructions, at the beginning level, the learner might hear a command (“May I borrow your hammer?”) and respond by choosing the correct item. At an intermediate level, the learner might hear a series of instructions (“Go to the broom closet, get the floor polisher, take it to the hall in front of the cafeteria, polish the floor there, then go to the . . .”) and respond appropriately by tracing the route on a floor plan of the worksite. An advanced-level learner might listen to an audio tape of an actual work meeting and write a summary of the instructions the supervisor gave the team. Use of authentic material, such as workplace training videos, audio tapes of actual workplace exchanges, and TV and radio broadcasts, increases transferability to listening outside of the ESL classroom context—to work and to community.

Opportunities to develop both top-down and bottom-up processing skills should be offered.

As mentioned above, top-down oriented activities encourage the learners to discuss what they already know about a topic, and bottom-up practice activities give confidence in accurate hearing and comprehension of the components of the language (sounds, words, intonation, grammatical structures).

The development of listening strategies should be encouraged.

Predicting, asking for clarification, and using non-verbal cues are examples of strategies that increase chances for successful listening. For example, using video can help learners develop cognitive strategies. As they view a segment with the sound off, learners can be asked to make predictions about what is happening by answering questions about setting, action, and interaction; viewing the segment again with the sound on allows them to confirm or modify their hypothesis (Rubin, 1995).

Activities should teach, not test.

Teachers should avoid using activities that tend to focus on memory rather than on the process of listening or that simply give practice rather than help learners develop listening ability. For example, simply having the learners listen to a passage followed by true/false questions might indicate how much the learners remembered rather than helping them to develop the skill of determining main idea and details. Pre- and post-listening task activities would help the learners to focus attention on what to listen for, to assess how accurately they succeeded, and to transfer the listening skill to the world beyond the classroom.

What are the steps in a listening lesson? The teacher can facilitate the development of listening ability by creating listening lessons that guide the learner through three stages: pre-listening, the listening task, and post-listening.

Engage the learners in a pre-listening activity.

This activity should establish the purpose of the listening activity and activate the schemata by encouraging the learners to think about and discuss what they already know about the content of the listening text. This activity can also provide the background needed for them to understand the text, and it can focus attention on what to listen for.

Do the listening task itself.

The task should involve the listener in getting information and in immediately doing something with it.

Engage in a post-listening activity.

This activity should help the listener to evaluate success in carrying out the task and to integrate listening with the other language skills. The teacher should encourage practice outside of the classroom whenever possible.

For example, at a worksite where schedule changes are announced at weekly team meetings, learners may need practice recognizing details such as their names, times, and dates within a longer stream of speech. A tape of such announcements may be used along with any pertinent forms or a weekly calendar. The lesson stages might proceed as follows:

Listening Lesson Example

Do a pre-listening activity: Ask the learners questions about what happens at the weekly meetings. Ask specifically about schedule changes. Show any form or the weekly calendar. Discuss its use and demonstrate how to fill it out if necessary.

Describe the task: Tell the learners they will be listening to a tape of a meeting. On the form/calendar they are to write down the schedule they hear. Demonstrate.

Have the learners do the task: Play the tape while they fill out the form.

Do a post-listening activity: Ask the learners how they thought they did. Was it easy or difficult? Why? They may listen again if they want to. Have them compare their forms with a partner or check the information by filling a form out as a whole class.

Then have the learner be the boss and write a script with schedule changes. Have them practice in pairs or small groups giving and recording schedule changes.

What kinds of listening tasks are appropriate?

There are numerous activities to choose from for developing listening skills. Lund (1990) has categorized them according to nine responses that can be observed as comprehension checks:

1. **Doing:** the listener responds physically such as in Total Physical Response (TPR);
2. **Choosing:** the listener selects from alternatives such as pictures, objects, texts, or actions;
3. **Transferring:** the listener transforms the message such as drawing a route on map, or filling in a chart;
4. **Answering:** the listener answers questions about the text;
5. **Condensing:** the listener takes notes or makes an outline;
6. **Extending:** the listener goes beyond the text by continuing the story or solving a problem;
7. **Duplicating:** the listener simply repeats or translates the message;
8. **Modeling:** the listener performs a similar task, e.g. gives instructions to a coworker after listening to a model or;
9. **Conversing:** the listener is an active participant in a face-to-face conversation.

A listening component can be built into an adult ESL lesson based on these activity response types in concert with the guidelines mentioned above. For example, choosing as a response may be used to develop bottom-up skills as learners listen to series of sentence patterns with rising and falling intonation and check column 1 (rising) or column 2 (falling) according to the pattern heard; or, the top-down skill of getting the gist of the message may be developed as learners hear

sentences describing a work task and select the appropriate picture (Peterson, 1991). An activity involving conversing might be to set up projects which call for learners to conduct interviews with native speakers outside of class on a theme related to a particular unit of study. For example, in a unit on Problem Solving on the Job, learners might ask questions about where and to whom coworkers go for help when they have a problem with a piece of equipment or with another worker or with understanding internal memos. (See Nunan and Miller (1995) and Rost (1991) for descriptions of listening tasks.)

Conclusion

Assisting learners in the development of listening comprehension is a challenge. It is a challenge that demands both the teacher's and the learner's attention because of the critical role that listening plays, not only in communication, but also in the acquisition of language. Knowledge of the listening process and factors that affect listening enable teachers to select or create listening texts and activities that meet the needs of their adult ESL learners. Teachers, then, must weave these listening activities into the curriculum to create a balance that mirrors the real-world integration of listening with speaking, reading, and writing.

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Notes

V. How to Use the Center for Adult English Language Acquisition (CAELA) Web Site

The CAELA Web site (www.cal.org/caela) continues to change and develop, offering diverse resources to support professional development, classroom instruction, and research. The site is supported by a team of adult English as a second language (ESL) professionals who are available to respond to questions about the Web site and the field. Trainers, teachers, program administrators, and researchers who have suggestions or advice about the CAELA Web site should send an email to CAELA at caela@cal.org or call 202-362-0700, extension 500.

Overview of the CAELA Web Site

The CAELA Web site is an integral part of CAELA's task of helping states build the capacity to provide sustained professional development for adult ESL professionals. More information about CAELA can be found at www.cal.org/caela/about_caela/.

The current structure of the CAELA Web site was created on the basis of feedback from adult ESL practitioners and trainers as well as CAELA's technical working group (www.cal.org/caela/about_caela/workinggroup.html). In telephone and face-to-face conversations, ESL professionals and state and local administrators told CAELA staff that to meet their needs, the Web site needs to

- ▶ Be logically and simply designed
- ▶ Provide several points of entry to the same topics
- ▶ Provide complete but concise contextual narrative
- ▶ Provide a wide range of information and resources, but emphasize the practical
- ▶ Provide appropriate links to a wide range of teacher, learner, and program resources

Structure

From the CAELA home page, users can access the resources through the left navigation bar, the search and advanced search functions, the Quicklinks feature, and the home page itself.

Left Navigation Bar

The left navigation bar, available to users from all the pages on the site, lists resources in the order of relevance. Following are the subcategories in each section:

- ▶ **Tools**
 - Instructional tools
 - Program development tools
- ▶ **ESL Resources**
 - Bibliographies
 - Books & reports
 - Briefs
 - Collections
 - Digests
 - FAQs
- ▶ **Research**
 - ESL resource database
 - Statistics
 - Research links
- ▶ **State Capacity Building**
 - Updates
 - *CAELA Guide for Adult ESL Trainers*

▶ **About CAELA**

- History
- Press releases
- Partners
- Technical working group
- About CAL
- Staff directory
- Contact us
- Newsletter

A calendar of CAELA, adult ESL, and adult education functions, as well as instructions for subscribing to *CAELA Currents*, are also accessible from the left navigation bar.

Advanced Search Function

Located at the top right of the home page (and each page of the site), this function allows users to search the CAELA Web site for specific words, phrases, or topics, such as workplace ESL, English literacy/civics, family literacy, and learning disabilities.

Quicklinks

The Quicklinks feature, located on the home page and throughout the site, allows users to go directly to the following high-interest areas: briefs, digests and Q&As (questions and answers), ESL resources, FAQs (frequently asked questions), research, and the *Practitioner Toolkit: Working With Adult English Language Learners*.

Home Page

The home page highlights new resources and information (e.g., briefs and capacity building updates) and addresses current *Ask CAELA* questions. *Ask CAELA* features a question of the month and provides in-depth answers to questions on important issues in the field.

Resources

The CAELA Web site is continually being augmented, but the table below provides an overview of the current resources available.

Table 1. CAELA Resources as of 2006

Resources	Description
Bibliographies	<p>Mostly annotated bibliographies on topics of interest to adult ESL educators. Topics include program and content standards, second language acquisition, health literacy, and the extensive <i>Research on Reading Development of Adult English Language Learners: An Annotated Bibliography</i>.</p> <p>www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/bibliographies.html</p>
Briefs	<p>Topics include adolescent learners, online professional development, how adult ESL reading instruction differs from adult basic education (ABE) reading instruction, multilevel classes, understanding and using adult ESL content standards, transitioning to post-secondary education, and English literacy and civics education.</p> <p>www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/briefs.html</p>
Collections	<p>Online collections include background information, links, and print resources on important issues in adult ESL, such as assessment and evaluation, civics education, learning disabilities and adult ESL, second language acquisition, working with literacy-level adult English language learners, and basic information that beginning teachers and tutors need to know about teaching adult English language learners.</p> <p>www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/collections.html</p>
Digests and Q&As	<p>Topics include methods and approaches for teaching adult ESL, professional development, program design, second language acquisition, technology, and workplace ESL.</p> <p>www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests.html</p>
FAQs	<p>Addresses basic questions about adult English language learners and teaching adult ESL, such as the following: What is English as a second language (ESL)? How long does it take an adult to learn English? What instructional practices best meet the needs of adult English language learners?</p> <p>www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/faqs.html</p>
<i>Practitioner Toolkit: Working With Adult English Language Learners</i>	<p>A 238-page downloadable compendium of programs for practitioners working with adult English language learners (with an emphasis on family literacy contexts). The toolkit includes background information, activity packets, and information about helping English language learners transition into other education programs and prepare for citizenship</p> <p>www.cal.org/caela/tools/program_development/prac_toolkit.html</p>
Research: ESL Resource Database	<p>Searchable annotated database with links (when available) to documents.</p> <p>www.cal.org/caela/research/resource_database.html</p>

Other Resources	Additional resources include statistics, links, and seminal papers, such as <i>Research Agenda for Adult ESL</i> (www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/agenda.pdf) and <i>Adult English Language Instruction in the 21st Century</i> (www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/languageinstructionEng.pdf); proceedings from national meetings, such as <i>The National Symposium on Adult ESL Research and Practice</i> (www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/nationalsymposium.pdf); instructional materials, such as <i>Picture Stories for ESL Health Literacy</i> (www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/health/healthindex.html); and <i>Ask CAELA</i> (www.cal.org/caela/ask_caela/).
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Use of the Web Site for Professional Development, Classroom Instruction, and Research

The CAELA Web site is designed to meet the diverse needs of practitioners, who access it for multiple reasons and from several points of entry. State and program administrators, trainers and professional developers, teachers, and researchers use the Web site for many reasons. Below are examples of how the site can be used to enhance professional development, improve classroom instruction, and provide access to research. If users need specific advice on how to use the site for their own purposes, they should send an email to caela@cal.org or call 202-362-0700, extension 500.

Professional Development

Adult ESL teachers, trainers, and administrators face many professional challenges. Barriers to professional development include part-time employment, frequent turnover of teaching staff, widely divergent professional qualifications among staff, a diverse and mobile learner population with variable needs, limited and uncertain funding, and geographic and technological barriers. As states and programs struggle to build ongoing, responsive professional development systems, they often face the task of training new teachers and administrators. The examples below show how using the CAELA Web site can provide the resources needed for ongoing professional development.

Example 1

Situation: A state has organized a series of professional development activities that will include face-to-face workshops, peer mentoring, and study circles to begin at next summer's state adult education institute. The state's ABE/adult ESL trainer has retired, and her replacement is relatively new to teaching adult ESL and knows little about professional development or about adult English language learners.

How the CAELA Web site can help: In the months before the new trainer begins the training, she can use the CAELA Web site to access information on both professional development issues and adult ESL content and methods. The following sources should prove particularly useful:

▶ **Bibliography:** *Online Adult Professional Development Resources for Adult ESL Educators*

Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/bibliographies/pdonline.html

This annotated bibliography offers a selection of some of the most comprehensive and useful online resources available to practitioners.

▶ **Briefs**

Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/briefs.html

Because CAELA's briefs have all been written since 2005, they give the trainer information about current topics in the field of adult ESL education. Of particular note is the brief titled *Online Professional Development for Adult ESL Educators*. This brief describes current efforts to provide online professional development opportunities and resources for adult ESL teachers and discusses factors that should be considered in the development, delivery, and evaluation of professional development.

Other briefs include the following:

- *Adolescent Learners in Adult ESL Classes*
- *Applying Research Findings to Instruction for Adult English Language Students*
- *English Literacy and Civics Education*
- *How Should Adult ESL Reading Instruction Differ From ABE Reading Instruction?*
- *Online Professional Development for Adult ESL Educators*
- *Problem-Based Learning and Adult English Language Learners*
- *Promoting the Success of Multilevel ESL Classes: What Teachers and Administrators Can Do*
- *Supporting Adult English Language Learners' Transitions to Postsecondary Education*
- *Understanding Adult ESL Content Standards*
- *Using Adult ESL Content Standards*
- *Using the ESL Program Standards to Evaluate and Improve Adult ESL Programs*

► **Digests:** Professional Development Series

Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests.html#profdev

The nine digests in this series provide information about specific adult ESL topics, such as working with beginning-level learners, using video-based distance education, and working with learners who have learning disabilities.

► **Digests:** Program Design Series

Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests.html#prog

The digests in this series can help the professional developer learn about types of programs and classes (e.g., English literacy/civics, native language literacy) and issues (e.g., outreach and retention, transitioning to academic programs) in adult ESL education to better understand the perspectives of the teachers and programs.

Example 2

Situation: A large Western state with a rapidly increasing immigrant population conducted a teacher survey that included a teacher background and needs assessment. The state adult education office plans to use these data to strengthen the adult education system. The survey results indicate that while several teachers in the capital city area have academic backgrounds and experience in adult ESL, those in other parts of the state do not. Results of the needs assessment indicate that the teachers want training in the following areas: teaching multilevel classes, teaching reading, and facilitating second language acquisition.

The trainer charged with providing the training taught adult ESL for many years, so she knows about multilevel classes. She is less comfortable with having to teach reading, however, because she is unfamiliar with current research and resources; in fact, the texts she used are no longer in print. She is not at all comfortable with having to provide training on second language acquisition. The trainer did most of her ESL teaching in the 1980s when the focus was seat-of-your-pants, competency-based instruction, without much theoretical underpinning.

How the CAELA Web site can help: This experienced trainer can use the CAELA Web site to learn about reading and second language acquisition before developing a professional development plan. Some of the materials will also be used in face-to-face trainings and for follow-up.

For information on reading instruction, the trainer can read or review the following resources:

► **Brief:** *How Should Adult ESL Reading Instruction Differ From ABE Reading Instruction?*

Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/briefs/readingdif.html

► **Bibliography:** *Research on Reading Development of Adult English Language Learners: An Annotated Bibliography*

Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/bibliographies/readingbib.html

- ▶ **Digest:** *Reading and Adult English Language Learners: The Role of the First Language*
Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/reading.html
- ▶ **Collection:** *Reading and Adult English Language Learners*
Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/collections/reading.html
- ▶ **Digest:** *Reading and the Adult English Language Learner*
Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/Read.html
- ▶ *Practitioner Toolkit: Working With Adult English Language Learners*
Activities to Promote Reading Development
Available at www.cal.org/caela/tools/program_development/elltoolkit/Part2-57ActivitiesToPromoteReadingDevelopment.pdf

For information on second language acquisition, the trainer can read or review the following resources:

- ▶ **Digest:** *Second Language Acquisition in Adults: From Research to Practice*
Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/SLA.html
- ▶ **Collection:** *Second Language Acquisition*
Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/collections/SLA.html

As the trainer reads through the documents and resources, she can contact CAELA staff (caela@cal.org) with questions about the topics and for suggestions about effective training techniques.

Classroom Instruction

Adult ESL teachers and tutors often need advice on activities, methods, and approaches that can work in their particular situations. The following two examples show how a novice instructor and an experienced instructor might use the CAELA Web site.

Example 1: Novice Instructor

Situation: A rural section of a state has seen a recent, rapid increase in adult immigrants who have come to the area to take entry-level jobs at a meat-packing plant. Up until now, the small adult education center has offered only ABE and General Education Development (GED) preparation classes. Any immigrants who wanted to study took the ABE class. Now, there are enough adult English language learners to support a class, so one of the ABE teachers—a former middle school math teacher—has agreed to teach the class. It will be 7 months before the yearly adult education conference, and the ESL class begins in 3 weeks.

How the CAELA Web site can help: By accessing the CAELA Web site, the teacher can begin learning independently about adult ESL.

First, she can visit the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) page under ESL Resources (www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/faqs.html). While all 19 FAQs are relevant to a novice teacher, for this teacher the most immediately pertinent FAQs may be as follows:

7. What are the characteristics of adults learning English in the United States?
8. How do adult English language learners differ from adult basic education (ABE) learners?
9. What instructional practices best meet the needs of adult English language learners?
11. How long does it take an adult to learn English?
12. How can I find out more about teaching English as second language?
18. What do beginning adult ESL teachers, tutors, and volunteers need to know?

Each FAQ cites briefs, digests, and other resources relevant to the specific topic.

Second, now that the teacher has become familiar with these FAQs, she can make use of the following four resources:

1. **Q&A:** *Beginning to Work With Adult English Language Learners*

Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/beginQA.html

This paper gives a concise overview of four essential questions that all adult ESL teachers should consider: How do the principles of adult learning apply to adult English language learners? What do instructors need to know about second language acquisition (SLA)? What do instructors need to know about culture and working with multicultural groups? What instructional approaches support second language development in adults?

If the novice teacher has no more time than to thoroughly study this Q&A, she could discover the basics of the principles and methods that are appropriate for adult ESL from this brief overview.

2. **Online Resource Collection:** *What Beginning Teachers and Tutors of Adult English Language Learners Need to Know*

Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/collections/beginning.html

This collection includes links to CAELA and other resources, including articles, reports, teacher reference books, curricula, organizations, an electronic discussion list, and policy issues that affect the field. For the novice teacher, with limited time to absorb a huge amount of data, the practical advice gathered from an experienced teacher focus group may demystify the field. The advice includes such comments as “Write the day’s agenda on the board,” “Do a lot of physical activity,” and “Limit teacher talk.”

3. *Practitioner Toolkit: Working With Adult English Language Learners*

Available at www.cal.org/caela/tools/program_development/CombinedFiles1.pdf

Because this 238-page compendium was developed to serve the needs of practitioners new to adult ESL, many of the topics of concern to the novice are addressed here. Topics include background characteristics of nonnative speakers in the United States, assessment and needs assessment, and ways to promote interaction and communication (www.cal.org/caela/tools/program_development/elltoolkit/Part2-41Interaction&Communication.pdf) and reading development (www.cal.org/caela/tools/program_development/elltoolkit/Part2-57ActivitiestoPromoteReadingDevelopment.pdf). Because the toolkit was developed specifically for family literacy programs, several sections specifically related to parent education may not be directly relevant.

4. **Brief:** *How Should Adult ESL Reading Instruction Differ From ABE Reading Instruction?*

Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/briefs/readingdif.html

Focusing on the skill of reading, this brief makes the critically important point that teaching adult English language learners requires different approaches than teaching adult native English speakers.

The teacher can also subscribe to the quarterly online newsletter *CAELA Currents* (www.cal.org/caela/subscribe.html) and the adult ESL electronic discussion list (www.nifl.gov/lincs/discussions/discussions.html). The newsletter will help connect the novice to current activities in the field, and the electronic discussion can provide a forum for communicating with approximately 850 adult (mostly) ESL practitioners from across the country and around the world.

Finally, the teacher can use the CAELA Web site for a systematic, focused course of self-study. In fact, throughout the process of her self-education, the novice teacher can use the CAELA Web site as a way to methodically develop her professional knowledge of adult ESL—to become, in effect, her own teacher. Here are some of the things she can do:

1. Begin a journal in which she keeps track of questions and concerns she has about teaching adult ESL. As she reads through the online resources, she can jot down possible answers or explanations.
2. Narrow the scope of study to one or two goals that fit into her time frame and her situation. For example, if adult immigrants at the meat-packing plant have beginning-level skills in speaking, reading, and writing English, there is no immediate reason for the teacher to study how adult ESL learners can transition to GED or community education. Rather, she should access documents directly relevant to her situation, such as *Working With Literacy-Level Adult English Language Learners* (www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/litQA.html).
3. Systematically choose, try out, and reflect on specific activities, such as those found in the activities sections of the *Practitioner Toolkit*. After trying out a new activity in the classroom, she can reflect on the experience, asking herself the following questions:

How did the activity work? What would make it better? Is it worth trying again? Then she can jot down the reflections in the journal.

4. Send an email to CAELA staff (caela@cal.org) with questions about instructional practice, appropriate learning materials, use of technology, sources of information about specific cultural groups, and other concerns.
5. Share questions, concerns, and information with the adult ESL discussion list community.
6. Set aside a regular time to share new knowledge and concerns with the program administrator, who can also benefit from the new knowledge. The novice can ask the administrator to observe the class, making sure that the observation focuses on the activities and approaches she has been experimenting with.
7. Go back to her journal after several weeks, and again after several months, to review the initial set of questions and concerns to see which questions have been answered, which remain, and what new questions have arisen.

Example 2: Experienced Instructor

An experienced instructor might use the CAELA Web site to search for a specific resource, reference, or link when presented, as in the example below, with a new or challenging teaching assignment.

Situation: An instructor teaches in a large, multifaceted, urban adult ESL program that supports nine levels of instruction. He has taught high intermediate and advanced classes for several years, but has just been asked by his supervisor to switch to teaching the beginning-level class. Learners in this class typically have very limited English proficiency and had little or no access to education in their native countries. The class is made up of learners from 11 countries who speak at least seven languages. The instructor has a Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) certificate from a local university and keeps up on new textbooks and resources for the higher levels, but he is uncertain about how to teach people who “never went to school.”

How the CAELA Web site can help: First, the teacher can use the CAELA Web site to access information and links that are specific to his situation. The teacher has accessed the CAELA Web site before, but he is now looking for information targeting beginning levels. He can find pertinent information from the following sources:

- ▶ **Collection:** *Working With Literacy-Level Adult English Language Learners*

Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/collections/literacy.html

This online resource collection offers background information about literacy-level learners as well as a wide variety of annotated links to CAELA resources, newsletters, articles, discussion lists, teacher reference books, and learner textbooks. The collection also includes advice on appropriate terms and procedures for searching the topic in the ERIC database and links to relevant organizations.

- ▶ **FAQ:** *What instructional practices best meet the needs of literacy-level adult English language learners?* (FAQ #19)

Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/faqs.html#nineteen

This FAQ provides background information about literacy-level learners, links to CAELA and other resources, and describes several effective classroom activities such as class surveys, dialogues, dictations, and Language Experience Approach (LEA). The FAQ might be a good place for the experienced teacher to get an overview of issues, resources, and activities related to literacy-level learners.

- ▶ **Q&A:** *Working With Literacy-Level Adult English Language Learners*

Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/litQA.html

This paper describes literacy-level learners and the skills they need to develop. It also discusses effective practices for literacy-level classes and gives examples of activities and techniques that support these practices. The experienced teacher will be able to compare the information here with his experiences with higher levels to see what techniques and strategies are the same and what should be added or adapted. Other digests that deal with this topic include *Teaching Low-Level Adult ESL Learners* (www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/HOLT.html) and *Teaching Multilevel Adult ESL Classes* (www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/SHANK.html).

- ▶ **Annotated Bibliography:** *Beginning- and Literacy-Level Adult ESL Learners*

Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/bibliographies/literacy.html

This 2006 bibliography describes print and online sources ranging from research studies to how-to guides for working with adult immigrants who have had little or no access to formal education.

- ▶ **Digest:** *Reading and Adult English Language Learners: The Role of the First Language*

Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/reading.html

This digest discusses how learning to read in another language is related to a learner's first language. Does the learner speak a language that is not written or is just in the process of being written, such as Somali Bantu? Is the learner from a culture that uses nonalphabetic writing, such as Chinese, or is the learner familiar with a non-Roman alphabet, such as Arabic, Russian, Korean, or Thai? Or is the learner illiterate, although her language uses a Roman alphabet, because she never had the opportunity to go to school?

The experienced teacher is familiar with learners who mostly had at least a high school education and who had studied English at home or in the United States. Because of this, he had no need for this information before. This article can help him better understand the diverse learners in his class.

► **Digest:** *Trauma and the Adult English Language Learner*

Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/trauma2.html

Immigrants and refugees at all levels may have experienced trauma in their home countries, in transition to the United States, and in their current situations. Because trauma is one of the reasons that learners may not perform well during intake interviews, on standardized assessments, and in class, some of these learners may end up in the beginner class even if their actual English proficiency level is higher. The experienced teacher may want to skim this digest, as well as several others that deal with learning and sociocultural concerns. Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests.html#culture, the resources include *ESL Instruction and Adults With Learning Disabilities*, *Refugees as English Language Learners: Issues and Concerns*, *Cross-Cultural Issues in Adult ESL Classrooms*, and *Mental Health and the Adult Refugee: The Role of the ESL Teacher*.

► *Picture Stories for ESL Health Literacy*

Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/Health/healthindex.html

The experienced teacher may need some step-by-step examples of appropriate activities that help beginning-level learners acquire language and the content they need. This section of the CAELA Web site gives the rationale, general instructions, and detailed instructions for using picture stories to teach eight important health topics, including medical emergencies, good nutrition, and depression. These lessons are of particular use to learners who may need visual support for learning. To the teacher who is only familiar with intermediate and advanced learners, the stories also model the amount and type of preparation needed when working with beginners.

► *Literacy- and Beginning-Level Texts for Adult English Language Learners*

Available at www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/littext.html

This annotated bibliography of textbooks can introduce the teacher to appropriate materials and publishers of materials for his beginning-level class.

Like the novice teacher, the experienced teacher can also use the CAELA Web site to educate himself in a systematic and focused way about the needs of his beginning-level students. Here is how he might proceed:

1. Begin a journal, keeping track of questions and concerns about teaching a beginning-level class.
2. Systematically choose, try out, and reflect on specific activities such as those recommended in *Working With Literacy-Level Adult English Language Learners*, other digests, and the picture stories. After trying out a particular activity, he can ask himself the following questions: How did the activity work? What would make it better? Is it worth trying again? Then he can jot down the reflections in his journal.

3. Subscribe to the adult ESL electronic discussion list available at www.nifl.gov/lincs/discussions/discussions.html. Through this discussion list, the instructor can communicate with other teachers who work with beginning-level adult English language learners. In fact, list participants regularly ask and answer questions about how to best teach beginning-level classes.
4. Send an email to CAELA staff (caela@cal.org) with questions about strategies that are most effective with beginning-level learners, research informing instructional practice, and sources of information about specific cultural groups.
5. Set aside a regular time to share new information and techniques with the program administrator; ask the administrator to observe the class.
6. Review the initial journal questions and concerns after several weeks, and again after several months, to reflect on what has worked well, what questions or concerns remain, and what knowledge has been gained.

Research

The entire CAELA Web site can be used for research by all users. However, under the Research dropdown menu on the site, the ESL Resource Database and Statistics links may offer the most information to researchers, students, government officials, and the press.

ESL Resource Database

Because it is focused on adult ESL, the CAELA ESL Resource Database is particularly useful for researchers who are searching for resources on their topics of interest and have limited time to search. The database includes some seminal materials from Grades K–12, higher education, and adult basic education, but it highlights documents that are germane to teaching adult ESL, including many of CAELA’s own publications.

The searchable ESL Resource Database at www.cal.org/CALWebDB/CAELATracker/CAELAList.aspx contains more than 70 entries, with each entry providing the following information:

- ▶ Title, author, availability (including live links when available), item identification number, and publication date
- ▶ Document type, such as dissertation/thesis, curriculum, journal article, report, and research (experimental, quasi-experimental, or case study)
- ▶ Population with which the work is concerned (e.g., older adults, refugees, immigrants, non-Latin alphabet users)
- ▶ Groups for which the work will be useful (e.g., administrators, community leaders, curriculum developers, funders, practitioners, researchers, policy makers, social workers, teacher educators, and teachers)
- ▶ Abstract

Table 2 shows a sample database entry.

Table 2. Sample CAELA ESL Resource Database Entry

Title	Where Immigrants Settle in the United States
Authors	Barry R. Chiswick, Paul W. Miller
Live Link	www.iza.org/en/webcontent/publications/papers/viewAbstract?dp_id=1231
Item ID	0006
Document Type	DAT, REP, ART [Data; Report; Article]
Availability	Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis, 2004, v6 n2, p185-197. Full text available online (as IZA Discussion Paper No. 1231) at: www.iza.org/en/webcontent/publications/papers/viewAbstract?dp_id=1231
Date	2004
Population Type	Immigrants
Useful To	Policy makers, Researchers
Abstract	Economic, social, and political impacts of immigrants' place of settlement in the United States (based on a study of 1990 Census data) result largely from high geographic concentration. Immigrants usually live in central parts of Metropolitan Areas in "gateway cities" (major international airport) in California, New York, Texas, Florida, New Jersey, and Illinois. The recent shift from choosing east coast metropolitan areas to preferring California reflects greater numbers from Asia, Mexico, and other parts of Latin America (rather than Europe or Canada). Other differences relate to linguistic origin and period of arrival. Data include 6 tables of Census figures.

Researchers can search the database by entering keywords (e.g., workplace, technology, immigrants), type of document (e.g., curriculum, journal), the author, or the publication date in the search box.

For example, a program administrator who is planning to start a family literacy program could type "family literacy" in the search box. The database search results would then report five documents that directly pertain to the topic (see Table 3): an annotated bibliography, a review of research, two dissertations (one a case study and one an experimental study), and one broad-based curriculum. Four of the documents are available in full text from the link, and a 24-page preview of the fifth document (the experimental study) is available for download. Good research practice dictates searching at least one other database (e.g., Educational Research Information Clearinghouse [ERIC]); however, reviewing or reading the representative range of materials available on CAELA can help the administrator make decisions informed by several perspectives.

Table 3. Family Literacy Search

<u>Annotated Bibliography on Family Literacy.</u>	Eunice N. Askov, Eugenio Longoria Saenz, Elisabeth L. Grinder, Shara Kinney, Maria Marvin	0017
<u>The Outcomes and Impacts of Adult Literacy Education in the United States.</u>	Hal Beder	0036
<u>A case study of parental behaviors in an English language learner community technology literacy lab setting and the extension of the behaviors in the home.</u>	Jenny Lea Preston	0045
<u>The effects of mothers' participation in a preschool family literacy program on mothers' English language and literacy.</u>	Colleen M. Cross	0061
REEP ESL Curriculum for Adults.		

Statistics

Scholars, members of the press, and government officials often need statistics on foreign-born and adult ESL learners. There is a bewildering quantity of statistics available from such large providers as the U.S. Census Bureau (www.census.gov/) and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (<http://nces.ed.gov/>). Because CAELA's statistics page, *Statistics and Data Related to Adult English Language Learners* (www.cal.org/caela/research/statistics.html), focuses on statistics related to immigrants and adult ESL, it narrows the scope of the search.

CAELA's statistics page includes annotated links to information about languages; information about immigrants and refugees (e.g., Ethnologue, Migration Information Center, and Pew Hispanic Center); targeted data from the U. S. Census Bureau (e.g., *Facts on Minority Population Groups and Profile of the Foreign-Born Population in the United States*); and education data (e.g., number of adults—by gender, ethnicity, and age—in education programs funded by the U.S. Department of Education).

VI. Resources for Trainers

Introduction

This annotated list of online, print, and multimedia resources provides professional developers with both seminal professional development resources (e.g., California Adult Literacy Professional Development Project [CALPRO] and National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy [NCSALL] Study Circle guides) and materials specifically about teaching adult ESL (e.g., Public Broadcasting System [PBS] ESL/Civics Link and *Teaching Adult Second Language Learners*). In most cases, state and local trainers will judge what resources are appropriate for training by topic, content, objectives, time, and financial constraints. However, being familiar with available resources can help trainers plan and conduct workshops efficiently.

The online resources below have been roughly categorized as either *professional development* or *ESL content*, although the distinction between the two types is not always clear. The print and multimedia resources generally focus on teaching adult ESL or a related topic (e.g., language and K–12 ESL).

Resources—particularly Internet resources—change often, so this list is not exhaustive. CAELA staff members welcome trainers' comments about the resources below as well as suggestions for others for training adult ESL teachers and administrators. Please contact CAELA at caela@cal.org or 202-362-0700, ext. 500.

As administrators and trainers decide what materials will best serve their needs, the following checklist for evaluating resources may be useful. The checklist provides content, format, and cost criteria to consider when selecting materials to use in training.

Evaluating Adult ESL Professional Development Materials

Selection Criteria	check √	Comment
Content		
Content is aligned with findings of practitioner needs assessment and reflects program and state goals (e.g., state standards).		
Goals and objectives are clear, challenging, and appropriate for the users.		
Content integrates educational theory and practice and reflects understanding of available evidence-based data.		
Underlying assumptions, materials, and processes are socially, culturally, and ethnically appropriate; are free of bias; and reflect diverse audiences.		
Instructional strategies reflect a variety of teaching and learning modes and incorporate principles of adult learning.		
Content includes evaluation that reflects the goals and objectives and allows users to assess their growth in knowledge and skill.		
Materials provide activities or suggestions for ongoing professional development.		
Format		
Materials and procedures can be replicated and adapted for use in a variety of instructional modes (e.g., mentoring, study circles, workshops, online).		
Content, processes, and ancillary materials (e.g., videos, software, Web design) are well written, well organized, and easy to understand and use.		
Cost		
Cost of content delivery, processes, and ancillary materials is commensurate with the amount of actual or potential benefit to adult ESL practitioners.		

Internet Resources for Professional Development

California Adult Literacy Professional Development Project (CALPRO)

www.calpro-online.org/default.asp

Although some parts of this Web site are specifically designed for California adult educators, much of the information available is of broad interest. The focus of the site is adult education and literacy, but some resources, such as the *ESL New Teacher Guide*, are geared toward ESL instructors. In addition, many seminal professional development guides posted on the site are available for downloading, including the following:

▶ *Adult Educators' Guide to Designing Instructor Mentoring*

Authors: Renee Sherman, Janet Voight, John Tibbetts, Dionne Dobbins, Arthur Evans, and Danielle Weidler

Publisher: American Institutes for Research, April 2000

www.calpro-online.org/pubs/Mentoring%20Guide.pdf

This guide outlines the steps that adult education programs need to take to plan, develop, and implement an instructor mentoring program. Topics covered include reasons for implementing mentoring, how programs can support mentoring, and steps for development and implementation of mentoring.

▶ *Evaluating Professional Development: A Framework for Adult Education*

Authors: Mark Kutner, Renee Sherman, John Tibbetts, and Larry Condelli

Publisher: American Institutes for Research, May 1997

www.calpro-online.org/pubs/evalmon.pdf

This guide offers advice on how to evaluate the impact of professional development, including strategies for assessing instructors and students and for evaluating program change. Though the guide is directed at adult basic education (ABE) programs, many of the strategies can be implemented in adult ESL programs as well.

▶ *Evaluating Professional Development Resources: Selection and Development Criteria*

Authors: Renee Sherman, Mike Dlott, Heather Bamford, Jennifer McGivern, and Marisa Cohn

Publisher: American Institutes for Research, August 2003

www.calpro-online.org/pubs/99.pdf

This guide presents a systematic approach to selecting professional development resources for adult educators. It includes a framework that programs can use to assess the feasibility and appropriateness of resources, as well as a guide for developing new professional development resources and a summary of key elements of quality professional development.

► *The Professional Development Resource Guide for Adult Educators*

Authors: Renee Sherman and Mark Kutner

Publisher: American Institutes for Research, (n.d.)

www.calpro-online.org/pubs.asp

Available online in sections, this guide aims to promote professional development activities in adult education instruction. It presents different approaches to professional development; information about evaluating the impact of professional development; and a collection of resources, including sample needs assessments and professional development plans.

In addition, documents from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education, such as ERIC Digests, Trends and Issues Alerts, Practice Application Briefs, and Major Clearinghouse Publications and Compilations, are archived at www.calpro-online.org/eric/index.asp. These documents can also be found at www.eric.ed.gov/.

National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL)

www.ncsall.net/

This Web site displays many professional development resources based on the research that NCSALL has conducted, as well as a link to *Focus on Basics: Connecting Research and Practice*. Pertinent research briefs include “How Teachers Change” at www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/research/brief25.pdf and “The Characteristics and Concerns of Adult Basic Education Teachers” at www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/research/brief26.pdf.

NCSALL teaching and training resources available online include several *NCSALL Study Circle Guides* (www.ncsall.net/index.php?id=25), which explain step by step how to organize, conduct, and evaluate study circles for adult education practitioners. A *Mentor Teacher Group Guide* (on adult multiple intelligences) is also available. While these guides are directed more generally at adult basic education, the careful explanations and processes can serve as models for specific adult ESL contexts.

Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE)

www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/AdultEd/aeprofdev.html

This section of OVAE’s Web site focuses on professional development. Although the primary focus is on adult basic education, many of the resources and Web sites listed are useful for adult ESL practitioners as well. The site features links to state-level Web sites from Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Texas that have resources of broad interest to ESL practitioners. It also includes links to NRS Online, the training site for the National Reporting System, and to Professional Development for Adult Education Instructors: State Policy Update, which provides useful background information on professional development in adult education.

Outreach and Technical Assistance Network (OTAN)

www.otan.dni.us/

OTAN provides a gateway to electronic resources and information on all aspects of adult education, including adult ESL. While the site was designed to support practitioners and others in California, the resources are of wide interest. Full-text documents, opportunities for online networking and training, and links to other Web-based resources are available. Users can register to be notified regularly of new materials related to their areas of interest. Adult ESL practitioners will be especially interested in OTAN's site for Teaching Tools and Resources (www.otan.us/browse/index.cfm?fuseaction=page&catid=10823). This page provides links to sample lesson plans and classroom activities and includes links to relevant articles and Web sites. It also features a publication from the Los Angeles Unified School District, "Tools for ESL Lesson Planning" (http://adultinstruction.org/teachers/instructional/esl_lpt2000.pdf). OTAN sites are free, but users are required to register.

Internet Resources With Adult ESL Content

Adult Education Content Standards Warehouse

www.adultedcontentstandards.ed.gov/

This Web site and the Adult Education Content Standards Warehouse project are being conducted by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) (www.air.org) for OVAE at the U.S. Department of Education. The goal of the site is to help adult educators develop, align, and implement content standards in English language acquisition (ELA), mathematics, and reading. Trainers can use this site to review and compare the nine sets of standards currently available to help their own state or program develop or enhance content standards.

Adult Literacy Education Wiki

http://wiki.literacytent.org/index.php/Main_Page

This relatively new Web site is a collection of information about various topics related to adult literacy education, including professional development and ESL. Other topics include public policy, participatory and emancipatory education, and learner persistence. The site is a volunteer effort that catalogs information posted by its more than 400 registered users. Some areas of the site are more developed than others, but new resources and information are added regularly.

Center for Adult English Language Acquisition (CAELA)

www.cal.org/caela

The CAELA Web site provides many resources for adult ESL practitioners. It includes more than 60 briefs, digests, and questions and answers on topics germane to adult ESL, frequently asked questions (FAQs) about adult ESL, and resource collections. Resource collections include *Assessment and Evaluation in Adult ESL*, *What Beginning Teachers and Tutors of Adult English Language Learners Need to Know*, *Civics Education for Adult English Language Learners*, *Learning Disabilities and Adult ESL*, and *Second Language Acquisition*.

In addition, CAELA staff have developed a searchable adult ESL Resource Database that will make searching for evidence-based documents easier and more efficient. Other pertinent resources on the CAELA Web site include teacher resources, statistics on adult English language learners, reference materials, and links to other sites useful to those working with adult English language learners. Practitioners are encouraged to contact CAELA (caela@cal.org) if they have questions about teaching or providing professional development to teachers related to adult ESL. Other resources on the CAELA Web site include the following:

- ▶ *Adult English Language Instruction in the 21st Century*
www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/languageinstructionEng.pdf
- ▶ *Adult ESL Language and Literacy Instruction: A Vision and Action Agenda for the 21st Century*
www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/vision.pdf
- ▶ *Research Agenda for Adult ESL*
www.cal.org/caela/esl-resources/agenda.pdf

Centre for Canadian Benchmarks

www.language.ca/display_page.asp?page_id=1

This bilingual (English/French) site supports the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB), a set of national performance standards for adult ESL instruction. Although specifically designed to serve Canadian teachers and adult learners, the benchmarks and related professional development tools provide practical information for teachers and trainers in the United States.

Cultural Orientation Resource Center

www.cal.org/co/

This extensive Web site, which was established to link overseas service providers of cultural orientation for refugees with service providers in domestic resettlement programs, offers a great deal of both background and up-to-date information about refugees and their concerns. The site includes questions frequently asked by refugees and cultural profiles that provide pertinent country and cultural background information about such groups as the Cubans, Haitians, Iraqi Kurds, Somalis, and Sudanese. Recent profiles have been written about Somali Bantu, Hmong, and Muslim refugees. A profile about Liberians is forthcoming. This site is maintained by the Center for Applied Linguistics (www.cal.org).

Cultural Profiles Project

<http://cp.settlement.org/english/>

This Web site, funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, contains profiles of more than 100 countries. Profiles include a basic introduction to each country and its people, with cultural information on such topics as family, food, work, literature and the arts, communication styles, holidays, and spirituality. Each profile also offers a bibliography for more in-depth study. This site may prove helpful to programs and states as new immigrant groups arrive in their areas.

Equipped for the Future (EFF) Portal

<http://eff.cls.utk.edu/default.htm>

This Web site, hosted by the EFF Center for Training and Technical Assistance at the Center for Literacy Studies, University of Tennessee, details the fundamentals of Equipped for the Future—an educational improvement initiative for adult basic education—and presents an ongoing eight-step process for learning and teaching. The site also contains a *Teaching/Learning Toolkit* for adult education practitioners, with sample lesson plans and teaching tools to support the lessons. Several lessons are directly related to adult ESL contexts.

ERIC Database

www.eric.ed.gov

The Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), sponsored by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the U.S. Department of Education, offers a bibliographic database of journal and nonjournal articles going back to 1996. Professional developers could use search terms such as *professional development*, *English (second language)*, *limited English speaking*, *adult literacy*, and *adult basic education* to access many resources useful for training adult ESL teachers. Examples of full-text professional development resources available range from *An Introduction to ESL in the Workplace: A Professional Development Packet* (2002, ERIC No. ED472204, also available from the California Adult Literacy Professional Development Project Web site) to *Guide for Instructors of Adult ESOL: Quality Professional Development Project* (1999, ERIC No. ED439287).

Modern Language Centre

www.oise.utoronto.ca/MLC/index.htm

The Web site for this center at the University of Toronto provides links to faculty information, publications, research, and resources. The focus is on both theory and applied theory in language education, with links to works by well-known faculty members such as James Cummins, Alister Cumming, and Nina Spada.

PBS ESL/Civics Link

<http://civicslink.ket.org/login.xml>

ESL/Civics Link is a fee-based online professional development system for adult education ESL teachers. The Web site offers facilitated and nonfacilitated models, with units focusing on topics such as teaching citizenship, teaching approaches in ESL, integrating civics and English literacy, and meeting learner needs and goals. In addition, the site offers teachers opportunities to network with other teachers and a portfolio space to accumulate and store resources and save their own work.

REEP ESL Curriculum for Adults

www.arlington.k12.va.us/instruct/ctae/adult_ed/REEP/reepcurriculum/

This is the latest edition of the curriculum from the Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP) in Arlington, Virginia. This curriculum includes information on adult ESL that any ESL teacher—whether a novice or a veteran classroom teacher—would find helpful. The curriculum is composed of the following units: learner needs assessment; learner evaluation; and instructional units from levels 100 (preliterate, no English ability) through 550 (high advanced English), with specific sections on ESL techniques, technology integration, and family literacy. The Web site includes links for learners and teachers as well as “Best of the Web” links for the life-skills topics used in the curriculum.

Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center

www.valrc.org/

Although this Web site is designed for adult education practitioners in Virginia, many of its resources are of broad interest. The site includes many useful resources for teachers and professional development trainers under the Publications and Resources links.

The online version of the resource center’s *ESOL Starter Kit* (www.aelweb.vcu.edu/publications/ESLKit/ESLKit_2002.pdf) provides an overview of the information most often needed for beginning adult ESL teachers. Sections provide information on such topics as intake, adult ESL resources, adult learning principles, second language teaching, the four language modes, and

curriculum development. Links to online resources and sample lesson plans for reading, writing, listening, and speaking are included. Other useful resources are the facilitator's guide for *Practitioner Research as Staff Development* (www.aelweb.vcu.edu/publications/research/), which outlines a step-by-step process for implementing professional development based on teacher inquiry, and the *Health Literacy Toolkit* (www.aelweb.vcu.edu/publications/healthlit/), which offers a model for addressing health literacy with adult learners.

Electronic Discussion Lists

Electronic discussion groups offer individual teachers and trainers a chance to listen to comments and concerns from other adult education or adult ESL teachers, to pose their own questions, and to review the archives to see how local questions and concerns about teaching ESL are reflected throughout the field.

The National Institute for Literacy hosts several discussion lists, including one specifically for adult ESL and for adult professional development. For more information, go to www.nifl.gov/lincs/discussions/discussions.html.

An ESL-specific list is supported by the City University of New York (CUNY). For more information, go to www.hunter.cuny.edu/~tesl-1/.

The American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) supports the National Literacy Advocacy (NLA) list. For more information about this list, go to <http://lists.literacytent.org/mailman/listinfo/aaace-nla>.

Print and Multimedia Resources

Bell, J. S. (2004). *Teaching multilevel classes in ESL* (2nd ed.). Ontario, Canada: Pippin. Available from www.pippinpub.com/index.asp

The author describes a variety of features that make a class multilevel. They include differences in language proficiency, education experience, and situational factors. This book discusses the challenges of planning curriculum and teaching multilevel classes and offers strategies for classroom management, as well as practical activities and resources.

Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy* (2nd ed.). White Plains, NY: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.

This book discusses teaching practices that are grounded in principles of language learning. It is written for new teachers and covers topics such as the history of language teaching; cognitive, affective, and linguistic principles of language learning; designing and implementing classroom lessons; and assessing language skills.

Celce-Murcia, M. (Ed.). (2001). *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

This book gives a comprehensive overview of teaching English to speakers of other languages. It discusses research and practice. Each chapter is written by a specialist in the field and provides background information on a specific topic and suggestions for instruction.

Hess, N. (2001). *Teaching large multilevel classes*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

While this book is not specifically geared for adult ESL classes, it systematically deals with one of the perennial issues for teachers that teacher trainers must address—multilevel learning groups.

Kentucky Educational Television (KET). *English as a second language teleconferences*. Lexington, KY: KET. Available from KET at 800-354-9067 or email adulsted@ket.org

These five 90-minute videos are available individually or as a set. The titles are *ESL in Adult Education: Teaching Multi-Level Classes*; *Citizenship Preparation: The Making of New Americans*; *Connecting ESL to GED and Credit Courses*; *I Am, You Are, We Is: A Look at Teaching Grammar in Adult ESL Classes*; and *From Talk to Action: Problem Solving in Adult ESL Classes*.

McKay, H., & Tom, A. (1999). *Teaching adult second language learners*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

The authors focus specifically on adults learning English. This book provides a summary of the principles of teaching adults, a lengthy section on building community in the classroom, and a variety of activities organized by life-skill topics. Topics include personal identification, family, community, housing, work, and other typical adult ESL content. Within each of these sections, the authors provide several interactive activities, including purpose, time, level, preparation, step-by-step procedures, and follow-up. The overview of teaching adult ESL, as well as the structure and detail, make this book ideal for practitioners new to teaching adults learning English.

Parrish, B. (2004). *Teaching adult ESL: A practical introduction*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

This introduction to teaching adult ESL presents the many complex facets involved in teaching adult ESL in a thoughtful and interactive manner. Chapters include “Working with Adult ESL Learners,” “Approaches and Program Options in Adult ESL,” “Managing ESL Classes,” “Selecting Instructional Materials and Resources,” “Assessing Learning and Teaching,” and “Standards and Accountability,” as well as chapters focused on teaching language skills. Because of its collegial tone, accessible format, and activities for readers to apply what they are learning, this book may be a natural for use in a peer-mentoring or study circle format.

Savage, K. L. (Series Ed.). (1992). *Teacher training through video: ESL techniques*. White Plains, NY: Pearson Longman. Available from Longman at 800-375-2375.

This series of 10 interactive teaching videos includes reproducible supporting materials and is organized into training goals and objectives, background information, video demonstration/classroom observation, guided practice, application, and appendix. Each of the 10 sets is designed to provide a minimum of 4 hours of formal training as well as 5 ½ to 9 hours outside the formal training. Used by teachers throughout the United States for many years, the series is somewhat dated. Even so, the detailed and logical presentation continue to be very effective in guiding teachers in such topics as lesson planning, early production, life-skills reading, and problem solving.

Smoke, T. (Ed.). (1998). *Adult ESL: Politics, pedagogy, and participation in classroom and community programs*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

The articles in this book encourage teachers to consider more complex issues than daily classroom and instructional issues. Titles include “The Politics of Adult ESL Literacy,” “The Relationship Between Knowing Our Students’ Real Needs and Effective Teaching,” “The Politics of Pronunciation and the Adult Learner,” and “Building on Community Strengths: A Model for Training Literacy Instructors.” These provocative articles could lend themselves to study circle or peer mentoring activities.

Spiegel, M., & Sunderland, H. (2006). *A teachers’ guide: Teaching basic literacy to ESOL learners*. London: LLU+ and London South Bank University. (Available in the United States from Peppercorn Books at www.peppercornbooks.com/catalog/)

This teachers’ guide outlines models for teaching reading and writing to basic literacy learners. The guide has ideas for beginning and experienced instructors, and it traces several approaches to literacy from a historic perspective. There is a practitioner’s chart for working one on one that outlines stage and purpose, activity and material needed, as well as a sample curriculum. The guide treats a broad range of topics, including learning styles, dyslexia, assessment, materials, planning, and managing courses and classrooms. Resources for teachers include materials, a glossary, and an extensive bibliography. The book is recommended by the authors to ESL teachers who are new to literacy levels, working on their ESL certifications, teaching EFL, or changing to a career in ESL. The book evolved from a need for theoretical and practical ESL background. LLU+ (formerly the London Language and Literacy Unit) and the authors discovered the gap in materials when they were developing ESL teacher training courses to be used throughout the United Kingdom.

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages. (2003). *Standards for adult education programs*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

The standards described in this book were developed by the TESOL Task Force on Adult Education Program Standards. The book describes nine standards for program quality in nine areas, including curriculum and instructional materials, instruction, assessment and learner gains, and employment conditions and staffing. Because *Standards* includes core definitions, background information about learners and programs, and a program self-review instrument based on the standards, trainers could use this book to present a series of program-wide professional development workshops focused on one or more program standards.