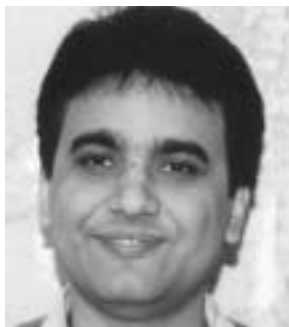




The World Comes to Tennessee



**A Resource Book for Adult Education and ESOL Teachers
of Advanced Level ESOL Students**

A COLLABORATIVE PROJECT OF
TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF ADULT EDUCATION
AND THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE CENTER FOR LITERACY STUDIES

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JUNE 2004

Acknowledgements

It is the intent of the Tennessee English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) professional development program to strengthen the capacity of ESOL teachers to help students communicate effectively in English, become successful members of the community, and to provide a two-way bridge of cultural understanding between ESOL students and the community at large.

To accomplish this, we have created this resource, *The World Comes to Tennessee: A Resource Book for Adult Education and ESOL Teachers of Advanced ESOL Students*.

We are aware that ESOL students bring important qualities and experiences that need to be acknowledged, respected, accepted and appreciated as they acquire a new language and learn to live in a new culture. We have written this book to share our experiences and knowledge with teachers working with these students as they work in their advanced level ESOL classes preparing for their transition from ESOL to GED, from ESOL to higher education, and/or from ESOL to the workplace.

The authors of this book are the Tennessee ESOL Support Practitioners.

Cynthia W. Barnett	Henry County Adult Education
Diane Cohn	Williamson County Adult Education
Suzanne Poteet Elston	Bradley County Adult Education
Connie Mayes	Sevier County Adult Education
Heather Nicely	Kingsport City Schools Adult Education
Shanna Sutton	Putnam County Adult Education
Pat Sweat	McNairy County Adult Education
D.Lee Wilson	Davidson County Adult Education
Pat Sawyer	Center for Literacy Studies
and	
John M. Tankersley	

Design by Mary Revenig

For further information contact:

**The University of Tennessee
Center for Literacy Studies**

600 Henley Street, Suite 312

Knoxville, TN 37996-4135

TEL: (865) 974-4109

TOLL-FREE: 877-340-0546

FAX: 865-974-3857

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Introduction: What Is This Book?

The United States is viewed by many as a country where immigrants can enjoy freedom and economic prosperity, and, recently, more of these newcomers are settling in the state of Tennessee. The 2000 United States Census reveals that 4.8 percent of Tennessee residents live in households where the primary language spoken is not English. That is a 178% increase over the same number in 1990. More recent statistics reflect that Tennessee adult education (AE) programs have increased the number of students in English for speakers of other languages by 77% from the program year 1996-97 to the program year 2002-03. This shift in demographics is changing AE in Tennessee, with an increasing number of individuals in AE classrooms seeking help to improve their English language skills. The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development Division of Adult Education and the University of Tennessee Center for Literacy Studies are working to address the changing needs of AE programs in Tennessee's 95 counties. This book is one product of this partnership.

In the program year 2003-2004, eight English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) support practitioners and two editors were asked to produce this manual. Its goal is to provide a foundation of theory for AE teachers and to give practical ideas for classroom instruction that build on that theoretical underpinning. The authors hope that seasoned instructors can benefit from the fresh ideas that their peers present here and will reflect on how to implement them in their practice. ESOL teachers of advanced level classes will find that this book contains beneficial, must-have, best practices of ESOL teachers that will ensure success with advanced level students.

An additional goal of this book is to address strategies on how to approach students transitioning from higher level ESOL instruction to other academic programs. The needs of these students are often more elusive for a teacher to recognize and address and are a source of concern for many ESOL instructors.

As in past years immigrants were welcomed to the United States by the sight of the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor, the authors hope that newcomers to your classroom will be welcomed in the same spirit and offered English language skills—the keys that open doors to so many opportunities in our society.



Statistics reflect that Tennessee adult education (AE) programs have increased the number of students in English for speakers of other languages by 77% from the program year 1996-97 to the program year 2002-03. This shift in demographics is changing AE in Tennessee, with an increasing number of individuals in AE classrooms seeking help to improve their English language skills.

Part 1: Teaching ESOL and the Advanced ESOL Classroom

How do I teach adults?

“The first step in the education of people is to convince them they already know a great deal.” —Paulo Friere

Adult learners, whether native or non-native English speakers, have certain characteristics in common. Malcolm Knowles described these traits in 1973, and they still comprise the basis of adult learning theory today.



Adults are self-directed in their learning. They take responsibility for much of their learning and need the instructor to serve as a helper and facilitator. The relationship between the instructor and learner should be characterized by mutual trust, respect, and helpfulness.

Adults have reservoirs of experience that serve as resources while they learn; therefore, use learner experiences as a basis for instruction.

In the spring of 2003, I offered my mixed level class of ESOL adults the opportunity to learn a skill indigenous to the Appalachians: quilting. They expressed interest, so the first thing we did was to make a field trip to a local quilt fabric shop. During the ensuing weeks, the students learned about using quilt patterns, piecing, creating the layers of a quilt, then doing the quilting and finishing, as well as a great deal of vocabulary relating to handwork. Each of the participants created a table mat, about 9" x 9" intended to be used under hot dishes. Even those whose English was very limited were able to participate and leave with a product they were proud of.

Adults learners are oriented toward problem solving and the practical, and they need to know “now.” Adults want their learning applicable to their lives; hence, instruction should focus on practical application.

Adults also want to know why something needs to be learned. Remind learners that the activities they do will help them move toward their goals. Provide opportunities for learners to see their progress, such as checklists of the outcomes they should be able to accomplish in order to reach their goals.

In addition, adult ESOL students tend to be highly motivated. They usually attend class of their own free choice and at some personal sacrifice. Occasional absences are more often due to family or job obligations rather than a lack of motivation.

The adult ESOL classroom environment must be one in which the students feel comfortable using and taking risks with English.

- Try to foster an environment of mutual respect among students and between instructor and student.

- Use activities that involve students working together or sharing information to help build a sense of community.
- In ESOL classes, group learning is more central to instruction than in ABE classes, since the acquisition of language is a social process. Well-designed group work can foster interaction and relationships among learners, which often have a greater influence on learning than teacher-learner relationships.
- Avoid constant error correction and include activities that motivate students.

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. Build on their strengths and what they already know. Provide opportunities for learners to use the language, not simply talk about it. Expose them to language that is slightly above their ability level.

Relevance is probably the most important motivation factor for adult students. If students are learning what they have identified as needed, they will be motivated. If they are actively participating in an ESOL class where their experiences, opinions, and comments count, then their self-esteem is enhanced along with motivation.

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Cain, from Mexico, works on construction. He is very determined to learn English and improve his life.

What’s so different about a classroom in the United States?

The ESOL student and the GED student are different in some ways, but alike in others. The adult education (AE) practitioner needs to be aware of the differences.

From *ERIC Digest*, July 1995

	ESOL	GED
Purpose	To acquire English language skills and competencies	To improve academic and study skills
Content	Reading and listening comprehension skills, speaking and writing production skills	Knowledge in English, math, science, social studies, and reading
Context/goals	Job/professional skills, develop English skills for life situations, access resources in the community	Gain access to books, literature, have discourse with instructors, develop subject content mastery



How long have you lived in the USA?

I have lived in the USA for 10 months.

What do you like about the town you live in?

I like the town because it is the beautiful town. There are many tall trees and many kinds of birds.

What do you like about English class?

I like my English teacher. She is so kind. Her English lesson is useful to live in the USA for me.

—Hiroyo from Japan

The above chart contrasts these differences. Students transitioning from ESOL to GED classes experience changes in subject matter, methodology, goals, classmates, grading, and class work. The major difference is the shift from learning English, to the use of English as a vehicle for learning.

What is this “Culture Shock” thing, anyway?

One of the most striking differences is one that may not be apparent to teachers who have lived most of their lives within the same community. These students bring a lifetime of experiences and customs with them from the communities in which they were raised. It is quite normal for this abrupt change in customs to cause culture shock in students entering an ESOL classroom in the United States for the first time. Culture shock can be a traumatic experience for a student and those around him or her.

Culture shock is generally thought to progress through four stages:

1. The time elapsed before the onset of each stage varies with the individual, but always begins with a **honeymoon stage** where new experiences are exciting and different.
2. This is followed by a period of hostility, characterized in some degree by a **dislike** of the unaccustomed or unfamiliar.
3. Next comes a period when the newcomer understands, becomes **comfortable** with, and possibly laughs about the differences that caused so much earlier frustration.
4. The final stage of culture shock comes when the cultural differences become everyday realities, unconsciously accepted or coped with.



One student, Kasia [KA-sha], moved to Blount County in East Tennessee to be with her American husband, Bill. She grew up in a 1,000-year old city in Poland with a population of about a half-million. Accustomed to life in a bustling city with world-renowned cultural attractions, Kasia found settling in rural East Tennessee a big change. At first she enjoyed living in Maryville and explored the town, making new friends and settling in to her new home. After she settled into a routine with work and school, Kasia

became bored and restless. She began to dislike the uniform architecture of buildings and not having the option of places to socialize with friends in the evenings. She also disliked many American foods, bread in particular, but the most difficult thing was missing her father. She cried often, and her husband did not understand what was wrong. After several shocking telephone bills, Kasia began to develop closer relationships with friends from work, and she found a bakery in Knoxville that sold European-style bread. She

also began to enjoy many conveniences of American life, like driving instead of taking public transportation, or the ease of returning goods in shops. When she visited her father for the first time, she found that she missed her husband; the Poland that she left was nice, but she missed many aspects of her life in America. When Kasia returned, she knew she had made the right decision because she was happy to return to Bill and her new life in Tennessee.

Sometimes called the “**home stage**” of culture shock, individuals who reach this stage often have reverse culture shock when they return to their native country.

Students going through culture shock often find the severity lessened by a teacher telling them about the four stages or students discussing their feelings with peers. Teachers may find that methods of instruction may need to vary depending on which stages of culture shock class members are going through.

Why do my students have expectations that I didn't expect?

As an example of a different cultural expectation, consider that students in some countries are taught to stand when the teacher enters the room and to stand again when s/he is directed to answer a question. The classroom is very formal, and the student never speaks unless the instructor demands it. The teacher is a strong figure of authority with the role of the student to listen respectfully, take notes, and ask no questions. Student answers are only rote memorization and repetition of facts and opinions presented by the professor. A student would never offer his or her own opinion!

A teacher may also find that students come from backgrounds where direct eye contact with the teacher is discouraged, and the lowering of the eyes is seen as a sign of respect. Societies exist in which a man would never be taught by a woman, or vice versa. Sometimes men and women are taught in separate classrooms by a teacher of the same sex. These students may be uncomfortable, and perhaps even angered, by classroom arrangements with mixed sexes unless they are prepared for the protocol of a typical United States classroom from the very first class session.

In some cultures, social interaction is an integral part of the classroom experience and sometimes takes precedence over classroom instruction. There may be increased noise levels before and during instruction time. Students may converse among themselves to clear up confusing concepts or even speak of a topic having nothing to do with the lesson. This could have no reflection on the student's respect for the teacher nor be an indication of his/her motivation to study. Teachers may find that if they reprimand students for talking out of turn they may prevent them from getting more easily comprehensible help from a classmate.

A United States ESOL teacher may have many different cultures in the same room and have to deal with culture clashes. The student accustomed to an authoritarian classroom can be shocked at the boisterous actions of the more informal stu-



Chiaki and her husband are talented, educated, young adults. Her husband is continuing graduate education here. Their two young children attend a local school. They have been surprised by the cultural differences in the play of young children being determined and distinguished by gender.



Jose is a ballet dancer part-time and a landscaper full-time. He just wants to dance.

dents and those, in turn, may believe the quiet students are unfriendly and perhaps slow in their understanding. It is up to the teacher to meld these cultures into a cohesive classroom group; thus the teacher has the responsibility to not only instruct the target language, but also the target culture.

Why do ESOL students act so...foreign?

Newcomers to a United States classroom can be gradually acclimated to this new—and for them—foreign classroom. A typical United States ESOL classroom is one that is open, friendly, and democratic. Students are encouraged to offer their opinions freely, ask questions, and fully participate in the learning process and in decision-making. American students know that their instructors expect them to arrive on time, be prepared for instruction, and to listen carefully when others are speaking. Students from different backgrounds, on the other hand, may be unaccustomed to working with deadlines, punctuality, group work, informal teaching techniques, the instructor's choice of dress, and many other cultural aspects that instructors of American students have never had to address.

Teachers often find that ESOL student behavior can be modified by teaching the procedures of a United States classroom through modeling or incorporating discussion concerning classroom rules into the instruction time. One such set of rules is taken from Helgesen & Brown (1994).

Each culture has different “rules” about how students should act in the classroom. In some countries, students are expected to listen and only the teacher should lecture or talk in class. In English-



Hiroshi's [he-row-she] friend Masahiro [mah-sah-hee-row] doesn't speak English very well. Masahiro is two years younger and hasn't studied English as long. When they are in Angie's class they frequently sit in the back of the classroom and talk to each other in Japanese. Angie wants them to pay attention to the lesson that she is introducing, so she asks them to be quiet. It soon becomes clear that Masahiro is completely lost and does not understand the lesson. The two students begin to converse

in Japanese again, and Angie lets them talk quietly. She observes Hiroshi pointing to the text when they are talking, and she catches several English words related to the lesson in their hushed speech. Masahiro's obvious relief at having this peer tutoring shows on his face. Angie knows that both Hiroshi and Masahiro are learning while they converse. By teaching his friend, Hiroshi is having to carefully think out how to explain the lesson topic and, through this process, is developing a better understanding of it.

Angie assigns pair work to the students and lets the two friends work together. She observes that they both work well together and asks them to speak only in English as they work on the task. After they successfully complete their pair work, the teacher asks the less-proficient Masahiro to read their work. Angie is satisfied because she knows from her informal observation of their performance that Hiroshi and Masahiro's collaboration resulted in a better understanding of the topic for both of them.

speaking countries (and in English class), it is good—and important—to answer the teacher’s questions and to interrupt with questions of your own. It means that you are interested and paying attention. In English, it is your job to ask questions if you don’t understand. (p. 3)

It is important that these rules be reviewed at the beginning of every class period if there appears to be a classroom etiquette problem. Students most likely will not become comfortable with a new way of doing things without a great deal of time spent on the new classroom expectations.

One component of face-to-face communication that can be troublesome for teachers is the interpretation of ESOL students’ body language. Students who are not mumbling to their peers or restless, who appear to be paying close attention, and nod their heads when asked if they understand can still be completely lost in the lesson. When students do not respond beyond a head nod to a question or assigned task, a common strategy to gauge student understanding is to explicitly direct the students to nod or shake their heads as a sign of comprehension, rather than as a sign only that they are listening. Closer proximity to the students and direct eye contact also increase the possibility of interaction. Patience and acceptance of minor cultural differences in a stress-free environment will lead to an improved classroom atmosphere.

Frequently in a transition class, ESOL students have already advanced through the previous levels of ESOL instruction in an American setting and are already aware of the differences between a typical adult education class and those experienced in their native countries. In these situations, teachers should find a simple review of the procedures they use in their class is really all that is necessary. However, in the ESOL classroom it is possible, and probable, that some international students have studied English extensively in their own countries and will quickly be able to move into and out of a transition class. It is up to the instructor to learn the educational and cultural backgrounds of all of the students in order to best serve them.

*"It is hard to hate
someone when you
know their story"*



Jolanta [JO-lahn-tuh] was in Sandy’s class for three years and made steady progress. She began studying at a low intermediate level of fluency, and after lots of hard work she exited the ESOL program into the GED program. In her new class, taught by Alan, he spoke so quickly that she could not easily understand him. Jolanta had been the most proficient student in Sandy’s class. In Alan’s class she had to struggle to keep up with the native English speakers. She found that she often understood the material as well or better than other students, but she had trouble getting that knowledge down on paper. Also, the classroom environment was different. In Sandy’s class, students spent most of their time working with each other and talking. Sandy also made everyone feel comfortable and safe from ridicule. In Alan’s class, students had to listen to him lecturing about math, American history, and other subjects that Jolanta found difficult. She also was self-conscious of her accent, and she was embarrassed when she made errors and the other students laughed at her. After a week of lessons Jolanta came to Sandy and asked if she could return to her ESOL class. Sandy explained that Jolanta could not come back to her class because she had reached the exit level for the ESOL program. Jolanta did not return to the AE program.

Why is the ESOL classroom environment so different?

Observers of ESOL classes regularly notice a different atmosphere in the class than one typically finds in classrooms. A primary task for teachers is to establish and maintain a community of respect, support, appreciation and inclusion. Helping students feel comfortable, relaxed, and knowing that their opinion is valued encourages students to participate fully and reduces the student's vulnerability to embarrassment or other social perils. Language learners often need a somewhat sheltered environment in which they can experiment with language, free from negative criticism, but guided by constructive feedback.



How long have you lived in the USA?

I have lived one and a half years in USA.

What do you like about the town you live in?

This town people very friendly and keep nature.

What do you like about English class?

I memorize English words and I meet different countries. My teacher is a good actor. I understand new words.

—Junko from Japan

The GED practitioner is likely to feel blessed to have an ESOL student in the classroom if the practitioner is receptive to the student's needs. An ESOL student has a lot to offer and will participate as long as there is respect and understanding in the classroom.

What can I do with the ESOL student in my GED class?

Here are ten suggestions that teachers have found helpful for working with non-native English speakers in GED classrooms:

1. **When possible, group students of similar skill levels together in the content-area.** Individual ESOL students may fit into any of these levels. One exception to this rule would be when students are likely to benefit from the extra practice and repetition necessary in the lower-level groups. ESOL students with lower levels of confidence in their English abilities may benefit from teaching material used in lower level groups.
2. **Speak slowly and clearly, repeating often and giving directions in simple, succinct language.** Even native-speaking GED students will misunderstand much of what we say. By enunciating and speaking more



Donna remembers that when she was a new teacher, she had put several hours into preparing and teaching an excellent lesson on how to use the past progressive (e.g. He was going to the store while she was working). Donna lectured for about fifteen minutes while drawing complicated diagrams on the board. Her back was turned to the students as she drew on the white board, so

they could not read her body language. When she turned around, she saw many of the students had a glassy eyed look. She asked several students "Do you understand?" they nodded politely, but she could sense something was wrong. She asked Javier, an extroverted new student, "Do you understand?" and after an extended silence, he responded "What is 'understand?'"

At that moment Donna knew that her best laid plans had just gone astray. The material she prepared, while excellent, was not appropriate for a lower level class.

Upon reflection, Donna now believes that the polite nod she got from the students in her first class could be interpreted as meaning, "I don't understand, but I am too embarrassed to tell you."

deliberately, we provide good speech models for our GED and ESOL students alike. Pause often and separate information into manageable chunks. Question students often for comprehension and repeat information when necessary. When repeating, try to say the same thing, but with different words. This helps students who do not understand the vocabulary contained in a sentence. Avoid cultural references that students may not understand. Some language references may confuse non-native English-speaking students including those from fairy tales, popular music, movies, or television.

3. **Use the board frequently to write out words or phrases that may be unfamiliar to students.** Vocabulary is one of the greatest weaknesses of many of our GED students. Like ESOL students, they may hear words or phrases that are unfamiliar, or see words that they have never encountered in print. By writing these terms on the board, teachers can give them the opportunity to see the words and copy them into their notes. In addition to clarifying verbal misunderstandings, this often helps students with their spelling and reading. Keep one important caveat in mind concerning use of the board: Be aware that ESOL students are less likely to understand spoken English if they cannot see the teacher's face; i.e., with back to the class, teacher speaks to the class while writing on the chalkboard.
4. **Don't overestimate the knowledge and skills of your students.** It is better to underestimate students' knowledge than to present material they may not understand. Begin with basics and watch carefully for indications of comprehension. Many ESOL students are not assertive enough to let their teachers know that they do not understand something, so teachers need to actively question students to gauge their understanding.
5. **Read new material aloud and then allow individual students to read aloud.** Many GED students are poor readers and will benefit from hearing material read aloud by the teacher. ESOL students additionally benefit from this as they can hear the teacher's pronunciation. After the initial reading, allow time for students to clarify meaning. If students are reticent, a teacher may want to ask comprehension questions to check students' level of understanding.
6. **Encourage students to help each other in a friendly, cooperative environment.** Allow students to teach their classmates when possible. ESOL students are often self-conscious about their accents or pronunciation. Teachers can encourage native-speaking classmates to assist them by having several students pronounce a difficult word so the ESOL students can hear the word from a variety of accents and speakers. Ironically, ESOL students often have a better grasp of English grammar than their native-speaking classmates and can teach this aspect of English to native speakers.



A chef since the age of fourteen, King had to leave school after the 6th grade to help support his family. He came to the U.S. from Hong Kong seven years ago with his wife and children. The whole family has recently achieved U.S. citizenship. King has become involved in the local community, and all three of his children are now full-time college students. He is shown here helping to support the local Literacy Council by racing a fish in the Fish Fry's Catfish Races.

For more information on the Tennessee Adult Education listserv, or to subscribe, go to <http://cls.coe.utk.edu/mailman/listinfo/tnae-share>. For online resources including an archive of past messages on the listserv, go to <http://aeonline.coe.utk.edu>.

7. **Ask questions that require individual responses from students.** By addressing questions to individual students, teachers can develop students' ability to express themselves, build confidence, and encourage good speaking habits. Tailor the questions to the abilities of individual students, beginning with one-word responses for basic-level students, and progressing to questions that require elaborate responses for advanced ESOL students.
8. **Encourage students to share their experience and culture in a safe, non-judgmental environment.** One of the great benefits of having ESOL students in the GED classroom is the GED student's opportunity to learn of other cultures first hand. Lessons in language, geography, history, political science, economics, and other subjects may grow naturally out of classroom discussions.
9. **Become culturally aware.** Learn about the cultures of each of your ESOL students and try to become aware of customs that may impact the student's ability to learn and fit into the class. When appropriate, be sensitive to cultural differences and try to avoid offensive gestures, mannerisms, or attitudes. ESOL students may need to be taught local customs or be alerted to inappropriate language or gestures that they may use.
10. **Be sensitive to the difficulties ESOL students often face.** Many ESOL students live difficult lives filled with constant anxiety and stress. They are living in a foreign environment, surrounded by unfamiliar language and customs, and often misunderstand or are misunderstood. GED teachers are often their source of information and help when problems arise. As with GED students, your level of involvement is a matter of choice. A sympathetic ear or a referral to a resource may be all that is necessary to solve a major problem. For more complicated problems, you can find support from colleagues across the state of Tennessee on the Tennessee Adult Education email discussion list.



Bithra was a 12-year old girl in Ethiopia when her country was invaded. Her mother was a teacher and her father was a politician. While Bithra's father was able to escape to the United States of America, the rest of the family was forced to stay behind.

Bithra's mother came down with a respiratory illness that grew progressively worse. She was hospitalized, and with treatment, began to recover. However, a soldier needed a hospital bed, and Bithra's mother

was discharged just as her course of treatment was beginning to take effect. She died soon after her release, and Bithra was left alone in the house with her dead mother. There were no other family members nearby to help. Bithra did not know where to go for help. She left her home and started walking to the next village where she had some distant relatives. They helped her to get to the United States to be reunited with her father. For some time after her arrival, Bithra's father

refused to acknowledge his daughter.

Eventually they reconciled and she entered public school. She entered school well behind the other students in her classes; and even though 15, she was enrolled in the eighth grade. Bithra's lack of English skills held her back in school, and she was unable to graduate at 18; thus, she enrolled in a GED class.

What issues should I expect?

ESOL teachers encounter some common challenges. Irregular attendance and habitual tardiness may be the result of culture-related concepts of time and attitudes toward punctuality. One strategy for modifying student behavior is defining teacher expectations in the first class sessions, and following up with students as the issues arise.

Often a personal or professional change can impact a student's performance or attendance. A family emergency, a change in work shift, or similar problem may result in the student dropping out of the class without notification.

When teaching, the instructor may need to modify his or her normal speech to facilitate student comprehension. Here are some ideas for simple ways to be more understandable:

1. Speak slowly and distinctly. Avoid informal spoken contractions:
 gonna woulja shudda whatcha
 wanna oughta hafta 'em
2. Limit use of idioms, slang, euphemisms, sports terminology, acronyms, cultural references, and other jargon.
3. Pace the class slowly enough to allow time for repetition, practice, vocabulary work, and comprehension checks. A classroom pace that is neither too slow nor too fast will aid the students in retaining the material presented.
4. Monitor both your body language and that of your students to provide and pick up on cues.
5. Use visual aids to convey complicated material or specialized content.
6. Be prepared to explain words and phrases in alternative ways rather than by repeating a definition that students cannot understand.

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When I finished six grade, I very want to continued go to school but my country's school only have six years free. The seven grade need to pay for money. My family is very poor. My mom told me she doesn't have money for me to go back to school. I must go to work...
 Everyday lunch time when I walk in street, I saw a lot of students. I feel very sad. They are so lucky. I wish some day I can go back school again. Right now I have chance to go back school. I feel very happy and lucky. I hope some day I can go to school full day, learn some English. I never feel tired in class.
 —Grace, a student from Hong Kong



Felipe is 28 years old and is originally from Guatemala. Before he came to ESOL classes, he had never attended school of any kind. Felipe confided to his ESOL teacher, "My father never went to school either, but he taught me what little he knew. There is so much I want to learn."

Felipe regularly attends class. He is very appreciative of his English lessons. He thinks that we are all are fortunate to live in a country that provides a public education for everyone.



Cristina is from Mexico. She is shy and quiet, but desperately determined to be a nurse.

Teaching Techniques for Working with ESOL Students

A variety of approaches and methods for teaching ESOL (whole language, competency-based, etc.) have proven effective and often overlap. Based on second language acquisition theories, they involve meaningful interaction and natural communication. ESOL learners need opportunities and purposes for communication that reflect or relate to their lives. Basic skills, such as grammar and sentence structure, should be taught as a means to real communication and integrated into the task at hand, rather than as the instructional focus. Authentic materials (newspapers, brochures, application forms, etc.) and visuals (pictures, realia, gestures, etc.) should be used in the classroom whenever possible.

The ESOL teacher should:

- speak simply and clearly, limiting the use of slang and idioms.
- face the students when speaking.
- give directions in simple, succinct language.
- pause often and separate information into manageable chunks.
- question students often for comprehension.
- repeat information when necessary.
- write unfamiliar words and phrases on the board using print letters.
- don't overload the chalkboard with too much or disorganized text.
- demonstrate tasks before asking your students to respond.



Tom was orphaned at the age of 9 when his village in Sudan was ravaged by religious extremists. They killed individuals who followed different faiths, such as Tom's family. After it was over, Tom started walking away from his village and toward the safety of neighboring Ethiopia. On the road he met other children walking—a few at first, but as they kept walking, the number swelled into the thousands. All were aged 4 to 18. The journey was hard; there were no provisions, and at night they were attacked by wild animals. Since the children were from different villages, they spoke different dialects and could not understand each other.

They arrived in the safety of

Ethiopia, and Tom stayed there for two years. Again extremists threatened his settlement, and he was forced to leave. He went back through Sudan and on to Kenya looking for safety. In Kenya the British settled the children into refugee camps. They received some education there, including instruction in English; but the camps were not safe. Gangs of Kenyans would attack and kill refugees for their meager possessions.

An international relief organization interviewed the children, and 3,500 were brought to the United States of America. All 48 continental states received some of the young refugees. Most were paired with

sponsors to help them learn simple things, including how to use running water and how to use a toilet, how to shop for necessities, and how to find a job. The sponsors taught everything necessary for self-sufficiency.

Tom was lucky. He lives with the American family that he was paired with and is attending a community college. He still worries about his friends from the camps. While he is happy to have found a home in the United States, he still maintains his cultural identity. When he is ready for marriage, he plans to go back to Sudan and buy a wife. He thinks that he can purchase a good wife for ten cows.

Balance variety and routine in classroom activities. Adult ESOL students need structure and organization to learn new skills, but like all learners, their individual learning styles and preferences vary. Provide a variety of opportunities to demonstrate and practice language skills.

Teaching techniques that have proven successful with adult ESOL students include, but are not limited to, the following.

Information Grids or *Interview Questionnaires* provide practice in all the skill areas (listening, speaking, reading, writing) with opportunities for real communication in which all the students interact. By interviewing classmates, they ask specific questions to gather information about the lesson topic. Students first write three or four questions across the top of a grid and the names of the classmates as they are interviewed down the left side of the page. Students circulate around the room asking the questions and writing the responses under the appropriate column. The interview questionnaire can also be an assignment for the students to complete outside the classroom, requiring interaction with native speakers. After a lesson on local government, a questionnaire might include questions such as: What local government offices have you visited? What services did you receive? How do government services here compare with those in your native country? How do you think government services could be improved in this country? Students could compile a grid or design a graph representing classroom responses.

Information Gap activities also provide an opportunity for real communication using all four skills. Students work in pairs, but each partner has different sets of information. They must interact, asking each other questions (without looking at their partner's paper) to acquire the information they don't have in order to complete the task. When finished, partners compare their work to see how well they have communicated. An example would be some text, such as from a newspaper article or brochure, with each student's version having different bits of information missing. They would have to ask each other questions in order to fill in the missing information. Another example would be a map, with different places indicated on each partner's version. They must ask each other directions/locations in order to complete their own maps.

Jigsaw groupings can be used when a large amount of reading material is presented. Each group is assigned one portion of the material to read, discuss and summarize for the whole class. Or each member of the group may be assigned a passage to read and summarize for the other group members.



How long have you lived in the USA?

Three years I live in USA.

What do you like about the town you live in?

I love this city because is peaceful, good street road, big T.V., no crime, nice school system.

What do you like about English class?

I like my teacher because she teach good, friendly, and she don't give hard time to any student. She try to understand all students.

—Jagadish from India



Like all good parents, Guillermina, a single mother from Mexico, wants to ensure a better future for her children. Having escaped an abusive husband, she is now studying to speak English as best she can to prepare herself for a good job.

Students may be provided with a list of questions to be answered as they listen for the summary information.

Role plays give the students opportunities to try out the language they may need in situations where they will have to speak English. Such situations normally involve interacting with a native speaker. Students can take turns with the role of the native speaker, a role that should be marked by command of fluency, accurateness, and appropriateness.

Cloze exercises and dictations improve learners' listening and writing skills and may be used to introduce a topic or reinforce material from a recent lesson. The teacher should read the passage at a normal speaking rate, repeating as many times as necessary. Afterwards, the passage can be put on the board so students may correct their papers and see correct spellings.

Other techniques or activities appropriate for adult ESOL classrooms include field trips; movies; video recordings; student demonstrations of skills or crafts ending with hands-on attempts where possible; and tape recordings of radio news broadcasts, weather reports, songs with discernible lyrics, prerecorded telephone messages, or realistic dialogs.

Games can provide opportunities for language review in a fun, relaxed way. Bingo grids can be filled in with target vocabulary or phrases. Students can help call the games. Pennies can be used as markers.

Concentration games can be made with index cards. Questions and answers, vocabulary, or phrases can be written on the cards. To set up play, lay the cards face down in rows and columns. Students match pairs of cards by remembering their locations.

In the game *Twenty Questions*, one student has a card with a word or phrase from the lesson. The other students ask questions requiring yes/no answers to try to guess the phrase. If they have not guessed it after 20 questions, the student supplies the answer.

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Assessment for Advanced Level Students

Assessment is an integral part of all adult education programs, used both for guidance in instruction, and for accountability and reporting purposes.

ESOL educators will find that their program is measured by standardized testing results. These scores influence:

- Program funding
- The perceived effectiveness of an entire ESOL program
- The perceived effectiveness of instructors in a program

Since these tests have a direct impact on funding and perceived competence, ESOL program supervisors and instructors have found that understanding testing instruments is critical.



Ramona came to the United States when she was first married over twenty years ago. When she and her husband first arrived, they picked oranges and grapes in the California fields. They lived in a small travel trailer for four years, and their first child was born there.

They moved to Tennessee five years ago and opened a Mexican restaurant. Ramona started studying English several months ago and recently told her teacher that she was able to really talk with her customers for the first time. Before English class, her children were embarrassed when she tried to

speak English and would tell her that she shouldn't talk. Now they have stopped saying that!

Two weeks ago Ramona started a lesson on travel, and she decided to apply for a Driver's License. In her more than twenty years of living in the United States, she had never had one. She had been afraid to drive and would often wait up to three or four hours in the fields until someone could come to pick her up. She studied the driving manual in Spanish and moved on to an English driving manual and practice test. When she arrived at the license center, the official tried to convince

her to take the written test in Spanish, but Ramona insisted on taking the test in English. She passed both the written and practical sections of the exam on her first attempt.

Currently, Ramona is intent on passing her citizenship test as soon as possible. Professionally, she is a success; she and her husband now own three Mexican restaurants in three different towns. Personally, Ramona is also a success: She is a proud parent, with one daughter in college and the other children honors students in their local public schools.



Gai is from Sudan and is one of “The Lost Boys.” Despite his harrowing background, he is full of sunshine and hope.

Formal Assessments.

There are a variety of formal assessment instruments used to measure ESOL students. The following section gives basic information about the tests and their purposes.

BEST Plus. Designed specifically for the ESOL student, the Basic English Skills Test Plus (BEST Plus) is a computer-based oral interview with a duration of 2-20 minutes, depending on the English skills of the student. The examiner asks questions about community life, health issues, the weather, family, and other issues that people talk about in everyday life. There is a large pool of questions from which the computer selects, so a student being retested is not likely to encounter the same questions. The examiner evaluates the spoken responses of the student in the areas of listening comprehension, language complexity, and communication. The scores are recorded into the computer by the examiner and automatically tabulated.

Literacy BEST. The paper-based Literacy Skills Test assesses reading and writing skills, and may be administered to a large group in one session.

TABE. The Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) are standardized, timed, multiple choice written tests that measure achievement in basic skills. With three levels of difficulty that include easy, medium, and difficult, these tests were not designed specifically for ESOL students. Higher level ESOL students are tested using the reading section of the exam. It measures critical thinking skills, word meaning inference, and vocabulary using documents that adults encounter in everyday life.

TOEFL. The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is a standardized test of academic English ability required by most institutions of higher learning and may be taken on a computer at private testing centers throughout the state of Tennessee. The most recent version of the TOEFL consists of 150 multiple choice questions in three sections:

- Listening Comprehension
- Structure and Written expression
- Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension

There is also a required essay section that measures the student’s ability to write on a specified topic. The maximum score on the TOEFL is 300, and most colleges require a minimum score for admission of around 166. Competitive colleges will require higher scores, and schools with open admission may require scores as low as 133.

This test is designed specifically for non-native English speakers and is authored by a private company, ETS. The official TOEFL website, www.toefl.org, is an excellent resource for practice materials and test information.

The Citizenship TEST. The process of becoming a citizen of the United States culminates with a test that has both oral and written components. The written section includes 100 fill-in-the-blank questions about the history and government of the U.S. In the oral interview the applicant must be able to talk about present, past, and future events. This test requires a basic level of proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Applicants must be at least 18 year of age. Most applicants must have been legal permanent residents for at least five years to apply for citizenship, but applicants married to U.S. citizens can apply for citizenship after maintaining legal permanent resident status for three years.

Testing Your Advanced Level Students.

Some ESOL students reach the advanced ESOL level by having worked through the lower levels; others enter an ESOL program at the advanced level. These levels are determined by the National Reporting System (NRS) www.oei-tech.com/nrs/ The NRS specifies the reporting requirements of the adult education program and was developed with the assistance of adult educators. The information collected through the NRS assists in assessing program effectiveness to help improve adult education programs and meets the accountability requirements of the federally funded adult education program defined by Title II of the Workforce Investment Act. The U.S. Department of Education uses information from the NRS to meet accountability requirements and to justify federal investment in adult education programs. The NRS has set beginning, intermediate and advanced ESOL levels.

Guidelines for Testing Your Advanced Level Students.

- The ESOL student enters the advanced level class with a base score determined by the BEST Plus.
- The student should be given a post-test approximately 90 calendar days after the previous test. If a student progresses one NRS level, the teacher may



Sinook came to the United States to live with her sister and was accustomed to making herself understood without too much difficulty. While studying English, she became upset after asking a number of students “Could I help you?” The responses she got were strange looks and the words “No” or “No, thank you.” Her feelings were hurt, and she felt other students were thoughtless and uncaring until she finally realized the question she was asking was not what she meant to ask. She wanted help and should have been asking “Could you help me?” rather than “Could I help you?” Changing the question also changed the answer from “No” to “Yes, I’d be glad to.”



How long have you lived in the USA?
I have been living two years in the USA.

What do you like about the town you live in?
I like this town because my family and business are here.

What do you like about English class?
I like speak English and our class teacher teaches good and she is never sad and she take care personally for me. I learn good English because my teacher good.
 —Rasik from India

use her/his discretion concerning additional formal testing. If a student does not progress one level, the teacher should test again approximately 90 calendar days after the previous test.

- If a teacher thinks a student will be leaving the class, the teacher may give another post-test immediately. It is critical to accountability that tests be administered on schedule and/or before a student leaves the class.
- A teacher needs to remember that when administering the test, s/he is placing the student in a “testing” situation, not a “teaching” situation. In other words, don’t assist them with the answers by nodding your head, saying “yes” or “no”, or indicating in any way that their answers are correct or incorrect.

Assessment Information for the Advanced ESOL Class.

Name of Test	Advanced Level Entrance Score	Advanced Level Exit Score
BEST Plus	540	599

Please note: NRS levels and pre- and post- test levels may change in time. You may always contact the Center for Literacy Studies <http://cls.coe.utk.edu> and click on AEonline and then click on ESOL for the latest testing information

Needs Assessment. When advanced ESOL students enter a transition classroom, they often have specific goals in mind. Some may wish to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) which is required for admission to college. Others may wish to enter GED classes, or to learn English for a specific purpose such as becoming a nurse or engineer. Still others may wish to learn material required to pass the citizenship exam. There may also be those who only want to read and write English in order to pursue a field of expertise learned in their country of origin. It is the teacher’s responsibility to discover the student’s needs.

Test-Taking Techniques.

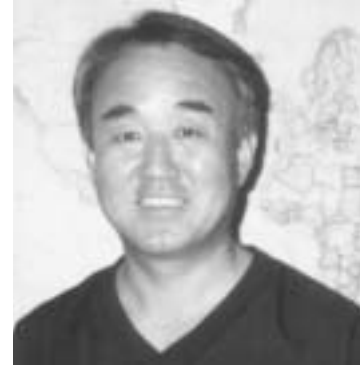
In a transition class, the teacher should address academic skills. Students will need to learn figurative language, use of language in differing contexts, inferences, and analysis of data. ESOL students may also need to learn the system of formal testing used in the U.S. Generally, students who reach the advanced level will be acquainted with the test-taking basics, but they may not know that they must use a Number 2 pencil when completing a fill-in-the bubble form or even how to identify a Number 2 pencil. Also, they may not have

experience in analyzing questions that are deceptively worded. Teaching test-taking skills is often necessary to give students the skill to express the knowledge that they have acquired.

Informal Assessments.

ESOL teachers use a variety of informal assessment tools to evaluate the progress of their students. One key to planning a successful course of instruction is having a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of students. Methods of collecting this data include:

- Reading aloud
- Making oral presentations
- Doing homework
- Doing work on the board
- Playing educational games
- Taking skills check tests
- Performing skits
- Writing in journals
- ...other methods are limited only by the imagination.



Tai Bo is a successful business man who directs his factories in Asia by cell phone connection. His first job at age 16 was digging coal far underground. His parents had refused to buy the jeans he wanted, so he set out to earn them during summer vacation. His friends also wanted jeans. He let each friend borrow the jeans he had earned and wear them for a day at "no charge."

Part 2: Student Learning Activities

I Want Some Practical Lesson Plans!!

What are these lesson plans?

The Tennessee ESOL support practitioners created these lesson plans and taught them to their classes of students preparing to transition out of ESOL. They are designed to be usable by other instructors and will serve as examples of the types of lessons that are effective in transitioning adult ESOL students into other programs.

Are these ESOL lessons?

The lessons are designed to teach academic English within the context of subject material. While the lessons are primarily designed to teach the English language, they teach it through an area of academic content: math, science, social studies, or language arts.

Why aren't the lesson plans only about learning English?

After students reach the High Advanced level of ESOL proficiency, they often know more about grammar than native speakers of English. However, to exit the ESOL program, a student must demonstrate proficiency with academic English on the medium form of the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE-M).



These lessons are designed to teach academic English and to give students exposure to content area instruction. These lessons will help to prepare students for the shift to a general adult basic education classroom.

How will these lessons help students in the adult basic education (ABE) classroom?

By offering these lessons as a bridge, teachers can offer Advanced ESOL students sheltered content area instruction. While learning the content, the students also learn how to be self-sufficient learners. In these lessons, the students are learning how to learn.

Why are the lessons so different?

They were designed by four different teachers. While all might not fit every teacher's teaching style, there is something here for every style of teacher.



TITLE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY:

Current Events, *Social Studies*

Identify the learning plan: Students will be able to read and understand a current event.

What will students do?

Students will read a passage, look up unknown vocabulary, discuss the current event, and write a paragraph relating to the current event.

What will the teacher do?

- Teacher will supply the current event.
- Teacher will read current event to class.
- Teacher will guide students as they read and work through this lesson.

What is the length of the task? One 2-hour class session

Describe in detail the activities used to implement this learning plan.

1. The teacher will choose an appropriate current event, make copies for students, and read to students while they follow along. Students will underline words that are unfamiliar to them and then write them on the board.
2. Students will be divided into groups and each group will be given some words to research. A leader from each group will report back to the class with the definition of the word as it applies to the current event. English-English dictionaries will be used.
3. Students will take turns reading the passage aloud.
4. Finally, students will discuss the passage. The teacher will ask literal and inferential questions. Students will discuss their thoughts about the passage.
5. Students will be asked to write an appropriate response to the passage.

What evidence will you look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?

The instructor will examine students' responses to questions and the written passage. Where there are multiple definitions of a vocabulary word, students will be able to select the correct definition as it relates to the current event.

SUBMITTED BY:
Connie Mayes

COUNTY/PROGRAM:
**Sevier County
Adult Education**

Instructor comments and reflections:

Students become aware of the many meanings of words and the importance of finding the definition that fits the passage. This lesson is different for ESOL students in that the vocabulary becomes very important. It is also an opportunity for them to see that a word may be a noun, verb or adjective, depending on the situation. This is sometimes difficult for ESOL students to understand. An activity such as this affords them a chance to fit the word with the story. An example in the passage for this lesson is that the word “digit” was used to mean finger. For my students it had previously meant only “number.”

I used *USA Today* for this lesson. However, any newspaper or magazine could be used. Care should be taken in selecting a passage that is appropriate for the class. A selection from the *New York Times* might have been too difficult for the class, and we might have spent too much time deciphering meaning, and not enough time working on higher order tasks, like interpretation, analysis, and responding thoughtfully.



TITLE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY:

Reading a Map, *Social Studies*

Identify the Learning Plan: Students will learn English vocabulary, symbols, and directions used on a U.S. route map. They will use this knowledge to plan a trip to a distant city.

What will the teacher do?

The teacher will guide the students as they learn about the vocabulary and symbols on a route map. Chapter 4 of *Maps, Globes, Graphs* published by Steck-Vaughn will be used to study the material.

What is the length of the task? Two 2-hour class sessions

Describe in detail the activities used to implement this learning plan.

1. The teacher will begin the activity by asking students to talk about their experiences traveling in the U.S., how they have used U.S. maps, and some problems they may have encountered reading the maps. How are U.S. maps different or the same as maps in their countries?
2. Students will study chapter four of *Maps, Globes, Graphs* to learn the vocabulary, symbols, and directions.
3. Pairs of students will be given assignments of charting a route to a distant city. They will be asked to identify the following and document their findings on paper. Then they will report to the class.
 - a. How many miles is the city from your town?
 - b. What highways will you take?
 - c. What bypasses will you take?
 - d. What cities will you go through?
 - e. What time zone will you be in? What time zones will you pass through?
 - f. What direction will you go?
 - g. What are some landmarks or scenic areas you will pass?*
 - h. What region of the U.S. will you be in?
 - i. What states will you cross?
 - j. What is the capital of the state you will be in?
 - k. How much gas will it take?
 - l. What are some interesting activities to do in the city you will visit?*
 - m. What is the city famous for?*

*Students could use the Internet or an encyclopedia to find the answers to these questions. City maps may also be found on the Internet.

SUBMITTED BY:
Connie Mayes

COUNTY/PROGRAM:
**Sevier County
Adult Education**

What evidence will you look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?

The documentation and reports to the class will show that students have mastered the ability to use a U.S. map.

Instructor comments and reflections:

Most students already know how to read a map in their own language. The focus on this lesson is to learn the English terminology. Similar lessons could be planned from any of the chapters in this book. A secondary focus is for the students to become familiar with commonly used reference materials.



TITLE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY:

Passing a Bill Through Congress, *Social Studies*

Identify the learning plan: Students will participate in a group exercise to learn about passing a bill through Congress.

What will students do?

- Students will read and discuss the workings of the Constitution.
- They will use the book entitled *Building Strategies: Social Studies* published by Steck-Vaughn. Chapters seventeen (The Constitution), eighteen (The Three Branches of Government), and twenty-one (From Bills to Laws) of this book will be used.
- Students will use the jigsaw cooperative learning method to present the material. Students will then write a bill and simulate passing a bill through Congress.

What will the teacher do?

- The teacher will supply the reading material and guide the students as they study the reading material.
- The teacher will then demonstrate through pictures and text how a bill actually becomes law.
- Finally, the teacher will supervise students as they write a bill and “run it through Congress.”

What is the length of the task? Three 2-hour class sessions

- The first class period is devoted to reading, reporting, and discussing the chapters assigned to each group.
- The second class session is centered on learning how a bill becomes law and writing a law.
- During the third session students will simulate running their bill (or bills) through Congress.

Describe in detail the activities used to implement this learning plan.

Day One: All students will be encouraged to read all the chapters; however, each chapter will be assigned to a group of students to study and report back to the class.

Day Two: Students will become thoroughly familiar with Lesson 21 (From Bills to Laws). Groups of students will work together to write bills.

SUBMITTED BY:
Connie Mayes

COUNTY/PROGRAM:
**Sevier County
Adult Education**

Day Three: Students will simulate passing a bill through Congress. There will be senators, representatives, the bill (a student) and a president.

What evidence will you look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?

The bills will be written evidence, and students will successfully pass the bill through Congress. The teacher will observe the correctness of the process.

Instructor Comments and Reflections:

Teachers will find that their ESOL students are eager to learn about American history. They were motivated by this topic and thoroughly enjoyed this activity.



TITLE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY:

“Rapunzel,” *Language Arts*

Identify the learning plan: Students will read an example from the fairy tale genre and analyze and reinterpret the story.

What will the students do?

Students will:

- read (silently or aloud) a version of the Grimms’ story “Rapunzel.”
- respond to the questions on the story.
- complete a vocabulary exercise on the story.
- create a new ending to the story from the point specified in the question.

What will the teacher do?

The teacher will:

- listen during oral reading and correct pronunciation.
- respond to questions relating to vocabulary.
- pair or group students to work on the questions about the story.
- guide process of response to questions, keeping students on track.
- provide a model for pronunciation when necessary.
- lead discussion of responses to questions when cooperative learning session is completed.

What is the length of the task? One 2-hour class session

Describe in detail the activities used to implement this learning plan.

1. Students need a copy of the story “Rapunzel,” collected by the Brothers Grimm. The edition used by this teacher was: *Tales of the Brothers Grimm*, edited by Clarissa Pinkola Estes, 1999.
2. Teacher needs to prepare papers with the questions and vocabulary exercise on the opposite page.

Note: When preparing the question sheets for students, be sure to leave plenty of space for answers between the questions on the page.

SUBMITTED BY:
Heather Nicely

COUNTY/PROGRAM:
**Kingsport City School
Adult Education**

Rapunzel: A Story from the Grimm Brothers

1. How long was Rapunzel's hair?
2. Describe Rapunzel as a young girl.
3. Why do you think that the old woman put Rapunzel into the tower?
4. How was Rapunzel's hair anchored while the old woman or the prince climbed on it?
5. How did Rapunzel plan to escape from the tower?
6. What *Freudian slip* did Rapunzel make?
7. What happened as a result?
8. What do you think was accomplished for the prince and Rapunzel during the time they were apart?
9. Write a new ending for this story, beginning just before the old woman learns about the prince's visit.

Vocabulary Study

Write a synonym for the underlined word in these sentences:

- She began to look pale and miserable and to pine away.
- You must fetch her some of that rampion.
- “Alas,” he answered, “be merciful to me.”
- She snatched up a pair of shears and cut off the plaits.
- The Prince was beside himself with grief.
- The old woman banished Rapunzel to the wilderness.

3. The teacher will pair or group students and encourage them to work together to find answers to the questions.
4. Each student should then create a new ending to the story.
5. The teacher will lead a class discussion of the responses to the questions, and then a session in which each student can share his/her new story ending.
6. The teacher will prompt discussion of any vocabulary items that were not covered previously.

What evidence will you look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?

- Students are able to respond to the questions on the story.
- Students are able to complete the vocabulary exercise.
- Students ask questions which demonstrate understanding of what they are reading and that they are seeking clearer understanding.
- Students will share their individual “new” endings to the story clearly and in a way that fellow students comprehend.

How will you collect this evidence?

1. Teacher will read the question sheets to see how students responded.
2. Teacher will note the level of comprehension and the grammar in which it was expressed.
3. Teacher will listen/observe during group/pair work and class discussion.

Instructor Comments and Reflections:

ESOL students transitioning into other academic programs will need much more support in vocabulary than the typical American student. ESOL students may well comprehend the general “gist” of a story, but will have a great many questions about specific vocabulary items. Generally, I find it is best if the teacher encourages students to figure out some of the vocabulary during group/pair work using the words in context, and then waits until the end of the class discussion to talk about vocabulary that did not get covered in the context of discussing the questions.

ESOL students should be encouraged to do a great deal of reading of all kinds if they want to pass a standardized exam, like the GED test. Vocabulary development in the context of reading is a great deal more meaningful than trying to memorize lists of vocabulary items.

TITLE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY:

Getting Ready to Do a General Educational Development (GED) Exam Essay, *Language Arts*

Identify the learning plan: Students will regularly practice essay-writing skills.

What will the students do?

Students will:

- write regularly in a journal.
- submit the journal for regular reading and reaction from teacher.
- set a goal of attempting to write more in each consecutive journal entry.

What will the teacher do?

The teacher will:

- provide topics for the students.
- read the journals regularly.
- encourage students to produce more writing.
- provide feedback/correction to students at the student's request.

What is the length of this task? On-going during regular class sessions

Activities Used to Implement This Learning Plan:

1. Students will need a notebook designated solely for their journal entries.
2. At the beginning of each class (or on some other regularly scheduled basis) students will spend 15-20 minutes writing in their journals on the assigned topic.
3. Students will date and give titles to each journal entry.
4. Students will submit the journals to the teacher at a regularly scheduled time.

What evidence will the teacher look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?

The teacher will look regularly at the journals. They should show regular, dated entries. The length and complexity of entries should increase.

How will the evidence be collected?

The teacher will regularly read the entries, evaluate the efforts of the student writer, and give constructive feedback.

SUBMITTED BY:
Heather Nicely

COUNTY/PROGRAM:
**Kingsport City School
Adult Education**

Instructor Comments and Reflections:

For the advanced level student in transition to the regular GED class, eventually the expected five-paragraph, linearly arranged essay form will need to be taught. However, many advanced level students, although fairly fluent in spoken English, are not good performers in writing. Writing cannot be learned by talking about it, only by doing it. This writing does not have to be perfect; but in order to improve, the writing must be done. In other words, the only way to learn to write is to write!

Some students will want the teacher to correct their work. Correction may help, but encourage the student to just produce written language. Let him/her know that the more the student writes, the more comfortable and fluent the writing will become.

When the teacher decides that the time has come to begin to practice the GED essay, allow plenty of time for ESOL students to become used to and comfortable with the traditional five-paragraph format of the American essay. As the teacher, please realize that academic writing is not the same world-wide. Different cultures have different ways of expressing themselves and the type of essay that is expected on the GED exam may be very unfamiliar to the ESOL student. To the student it may seem a very strange, indeed a very foreign, way of expressing oneself. Allow time for the student to develop fluency via the journal writing and time for practicing the expected format of the GED essay.

Practice of the essay format will help students when they transition into an academic program or with another standardized test, such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).



TITLE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY:

Developing Fluency in Written English by Writing a Children’s Book,

Language Arts

Identify the learning plan: Students will illustrate and author a children’s book.

What will the students do?

1. Students will read a total of twelve children’s books to become familiar with the genre they will be expected to duplicate with their own stories.
2. Students will each produce a children’s story in book form.

What will the teacher do?

The teacher will:

- provide books for the students to read. This can be done from private collections or the public library. Enlist the aid of your children’s librarian to select suitable books. Prize-winning titles such as those awarded by Newberry and Caldecott are excellent choices.
- assist students as they read, to make sure they understand the elements of the record sheets they are to keep on each book.
- pair/group students to give peer reviews and discussion of the books they have produced.
- make final corrections of each story and return the story to the student for final production.
- (optional) arrange for students to read their stories in an elementary class, library, or for another group of children.

What is the length of this task?

This is an on-going project on which students can spend a portion of each class session. In class, students are expected to read children’s books, complete reporting sheets on those books, and do peer review of their work. The only thing done outside of class is the rough draft of the story, then the final production of the book. Giving an hour or so per session (in a class that meets twice a week) should allow completion of this project in a month to six weeks.

Activities Used to Implement This Learning Plan:

1. Students will each read twelve children’s books, written for children between the ages of two and eleven.
2. Information on each book will be recorded on the record sheet called “Writing a Children’s Book: Pre-writing Activity.” This sheet will contain

information about all of the books read including: title, author, a one-sentence summary, and a one-sentence review.

3. Record sheets will be turned in to the teacher.
4. Students will write a rough draft of a story of their own. This may be an original story, a folktale from their native country re-told in English, a story from student's childhood told in English, etc. The story must be for children. Students should be sure to understand their purpose for writing, i.e., to entertain, to help children with a problem, to help children learn about something. Students need to keep in mind the age of the children they are writing for.
5. Students need to bring the rough draft to class for peer review. Students will work in pairs or groups to read each other's stories and offer suggestions for changes or improvements.
6. After the peer review is complete, students will turn in stories to teachers for polishing.
7. After the teacher has corrected the story, students will re-copy it in writing or by typing; illustrate it, with drawings or cut out magazine pictures; place it in a cover with the title and author's name.
8. If possible, students will share the story with a child or group of children.

What evidence will teacher look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?

The teacher will check the record sheets to see that students have actually done the pre-writing exercise and have practiced the necessary reading. The teacher will also collect the final storybooks from the students.

How will this evidence be collected?

1. The teacher will read and share (with permission) the stories produced by the students.
2. A display of the student storybooks could be arranged at an adult learning center to share this project with other groups of adult students.

Instructor Comments and Reflections:

There has been much written and said about the use of children's books in adult classes. Children's books of the quality demonstrated by Newberry and Caldecott Award winners transcend age barriers. Good children's books address deeper issues and topics than are often addressed in books directed to adults. Such children's books are often artistically beautiful—a pleasure to peruse. Judicially chosen children's books can enhance the experience of learning a language and certainly, producing such a story by a student is an exercise in understanding, writing, organizing, planning and presenting.

SUBMITTED BY:
Heather Nicely

COUNTY/PROGRAM:
**Kingsport City School
Adult Education**

This project lends itself to students examining examples of the expected “product” and planning and designing their own. It gives extensive practice with vocabulary in context, in a non-threatening, accessible context, and provides an opportunity to produce a finished piece of writing that can be shared. It is concrete evidence of learning and using another language.

Smallwood, Betty Ansin. “Children’s Literature for Adult ESL Literacy.” *ERIC Digest*, November, 1992.



TITLE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY:

Understanding Poetry, *Language Arts*

Identify the learning plan: Students will learn to read, understand, interpret, and appreciate English poetry.

What will the students do?

Students will:

- read two poems by Emily Dickinson.
- discuss and analyze the poet's use of metaphors/similes.
- complete a written exercise on the poems.
- work in pairs/groups to discuss the poems.
- ask questions about new vocabulary items.

What will the teacher do?

The teacher will:

- read the poems aloud and listen as students follow the model and read the poems aloud themselves.
- pair or group students to work on the questions/exercises.
- guide responses to questions during pair/group work to keep students on track.
- lead discussion of questions after group work is completed.

What is the length of the task? One 2-hour class session

Activities used to implement this learning plan:

1. Students will be given copies of the two poems (see following pages).
2. Students will follow along in text as teacher reads the poem (see following pages).
3. Teacher can address vocabulary at this time.
4. In pairs or small groups, students complete the exercise (see following pages).
5. Teacher can bring the class back together after group/pair work and discuss the responses to the questions.
6. Students can share the poems they wrote by reading them aloud.
7. As a final activity, students can again read the Dickinson poems aloud, this time with much greater understanding of their content!

SUBMITTED BY:
Heather Nicely

COUNTY/PROGRAM:
**Kingsport City School
Adult Education**

Poem #628

They called me to the Window, for
“Twas Sunset” — Some one said —
I only saw a Sapphire Farm —
And just a Single Herd —

Of Opal Cattle — feeding far
Upon so vain a Hill —
As even while I looked — dissolved —
Nor Cattle were — nor Soil —

But in their stead — a Sea — displayed —
And Ships — of such a size
As Crew of Mountains — could afford —
And Decks — to seat the skies —

This — too — the Showman rubbed away —
And when I looked again —
Nor Farm — nor Opal Herd — was there —
Nor Mediterranean —

Questions on Poem #628 by Emily Dickinson

1. What time of day is it in this poem?
2. When she looks out the window, what does she see?
3. What happens to what she is looking at?
4. When the scene changes, what can she see?
5. Who is the Showman? Who is he being compared to?
6. What does he do to the second scene she is looking at?
7. What forms the scenes of the Farm, the Opal Herd and the Mediterranean?
8. Poets often compare things that are very different, but have something in common. What is forming the scenes this poet can see in this poem? How are they different and how are they similar?
9. Imagine that you are a child. You are lying on a hillside on a lovely summer day. There are some fluffy big clouds in the blue sky. Write a 4-line poem (it can be free verse or it can rhyme) about what you see.

Poem #986

A narrow Fellow in the Grass
Occasionally rides —
You may have met Him — did you not
His notice sudden is —

The Grass divides as with a Comb —
A spotted shaft is seen —
And then it closes at your feet
And opens further on —

He likes a Boggy Acre
A Floor too cool for Corn —
Yet when a Boy, and Barefoot —
I more than once at Noon
Have passed, I thought, a Whip lash
Unbraiding in the Sun
When stooping to secure it
It wrinkled and was gone —

Several of Nature's people
I know, and they know me —
I feel for them a transport
Of cordiality —

But never met this Fellow
Attended, or alone
Without a tighter breathing
And Zero at the Bone —

Questions on Poem #986 by Emily Dickinson

1. This poem is almost like a riddle. What is a riddle?
2. How does this creature (fellow) move?
3. What is the poet comparing the Grass to? How do you know?
4. In what kind of place does this fellow live?
5. What happened when the speaker was young?
6. How does the poet feel about most animals? What is her name for animals?
7. How does she feel when she meets this creature (fellow)? Why?
8. Why does Miss Dickinson use the phrase "Zero at the bone"?
9. What creature is Emily Dickinson writing about in this poem?
10. Which of our five senses is the poet appealing to in this poem?
11. What animal or creature makes you shiver when you see it? Write a description of how this creature makes you feel and why it makes you feel that way.

What evidence will you look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?

1. Students are able to respond to the questions in the exercise.
2. Students ask questions that demonstrate understanding and a wish for further clarification.
3. Students are able to complete the final question in each exercise in which they create a poem or description of their own.

How will this evidence be collected?

1. The teacher will listen to responses to the questions during class discussion following group/pair work.
2. The teacher will listen and observe during group/pair work.

Instructor Comments and Reflections:

Although poetry is short and often composed of simple lines, it can be very difficult for the ESOL student to understand. When these poems are first read to/by them, more than likely they will look puzzled and have little comprehension beyond some of the vocabulary.

Students will need to be reminded that poets will play with language and very often compare things that seem very different. Upon contemplation and stretching the imagination, one begins to see whatever the poet thinks the items have in common.

Poem #628 is a metaphor: the sunset turns into the various things the clouds seem to form. The Showman (Creator) erases these things from the sky as the sunset fades. The riddle in Poem #986 is that the “narrow fellow” is a snake.

Although there are some comparisons such as metaphors and similes in poetry that teachers expect students to “get,” it is probably a good idea to impart to students that understanding poetry is often a matter of interpretation; different people will understand the same poem in quite different ways, ways that are most likely equal in their legitimacy.

ESOL students may need to be encouraged or possibly pushed to stretch their imaginations to understand the language and images of poetry. Poetry goes beyond literal meanings, so once students grasp those meanings, they often have to stretch to see how the words are being used in the poem. This will be rather unconventional thinking for many ESOL students (and perhaps many of your American GED students!) so be patient with them as you work toward meaning in poetry.

Some Things Every Teacher Should Know About Teaching Math to Adult ESOL Students

- Standardized tests are often not useful in determining what ESOL students actually know about math. ESOL students may score low on these tests because they lack math skills or because they lack English language skills to understand the questions.
- Teachers need to teach *math vocabulary* and *symbols* to ESOL students **first** in order to learn what students know.
- Math is a survival skill. Math literacy should be incorporated into English language instruction from the very beginning. For example, teaching numbers, money values, dates, measurement, and time along with math vocabulary such as addition, subtraction, plus, and minus. As language skills develop, math skills such as estimating, measuring, and analyzing data should be integrated into the instruction. These can be taught within contexts such as shopping, budgeting, and record keeping.
- ESOL students may come from a math tradition that uses commas where we use decimal points and periods where we use commas. For example, \$12,564.32 might be written as \$12.564,32 in their country of origin. The teacher should be sure ESOL students understand this difference and can conform to the U.S. nomenclature to make themselves understood.
- ESOL students may have learned methods for performing basic operations that look quite different from those traditionally used in American schools. For example, an ESOL student's multiplication or subtraction or long division problem may look very different on the page. Thus they may not follow the teacher's explanation when he or she tries to explain a problem using typical American problem constructions and algorithms. If the student is confident in his or her own approach, no other instruction may be needed. However, if the student is having difficulties with basic operations, he or she may need to relearn these skills using techniques more familiar to the teacher. Sometimes ESOL students will want to learn the teacher's method so they can help their own children with math.
- ESOL students may have unique strategies for finding the answers to math problems. Many adults have developed "street math" abilities rather than "school math" methods. If the student's strategy is mathematically sound and will consistently supply a correct answer, he should be encouraged to use it.

- Since most other countries in the world use the metric system, most ESOL students will likely be comfortable with metric measurements but will need to learn and internalize values for U.S. standard measurements. Learning our measurement system takes time, so teachers should offer frequent opportunities for ESOL students to practice.
- Some ESOL students will have little experience performing basic operations with common fractions since their measurement system is metric and thus most contexts call for decimal fractions. Teachers should consider the student's needs and goals in determining how in-depth his or her knowledge of fractions needs to be. Most real-life activities in the U.S. (and most problems on the GED test) require use of fractions as ratios, i.e. $1/2$ of something or $4/5$ of something. Seldom do we actually need to find common denominators to add or subtract fractions.
- Using math in real life is seldom a private activity but most often occurs as part of interaction between people. Math learning is also best achieved as a collaborative activity. Allowing students to work together to solve math problems is non-threatening and permits students to share knowledge.
- ESOL students learn best when skills are taught within a real-life context. Teachers should try to create real-life or work-related contexts or reasons for using a particular math skill as part of an overall math and language lesson. As much as possible, students should be allowed to discover solutions using their own strategies.
- ESOL students should be encouraged to verbalize or write about their math processes. This will strengthen their language and their critical thinking skills.

Resources:

Ciancone, Tom. "Numeracy in the Adult ESL Classroom." *ERIC Digest*, Feb. 1996.

Ebanks, Zanna. "Doing Math the Latin American Way." *Field Notes by and for the Massachusetts Adult Education Community*. Fall, 2001. Vol. 11, No. 2.

Leonelli, Esther D. "Teaching to the Math Standards with Adult Learners." *Focus on Basics*. Sept. 1999. Vol. 3, Issue C.

Prehn, Peter. "A Math Glossary of Terms for Basic Skills Students to Help with Story Problems for the GED Test."

<http://www.contemposcribe.com/abe/mathglossaryofterms.html>

TITLE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY:

Solving Math Word Problems, *Mathematics*

Identify the Learning Activity: Use Math to Solve Problems and Communicate

What will students do?

Students will learn English vocabulary and symbols associated with mathematics problems. They will learn to read word problems and recognize clue words that suggest what operations are called for to solve the problems. They will practice their skills in solving addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division word problems dealing with whole numbers, fractions, and percents.

What will teachers do?

The teacher will guide the activity, exploring the depth of students' knowledge by examining their ability to:

- read the problem.
- choose the appropriate operation and data to construct the problem.
- do the computation necessary to solve the problem.

The teacher will assist students as needed by helping them:

- understand vocabulary.
- identify clue words.
- check their ability to compute the problems they construct.
- go over the procedures for solving problems if students need review of skills.

What is the length of the task? Two 2-hour class sessions

Describe in detail the activities used to implement this learning activity:

The teacher will introduce the activity by encouraging students to talk about how they use math in their daily lives and how using math in an English environment might be different from using math in their native lands. She will encourage students to talk about any problems they may have that involve math and any shortcomings they may feel they have in their math skills and their abilities to cope with math in English. She will lead them into the planned activity by suggesting that although they may feel very comfortable with math in their own languages, it is necessary to understand the English vocabulary associated with math in order to successfully use math in an English setting. She will suggest that they explore English math word problems as a way to learn more about the vocabulary of math.

SUBMITTED BY:
Suzanne Elston

COUNTY/PROGRAM:
**Bradley County
Adult Education**

The teacher will give students a worksheet that has several word problems that call for addition with whole numbers. She will read the first problem aloud and check for comprehension. She will ask students if they can identify the operation needed to solve the problem and if they can select the data needed to set up the problem for computation. She will allow the students to work the problem at their desks. Then she will check students' work for correct answers and will note if some students' problem set-ups differ from traditional set-up taught in this country. She will make sure that students are able to arrive at correct answers using their method, but will not expect them to adopt a different method if theirs works. The answer, however, must be written in acceptable English form (e.g. decimals must be written as decimals and not as commas and vice versa.) The teacher should remember when demonstrating problem solving on the board that not all students will use an identical set-up or method. She may want to allow students to demonstrate their own methods of set-up and computation. The teacher will ask students for math vocabulary associated with addition and will write it on the board. As students do several word problems, they will look for different clue words associated with addition, and the teacher will write these words on the board. The teacher will mention these and write other clue words for addition so that students can create a comprehensive list.

The teacher will supply worksheets on subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, and percents, and will follow the above procedure for exploring these operations and associated vocabulary. The teacher will note throughout the activity if any students have not mastered a particular math skill, and she will plan for future lessons based on these needs.

Suggested vocabulary list:

Addition: plus (+), equals (=), add, total, sum, carry, regroup, rename, in all, altogether

Subtraction: minus (-), take away, subtract, borrow, less, more, difference, increase, decrease, farther, smaller, larger, or other *-er* words that compare things such as taller, older, longer, or wider

Multiplication: times (x), total, in all, altogether. Multiplication word clues are often the same as addition; if you are asked to find the total of *different* numbers, *add*; if you need to find the total of the *same* number many times, *multiply*.

Division: $4 \div 2$, four divided by two, $2 \overline{)4}$, two goes into four, divide each.

What evidence will you look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?

Learners will be able to solve problems on worksheets and will be able to use their newly acquired vocabulary to discuss and solve mathematical situations in their

lives. Students will, with practice, be able to solve word problems more rapidly and make higher scores on standardized tests.

How will you collect this evidence?

Student worksheets, observation of competence in classroom work, observation of greater comfort in discussion of mathematical scenarios, increased scores on standardized tests.

Instructor comments and reflections:

The New Readers Press Breakthrough to Math series complemented this lesson nicely. The vocabulary is not too difficult for ESOL students and the arrangement of problems on the page is not crowded.



TITLE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY:

Understanding Risk Ratios, Part One of two in a unit, *Mathematics*

Identify the learning activity: Students will learn to interpret statistics and assess risk.

What will students do?

Students will read about health and safety risks and will gain an understanding of what mathematical risk ratios mean. They will learn to rank these risks in order from greatest to least risk and will represent their results on a chart.

What will teachers do?

The teacher will:

- act as facilitator throughout the activity, helping students to set their own goals for learning.
- guide students as they design a learning activity and create a rubric to assess their work.
- introduce the concept of risk as a mathematical ratio and help students explore their understanding of this concept.
- organize and assist students as they carry out the cooperative activity of creating a chart and using their rubric to assess their work.
- lead discussion to help students explore how their learning might transfer into real-life activities and also to help them plan for future activities to address other topics of concern.

What is the length of the task? Two 2-hour class sessions

Describe in detail the activities used to implement this learning plan.

Students will practice several skills as part of this activity:

1. Determine individual learner and shared learned goals: The students will set goals for themselves that will enable us to set class goals and design learning activities to benefit the class as a whole. They will use the “Things I want to be able to do...” worksheet for this purpose. The students will share their answers to the goal surveys. Using these survey responses and previous test results, we will agree to focus on math and the Common Activity of Gathering, Analyzing, and Using Information. [Refer to the location of the “Things I want to be able to do” worksheet]
2. Design a learning activity: The students and teacher will focus this activity on learning about mathematical risk ratios and how understanding this mathematical concept can help them make choices in their lives. They will read an article about some common health and safety concerns and the actual risk factors of those concerns. [refer to location of article] They will discuss the mathematical risk data supplied in the article.
3. Develop a plan to capture evidence of learning: The students will discuss how they might present data in a clear, readable format that will make it easy for a reader to understand the relative risk of different concerns. They will plan to create a chart that ranks these

SUBMITTED BY:
Suzanne Elston

COUNTY/PROGRAM:
**Bradley County
Adult Education**

risks, and they will discuss what this chart should look like. They will create a system (sometimes called a rubric) for evaluating the charts they will create for this and future similar activities.

4. The students will listen as the teacher introduces the topic of Risk and how it relates to the unit being covered. The class will:
 - examine several risk ratios the teacher will present to the class (such as risk of death by shark attack).
 - discuss the meanings of such mathematical ratios as “1 out of 8,” “1 in 200,” “1 out of 6 million,” etc., and how significant they perceive such risks to be in their personal lives.
 - discuss different formats for presenting risks, such as ratios and percents.
 - read an abridged newspaper article, examining the subject of risks and our responses to perceived risks.
 - discuss the effect that news media and public perception have on our fear of certain health and safety concerns and how these fears may affect our behavior.
 - examine a prepared list [refer to location of list] of twelve health and safety risks taken from the original article, including statistics for “risk of injury and illness” and “risk of death.”

The students will work with a partner to create a chart on newsprint that ranks these twelve risks from greatest to least, based on “risk of illness/injury.” They will examine their own chart and those of their classmates for clarity and correctness, and they will use ideas from this examination to create a second chart, ranking the twelve concerns according to “risk of death.”

What evidence will you look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?

Students will evaluate their own work using the framework established before beginning the lesson. The teacher will evaluate student understanding based on the accuracy of the students’ ordering of risks.

Instructor comments and reflections:

This lesson worked well. The students seemed comfortable with their understanding of the risk ratio choices I gave them, and the students were able to place these in order from greatest to least risk and did not seem to have too much trouble understanding that the big numbers—say, 1 in 6 million—actually represented a smaller risk than the smaller numbers—say 1 in 600.

The students’ evaluation of their charts and the rubric-creating exercise was instructive for both the students and teacher. We were able to discuss what we thought the result should look like, and we were able to create a set of guidelines to help them evaluate their work in the future. This experience should be helpful as they are asked to evaluate the effectiveness of future lessons.

Things I want to be able to do...

Work	Family
Community	Self

Never Bitten, Twice Shy: The Real Dangers of Summer

August is the peak of the summer vacation season. It is a time for rest, relaxation, and – risking our lives. When the weather is warm and Americans have more free time, they often do things that increase the chances that they will be seriously injured. But are we afraid of the right things?

When Americans are asked about “risk,” they usually talk about statistical probability — the chances that something bad will happen. But when we think about specific threats, we often forget logic and let our fears control us. We fear things that are not likely to happen, and we forget about more common things that are really dangerous.

For example, we are more worried about things that may hurt children than things that may hurt adults. Dangers that are man-made, like radiation from a nuclear plant, are more frightening than natural dangers, like radiation from the sun. And things that may hurt us in a terrible, gruesome way, like a shark attack, are more frightening than something far more common that kills people every day in a less horrible way, like a heart attack.

The way we feel about how dangerous things are even affects the judgment of the people who bring us the news. Between Memorial Day and Labor Day last year, major American newspapers

ran 2,240 articles about West Nile Virus, a disease which kills fewer than 300 Americans a year. But these newspapers ran only 257 articles about food poisoning, which kills more than 5,000 Americans each year.

Our fear of danger helps us survive. But sometimes this fear causes us to act in ways that can be dangerous to our health and safety. It may feel safe to walk outside in the sunshine for a few hours without sunscreen, but it’s not. Some people may feel safer to stay out of the woods so they won’t get West Nile Virus or Lyme Disease. But actually, the exercise they would get from that walk in the woods is probably better for their hearts and their health than the risk of getting either of those rare diseases. Sometimes Americans want the government to protect us from rare diseases that we fear a lot, even though they are only small risks. But the attention and money we spend on those small risks may make us forget the even bigger risks that we can really do something about. For example, we can do a lot to prevent heart disease and stroke, simply by getting more exercise and avoiding tobacco. So relax and enjoy your summer, but stay safe!

This story is adapted from an article by David Ropeik and Nigel Holmes. Published in *The New York Times* on August 9, 2003.

Risk Statistics

Fireworks

Injury/Illness 1 in 32,400
Death 1 in 71.2 million

Lawn Mowers

Injury/Illness 1 in 5,300
Death no fatalities

Lyme Disease

Injury/Illness 1 in 18,100
Death no record of fatalities

Skin Cancer

Injury/Illness 1 in 200
Death 1 in 29,500

Children falling out of windows

Injury/Illness 1 in 12,800
Death 1 in 2.4 million

Amusement Parks

Injury/Illness 1 in 34,800
Death 1 in 72.3 million

Food Poisoning

Injury/Illness 1 in 800
Death 1 in 55,600

Snake Bites

Injury/Illness 1 in 41,300
Death 1 in 19.3 million

Shark Attack

Injury/Illness 1 in 6 million
Death 1 in 578 million

West Nile Virus

Injury/Illness 1 in 68,500
Death 1 in 1 million

Drowning (while boating)

Injury/Illness 1 in 64,500
Death 1 in 400,900

Bicycles

Injury/Illness 1 in 1,700
Death 1 in 55,600

Roperk, David, "Never Bitten, Twice Shy: The Real Dangers of Summer,"
The New York Times, Saturday Edition, August 9, 2003.

TITLE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY:

Evaluating Your Personal Risk,

Part Two of two in a unit, *Mathematics*

Identify the learning activity: This learning activity is designed as a cooperative learning activity, with students participating in the planning and assessment of the activity.

What will students do?

Students will read selected articles about health/safety/life concerns they have previously expressed and will extract statistical data from the reading to help them formulate their personal risk in terms of ratios and percents. They will practice interpreting these ratios as percents using manipulatives and will represent the results of their research on a chart.

What will teachers do?

The teacher will:

- review the students' personal risk lists from the previous "Understanding Risk Ratios, Part One" of two lessons in a unit, Mathematics.
- select several common interests to research, trying to include at least one concern from each student's list.
- research these selected concerns ahead of time using the Internet and copy relevant articles and fact sheets from reliable sources. See sidebar for examples of topics to research and reliable sources of information.
- use discretion in selecting articles for readability and clarity of data.
- provide student copies of these articles for classroom use.
- provide 100 grid paper and manipulative markers for each student, as well as a worksheet to provide classroom practice in manipulating data formats from ratios to fractions to percents.
- guide the students through all activities and assist in their understanding as needed, but encourage student interaction and knowledge sharing as the primary means of learning.
- organize and assist students as they carry out the cooperative activity of creating a chart and using their class-designed rubric to assess their work.
- lead discussion to help students explore how their new knowledge may have changed their concerns and may transfer into real-life decision-making and behavior changes.

What is the length of the task? Depending on the students, two or three 2-hour class sessions

I researched these subjects through the Internet and selected nine topics that I felt my class could read and understand well enough to extract data, trying to limit these articles to one page or less.

Topics Selected for Reading Research

- Alzheimer's Disease
- Breast Cancer
- Varicose Veins
- Diabetes
- Stroke
- Lightning
- Coronary Heart Disease
- Unemployment
- Loss of Hearing

Some websites I used:

- www.diabetes.org/info/diabetesinfo.jsp
- www.worlded.org/us/health/docs
- www.alzheimersconcern.com
- www.data.bls.gov
- www.crh.noaa.gov
- www.quickfacts.census.gov
- www.familydoctor.org
- www.fda.gov

SUBMITTED BY:
Suzanne Elston

COUNTY/PROGRAM:
**Bradley County
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Describe in detail the activities used to implement this learning activity.

1. Students will determine individual learner and shared learned goals. The students will set goals for themselves that will enable us to set class goals and design learning activities to benefit the class as a whole. They will use the “Things I want to be able to do...” worksheet (page 48) for this purpose. The students will share their answers to the goal surveys. Using these survey responses and previous test results, we will agree to focus on math and the Common Activity of Gathering, Analyzing, and Using Information.
2. The students will demonstrate understanding by extracting data from reading material, converting data from differing formats into a common format (such as changing a "1 in 8 affected" to "approximately 12% affected"), and by creating a chart to represent their findings. They will evaluate their work using their previously designed rubric for chart evaluation.
3. The students will :
 - read unabridged English articles or fact sheets that the teacher has taken from reliable Internet sources that address their health/safety/life concerns.
 - use dictionaries as needed to help them understand the reading.

As a group, the class will:

- discuss each article and work to extract meaningful risk data about the subjects.
 - collect this data on the board and on paper.
 - examine the different formats that risk data may assume. For example, a woman’s risk of breast cancer might be stated as “1 in 8 women will develop breast cancer in their lifetime,” or it might be stated as “12% of women will develop breast cancer in their lifetime.”
 - discuss different approaches to converting ratios to fractions to percents.
4. To make sure students fully understand the relationship between ratios or fractions and percents, the teacher will lead an activity in which students will use 100 grid paper and various manipulative markers such as two different colored paper squares, beans, or candies. The students will be encouraged to use these markers to demonstrate the concepts of “1 in 8” (one red bean and 7 white beans) or “1 out of 10” (1 red paper square and 9 green paper squares). Then the students can build on that concept by filling in the complete 100-space grid with this ratio to demonstrate the equivalent (approximate) percent relationship. The students will practice manipulating data from one format to another by completing a worksheet supplied by the teacher. When students are comfortable with translating from ratios to fractions to percents, they will use this knowledge to complete the research activity. They will work in small groups to format, organize, and represent their

findings in an easily readable chart that will communicate information about their personal concerns.

5. Evaluate and reflect on learning: The students will evaluate what they have learned about their real-life health/safety/life concerns and will acknowledge their personal risk and responsibilities. They will discuss how they might make decisions or change their behavior based on what they have learned.
6. Determine next steps to meet learner goals: The teacher will ask the students to continue to reflect on their new-found knowledge about these risks and be ready to select their greatest concern at the next class session.

What evidence will you look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?

Students will evaluate their own work using the framework established before beginning the lesson. The teacher will evaluate student understanding based on the accuracy of the students' ordering of risks and conversion of ratios to percents.

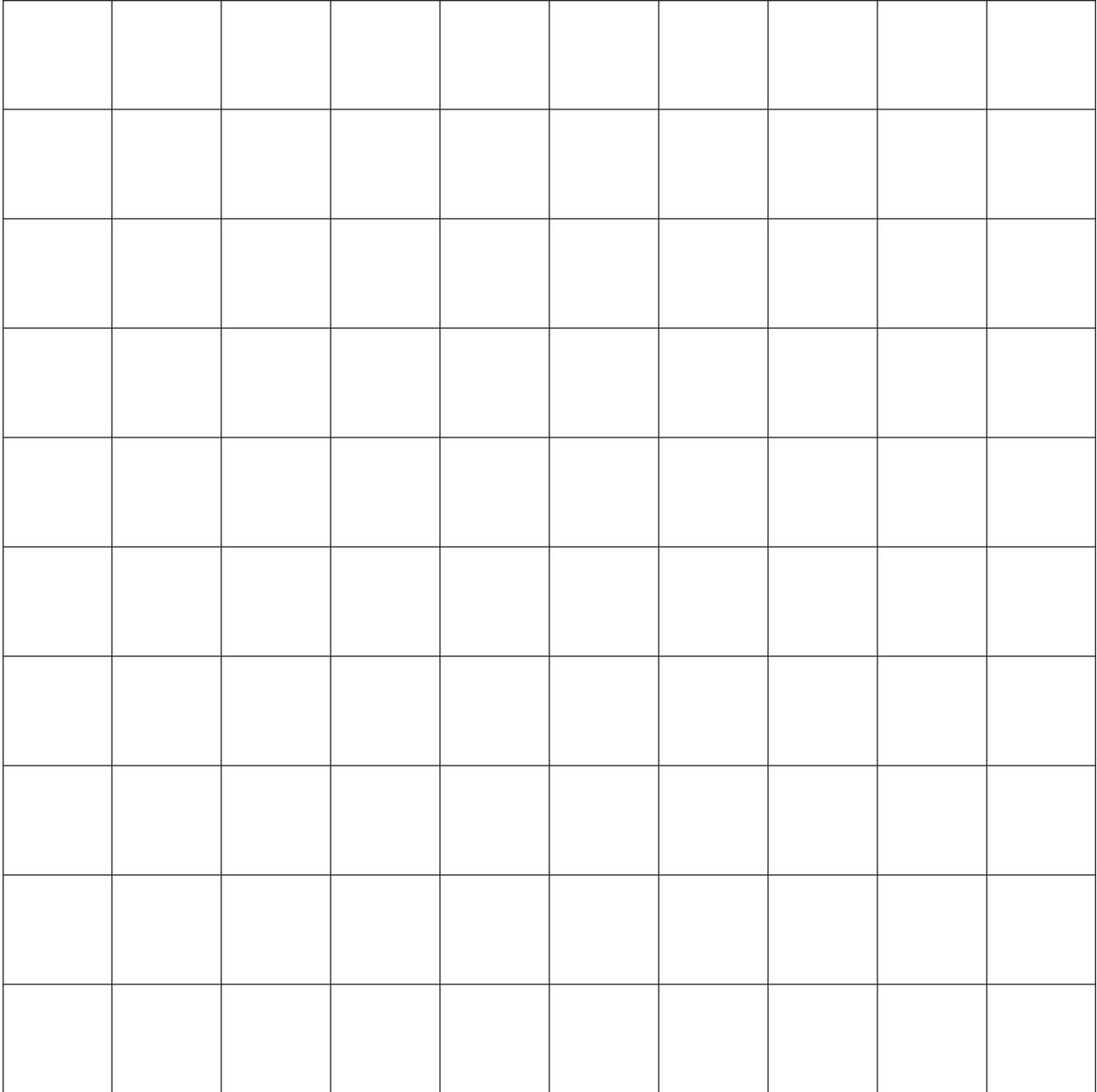
Instructor comments and reflections:

I expected the first part of this lesson to be the most challenging since the students were expected to read various materials in English and extract specific data. The students did not need to try to understand every word of the reading, but rather to briefly read over the materials and find the data they needed. Surprisingly, they seemed to accomplish this with little trouble, perhaps because their purpose for reading was clear.

Our data came in a variety of formats: There is a 32% chance that a woman will develop varicose veins in her lifetime, but a 1 in 8 chance that she will develop breast cancer. One in 10 people over 65 have Alzheimer's Disease, and 1 in 4 over 65 have hearing loss. The prevalence of diabetes in the United States is 6.2% across all cultures, but it affects 1 in 6 people of Hispanic/Latino background.

I wanted to make sure that my students understood the difference between 6% and 1 in 6, so I asked if anyone could change 1 in 6 to a percent. I noticed a lot of furrowed brows and busy pencils, but one student almost immediately raised his hand and volunteered the answer, "about 17%." I asked him how he had arrived at this answer so quickly, and he demonstrated by drawing a pie on the board and dividing it into 6 parts. He explained that he knew if the parts were each 15, the pie would total 90, so 15% was not large enough. He knew he could add 1 to each pie piece to make 16, but the total would still be only 96, so he knew the answer had to be more than 16, closer to 17%. All this in just a few seconds! The point is that many of our ESOL students (and AE students as well!) have unique methods or strategies for arriving at a mathematical solution. When I encounter a unique method, I encourage the student to explain how he or she arrived at the answer. If the strategy is mathematically sound and will consistently work, I do not try to change it. Often these inventive students have numeracy skills that equal the book-taught skills we learned in school. I may share with my students the algorithm I was taught to arrive at an answer, and I often find that these students quickly understand those concepts. But, since the GED test (and real life) emphasizes the use of mental math and estimating skills, we should encourage our students to use them whenever they can.

100 grid paper for easy copying



NAME _____ DATE _____

Fill in the blank in the chart. Show how you got your answers.

RATIO	FRACTION	PERCENT
1 in 2	$\frac{1}{2}$	50%
1 in 5		
		10%
1 out of 4		
	$\frac{1}{8}$	
3 out of 4		
		60%
	$\frac{4}{5}$	
7 in 10		
	$\frac{1}{3}$	
3 out of 5		

TITLE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY:

How Tall Are You? *Mathematics*

Identify the Learning Plan: Students will practice understanding, using, and converting U.S. units of measure.

What will students do?

Students will:

- learn vocabulary of the U.S. measurement system and will learn the relationships between the different units of measurement.
- practice using U.S. measurement tools.
- complete practice worksheets.

What will the teacher do?

The teacher will:

- introduce the topic of measurement and will elicit discussion about U.S. customary measurement system.
- provide student handouts of U.S. measurement system.
- provide measurement instruments for students to practice measuring (e.g. rulers, yardsticks, tape measures, weight scales, measuring cups, thermometers).
- guide students in practicing measurements.

What is the length of the task?

One 2-hour class session, but may be revisited periodically to help students internalize U.S. measurement system.

Describe in detail the activities used to implement this learning activity.

The teacher will introduce the topic of measurement by asking students if they know how tall they are in feet and inches or how much they weigh in pounds. Teacher will ask how many know these answers in metric measurements.

The teacher will ask students if they can name examples of when they need to know these as “U.S. standard” measurements. Some examples include:

- height and weight for a driver’s license or medical records
- body measurements for clothing sizes
- room measurements for redecorating or purchasing furniture
- weight measurements for purchasing food
- volume measurements for purchasing food or fuel
- volume measurements for following recipes

- U.S. standard tools and mechanical fittings
- weather reports

The students will discuss the U.S. measurement system including length, weight, volume, and temperature. The teacher will write equivalents on the board. For example, 1 inch is 2.54 centimeters, and there are 2.2 pounds in 1 kilogram. If the teacher or students are unsure of how to convert units, an almanac is a definitive source of this information.

The teacher will provide measurement instruments and items for students to practice measuring. The teacher will explain the breakdown of feet into inches and inches into fractional pieces. The students will work in small groups to explore the different measuring tools. They will measure themselves to determine their height in feet and inches and their weight in pounds.

The teacher will provide appropriate worksheets that offer practice in using U.S. measurements. The teacher will assist students as needed and will check their work to see where further instruction and practice are needed.

What evidence are you going to look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?

Students' ability to measure and communicate the measurements of various items. Students' ability to complete practice worksheets.

How are you going to collect this evidence?

- Observation of students' ability to measure and communicate their results.
- Completed worksheets.

Required resources:

Any good pre-GED Math book with U.S. (standard or customary) measurement tables and practice exercises in using appropriate units of measurement.

Instructor comments and reflections:

Since most ESOL students come from cultures that use the metric system, they will need lots of practice to learn and feel comfortable with our U.S. measurement system. The good news is that most of them are already quite comfortable with metrics and will learn our system by comparing it to the metric measurements they already know. The teacher should keep in mind that we take years of life experience to develop a sense of measurement, and the ESOL student will not internalize these measurements overnight. After all, how many Americans have a really good sense of how tall they are in centimeters or how many miles their car can go on a liter of gas?

SUBMITTED BY:
Suzanne Elston

COUNTY/PROGRAM:
**Bradley County
Adult Education**

A word about fractions and the ESOL student: Consider that most of the times we use fractions in our daily lives have to do with measurement (fractions of cups for cooking, fractions of inches in length measurements). And since most other cultures use the metric system, they will be more accustomed to using decimals rather than fractions. For this reason, many ESOL students will have little or no experience adding, subtracting, multiplying, or dividing fractions. Learning observable, practical fractions on a measuring cup or ruler may be the best approach to teaching fraction concepts.



TITLE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY:

Molecules, Science

Identify the Learning Activity: This is the first lesson in a series of four lessons designed to introduce chemistry.

What will the students do?

The students will first read the chapter “The Conservation of Matter” in Steck Vaughn *Building Strategies: Science* and answer the questions in that chapter. Next, the class will discuss any unknown vocabulary words and ideas. The students will use gumdrops and toothpicks to create the water molecule H₂O.

What will teachers do?

The teacher will provide the chapter from the book Steck Vaughn *Building Strategies: Science*. The teacher will guide the students’ reading and discussion about molecules. The teacher will provide all materials for the students to build their water molecule models, as well as specific instructions on what is expected.

What is the length of task? One 2-hour class session

Describe in detail the activities used to implement this learning plan:

The teacher will introduce the activity with a discussion of terms: What are molecules? Atoms? Elements? Compounds? These definitions will be written on the board. With each definition it is important to give examples of each. Then ask the class what is H₂O? What does this symbolize? What does each symbol mean?

Next, the class will read pages 104-106 in *Building Strategies: Science*. This chapter is titled “The Conservation of Matter.” It is important to discuss the questions and answers at the end of the chapter and to discuss all unfamiliar vocabulary. Important vocabulary to emphasize is: Law of Conservation of Matter, chemical reaction, decomposition, break down, corrosion, and universe.

The students will then use gumdrops to build a water molecule model. Each student will receive a large red gumdrop, two small blue gumdrops, and toothpicks. Explain that everything is composed of extremely small atoms. When atoms come together they form molecules. Water, also called H₂O, is made up of three atoms: two hydrogen (H) atoms and one oxygen (O) atom. Students will build a water molecule model with one oxygen atom (red gumdrops) and two hydrogen atoms (blue gumdrops) and toothpicks. Discuss the similarities and differences of each of the models. Is there a correct or incorrect structure?

Note: Many ESOL students have a basic knowledge of chemistry from schooling in their native countries. So in teaching chemistry, as in all subjects, it is essential to emphasize vocabulary and reading comprehension. In a regular GED class the teacher often teaches the concept. In a transition class the concept is often already understood, so the emphasis is on the words.

SUBMITTED BY:
Diane Cohn

COUNTY/PROGRAM:
**Williamson County
Adult Education**

Next, the teacher will direct the students to express the chemical equations using gumdrops; then the teacher will ask the students how decomposition would impact their model.



Ca is represented with red gumdrops and CO is blue gumdrops.

Ca = calcium carbonate or limestone, CO = calcium oxide or lime

2. Create the chemical equation of corrosion from the article by using gumdrops:



Fe is red gumdrops and oxygen is blue gumdrops.

Fe = iron, O = oxygen gas, Fe_2O_3 = iron oxide

3. Can the students create other molecule structures and equations?

What evidence will you look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?

Students will understand and be able to discuss the article “The Conservation of Matter.” They will also be able to demonstrate learning by creating a molecule structure by using gumdrops and toothpicks. They will then be able to expand upon this knowledge of a basic molecule and create other molecule structures.

How will you collect this evidence?

The teacher can collect the answers to the questions at the end of the chapter. Pictures can also be taken of the students with their molecule structures.

Instructor Comments and Reflections:

I taught this lesson to a class which included a physician, two engineers, and a pharmacist. This activity was elementary for them. At the same time, maybe one fourth of the class never finished high school, so it was an informative and fun activity to do. The higher level students felt comfortable informing the class of the correct way to create the structure, and the rest of the class felt comfortable making mistakes and laughing about them. Most importantly, this activity allowed for a tactile way to learn about an important basic concept of chemistry.

Resource: www.miamisci.org/ph/hexcite1.html

TITLE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY:

Atoms, Science

Identify the Learning activity: This lesson is the second in a series of lessons to introduce chemistry. This lesson focuses on the structure of an atom.

What will the students do?

The students will read the chapter “Matter All Around” and answer the questions. The class will then discuss any unknown vocabulary and ideas. Next, the students will use gumdrops to create an atomic model. Finally, they will compare and contrast the individual models and discuss the correctness of their structures.

What will the teacher do?

The teacher will provide the chapter from the book *Building Strategies: Science*. The teacher will guide the students’ reading and discussion about atoms. The teacher will provide all materials for the students to build the atomic models, as well as specific instructions on what is expected.

What is the length of task? One 2-hour class session

Describe in detail the activities used to implement this learning plan:

The teacher will introduce the lesson with a discussion of vocabulary terms: atom, nucleus, proton, neutron, ionic, and electron. The words and definitions will be written on the board. It is important to provide examples with each definition.

The class will pages 94-97 in Steck-Vaughn *Building Strategies: Science*. This chapter is titled “Matter All Around.” It is important to read and discuss the questions at the end of the chapter. It is even more important to discuss any unknown vocabulary words or ideas after the reading.

Ask the question “What does an ionic atom look like?” Students will use gumdrops to build an atomic model. Each student will receive four large red gumdrops, three large green gumdrops, three small blue gumdrops, toothpicks, skewers, and small sticker dots. Students will make particle labels by drawing a “+” on three stickers, a “O” on four stickers, and a “-” on three stickers. Next the students will place +’s on the three large green gumdrops (protons), O’s on the four large red gumdrops (neutrons), and -’s on the three small blue gumdrops (electrons). Explain that “+” means positive charge, “O” means no charge, and “-” means negative charge.

Note: One of the differences between this transition lesson and a regular GED lesson is the emphasis on vocabulary. It is essential to introduce the reading and vocabulary first, before discussing the concept involved. This lets the students decode the material and internalize it so that they are much more likely to understand what they’re learning.

SUBMITTED BY:
Diane Cohn

COUNTY/PROGRAM:
**Williamson County
Adult Education**

Students will then combine protons and neutrons into one cluster, the nucleus. Ask what charge the nucleus has by itself (positive) and discuss why. Students must place each electron on one end of a skewer, and then stick the other end of the skewer in the nucleus; the atom is complete.

Next ask what charge the whole atom has (*none*) and discuss why. Students must then remove one electron from the atom. Ask what charge the atom would have if one electron were left (*-1*) and discuss why.

Evidence of Learning:

Students will be able to discuss what happens when changes in the atoms take place. Students will be able to discuss and understand the chapter “Matter All Around.” The students will be able to create the atomic model of a Lithium atom by using gumdrops and toothpicks. The students should be able to create other models of elements with the teacher providing the symbols.

Instructor Reflections:

This activity was a little difficult for half of the class. Even with all of the discussion, there was still confusion about protons and neutrons. More review of the terms and their functions was needed. But, it was a fun activity to do. Again, it provided hands-on learning and lots of discussion and laughter.

Resource: www.miami/sci.org/ph/hexcite1.html



TITLE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY:

Acids and Bases, *Science*

Identify the Learning Activity: This third lesson will define the concepts of acids and bases. It will introduce the impact of acid rain on the earth. Our experiment will use different areas of the tongue to show where the tongue can taste acids/sour and bases/bitter.

What will students do?

The students will read the chapter “Acid Rain” in Steck Vaughn’s *Building Strategies: Science* and answer the questions. Next, the class will discuss any unknown vocabulary words and ideas. Students will divide into groups to do a tongue taste test to discover what parts of the tongue taste acids/sour and bases/bitter.

What will teachers do?

The teacher will provide the chapter from the book Steck Vaughn *Building Strategies: Science*. The teacher will guide the students reading and discussion about acids and bases. The teacher will provide all materials for the students to taste four different mixes: two acids and two bases.

What is the length of task? One 2-hour class session

Content/Learning Activities:

It is important to introduce any topic by discussing important vocabulary and pre-knowledge of the subject. Introduce/review four important vocabulary words:

Atoms: The atom is made up of neutrons, which have no charge; protons, which have a positive charge; and electrons, which have a negative charge. Atoms always have an equal number of electrons and protons, so the charges cancel each other out.

Ions: If an atom picks up an electron (-), it becomes negatively charged; there are now more electrons than protons. If an atom loses an electron (-), it becomes positively charged; there are now more protons than electrons. Atoms with electron imbalances are called ions.

Acids: Acids in water separate into ions, and the positive ion is hydrogen (H⁺). When hydrochloric acid (HCl) mixes with water, it separates into positive hydrogen (H⁺) and negative chlorine (Cl⁻). Hydrogen (H⁺) combines with water (H₂O) to make hydronium (H₃O⁺).

Bases: Bases in water also separate into ions, and the negative ion is hydroxide

Note: This is the third lesson in a series of introduction to chemistry lessons. In this lesson, as in others, it is essential to emphasize vocabulary and reading comprehension. The concept of acids and bases is introduced by reading a chapter from a science book. I also spend much time writing vocabulary words and definitions on the board. Often the students discuss and come to a consensus on the correct definition. Using cooperative learning is a fun way to teach words in an ESOL class.

SUBMITTED BY:
Diane Cohn

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(OH⁻). When the base sodium hydroxide (NaOH) mixes with water, it separates into positive sodium (Na⁺) and negative hydroxide (OH⁻).

Read pages 113-115, the “Acid Rain” chapter, in Steck Vaughn’s *Building Strategies: Science*. Summarize the chapter and discuss any unknown vocabulary. Answer the questions on page 115 together.

Next the teacher will direct the “Talk it out” activity. At the teacher’s discretion, copies can be made of the instructions on the following page.

What evidence will you look for to know that learners are developing this skill?

The students will understand and be able to discuss the chapter, “Acid Rain.” They will be able to demonstrate learning by answering the questions at the end of the chapter. They will be able to label their tongue maps as to where acids/sour is tasted and bases/bitter is tasted.

How will you collect this evidence?

The teacher can collect the answers to the questions at the end of the chapter. She can also collect the students’ completed tongue maps.

Instructor Comments and Reflections:

This was a very interesting activity. The students enjoyed tasting the four different solutions. Most of the students didn’t know that different parts of the tongue taste different tastes. They had fun blindfolding each other and comparing answers. I divided the class into three groups and then mixed the solutions. This took too much time. It would have been more efficient to have the solutions already mixed. The students also enjoyed their tongue maps and really took the assignment seriously. All in all, it was a successful experiment.

Resource: www.miamisci.org/ph/hexcite1.html

Talk it out:

- What does an acid or base taste like?
- What parts of the tongue give us different tastes?
- What foods have more acid?
- What foods have more bases?

Instructions: The solutions to use in this experiment are acids and bases. The vinegar and citrus solutions are acids, which have a sour taste. The baking soda and unsweetened chocolate solutions are bases, which have a bitter taste. The taste buds on both sides of the tongue have adapted to taste sour substances. The taste buds on the back of the tongue have adapted to bitter substances. Other receptors are specialized for tasting sweet and salty.

Can you taste the difference between something sour and something bitter? After tasting sour and bitter substances, students will map areas of the tongue which can taste these substances.

What is needed:

- 1-cup water and vinegar
- 1-cup water and baking soda
- 1-cup water and lemon juice
- 1-cup water and unsweetened cocoa
- Cotton swabs
- Blindfolds
- Tongue Map

What to do:

Divide the class into groups, no more than four per group. Mix one tasting solution in each cup. Label the cups with appropriate letters, such as “B” for baking soda, etc. Place the four cups of solutions in front of each group. Give each group cotton swabs and a blindfold and a tongue map. Draw a picture of the tongue map on the board. Tell the students they will use their tongues to make a taste map. Ask for a volunteer to model the process. Blindfold the student and ask that he hold his nose. Dip a cotton swab into a solution and lightly touch it to various areas of the student’s tongue. Ask him to tell what he tastes. Write a letter of the solution on the diagram on the board to show where he tasted the solution the most, such as “B” for baking soda.

Have each group test the solutions on each other and different parts of their tongues. Be sure to use a different cotton swab each time. Each student must label his or her tongue maps. Encourage the students to identify a pattern.

Discuss the findings of the groups with the class as a whole. What was learned? Students should have discovered that the sour taste is on each side of the tongue, and the bitter taste is on the top and bottom of the tongue. That leaves the middle of the tongue for sweet and salty.

TITLE OF ACTIVITY:

Acids, Bases, Powers of Ten, and Acid Rain, *Science*

Note: This fourth of a series on chemistry is designed to be a review of terms. More importantly, it is a review of acid rain and the varying degrees of damage it has on the earth. Review is important with any level of student, but with an ESOL student it is essential to review words and meanings.

Identify the Learning Activity: The final unit in our chemistry series serves primarily as a review of the pH scale, how to read the scale, and at what point on the scale does acid rain fall. Although not included in this series on chemistry, the next lesson following this one should deal specifically with acid rain and its impact on the environment.

What will students do?

The students will review the definition of the words: acids, bases, pH factor, and powers of ten. The students will do an exercise practicing how to use powers of ten. They will discuss the powers of ten as it relates to the pH scale. Students will receive a blank pH scale and plot different substances on it. They will discuss where acid rain occurs. Lastly, they will take a short quiz about the pH scale, acids, and bases.

What will teachers do?

The teacher will provide all materials. She will guide the many discussions leading from the definitions of terms, to the powers of ten, to the use of the pH scale, to the discussion of acid rain and its impact on the environment.

What is the length of task? One 2-hour class session

Describe in detail the activities used to implement this learning plan:

1. The teacher will review the definition of terms:

Acids: a sour substance; any of various typically water-soluble and sour compounds capable of reacting with a base to form a salt that are hydrogen-containing molecules or ion.

Bases: a bitter substance; any of various typically water-soluble and acrid or brackish-tasting compounds capable of reacting with an acid to form a salt that are molecules or ions.

pH factor: scientists use the pH scale to show how strong an acid is. The pH scale runs from 0 to 14. Acids have a pH less than 7. Bases have a pH more than 7. 7 is neutral, like pure water.

SUBMITTED BY:
Diane Cohn

COUNTY/PROGRAM:
**Williamson County
Adult Education**

2. Students will be introduced to a review of the powers of ten in Contemporary's *The GED Math Problem Solver*, page 2. Students will practice the powers of ten.
 - a. What is 10×1 ?
 - b. What is 10×10 ?
 - c. What is $10 \times 10 \times 10$?
 - d. What is 10^3 ?
 - e. What is 10^6 ?
3. The worksheet showing the relationship to powers of ten and the pH factor will be handed out and discussed, the emphasis here being the negative powers of ten or acids.
4. How can the knowledge of the powers of ten and the pH scale come together? This next step is a blank diagram of the pH scale. Ask the students to plot on the scale the following terms: vinegar (3), lemon juice (4), aspirin water (5), acid rain (between 3.5 and 4.5).
 - Where do fish fail to breed? (5)
 - Where do all organisms in lakes die? (4)
 - Where are plant leaves damaged? (3.5)
 - Where is battery acid? (1)
5. Reinforce the students' pH scale with the scale on page 113 in Steck Vaughn's *Building Strategies: Science*. Emphasize in the discussion the impact of acid rain on the earth.
6. Finally, quiz the students about the pH scale using page 180 from Steck Vaughn *GED: Science*. It is important to follow this lesson with a lesson about acid rain.
 - Where has most of the damage occurred?
 - What countries have serious acid rain damage?
 - What is being done to prevent acid rain?

What evidence will you look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?

Students will discuss and understand the basic terms: acids, bases, pH factor, and powers of ten. Students will be able to read a pH scale. They will be able to plot where certain materials fall on the pH scale. They will discuss the impact acid rain has on the environment.

How will you collect this evidence?

The teacher can collect written answers to the quiz and the students' pH scale diagrams.

Instructors Comments and Reflections:

This was a difficult lesson for me to put together because I felt the students needed a review of terms to connect previous lessons to the pH scale. I wanted it to be an enjoyable lesson with some hands-on activities. It actually turned out to be fun. We discussed so many different things about the powers of ten and acids and bases. Having each student plot different materials on the scale helped create a lot of discussion and interest. One student from Korea, who happened to be a pharmacist, said that even though she already knew what we were studying, she found how it was taught to be very interesting. She said in her previous schooling she was only taught to memorize everything, and that it was so much better to learn about the impact of certain materials on the environment. After this lesson, teachers may want to follow with another lesson on acid rain and its effect on the environment. Teaching the science and the real-world results brings practicality to the lesson and connects the theory and reality. This tends to make the subject material more relevant in the eyes of the students. Contemporary's *Foundations Science* has a very interesting article about the effects of acid rain around the world.

Resource: www.miamisci.org/ph/hexcite1.html

Part 3: Resources

What are some other resources?

Print Resources

Writing

GED Test1: *Writing Skills*. Susan Breemer Wickham. Contemporary Books.

Pre-GED Writing. Steck-Vaughn.

Write to be Read: Reading, Reflection, and Writing. William R. Smalzer. Cambridge University Press.

Grammar

Basic English Grammar. Betty Schramper Azar. Prentice Hall.

Fundamentals of English Grammar. Betty Schramper Azar. Prentice Hall

Understanding and Using English Grammar. Betty Schramper Azar. Prentice Hall

Intermediate Grammar: From Form to Meaning and Use. Susan Kesner Bland. Oxford University Press.

Language FUNDamentals. Lisa Kelley. AGS Publishing.

Grammar Write Away. Books One and Two. Betsy Rubin. NTC Publishing Group.

Regents English Workbook. Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced. Robert J. Dixon. Prentice-Hall.

English Essentials: A Refresher Course. Jewel Varnado. Steck-Vaughn Company.

Reading and Literature

Great American Stories. Books One, Two, and Three. C. G. Draper. Prentice-Hall Regents.

World Folktales: An Anthology of Multicultural Folk Literature. Anita Stern. NTC Publishing Group.

GED Language Arts, Reading. Steck-Vaughn Company.

English, Yes! Learning English through Literature. Burton Goodman. NTC Publishing Group.

Challenger. Adult Reading Series, Books One through Seven. Corea Murphy. New Readers Press.

Vocabulary Connections: A Content Area Approach. Books A through H. Steck-Vaughn Company.

Back and Forth: Pair Activities for Language Development. Adrian S. Palmer and Theodore Rogers with Judy Winn-Bell Olsen. Alemany Press.

Literature for Life and Work. Elaine Bowe Johnson and Christine Bideganeta LaRocco. McGraw-Hill.

Conversation Starters

Chicken Soup for the Soul. Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen. Health Communications.

The Book of Questions. Gregory Stock. Workman Publishing Company.

The Non-Stop Discussion Workbook. Heinle & Hinele

Social Studies

America's Story. Books One and Two. Vivian Bernstein. Steck Vaughn Company.

Government at Work: From City Hall to State Capital. William Lefkowitz, Globe Fearon. Janus Books.

Our Constitution: A Working Plan for Democracy. Thomas Bye. Prentice Hall.

It's Our Government: Congress, the President, and the Courts. William Lefkowitz and Richard Ulrich. Janus Books.

World Geography and You. Books One and Two. Vivian Bernstein. Steck-Vaughn Company.

Building Strategies: Social Studies. Susan D. McClanahan, Judith Andrews Green. Steck-Vaughn Company.

Maps, Globes, and Graphs. Steck-Vaughn Company.

Science

The Listen and Learn Connection. Grace W. Frank. High Noon Books.

Building Strategies: Science. Susan D. McClanahan, Judith Andrews Green. Steck-Vaughn Company.

Mathematics

The GED Math Problem Solver: Reasoning Skills to Pass the Test. Myrna Manly. Contemporary Books.

Pre-GED Mathematics. Steck-Vaughn Company.

GED Mathematics. Steck-Vaughn Company.

Internet Resources

The homepage of the publishers of this book, the University of Tennessee Center for Literacy Studies:
<http://cls.coe.utk.edu>

Tennessee adult education online:
<http://aeonline.coe.utk.edu/>

Tennessee adult education discussion archives:
<http://cls.coe.utk.edu/pipermail/tnae-share/>

Purdue University's online writing lab for ESL:
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/esl/index.html>

Digests of professional thought in ESL are available through the National Center for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE):
<http://www.cal.org/ncle/DIGESTS>

Dave's ESL Café has a variety of online resources:
<http://www.eslcafe.com>

The Amherst, Massachusetts public library has compiled a list of ESL/GED web links:
<http://www.joneslibrary.org/esl/adult.html>

Part 4: Immigration

Why Don't They Just Get Legal?

A common misconception regarding immigrants is that it is a simple matter to clear up immigration issues and “get legal.” Some common misconceptions are:

- ESOL programs can issue student visas
- Anyone can legally get a “green card”
- After entering the United States of America, anyone can clear up immigration problems by doing some simple paperwork and paying a nominal fee
- Marrying a United States citizen immediately confers citizenship
- Permanent residents have all of the same rights as citizens

What one might think would be a simple process often is expensive and time consuming. For example, in April 2004, replacing a lost “green card” in the state of Tennessee cost \$130 and took eight months. This process bears little in common with replacing a lost credit card or driver’s license.

People may enter the United States temporarily with a tourist visa issued by the U. S. State Department at embassies and consulates around the world. Most individuals who apply for a visa must prove to the consular official issuing the visa that they are not entering the United States for the purpose of immigration, that they have the means to support themselves on their trip, and the reason for entry is valid. Tourist visas generally allow a person to stay in the United States for between 30 and 90 days.

Student visas are issued by student exchange programs and higher education institutions for students to temporarily live in the United States while attending school. After they have exited their program, the students are required to leave the United States. Schools issuing student visas must have prior approval from the federal government to do so. No adult literacy ESOL program in the state of Tennessee may issue student visas.

The process of becoming a lawful permanent resident is generally long, expensive, and complicated. Immigrants may become permanent residents of the United States through a number of avenues. Some of the most common are:

- Through an invitation from a family member
- Being granted asylum or refugee status
- Winning a space through the Diversity Lottery
- Through a government amnesty for undocumented immigrants.

Applications for family members are one route into the United States, but the processing times are frequently long. It is not unusual for the application process to take in excess of five years. Marrying a citizen expedites the process; however, since September 11, 2001, processing time for these applicants has been lengthened to more than two years. The processing fees total hundreds of dollars, and the applicant must pay for a comprehensive medical exam, fingerprinting, special pictures, and, optionally, an attorney to help process the paperwork. Diversity Lottery participants may win a chance to apply for permanent resident status, but nationals of many countries are excluded from participating in this program.

Some individuals choose to avoid the bureaucracy of the immigration system and stay in the United States without a valid visa or permanent resident status. The consequences for these individuals may include deportation, detention for an unknown period of time without representation, or a bar to lawful re-entry into the United States of America for up to ten years. Becoming “legal” or “in status” as it is known in immigration vernacular is difficult once an individual enters unlawfully or falls “out of status.” While many undocumented residents would like to resolve immigration issues, it may simply be impossible for them to qualify to do so.

The process of becoming a citizen of the United States may be initiated after an individual has had permanent resident status for five years. People married to U. S. citizens need only wait three years. As with the other processes, it is expensive, costing a minimum of several hundred dollars and taking more than a year to complete.

One characteristic of the process is that it is constantly changing. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has been reformed under the U. S. Department of Homeland Security. It has also been renamed as United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS or CIS). Immigration professionals must continually educate themselves to the changes in this complicated system. Attorneys who practice immigration law may or may not be knowledgeable regarding the latest changes in immigration law or petitioning procedures. Finding an advocate who is both knowledgeable and reputable is a challenge for many newcomers to the U. S.

Some internet resources for individuals who want immigration information are:

- The USCIS (former INS) website: www.uscis.gov
- The National Organization for Foreign Student Advisors: www.nafsa.org
- The Tennessee Association for International Educators: web.utk.edu/~taie

Part 5: How can I build a classroom community?

Are you tired of using the same old activities to build a community within your classroom? Here are ten practical ideas for get-to-know-you exercises that you can use. You may want to keep a supply of 3x5 index cards or blank slips of paper around the classroom, as many of these ideas require them.

1. On a plain sheet of paper have each student draw a picture of himself that shows how s/he feels today, or draw a picture of himself that shows where s/he would prefer to be, what s/he would prefer to be doing, and with whom s/he would prefer to be doing it. Have the students write their names at the bottom of their pictures. In larger classes have students work in groups to explain their picture. In smaller classes have students explain the pictures to the class.
2. Give students a list of questions. They must walk around the room to find a person who matches each question. Compare the lists at the end of the activity. Sample questions may include:
 - Who likes chocolate ice cream?
 - Who has brown eyes?
 - Who has a dog?
 - Who has more than four brothers and sisters?
3. Have each student write his/her name on an index card. Mix up the cards, and randomly distribute one to each student. Instruct students to write four statements about what the person is wearing using the present progressive tense. Examples might include:
 - She is wearing a gold ring on the little finger of her left hand.
 - He is wearing a mustache.
 - She is wearing blue and green striped pants.

Then choose students one at a time to read their descriptions. Have classmates guess who is being described.

4. On an index card have students write four sentences about what they are wearing. Each student chooses a card from the group of cards held by the teacher, who reads the card to the class. The class then guesses who is being described.

5. An alternative version of the above activity has the students write four positive statements on each card about a person in class. Examples might include:
 - She is a good mother.
 - He is a very hard worker.
 - She loves her job.

The teacher reads cards randomly and the students must guess who is being described.

6. On an index card have each student write between two and five statements about themselves. One statement must be false. The teacher then chooses one student to read her card, and the rest of the class guesses which statement is false.
7. Hand out index cards with random questions. Have each student answer the question to the class. The questions can vary in difficulty. Examples might include:
 - What is your maiden name?
 - What is your favorite TV show?
 - What makes you happy?
8. Write each student's name on a slip of paper. Put the paper in a box. Have each student pick a name. Have the student describe a gift that he would get for the named student, and why he would choose that gift. For larger classes, the teacher will want to divide students into small groups.
9. Divide the class into small groups. Let each group choose a card at random that describes a problem. The groups must give advice to help solve the problem. Examples of problems include:
 - Every time I go anywhere I get lost—what can I do?
 - I want to return to my home country because I miss my friends—what should I do?
10. The teacher has the students count off by twos. The twos form a circle in the center of the room. The ones form a circle around the outside of the twos. The twos will be directed to move opposite the ones in their circle when music starts. When the music stops the people will stop and face their nearest opposite number and ask that person a question requiring a one-word answer. The music resumes and repeat the movements and questions. Possible questions include:
 - Do you drive or walk to school?
 - Do you think it will rain today?
 - Do you like cats or dogs?

Glossary

additive bilingualism – Used to describe a program in which students are taught English as a second language along with instruction in their native language. Positive feelings about the students’s native language are fostered. This method avoids a student regressing to the skill level of his/her native language while learning English, and thus being in the terrible position of lacking skill in the native language and in English. See *subtractive bilingualism*.

assessment procedures, formal – Standardized tests. Some positives are they provide reference to other individuals or groups, can give educational decision-makers needed information to improve curriculum, conduct large-scale change, or measure the equity of opportunity, and they are easy to administer and score. Among the weaknesses are their lack of motivational value and interest, cost, teacher resistance to testing, and problems with student understanding of the testing procedure.

assessment procedures, informal – Non-standardized assessments that a professional educator might administer. Positives include flexible administration, ability to gain a picture of how students best learn, non-threatening presentation, and ability for teachers to motivate student performance and thus gain an accurate assessment. Negatives include possibility of test administrator error, complexity of evaluation, time-intensive to administer, require specialized administrator training, and they are not as easily compared as with formal assessments.

BICS – Acronym for “Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills.” Refers to the level of language required to function in everyday situations. See *CALP*.

bilingual education – A method of instruction for second language learners where the ultimate goal is the attainment of increased second language skills and, under some models, increased first language skills. There are many models for bilingual education. The main differences among bilingual education models are whether or not a student’s native language is used as a medium of instruction, and whether or not native language is valued as a skill of intrinsic value.

CALP – Acronym for “Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency.” Refers to the complex set of language skills required for success in academic settings. See *BICS*.

cloze tests – Commonly called “fill-in-the-blank” exercises. This is an exercise for learners in which words are left out at regular intervals. Students must provide the appropriate word to complete the sentences.

criterion-referenced tests – Tests that require a student to show achievement of a specific performance level, such as a score of 60% or 80%, in order to indicate competence in a given subject area. This is the traditional type of “black and white” test used by educators, leading to a percentage right, a percentage wrong, and a letter grade.

CUP hypothesis – Acronym for “common underlying language proficiency.” The CUP hypothesis states that students who are skilled in their native language may transfer some of those skills to other languages that they learn.

ESOL – Acronym for “English for speakers of other language.” This term is used to describe adult programs for English L2 learners.

language dominance – Refers to the language in which a student can best communicate. The dominant language may vary according to what one is doing. A student may be able to succeed academically in his/her dominant language and be able to use these academic skills in context-embedded situations.

LEP – Acronym for “limited English proficient.” The term is used by the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs “to designate populations of students who encounter instructional difficulties because they lack language skills in English.”

norm-referenced tests – This term refers to tests that been given to a large number of students in a controlled environment. They are designed so that the results from a sample of people taking the tests will be similar to the entire population of people who might take the test. Some tests, like the ACT or SAT are not norm-referenced for ESOL students so that a score does not accurately compare an ESOL student with other students. Other tests like the TOEFL are norm-referenced for ESOL students.

selective mutism – A condition where a student does not speak because s/he does not want to. It is often confused with the silent period, but is indicative of more complex issues than a simple lack of language proficiency. See *silent period*.

silent period – This occurs when students can understand language before they can articulate it. It is usually only a few weeks long, but many times this situation is aggravated by an unwillingness to make mistakes. The silent period is different from selective mutism. See *selective mutism*.

subtractive bilingualism – A term used to describe a program in which students are taught English as a second language only. Students’ home language(s) are not maintained.

TNTESOL – Acronym for the “Tennessee Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.” This is the Tennessee Chapter of the “international” education association, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL), headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia, a group of more than 14,000 members. Its mission is “to develop the expertise of its members and others involved in teaching English to speakers of other languages to help them foster effective communication in diverse settings while respecting individuals’ language rights.” The national organization’s website is available at <http://www.tesol.org>.

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The University of Tennessee Center for Literacy Studies

600 Henley Street, Suite 312

Knoxville, TN 37996-4135

TEL: (865) 974-4109

TOLL-FREE: 877-340-0546

FAX: 865-974-3857