

English-as-a-Second Language

Tutor Training Kit

**A Learner-Centred Approach
to Tutoring Adult ESL Learners**

TUTOR TRAINING MANUAL

by Myrina Rutten-James



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The Learner–Centred Approach to Tutoring English-as-a-Second Language (ESL)

The way in which you tutor an ESL learner may be very different than the way in which you were taught in grade school or university. Often, in a classroom setting, the teacher makes decisions regarding the information that is covered and the skills that are developed. However, adults learn best when they can make decisions regarding what materials or strategies should or should not be taught. When tutoring an adult learner, it is important that all the activities and content be **learner-centred**. Learners should be full participants in the learning process. Decisions should be made with the learner, not for the learner.

Components of the ESL Tutor Training Manual

- The Tutor Training Manual will provide you with some basic teaching strategies that will help your learner develop reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. Promoting a learner-centred approach, such as the one described above, will also be highlighted throughout the manual.
- The manual is divided into eight sessions, each giving you information about the topic to get you started. Additional resources will be suggested throughout the manual, should you be interested in learning more about a topic of interest.
- Keep in mind that not all the information presented may be applicable to your learner. Some of the teaching strategies discussed are more useful for beginner learners, while others are more appropriate for advanced learners. You may find that additional consultation with your trainer is necessary after you have started tutoring.
- You may also find that your learner responds to some of the strategies provided but will not progress as well when you take a different approach. This is natural; not all learning strategies work well for all learners all of the time. Some time will need to be spent getting to know your learner and finding what works for her. Tutoring will be a learning process for both you and your learner!

- While you are tutoring, you may also discover that your learner has different issues than many Euro-Canadian learners. For example, culture shock and homesickness can be significant problems that affect not only the ability to learn, but may also affect an individual's physical and mental well-being. Other issues, such as motivation and energy levels, affect learners regardless of how near or far from home they may be living. Additional material regarding these issues and how these issues may be addressed are also highlighted in the manual. *Once again, additional assistance may be necessary. Do not hesitate to contact program personnel should problems arise.*

A New Experience

You've taken on a new role as a tutor, and should be commended! Tutoring an ESL learner can be a very exciting and challenging experience. As a tutor, I understand the work a good lesson involves and the rewards it brings as you see how someone has benefited from your work. As a learner, I also appreciate the linguistic and cultural lessons I received when I was abroad. But, it was through the patience, generosity and good humor of my tutors that I learned the most important lesson of all – that, with support and encouragement, it is possible to make anyplace a home. Thank you for helping make Saskatchewan a home to the learners that you assist, and enabling them to achieve the goals they want to achieve.

Myrina Rutten - James

SESSION 1

Understanding the Context

Session 1: Understanding the Context

The objectives of this session are:

- To familiarize you with the adult ESL learner
- To discuss factors that may affect the learner
- To introduce general strategies to help motivate the learner

The Benefits of Tutoring:

Being a tutor can be a very rewarding experience. The benefits of tutoring include:

- Developing transferable skills that can assist you both personally and professionally.
- Learning about another culture and way of life.
- Learning about yourself and your own culture as you are given the opportunity to see things you may take for granted through another set of eyes.
- Making a positive contribution in the lives of the learner's entire family. Helping a mother to communicate in English not only helps her as an individual but enables her to take a more active role in her children's schooling and to contribute to the larger community.

A: The Tutor

What makes an effective tutor?

According to Judy Blankenship¹, good tutors are:

Learner-centred

Students need to gain their own skills, not see a demonstration of the skills a tutor possesses.²

- Good tutors recognize who the learner is as a person and as a learner; they try to use methods that are appropriate for the skill level and learning style of the learner.
- Are in partnership with the learner and decide what happens in the tutoring session with the learner and not just for the learner.

Patient

- Learning another language takes time and an incredible amount of effort. A second language is not something that can be learned in six weeks or even a year. It is a life-long process, which can cause frustration and anxiety for learners who are used to learning in a classroom where the material is limited and easy to master.
- Patience is necessary to keep up the morale of the learner and provide an environment where learners want to take risks.

¹ Judy Blankenship Cheatham et al., *Tutor: A Collaborative Approach to Literacy Instruction* (Syracuse, New York: New Readers Press, 1993), p. 28. Used by permission.

Ruth Johnson Colvin, *I Speak English* (Syracuse, New York: New Readers Press, 1997.)

² Ruth Johnson Colvin, *I Speak English* (Syracuse, New York: New Readers Press, 1997), p. 29. Used by permission.

Respectful

- Learners may not know the language, but they will have a lot of “life experience.” Value their experiences and find ways to connect the new concepts and information to the knowledge and expertise your learners already have.
- Do not approach teaching your learner as you would a child. Learners may be offended if, for example, you use a grade one workbook. Opt to modify adult resources rather than use materials that could be considered “childish.” The language used doesn’t need to be complicated but the ideas should be mature.
- Tutoring will enable you to learn a lot about your learner, another culture, your own culture and yourself. Let your learner know what you have learnt as well. Let her know that you are equal partners in this relationship.

Creative

- Great lessons cannot be cut and pasted off the Internet or out of a book. It will take knowledge of basic teaching techniques, knowledge of learner needs and creativity to make the best lessons possible.

Adaptable

- All learners are different. Your learner may even have a different learning style than you do. Your challenge is to adapt your teaching to your learners’ learning styles.
- Do not feel tied down to the lesson plan. Sometimes, you will be presented with “teachable moments” where the learner shows interest in something other than the material presented. Feel free to change plans to include these newly discovered learner interests.

Culturally sensitive

- Learn as much as you can about your learner’s background. While it isn’t necessary to learn another language, having some basic cultural knowledge can go a long way. This basic knowledge can include family structure, common religious beliefs and even holidays. Learners will generally be receptive when you ask them, for example, if they are doing something special to celebrate the Lunar New Year or Buddha’s birthday.

- Tutors also understand that learners may need explanations about their new country. Things that we generally take for granted, such as how to use a shower, may be new to them. Knowing that they can ask any cultural question they need, may help learners feel more comfortable in their new homes.

Realistic

A blend of idealism and reality is the goal.³

- All learners are different. Some will need considerable repetition while other learners will be able to remember lessons from week to week. You will find that some learners will have a lot of opportunities to practice English whereas other learners will have too many other commitments to do the homework you have assigned.
- Be aware of what your learner can do given her situation. Ensure that the goals your learner has are realistic and the timeline she has set out for achieving these goals is appropriate.
- Use an honest approach with your learner. While you do not want to discourage her, setting realistic goals will lessen the likelihood that she will become discouraged during the learning process.

Organized and Accountable

- Keep accurate records of what you taught; date and save lesson plans. This will help keep the learner and you on task while implementing plans to reach short-term and long-term goals.
- Keeping records and sharing these with your learner can give the learner additional motivation – she now has a tangible record of the progress made.

Well-trained

- Seize any opportunities you can to learn more.
- Attend any learning opportunities extended by your volunteer organization or any professional organizations in your area.
- Feel free to network with other tutors to gain additional ideas, support and encouragement.
- Use the resources available on the Internet or at the local library.

³Judy Blankenship Cheatham et al., *Tutor: A Collaborative Approach to Literacy Instruction* (Syracuse, New York: New Readers Press, 1993), p. 28. Used with permission.

Able to recognize when the situation needs external aid

- Unfortunately, you may encounter situations where your learner is in an abusive or unhealthy situation. Although you are not legally bound to report it, it would be unethical not to help a learner in that situation. Contact trained professionals to assist your learner.

“While I might be the expert in this language at this place and time, the learner is the expert in his or her life. If I am going to figure out how this particular learner learns, I had better listen more than I speak, and watch more than I perform.”⁴

B: The Learner

Who are our learners?

There is no “typical ESL learner.” Learners can vary in age (from 16 to 90) and will come from a variety of different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. Your learner may have a lot of formal education or very little. She may be fully literate in many languages or may have only a basic knowledge of reading and writing in her first language.

Characteristics of the Adult ESL Learner

ESL Learners:

- are creative and adaptable.
- have a great range of life experiences.
- experience stress in their new surroundings.
- are highly motivated but may be apprehensive about learning English.
- learn best when the information is linked to something they already know.
- want practical lessons that are relevant to their own goals and needs.
- like to learn things they will use immediately.
- may have uneven learning: learners will not progress in a uniform manner; they may have “good” and “bad” “English days.”
- have a multitude of outside responsibilities (family, home, job).

⁴ Virginia Sauv , *Voices and Visions: An Introduction to Teaching ESL* (Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press Canada, 2000), p. 7. By permission of Oxford University Press Canada.

C: Teaching Adult Learners

General Guidelines for Teaching Adult Learners

“We must be willing to listen, to learn, to see the world through their eyes and, step-by, step, to offer our hand where they do not know the road and we do, being careful to let them choose the journey. We must honour their choices”⁵

- Create an atmosphere where the learner is actively involved.
- Have learners chose what they want to learn.
- Have learners set their own goals.
- Use activities in the lessons to help learners achieve their goals.
- Start lessons with what learners already know and build on their strengths.
- Encourage learners to judge what helps them learn and what does not.
- Design a program that changes when learner’s needs change.

Accelerators ⁶

It’s easier when...

- ☺ The purpose of using language – reading, writing, speaking and listening – is real and natural.
- ☺ The focus is on communication.
- ☺ Talk is about interesting topics.
- ☺ Mistakes are part of learning.
- ☺ Language is used or studied within a context.
- ☺ Concepts and activities are relevant to the learner.
- ☺ Sufficient time is provided.

Roadblocks

It’s harder when...

- ☹ The reasons given or situations created for using language are artificial.
- ☹ The focus is on the form, not communicating.
- ☹ Talk is dull and uninteresting.
- ☹ Mistakes are bad, and it’s more important to get it right than to get a message communicated.
- ☹ Language is studied out of context.
- ☹ The particular use of language studied or assigned is irrelevant for the learner.
- ☹ Students are pressured to complete work or make progress.

⁵Virginia Sauvé, *Voices and Visions: An Introduction to Teaching ESL* (Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press Canada, 2000), p. 11. By permission of Oxford University Press Canada.

⁶ Barbara Law and Mary Eckes, *The More- Than-Just- Surviving Handbook: ESL for Every Classroom Teacher*. (Winnipeg, Manitoba: Portage & Main Press, 2000) p. 56. Copyright © 2000 by Barbara Law and Mark Eckes. Used by permission of Portage & Main Press.

D: Factors Affecting the Learner's Experience

The following is a list of factors that may affect the experience of your learner in your lessons. Consider these as you develop your partnership with the learner.

1. Education

The education level of your learner will determine, to a degree, the strategies that you will use.

If you have a learner who has been successful in formal educational settings and is confident in her abilities, find out how she learned and what ways she learns best. Often, we need to find the skills a learner already possesses that work well in a language learning environment.

If the learner has not been to school or was unsuccessful, the best way to teach her is to be open, respectful and minimize the amount of paper you give her.

For learners who are not literate in their first language, you will need to use different strategies and cover a lot of preliminary material. You may need to show your learner how to hold a pencil, form letters and the function of lined paper.

According to Miriam Burt and Joy Kreeft Peyton⁷ there are many different types of learners:

Preliterates: learners who speak a language that has no written form. *(These are the learners who may not know that "lines on paper" have meaning.)*

Nonliterate: learners who speak a language that has a written form but have not learned how to read and write.

Semiliterate: learners who have had limited access to literacy instruction in their first language.

Nonalphabet literate: literate learners from other countries whose languages use a nonalphabetic script (for example, Chinese).

Non-Roman alphabet literate: learners who are literate in a non-Roman alphabet (Korean, Greek and Russian).

Roman-alphabet literate: learners from other countries who already know the Roman alphabet.

⁷ Miriam Burt and Joy Kreeft Peyton. (2003). Reading and Adult English Language Learners: The Role of the First Language. In *National Centre for ESL Literacy Education and Centre for Applied Linguistics* [on-line], Available: cal.org/ncle/digests/reading.htm. [2003, April 15]

More information about strategies you can use with those who are not literate in their first language will be discussed in **Additional Resources: ESL Literacy**. If you are looking for samples of specific lesson plans for your learner, take a look at *Hands On! A Collection of ESL Literacy Activities*⁸.

2. Gender

Whether the learner is male or female can also make a difference. Sometimes, a female learner will need extra support, especially if she is originally from a culture that sees education as a “male pursuit.”

3. Family Relationships

Learners with children or partners will have many other tasks to accomplish. This may seemingly “interfere” with your sessions when, for example, a session needs to be cut short because your learner needs to run errands or cancel because a child is sick.

Recognize that cutting a session short doesn’t indicate a lack of commitment. Learners are often subjected to events beyond their control and may not have the family support that you are accustomed to in difficult situations. Newcomers may have limited means (i.e. for babysitters) and few friends they can go to for assistance.

We must also recognize that settlement can cause problems in family relationships. For example, children of immigrants may adopt portions of the new culture that make parents uncomfortable. This could lead to tension. Parents may feel that they are not in a position of authority and have little power to influence their children.

More information regarding this will be discussed in Session 2: Culture and Communication.

4. Work and Energy Issues

Just as caring for children can drain adult learners, so too can work. Your learner may have a job during the day or may be seeking employment, which can be emotionally and physically draining.

Acknowledge that your learner’s time is valuable by coming to the session with a lesson plan and materials that are relevant to her life. You may also want to remind her that you are here to help her improve her skills and this does not have to be done using traditional teaching materials. Helping your learner fill out income tax forms or read a power bill could be important lessons that would promote skill development.

Learning a second language takes a lot of energy. Ensure that the learner gets breaks whenever necessary. Consider planning lessons that alternate exercises that require a lot of energy with exercises that are more relaxing.

⁸ Kathy Burnett, *Hands On! A Collection of ESL Literacy Activities*. (Halifax, Nova Scotia: Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre, 1999.)

5. Physical Health

Money may be an issue for some learners. Learners are not likely to learn effectively if they can't afford proper food, medication or a dentist.

While it is difficult to solve these issues, keep in mind that there may be other alternatives. If your learner has a toothache, is it possible to get her to see a dental student? Could you and the learner brainstorm ways to prepare healthy and cheap food? Could planning a menu or looking at recipes be components of a lesson?

6. Personality

If a learner feels inhibited and is not willing to take risks, it will take longer for her to learn English.

Providing an environment where the learner is as comfortable as possible will help reduce learner anxiety and increase risk-taking. Developing a comfortable learning environment is possible when the tutor values the learner as a person and sees their relationship as a partnership.

Increased risk-taking and the confidence that is developed as a result, will help the learner communicate with others in her daily life.

If you are interested in discussing the importance of risk-taking with your learner, ***Strategies for Success: A Practical Guide to Learning English***⁹ allows learners to practice their skills (reading, vocabulary, speaking and listening) while learning about themselves as learners. The book is intended for learners at an intermediate level.

Two chapters of ***Strategies for Success: A Practical Guide to Learning English*** are reprinted in **Additional Resources: Two Models of Learning Styles**. One of these chapters specifically deals with personality (or "language ego") and the importance of risk taking in language development.

7. Motivation

Learner motivation impacts language learning. Although the learner may generally be motivated to learn, there will be times when the learner is apathetic because she does not feel she is learning "quickly enough."

Keeping track of learner progress is a good way to keep the learner motivated. When she feels she is not advancing, pull out the portfolio and lesson plans. With your learner, take a look at what she has accomplished.

⁹H. Douglas Brown, ***Strategies for Success: A Practical Guide to Learning English*** (White Plains, NY: Pearson Education, 2002.)

8. Learning styles/Learner preferences

Learning styles refer to the preferred way that learners receive information. This can be through the eyes, ears, skin or muscles. Later in the manual we will discuss learning styles and how these learning styles can influence the way in which you present new concepts and information.

Learner preferences will influence how formal or informal a lesson should be. While you may think that memorization is not useful, the learner may think differently. Sometimes, learners will want to do things that seem contrary to the ways we have been taught to tutor. Rather than discouraging the learner from using methods that you think are not useful, encourage her to use all means available to her as she learns English.

If a learner is concerned about the way in which you deliver a lesson, listen closely to what the learner says. If you still feel that the method of delivery you are using is the preferred way, explain the rationale to your learner.

If your learner likes to do traditional grammar worksheets and you feel that the learner needs to apply this knowledge above and beyond what the worksheets allow her, let her know. Explain that research shows that if a learner learns only grammar and written language, she will not develop all the skills she needs.

Strategies for Success: A Practical Guide to Learning English, also covers content related to learning styles. Learners can take “quizzes” which will help them learn more about their learning styles (for example, right brain vs. left brain dominance). While it cannot be considered a definitive test, it enables learners (and tutors) to think about and discuss learner preferences.

“E very person does his or her best under the circumstances, and if it does not appear that way to us, then we are just lacking sufficient information to understand it.”¹¹

9. Behaviour¹⁰

There will be times when it is difficult to gauge why a learner is doing what she is doing. Just as we cannot make any assumptions about a learner’s motivation when she has to leave early to pick up a child, we cannot always make any assumptions about what is causing apathy or indifference during the lesson or the learner’s day-to-day life.

¹⁰ Virginia Sauvé, *Voices and Visions: An Introduction to Teaching ESL* (Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press Canada, 2000.)

Barbara Law and Mary Eckes, *The More- Than-Just- Surviving Handbook: ESL for Every Classroom Teacher*. (Winnipeg, Manitoba: Portage & Main Press, 2000.)

¹¹ V. Satir in Virginia Sauvé, *Voices and Visions: An Introduction to Teaching ESL* (Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press Canada, 2000), p. 28. By permission of Oxford University Press Canada.

Consider how difficult it may be to deal with significant life changes and then factor in the following:

- A change in geography or climate

If the learner is coming from a warmer climate, it may be difficult to become accustomed to an environment where, for many months each year, one has limited time outdoors.

Changes in humidity can also be tough. When I moved from a dry climate (in Saskatchewan) to a humid climate (in Asia), my energy level suffered. I wasn't used to living in such a warm place with high humidity. I was always tired because I was too hot to sleep comfortably. The heat affected my appetite, which made me seem really lethargic.

"An immigrant leaves his homeland because the grass is greener; a refugee leaves because the grass is burning under his feet." (source unknown)

- A change from a rural to urban setting or vice versa

Learners coming from rural centres and smaller, more intimate communities may find the impersonal nature of the city difficult to tolerate.

"Refugee students often have emotional ties to their homeland and continue to nurture the hope of returning there, only allowing themselves to be marginally involved with their new home."¹²

- A change in economic situation

Learners may have left high-ranking, well-paying jobs to come to Canada. Sometimes, it is difficult to have educational qualifications recognized in Canada. Even when qualifications are recognized, finding a new job may be exceptionally challenging. Learners may be forced to take on jobs that they are overqualified to do. This change in status not only affects their economic well-being, but can affect the learners' self-concept as well.

- A change in culture

In the chapter on culture, we will discuss culture shock and associated issues.

- Reasons for coming to Canada

A common belief is that newcomers have chosen to come to Canada. While for many newcomers this is true, there are some people who have left their former homes out of necessity, not desire.

¹² Barbara Law and Mary Eckes, *The More- Than-Just- Surviving Handbook :ESL for Every Classroom Teacher*. (Winnipeg, Manitoba: Portage & Main Press, 2000), p. 64. Copyright © 2000 by Barbara Law and Mark Eckes. Used by permission of Portage & Main Press.

E: Additional Factors Affecting the Canadian-Born Learner

Keep in mind that many of the issues facing ESL learners are also true for Canadian-born ESL or English-as-a-Second Dialect (ESD) learners. Motivation, personality, energy levels as well as family and economic issues also play a dominant role in the learning process. There are, however, additional concerns that need to be addressed with Canadian-born Aboriginal learners.

Historical Issues

While many Aboriginal learners have been successful in the school system, some have not. Some of this is due to the effects of the residential school system. Dianne Hill, in her written works, discusses her grandmothers' experience in the residential school system where she was:

- Punished for speaking her language
- Made to work long hours
- Unable to see her parents and felt extremely lonely

The impact residential schools had did not stop with her grandmother.

"Great feelings of loneliness and shame came to live in my grandmother. After she left residential school, married and had my mother, well, then she passed on all of those experiences in the form of her behavior onto my mother who then turned around and did the same thing to me. I learned loneliness and shame from my mother." ¹³

Contemporary Issues

Even today, Aboriginal learners are obliged to be part of a school system that has a much different value system than their own culture promotes. The information provided illustrates some of the fundamental differences between "school culture" and the "Aboriginal cultural view" which may result in less than favorable learning experiences. ¹⁴

¹³ Dianne Hill, "Prior Learning Assessment Recognition: Applications for an Aboriginal Model of Holistic Learning." Joe Duquette High School. Saskatoon, November 16, 2001. Used with permission from Dianne Hill.

¹⁴ Barbara St.Goddard and Linda North. CHI KI KEN DA MUN: So you should know. *National Adult Literacy Database* [on-line], Fredericton, New Brunswick. Available: nald.ca/CLR/chikiken/intro.htm. [March 1, 2003] Used with permission of Barbara St. Goddard.

School Culture

- In large school settings, there is a tendency to treat learners impersonally.
- Non-Native learners may perceive Native learners' *interpersonal distance* as hostility and may not respond in a friendly way.
- There is more of a tendency to offer advice without being invited to do so.
- Task achievement is frequently considered more important than developing close, harmonious personal relations. Traditional schools tended to value competition over co-operation.
- Emphasis is placed on maintaining considerable physical distance between teachers and learners as socially correct.
- Teaching methods have traditionally emphasized lecture and note taking. These activities have taken place in restrictive settings.
- Routines are rigid and time factors strictly adhered to.

Aboriginal Cultural View

- This impersonality of school can be interpreted as dislike, since it violates the value placed on the individual.
- Interpersonal style is respect for autonomy and independence of others. Individual differences are best respected by maintaining a high degree of interpersonal distance, particularly with strangers.
- Native learners may feel insulted by non-Native response.
- Social harmony is preferred over task achievement.
- Native learners feel more comfortable with close distance in interactions with teachers and others who are liked.
- May learn best by concrete demonstration by elders and experts.
- Routine is flexible and self-determined.¹⁵

These reflect tendencies; there may be exceptions in either case.

¹⁵ Barbara St.Goddard and Linda North. CHI KI KEN DA MUN: So you should know. *National Adult Literacy Database* [on-line], Fredericton, New Brunswick. Available: nald.ca/CLR/chikiken/intro.htm. [March 1, 2003] Used with permission of Barbara St. Goddard.

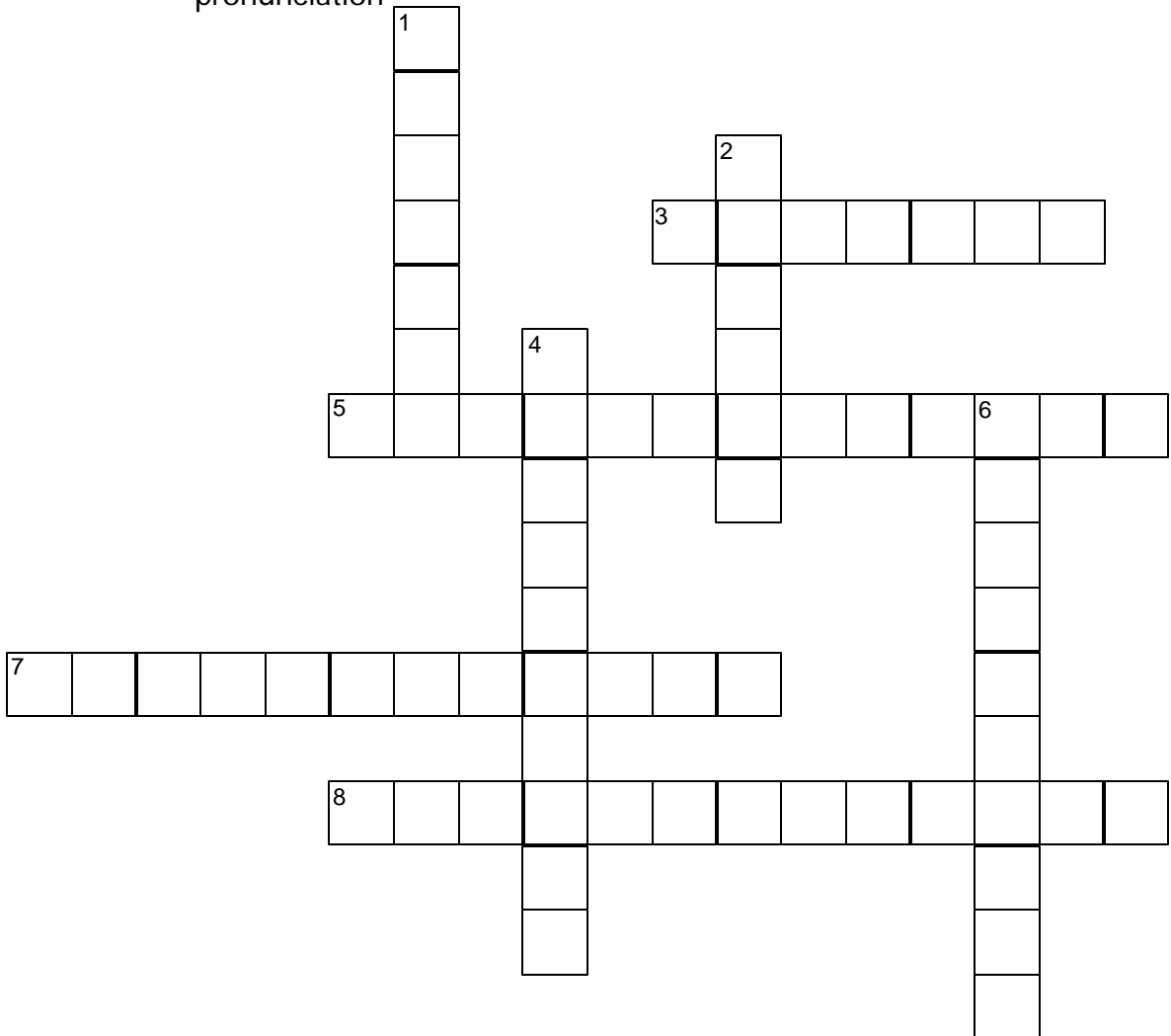
Factors Affecting the Learning Experience

Across

3. someone who may have emotional ties to his / her homeland
5. a traditional way in which Aboriginal people learn
7. learners who speak a language that has no written form
8. learners who have had only limited literacy instruction in their first language

Down

1. may affect learner behaviour (and our own)
2. something that can dramatically affect a learner
4. something that dramatically affects language learning
6. a personality trait which may negatively affect second language pronunciation



SESSION 2

Culture and Communication

Session 2: Culture and Communication

The objectives of this session are:

- To understand the complexity of culture and the implications of cultural misunderstanding
- To discuss the impact of non-verbal behaviour
- To discuss culture shock and related issues
- To introduce a variety of methods you can use to discuss culture with your learner

Culture and Communication

What is Culture?

When we think of culture, we often think about the tangible aspects of culture - traditional dancing, food and music.

However, culture is much more complex. One commonly used analogy is to think of culture as an iceberg. The tip of the iceberg, or what we can see, consists of language, food and clothing. However, it is the rest of the iceberg, submerged under water and more difficult to see, which plays a much more significant role. Learning to communicate well across cultures means having the ability to discover what is hidden – the communication style, beliefs, attitudes and values of other cultures.

“Culture is a system of behaviors and beliefs. These belief systems make some things more permissible under certain circumstances but nearly prohibited in others. These cultural patterns may vary from country to country and even from area to area. What may be normal or acceptable in one part of the world may be frowned upon in another. In many societies, there is a generally accepted dominant culture to which many people subscribe in various ways. Yet there are often various subcultures that reflect behavioral patterns and attitudes that may be significantly different than that of the dominant culture. Culture reaches all aspects of language and communication.”¹

What is Communication?

When communicating with your learner, not only will you be speaking, listening, reading and writing together, you will be communicating through your non-verbal behavior as well. Non-verbal communication varies from culture to culture. Based on the book, *BODYTALK: The meaning of Human Gestures*², the meaning of a single movement can mean a variety of different things.

The **chin flick** can mean “no” (in Italy), aggressive disinterest (in Northern Europe), disbelief (in Greece) or “I don’t know” (in Portugal).

The chin flick is an action where the backs of the fingers on one hand are brushed under the chin either once or several times.

Palms pressed together can signify a prayer, a greeting (in India), thank you (in Asia) or an apology.

Biting the forefinger can signify “I am angry” (when biting the knuckle in Italy), “I am sorry” (when biting the middle joint in Saudi Arabia) or “lucky” when the finger is placed sideways in the mouth (in Lebanon and Syria).

¹ Ruth Johnson Colvin, *I Speak English* (Syracuse, New York: New Readers Press, 1997), p. 15. Used by permission.

² Desmond Morris, *BODYTALK: The meaning of Human Gestures* (New York: Crown Trade Paperbacks, 1994.)

The non-verbal messages you give can be extremely powerful and can cause confusion for your learner if it contradicts the message you are giving verbally. Actions, which you may not even notice doing, may be extremely offensive in other cultures. Showing the bottom of your foot, for example, is considered exceptionally insulting in Thailand, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The “okay sign” and “thumbs up” are also interpreted in a number of different ways throughout the world – many of them negative.

Consider another example - eye contact. Eye contact can be interpreted in a variety of ways. If you were to buy a car and the salesperson told you the car was in exceptional shape while staring at the ground, would you believe her? If your learner says that she is interested in learning about food and then does not look at you while engaged in the lesson, is she disinterested?

When a person’s verbal message is inconsistent with her body language, people may not believe the message she is trying to get across. Consider how difficult it may be for a learner who is trying to communicate but is using culturally inappropriate body language to deliver her message.

A: Different Cultural Behaviours

There are far too many different cultural behaviours to list. However, a few that are pertinent to learning situations are highlighted below.

1. *Eye contact*

In Canada, eye contact between people is considered important. Assumptions regarding the honesty or integrity of a person who does not have “good eye contact” may be made. In other cultures, avoiding eye contact with people who are older or of a higher rank is considered polite and respectful.

2. *Attitudes about cooperation*

Attitudes about cooperation vary from culture to culture. What North Americans consider “cheating” in school may be considered “sharing” for many learners. While this may not be problematic for you as a tutor (since you are not assigning marks), it can cause numerous difficulties for your learner who is now living in a country, and may be part of a school system, that focuses more on individual rather than group achievement.

3. *Fear of making mistakes*

Canadian students are generally encouraged to try. Incorrect responses are not seen as a failure but as a learning opportunity. Students may be given participation points and, as long as improvement and the desire to work exist, may be able to pass from one level to another.

Your learner may have had very different experiences while she was in school. Some educational systems emphasize accuracy in a manner with which we may not be accustomed. Law and Eckes discuss an experience where a class of Vietnamese students, who were generally lively and gregarious, became very quiet while their teacher was being observed by her boss.³ For these learners, the fear of making mistakes while their teacher was being observed was the issue – they thought that answering incorrectly would shame their teacher.

4. Taboos against touching

A hug or a pat on the head may be considered affectionate to you but could make a learner feel uncomfortable. In some cultures it is even considered an affront. It is probably best to avoid physical contact unless your learner indicates otherwise, especially if you are matched with someone of the opposite sex.

Tips on Being an Effective Culture Guide

- Recognize who you are as a culture guide. Culture is not stagnant and there are different perspectives within a culture. Consider how an event will be interpreted differently by people dependent upon age, gender and socio-economic background.

- Avoid potentially uncomfortable situations by avoiding gestures such as the “thumbs up” or the circle “okay” sign. These can be quite offensive in other cultures. Also avoid pointing with a finger; use the entire hand (with the palm up) when you need to point or use a pen.

- Explore the learner’s perceptions through questions
When the learner encounters an unfamiliar situation where she is not sure how to respond, ask the learner what the action means to her. By exploring how the learner interprets the event, it will help bring clarity to the issue.

- Encourage the learner to guess what is or is not appropriate in her new culture (based on what she has experienced).
*Examples: Is it polite to decline food when offered?
 What color should a bride wear to a wedding?
 When should one give a gift?*

³ Barbara Law and Mary Eckes, *The More- Than-Just- Surviving Handbook:ESL for Every Classroom Teacher*. (Winnipeg, Manitoba: Portage & Main Press, 2000), pp.68 – 69. Copyright © 2000 by Barbara Law and Mark Eckes. Used by permission of Portage & Main Press.

- Avoid being judgmental ⁴

Try not to jump to conclusions about what your learner's actions represent.

- Learn about your learner's culture. *CULTURGRAMS: The Nations Around Us* ⁵ gives a brief description of the following subjects: climate, history, language, religion, attitudes, customs, lifestyle and society.

Benefits: It gives general information in a quick, easy to read format and serves as a starting point from which to get to know your learner. A section on "gestures" will help you to avoid making any lewd or offensive gestures. While the learner may know that the meaning in Canada is different, it could still result in discomfort.

Limitations: The set currently available was published in 1996 and certain aspects of it may be outdated, but it gives you a lot of information. Because the cultural information is brief, it may be considered "stereotypical" by your learner. Rather than assume that the information is correct and complete, use it as a starting point to ask questions and learn more about the culture.

B: Culture Shock

People who have moved from one country to another (or from one region to another) may have a lot of difficulty. Not only are they learning a new language, but they are also learning a very different way of life.

Some people may go through phases where they feel frustrated and humiliated. Some of the issues could include:

- Loss in status

Respected people with positions of power in their former communities may feel they are now labeled as "immigrants."

- Loss of established support systems

Times of difficulty (i.e. illness or financial difficulties) may be even more problematic when there are no family members or close friends to call upon for support.

Feelings of isolation may result when a parent is required to stay home and take care of the children. Without a job (or the opportunity to take language classes), an individual with limited language skills may feel like a prisoner at home.

⁴ Suzanne Abrams et al., *Teaching Adults: An ESL Resource Book* (Syracuse, New York: New Readers Press, 1996.) Used by permission.

⁵ Grant Skabelund., ed. *CULTURGRAMS: The Nations Around Us*. (Chicago: Brigham Young University, 1999.)

- Frustration over the inability to do “simple” tasks that were easily completed at home

Not only is the language different but the procedures as well. For example, the procedure for riding a bus differs from place to place. In some countries, payment occurs after the ride is complete. There may also be a man on the bus who takes your money once you are seated. The way in which you signal to get off the bus may also be different. Imagine trying to ride a bus in Regina without the proper change or knowing the purpose of the fare box and bell cord.

- Feeling that their identity is threatened

While Canada is a multi-cultural country, there is still an expectation for those outside “mainstream society” to become acculturated. Keeping traditions and raising children in the manner learners feel is best may be more difficult than they originally anticipated.

Traditional parent–child relationships can be dramatically altered when children know more English than their parents. Having to depend upon children for assistance can cause problems as it may undermine the parent’s authority. In some situations, it can even result in parental abuse.

“Many students – including Native Americans - are confronted with the task of functioning in a society that they don’t understand. There is a mismatch between our culture and theirs. Their own culture has a different set of norms for simple things we take for granted, such as how to address the teacher, how close to stand to the person they are talking to, how loud to talk. Many times what they see and hear in North America is in direct conflict with their own set of cultural values: people sitting with their legs crossed so that the soles of their feet are showing, dating, displaying affection in public, openly questioning a teacher’s point of view. They often feel confusion, conflict, and helplessness over the wide disparity between what they experience in everyday North American life. These feelings are defined as “culture shock.”⁶

⁶ Barbara Law and Mary Eckes, *The More-Than-Just-Surviving Handbook: ESL for Every Classroom Teacher*. (Winnipeg, Manitoba: Portage & Main Press, 2000), p. 67. Copyright © 2000 by Barbara Law and Mark Eckes. Used by permission of Portage & Main Press.

There are 4 stages of culture shock: ⁷

1. *Honeymoon*

The honeymoon phase takes place when people first arrive. There is genuine excitement about the new place, and a belief that life [in the new region] is an adventure.

2. *Hostility*

This generally takes place four to six months after arrival when the newcomer realizes the limitations of the new environment. For example, she may not be able to get the food she likes or may find it difficult to participate in many of the activities that are important to her.

If your learner is suffering from culture shock in this stage you may notice that she may:

- complain about a variety of things, perhaps even claiming to hate the new environment.
- want to go home regardless of her previous situation.
- spend more time with people who speak the same language.

3. *Humour*

In this phase, the learner has resolved or is in the process of resolving negative feelings about the new culture. She may have found new friends and has tried to come to terms with both the “old” and “new” way of living.

4. *Home*

Acceptance of the new home; the learner feels that she is here to stay!

Helping someone with culture shock

Everyone experiences culture shock in different ways, to different degrees. One person may adjust with relative ease, whereas another person may suffer from more pronounced culture shock. Regardless, it is important to support your learner to the best of your ability (even when she is critical of the new environment.) Let the learner know that feeling this way is natural. Adjusting to a new place takes time and patience. Getting through difficulties will require persistence and a willingness to learn (but not necessarily assimilate).

⁷ Barbara Law and Mary Eckes, *The More- Than-Just- Surviving Handbook: ESL for Every Classroom Teacher*. (Winnipeg, Manitoba: Portage & Main Press, 2000) pp. 69 - 70. Copyright © 2000 by Barbara Law and Mark Eckes. Used by permission of Portage & Main Press.

Sometimes, learners will need additional support. Depression may be an issue and learners may have difficulty moving from stage 2 of culture shock (hostility) to stage 3 (humour). If you are concerned, please refer your learner to a professional organization for additional support.

C: Other Issues Related to Culture

In the next section, we will explore some issues that may surface while you are tutoring. Because each learner and tutor are different, it is hard to make any “rules” regarding how to best address each situation. The following examples are intended to bring to light some of these issues and to brainstorm healthy ways to resolve them.

Issues

- **You and the learner are experiencing some discomfort due to cultural differences.**

While the learner may understand (on an intellectual level) some of the differences between Canada and her home country, it may be very difficult for the learner to feel comfortable with these differences. For example, a learner may be aware that she can call you by your first name but may feel more comfortable if she can call you “Mr” or “Mrs” to show respect. In turn, this may seem awkward for you, especially if you are only a couple years older than your learner.

Keep in mind that when teaching language, we teach not only the words, form and pronunciation, we teach culture. Culture includes not just holidays, dress, food and all the visible aspects of a nation but the way in which people see and evaluate the world. This also includes how people value and treat each other.

In a situation where you may feel uncomfortable, you may want to explain, for example, the reason why people in Canada often refer to each other by their first names. (Calling each other by our given names is not disrespectful, it is a sign of friendliness.) In situations like this, it is probably more important to ensure that the learner is comfortable. While it may be awkward for you, consider how many things the learner must deal with on a daily basis which are new and perhaps a little odd for her.

Ultimately, there are certain aspects of our culture your learner may not want to adopt, even if it is the conventional way people in Canada behave. We must respect our learner’s values and beliefs.

With a partner, take a look at the following case study:

After living in Canada for only 2 months, a learner wanted to take on an English name because she thought her name was difficult for English speakers to pronounce. She asked me to give her a “good English name”. I thought about this a long time and felt a little uncomfortable about doing this. Her name is a fundamental part of her identity. Who was I to choose another name for her?

What would you do in this situation? Why?

- **Your learner will not give you feedback; it is difficult for you to determine what you should be working on with your learner.**

Some learners are from cultures where teachers are highly respected. Students see teachers as specialists, and to question a teacher would be unimaginable.

While you are not a classroom teacher, you are in a situation where you may be perceived as a specialist. The learner may not feel that giving you feedback (in terms of what they do and do not like) is proper. She may resist telling you how she really feels.

Options to explore with the learner:

You may need to ask questions in a more indirect way. You may want to come with a few different books. Let your learner know that she must choose the best book.

Rating exercises may also be useful in determining the types of exercises your learner feels suit her purpose best.

What are the best ways to learn English?

*(1 is for the best way, 2 is for the second best,
8 is for the least important.)*

- ___ Memorizing information and taking tests to see how much I know
- ___ Watching movies
- ___ Listening to songs
- ___ Talking with an English speaker
- ___ Studying grammar
- ___ Listening to a tape and answering questions
- ___ Reading a book and answering questions
- ___ Having someone correct me when I speak

Reading articles about schools and how the people locally feel about education may also give you interesting feedback when the learner compares the information in these articles with educational concerns in her former region. You may also want to give your learner an exercise where she has to plan “the perfect English school” or has to “hire the best English teacher” for her fictional school. (You would need to provide your learner with 3 or 4 candidates from which to choose.)

Take note of some of the concerns expressed throughout these lessons and consider how you can address your learner’s expectations of what a tutor should do while still ensuring that the lessons are learner-centred. Throughout this process, you and your learner are negotiating. You are trying to increase your learner’s comfort level by fulfilling, to a certain degree, her expectations while trying to give her opportunities to express preferences.

■ You feel your learner is being exploited.

Ideas relating to work are cultural. While I was working in South East Asia, my workload was much heavier than it is in Regina. Not only was I expected to start work as early as 6:30 a.m. (and finish as late as 10 p.m.), I often had to work Saturdays as well.

In most office environments at that time, it was important for all the employees to make sure they arrived at the office before their boss did and to stay until after their boss left. The idea of “employee rights” took second place to the importance of being a “diligent” worker.

While workloads may vary from culture to culture, it would be unjust for anyone to profit by exploiting people who are unaware of local labor standards.

Options to explore with the learner:

Give your learner all the information you possibly can about labour standards. Information regarding labour standards is available on the Internet. (See <http://www.labour.gov.sk.ca/standards> for information regarding Saskatchewan labour standards.) You can simplify the material that is pertinent to your learner and have her read it. Discuss the reading with your learner and let the learner know what options are available to her. You may want to brainstorm the pros and cons of each option.

As a tutor, you are here to help your learner with English. While other issues may come to the forefront that will need to be resolved before learning can take place, it is important to inform and empower the learner to resolve issues on her own terms.

■ **Learner feels undervalued because she cannot find work in her field.**

For some immigrants, the change in locale not only means a physical and linguistic change, but the loss of a career. A recent government report states that underemployment is a significant issue. This report states that:

Immigrants and refugees reported that they had found employment mostly in low skill level occupations in areas not generally corresponding to their prior education and work experience. The number of immigrants and refugees reporting employment in sales and service occupations, for example, increased from 21% to 48% after immigration to Saskatchewan. At the same time, the number of immigrants and refugees reporting employment in high skill level occupations declined from 44% to 18%.

This is even more striking when one takes into consideration that 41% of immigrants and refugees have an under-graduate or post-graduate degree before coming to Saskatchewan.

In-province immigrants and refugees interviewed did not experience significant improvements over time in their reported employment situation.

Despite higher levels of education and skills, immigrants experienced difficulties integrating into the Canadian labour market. In 1996, the gap in employment rates between university-educated immigrants (73%) and Canadian – born (92%) stood at 20%. This gap has continued to widen over time...

Across Canada, language difficulties, lack of recognition of prior learning and foreign credentials...and possibly discrimination are factors hindering newcomers' integration into the labour market.⁸

Options to explore with the learner:

We want to be supportive and encourage learners to get jobs that suit their skills, abilities and previous experience. However, the statistics are disheartening and you may want to discuss some of the difficulties your learner may face.

If your learner is in a profession where there are local networking opportunities, inform your learner about them and discuss how these may be of use. Volunteer work may be one way for your learner to meet people and gain additional work related skills while increasing her English proficiency.

⁸ Saskatchewan Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs. *Meeting Needs and Making Connections: A Report on the Saskatchewan Immigrant and Refugee Settlement Needs and Retention Study* (November 2002), pp. 15 - 16.

You may also want to teach your learner about unions and how they are structured. Let the learner know that taking a lower-paying job in a union environment may be the first step in a long and prosperous career.

- **Learner has children who are adopting elements of Canadian culture that make her uncomfortable.**

The “generation gap” between parents and children can be difficult for newcomers to Canada. While adults do change, they keep with them many of the attitudes, beliefs and values they learned as children in their country of origin. However, their children, who grow up in Canada, tend to adopt a more Canadian viewpoint than their parents. This can make parents feel alienated from their children.

Options to explore with the learner:

Discuss difficulties the children of newcomers must face. At home, they are expected to conform to patterns of behavior from their country of origin while conforming to Canadian norms at school.

Finding a balance between respect for tradition and the pressure felt at school is necessary. This process takes time, patience and understanding. Stress the importance of being empathetic to the situation children face.

Contact program personnel from the organization that connected you to your learner for assistance. They are aware of the local organizations and groups your learner can go to for support.

- **Abuse**

Abuse is a problem that exists for people whether Canadian-born or recent arrivals. Those who suffer from abuse need comfort and support; however, it is particularly important that newcomers know that this support exists since many of the mechanisms we have in Canada may not exist in their native country.

Options to explore with the learner:

You may want to discuss the idea of “public responsibility” with your learner. In Canada, it is expected that the government can (and should) get involved in situations where children or spouses are being abused.

“The relationship between the family and the government is markedly different in Canada from many other countries. Canadians have come to expect that there are good reasons why there should be intervention in the family cases of violence, abuse or neglect... In some cases, newcomers must recognize that aspects of life which they may think of as private are illegal in Canada.”⁹

It is also important that learners recognize that some professions such as teachers, doctors or nurses have an “advisory role”. Advice given by these professionals in no way indicates that a parent is inadequate. It is simply offered to assist the parent make appropriate decisions.

Potential activities to try with the learner¹⁰

- Discuss the difference between drastic intervention (involving police) and helpful intervention (i.e. a nurse giving advice on child care).
- Discuss standards of acceptable discipline in Canada. These standards may differ from the ones the learner is accustomed to in her native country. Let learners know that children can be taken out of homes where family members use inappropriate forms of discipline.
- For lower level students, there are resources available in *The ESL Toolbox: Ready-to-Use Enrichment Activities for LINC Classes*,¹¹ that have simple language and many visual aids, which can be used to introduce topics such as abuse, date rape and other related issues.
- Please consult program personnel whenever serious issues arise. Program staff can make the referrals necessary to support a learner.

D: Discussing Culture with a Learner

Discussions about culture may come up frequently in your tutoring sessions. Learners are generally very interested in learning about Canadian culture and may come with numerous questions after a busy week.

However, there may be times when you want to make this part of the formal lesson. One way to introduce culture into the tutorial sessions is through the use of “critical incidents.” Critical incidents are set up in a way that stimulates discussion and allows the learner to express her viewpoint.

⁹ Human Resources Development Canada. *Working with Newcomers: A Guide for Immigration and Settlement Workers*, 1991. Reproduced with the permission of the Minister of Public Works and the Government Services Canada, 2003.

¹⁰ Human Resources Development Canada. *Canada: A Source Book for Orientation, Language and Settlement Workers*, 1991. Reproduced with the permission of the Minister of Public Works and the Government Services Canada, 2003.

¹¹ Ormiston et al., *The ESL Tool Box: Ready-to-Use Enrichment Activities for LINC Classes* (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: University Extension Press, 1995.)

Before the session: Choosing a critical incident

- Select a social situation.
- Write a scenario related to this situation.
- Create three or four responses for the situation.
- If possible, make one of the choices related to the culture of the learner.

Critical Incident: Example

Lisa asked Beth to come over to her house for supper and a movie. She told Beth to come over "around 7:00 p.m." What time should Beth arrive?

- a. at any time that evening
- b. 10 or 15 minutes before 7:00 p.m.
- c. 10 or 15 minutes after 7:00 p.m.
- d. at exactly 7:00 p.m.

Basic steps in using critical incidents

- Read the situation and the responses together.
- Let the learner choose which one is the most appropriate.
- Ask follow-up questions regarding why the learner has chosen that response.
- Discuss each possible response with the learner and how it might be interpreted.
- Discuss which answer you would have chosen and why.

This activity works with larger groups as well. The more diverse your group is, the more interesting it is.

Other variations

- Instead of using a written "critical incident" play a short video segment with a communication problem between a Native English speaker and someone from another culture.
- Have learners write their own "critical incident" regarding a situation they have experienced.

"We can not assume that our values are the best values or the only acceptable ones." ¹²

¹² Virginia Sauvé, *Voices and Visions: An Introduction to Teaching ESL* (Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press Canada, 2000), p.12. By permission of Oxford University Press Canada.

The purpose of “critical incidents” is to reinforce the concept that one action can be interpreted in many different ways. It is not to make overarching generalizations about the culture and how people will definitively react in a given situation.

E: Cultural Homework

Surveys

If your learner is interested in learning more about cultural norms, you may want to use surveys. Surveys are short lists of questions that the learner uses to get information from two or more people.

Surveys can be on a variety of topics and can be written for beginning to advanced learners. While you could write the survey yourself or take it out of an ESL text, it is best to have the learner write the survey with your assistance. Before you write a survey together, ensure that your learner is comfortable talking to native speakers about the assigned topic and knows people (from school or work) that are willing to be interviewed.

A sample survey

Introductions

- Do you usually introduce yourself or do you wait for someone to introduce you to a new person?
- When you are introduced to someone new, what do you say?
- Do you shake hands when you are introduced to someone?
- What questions can you ask someone that you have just met?

As mentioned previously, we should be aware of what element of Canadian culture we represent (middle-class etc.) Giving surveys can be meaningful because:

- a. it reinforces the notion that the tutor's beliefs are not necessarily the same as everyone else.
- b. it gives the learner the opportunity to meet other people and converse with them in a meaningful way.
- c. the learner will gain more confidence in her "English ability" .

Surveys for beginning learners

Beginning learners may not feel comfortable finding people to talk to them about cultural issues. You could, however, use surveys to examine cultural issues together. *ESL Toolbox: Ready-to-Use Enrichment Activities for LINC Classes*¹³ has a number of questionnaires that you and the learner can use to gain information about culture. Topics include: men and women, work, school, family, and manners (what is polite / impolite in certain social situations.) Some surveys are included in Additional Resources: Cultural Surveys.

In these exercises, there are three categories: in my country, in Canada, and in "my opinion." These exercises will give you a chance to: learn about your learner's culture, discover what your learner knows about Canadian culture and, using follow-up questions, find out how your learner interprets the activity around her. The activity recognizes that the learner will not necessarily agree with the cultural norms of her native country or the prevalent cultural norms in Canada.

*"I encourage people to talk about differences they see between their culture and ours. But I try not to be defensive when they are critical because, indeed, there are many aspects of our culture that not only they do not like, but I too find wanting. It is not my job to impose cultural norms and values on anyone, but rather to inform them, to the best of my ability, what those norms and values are and what might be the consequences of choosing not to adhere to them. It is not my place to judge their decisions."*¹⁴

¹³ Ormiston et al., *The ESL Tool Box: Ready-to-Use Enrichment Activities for LINC Classes* (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: University Extension Press, 1995.)

¹⁴ Virginia Sauvé, *Voices and Visions: An Introduction to Teaching ESL* (Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press Canada, 2000), p.97. Used by permission.

SESSION 3

The Learner

Discovering the Learning
Styles, Skills and Needs
of Your Learner

Session 3: The Learner

The objectives of this session are:

- To introduce you to different types of learning styles regarding how the brain receives and processes information
- To discover your learning style and how this may affect your tutoring style
- To familiarize you with the cultural issues associated with learning styles
- To introduce assessment (skills and needs assessment) and discuss the importance of each type of assessment
- To familiarize you with initial and continuous assessment
- To examine a sample inventory of questions that can be used to assess a learner
- To introduce and describe the usage of portfolios
- To start a portfolio to demonstrate how portfolios can be used to define goals and measure growth of a learner

Part 1: Learning Styles

Learning style are the way in which learners “most efficiently and effectively perceive, process, store and recall what they are attempting to learn.”¹

A¹: How the Brain Perceives Information

Consider how many different ways a learner can get information. When Hyun-Chu was taking her English class, she would read the assigned text, write down words the teacher wrote from the board and listen to the teacher speak.

She found that, whenever she could see and write something down, she remembered the information much better than if she just heard it. Often, she would forget new vocabulary or confuse it with something else if she didn't see it in print.

Every person has a preferred way of learning. Hyun-Chu likes to read when she learns something new; other people would rather listen to a lecture or involve their other senses.

Because information is taken in through the senses, it is important to identify how people learn using these senses. There are four different ways that people learn: by reading, by listening, by touching and by doing. Certain characteristics for each type of learner are described in the *Saskatchewan Level 1 Tutor Training Kit*.²

Visual learners

(take in messages through the eyes; they learn by reading)

- Can recall words after seeing them a few times
- Like written directions
- Discriminate between letters and words that look alike (pass, past)

Auditory learners

(take in messages through the ears; they learn by listening)

- Can remember words after hearing them a few times
- Like oral explanations
- Discriminate between sounds that sound alike (pail/bail)

¹ James et al. as cited in Bettina Lankard Brown. (1998). Learning Styles and Vocational Education Practice. *ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education*. [on-line], Columbus, OH. Available: ericacve.org/pab.asp. [2003, April 15]

²Saskatchewan Literacy Network, *Saskatchewan Level 1 Tutor Training Kit* (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Saskatchewan Literacy Network, 2000), p. 14.

Tactile learners

(take in messages through the skin; they learn by touching)

- Recall words after tracing or typing them a few times
- Write legibly
- Excel at sewing, model making etc.
- Recall words after touching an object

Kinesthetic

(take in messages through body movement; they learn by doing)

- Recall words after writing them a few times
- Can recall information more easily when moving

Many people prefer to use one method over the others when they are trying to learn something. Once you get to know your learner, you will be able to determine how she learns best. You'll be able to get a lot of information from the learner herself. Encourage your learner to tell you her preferred learning style. How does she learn best at school? What is the most efficient way for her to learn at work? What strategies does she use when learning a new task at home? Keep in mind that your learner may not have the same preference all of the time. Sometimes, learning preferences differ dependent upon the task or type of learning that is done.

Generally, learners are already aware of what learning style they feel the most comfortable with in a given situation. Ask the learner for feedback and use your own judgment while you observe your learners response to various teaching styles.

Other considerations

Keep in mind that learning styles exist on a continuum – not all learners will be equally “visual”, “auditory”, “kinesthetic” or “tactile.” For example, some visual learners may have a lot of difficulty when faced with learning situations that emphasize the use of other learning styles, while other visual learners may be able to more readily understand information presented in the other forms.

Regardless of where your learner seems to be on the continuum, use all the methods of delivery. Although using the preferred learning style will make the process faster and easier, it is important to expose the learner to different methods. This will allow the learner to gain the most from the learning experience. However, keep in mind that it is best to use the

preferred method when introducing new material. Use other methods when doing extra practice or review. This will help reinforce what has been learned.

Sometimes, if we have a preferred learning style, we automatically teach in that style. This can be a frustrating experience for the learner. Teaching as you like to be taught is not always the best course of action.

Here are some suggestions that will help you while lesson planning:³

Suggestions for a visual learner

- Use pictures or other visual aids (graphs) to help explain what you are saying
- Have a paper and pencil ready
- Write down instructions
- Ask the learner to write down new words
- Teach words or word parts by sight first
- Make sure there is no background noise

Suggestions for an auditory learner

- Use your voice as much as possible
- Give oral instructions whenever possible
- Use tapes, radio and discussions
- Read aloud to learners
- Have learners listen to a tape while reading
- Do not crowd information onto a page

Suggestions for a tactile learner

- Help a beginning learner to make letters and sounds by tracing them on a rough surface such as sandpaper
- Use typewriters, computers and other audio/visual equipment

³Saskatchewan Literacy Network, *Saskatchewan Level 1 Tutor Training Kit* (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Saskatchewan Literacy Network, 2000), pp. 19-21.

Suggestions for a kinesthetic learner

- Allow the learner to be physically involved in her learning. Create activities connected to what she is learning. For example, act out information that is read or encourage hand/body movements during explanations.
- Put words on separate cards for the learner to make sentences.
- Put word parts (prefix, root and suffix) on separate cards so the learner can make words.
- Take a walk with your learner. Use the print you see on your walk (store signs, advertisements on billboards, movie posters) as the basis for future lessons. For example, the learner could write down key words on the walk and use these key words in a story later.
- Have the learner beat out syllables so she can feel the “rhythm of the word.” This can be useful when the learner is having pronunciation difficulties.

A study of ESL learners done by Joy Reid (1987)⁴ shows that there are some cross- cultural differences in learning styles. Based on her study, it was found that:

- Korean students were more visually orientated than English-speaking Americans
- Japanese students were the least auditory (compared to Chinese and Arabic learners)

Learning styles are also influenced by:

- Gender (male / female)
- Length of time in the new country
- Field of study (if involved in academia)
- Level of education

Thus, while culture may play a role, it is not the only determining factor.

There are many different ways to classify learning styles. More information regarding these classification frameworks is available in the **Additional Resources** Section.

⁴ H. Douglas Brown, *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (4th edition). (White Plains, NY: Pearson Education, 1999), p. 122. Reprinted by permission of Pearson Education.

B: Aboriginal Learning Styles

The way we classify learning styles is cultural. While the information provided about learning styles so far will help you get an idea of how you can help your learner, it is important to keep in mind that there are other ways to define learning styles.

We have discussed the importance of using approaches that take into consideration your learner's preferred learning style. For example, visual learners can learn much more quickly if they can see the information in print. Auditory learners prefer to hear new information and find it is easier to remember information when it is presented in this form.

Although it is important to tailor your approach when introducing new material, finding ways to use approaches that involve all the senses is also a good idea. All the approaches can work well with learners as they learn English.

Just as you should try to use an integrated approach that uses all the senses, the Aboriginal approach to learning and learning styles (as described in a speech entitled "Prior Learning Assessment Recognition: Applications for an Aboriginal Model of Holistic Learning") advocates an integrated approach that focuses on the physical, the mental, the intuitive and the emotional.⁵

Physical

Body – Doing or Acting on it

Spirit

Intuitive – Seeing it - Visioning

Mental

Mind – Knowing it – Understanding

Relational

Emotional – Relating to it - Feeling

⁵ Dianne Hill, "Prior Learning Assessment Recognition: Applications for an Aboriginal Model of Holistic Learning." Joe Duquette High School. Saskatoon, November 16, 2001. Used with permission from Dianne Hill.

When planning a program for Aboriginal learners, it may be important to design lessons using all 4 aspects of the human being: mind, body, heart and skills.

For Aboriginal people, learning can begin with the spirit or intuition. “When the spirit senses something, you can be made aware... The learning process... moves from the spirit to the heart, then through the mind and finally expresses itself in the body.”⁶

Learning can also start when “new information is coming at us from the outside, it has to go through the body first, then through the mind, then it has to reach the heart, before it hits us deep within our spirits or the part of us that intuitively knows.”⁷ While this may seem contradictory, it is not. The learning process for Aboriginal learners takes into consideration that knowledge can come from two sources – both from within and outside the person.

Understanding how they learn is the first step in helping Native learners realize that they have a choice in how they learn.⁸

⁶ Dianne Hill, “Prior Learning Assessment Recognition: Applications for an Aboriginal Model of Holistic Learning.” Joe Duquette High School. Saskatoon, November 16, 2001. Used with permission from Dianne Hill.

⁷ Dianne Hill, “Prior Learning Assessment Recognition: Applications for an Aboriginal Model of Holistic Learning.” Joe Duquette High School. Saskatoon, November 16, 2001. Used with permission from Dianne Hill.

⁸ Dianne Hill, “Prior Learning Assessment Recognition: Applications for an Aboriginal Model of Holistic Learning.” Joe Duquette High School. Saskatoon, November 16, 2001. Used with permission from Dianne Hill.

1. Physically-centred learners

Characteristics

- Learn best when learning is a part of the whole context
- Learn best when the content is practical
- Need to relate new experiences to past learning
- Like to learn by watching and doing – not by listening to detailed instructions from the tutor
- Task-orientated

As with any learning style that attempts to classify a large group of people, we must recognize that First Nations People are not a uniform group – there are hundreds of different tribal groups in North America. Even within the same tribal group, individuals can be considerably different from one another.¹⁰

Ideas for tasks and activities

- Videos
- Role-play
- Personal, experiential stories and variety
- Change activity frequently

2. Intuitive learners⁹

Characteristics

- Need to know why they are doing something
- Connect what they are learning to what they already know
- Need time alone to process new concepts and information
- Adapt easily to new learning situations
- Can synthesize large amounts of information
- Thorough, remember the smaller details

Ideas for tasks and activities

- Experience-sharing discussions
- Crosswords
- Debate
- Word games (Scrabble, crosswords)
- Videos – to watch and discuss
- Oral history
- Self-awareness and self-assessment exercises

⁹Dianne Hill, "Prior Learning Assessment Recognition: Applications for an Aboriginal Model of Holistic Learning." Joe Duquette High School. Saskatoon, November 16, 2001. Used with permission from Dianne Hill.

¹⁰ Karen Swisher. (May 1991) American Indian /Alaskan Native Learning Styles: Research and Practice. *National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition & Language Instruction Educational Programs*. [on-line], Washington, DC. Available: ncela.gwu.edu/miscpubs/jeilms/vol13/amer13.htm [2003, February]

3. Mental learners

Characteristics

- Like to have the idea or theory presented first
- Do not like discovery exercises
- Have strong value systems and prefer content that is related to these values
- Are considered “black and white” thinkers
- Learn well independently
- Like to talk about ideas only after they have had time to think about and consider the issues
- Concentrate intensely and, therefore, cannot divide attention among many tasks

Ideas for tasks and activities

- Debates
- Field trips
- Audio books
- Organizing events

4. Emotional – Relational learners

Characteristics

- Learn while talking and listening to others; learn through stories
- Like variety and like to be creative
- Can divide their attention among many things at the same time
- Learn best when the material is connected to their personal lives

Ideas for tasks and activities

- Role play, role reversal exercises
- Writing and retelling a personal story
- Scavenger hunts
- Joke telling
- Teaching with props
- Video/audio recordings

“ Native adult learners must be able to analyze and determine not only what is needed to perform well in their occupation, for example, but also what is needed for them to live a life of quality within the context of their Native cultural identity. Therefore, for Native people, an holistic educational process requires the adult learner to become aware of not only the external, objective world around them, but also the internal, subjective world that they carry inside themselves.”¹¹

¹¹ Michael Johnny (ed.) *Native Learning Styles: Second Edition*. (Owen Sound, Ontario: Ningwakwe Learning Press, 2002), p. 6. Written permission granted.

Part II: Assessing the Learner

A: Why should we assess the learner?

Assessing the learner is important because it forms the basis from which to start tutoring. It helps to identify the learner's strengths and weaknesses. With this knowledge, the learner and you will be able to set realistic goals and determine the approach you should take. Assessing the learner will also help you choose appropriate materials – materials that are challenging but not too difficult.

In Session 1: Understanding the Context, we discussed the different types of learners that you may encounter as a tutor.¹²

Preliterates are learners who speak a language that has no written form.

Nonliterates are learners who speak a language that has a written form but have not learned how to read and write.

Semiliterates are learners who have had limited access to literacy instruction in their first language.

Nonalphabetics are literate learners from other countries whose languages use a nonalphabetic script (for example, Chinese).

Non-Roman alphabetics are literate learners from other countries whose languages use a different alphabetic writing system (Korean, Greek and Russian).

Roman Alphabetics are learners from other countries who already know the Roman alphabet.

Learners in each of the groups will have their own set of special needs. For example, some ESL instructors may argue that *preliterate* or *nonliterate* learners will find learning English more difficult than other learners. As a tutor, you will need to do a lot of preliminary work with your learner before you start focusing on content. Not only will you be teaching the alphabet, but you may be teaching the learner how to hold a pencil and use lined paper. The numerical system is also something that these learners may need to learn. If your learner is *preliterate* or *nonliterate*, please refer to the appropriate section in the additional resources provided. Activities and lesson plans, that will you give some ideas regarding what you can do with your learner, are included.

¹²Miriam Burt and Joy Kreeft Peyton. (2003). Reading and Adult English Language Learners: The Role of the First Language. *National Centre for ESL Literacy Education and Centre for Applied Linguistics* [on-line], Washington, D.C. Available: cal.org/ncele/digests/reading.htm. [2003, April 15]

Learners who are *semiliterate* will also need extra support. These learners may have left school early in their native country due to political or economic reasons. As mentioned in Session 1, try to minimize the amount of paper you use at first so the learner does not feel overwhelmed.

For the *nonalphabetic* or *non-Roman alphabetic* learners who have not had the opportunity to take English classes, you may need to start with the alphabet and emphasize the need to read from left to right. However, some *nonalphabetic* or *non-Roman alphabetic* learners that you may encounter may have very well developed skills. You may find that your learner has taken numerous English classes before coming to Canada and has a good solid understanding of English. This learner may be able to read and write well, but may have difficulty with listening and speaking. Working on improving listening skills, pronunciation and speaking fluency may be this learner's greatest interest.

Classification of Learners in this Manual

Generally, learners will be categorized as beginner, intermediate and advanced. While your learner will not fit neatly into a category (for example, you may consider your learner's reading ability at an "intermediate" level and her speaking at an "advanced" level), the categories are useful. The categories will help you determine what activities will work best for your learner. This knowledge can also assist you and your learner in appropriate materials selection.

ESLOA: Level Description Grid ¹³

	General	Listening	Speaking	Work	Reading	Writing
Beginner	Students enter the beginning level with little or no ability to read or write in English. Low beginners are unable to function in a situation requiring spoken English. Students at high beginning level function in a limited way speaking English in situations related to their immediate needs.	Students are able to comprehend a range of high-frequency words used in context. Students understand a limited number of very simple learned phrases, spoken slowly with frequent repetitions.	Students can communicate survival needs using very simple learned phrases and sentences. Students ask and respond to simple questions and have some control over basic grammar.	Students can handle only very routine entry-level jobs that do not require oral communication and in which all tasks can be easily demonstrated. Students at high-beginning level can use only the most basic oral communication skills on a non-technical level.	Students are able to attain limited meaning from print materials with successive rereading and checking.	Students are able to copy isolated words and phrases and generate short sentences based on previously learned material
Intermediate	Students who enter the low-intermediate level function satisfactorily in the use of English in basic survival situations related to their needs. At the high-intermediate level students can use English to function independently in most familiar situations.	Students comprehend conversations containing some unfamiliar vocabulary. Students understand simple learned phrases easily and some new phrases containing familiar vocabulary.	Students have some ability to participate in face-to-face conversations on topics beyond their survival needs. They clarify meaning by asking questions or simply rewording. Students have some control of basic grammar.	Students can function independently in their jobs, handling job training and work situations that involve oral communication skills on both a nontechnical and technical level. Written directions and materials may need to be simplified or clarified orally.	Students can read simplified material on familiar subjects and have limited success when attempting to read some authentic materials.	Students can generate simple sequential paragraphs related to survival skills, personal topics, and non-personal topics with some errors.
Advanced	Students enter the advanced level with the ability to use English to function effectively in familiar and unfamiliar social situations and familiar work situations. High level advanced students use English to meet most routine social and work-related demands with confidence, though not without instances of hesitation.	Students can comprehend abstract topics presented in familiar contexts. They can also understand descriptive and narrative form.	Students are able to participate in casual and extended conversation. They communicate on the phone on familiar subjects, clarify general meaning, and control of basic grammar is evident.	Students can meet most work demands with confidence. They can also function effectively in work situations that require interaction with the public. They can follow written instructions in technical work manuals.	Students can read authentic materials on abstract topics in familiar contexts as well as descriptions and narrations of factual material.	Students can write descriptions, short essays, summaries, letters, and can complete complex forms or applications. Students can use basic self-correction techniques.

¹³ Ruth Johnson Colvin, *I Speak English*. (Syracuse, New York: New Readers Press, 1997), p. 51. Used by permission.

B: Initial Assessment

The Informal Interview

Thus far, we have discussed the importance of knowing:

- the level of formal education your learner has.
- the learning style or preference your learner has.

However, understanding your learner does not consist of just gleaning information about her background; it should also focus on the skills, needs and goals of the learner. You may find it useful to do an **informal interview** with your learner. The informal interview can serve as an opportunity to do the **needs assessment** as well as get a feel for the skills the learner already possesses.

A needs assessment is the process of gathering information about the learner's background, interests and goals.

This interview should not be set up as though it is a testing situation. It should be something that you approach in a friendly, conversational way. You may even want to take more than one session to do the interview. Below are some questions which will help you learn more about your learner and assist both of you in developing a program which best suits the needs of the learner.

Naturally, if the learner cannot answer the first few questions, you would stop the interview process.

*Possible Questions*¹⁴

a. Education / Background

Where did you grow up?

Did you go to school there? (How many years did you go to school?)

What are schools like in your country?

What is your first language?

Do you speak any other languages?

How old were you when you started learning English?

¹⁴ Manitoba Education and Training, Adult Literacy and Continuing Education. Creative Student Assessment. *National Adult Literacy Database*. [on-line], Fredericton, New Brunswick. Available: nald.ca/CLR/csa/contents.htm. [2003, February 21] Used with permission.

Did your teachers spend a lot of time teaching you reading and writing?
(How much?)

What kind of books did you read? What topics did you write about?

Did you get a chance to practice speaking and listening?

What language do you speak at home?

b. Employment

Did you work in your country? What kind of work did you do?

Do you work here?

c. Long range goals

What are your educational goals?

What are your work or career goals?

What other goals do you have?

d. Short and long-term goals

An important part of the initial assessment is to gain an understanding of where your learner is in terms of language proficiency and employment, and what your learner hopes to accomplish. This will help you determine the content of the tutoring program.

The following forms can be photocopied and used to help learners define their short-term goals and long-term goals.¹⁵ There are blank sections in order for learners to add extra tasks that they consider important. Once the checklist is complete, spend time with your learner determining in what order the tasks should be addressed.

¹⁵ Manitoba Education and Training, Adult Literacy and Continuing Education. Creative Student Assessment. *National Adult Literacy Database*. [on-line], Fredericton, New Brunswick. Available: nald.ca/CLR/csa/contents.htm. [2003, February 21] Used with permission.

Tasks ¹⁶	Can do (date)	Work on Now	Work on Later	Not Interested
At home				
Write shopping list				
Read labels on food packages				
Read mail such as bills and advertisements				
Look up phone numbers				
Take a phone message				
Follow directions (i.e. recipes or directions for assembly)				
Read a lease				
Fill out application forms				
Read/write letters or notes				
Read newspapers and/or magazines				

¹⁶ Manitoba Education and Training, Adult Literacy and Continuing Education. Creative Student Assessment. *National Adult Literacy Database*. [on-line], Fredericton, New Brunswick. Available: nald.ca/CLR/csa/contents.htm. [2003, February 21] Used with permission.

Tasks	Can do (date)	Work on Now	Work on Later	Not Interested
Banking				
Open an account				
Fill out bank forms				
Write cheques				
Keep bankbook				
Shopping				
Read signs and labels				
Compare prices				
Request items at store				
Ask about prices and discounts				
Count money				
Order something by mail				
Order something over the phone				
Health				
Request an appointment				
Fill in a health questionnaire				
Discuss health issues with a doctor				
Read medicine labels				

Tasks	Can do (date)	Work on Now	Work on Later	Not Interested
Work				
Read information about training programs				
Read job applications				
Make an inquiry about a job				
Fill out job applications				
Prepare résumé				
Write cover letters				
Read/write job-related memos				
Read pay cheque				
Read contract				
Read work orders				
Read safety information				
Take/leave telephone messages				

Tasks	Can do (date)	Work on Now	Work on Later	Not Interested
Getting Around				
Read street names				
Read a map				
Ask for directions				
Write down directions				
Read a bus schedule				
Read a menu				
Order food in a restaurant				
Make a reservation				
Confirm a reservation				
Take a driver's test				

Tasks	Can do (date)	Work on Now	Work on Later	Not Interested
General				
Read short stories				
Read stories to my children				
Write stories				
Keep a diary				
Read the newspaper				
Write letters to a newspaper				
Write e-mail				
Write paragraphs				
Write essays				
Use grammatical forms correctly				

Short and Long-Term Goals: Beginners

Before planning lessons based on the information that you have gleaned from the goal setting sheets, you may want to consider the skills necessary for each outcome. With beginners, you may want to ask them the following questions or give them an assignment where you can determine whether or not they possess the following skills.

When having a learner read, provide an assortment of reading materials and let the learner choose. Ensure the materials are “real materials” – things that a learner may have to cope with. Make sure the materials are also at a variety of levels and cover different topics. Any writing samples you collect should involve learner choice.

Reading Tasks ¹⁷	Yes	Sometimes	No	Not Interested
I know the alphabet				
I know what sounds the letters make.				
I read from left to right				
I understand what I read.				
I can answer yes/no questions about what I have read.				
I can answer wh- questions about what I have read.				

¹⁷ Manitoba Education and Training, Adult Literacy and Continuing Education. Creative Student Assessment. *National Adult Literacy Database*. [on-line], Fredericton, New Brunswick. Available: nald.ca/CLR/csa/contents.htm. [2003, February 21] Used with permission.

Writing Tasks	Yes	Sometimes	No	Not Interested
I can print the alphabet				
I can print large case and small case letters.				
I can write common words (a, the, he) from left to right.				
I can write in sentences.				
I can write about myself.				
I can write about familiar topics.				
I spell known words correctly.				
I can fill in forms.				

Using informal interviews for skills assessment

As mentioned before, the informal interview can be used as a skills assessment. In addition to asking the learner what her weaknesses are (or determining what these are with a reading or writing exercise), you may also want to think about how well the learner can speak and understand English.

Comprehension

- Does the learner understand what you say?
- Does the learner often ask you to repeat or give you the wrong answer to the question?

Speaking

- Is the learner's speech easy to understand or do you have to ask the learner to repeat?
- Is the learner's speech fluent or are there many pauses?
- Is the learner self-correcting?
- Does the learner's speech interfere with understanding?
- Can the learner pronounce individual sounds correctly? What sounds does the learner have difficulty with?
- Does the learner use appropriate intonation patterns? Do questions sound like questions and statements like statements?

In Sessions 6 and 7, these areas will be discussed.

C: Introducing the Learners

You will be introduced to different learners who have a variety of skills and different needs. The first two learners, Hyun – Chu and Carine are included in the manual. The workshop facilitator will also introduce additional learners using either a video or additional handouts.

Introduction to Hyun – Chu

After meeting Hyun-Chu and doing a needs and skills assessment, the tutor learned the following information about her:

Hyun-Chu is a 24-year old from Korea. She tells me that she learns best by reading. She is studying English right now, but is planning on becoming an environmental scientist. Before she can do that, she needs to complete English classes and attend some additional courses in her subject area at the University of Regina. Her classes started only a few weeks ago and she is considered a beginning learner.

Since her long-term goal will take years to accomplish, she wants to concentrate on smaller goals right now. Many of these smaller goals consist of improving skills that she needs to excel in her English class. She wants to improve all skill areas: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Although she knows that she still needs to improve in reading and writing, she wants to concentrate slightly more on improving her speaking and listening.

She is interested in learning as much as she can about Canadian culture and has to write a short paper for her English class comparing certain aspects of her hometown to Regina by the end of her semester. She doesn't know exactly what things her teacher will ask her to compare.

When she was a middle-school and high-school student, Hyun-Chu's teachers placed a lot of emphasis on grammar. Hyun-Chu feels comfortable with grammatical explanations and a more linear, detail-orientated approach to learning.

In her life outside the classroom, she sometimes feels awkward in social situations. People speak too quickly for her to understand. She feels that people have a lot of difficulty understanding her pronunciation. Some of the problems she has with pronunciation are the differences between /f/ and /v/, /p/ and /b/, as well as /l/ and /r/. Some vowel sounds are also very difficult for her to pronounce. When she says "want" and "won't", they sound very similar. Sometimes, this causes communication difficulties. When at a friend's place the other day, she looked at the meal and said, "Looks interesting. I want to eat this." Her friend, however, heard, "Looks interesting. I won't eat this." Hyun-Chu was surprised when her friend said to her, "Oh, you don't have to eat this. You can have a hamburger."

Her sister's birthday is coming soon and she wants to buy her some presents. She is thinking of buying her a shirt of some sort, preferably something that has the Canadian flag on it. She wants to practice shopping in the tutoring session so she feels more confident when she goes to make her purchases.

Because Hyun-Chu's needs are predominantly academic, the checklists were used only to a limited degree. As a tutor, you may find that the checklists do not suit the individual needs of your learner. You and your learner may have to build a more individualized checklist or use another way to document the short-term and long-term goals of your learner.

Regardless of the format used, it is important that the goals that are defined are learner-centred. When learners take an active role in goal setting, they are likely to take responsibility for their learning and remain motivated throughout the lessons.

Introduction to Carine

After meeting Carine and doing a needs and skills assessment, the tutor learned the following information about her:

***Carine** is a 33-year old originally from France but has lived primarily in Egypt since she was a teenager. She met her husband 8 years ago; they married soon after the initial meeting, and they now have 2 young children. Two months ago they left Egypt and moved to Canada, her husband's native country. As he is bilingual, they generally speak French at home. She wants to take English classes and ultimately resume her career as a nurse, but will wait until her children, who are now 2 ½ and 3½, start school.*

For now, she is enrolled in the tutor program and wants to meet once a week. She is interested in learning a variety of different things. Her husband is able to help her quite a bit, but she knows that once her children start school she will be the one who attends parent-teacher interviews because his work schedule is chaotic and he is often on call. She would also like to be able to read stories in both English and French to her children. She plans on sending them to an English-speaking school since they live in a small city.

Since her long-term goal will take some time to accomplish, she wants to concentrate on smaller goals right now. She knows her vocabulary is limited and wants to work on learning the names for the things that she uses everyday, such as appliances or things around the house that she may need to purchase or have repaired. She wants to spend one lesson reviewing money. She knows numbers but is unfamiliar with some of the words storekeepers have said to her when she pays for her groceries. She

cannot remember what these words were, but will try to write them down next time she hears them and bring them to a future session.

Carine needs to shop for food and is unfamiliar with the names of many types of food. She also has limited experience preparing food and wants to learn how to read recipes so she can prepare regional cuisine as well as the French and Egyptian food she already knows how to make.

Although there are many similarities between French and English, she still has some problems. Often, she speaks using French sentences structure, and says things like “I have 37 years” or “I saw the car blue.”

Her short-term goals also include improving her pronunciation. Some of the problems she has with pronunciation are the differences between the /t/ and -th sounds (as in **th**ink and **th**at), the -ch sound (as in **ch**ina), and the r sound as well as a variety of vowel sounds. English intonation is also very difficult for her, and she often pronounces English words using French word stress.

Carine is predominately a visual learner, but also enjoys doing activities where she can be physically involved. She is very spontaneous and likes to participate in drama and learn English through music.

She does not like to do traditional grammar exercises; she needs to work with the language and see the “big picture” rather than concentrating on rules. She would like the tutor to help her correct her most serious mistakes. She is interested in learning English while having fun. She has a computer at home, which she uses for additional English practice.

One of Carine’s checklists looked like this:

Tasks	Can do (date)	Work on Now	Work on Later	Not Interested
At home				
Write shopping list		✓		
Read labels on food packages		✓		
Read mail such as bills and advertisements		✓		
Look up phone numbers	✓			
Take a phone message			✓	
Follow directions (i.e. recipes or directions for assembly)		✓		
Read a lease				✓
Fill out application forms			✓	
Read / write letters or notes		✓		
Read newspapers and / or magazines		✓		

You will notice that the information provided about Carine includes more than what was gathered through the informal interview questions and the checklists. Although they were used as the basis of the initial assessment, the tutor asked additional follow-up questions to learn more about Carine. The tutor also had Carine prioritize her concerns and decide in what order she wanted to learn the skills highlighted. The tutor made notes regarding Carine's comprehension and speaking skills based on what he observed in the interview.

D: Assessing Progress

The checklists provided can be used not only for the initial assessment but referred to every few months so learners can see the progress they have made. It also gives learners an opportunity to revisit their original plans and make changes wherever necessary.

Portfolios

What are portfolios?

Portfolios are files that contain learner work. They are meant to show how a learner has progressed over a period of time.

Basic steps in using portfolios

- 1 Determine the long-term goals the learner wants to achieve.
- 2 Break a long-term goal into short-term goals that are both attainable and measurable.
- 3 Write these short-term goals as goal statements.
- 4 Set up time to review the contents of the portfolio and redefine goals when necessary.

Items to include in a portfolio

- A cover page with an introduction
- A preliminary skills checklist (*what the learner was able to do when the tutoring sessions first started*)
- Writing samples (including drafts and final copies)
- Audio tapes with speech samples
- Video tapes demonstrating proficiency at a task
- Goal statements
- Skills checklists
- Reading checklists and samples of reading
- Checklists of TV shows watched or radio broadcasts listened to
- Vocabulary charts
- Idiom lists
- Anecdotal notes (stories of how the learner has changed)
- Self-reflection exercises that highlight what the portfolio demonstrates about the learner's strengths and needs

Any additional items that demonstrates a skill or goal has been achieved!

Organizing your portfolio

- Put a date on all entries.
- Use a summary sheet or table of contents at the beginning and keep it up-to-date.
- Include a variety of different work.

Benefits in using portfolios

- Are truly learner-centred.
 - ✓ Assessment is done with the learner not to the learner.
- Improve planning and empower the learner.
 - ✓ Learners set their goals and see where they are going.
 - ✓ It gives learners an opportunity to think about the process of learning and the strategies that they use while learning. Portfolios can help learners think about and evaluate the ways in which they learn.
 - ✓ Revisiting the portfolio gives the learner a chance to reset goals when necessary.

- Motivate the learner.
 - ✓ The learner can see what she has accomplished.
 - ✓ The portfolio helps the learner take responsibility. The learner decides what the goals should be and defines when the goal has been reached.

- Can take on different forms to achieve their purpose.

Dianne Hill advocates the use of portfolios for Aboriginal learners. *"Because Aboriginal people come from an oral tradition... Aboriginal people can often do quite well in creating portfolios that are based on audio-cassette or videotape presentation methods."*²¹

²¹Dianne Hill, "Prior Learning Assessment Recognition: Applications for an Aboriginal Model of Holistic Learning." Joe Duquette High School. Saskatoon, November 16, 2001. Used with permission from Dianne Hill.

Goal Statement and Reflections

My goal:

long-term

short-term

Steps I will take to reach my goal:

Interest Inventory ²²

Name:

Date:

1. I like to read about...
2. I like to write...
3. I wish I could...
4. On weekends, I...
5. I am at my best when...
6. I often worry about...
7. When I have to read, I...
8. I am really interested in learning about...
9. My idea of the perfect day is...

²² Manitoba Education and Training, Adult Literacy and Continuing Education. ***Creative Student Assessment***. National Adult Literacy Database. [on-line], Fredericton, New Brunswick. Available: nald.ca/CLR/csa/contents.htm. [2003, February 21] Used with permission.

Reflection sheet (for speaking or listening exercises)

Name:

Date:

1. Describe the activity:

2. This work shows that I can...

3. I still need to work on...

Checking Progress (weekly or monthly)²⁵

This learner questionnaire can be used for:

- *Examining the tutoring process and learner experiences outside the tutoring sessions.*
- *Redefining short-term goals.*

1. This (week/month) I studied...
2. This (week/month) I learned...
3. This (week/month) I liked...
4. This (week/month) I didn't like...
5. This (week/month) I used my English in these places:
6. This (week/month) I spoke with these people...
7. This (week/month) I had difficulties with...
8. I would like to know/work on...
9. My learning and practicing plans for next week are...

²⁵ Auerbach, *Making meaning, making change: Participatory curriculum development for adult ESL literacy*. (Washington, DC and McHenry, IL: Center for Applied Linguistics and Delta Systems, 1992) Reprinted with permission.

Reviewing the contents of the portfolio

It is a good idea to regularly review the contents of the portfolio. During this time, take a look at how the items in the portfolio demonstrate that a skill has been developed or a goal has been achieved. For an advanced learner, you may want to ask some of the following questions. These questions will enable the learner to look at her development holistically and make some plans for the future.

What did I like working on the most?

What things would I like help with now?

What are some things I need to work on next?

What does my portfolio tell me about how I am learning?

SESSION 4

**Integrated Teaching
Strategies**

Session 4: Integrated Teaching Strategies

The objectives of this session are:

- To introduce you to the communicative approach and the importance of an integrated approach to language teaching.
- To familiarize you with integrated teaching techniques and activities.

The Four Language Skills

While tutoring, you will need to address each of the four language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. If your learner picks a topic she would like to speak about, it is a good idea to develop some additional exercises that will increase her reading, writing and listening proficiency as well. Each skill complements the development of the other skills.

The Communicative Approach

The communicative approach is an integrated way to teach a new language that emphasizes listening, speaking, reading and writing. It stresses practical language use. Emphasis is on communication in real-life situations. Exercises are chosen because they will assist learners in their daily lives or will help them achieve their short or long-term goals.

The following teaching strategies allow the learner to practice all four skills while doing only one prepared exercise.

A: Information Grids

What are they?

These are grids set up with missing information that the learners will need to get from each other (in a group tutoring situation) or exchange with the tutor (in an one-on-one session.) Topics for the grids are generally based on learner needs and interests.

Take a look at the following grid and write the names of three classmates in the first column. Now, spend a moment talking to each of these three people. Ask questions to fill out the rest of the grid.

Name	Occupation	Hobby	Favourite food

What questions did you ask? Chances are the questions were all questions that started with the word, *what*. This type of grid is a good way to have the learner practice asking and responding to questions with "what". For other more advanced learners, you would want to add other categories where learners have to ask "where" "which" "when" and "why" questions.

In addition to the grammatical practice the exercise allows, it could also be used to give cultural information as well. Notice how the questions posed on the grid are all culturally appropriate. There are no questions, for example, regarding how much money an individual makes or what religious affiliation she has.

Who is this intended for?

This exercise can be used with any learner, but works best with those who are at a basic or intermediate level. Generally, the grids prompt only short responses but could, with the use of additional follow-up questions, be used with more advanced learners.

Before the session: Planning your lesson

- Select a topic.
- Select the column headings.
- Create the grid.

Basic steps in using information grids

- Model the exercise with the learner before asking her to do it. This will better enable the learner to use the targeted forms.
- If this exercise is grammatical review, repeat any errors the learner makes so she will have a chance to self-correct.
- If this exercise has a cultural component in it, discuss why these questions, for example, would be appropriate to ask a Canadian the learner has just met.

Benefits of using information grids

- When you use an information grid during your session, you are setting up a lesson that will be interactive while focusing on all the language skills - listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- This activity is very versatile as you can change and adapt it for almost any situation.
- You can also use the grid to poll your learner about a variety of topics and learn more about her!
- Grids are quick and easy to make.

B: Total Physical Response (TPR)

What is it?

This is a technique that allows learners to gain new vocabulary by listening to and carrying out spoken or written commands. The tutor models the commands (with repetition) until the learner can carry out the command effectively.

Speaking is optional for the learner when new vocabulary is first introduced.

Who is it intended for?

TPR works best with beginning learners although it can be used at all levels. This technique provides learners with different types of input, which can be beneficial for auditory, visual, tactile and kinesthetic learners.

Before the session: Planning your lesson

1. Select the commands and vocabulary that will be taught.
2. Make a list of the commands in the order they will be taught.
3. Gather props or pictures that you will need.

Basic steps in using TPR¹

1. Do the action as you give the new command.
2. Do the action with the learner several times as you give the command.
3. Give the command. The learner will do the action. The tutor will not.
4. Repeat step 2 if the learner has difficulty.
5. Repeat steps 1 – 4 for each command taught. Before introducing a new command, review the commands already taught.
6. Review the commands in random order.

Adapting TPR to a group

There are different ways to adapt TPR to a larger group. First, the instructor will select two or three learners to demonstrate the activity. All the students will then follow the commands after the initial demonstration either all at the same time (if there is enough space) or in a smaller group while other students watch.

TPR with written commands

Teach the learner to read the commands she just learned.

1. Write each command on a separate card.
2. Show and read the first command as you model the action.
3. Show and read the command as you do the action with the learner.
4. Show the card without reading it or modeling it. Have the learner respond only to the written command.

Suggestions for using TPR

- Go slowly: Learners work best when they are relaxed.
- Do not teach too many commands. Four to six new commands each session is advised.
- Provide support and repeat steps whenever necessary.
- TPR lessons can be used to demonstrate the vocabulary associated with familiar tasks such as baking a cake or buying something at a store.

Other uses for TPR

While it is apparent how TPR could be used to teach verbs and nouns, this technique can also be used to teach other elements of the language as well.

¹ Suzanne Abrams et al., *Teaching Adults: An ESL Resource Book*. (Syracuse, New York: New Readers Press, 1996.) Used by permission.

Example exercise for Carine

Objectives:

- Carine will review nouns (furniture in the living room).
- Carine will learn the following prepositions: on, in, next to, to the left of, to the right of, above.

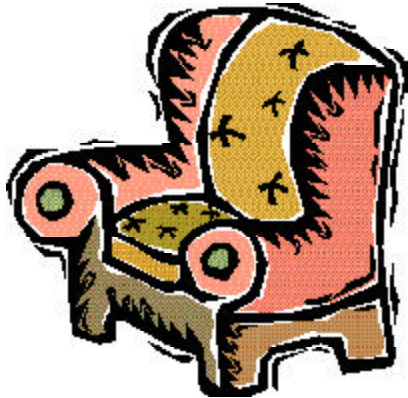
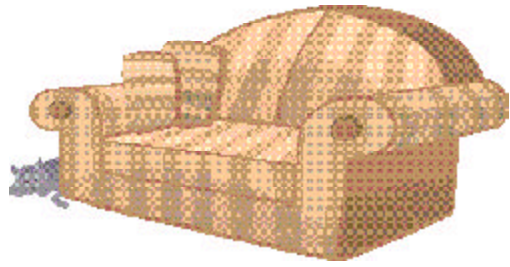
Materials:

Paper cut outs of a(n):

Sofa	coffee table	plant
Armchair	rug	telephone
Television	bookshelf	painting

Procedure:

1. Sit on the opposite side of the table from your learner.
2. Put a divider between the learner and you so neither of you can see the table in front of the other person.
3. Imagine that the space in front of you on the table is a room and the paper cut outs are "furniture" pieces that you are arranging in the room. (The carpet can be a blank 8.5" x 11" paper.)
4. Take one piece of furniture and place it in your room. Using the prepositions noted above, tell the learner where to place this piece of furniture in her own room.
5. Repeat step #4 until all the furniture has been arranged.
6. Remove the barrier between you and the learner and compare.
7. Repeat the process. This time, the learner will give you directions.



Using TPR with children

Have your learner listen to your directions and “act out” what she hears. Rather than making it a simple chain of commands, use a story. The learner could act out a story where, for example, she is Winnie the Pooh eating out of the honey pot.

- Use the learner’s own cultural folktales whenever possible.

In a classroom setting: BINGO

Play the game with words rather than numbers.

1. Prepare the grids with vocabulary you would like to review.
2. Make one copy of the grid that you can cut into smaller pieces. Fold these pieces and put them in a hat.
3. Have a learner pull a vocabulary word out of this hat and act it out.
4. Other learners find the word on their grid and cover it.
5. Continue to repeat #3 with a different learner acting out the word each time until someone shouts, “BINGO.”

C: Information Gaps

What are they?

These are activities where the learner needs to exchange information with the tutor (or another learner in a group situation.) In this activity, learners ask questions to get unknown information.

Information gaps can take on a variety of different forms. In the next section, we will take a look at some of the less complicated versions.

Who is it intended for?

- It can be used with learners at all levels.

Before the session: Planning your lesson

- Set up a grid that has all the information on it. This will be the “master copy.”
- Make two photocopies of the grid.
- Blank out about half of the information on the first grid. This will be copy “A.”
- Blank out the other half of the information on the second grid. This will be copy “B.”

Basic steps in using information gaps

- In a one-on-one tutoring session, give the learner copy “B” and keep copy “A” for yourself.
- Take turns asking questions and writing the responses on your paper.
- Compare the results on your learner’s paper with what is on your paper.

Benefits of using information gaps

- The activity is integrated – it uses all four skills.
- The topics can be varied.
- Language is used in an authentic and meaningful way.

Example exercise for Carine

Objectives:

- Carine will review the vocabulary associated with money, including how to distinguish between the coins using descriptive adjectives.
- Carine will practice asking questions using “how much” and “which.”

Materials:

- The following pages from the tutor training manual.
- 2 pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters, loonies and toonies.

Information gaps: A sample

Note: This information gap was done after Carine was shown each coin and given a chance to describe it. Carine was to describe it using the colour(s) of the coin. She was also to tell the tutor which animal or object was pictured on the coin.

Tutor: Last week, we learned about the value of Canadian money. Today, we are going to do some review. I will ask you a question and you will answer it for me using the information from the sheet in front of you. Okay, which coin is red and has a leaf on it?

Carine: A penny has a leaf on it.

Tutor: Great. I will write in this area, “penny.”

Now, what information do you need to complete the first row?

- Carine: I want to know the amount of the coin.
- Tutor: Okay, what question do you need to ask before you can get that information?
- Carine: How much is a penny?
- Tutor: Sure... or how much is a penny worth?
- Carine: How much is a penny worth?
- Tutor: Okay, a penny is worth one cent. You can write one cent in this box (while pointing to the empty box on the person B grid.)
- Now, you can ask me another question to get the information you need from the second row.

Adapting information gaps to a group

- Have learners work in pairs with one learner as "Student A" (with copy A) and the other as "Student B" (using copy B.)
- If you want to have the learners work with many partners, make "A" "B" "C" and "D" versions with a quarter of the information present on each. Pair up the learners and have them switch partners until they get all the information. This is also referred to as a "jigsaw."

Additional examples of information gaps are available in ***The Interactive Tutorial: An Activity Parade.*** ¹

If you are interested in learning different ways to use jigsaws in classroom situations, refer to ***Zero Prep: Ready-to-Go Activities in the Language Classroom.*** ²

² Karen M. Sanders, ***The Interactive Tutorial: An Activity Parade.*** (Brattleboro, VT: Pro Lingua Associates, 1998.)

³ Laurel Pollard and Natalie Hess, ***Zero Prep: Ready-to-Go Activities in the Language Classroom.*** (Burlingame, California: Alta Book Center Publishers, 1997.)

Name of Coin	Coin	Amount
	<i>place penny here</i>	1 cent (\$0.01)
nickel	<i>place nickel here</i>	
	<i>place dime here</i>	10 cents (\$0.10)
quarter	<i>place quarter here</i>	
	<i>place loonie here</i>	1 dollar (\$1.00)
toonie	place toonie here	

Questions to use:

Which coin is... (silver and has a beaver on it)?

How much is a (nickel)... worth?

Person B

Name of Coin	Coin	Amount
penny	<i>place penny here</i>	
	<i>place nickel here</i>	5 cents (\$0.05)
dime	<i>place dime here</i>	
	<i>place quarter here</i>	25 cents (\$0.25)
loonie	<i>place loonie here</i>	
	<i>place toonie here</i>	2 dollars (\$2.00)

Questions to use:

Which coin is... (silver and has a beaver on it)?

How much is a (nickel)... worth?

D: The Language Experience Approach (LEA)

What is it?

This is a technique where the learner tells you a story as you write it down. It is a powerful technique as it builds on the learner's life experiences and treats the learner as a "person first and learner second."

Who is it intended for?

- It works best with learners who have stronger speaking skills than reading and writing skills.
- It can be used with learners who are literate in their first language as well as those who have limited reading and writing ability in their primary language.
- It can be used for learners of all ages.
- It can be used at all levels with revisions in the basic steps provided below.

Basic steps in using LEA

1. Ask your learner to talk about something that is important to her. While she is talking, write down key words.
2. After the discussion, have her tell the story again, using the key words as a guide.
3. Write the story as the learner tells it.
4. Reread the story, pointing to each word as you say it. Let the learner add or delete information if she desires.
5. Have the learner read it with you (either in sentences or smaller sections).
6. Have the learner choose words she would like to learn by sight.
7. Have the learner reread the story and edit it if necessary.

Suggestions for using LEA

- Don't use LEA to teach new concepts.
- Don't make corrections to grammar or word choice (especially while the story is being told.)
 - Keeping the story authentic (true to what the learner said) is a great way to access and record your learner's ability.
Correcting errors will not give you an appropriate record of your learner's skills.
Address grammatical difficulties in another lesson using another source.

- Because LEA is used to teach how to read, it is all right to concentrate solely on reading the text at this point.
- Don't change the learner's thoughts or the content of the story.

Benefits of using LEA

- LEA is an integrated technique that allows all the skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) to be used at once.
- LEA helps develop other skills (sight word vocabulary development) in a meaningful context.
- LEA provides content for learning that is authentic.
- LEA can be very motivating for learners; their point of view is valued and their story is told.
- LEA provides a permanent record to add to the learner's portfolio.

Adapting LEA to a group

Steps in the large group approach:

1. After a field trip or class experience, discuss the event together. You could also show a movie or read a short story together.
2. Together, write the story out on butcher paper or the chalkboard. Have each learner contribute a sentence. Read each word aloud as you write it down.
3. Have learners copy the story down (for writing practice.)
4. Follow-up activities:
 - Reread the story in its entirety using your finger or a pointer to show learners which word you are saying.
 - Cut the words apart and have the learners put them in the correct order. This would be an appropriate activity if most of the vocabulary, in its written form, is already familiar in that particular sentence.
 - Call on individual learners to point out specific words that they previously learnt.
 - For lower level learners, call on individual learners to point out words that start with specific letters.

Using LEA with children

Have children draw a picture connected to the story. Pictures can also be used to create an original story.

There are multitudes of different ways to use LEA to build skills.

The preliterate or nonliterate learner (with a short LEA story) could:

- Copy some words or letters into the learner's notebook.
- Circle every "e" (or some other letter) in the story.
- Underline every capital letter.

The beginning learner could:

- Copy the story in the learner's notebook.
- Make flash cards for words the learner is interested in remembering. (This is called the "sight word" technique and will be discussed in Session 5.)
- Make new sentences out of an existing sentence.
- Underline the words that she already knows. (This is a great way to assess your learner!)
- Make as many words as possible by changing the first consonant sound in one of the words in the story. (If one of the words in the story was *mail*, you could teach *hail*, *bail*, *sail*, *tail* and other words that have the same sound and letter combination.) This will help increase spelling proficiency and pronunciation. (This teaching strategy is discussed in Session 5 as "word families".)
- Say words that begin with the same constant blend. For example, **Stacey was stuck while studying** for her science class.
- Circle all the adjectives or another part of speech that you have been working on.
- Develop a list of words to learn to spell.
- Reread the story several times to increase fluency.
- Read the quote with emotion (boredom, sadness, excitement, anger etc.)
- Select a prefix or suffix that has been learned and see where it could be joined to new words in the story. For example, seek out words that start with "un" and find other root words where "un" could be added such as "unnatural" or "uneducated." See Session 5 for more information.

⁴ Suzanne Abrams et al., *Teaching Adults: An ESL Resource Book*. (Syracuse, New York: New Readers Press, 1996.) Used by permission.

- Write contractions or sound reductions from the story and say what the word means. For example, *hafta* means *have to* and *wanna* means *want to*.
- Use “informal” speech, including contractions or sound reductions in the story.

Example: I want to eat kalbi for supper tonight but I cannot. I have to get some spices sent to me from Korea before I will be able to make it. If I would have known I could not buy these things in Canada, I would have brought more with me when I first moved to Saskatoon.

With reductions: I *wanna* eat kalbi for supper tonight but I *can't*. *I've* to get some spices sent to me from Korea before *I'll* be able to make it. If *I'd've* known I *couldn't* buy these things in Canada, *I'd've* brought more with me when I first moved to Saskatoon.

- Use the tutor’s copy of the LEA story to do a fill-in-the-blank exercise that focuses on a certain type of word such as nouns, verbs or adjectives.

Note the previous example using a fill-in-the-blank exercise:
I want to eat kalbi for _____ tonight but I cannot. I have to get some _____ sent to me from Korea before I will be able to make it. If I would have known I could not _____ these things in Canada, I would have _____ more with me when I first moved to Saskatoon.

In this exercise, the learner is NOT necessarily required to memorize and provide the same word. The learner needs to provide a word that makes sense. For example, in the first blank, breakfast and lunch would not make sense because the learner wants to eat this tonight. Supper or dinner would be the best choice.

This type of exercise is an effective way to help the learner make predictions and use context clues provided in the text in order to make these predictions.

Most importantly, work with learners to choose what skills they would like to work on.

SESSION 5

**Teaching
Strategies
(Part I)**

Session 5: Teaching Strategies (Part 1)

The objectives of this session are:

- To gain an understanding of sight words and how they can be used in the tutorial session*
- To discuss the importance of context
- To introduce phonics and the basic steps in teaching phonics
- To become familiar with word patterns and how they can be used to assist learners
- To discuss ways for learners to increase their vocabulary
- To discuss the significance of focusing on meaning when teaching language

* Reading is a complicated activity that involves performing many tasks at once. However, for this session, we will only be looking at one aspect of reading – decoding. Decoding refers to the act of knowing what the letters are and how they sound. When introducing new vocabulary, it is advisable for learners to be introduced to the written form of the word (as well the oral) since all four skills complement each other. Session 6 looks at reading more in depth and will clarify some of the questions session 5 may prompt.

For Beginning Learners

Learning how to decode vocabulary in text

A: Cue Cards

Cue cards, which have pictures of common everyday objects on them, are great to use with learners, especially in a one-on-one situation where bringing in large objects may be too burdensome.

Once the learner is able to say the word and understands how she can use it in a simple sentence, you can introduce the written word. There are two ways to teach the learner how to read the written word: you can teach it as a sight word (as a whole word) or you can teach it using phonics (breaking down the word into smaller sounds.)

B: Sight Words ¹

Sight words are words that the learner can recognize and understand immediately. Sight words are generally taught as whole words. They are not broken up into individual sounds. There are four specific types of words, which are best taught as sight words. They are:

- Survival words: danger, exit, emergency
- Service words: the, a, what, why
- Irregular words: laugh, have, of
- Introductory words that could be used in word patterns: eat (could enable the tutor to teach the "ea" sound as in beat, meat, seat)

Before the Session: Planning your lesson ²

- Prepare the materials (2" x 3" blank cards) and three envelopes for the cards.
- The envelopes should be marked: Study, Known and Want to Learn.

Basic steps in using sight words

- Have the learner choose the words she would like to learn.

¹ Ruth Johnson Colvin, *I Speak English* (Syracuse, New York: New Readers Press, 1997), p. 106. Used by permission.

² Saskatchewan Literacy Network, *Saskatchewan Level 1 Tutor Training Kit* (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Saskatchewan Literacy Network, 2000), p. 17.

- Print each word on a card.
- Choose five* of the words and do the following steps. Put the remaining words the learner would like to know in the **Want to Learn** envelope)
 - Read each word aloud and have the learner repeat.
 - Create a sentence (oral) for each word.
 - Shuffle the cards and have the learner read the words again.
 - Ask the learner to create a sentence (oral) for each word.
 - Continue shuffling and reading until the learner feels confident.
 - Put these cards in the **Study** envelope. The learner can take these home and work on them in between sessions.
 - Have the learner read the cards at the next session. If she can easily recall the word, put the card in the **Known** envelope. Words that are still difficult should be put in the **Study** envelope.
 - Choose another five words from the **Want to Learn** envelope. (This envelope is for the words the learner has chosen from other reading activities or even from a language experience story.)
 - Review the words in the **Known** envelope regularly.

Optional Activity 1

- When the learner is making sentences for each sight word, write the sentences down.

If your sight word is **sit**, you could use the following sentence:

I _____ on a chair.

- Have the learner match the sight word with the sentences you have provided.

Optional Activity 2

If the sight words have been taken out of an LEA (Language Experience Approach) story, cover the sight words. Have learners put the words back into their proper place.

* You may find that your learner will prefer to do more than five words at a time.

Sample story:

Yesterday, I went to store for buying the new camera. After I ate ice-cream, I saw a movie with Louis. He is a nice person.

If your learner wanted to learn the words **the**, **after**, **Louis** and **nice** you could make cue cards with those four words on them and then supply the following text.

*Yesterday, I went to store for buying _____ new camera.
 _____ I ate ice-cream, I saw a movie with
 _____. He is a _____ person.*

Review activities:

- During the following session, take cards from the **Study** envelope and have the learner look for them in another source (newspaper, song lyrics or a magazine). Have the learner circle or point out the words when she finds them. Examine the sentences in which these words are used.
- Spread the cards that the learner has been reviewing that week out on the table. Give the learner a verbal clue (such as "I shower _____ I exercise.") The learner needs to find the missing word (*after*) to complete the oral sentence.

Other considerations: Developing Context

Sight words should be chosen by the learner and presented in a context that allows the learner to understand the meaning of the word. The context could come from the pictures provided or be from a story or an article in which the word is found. You could also use examples from the learner's own life, such as an LEA (Language Experience Approach) story.

Take a look at the examples below. Which sentence has the most meaningful context?

Our sight word for this lesson is **dangerous**.

- He is very **dangerous**.
- Driving your car after drinking a lot of beer is very **dangerous**.
- She can be **dangerous** when she is angry.

In the first sentence, we know that **dangerous** is probably an adjective but we have no context, or no clues, to even determine if **dangerous** has a negative or positive connotation. Do you think that the second and third examples provide enough information for learners to understand what the word **dangerous** means? Is there a sentence that you could make which would better demonstrate what the word means?

C: Phonics: Letter – Sound Relationships

One way to understand a text is to assign a sound to each letter or letter combinations, so the learner can “sound out” the word. Using phonics enables the learner to figure out how to read words by predicting how these sounds may be pronounced based on the patterns she has previously learned.

There are many people who believe that the use of phonics is a better way to learn how to read words; others believe that using sight words is a more efficient way to pick up new words. Both methods work. However, some learners respond better to phonics and others respond better using the sight word method.*

You and your learner will be able to determine which method works best for your learner. However, it is important to note that the use of phonics does have limitations even if it is the preferred way for your learner to gain more vocabulary. For example, vowel sounds, which are very complicated, are much harder to learn using phonics. (There are 18 different vowel sounds that have over 50 different spellings!)

Generally, it is advisable to teach the essential sight words before introducing phonics to your learner.

Basic steps in introducing a sound:³

1. Identify the letter.
 - Say the name of the letter.
 - Write the letter down.
2. Ask the learner to listen to the beginning of the words that you state.

Example: *man, Monday*
3. Ask the learner to repeat the words and tell you what sound comes at the beginning.
4. See if the learner can hear the sound in other words.

Example: *movie (yes), mother (yes), tape (no), number (yes)*

* The importance of using phonics (or sound – symbol correspondences) with lower-level ESL learners is explored in the following texts, which demonstrate how to use this tool in an integrated way.

Grace Massey Holt. (January 1995). Teaching Low-Level Adult ESL Learners. In **National Centre for ESL Literacy Education and Centre for Applied Linguistics** [on-line], Available: cal.org/ncle/digests/holt.htm

Miriam Burt and Joy Kreeft Peyton. (2003). Reading and Adult English Language Learners: The Role of the First Language. In **National Centre for ESL Literacy Education and Centre for Applied Linguistics** [on-line], Available: cal.org/ncle/digests/reading.htm. [2003, April 15]

Jill Bell and B. Burnaby, **A Handbook for ESL Literacy**. (Toronto, Ontario: The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1984.)

³ Ruth Johnson Colvin, **I Speak English** (Syracuse, New York: New Readers Press, 1997), p. 108. Used by permission.

5. Put the sound at the end of the words.
Example: *them, dim*
6. Have the learner repeat the words and tell you what the final sound is.
7. Write the letters (both upper and small case) and have the learner write them as well.

Tutoring Tips when Teaching Phonics⁴

Vowels are A, E, I, O and U.
Consonants are all the other letters of the alphabet.

The following order for introducing new sounds is generally accepted.

1. Start with **consonant** sounds that are easy to recognize.
m, b, s, d, f, t, and n are considered the easiest sounds to hear p, r, l, c, k, g, j, qu, z, and v are considered “harder sounds”
2. Start by teaching **consonants** that come at the beginning of the word.
3. Next, teach **consonants** that come at the end of the word.
4. After that, take a look at words with **short vowel** sounds in them.
Short vowels include:
 - A as in *apple* (ă)
 - E as in *echo* (ĕ)
 - I as in *igloo* (ĭ)
 - O as in *ox* (ŏ)
 - U and is in *up* (ŭ)

Because vowel sounds are very difficult to teach (and learn), you may want to use the “word patterns” activity to introduce common sounds to learners. Word patterns are best developed using three letter words that follow the consonant-vowel-consonant format. Examples include: hat, map and bin.

5. **Consonant blends** are generally taught after short vowel sounds. Consonant blends are two consonants that blend together but keep some of their original sound).

⁴ Saskatchewan Literacy Network, *Saskatchewan Level 1 Tutor Training Kit* (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Saskatchewan Literacy Network, 2000.)

Blends with L include: bl, cl, fl, gl, pl, sl

Blends with R include: br, cr, dr, fr, gr, pr, tr

Blends with W include: dw, tw

Blends with S include: sc, sk, sl, sm, sn, sp, squ, st, sw

Triple blends are: scr, spl, spr, scr

Consonant blends are generally taught at the intermediate level. But do not limit your beginner student from learning them if she shows an interest!

6. Long vowels are generally taught next.

Long vowels include:

A as in aim (ā)

E as in eaves (ē)

I as in idea (ī)

O as in open (ō)

U as in use (ū)

7. **Consonant digraphs** are taught at a later stage. Consonant digraphs are a pair of letters that form a new sound, unlike either of the original sounds that the letters made. Notice that with consonant digraphs, there are different sounds that can be made using the same two-letter combination. For example, **gh** can make an f sound (tough), a g sound (ghost) or it can be silent (dough). **Th** has two different sounds. Notice the difference between the words there and thumb.

Other examples at the beginning of a word include:

Ch (china, choir and chute)

Ph (photographer)

Sh (shape)

Wh (whether)

Examples at the end of the word include:

ng (sing)

nk (ink)

8. **Vowel digraphs** (two vowels that take on the sound of the first vowel), **diphthongs** (two vowels where the first rolls into the second vowel sound), and **vowels followed by an R** are generally the last to be taught.

Phonics generally works well with auditory learners but may be less popular with other types of learners; if your learner is having difficulty, use other methods to increase her reading proficiency and vocabulary.

Details		
B	/b/	usually a consistent sound (bat, bell) can be silent in words such as comb, subtle, thumb
C	/k/	can have a hard K sound when followed by an O or an A (cat) can also be soft when followed by an E, I, or Y (face, circle, fancy)
D	/d/	a consistent sound (dog, dirt)
F	/f/	a consistent sound (fun, favourite)
G	/g/	can have a hard sound (go, get) can also be soft when followed by an E, I, or Y (orange, region, gym) there are exceptions to this rule (girl) can be silent when followed by an N (sign) GH can form an F sound (laugh), or be silent (naughty), or can sound like G (spaghetti)
H	/h/	can be a consistent sound (home, hockey) can be silent (honest) is often combined with other letters to make consonant digraphs
J		a consistent sound (January, junk, Jennifer)
K	/k/	a consistent sound (kite) can be silent when paired with an N (knife)
L	/l/	a consistent sound (look, lucky, lake) often blends with other consonants can also be silent (half)
M	/m/	a consistent sound (moon, mighty)
N	/n/	a consistent sound (nine, nice) can also be silent (autumn, hymn)
P	/p/	a consistent sound (puppy, penguin) can be silent (psalm, receipt) can sound like an F when combined with an H (photograph)
Q	/kw/	almost always paired with a U (queen) may sound like a K when the U is silent (liquor)

Details		
R	/r/	a consistent sound (run, rack) often forms blends with other letters when it follows a vowel, will change the vowel sound
S	/s/	can sound like a soft C (snake, sand) can also sound like a Z at the end of a word (wears cars, dogs) can be silent (island)
T	/t/	a consistent sound (telephone) can be silent (depot, often, castle) will sound different in other combinations (i.e. tion, tious)
V	/v/	a consistent sound (vitamin, vine)
W	/w/	examples include woman, worn, watermelon can be silent (sword, who) almost always silent when paired with a WR (write)
X		at the end of a word makes a /ks/ sound (tax, exit) at the beginning of a word makes a /z/ sound (xylophone)
Y	/y/	is usually a consonant at the beginning of a word (yo-yo, yellow) at the end of a multi-syllabic word, may sound like a long E (baby, daisy)
Z	/z/	a consistent sound (zoo, zebra)

This chart is for your own use.

Learners should not be given this type of chart with the hopes of memorizing the contents.

D: Word Patterns (or word families)

One of the most common ways to teach using phonics is through the use of word patterns. Word patterns are sets of rhyming words such as run, fun, bun and nun. By using vowel sounds in a context such as this, it is easier for learners to understand the sounds they make and apply this knowledge to new words. Generally, this is a much easier method than studying and applying the rules of phonics for vowel sounds!

Who is this intended for?

You can use word patterns with all levels, but it is generally more popular at the beginning levels.

Basic steps in using word patterns

- Select a word pattern from your learner’s reading material or a word that you know the learner knows by sight. (To start, look for three letter words that consist of a consonant-vowel- consonant. Examples include: map, get, run, and fin.)
- Ask your learner to read the word that she knows.
- Place your finger over the first letter of the word and have your learner say that sound.
- Point to (or write) a rhyming word underneath.
- Ask your learner to say the word.
- Continue with the next word.
- Assist your learner whenever there is an error.
- Practice no more than 3 rhyming patterns each lesson.

<p>-at</p> <p>bat</p> <p>cat</p> <p>fat</p> <p>hat</p> <p>mat</p> <p>rat</p> <p>sat</p>
--

For beginners, avoid blends such as the spr, ~~br~~ and ~~thr~~ in spread, bread and thread (instead just teach words such as head, lead and read if you teach the –ead series).

If you cannot think of any rhyming patterns to use, take a look at the following books. They have extensive lists of word patterns that can be useful for this type of exercise.

Patricia Frey, *LITSTART: Strategies for Adult Literacy and ESL Tutors* (Okemos, MI: Michigan Literacy, Inc., 1999.)

Ed Robson et al. *LITSTART: Literacy Strategies for Adult Reading Tutors.* (Okemos, MI: Michigan Literacy, Inc., 1990.)

- *This is a great book for word patterns (also referred to as word families)*
- *In the appendix, there are lists for beginning, intermediate and advanced learners.*

Judy Blankenship Cheatham et al., *Tutor: A Collaborative Approach to Literacy Instruction.* (Syracuse, New York: New Readers Press, 1993.)

Limitations of the word pattern approach

While this approach is helpful for learners to understand sound patterns and improve spelling, it may be difficult for them to remember the words that are taught. Because the vocabulary is not often connected beyond the sound pattern itself, it may be difficult for learners to remember exactly what bin, fin, sin and gin may mean. Generally, when trying to teach vocabulary, it is best to teach vocabulary words that are connected to each other. The next exercise, labeling, will help learners develop a greater functional vocabulary.

E: Labeling

Who is this intended for?

This activity can be used with any learner who wants to learn concrete objects or pictures. Labeling can assist the learner in developing a larger functional vocabulary because the vocabulary is grouped into units.

How can I make this activity participatory?

Choose words (and link them by theme) based on the needs or interests expressed by your learner. For example, Carine's goal is to learn how to follow a recipe. In order to ensure Carine reaches this goal, there should be a number of lessons dedicated to this theme. One of these lessons could involve teaching kitchen verbs such as stir, grate and peel since knowing these would allow her to better understand the recipes she is trying to follow.

Example exercise for Carine

- Using page 32 of *The Canadian Oxford Picture Dictionary*,⁵ look at the list of kitchen verbs (using the pictures) with Carine.
- Have her choose which verbs she is interested in learning.
- Say each verb and have her repeat the verb (two to three times).
- Tutor says the verbs in the same order originally presented.
 - Learner touches the appropriate picture.
- Tutor says the verbs in any order.
 - Learner touches the appropriate picture.
- Learner says the verb and the tutor touches the picture.
- Make cue cards with a picture on one side and the written form of the verb on the other. (Either the learner or the tutor could write the word.)

⁵ E.C. Parnwell, *The Canadian Oxford Picture Dictionary* (Oxford.: Oxford University Press Inc., 1996.)

- The learner could take these cards home and practice for homework.
- Review (for the next session):
 - Review exercises could include categorization exercises (as discussed in Session 1.)
 - Review could also include making sentences with the words.

Future lessons could focus on other categories of vocabulary linked to the topic. The following lessons could be about kitchen appliances (necessary for cooking) and measurement. Once again, the learner is responsible for deciding which vocabulary words she wants to learn.

Learners may be interested in bringing their own photographs as a basis to learn vocabulary. A very learner-friendly book which could be used for vocabulary development (within a theme) is *The Canadian Oxford Picture Dictionary*.⁶

If this book (or a similar book) is not available, look through cooking magazines and have your learner make a collage with the kitchen verbs she wants to learn! Naturally, if your learner is interested in other things, you'll need to find a magazine which will provide you with the pictures needed to complement the theme.

For Youth and For Fun

You can set up your review exercise like a true and false game. The learner can say the word and the tutor can touch the picture. If the picture touched is correct, the learner continues and says another word. If the picture touched is incorrect and the learner recognizes this, the learner is awarded one point. If the learner does not recognize the "lie", the tutor is awarded a point.

⁶E.C. Parnwell, *The Canadian Oxford Picture Dictionary* (Oxford.: Oxford University Press Inc., 1996.)



For Intermediate and Advanced Learners

Throughout our discussion on teaching techniques, we focused on ensuring that the learner could not only repeat the word, but could understand what the word meant and how it could be used in a sentence. Pictures were used with the written word whenever possible, and actions (in exercises such as Total Physical Response) were also used when appropriate. Writing (and stating sentences in which the new vocabulary was used) was also an important part of this process since knowing a word is not useful if the learner cannot put it to use!

Higher-level learners also need to develop their vocabulary in meaningful ways. They need to develop skills and strategies that allow them not only to increase the number of words they can say, but allow them to use the words correctly. While Total Physical Response and word patterns may be appropriate ways for your lower-level learners to study new vocabulary, higher-level learners may find other approaches more useful.

A: Word Forms (or parts of speech)

One approach that more advanced learners can use to remember (and better use the vocabulary they learn), is to know the function a word plays in a sentence.

<p>Noun Person, place or thing (John went to Paris by plane.)</p>	
<p>Verb Action word (walk, run, sing) or state of being (am)</p>	
<p>Adjective Word describing a noun (He is tall.)</p>	
<p>Adverb Word describing a verb (He walks slowly.)</p>	

Once learners know the function of the word, it gives them a much better idea of how to use it in a sentence.

Being able to recognize what type of word the learner is using enables her to know how to use it in a sentence; it also allows her to increase her vocabulary easily. Many of the words we use in English have the same root word in their noun, verb, adjective and adverb form. Knowing what one word means often allows us to know four!

Let's say that your learner is interested in learning about dating in Canada, and you have recently found an article about dating in Canada that the two of you will read together. While preparing your lesson, you notice the words *attract*, *love*, *understanding* and *romance*. You know that these words have different word forms and you set up the following chart, which your learner fills in as follows:

Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb
attraction	attract	attractive	attractively
love	love	loving	lovely
understanding	understand	understanding	understandably
romance	romance	romantic	romantically

Charting the words that your learner encounters can be beneficial. It helps the learner recognize that her vocabulary is much larger than originally assumed and shows her, to a certain degree, how the word can be used. Follow-up exercises could involve writing exercises where the learner is required to use the new word forms in which she has just been introduced.

B: Word Parts

Discussing how words are put together can be helpful for intermediate and advanced learners. While these learners may have a solid basic vocabulary, what they need are some skills that will assist them in tackling the larger, more complex words that they will encounter.

1. Root words

You will notice that the words in the chart all have the same root word. Attraction, attract, attractive and attractively have **attract** in common.

“The root” can also refer to the Greek or Latin root that is used. A few examples of these include:

- | | | |
|-------------|------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. vita: | <i>vitality, vitalize, vitamin</i> | life |
| 2. demos: | <i>demographics</i> | people |
| 3. phobos: | <i>photophobia</i> | fear |
| 4. therapy: | <i>therapeutics, chemotherapy</i> | to cure |

2. Prefixes

Prefixes are placed in front of a word. While they can add something to the meaning of a word, they do not usually change the type of word it is.

- | | | |
|----------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. anti- | antisocial | “against” |
| 2. bi- | bicycle, biplane | “two” |
| 3. co- | cooperate, copilot | “with” |
| 4. de- | decrease, descend | “down” or “negative” |
| 5. dis- | disconnect, disown | “do the opposite of” |

3. Suffixes

Suffixes are the grammatical endings of words. Some suffixes will tell you what kind of word you are using.

Nouns

-er, -or, -ee, -ess will often turn verbs into nouns

Examples: writer, driver, actor, employee, trainee, actress, waitress, princess

Adjectives

-al, -ous, -ic, -ful, -less will usually make words adjectives

Examples: personal, natural, postal, humorous, famous, generous, Historic, poetic, electric, beautiful, helpful, useful, childless, helpless, useless

Verbs

-ize, -ise, -ify, -en will often indicate these words are verbs

Examples: modernize, emphasize, realize, beautify, terrify, simplify, widen, and soften

4. Compound Words

Some words will have more than one root word. A word that has two root words joined together is called a compound word. If the learner knows the meaning of the two separate words, it is easy to figure out what the compound word means. So, if the learner knows **hand** and **shake**, she will have an idea of what **handshake** means.

Points to consider when discussing vocabulary with your learner

- Show the learner more than one example of the noun when teaching a noun.
If you teach the learner "chair" show pictures of a kitchen chair, an office chair etc.
- Use synonyms for the new word whenever possible.
Beautiful is similar to pretty.
Huge has the same meaning as very big.
- Give the learner an example of that word if there is no synonym.
Apples are fruit.
Breakfast is considered a meal. Lunch and supper are meals.
- Use antonyms to explain a new word if it is appropriate.
Huge is the opposite of very small.
Beautiful is the opposite of ugly.
- Draw pictures to assist with vocabulary development when necessary.
- Use whatever means available to explain vocabulary before your learner resorts to the dictionary.
- Encourage intermediate and advanced learners to use a monolingual dictionary.

These vocabulary-building techniques need to be used within the context of a larger lesson that promotes listening, speaking, reading and writing development. Spending an entire lesson dissecting words could get boring. Find applicable words in the article that your learner has chosen to analyze and discuss.

A final note about learning vocabulary

Try to avoid teaching skills in isolation. Historically, literacy was taught as a series of skills that needed to be mastered. Learners started by learning the letters of the alphabet and then progressed to words and later sentence formation. Rather than take this approach, help learners decode text that is already meaningful to them.

The tools discussed need to be used with topics that are important to the learner. When teaching decoding skills or word attack skills, begin with a meaningful text, preferably something that the learner has chosen. If the learner is not advanced enough to choose a text, start with pictures that develop a meaningful context.

SESSION 6

**Teaching
Strategies
(Part II)**

Session 6: Teaching Strategies (Part II)

The objectives of this session are:

- To review the use of sight words
- To emphasize the idea that context is important
- To discuss reading as a complex task
- To introduce a format you can use when teaching reading
- To define different reading strategies a learner can use
- To experience a second language lesson that focuses on all four skills
- To highlight the importance of grammar in second language learning
- To introduce drills and how these can be used
- To discuss dialogues and role-plays

Reading

In the last session, we discussed the use of sight words, phonics and a variety of other “word attack” skills the learner could use to assist in the recognition and pronunciation of words. While knowledge of the letters and the ability to pronounce what you read is important, reading entails much more. It involves understanding the meaning expressed in the text.

A: What is reading? ¹

1. Decoding the symbols (the words)

This refers to the learner’s ability to understand what the letters are and how the words may sound. While this is an essential part of learning how to read, there are other skills which need to be developed before the learner can successfully read something.

2. Understanding the syntax (the patterns)

We gain a lot of meaning not just through the words that we use but the way these words are put together. Knowledge of these patterns is important if the reader is to get the intended meaning. Although the sentences below are very similar (only one word is different), the meaning they convey is very different.

She put the hammer away.

Did she put the hammer away?

3. Understanding the meaning and context

Sometimes, learners will understand the symbols and the syntax but have difficulty understanding the message. There are many reasons why this can happen. When reading aloud, the learner may be placing too much emphasis on producing the sound and not focusing on the meaning. If problems exist when the learner reads silently, it may be because the material is too technical or has too many cultural references in it for the learner to understand.

¹ Philip Fernandez, *Frontier College Tutor’s Handbook: A Guide to Student Centred Individualized Learning*. (Toronto, Ontario: Frontier College Press, 1997.) Used with permission.

B: A Reading Lesson

Session 5 provided you with many different ways you could help your learner decode words. Helping your learner understand and use grammar (or the syntax) will be discussed later in this session.

You may wonder how you can help the learner “understand meaning.” Using an integrated approach, where the learner speaks, listens, reads and writes about the same topic, will be helpful. However, the way you plan the reading portion of your lesson will help your learner to understand more clearly. The following can be used to help guide you when you teach a reading passage to your high-beginner to advanced learner.

Before the session: Planning your lesson

- Choose an interesting text.
 - *This should be something that the learner will relate to and find relevant. Ensure that the piece is an appropriate length. (Learners should also be encouraged to bring their own reading material.)*
 - *Research has shown that an interest in the reading topic is more important than the number of words the learner does (or does not) know in the article. However, it is important that you do not give the learner material that will frustrate or demoralize her. Let her choose from a variety of different materials about a topic of interest.*
 - *If your learner is interested in reading a certain type of text (i.e. a newspaper), bring several different samples from which your learner can choose. Different newspapers are geared towards different audiences. *The Sun* would be easier for your learner to read than *The Leader Post* or *The Star Phoenix*. Also have *The Globe and Mail* on hand should your learner want a challenge.*
- Choose materials at an appropriate level.
 - *Try not to introduce reading materials with a lot of vocabulary that is new unless it is contextualized.*
 - *Children’s books are full of pictures, which help establish the context of the story. Feel free to give your learner the option of reading these. Some learners may appreciate the opportunity to practice reading a book that they can later take home to their children. Other learners may find the use of children’s books offensive.*
- Find visual aids to assist you in presenting the text.
 - *While some materials will have ample photographs and visual aids, others may not.*

Basic steps when reading with high-beginner to advanced learners ²

Before reading: Preparing to read

- Start with prereading activities that allow learners to connect what they will be reading with their own knowledge and experience. This can take the form of a direct question about their lives or it may involve asking questions about a picture in the text. For higher-level learners, it could involve responding to a quotation connected to the text.
- Preview the reading by looking at the title, the first sentence and anything in bold or unusual print. Have your learner guess what the passage will be about.
- For higher-level learners, have them write prereading questions about the text based on the preview you have done together.

During reading: Focus on Meaning

- Break up the text and ask questions throughout.
- Ask a variety of questions.

You could also have your learner do a read/react exercise. The learner should divide the paper into two sides. On the left side of the paper, copy a section from the text that she felt strongly about. On the right side of the paper, she should write her reaction to that section.

- Ask questions that measure the knowledge gained in the text. *These can include yes/no questions as well as wh-questions (questions that start with who, where, what, why or when).*
- Ask questions that enable the learner to predict what may happen next and justify why she feels that may happen.

After the reading: Link the reading to the learner's life

- Ask questions regarding your learner's interpretation of the text.
If, for example, you are reading a cultural case study, you can ask your learner what she thinks may have happened. What was the problem? Why was it an issue?
- Ask the learner to apply the information that she has just read.
Has a situation like this ever happened to you? What did you do? Would you do the same thing now?
- Ask the learner to evaluate what she has read.
What do you think the people in the story should have done? What actions made the situation worse?

² E.R. Auerbach, *Making Meaning Making Change: Participatory curriculum development for adult ESL literacy*, (Washington, DC: Centre for Applied Linguistics, 1992.) Used with permission.

- Ask the learner to synthesize the material read.

What is the main idea of this? What do you think about this story?

*You may find the text, **Teaching Reading to Adults: A Balanced Approach**³ by Pat Campbell useful with high intermediate or advanced learners who have difficulty either decoding or comprehending reading passages.*

*In **Teaching Reading to Adults: A Balanced Approach**, Pat Campbell provides basic tools to assist you in determining learner difficulties in reading. She also suggests different teaching strategies that you can use if your learner has difficulty gaining specific information from the text (an inability to answer text-based questions) or cannot synthesize or evaluate information from the text (an inability to answer questions not literally answered in the text).*

C: Other Reading Strategies: Skimming and Scanning

While teaching for comprehension is important, it is also valuable to teach other types of reading skills as well. Sometimes, it is not necessary to gain a thorough understanding of what one reads. For example, when you read the newspaper, do you read it cover to cover, word for word?

If you are interested in getting the main idea of what an article is about, you will need to look over the text very quickly. Perhaps you will read only the title, the introduction, the conclusion and any bold or bulleted points. While this is not enough information to fully understand the text, doing this will give you enough information to determine the main idea and whether or not you are interested in reading the entire document.

This type of reading is referred to as **skimming** and is a useful skill for learners to develop if they are interested in returning to school or planning to work in an environment where they are required to do a lot of reading and may have to glean information from numerous sources.

Scanning, a strategy where you run your eyes quickly over the text until you find the specific information you were seeking, is also useful for learners to develop. Generally, this skill is used to find small pieces of information in a large source like a phone book or the want ads.

The way you structure the presentation will differ depending upon the skill(s) that you want to develop. Generally, the development of skimming and scanning skills require that the tutor develop questions that will prompt learners to find specific information quickly or supply the main idea of a passage in a short period of time.

³ Pat Campbell, **Teaching Reading to Adults: A Balanced Approach** (Edmonton, Alberta: Grassroots Press, 2003.)

General Tutoring Tips

- Reading activities, which are done in context, allow the learner to better understand the meaning of the text. It is a good idea to keep the same theme for your listening, speaking, reading and writing activities. The listening and speaking the learner has done prior to the reading activity will help her understand the text. Prior knowledge is important in reading.
- Reading materials do not necessarily have to come from a textbook, there are many places where you can find text to read.
Examples include: advertisements, phone books, bills, medicine labels, menus and signs.
- You may even want to start you own reading file, which could contain a variety of reading texts. Items for beginning and intermediate learners could include cartoons, want ads, bills, bus schedules, or even pictures of traffic signs. Learners could then pick what they want to read from your file.

Teaching Grammar

While grammar should not be the focus of your lesson, research has shown that teaching grammar can be helpful to learners. Because grammatical forms vary from language to language, having a tutor help unravel the meaning of these forms will make the learning process quicker for ESL learners. Learners who do not understand grammar will have a lot of difficulty understanding and communicating since they do not know how to put English words together and how to interpret the words they receive.

Take a look at how the paragraph above would look if written using Korean grammatical forms.

Grammar Teaching

Grammar your lesson the focus (of) should not be while, [according to] research (has shown that) grammar in a meaningful way teaching to learners helpful can be. Grammatical forms from language to language vary because, (having) a tutor these forms the meaning (of) unravel help for ESL learners (the) learning process quicker will make. Grammar don't understand learners (who) understanding and communicating a lot of difficulty will have since they how (to) English words together put and how (to) they receive (the) words interpret don't know.

Translation done by Ellen Chun Hee Son.

** The words in brackets do not exist in the Korean language. They were added to this particular piece of work to make the meaning a bit clearer for the English reader. Now, read this again without the words in the brackets.*

By taking a look at the example on the previous page, we can recognize that there would be a mountain of difficulties if a learner tried to “translate” into the other language word for word what was being said. Learning another language is extremely complex and requires not just learning words and cultural norms, but changing the way in which one thinks.

How do I know I am teaching grammar in a meaningful way?

When teaching, we need to consider the needs of the learner. While for some learners, the teaching of grammar will be very important, for others it will not. Whether or not the learner will consider grammar important may depend upon a variety of factors such as age, level of education, level of second language proficiency and what the target language will be used for.

	less important	-----	more important ⁴
Age	children	adolescents	adults
Level	beginning	intermediate	advanced
Education	preliterate: no formal education	semi-literate: some formal education	literate: well advanced
Need/Use	survival	vocational	professional

⁴Marianne Celce- Murcia, 1991 as cited in H. Douglas Brown, *Teaching by Principles: An interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy* (White Plains, NY: Pearson Education, 1994), p. 349. Reprinted by permission of Pearson Education.

A: Beginning Learners

While the diagram above cites that grammar is “less important” to the beginning learner than the more advanced learner, it does not mean that it is not an essential part of the learning process. While an in-depth grammatical explanation would be inappropriate at this level, there are some easy-to-use exercises that you can do with your learner that will help promote accurate sentence structure.

1. Drills

Drills are a good way to assist the lower-level learner in gaining grammatical knowledge without the traditional “grammar talk” or grammar worksheets. Drills are oral exercises that involve repetition in order to familiarize learners with common sentence patterns. Drills allow the learner to increase both her accuracy and fluency.

The Russian or Arepelalese lesson where learners were required to say, “This is a table. This is a chair.” is an example of a **substitution drill**. In it, one word out of the sentence is substituted for another similar word. For example, a noun is substituted for another noun, and a verb for a verb.

Complex substitution drills are slightly different. This time, rather than having one type of word that is substituted in the same position each time, the word provided would go into an unknown slot in the sentence.⁵

⁵Ruth Johnson Colvin, *I Speak English* (Syracuse, New York: New Readers Press, 1997), pp 74. Used by permission.

Substitution drill (simple)	Complex substitution drill
Tutor: This is a table. Learner: This is a table.	Tutor: John likes the table. Learner: John likes the table.
Tutor: chair Learner: This is a chair.	Tutor: chair Learner: John likes the chair.
Tutor: book Learner: This is a book.	Tutor: hates Learner: John hates the chair.
Tutor: pen Learner: This is a pen.	Tutor: Susan Learner: Susan hates the chair.
Tutor: pencil Learner: This is a pencil.	Tutor: loves Learner: Susan loves the chair.
Tutor: lamp Learner: This is a lamp.	Tutor: movie Learner: Susan loves the movie.

Response drills are another way in which to assist the learner. Here, rather than substituting words, you are giving repeated practice in understanding and responding to questions. ⁶

Tutor: This is a table. (Point at a nearby table.) Learner: This is a table.
Tutor: What is this? Learner: This is a table.
Tutor: What is this? (Point at a chair or at a picture of the chair.) Learner: This is a chair.

⁶Ruth Johnson Colvin, *I Speak English* (Syracuse, New York: New Readers Press, 1997), pp 75. Used by permission.

After the learner has had an opportunity to respond to the form, change roles. This time, the learner can ask the questions and you can respond.

Transformation drills can also be useful for learners who need practice changing positive statements to negative statements (or negative statements to positive statements).

Tutor:	He is tall.
Learner:	He is tall.
Tutor:	He is not tall.
Learner:	He is not tall.
Tutor:	not
Learner:	He is not tall.

Transformation drills can also be used to change statements to questions and questions to statements. When you want the learner to make a question, it is a good idea to give the learner some type of cue. A cue card with a question mark on it may be helpful.⁷

Tutor:	He is tall.
Learner:	He is tall.
Tutor:	Is he tall? (hold cue card)
Learner:	Is he tall?
Tutor:	Is he happy? (hold cue card)
Learner:	Is he happy?
Tutor:	Is he happy? (without card)
Learner:	He is happy.

⁷Ruth Johnson Colvin, *I Speak English* (Syracuse, New York: New Readers Press, 1997), pp 78-79. Used by permission.

Things to consider when using drills:

- Use vocabulary that the learner already knows. This activity is used to increase accuracy, not develop a larger vocabulary.
- Limit the amount of time you spend at each session on drills. Try to limit the time used to 10 minutes per session.
- Use pictures or objects when appropriate.
- Do not overemphasize the word you want substituted. Make sure that the stress and intonation you use are natural during the exercise.
- Follow up on the drills. Do reading and writing exercises that focus on the content and grammatical forms used in the drill.
- Find ways to adapt drills to your learner's needs. Drills can be used to teach verb tenses and a multitude of other things.

Adapting drills to larger groups: Completion drills

You can use drills in a classroom environment by having the learners sit in a circle and complete a sentence that you start.

Tutor: I had a lot of fun last night. I...

Learner 1: I had a lot of fun last night. I saw a movie and...

Learner 2: I had a lot of fun last night. I saw a movie, ate some popcorn and...

You will notice that, in this type of drill, you are required to repeat everything your classmates have said. This provides each learner with a fair amount of repetition. You will notice, for this lesson, the tutor has decided to focus on the **past tense**.

It is important, when using drills, to make sure that they are tied to real-life issues. Do not teach drills in isolation! While they are a good way to improve accuracy and fluency, it is important that they are used in conjunction with a variety of other teaching strategies.

2. Dialogues

Dialogues are conversations between two or more people. Dialogues can be used with your ESL learner to help her learn patterns and structures, and are beneficial to use because the context is apparent.

Dialogues vary in complexity and can be used for all levels. The following dialogue would be useful for a beginning learner who wants to learn how to ask for someone on the telephone.

Person 1: Hello.

Person 2: Hello. May I speak with Ranji?

Person 1: Who is calling?

Person 2: This is Namiko.

Person 1: Please hold. I'll get Ranji.

Person 2: Thank you.

Basic steps when using a dialogue

- Read the complete dialogue 2 – 3 times for the learner. Use normal speed and rhythm.
- Break the dialogue into sentences or short phrases. Say the first sentence or phrase and have the learner repeat.
- Repeat this process for each line. Repeat phrases whenever necessary.
- Repeat the entire dialogue with appropriate body language.
- Repeat the entire dialogue with your learner. You and the learner will read the dialogue together at the same time. (This is referred to as "choral reading.")
- Take a role! You can read the dialogue for person 1 and the learner can do the same for person 2.
- Reverse roles.

3. Additional Activities

a. Drills

You can use the dialogue as the basis for drills. Below are examples of how you could use the dialogue for simple and complex substitution drills.

A simple substitution drill

Tutor: *Hello. May I speak with Ranji?*

Learner: *Hello. May I speak with Ranji?*

Tutor: *Renu*

Learner: *Hello. May I speak with Renu?*

Tutor: *Yuka*

Learner: *Hello. May I speak with Yuka?*

Tutor: *Hannah*

Learner: *Hello. May I speak with Hannah?*

A complex substitution drill

Tutor: *Hello. May I speak with Ranji?*

Learner: *Hello. May I speak with Ranji?*

Tutor: *Anna*

Learner: *Hello. May I speak with Anna?*

Tutor: *Could*

Learner: *Hello. Could I speak with Anna?*

Tutor: *Hi*

Learner: *Hi. Could I speak with Anna?*

b. Role-play

For some learners, it may be possible to read through the dialogue and then improvise or role-play a similar situation. Learners can choose topics that are relevant to their day-to-day needs (such as asking directions, making a purchase or ordering in a restaurant.) This is a good activity to do because it

gives the learner an opportunity to respond to and ask questions that may occur in that given situation. Although it is impossible to anticipate every question that may be asked (nor is it necessary), it will provide the learner with additional vocabulary and the skills necessary to succeed next time she does that task.

c. Taping dialogues and role-plays

Taping dialogues and role-plays give the learner the chance to critique her own performance and can be used in a multitude of ways. Listening for common grammatical and pronunciation errors can help you and the learner decide on what areas future lessons should focus.

Remember, when you or your learner are listening for common errors, only choose a few to look at. Do not make a point of critiquing too much in your learner’s speech. Although your intent may be only to assist your learner, pointing out a lot of errors can be demoralizing and counterproductive for the learner.

Other considerations

It is important to use a dialogue that is connected to the theme of your lesson, a theme that the learner has chosen. Although many lower-level ESL textbooks have dialogues in them that may interest your learner and be related to your topic, you may want to consider writing your own, and keeping these in your own tutoring file.

Your learner may also be interested in writing a dialogue with you. If you are planning on using this dialogue for grammar practice, you may need to revise it (especially if you are interested in using it as a drill). However, if your learner’s primary goal is to improve her reading skills, it is also possible to write a dialogue together and use it in the same way you used the LEA story.

d. Sentence Unscrambling

One way to review structures that your learner has practiced (during the drills, role-plays or dialogues) is to give your learner an opportunity to “unscramble” sentences.

On individual cards, write words that the learner knows. Your learner can rearrange the words to form a sentence. After forming the sentence, your learner may want to copy it into a notebook for additional review and writing practice.

Ranji	with	I
may	speak	?

B: Intermediate and Advanced Learners

Some Considerations

- Link the grammar taught to what the learner needs to know to achieve her short and long-term goals.
- Do not use grammar exercises in isolation – pick a topic that the learner will read, write and talk about. Learning the grammar point should help the learner communicate about the topic.
- Do not use a lot of “grammar talk” – learners need to know how to use a preposition, not necessarily what it is.
- Identify what grammar should be taught by listening to your learner – do not teach something she already does well.
- Focus on reoccurring problems that could result in miscommunication. Look for patterns of error and choose the most important one or two problems to work on during a lesson.
- Do not correct every error that your learner makes – this will be both frustrating and counterproductive for the learner.
- Remember the goal is to improve the learner’s ability to communicate outside the classroom. This cannot be measured using traditional grammar tests.
- Discuss your learner’s expectations regarding grammar instruction. While the information provided may give you a framework to determine how grammar should be taught, your learner is ultimately the expert on what works or does not work well for her.

But what if I don’t know grammar?

You know a lot more grammar than you think you know! Although we may have learned to speak “intuitively”, we went through a trial and error process as children that allowed us to learn how to use grammar correctly.

While you know a lot of grammar, you may need to review some grammar vocabulary.

*Noun: Person, place or thing
(Lisa, Paris, popsicle)*

*Verb: Action word (walk, run, sing) or
state of being (am)*

*Adjective: Word describing a noun
(He is tall.)*

*Adverb: Word describing a verb
(He walks slowly.)*

The grammar that an ESL learner needs is not the grammar that you learned in high school but the grammar that you use and take for granted everyday.

C: Canadian-Born Learners

English-as-a-Second Dialect speakers are those who speak a different dialect (form of language) than what is generally taught in schools. Some First Nations learners will speak in English using “distinctive pronunciation, vocabulary [and] grammar.”⁶ Although this may not be “standard English”, it is important to note that all dialects are valid. “Standard English” is not better than a local dialect. It is simply a different way to communicate in English.

When you are listening to your learner speak or when you are discussing a writing assignment, it is important **not** to view the differences in dialect as errors and **not** to “correct” the learner’s speech or writing sample. Try to present new grammatical information as an alternate way to communicate. Compare and contrast grammatical features of the dialect with “standard English” and honour the culture that the dialect represents.⁷

⁶Ruth I. Epstein and Lily X. J. Xu, *Roots and Wings: Teaching English as a Second Dialect to Aboriginal Students, A Review of the Literature* (Saskatoon, SK: Extension Division, University of Saskatchewan, 2003.) Used by permission of the authors.

⁷Ruth I. Epstein and Lily X. J. Xu, *Roots and Wings: Teaching English as a Second Dialect to Aboriginal Students, A Review of the Literature* (Saskatoon, SK: Extension Division, University of Saskatchewan, 2003.) Used by permission of the authors.

SESSION 7

Speaking and Pronunciation

Session 7: Speaking and Pronunciation

The objectives of this session are:

- To discuss the importance of pronunciation
- To understand how sound is produced
- To introduce minimal pairs
- To introduce a general format for teaching pronunciation
- To highlight different pronunciation difficulties a learner may have
- To discuss the impact of stress and intonation on meaning
- To highlight a variety of different activities to improve listening discrimination and sound production

Speaking and Pronunciation

Why teach pronunciation?

Some sounds that exist in English do not exist in other languages. Knowledge of the English sound system and how these sounds can be produced can assist an ESL learner as she tries to communicate with others. However, teaching pronunciation will not, nor should it, mean eradicating the accent of your learner. What we want to do as tutors is to give learners the skills necessary to prevent miscommunication.

Spelling and Pronunciation

As highlighted in Session 5, some words are not spelled as they sound. Different letters may represent the same sound. Read the following words aloud: to, tool, two, threw, through, shoe and clue.

While all of these words are spelt differently, they all have the same vowel sound.

Vowel sounds, which can be written many different ways, may produce additional difficulties for ESL learners. The following examples demonstrate how many spelling variations there can be for a sound.

Long/short vowel intonation	Common Spelling Patterns	Alternative Spelling Patterns
ē	e (me, we) e...e (scene) ee (sheep) ea (meal) ie (niece)	y (ready) ey (monkey) ei (ceiling) i (taxi) i...e (police)
ě	e (yes, best)	ea (bread, heavy) a (any, anyone) ai (said, again) ay (says) ie (friend)
ā	a (baby) a...e (name) ai (train) ay (gray)	ei (vein) ey (they) eigh (weigh) ea (great) aigh (straight)

Long/short vowel intonation	Common Spelling Patterns	Alternative Spelling Patterns
ō	o (job, shop) a (father, hard)	ow (knowledge) ea (heart)* <i>* ea makes this sound before an r</i>
ā	a (bank, jacket)	au (laugh) ai (plaid)

A: Sound Production

Your learner may find it difficult to produce certain sounds. Let your learner know that this is normal. They have used their articulatory muscles in certain ways for a long time and it will take a lot of practice before they grow accustomed to moving these muscles in a different way.

We use breath as power and the sound changes depending on the use of the seven other articulators (parts of our head.) These seven articulators are our:

- Vocal chords
- Tongue
- Teeth
- Lips
- Jaw
- Roof of the mouth
- And nose (for "m", "n" and "ng")

Consonants

Consonant sounds are divided into two main categories – voiced and unvoiced.

1. **Voiced**

Put your hand directly underneath your Adam's apple and say the following words:

- bad
- door

- goat
- van
- zoo

Can you feel the vibrations in your vocal chords? “Voiced” consonants are produced with vibrations. In order to produce a “voiced” sound correctly, you need to use this vibration.

2. *Unvoiced*

Say the following words with your hand in the same position:

- pad
- tore
- coat
- fan
- Sue

“Unvoiced” consonants do not use these vibrations. They are made with breath alone.

Voiced and Unvoiced Pairs

Say the following words, reading each line from left to right. Concentrate on how you use your articulators when reading each line.

bad	pad
door	tore
goat	coat
van	fan
zoo	Sue

Sometimes, giving your learner just one piece of information (“make a vibration”) can go a long way in correcting some reoccurring pronunciation problems.

Identifying problems

Books such as *Teaching American English Pronunciation*¹ contain information regarding the main errors in common language groups. For example, Japanese learners may have difficulty with the letters R and L. Cantonese and Mandarin learners often have problems pronouncing the W and V. Reference books will be helpful as a starting point and could even be examined before you meet your learner.

Tape recording your learner is also a good idea. The best time to record a speech sample is during a role-play or conversation when your learner is more concerned with the activity she is doing than with the audio recorder. After you have found a good sample, the learner and you can analyze the errors. Concentrate on the errors that are reoccurring and could result in miscommunication. Prioritize the errors and decide together in what order the sounds should be taught.

B: Teaching Pronunciation

Individual Sounds

After identifying a problem with which your learner wants help, start collecting materials. Materials that will be beneficial during a pronunciation class include:

- Diagrams of the head (preferably with a side view) demonstrating the sound that you want to teach.
- A small hand mirror (so the learner can see herself while practicing the sound).
- Minimal pairs (when applicable) to contrast the new sound with a previously practiced sound.
- Dialogues, stories, or tongue twisters which feature the designated sound in it.

Learners should be encouraged to critique their own performance whenever possible. Listening for performance errors, or errors that involve sounds that have already been taught, is an important step in becoming an independent learner.

Minimal pairs are two words that differ in only one sound. This sound appears in the same position (beginning, middle or end) in both words.

*Examples:
lug vs. rug
ship vs. sheep
bus vs. buzz*

¹ Peter Avery and Susan Ehrlich, *Teaching American English Pronunciation*. (Oxford, England:Oxford University Press, 1994.)

Basic steps in teaching individual sounds²

- Show the diagram.
- Explain how the articulators work while making the sound.
- Model the correct pronunciation.
- Do some listening discrimination exercises.
- Practice the sound using familiar vocabulary.
- Practice the sound in different positions (at the beginning, middle and end of the word).
- Practice the sound in a sentence.

Sample lesson for Hyun-Chu: /r/ (to be done after /l/)

- Show diagram (with a side view) and explain the following:
When making the “r” sound, turn the tip of the tongue up but do not touch the top of the mouth with the tip of the tongue. The sides of the tongue will touch the back teeth.
- Place the mirror in front of your mouth, positioning it so Hyun-Chu can see your lips move in the mirror.
- Say the following words: right, roll, ready.
- Ask Hyun – Chu what position your mouth is in when you say the sound.
- Do the following listening discrimination exercise:
 Read the entire sentence to her (choosing one of the two words in brackets). Have her circle the word she hears.

Circle the word that you hear.

1. *That movie is (long, wrong).*
2. *I need to make sure this is (light, right).*
3. *Did you (light, write) it?*
4. *I need to know if this is (law, raw).*
5. *I think it is important that she (read, lead).*
6. *I need to (correct, collect) your essay.*
7. *She is interested in the (file, fire).*
8. *I want to read about (pirates, pilots.)*

² Dodson, Margaret et al. *The English as a Second Language Tutor Training Manual* (Regina: The Regina Public Library, 1988.)

- Have Hyun-Chu say the following words:

Initial position	Middle	End
wrong	correct	fire
right	dark	partner
raw	merry	four
read	where	car
rent	around	her

- Practice tongue twisters and sentences that feature "r."

Sample sentences:

Ralph rides the rapid rollercoaster.

Randy and Rita ran into a rented trailer.

Rina read rhymes about waitresses.

I am sorry I cannot carry your mirror tomorrow.

Other considerations when teaching pronunciation:

- Only work on one pronunciation problem at a time.
- Keep pronunciation lessons short. (10 – 15 minutes unless your learner indicates otherwise.)

C: Stress and Intonation

While some learners may be able to say individual sounds well, you may find that they have difficulty communicating with ease. Often, this is because the learner is not using English stress, rhythm or intonation patterns. Stress patterns are difficult for learners to use because they seem irregular and unpredictable.

Pronouncing each syllable clearly and exactly does not necessarily result in accurate speech. Many sounds and words are influenced by the sounds that surround it.

1. Stress

Stress refers to how loud syllables or words in a sentence are said. This helps to create the rhythm of the language.

Within a word

Sometimes, students will stress the wrong syllable within a word.

Example: tel e phone instead of tel e phone

You can assist your learner by clapping as you say the word. The clap you use for the stressed syllable should be louder than the clap you use for the unstressed syllable.

Some rules:

- Accent most two syllable words on the first syllable (paper).
- Accent compound nouns on the first part (sunshine, oatmeal, railroad).
- Accent compound verbs on the second part (overcome, undertake).
- With words that have a noun and verb form:
 - Accent the noun on the first syllable.
 - Accent the verb on the second syllable.

Learners may even break the word up incorrectly by adding too many syllables to it or by reducing it to fewer syllables than it actually is. Clapping while stating each syllable may be useful in situations like this as well.

Within a sentence

- | | | | |
|----|----------|-----------------|-----------|
| 1. | CATS | DRINK | MILK. |
| 2. | The CATS | DRINK | MILK. |
| 3. | The CATS | DRINK | the MILK. |
| 4. | The CATS | will DRINK | the MILK. |
| 5. | The CATS | will have DRUNK | the MILK. |

You will notice that the time it takes to say a sentence depends on the number of syllables that receive stress, not necessarily the number of words there are in a sentence. The length of time it takes to say each of these sentences does not change despite the fact there are more words in the later sentences.

Points to Consider³:

Generally, words and syllables that carry meaning are spoken at a louder volume and held for a longer length of time than the other syllables.

These words include:

- Nouns (Bill, Regina, toy)
- Main verbs (read, write)

³ Dodson, Margaret et al. *The English as a Second Language Tutor Training Manual* (Regina: The Regina Public Library, 1988.)

- Adverbs (slowly, quickly)
- Adjectives (beautiful, large)
- Question words (who, where, what, when, why)
- Demonstratives (this, that, those)

Example: I **want** to **save** some **money**.

Generally, we do not stress function words such as:

- Articles (a, an, the)
- Prepositions (at, to, of)
- Conjunctions (but, or)
- Most pronouns (he, her, it, they)
- Helping verbs (be, have, do)

2. *Intonation*

There are two main intonation patterns in English:

Rising–Falling intonation in statements and wh- questions.

Examples: The dog is energetic.

What time is it?

When will you go?

Why did he do that?

Rising intonation is used for yes or no questions.

Examples: Are you coming?

Do you like it?

Is he around?

Rising intonation is also used for questions that use a statement word order.

I can't do that?

He isn't here?

D: Sound Reductions

With your learner, you may want to work on sound reductions. Sound reductions refer to the way a word (or series of words) is shortened or reduced in a sentence.

1. *"I would have liked to see him there"* might sound more like *"I'd've liked dah see him there."*
2. *"Did you change?"* will often sound like *"Didya change?"*
3. *"I want to take this class"* may sound like *"I wanna take this class."*
4. *"It is on the tip of my tongue"* may sound more like *"It's on the tip ah my tongue."*

Sound reductions are very common in daily conversation and we often say sentences using reduced forms without even recognizing that we do so.

One of the most common sound reductions in individual words is called **schwa**. Often, unstressed vowel sounds in a word sound different than vowel sounds found in stressed syllables.

Listen to the difference between the following words ⁴:

Canada	Canadian
Drama	Dramatic
Democrat	Democracy

In the first column, the first syllable of each word is stressed; whereas, in the second column the second syllable is stressed. The unstressed first syllable in Canadian, Dramatic and Democracy are all examples of schwa, or reduced vowels.

In normal speech, words such as *to* and *do* are often unstressed in sentences. The vowel sounds in these words are also reduced to schwa.

E: Fun Activities for Teaching Pronunciation

Varying your approach to teaching pronunciation is always a good way to keep your learner motivated. Here are a few ideas which may be of interest to you and beneficial for your learner. All of these ideas can be used with one learner or many!

⁴ Peter Avery and Susan Ehrlich, *Teaching American English Pronunciation*. (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1994), p.65. Reproduced by permission of Oxford University Press.

1. Classification exercises

a. Sound Pairs

Give your learner a set of cards that has matching sounds. Have them read the words aloud and find matching pairs.

took	clue
too	moon
snooze	book
loon	use
now	cow

This is a good way to review a variety of sounds that you have just finished working on with your learner.

b. Syllable Grids

Give your learner a set of cards with familiar words on them. Your learner should read the words aloud and put the word in the appropriate category.

1 syllable	2 syllables	3 syllables

You could also use a grid and have the learners classify words according to the syllable that is stressed in it. Your learner could read the words aloud and put the word in the appropriate category.

c. Sound Grids

Use the cards you have made and set up a grid to compare two individual sounds.

ā	ä

2. *Listening Discrimination Exercises*

a. BINGO

Basic steps when using BINGO

- On a grid, write in words with some of the sounds you have been using. (Minimal pairs are good to use when using BINGO.)
- Make a copy for the learner and keep a copy for yourself.
- Say a word.
- Have the learner cross out (or cover) the word she heard on her grid.
- Continue saying words until the learner calls out "BINGO."
- Discuss any difficulties that arose during the exercise and try additional follow-up exercises with those sounds.

Adapting BINGO to larger groups

With larger groups, cut one copy up into smaller pieces. Put these pieces into a hat and have the learners take turns choosing the words. (With more than one learner, it can be used for both listening discrimination and pronunciation practice.)

3. *Other Exercises*

a. Songs

Songs can be used to demonstrate English intonation as well as how English speakers link words and reduce sounds.

b. Poetry

Limericks can be used to practice sentence stress with learners. Clap out the stressed syllables for further aid.

Using haiku is also a good way to emphasize the number of syllables in speech. Your learner and you could even write one together.

Haiku is a type of poetry that focuses on feelings and descriptive language. Haiku is three lines long.

*The neighbourhood park
Children run out to play there
Careful mothers watch*

The first and last lines have 5 syllables in them. The middle line generally has 7 syllables in it.

c. Role-plays

Role-plays can also be designed to assist in problematic areas. With your learner, you may want to write role-plays that provide further practice in weak areas. If, for example, your learner has difficulty with reduced sounds, you could write a role-play where the expressions “wanna”, “gonna” and “hafta” are featured.

- A. Do you wanna go to the movies tonight?
- B. Sorry, I hafta do my homework. Then, after that I’m gonna sleep. I’m tired.

d. Assessing pronunciation: A pronunciation portfolio

It may be a good idea to dedicate a section of your learner’s portfolio to pronunciation. Include speech samples (on audiotapes) and any pronunciation goals the learner formed after listening to her speech sample. Revisit these goals later to ensure that you and the learner have accomplished what was set out. Listening to the old speech sample can also be beneficial. It will show the learner how much she has accomplished and help motivate her to continue to improve her pronunciation.

SESSION 8

Lesson Planning

Session 8: Lesson Planning

The objectives of this session are:

- To connect short and long-term goals to the lesson planning process
- To discuss the process involved in lesson planning
- To demonstrate a format to write lesson plans
- To critique a lesson plan
- To write a lesson plan
- To provide general tutoring tips

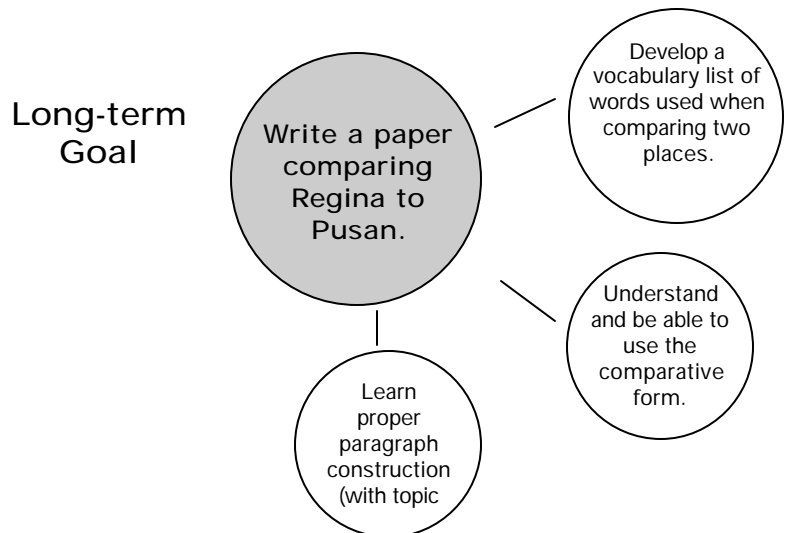
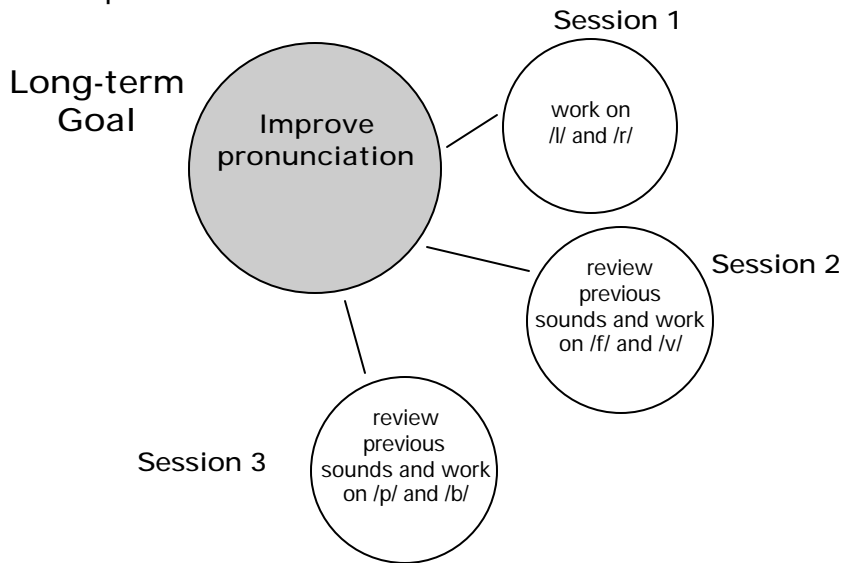
A: Where should I start?

It is important to start with the learner. Start at a point where the learner is comfortable. Start with what the learner knows before introducing new concepts or ideas.

Starting with your learner also means that everything you do will benefit the learner by contributing to her short and long-term goals.

In the third session, we were introduced to Hyun-Chu, a 24-year old from Korea. Hyun-Chu has several goals that she wants to accomplish. For example, she wants to improve her pronunciation, write a paper comparing Regina and her hometown, and learn how to purchase clothing in a store.

In order to accomplish these larger goals, we need to break these down into smaller goals (or steps) that will lead to her long-term goals. A mind map may be a useful tool to assist Hyun-Chu in defining these smaller goals or steps.



Although you may have established long-term and short-term goals with your learner, you still need to narrow the focus further in order to build effective lesson plans.

B: What are the steps involved in lesson planning? ¹

Step 1: Ask Who?

Use the information you have about your learner to develop learning objectives. Learning objectives tell what the learner will know or be able to do after the lesson that she could not do before. Objectives should be focused.

Vague: She will have better pronunciation.

Specific: She will know the proper tongue, lip, jaw placement (etc.) to use for /f/ and /v/.

Vague: She will be able to compare some things.

Specific: She will be able to use the comparative form “er... than” (larger than) and “more... than” (more beautiful than) to compare two things.

Vague: She will be able to participate in everyday activities.

Specific: She will be able to purchase items in a clothing store.

Step 2: Ask What?

For every objective ask *What?* What do I need to do to meet this objective? What skills and vocabulary will the learner need to meet this objective?”

Teaching Hyun-Chu how to pronounce /f/ and /v/

She will need to know:

- where to place her tongue (touch the top teeth to the bottom lip).
- how to hold her lips and jaw.
- the route the air should travel (blow air between the lips and teeth).
- the difference between the two sounds.

¹ Suzanne Abrams et al., *Teaching Adults: An ESL Resource Book*. (Syracuse, New York: New Readers Press, 1996.) Used by permission.

Teaching Hyun-Chu learn how to compare Regina and her hometown in Korea (multi-lesson)

She will need to know:

- Nouns and adjectives related to Regina and area.
- The one syllable rule when using the comparative.
- The two syllable rule when using the comparative.
- The three (or more) syllable rule when using the comparative.

Teaching Hyun-Chu how to purchase items in a clothing store

She will need to know the following phrases:

- Excuse me, could you help me?
- Can I help you with something?
- No, thanks. I am just looking.
- Yes, I am looking for a shirt.

- Do you have this in size 6 / 8 / 10 / 12?
- Do you have this in green / yellow / blue / white / purple / black?
- Do you have this in a small / medium / large?
- How much is this?

Step 3: Ask How? (How will I teach these skills?)

After you have decided what you will teach, you will need to select appropriate materials, teaching strategies and activities.

Consider:

- the pace you would like to use.
- how much time you should spend on each of the activities.
- how much practice and review your learner will need.

One way to bring all this information together is to write a lesson plan.

Teaching Hyun-Chu how to pronounce /f/ and /v/

I could include:

- Sound discrimination activities to make sure she can hear the difference between the two sounds.
- Exercises where she can pronounce /f/ at the beginning, middle and at the end of the word.
- Exercises where she can pronounce /v/ at the beginning, middle and at the end of the word.
- Minimal pairs (fine, vine; fan, van).
- Tongue twisters with both sounds.
- Review exercises for the following lesson.

Teaching Hyun-Chu learn how to compare Regina and her hometown in Korea (multi-lesson)

The following activities could be included:

- Make a list of nouns associated with Regina and have her add to the list.
- Have her describe each noun using an adjective – provide additional adjectives whenever necessary.
- Have her classify each adjective by the number of syllables it has (make a chart).
- Using one syllable adjectives, write some sentences using the comparative (adjective + er + than) form.
- Using those sentences as a model, have Hyun-Chu make her own sentences using one syllable words (speaking and writing).
- Repeat using two syllable and then three (or more) syllable words.
- Have her write additional sentences using the vocabulary provided for homework (follow-up).
- Review work between each session.

Teaching Hyun-Chu how to purchase items in a clothing store

The following activities could be included:

- Have Hyun-Chu classify which questions would be asked by a salesperson, which ones would be asked by a customer.
- Read a dialogue about the topic (tutor reads to the learner; learner will listen).
- Read the dialogue with the learner (tutor reads one line; student repeats).
- Read the dialogue again (learner plays the customer; tutor plays the clerk).
- Read the dialogue again (tutor plays the customer; learner plays the clerk).
- Role-play exercises where she asks for help, gets information about clothing, and asks for the price (tutor provides responses).
- Role-play exercises where tutor is the customer and Hyun-Chu is the clerk.
- Write a dialogue where she asks for help and gets information about an item.
- Review the expressions the next session.

C: What should a lesson plan “look like”?

There are numerous ways to write up a lesson plan. One will follow, but feel free to pick the form that works best for you.

The acronym R.O.P.E.S. can be a helpful way to remember the following method for lesson planning.

Review

Start each lesson by reviewing the previous lesson. Ensure that the learner has the skills necessary to continue with the new information.

Overview

Give an overview of what will be taught in the lesson. Show how the new lesson will be connected to what was learned previously and how this will help the learner achieve her goals. This will keep the learner motivated and focused on the task at hand.

Present

Present the material.

Start by presenting any new structures, vocabulary or expressions that are needed for the lesson. *

Exercises

Use the material in different exercises and activities. This will reinforce what you have just taught.

■ Start with a targeted activity

A targeted activity is an activity that you direct. It is used specifically to provide practice in a certain area. So, if you are teaching your learner how to compare two things, you will set up a situation where the learner must use the expressions taught.

Directed teaching strategies include drills, focused questions and predetermined listening and reading exercises.

The lower the level your learner is, the more targeted activities you should do. You may want to start with a listening exercise, ask directed questions and then read together. You would want to follow-up with additional exercises (drills or dialogues) so the learner can practice what she has just heard and seen.

* You may also want to consider presenting new information while doing the exercise. For some learners, it is better to learn new structures and vocabulary while doing the exercises. Other learners feel more comfortable if they are introduced to new vocabulary and expressions (in context) prior to the exercises. For more information regarding how to introduce new material, please see Additional Resources: Two Models of Learning Styles. In this section, there are examples of an inductive and deductive approach to teaching.

■ Follow-up with an open activity

This is an activity that the learner directs. This part of the lesson may involve a spontaneous role-play (without a script) or “free conversation” where the learner can direct the course of the conversation. The purpose of this part of the lesson is to give the learner the chance to use what was just learned in a natural setting.

Summary

Summarize what has been taught and connect the information to the learner’s daily life.

Tips to help your lesson planning:

- Take a few minutes to talk to your learner before starting the formal part of your lesson. Find out what happened since you saw her last or play a little game to “warm-up.” Make sure the learner is comfortable before starting the lesson.
- Start new lessons with a review of the previous lesson.
- Connect your new lesson with what has been taught before.
- Break up larger concepts into smaller, more manageable tasks.
- Use demonstrations whenever possible.
- Model the exercise rather than explain how to do it (pretend that you are the learner and show rather than tell the learner what to do.)
- Start with guided practice and then move into independent practice.
- Keep practices short but varied.
- New information should be connected to the learners’ own experience.
- Ensure that the information and skills taught can be used in daily life.
- Include all skill areas in each lesson – reading, writing, listening and speaking.
- Make sure that the learner is actively participating. Try to get the learner to do the majority of the talking.
- Involve the learner in the lesson planning (especially when deciding on objectives) whenever possible.
- End the lesson with a fun activity.
- Reflect on what has happened during the lesson: Were the objectives fulfilled? If not, what additional work needs to be done to make sure the learner can do what needs to be done?
- Spend time redefining long and short-term goals when necessary.

Regardless of what form your lesson plan may take, it is important to keep the form consistent from lesson to lesson, particularly if you have a lower-level learner. Too many changes can result in added stress for the learner.

Sample Lesson Plan

Student	Hyun-Chu
Date	August 3, 2003
Objective(s)	Learner will increase vocabulary. Learner will be able to use the comparison form with one-syllable adjectives.
Materials	Vocabulary cards based on the objects highlighted in the landscape and city photos from Regina and area. (These were the learner's photos of Regina used during the last lesson for vocabulary development.)
Review	<p>Review list of vocabulary from last day (nouns and adjectives related to Regina) using vocabulary cards (words written out on cue cards) and photographs of the landscape and city.</p> <p>Part I: Review Landscape/city vocabulary (nouns) <i>Model exercise: match a couple of vocabulary cards with their pictures (put word underneath).</i> <i>Have Hyun-Chu match the word card with the picture.</i> <i>Model exercise: Say the word and point to the picture.</i> <i>Say the word and have Hyun-Chu point to the picture.</i></p> <p>Part II: Review the Adjectives <i>Review the cards and have Hyun-Chu repeat each word.</i> <i>When appropriate, have her give a synonym or "similar word" in meaning.</i> <i>(For example, attractive, beautiful and pretty are all similar in meaning.)</i></p> <p>Part III: Classify Words <i>Using the vocabulary cards, Hyun-Chu will put them into two rows. One row will be for nouns; the other row will be for adjectives.</i></p>
Overview	Discuss the assignment that she will need to do at the end of the semester, and how the following exercises will help her to compare Regina and her hometown, Seoul.
Presentation	<p>Part 1: Classify adjectives <i>Model: Read six or seven adjectives. While reading the word, clap your hands for each syllable the word has. Big (clap once), small (clap once), beautiful (clap once for each: beau, ti and ful)</i></p> <p><i>Have the learner read the adjectives and "clap out" the syllables for a couple words.</i></p> <p><i>Model: Take four or five cards and set up three rows on the desk. One row is for "one syllable" adjectives, the second row is for "two syllable" adjectives and the third row is for "three or more syllable adjectives"</i> <i>Have the learner continue classifying the rest of the adjectives.</i></p>
* note the presentation involves exercises; often this will be the case	

<p>Presentation Cont.</p>	<p>Part II: Comparing objects using one syllable words (adjectives) <i>Using the words (adjectives) in the first column and the landscape and city vocabulary (nouns), make sentences using the vocabulary previously learned.</i></p> <p><i>Example</i> <i>Materials: (noun) vocabulary cards with the words "bank" and "store"</i> <i>(Adjective) vocabulary cards that say: "big", "tall", "old", "nice", "small", "new", "cheap" and "clean"</i> <i>Cards that say: "is" "ger" "er" "r" "the" (x2) and "than"</i></p> <p><i>Take the photos and say the following sentence: The farm is bigger than the park.</i> <i>Take the cards and use them to make the sentence you have just said.</i> <i>Hyun-Chu will read the sentence that she sees.</i></p> <p><i>Repeat exercise using a different adjective:</i> <i>The park is smaller than the farm.</i></p> <p><i>Hyun-Chu will use the vocabulary provided and say a sentence.</i> <i>She will use the cards to make a sentence.</i> <i>Read her sentence back to her.</i> <i>Allow her to make any changes she wants.</i></p> <p>Repeat with other adjectives and nouns.</p>
<p>Exercise(s)</p>	<p>Part I: Write a short dialogue together comparing things previously labeled in the photographs. (The tutor will write one line and then have the learner respond to that statement in written form.)</p> <p>Part II: Free conversation Discuss how Regina is different than her hometown. Ask questions whenever there is a lull. (i.e. Which city has wider roads?)</p>
<p>Summary</p>	<p>Review vocabulary cards. Read the dialogue again together and point out where she has used the form correctly. Reiterate the need to continue learning in this area in order to do the best job possible on her major project due later this term.</p>
<p>Personal Reflections on the Lesson</p>	<p>Hyun-Chu did all the exercises very well. Perhaps I could have introduced more vocabulary in the prior lesson and added additional related vocabulary in this lesson.</p> <p>Her dialogue was very well done, but she took a long time writing it. Maybe, the assignment should have been given as homework. I could have written out some short dialogues for person #1 and she could have written out the responses for Person #2.</p> <p><i>Person #1: Hello. I am looking for the bank. I heard it is on this street.</i> <i>Person #2: Yes, it is further down this street, next to the store.</i> <i>Person #1: What does the building look like?</i> <i>Person #2: _____</i></p> <p><i>Person #1: I want to go to Regina or Saskatoon for the weekend.</i> <i>Person #2: You should go to Regina.</i> <i>Person #1: Why?</i> <i>Person #2: Regina is _____ than Saskatoon.</i></p>
<p>Items to Include in Portfolio</p>	<p>Have Hyun- Chu fill in the reflection sheet (for speaking or listening exercises) for homework.</p> <p>The dialogue will be placed in the portfolio and added to the writing summary sheet.</p>

D: Reflections on the Lesson: Assessing the Session ²

After each lesson is completed, it is a good idea to jot down a few notes regarding how the lesson progressed. Generally, this can be done right in the lesson plan grid itself.

Learner–Related Concerns:

- Was the session the right pace for the learner?
- Did the learner participate in planning and evaluating the lesson?
- Was the learner active more often than the tutor?
- Did the learner feel good about what happened?

Content–Related Concerns:

- Were the contents of the lesson related to the goals?
- Did the lesson include enough or too many explanations, demonstrations and practice activities?
- Were the activities interesting and varied?
- Did the lesson include reading, writing, listening and speaking activities?
- Were the tasks “real”? Were they presented in real situations?

Material Related Concerns:

Were they:

- “real”?
- for adults?
- related to the goals?
- varied?
- at a suitable level?

Other Concerns:

- Was the goal reached?
- Did the goal change during the session?
- Was a new goal set at the end of the session?
- Were praise and feedback provided?
- Did both the learner and tutor stay on track?

² Saskatchewan Literacy Network, *Saskatchewan Level 1 Tutor Training Kit* (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Saskatchewan Literacy Network, 2000), p. 4 –15.

E: Tutoring Tips ³

Having a good lesson plan is a starting point. How successful your lesson is will be determined by how you implement your plan. Consider using some of the suggestions below.

- Speak at a relaxed pace, but not unnaturally slow.
- Use the correct intonation.
- Do not speak too loudly.
- Do not over-articulate (unless you are teaching pronunciation and are drawing attention to a specific sound).
- Monitor your sentence length. Try not to speak in long sentences.
- Use complete sentences. Do not say anything to your learner that you would not say to anyone else. It is not in the learner's best interest to hear questions like, "You go movie?"
- Use linguistic cues such as "look" and "listen" to emphasize important points.
- Use visual aids such as objects, pictures, and maps.
- Draw or sketch whenever appropriate.
- Act (especially for things such as verbs).
- Use facial expressions to help you communicate.
- Use methods that emphasize all learner preferences.
- Use audio aids (taped dialogues) when appropriate.
- Try not to use too much filler when first starting with a beginner student. "Filler" refers to words that have no real meaning. (example: And, uh... let's see here... hmmm... yeah, now... this is an... uh.. apple.)
- Paraphrase what your learner has said when you do not understand. Restating what your learner has said will give her an opportunity to clarify what she has said to you. It also allows her to see how a native speaker is interpreting her message.
- Check to see that your learner understands what you are saying. Learners can be very polite and may not want to interrupt you while you are speaking. Ask your learner to paraphrase what you have said or ask questions to get feedback.
- Repeat when necessary but repeat your sentence using slightly different words. Do not repeat the exact same sentence over and over again. Find other ways to express your idea. It may be one or

³ Barbara Law and Mary Eckes, *The More- Than-Just- Surviving Handbook: ESL for Every Classroom Teacher*. (Winnipeg, Manitoba: Portage & Main Press, 2000) p. 72. Copyright © 2000 by Barbara Law and Mark Eckes. Used by permission of Portage & Main Press.

two words in your sentence that are causing difficulties for your learner.

- Make the environment as stress-free as possible.
 - Consider how the noise and lighting in the area could affect the learner.
- Show genuine interest in the learner. This will make her more comfortable.
- Encourage the learner to take risks practicing her English.
- Allow your learners to make errors without correction – communication is the goal not perfection.
- Let your learner know that making mistakes is a natural part of learning a language; she should not feel embarrassed about errors!
- Reinforce learner progress.
- Let learners feel their culture is valued; have them bring cultural artifacts to the session.
- Be flexible and change your lesson plan whenever necessary.

*"The learner is a person first, learner second."*⁴

- Respond to questions that the learner asks and, whenever necessary, adapt lesson plans to reinforce the answers to their questions.
- **SMILE!** It may seem silly, but smiling can put a learner at ease and help him perform better.

F: Tips for Aboriginal Learners *

In Session 1, we talked about some of the difficulties Aboriginal learners might face while in school. As a tutor, you want to ensure that your learner's experience is a positive one. Consider using some of the suggestions below.

- Honour the feelings your learner might have and be empathetic.
- Get to know your learner as a person; establish a trusting relationship. This in turn, will help promote a relaxed and safe environment for the learner.
- Understand that learners may initially be reluctant to ask for help.
- Use materials that are culturally and personally relevant to the learner.
- Assist learners in connecting new material to their own experiences.

⁴ Virginia Sauvé, *Voices and Visions: An Introduction to Teaching ESL* (Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press Canada, 2000), p.12. By permission of Oxford University Press Canada.

* Many of these suggestions will work well for other learners.

- Allow time for responses.
- Present lessons in a way that lets learners see the “whole picture” before defining all the parts.
- Use cooperative, collaborative approaches.
- Allow the learner a chance to watch and practice. Do not demand “performance” right away. Allow the learner to rehearse a skill privately before showing you if that makes her feel more comfortable.
- Be aware of nonverbal communication. For example, Aboriginal learners may not make eye contact with an older person as this would, for some learners, be a sign of disrespect.
- Understand that “noninterference” is not disinterest in Aboriginal culture. Refraining from giving unsolicited advice means that you trust the individual will make the right decision.
- Avoid stereotyping and consider the information given above only as tendencies.
- Find the best way to work with your learner.

Noninterference means having respect for other persons' decisions (regardless of age) and refraining from interfering with their way of life. ⁵

⁵ Swisher, Karen. (Spring 1994). American Indian Learning Styles Survey: An Assessment of Teachers Knowledge. In *National Centre for ESL Literacy Education and Centre for Applied Linguistics* [on-line], Available: ncela.gwu.edu/miscpubs/jeilms/vol13/americ13.htm [2003, January]

Are you looking for some good resources with Aboriginal content?

Take a look at:

Root, Letitia. *Through the Eyes of the Elders*. Southampton, Ontario: M&T Printing Service for Saugeen Community Remedial Outreach for Learning Literacy, 1996.

This series documents a variety of topics (quill basket making, quilting, and cooking) for learners to read about. There are numerous photographs. The book is structured in a way that, should you have the supplies, you could do the activity with your learner as well. The written language is appropriate for lower-level learners.

Akiwenzie - Damm Kateri, and Deana Halonen. *Empowering the Spirit: Native Literacy Curriculum*. Owen Sound, Ontario: Ningwakwe Clearing House, 1997.

This resource is full of background information as well as numerous lesson plans for basic, intermediate and advanced learners. The bibliography provided at the back of the manual has abundant resources available for use during tutoring sessions.

Johnny, Michael (ed.) *Native Learning Styles*. 2nd ed. Owen Sound, Ontario: Ningwakwe Learning Press, 2002.

This is a great resource for additional information regarding learning styles and "tips for successful instruction."

Additional works consulted for "General Tips for Tutoring Aboriginal Learners"

- Hill, Dianne. "Prior Learning Assessment Recognition: Applications for an Aboriginal Model of Holistic Learning." A speech at Joe Duquette High School. Saskatoon, November 16, 2001.
- Schultz, Marilou and Miriam Kroeger. *Teaching and Learning with Native Americans: A Handbook for Non-Native American Adult Educators*. Arizona: Arizona Adult Literacy and Technology Resource Center, Inc., June 1996.

Additional Electronic Documents

- Swisher, Karen. (Spring 1994). American Indian Learning Styles Survey: An Assessment of Teachers Knowledge. *National Centre for ESL Literacy Education and Centre for Applied Linguistics* [on-line], Available: ncela.gwu.edu/miscpubs/jeilms/vol13/ameri13.htm, [2003, January]
- Saskatchewan Learning. (1997). *Teaching Native Studies. Evergreen Curriculum* [on-line], Available: asked.gov.sk.ca/docs/native30/nt30tea.html
- Sabourin, Beverly Anne and Associates. (December 1998). The Language of Literacy: A National Resource Directory of Aboriginal Literacy Programs. *National Adult Literacy Database*. [on-line], Fredericton, New Brunswick. Available: nald.ca/fulltext/langlit/contents.htm.

G: The First Lesson

If this is your first tutoring experience, you may feel a bit nervous about meeting your learner. Remember that your learner is probably even more nervous than you. For some learners, just enrolling in the tutoring program takes a lot of courage!

Throughout your first meeting, it is important to focus your attention on learning as much as you can about the learner. Make your learner feel comfortable, and ensure that, by the end of the session, your learner feels a sense of accomplishment.

The following are some tips for your first meeting:

Start with an introduction

Let the learner know who you are and a bit about your background. This will help the learner feel more comfortable when talking about herself. While chatting, focus on the learner. Show interest, but do not ask too many probing questions. Open-ended questions are generally the best because they allow the learner to offer whatever information she feels comfortable providing.

Meet somewhere neutral

Try to meet at the local library or a quiet coffee shop for the first meeting. Ensure that the lighting is appropriate and there are not too many distractions at the chosen site.

Discuss expectations and goals

Be up front about how you would like to see the tutoring sessions progress. Let the learner know that the sessions are intended to be learner-centred. You are there to help her learn whatever it is **she** wants to learn. If there is something from home or work with which she would like help, she should bring it to the session.

Being upfront about how you would like the lesson to progress could also include “housekeeping issues.” For example, you may want to provide the learner with your contact information and ask your learner to call you if she cannot make a session or will be late.

Near the end of this first meeting, you may want to ask some of the questions found on the assessment sheets provided in Session 3. However, do not take notes unless the learner is comfortable with this. If your learner seems uncomfortable, you may even want to leave the assessment until the next session.

Come prepared

Bring pens, pencils, paper and any books you think the learner may be interested in to the first session. Make sure that any reading materials you bring are at a variety of different levels.

Although the first meeting is generally just to get to know each other and establish trust, some learners may be anxious to get started. Some activities that you can do with your learner to start may include:

- **Reading a short passage**

Let the learner look through the materials you have brought and choose a passage to read aloud to you. It is important to let the learner pick the book rather than use the “trial and error” approach where the learner may be given something too difficult to read and may feel uncomfortable.

This activity will enable you to discover how well the learner decodes the written text and will give you a chance to hear her pronunciation. Asking additional comprehension questions will give you a better idea of what the learner can comprehend from the text.

- **The Language Experience Story**

This is a good exercise for the first session because it will allow you to get to know the learner as well as assess the learner’s spoken English. Have the learner read the story back to you.

- **Trying the “Getting to Know You” questionnaire in Session 2**

This questionnaire could be used during the first session. You could ask your learner the questions to get to know more about her and her cultural background. She could also ask you these questions to get to know more about the activities in which you (and other Canadians) participate.

The most important thing to remember is to let the learner control the activities during this first session. Establishing trust and a comfortable learning environment is more important than assessment at this point in time.

“We are teaching people first, and content second.”⁶

⁶ Virginia Sauvé, *Voices and Visions: An Introduction to Teaching ESL* (Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press Canada, 2000.) By permission of Oxford University Press Canada.

Additional Resources

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Cultural Surveys for Beginning Learners

Cultural Surveys for Beginning Learners

The use of cultural surveys was discussed in Session 2: Culture and Communication. *The ESL Toolbox* has a number of questionnaires that you and the learner can use to gain information about culture. Three cultural surveys follow.

These exercises will give you a chance to:

- learn about your learner's culture.
- discover what your learner knows about Canadian culture.
- know how your learner interprets the activity around her (using follow-up questions.)

The activity recognizes that the learner will not necessarily agree with the cultural norms of her native country or the prevalent cultural norms in Canada.



Name: _____















Date: _____/_____/_____

CULTURE SHOCK

ACTIVITY

A. Read Check *okay* or *not okay*

		In my first country		In Canada		My opinion	
		okay	not okay	okay	not okay	okay	not okay
Example: People talk about money while they eat.		✓		✓			✓
1. People talk about money while they eat.							
2. People blow on soup to make it cooler							
3. People open their mouths while they chew food.							
4. People spit near other people.							
5. People ask, "How old are you?"							

		In my first country		In Canada		My opinion	
		okay	not okay	okay	not okay	okay	not okay
6. People chew gum while they talk.							
7. People smoke while other people eat.							
8. Men whistle or make noises when a woman goes by.							
9. People says "okay" like this:							
10. People say "come here" like this:							
11. People say "come here" like this:							
12. People say "hello." and kiss each other on the cheek.							

Talk about your answers with your partners.



Name _____





Street _____









A. Read each sentence about families.
in each space, write

- *always*
- *usally*
- *sometimes, or*
- *never.*

Talk about your answers.

		In my first country	In Canada	My choice
Example: Older people live with their children or grandchildren		always	somethimes	usally
1. Older people live with their children or grandchildren.				
2. Husbands stay home with the children when their wives work.				
3. Young single people live with their parents				
4. Children call parents by their first names.				

		In my first country	In Canada	My choice
<p>5. Parents help to find good husbands and wives for their children.</p>				
<p>6. The oldest child should get married first.</p>				
<p>7. People phone the police when there is family violence.</p>				
<p>8. Many couples decides to have a child alone.</p>				
<p>9. A single person decides to have a child alone</p>				
<p>10. Parents want children to talk about their opinions</p>				

Name: _____


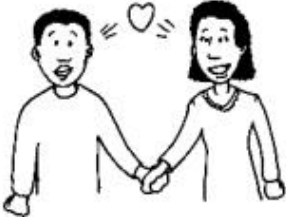
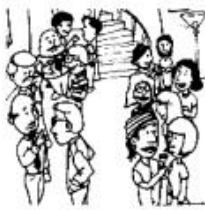
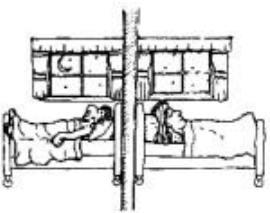
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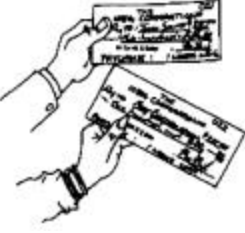






A. Read each sentence about families. in each space, write

- *always*
- *usally*
- *sometimes, or*
- *never.*

Talk about your answers.

		In my first country	In Canada	My choice
Example: Men and women shake hands when they meet for the first time.		always	somethimes	usally
1. Men and women shake hands when they meet for the first time.				
2. In public places, men and women hold hands.				
At a party, the women stand on one side of the room and the men stand on the other.				
Unmarried men and women are friends. They live together. but they sleep in different bedrooms.				

		In my first country	In Canada	My choice
<p>5. Men invite women. (Women do not invite men.)</p>				
<p>6. Men and women who do the same job make the same amount of money</p>				
<p>7. Men and women each do half of the cooking and cleaning at home</p>				
<p>8. When a man and a woman go to a restaurant together, the man pays.</p>				
<p>9. When men and women are talking, they look down or to the side. They do not look each other in the eye.</p>				
<p>10. Couples live together before they get married.</p>				

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Two Models of Learning Styles

Two Models of Learning Styles

In Session 3 of the manual, we discussed different learning styles. Visual, auditory, tactile and kinesthetic learning styles all refer to the way in which the learner best receives the information when it is presented. Two models, which focus on different aspects of learning, are highlighted below. The first model describes the left and right brain functions and focuses on the way the brain processes the information received. The second model describes whole picture vs. detail-orientated learners and further investigates learning styles which affect second language development.

A²: Left and Right Brain Learners ¹

There are two parts of the brain that are responsible for different tasks. Although people can mix their left and right-brained thinking skills, some people may favor a side.

left brain

- intellectual
- makes objective judgements
- relies on language to think and remember
- Appreciates logical sequence of ideas or information
- details
- planned and structured
- analyzes: breaks down
- favours logical problem solving
- prefers multiple choice tests
- good at grammar and spelling

right brain

- intuitive
- makes subjective judgements
- relies on images to think and remember
- favors discussions and the random development of ideas
- general ideas
- spontaneous
- synthesizes: builds up
- favours intuitive problem solving
- prefers open-ended questions
- good at art, music, drama

¹ H. Douglas Brown, *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching (4th edition)*. (White Plains, NY: Pearson Education, 1999) By permission of Pearson Education.

Here are some suggestions that will help you while lesson planning

Suggestions for a Left-Brained Learner

- Teach rules wherever applicable such as: spelling rules, grammar rules, writing rules (i.e. how to write a paragraph).
- Teach how to decode written words using phonics.
- These learners like to measure progress. Be sure to give them feedback.
- Structure your lessons in a way that they can get immediate feedback (i.e. drills and dictation).
- Teach difficult words before reading them. Give a vocabulary list before the article, story or book.
- Left-Brained learners prefer guided writing exercises. This means that they will need some help brainstorming before writing. They are not generally comfortable doing creative writing.

Suggestions for a Right-Brained Learner

- Allow these learners to read something first and look at the individual words afterwards.
- These learners may not respond well to phonics; they often learn better using sight words.
- Spelling may be more difficult for right-brained learners. You may want to look for common errors they make and find exercises to address them.

Keep in mind that learners may have a mix of learning styles. Learners may be "right brained" while doing some tasks, but make use of their "left brained" characteristics while participating in other types of learning tasks.

A³: “Whole picture” vs. “Detail-orientated” Learners ²

Someone who is a whole picture learner needs to look at the subject matter holistically in order to fully understand. While this learner can understand things in context, she may not be able to see the smaller parts that make up the whole.

Someone who is detail-orientated can see what is important among distracting items. She can separate the parts from the whole. However, a learner who is “too detail-orientated” may get bogged down in the details and suffer from “tunnel vision” or the inability to see the larger picture.

How can this help me help my learner?³

The “Whole Picture” Learner

This learner tends to see things more holistically. When the whole picture learner is reading or listening, she can still get the gist of the material but may not be able to explain or understand the smaller details within it. This learner has an easier time learning language and culture outside the classroom than one who is detail-orientated.

When learning structure and form, a whole picture learner benefits from “inductive” lessons. Using an inductive approach means that you do not have to teach this learner grammatical rules. However, this does not mean that the learner does not need structure and guidance. A general overview of a grammar lesson using an inductive approach might look like this:

An overview of an inductive grammar lesson

Warm-up questions:

Tutor: I go to school at 8:00 a.m. When do you go to school?

Learner: I go to school at 7:00 a.m.

Tutor: I go shopping on Monday. When do you go shopping?

Learner: I go shopping on Saturday.

Tutor: I go on holidays in March. When do you go on holidays?

Learner: I go on holidays in April.

Tutor: I go biking in the summer. When do you go biking?

Learner: I go biking in the summer, too.

² H. Douglas Brown, *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. (White Plains, NY: Pearson Education, 1994), pp. 114 - 115. By permission of Pearson Education.

³ H. Douglas Brown, *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. (White Plains, NY: Pearson Education, 1994), pp. 115 - 116. By permission of Pearson Education.

A Week in the Life of John

Part 1

John is a very busy man. He goes to work every weekday at 7:00 a.m., and he finishes work at 6:00 p.m. When he arrives home at 7:00 p.m., he must help his wife finish making supper and then clean up the dishes.

Although he works many hours each day, he tries to find time to enjoy life. On Monday, he takes a karate class at 8:00 p.m.. He also likes to swim on Tuesday and Thursday at 1:00 p.m., when he takes his lunch break. On Friday, he meets his friends after work to have a quick drink before going home to spend a relaxing weekend with his wife.

This is generally how he spends his time in the fall and winter. In the summer, his schedule changes a bit.

Comprehension questions:

1. When does John go to work everyday?
2. When does John arrive home from work?
3. When does he take a karate class?
4. When does he go for a swim?
5. When does he meet his friends for a drink?

Part 2

In May, John starts to spend more time outside. He likes to get his garden ready so that he can plant his vegetables in June. He enjoys eating fresh vegetables in July and August.

John also enjoys outdoor sports in the summer. He likes to go waterskiing in July when he visits his sister. In August, he enjoys fishing with his brother.

Comprehension questions:

1. When does John spend more time outside?
2. When does he plant his vegetables?
3. When does he eat these vegetables?
4. When does he enjoy outdoor sports?
5. When does he go waterskiing?
6. When does he go fishing?

Part 3: Discussion of grammar points

Tutor asks: When should we use at / on / in? What is the difference between them?

Part 4: Writing Assignment

Write five sentences about five different activities you do (using **at**, **on** and **in**).

An inductive approach to learning means that the material can be presented before the rule is applied. First, we study the form. After studying the form, we can determine what the rule is regarding it. In the above example, learners can note that the preposition varies.

- With specific numerical times (i.e. 7 o'clock), we use **at**.
- With days of the week, we use **on**.
- With months, we use **in**.
- With seasons, we use **in**.

The Detail-orientated Learner ⁴

The detail-orientated learner is often very successful in formal learning situations. This learner generally does well in traditional classroom exercises (such as drills) and in testing situations that require analytical abilities. Some studies state that detailed-orientated learners can improve their pronunciation more quickly than holistic or whole picture learners.

A detail-orientated learner can also more readily learn language forms (or grammar) using a deductive approach. This means that this learner prefers to have the grammar rules specified before she does any exercises where she would need to use that grammatical form.

Things to consider when teaching rules deductively:

- Keep explanations brief and simple.
- Use charts and other visual aids.
- Give clear examples.
- Do not worry about exceptions to the rules.
- When in doubt, tell the learner you will research it and answer her at the next session.

⁴ H. Douglas Brown, *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. (White Plains, NY: Pearson Education, 1994), p.118. By permission of Pearson Education.

In conclusion, knowing whether or not your learner is a *detail-orientated* or a *whole picture* learner can be useful when determining how you should present new information to her. Since *detail-orientated* learners like a deductive approach, you may want to spend more time working on “rules” before practicing how that rule is applied. On the other hand, *whole picture* learners like to look at things more holistically. You do not have to pre-teach these learners rules. You can let them discover rules for themselves.

Keep in mind, some learners might be both *detail-orientated* and *whole picture* learners. These are at either ends of the continuum in much the same way as the labels “introvert” and “extrovert.” Just as you may be both introverted in some situations and more extroverted in others, so too will learners be *detail-orientated* when doing some tasks but have a *whole picture* orientation when engaged in other types of tasks. The learner needs to learn when to use each orientation. The tutor needs to understand the learner’s preferred style and help the learner become more flexible.

Some academic research shows a connection between learning style and culture.

For example, findings show that Hispanic, African and Native American students are less detail-orientated than the average Caucasian student.

Research also indicates that while it can be beneficial to know the relationship between culture and learning styles, there are considerable differences between learners with the same cultural background.

Some researchers believe that we should pay more attention to the strengths the individual learner shows than to the generalizations researchers have found within their culture. ⁵

⁵Al Heredia (October 1999.) Cultural Learning Styles. *ERIC Clearinghouse on Teaching and Teacher Education* [on-line], Available: ericass.uncg.edu/virtuallib/diversity/1036.html

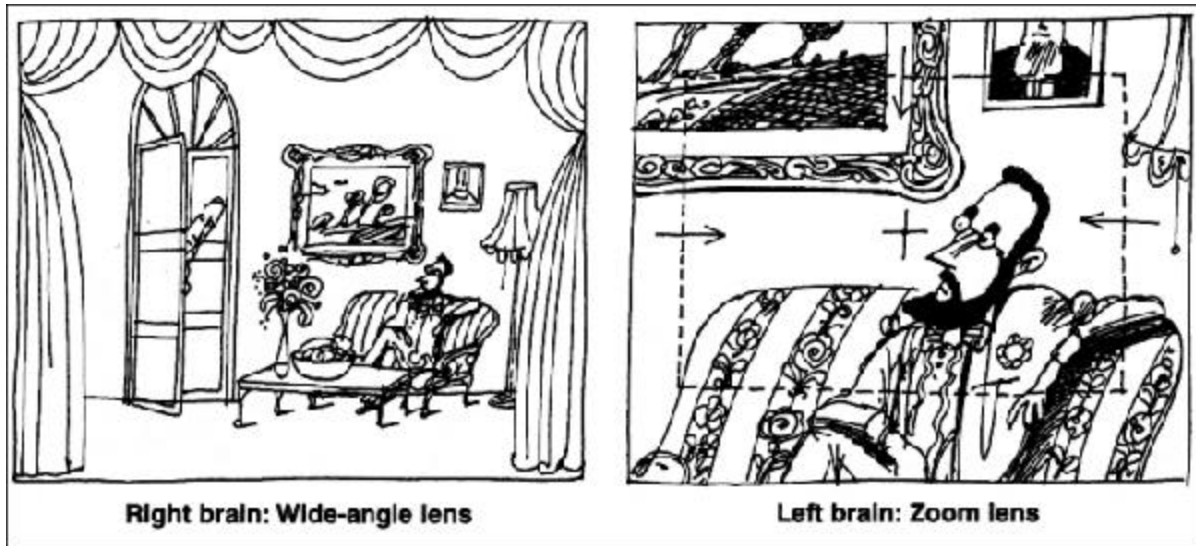
Following is a chapter entitled "Left Brain and Right Brain" from *Strategies for Success: A Practical Guide to Learning English*.⁶ It allows learners to practice their skills (reading, vocabulary, speaking and listening) while learning about themselves as learners. The attached chapter is not intended to be a diagnostic test - just a reflective exercise.

Also included from the same book, is the chapter "Learning to Take Risks." In Session 1 of the manual, it was mentioned that confidence leads to more effective learning. This chapter explores how "language ego" can affect learning, and offers a variety of strategies for success.

⁶ H. Douglas Brown, *Strategies for Success: A Practical Guide to Learning English* (White Plains, NY: Pearson Education, 2002.)

3

Left Brain and Right Brain



When you were five years old, you probably used your native language all the time. But did you think about grammar rules? Did you worry about correct pronunciation or using verbs and articles correctly? Of course not. And if you learned a foreign language when you were young, you didn't think about rules and grammar in that language either. You learned languages naturally, without thinking about the language.

But now you're an adult, and you probably analyze English a lot. Perhaps you memorize lists of words, learn grammar rules, look up words in a dictionary, and translate from one language to the other. You probably know more about the rules of English than about how to speak it or read it fluently. You may be thinking too much about the details of English grammar and pronunciation; you may need to be a little childlike when you use English.

What's your Learning Focus?

Think of language learning as using a camera with interchangeable lenses. You can use a zoom lens to focus on the details of English—what every word means, how every rule is applied, and what all the exceptions are. You can use a wide-angle lens to see the general meaning of something—the big picture of what someone is trying to say or write.

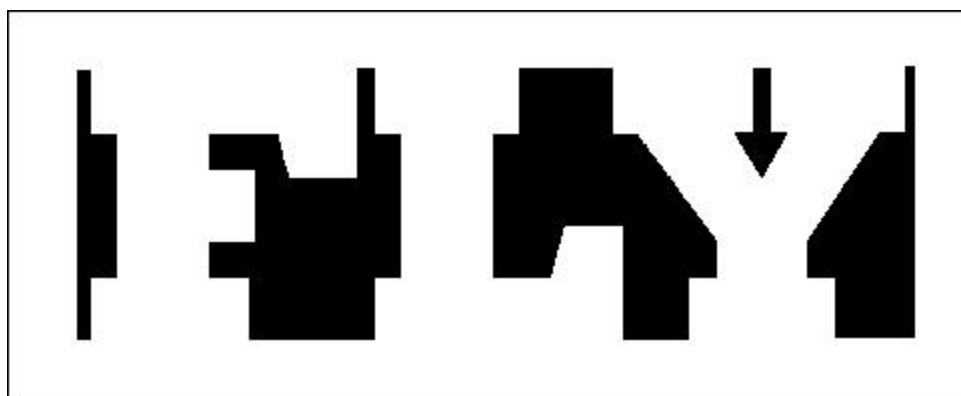
Adults usually use the zoom lens a little too much when they learn languages. Children usually use a wide-angle lens as they learn a language naturally. As an adult, you must make a conscious effort to use a wide-angle lens most of the time, only occasionally zooming in on a word or grammar point.

You can also think of learning English as similar to learning to play a sport. If you think about it too much, it doesn't work. I used to overanalyze my tennis game. I would tell myself to watch the ball or to swing the racket correctly or to change my grip for a backhand shot. But I analyzed so much that I couldn't relax and just play the game! I was too aware of myself. I finally discovered that I was more successful if I focused on the big picture: the game, not myself.

Should you stop studying grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary? No! Focusing on the small pieces of English is important and useful. It helps you to see what you can't see with your wide-angle lens. As you continue to learn English, it's very useful to be able to quickly zoom in on a difficult word or grammar point, and then to zoom out to the wider angle again.

Adults have an advantage over children here. Children have only the wide-angle lens; they learn languages *subconsciously*. Adults can do both: we can learn both *subconsciously* and *consciously*. Research shows that being able to learn both ways is important for success. You need to be childlike enough to relax with the language and not be too worried about all the details. But at the right times, you also need to examine your language with your zoom lens, then use the detail to improve your language.

Here's an example of what it's like to use a wide-angle lens when you look at things. Look at the row of strange shapes below. Can you read the message? What does it say? Don't read further until you have tried this puzzle for a few minutes.



Did you get it? You have to look at the white spaces between the black shapes. The three white spaces are the three letters, F, L, and Y, spelling the word FLY. You may have looked at the black shapes because you are used to seeing black print on white paper. Don't be tricked!

This puzzle is an example of how you can focus on the wrong thing in a language if you don't have a wide-angle view of language. If you look too closely at the puzzle, you focus on the details. If you back away and look at the whole picture, you get it. Language works the same way.

Before you read further, do Questionnaire 3.

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QUESTIONNAIRE 3 Left-Brain and Right-Brain Processing

Circle the number that best describes you. Circle only one number for each item. Use the following scale:

1. The sentence on the left describes you well.
2. The sentence on the left somewhat describes you.
3. The sentence on the right somewhat describes you.
4. The sentence on the right describes you well.

Example

I prefer speaking to large groups. 1 2 **3** 4 I prefer speaking to small groups.

Number 3 has been circled. This means that this person somewhat prefers speaking in small group situations.

- | | | |
|--|---------|--|
| 1. I try to make decisions based on facts. | 1 2 3 4 | I make decisions based on my feelings. |
| 2. I like rules and exact information. | 1 2 3 4 | I like general guidelines and uncertain information |
| 3. I like to solve a problem by first looking at all its parts | 1 2 3 4 | I like solve a problem by looking at the whole problem. |
| 4. I read slowly and try to carefully analyze what I am reading. | 1 2 3 4 | I read fast and try to get the general meaning of what I am reading. |
| 5. I like teachers to tell me exactly what to do. | 1 2 3 4 | I like teachers to give me a lot of freedom to choose what I can do. |
| 6. I like mathematics and science. | 1 2 3 4 | I like literature and art. |
| 7. When I listen, I pay attention to people's exact words. | 1 2 3 4 | When I listen, I pay attention to the overall message. |
| 8. I like multiple-choice test. | 1 2 3 4 | I like open-ended essay tests |

Add up the numbers you circled. You should get a total score between 8 and 32.

Score: _____

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Questionnaire 3 tells you if you use *left-brain* processing or *right-brain* processing more. The brain is divided into two parts. The left brain is like the zoom lens. It is logical, analytical, and mathematical. The right brain is like the wide-angle lens. It is better at remembering social, emotional, and artistic experiences. Left-brain and right-brain processing involve a whole set of style differences.

Very young children tend to use their right brain more. Then, as they grow older, the left brain develops. As an adult, people use one side or the other side most. Do you remember reading in the last chapter about reflective and impulsive styles? Left-brain and right-brain preferences work the same way as styles: you probably use one side of your brain more than the other.

Your brain processing preference was measured in Questionnaire 3. This is what your score means:

Score

- 28-32** High right-brain preference
- 23-27** Moderate right-brain preference
- 18-22** No particular preference for either side
- 13-17** Moderate left-brain preference
- 8-12** High left-brain preference

Interpret your score from the questionnaire using the following chart.

Left Brain	Right Brain
Zoom lens Rules and definitions Logical, systematic, planned Language, mathematics Focuses on details	Wide-angle lens General guidelines Intuitive, flexible, spontaneous Music, art Gets the general idea

Balancing your Brain

So what does all this mean to *you* and your English study? According to some research studies, people who learn foreign languages outside the classroom use the right brain more in the beginning than when they are at advanced levels. People may naturally use wide-angle lenses when they are beginning a language and use zoom lenses more when they reach a higher ability. But many English language classes do just the opposite! They teach the details of English grammar at the beginning. Much later in the process, students are expected to get a "feel" for the language. This means that many students are being taught to learn English backwards. It is better to get general meanings with the right brain early in the course and to focus on grammar and vocabulary and so on later.

In your English classes, you may have been using your left brain by focusing on the details instead of being more relaxed and childlike. You might become a better learner by using more of your right brain.

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On the other hand, it's important to remember that the left and right sides of your brain work together as a team. Most of the time, when we are learning something, we use both the left and right brain. We do some analyzing, find rules, and focus on details, and we use our intuition and get general meanings. Often we find the best answers to problems by using both sides of the brain.

Remember, it's important for you to know which side of the brain you usually use more, but it's also important for you to use both sides of your brain, depending on the situation. Your left and right brain are members of a team. Use both sides and your brain will stay balanced!

EXERCICES

Understanding Reading and Vocabulary

Here are some words from this chapter that help you to understand left-brain and right-brain learning styles.

conscious	intuitive
subconscious	spontaneous
logical	systematic

With a partner, do the following for each word:

1. Find and circle the word in the chapter. Look at the word's context.
2. Define the word by looking at the context. If you still cannot define it, then look it up in a dictionary.
3. Take turns using the word in sentences that show the word's meanings.
4. After you have done this exercise with your partner, then, on your own, write down in your notebook the six words and the sentences you made with your partner.

Speaking and Listening with a Partner

Look at your score for Questionnaire 3 on page 13, and then discuss the following:

1. According to the questionnaire, which do you use more, your left brain or right brain? Do you agree?
2. What are some things you do while learning English that are examples of left-brain and right-brain styles?
3. Make a list of specific things you could do to improve use of the left side of your brain and things you could do to improve use of the right side of your brain.

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Example

Left-brain things I could do

Pay more attention to my pronunciation of _____.

Right-brain things I could do

Read faster and skip words that I don't know.

4. Copy your lists onto Post-its and stick them near the other Post-it lists you have been making.

Discussing with the Whole Class

Share your lists from *Speaking and Listening with a Partner* with the rest of the class. As other classmates are sharing their lists, write down any of their ideas that you would like to add to your list. Write the lists on the board. When everyone has shared their lists, if time permits, tell the class what ideas, if any, you added to your list.

Writing your Journal

Write about things you have done in your English classes that you think were either helpful or not helpful.

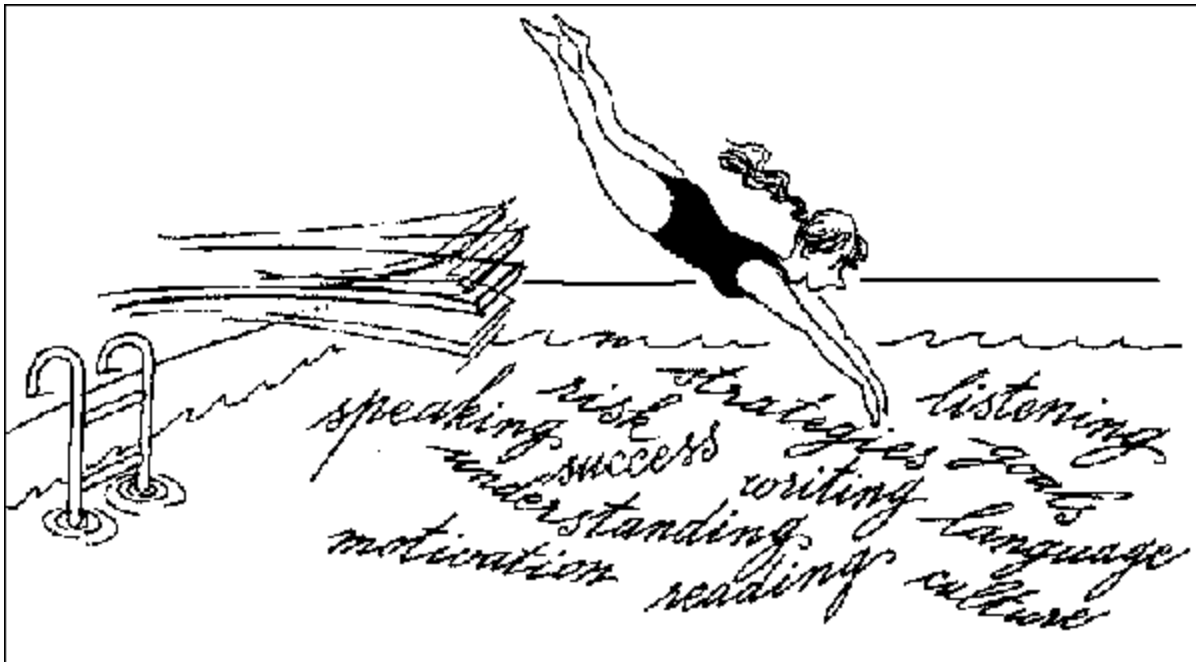
Example

When I was in high school, I remember my teacher used to make us learn the grammar rules that we were studying. We had to write the rules down in our tests. For example, we learned that the present perfect tense expresses an action that began in the past and is continuing in the present. The funny thing is, we focused on the rules but could never use them when we were speaking English.

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6

Learning to Take Risks



So far in this book you have studied the following topics:

- Your own learning styles and preferences
- Motivating yourself and setting your own goals
- How you can build self-confidence
- How to lower your anxiety

You have also learned to have some conversations in English and to read and write a little better in English. You are ready to learn to be a successful *risk taker*. Taking risks means you try to say things in English even if you might make a mistake. It's one of the most important strategies you can use. Let's look at why it's so important.

Language Ego

When you were growing up, you gradually began to understand yourself better. As an adult, you know what you like to do and what you don't like to do, what your strengths and weaknesses are, and what makes you special. This self that you have come to know well and to feel proud of is called your *ego*.

When you were about a year old, you began to speak your native language. Ever since then, you have been telling people what you know, what you think, and how you feel in your language. You have learned to understand yourself in your own language. Other people see you through your native language. This close connection between language and ego is called *language ego*: the way language helps you to understand and express yourself.

People get used to using their native language and seeing themselves through their native language. You are comfortable with the way you speak and understand others. Then you start to learn English: you do not speak fluently; you cannot say everything correctly; you don't understand everything. In English, you do not feel as intelligent, friendly, and charming as you feel in your native language. You can feel very frustrated as you try to speak in English. Why? Because your new language ego is weak.

Before you read further, do Questionnaire 6.

QUESTIONNAIRE 6 Language Ego

Circle the number that best describes you. Circle only one number for each item. Use the following scale:

1. The sentence on the left describes you well.
2. The sentence on the left somewhat describes you.
3. The sentence on the right somewhat describes you.
4. The sentence on the right describes you well.

Example

I don't care if people laugh at me. 1 2 3 4 I get very upset if people laugh at me.

Number 2 has been circled. This means that this person generally doesn't mind if people laugh at him or her.

- | | | |
|--|---------|--|
| 1. I don't want to make mistakes because people will laugh at me. | 1 2 3 4 | Everyone makes mistakes, so it's okay to try out my English. |
| 2. I must speak perfectly or no one will understand me. | 1 2 3 4 | Other people will not care if I make mistakes. |
| 3. If my English is bad, I feel very stupid. | 1 2 3 4 | If my English is bad, I still have strong confidence in myself. |
| 4. Classmates who speak English better than I do really bother me. | 1 2 3 4 | Classmates who are better than I am don't bother me. |
| 5. A bad score on a test means that I am not intelligent. | 1 2 3 4 | A bad score on a test means that I need to study harder next time. |
| 6. When my teacher corrects me, I feel ashamed. | 1 2 3 4 | When my teacher corrects me, I don't feel ashamed. |
| 7. I hate making a fool of myself. | 1 2 3 4 | I don't mind making a fool of myself |

Add up the numbers you circled. You should get a total score between 7 and 28.

Score: _____

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Questionnaire 6 tells you how strong your language ego is. This is what your score means:

Score

- 7-13** Weak language ego
- 14-21** Moderate language ego
- 22-28** Strong language ego

How did you score? If you have a weak or moderate language ego, you like to be safe when you use English. You like to be certain that what you are saying is correct. But research has shown that the most successful language learners take *risks*. They make guesses. They try out new things. They talk with others freely. How can you become more of a risk taker? Think about some of the ideas and strategies that follow.

Weak to Moderate Language Egos

A score of 7 to 21 means that you may feel somewhat afraid to speak English. You may be afraid that other people will think you are stupid. Or perhaps you think that because you don't speak English really well, other people will not like you. You probably do some of the following things:

- Sit near the back of the classroom.
- Speak only when you have to in your English class.
- Let other students talk most of the time in small group work.
- Don't try to speak English with other people outside class.
- Use very simple language that you know is grammatically correct.

To become a higher risk taker, remember to practice what you learned in Chapter 5. Try to increase your self-confidence and lower your anxiety. Then work on these strategies.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

1. **listen to English.**

The first strategy is quite easy: *listen* to English as often as possible. When you just listen, you don't have to speak and risk making mistakes. Listen carefully in class, but also listen outside class on your own, as part of your homework. Watch English TV or go to a movie; listen to English radio programs and English songs.

2. **Make opportunities to talk**

The second step in becoming a greater risk taker is to do lots of talking. It is important for you to speak English even if you make mistakes. You just have to risk saying things that aren't quite correct and be confident in yourself!

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3. **Be willing to make mistakes.**

You don't want to do anything that will make you look foolish or stupid because of your ego. You might feel that mistakes make you look weak and unintelligent. But to learn English successfully, you must tell yourself that it's *okay to make some mistakes*. Mistakes are not signs of weakness or failure. They are natural; everyone makes mistakes. So when you make a mistake, just keep talking and don't worry about it.

4. **Make your mistakes work for you.**

When someone corrects you or tells you they don't understand you, try to remember your error. When people correct you, they are giving you useful information. For example, if you notice that people don't understand you when you use the /l/ and /r/ sounds in English, then you know you need to practice the sounds more. Make a list of errors you make. Try to notice them when you speak.

Strong Language Egos

If your score was 22 to 28, you are probably already a pretty good risk taker. You are not afraid of trying to use your English, and you don't mind too much if you make mistakes. You feel that mistakes are a natural part of learning, and if people correct you, you don't worry about it. You are quite confident in yourself and don't get anxious about speaking English.

Should you practice any strategies for better success? Here are some suggestions.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

1. **Make opportunities to use English outside the classroom.**

You may feel quite confident about speaking English in the classroom, but do you make opportunities to use English outside the classroom? If not, make sure you listen to English and speak English with other people, not just your classmates and teacher. Watch English TV or go to a movie; listen to English radio programs and English songs. Find people who speak English; don't talk only with people who speak your native language.

2. **Make your mistakes work for you.**

When someone corrects you or tells you they don't understand you, try to remember what your error was. When people correct you, they are giving you information about your English. For example, if you notice that people don't understand you when you use the /l/ and /r/ sounds in English, then you know you need to practice the sounds more. Make a list of errors you make. Try to notice them when you speak.

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3. **Take calculated risks.**

While you are practicing English freely, don't forget to *think* a little bit about what you are going to say before you speak. Make sure your risks are calculated; that is, make sure you feel that most of the time your guesses about what you should say will be right. Don't make wild guesses that will be wrong most of the time. Try to be an *accurate* guesser.

One of my American friends told me about a time in Japan when she was eating with some friends in a restaurant. The food was really good, so she wanted to tell the waiter the food was great. She asked one of her friends how to say "great" in Japanese. Her friend gave her the word *oishi*, which actually means "delicious." You use the word to describe food. When the waiter came by; the American smiled, pointed to the food, and said; "Oishi." The waiter was very happy. Later in the evening at a nightclub, when a very handsome man finished a wonderful performance of a romantic song, she stood up and yelled out to him above the noise of the audience, "Oishi!" Everyone in the place laughed.

My friend was a risk taker. People laughed because the word *oishi* is never used for people or songs. But she learned something. She used the information people gave her and always used that word correctly after that.

EXERCISES

Understanding Reading and Vocabulary

Do the following three activities.

1. On your own, skim (quickly read) this chapter again in 5 minutes or less.
2. Write some notes about what the main ideas of the chapter are.
3. With a partner, tell each other what you think the main ideas were. Use your own words.

Speaking and Listening with a Partner

- A. Look again at your score on Questionnaire 6 on page 31. Then look at the strategies that were suggested if your language ego is weak/moderate or strong. Write specific examples of things you can do to improve your score. Share them with your partner, and add your partner's ideas that you like.
- B. Look at the following list of suggested strategies. Think of other strategies to add to the list. Then each choose three or four things to do right away this week. Write these strategies on Post-its. Put your list where you will see it every day.

Examples

Wherever you are

1. Use the Internet to get information in English.
2. Write an e-mail to someone in English.
3. Raise your hand in class to volunteer to speak.
4. Ask questions in class if you don't understand something.

If you are in an English-speaking country

1. With a partner and/or a classmate, eat lunch with native English speakers.
2. Start conversations with people while you're waiting in line for something.
3. Go to parties where people are speaking English.

If you are not in an English-speaking country

1. Go to places where you can find English speakers and talk with them.
2. Practice English with your classmates outside the classroom.
3. Buy and read an English language newspaper.

Discussing with the Whole Class

Write your Post-it strategies from the last exercise on the board for the rest of the class to see. If you like someone else's strategies, add them to your Post-its and use them.

Writing your Journal

Answer these questions in your journal:

1. How well did the language ego questionnaire describe you? Give examples.
2. How do you feel when you make mistakes in front of your classmates?
3. Look back at all the Post-its you have been making. How well have you been following them? Highlight (with a colored marker) any strategies that you have not been doing, and write them in your journal now to remind you.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Listening

Listening

A: What is listening?

Like all language development skills, listening is a complicated task. ESL learners are not just listening to “English sounds,” they are using their knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and context (including knowledge of cultural norms) to make sense of what they hear.

1. *Listening for perception: Individual Sounds and Words*

Being able to distinguish individual sounds is important to ensure information is communicated properly. Learners may have difficulty hearing certain sounds in English because these sounds may not exist in their mother tongue. You may have a learner who hears a “t” sound rather than the “th” sound (as in tooth), and believes that the object you are talking about is “toot.” Other sounds, which English may use as two separate sounds, may exist interchangeably in some languages. For example, in the Korean language, the letters b and p are represented by the same symbol.

Not only can the inability to hear individual sounds cause listening comprehension problems, but pronunciation problems as well. Thus, helping a learner improve her listening inevitably means that you will assist in remedying some of her pronunciation problems as well. Good pronunciation and good listening skills are developed in tandem.

In order for ESL learners to understand English, they need to know not only the individual sounds that exist in the language but how words are stressed. Word stress can also cause additional difficulties for the ESL learner, particularly when words have different stressed syllables in their noun and verb forms.

2. *Listening for perception: Phrases*

Words often sound different when spoken in a sentence. When said in isolation, *you* is pronounced a certain way. When stated rapidly in the phrase *would you come*, *you* may sound more like *ja*. It is important that learners recognize these reduced speech forms. Without knowledge of these reduced forms, understanding day-to-day interactions may be extremely difficult.

Word stress in a sentence can also influence the meaning of a sentence. In Session 7, we discussed how stressing one word in a sentence can change the meaning of a sentence.

Statement	Potential Meaning
HE told them my name.	I do not know why he told them my name. I did not think he knew who I was.
He told THEM my name.	Why did they want it? I wonder what will happen as a result.
He told them MY name.	He did not give them your name or the name of another person.
He told them my NAME.	Not my address or telephone number.

In addition to hearing individual sounds, it is important to be able to discriminate between different types of intonation patterns to truly understand the meaning of a sentence. Learners need to know if they are being asked a question or are simply listening to a statement.

3. *Listening for Comprehension: Understanding the Main Idea*

Comprehension is more than just understanding individual words and phrases. Real comprehension also involves understanding the main idea, and having the ability to understand “inferred” information or information not stated directly in speech. (Consider the phrase, “Do you have the time?” Although it is technically a question that requires a yes or no response, it is commonly used as a substitute for “What time is it?” “What time is it?” is the implied meaning of the question.)

Being able to look at the larger picture, despite gaps or problems that exist at the word or phrase level, is essential. ESL learners need to know enough vocabulary in order to successfully fill in the gaps and understand the main idea, but it is not necessary for learners to understand every word in a conversation. Sometimes, learners may comprehend individual words but may not understand the meaning because they are too busy analyzing

words without linking them to the larger context.

It is normal for people to have gaps when listening to a second language. A certain amount of informed guesswork will always be necessary. Learners need to be able to link what they hear with the visual cues they see and the prior knowledge they possess to fill in these gaps. Not only will this help them understand the message, but will allow them to conserve energy by skipping over unnecessary details or redundancy in speech.

B: Techniques for Teaching Listening

Many of the interactive teaching strategies discussed in the workshop will help your learner improve her listening skills. TPR (Total Physical Response), LEA (Language Experience Approach) and information gap exercises all have listening components to them. Other exercises can be adapted to increase listening proficiency. For example, vocabulary classification can be done orally rather than with cue cards.

However, you will find it beneficial to do additional activities, which focus on developing different types of listening skills. Below are some activities that can be used to help learners improve specific types of listening skills.

1. Listening Activities for Beginning and Intermediate Learners

a. Listening for perception

Many of the listening discrimination activities in Session 7 of the workshop will assist the learner in being able to differentiate the sounds of English. For learners who want practice at the sentence level, there is a number of activities that you could try.

i. Repetition

Have the learner repeat sentences that you say. These sentences could focus on a number of different things such as sound reductions (including schwa), intonation or word stress. Have the learner repeat these sentences in their proper (or ideal) form, and their reduced forms.

If your learner is having difficulty repeating sentences in their reduced form, you may want to start by having her analyze the number of words that are present in an utterance. How many words does *wotcha doin'* represent

in its ideal form?

ii. Predict and/or identify components of spoken language using written text

Word Stress

Have your learner take a look at a written text and decide where she thinks the stressed (and unstressed words) may be. Listen to the recording and see which predictions were correct. Have the learner look for patterns whenever applicable. For a list of common rules regarding what word forms are commonly stressed, refer to Session 7 in the manual.

Intonation

Using a written text, have your learner mark the intonation patterns. Play (if you are using a cassette) or state the sentences and have the learner check over her predictions. Discuss any connection that you find between the stressed words and intonation patterns. (Changes in intonation patterns often start with stressed words.)



What did you say?



Yes, I know.

Fill in the Blank Exercises

There are different types of fill in the blank exercises that you can do. You could choose to have every 7th word removed and a blank left there. The learner would then listen to the speech sample and fill in the word.

You can develop fill in the blank exercises for particular purposes. For example, if you wanted to provide your learner with listening exercises which focus on word endings for past tense, regular verbs, then you could delete every past tense verb from the text. The learner could then listen to the tape and write in the words that she hears. She could listen a second time to see if the word she hears ends in a /t/ (as in washed, fished), /d/ (as in filled) or /id/ (as in waited, accepted).

Fill in the blank exercises: Integrating prediction exercises in reading with listening

Often, learners will read the text and make predictions (based solely on the reading) regarding what words will appear in the blank. The learner could then fill in the blanks and listen to the speech sample to compare her predictions to the words actually heard. Follow-up exercises could consist of discussing with the learner:

- Which words were the same?
- Which words were synonyms?
- Which words share the same part of speech but have a different meaning? (Why would this word work or not work in this sentence?)
- Which words were different in meaning and the part of speech used? (Why would this word work or not work in this sentence?)

A mini-lesson incorporating reading prediction exercises and listening follow-up

Step 1: The learner reads and fills in the following text.

My last weekend

On Friday, I _____ out with a bunch of friends. After we _____ at the local café and _____ until we couldn't eat another bite, we _____ to go see a movie. We _____ through the newspaper, trying to find a movie we all _____ to see. We _____ and _____ about it. No one could agree!

Finally, Pete _____ that we could just go to his house and play cards. At that time, it was 9:30, and far too late to go to a movie. We all _____. I happily _____ home at 1:00. I had won the poker game!

Step 2: The tutor plays a tape with (or reads) the following text. The learner writes words that are different above the previous word chosen.

Step 3: The tutor poses the follow-up questions highlighted above.

Transcript

On Friday, I went out with a bunch of friends. After we met at the local café and ate until we couldn't eat another bite, we decided to go see a movie. We looked through the newspaper, trying to find a movie we all wanted to see. We talked and talked about it. No one could agree!

Finally, Pete mentioned that we could just go to his house and play cards. At that time, it was 9:30, and far too late to go to a movie. We all agreed. I happily returned home at 1:00. I had won the poker game!

Dictation

Rather than have your learner repeat what you said or have her use an existing written text to analyze certain components of speech, you could also have your learner write the words as you speak. Give your learner a blank piece of paper with instructions to write every word that she hears. Repeat each section or phrase several times, but do so at your regular rate of speech. Once the dictation is finished, read the entire text over again so your learner can check over her paper.

Dictation can be useful. It will help you determine what the learner hears when you speak and whether or not she is using certain English sounds interchangeably. It also can give you an idea of whether or not the learner is predicting, or using context clues to help fill the gaps where she cannot understand your speech.

Example

- Tutor states, " I want a pen. I need to write a letter."
- Learner writes, "I want a pin. I need to right a leader."

In this example, we can see that the learner had some difficulty discriminating between the vowel sounds in pin and pen. She may also have trouble with homonyms (words that sound the same but are spelt differently), and may not know that sometimes "t" is pronounced "d" when said with a Canadian or American accent.

For further exercises in stress, intonation and rhythm, you may want to consult:

Laroy, Clement. *Pronunciation*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Sauvé, Virginia. *Voices and Visions: An Introduction to Teaching Adult ESL*. Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2000.

b. Listening for Comprehension

Many of the exercises highlighted in the manual were also designed to improve listening comprehension. In Session 4, a lesson plan for Carine was highlighted that used TPR (Total Physical Response). The objectives of the lesson were for Carine to:

- review nouns (for the living room).
- learn the following prepositions: on, in, next to, to the left of, to the right of, above.

Another objective, although not specifically highlighted, was to improve her listening comprehension skills. In this lesson, the stress, intonation and reduced forms were not overtly analyzed. Importance was placed on her ability to respond to what she heard. There may have been words that she did not fully understand when her tutor spoke, but her success at completing the exercise meant that she was able to comprehend the important information.

i. Picture-based listening exercises

With basic learners, you may want to consider using pictures to help assess and improve your learner's listening proficiency.

1. Take a series of pictures and make a story using them. While the learner is listening to the story, have her put the pictures in their appropriate order. Say the story again and give the learner a chance to reorder the pictures, if necessary. For a higher-level learner, have her retell the most important ideas in the story.

2. Using two pictures that are slightly different, do the following:
 - Give your learner one of the pictures. Describe your picture to her. While she is listening to you, have her circle the things that are different between her picture and your picture.
 - These pictures are available in a variety of ESL textbooks as well as on the Internet. Check out <http://www.primaryresources.co.uk/english/xmas.htm>.

3. With certain listening tasks, you may find it useful for the learner to alter her picture or diagram. For example, if you were teaching your learner how to ask for and give directions, it would be valuable to have her mark the route on a map while she listens to the directions. The route could be broken down into parts, with additional comprehension questions asked throughout the exercise.

Example

Material necessary: A city map

- Tutor: Now, you are at the mall. Go down Main Street and turn right on 3rd Avenue. What place is to your right?
- Learner: The sports store.
- Tutor: Great. Now, continue walking down the street three blocks and turn to your right. What building is between the library and the town hall?
- Learner: Uhm... I am not sure.
- Tutor: Okay... let's start at the sports store. Are you at the sports store?
- Learner: Yes. Sports store.
- Tutor: Okay. Walk down the street three blocks. Are you at a corner?
- Learner: Yes.
- Tutor: What are the names of the two streets that you are on?
- Learner: Railway Avenue and 3rd Avenue.
- Tutor: Perfect! Now imagine you are walking. Walk a little further down Railway Avenue. Do you see the library?
- Learner: Yes, I can see the library.
- Tutor: What is to the left of the library? Remember, you are walking to the right now. Imagine you are there.

Using the same approach, you could review adjectives and vocabulary related to the body by giving the learner a picture of a head and having her add different body parts (i.e. nose, blue eyes, long eyelashes, curly hair) to the picture.

ii. Paper-based listening exercises

Using materials designed specifically for ESL learners

You may be interested in using listening exercises from ESL workbooks and textbooks, especially if your learner is in a lower level, and you feel that the listening resources readily available to you (local radio and television shows) would be too difficult for your learner to use successfully.

There are different types of listening exercises that could be used in conjunction with these books. Often, the speech samples will come with ready-made activities, but you may want to make your own activities rather than use those provided in the text. The following techniques could also be used with authentic materials as well.

Ticking off Items

If your learner is at a low level, you may want to have her make a checklist where she can listen for and classify certain types of vocabulary she hears.

The following is a grid that was used with a beginning learner for a listening exercise. In this speech sample, a homeowner was giving her friend a tour of her new place. When she mentioned an item from the kitchen, the learner was to put a checkmark in the appropriate category. The same rule applied when an item from the living room was mentioned.

Tape plays:

Ann: Hey, Susan. I like your new place.

Susan: Thanks Ann. I've been busy making changes. The cupboards are new; we bought them last week.

Ann: They look great. Is that a new fridge and stove?

Susan: Yes, the fridge and stove are new.

Ann: Wow. Have you made any changes to the rest of the house?

Susan: Well, let's see. Three weeks ago, we replaced the living room carpet and bought a new coffee table.

Ann: I like the colours you have chosen for the living room. The new carpet and coffee table look really good here.

Learner uses the following grid and makes the noted checkmarks.

Items in a kitchen	Items in a living room
✓	✓
✓	✓
✓	

Variation for a high-beginner: Have the learner write in the vocabulary rather than simply ticking off the appropriate line.

True and False Exercises

Provide the learner with a series of statements regarding a speech sample. To increase the difficulty, have the learner listen a second time and correct the false statements.

For beginning learners, these statements should focus on factual information presented in the speech sample. For higher-level learners, the statements could be designed to prompt learners to investigate the inferred meaning of the speech sample.

Learner sheet:

Please circle T if the statement is true. Circle F if the statement is false.

T F 1. Alice was married in 1968.

T F 2. She met Rick in 1956.

T F 3. She met Rick at work.

T F 4. He was her co-worker.

T F 5. He was wearing blue pants and a white shirt when they first met.

T F 6. Alice really liked her job.

T F 7. She noticed Rick immediately.

T F 8. She thought that Rick was handsome.

Tutor reads (or tape plays):

We were married in 1958. I met Rick two years earlier when I was working in a factory. Oh... the factory... the smell was intolerable. All day long, standing on the line, picking the bad potatoes out from the good potatoes. My word! Uh... yeah... I saw him one day. He had just started managing; I guess that made him my boss, didn't it? He was wearing black pants and the cleanest white shirt I'd ever seen in that factory. Usually, everyone was covered in food, dirty from work on the assembly line. Rick really stood out. He seemed like a kind, gentle man. Hmmm...

Notice how some of the questions can be answered using material directly related to the content of the listening exercise. Other questions, such as "Alice really liked her job" cannot be answered directly but we can infer, or make an assumption based on evidence in the speech, that she did not like her job since she thought the smells were intolerable and that she had to stand all day.

Complete the Grid

In Session 4, we took a look at information grid exercises and how they can be used to develop listening, reading, writing and speaking skills simultaneously. However, when used with prerecorded speech samples, grids can provide a framework for listening and writing practice.

An example of a grid for higher-level learners is provided in the listening lesson below for Akbar.

Circle the Main Idea

Even at a more basic level of language proficiency, it is important that learners are asked to look at the "larger picture" and are not given listening exercises that focus solely on specific information (such as dates and names).

To ask a beginning learner to write the main idea without any additional support may be too difficult for the learner to do. It may be better to give your learner some options from which to choose. Have your learner circle what she considers the main idea out of the three or four options you have prepared for her. Ask follow-up questions where she justifies her decision.

2. Listening Comprehension Activities for Advanced Learners

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is the act of reproducing a speech sample in the learner's own words and is used to check comprehension. Repeating a passage word-for-word is not the intent - what is important is for the learner to communicate the main idea of the message presented.

Paraphrasing exercises can be difficult to develop for a number of reasons. First of all, the passage that you ask your learner to repeat cannot be too short. If it is too short, there is a tendency to simply restate what was heard. If it is too long or contains too many diverse topics, it can be extremely difficult for the learner to paraphrase. Your ability to choose the right material and stop at the right intervals will improve as you get to know your learner.

Example of a paraphrasing activity

Material necessary: A cassette tape featuring a story.

- Tape: It was late. She was tired, hungry and angry. She spent the entire day babysitting five children and all she wanted to do now was rest.
- Learner: She was tired after babysitting five kids.
- Tape: Once she got home, she had a shower and soaked in the bathtub. She read a book and started... for the first time all day, she started to relax.
- Learner: She took a bath, read and relaxed.
- Tape: All of a sudden, there was a loud noise, like glass breaking and footsteps. She was startled and jumped out of bed. Her heart was pounding loudly; she felt nauseous, thinking about the stories she had heard in the recent news.
- Learner: Maybe, there was someone in her house. She is very scared.

Applying the skill to the “real world”

Paraphrasing is useful for learners to practice because it can be used as a tool for clarification. If the learner is uncertain of a speaker's intended

message, she can paraphrase what she has heard. This will enable the speaker to clarify any misunderstood information.

As a tutor, you may find it beneficial to have your learner paraphrase important information at a lower level. “Do you understand?” is a question that asks for a yes / no response. The “yes” your learner states may not really indicate comprehension. Having your learner paraphrase essential information will help you determine what she really understands.

Example

Tutor: For homework next week, take a look at the next chapter. Read page 40 and review the grammar notes on the following page. We can meet at 7:00 p.m., just like we usually do. Okay?

Learner: Yes. (She looks a little uncertain.)

Tutor: What is the plan for next week? Please tell me.

Learner: Homework from this book... page 14... I will meet you at 7:00 p.m.

Tutor: Yes, we will meet at 7 p.m., but the homework is on page 40.

Making predictions

In Session 6 of the tutor training manual, one of the suggestions discussed for the development of a reading lesson was to have “prereading questions” which were based on a quick read of the title, the first sentence and any bold or italicized print. Pictures or other visual images were also to be considered when prereading questions were formed.

The prereading questions had two purposes:

- a. to define the purpose for reading the article
- b. to use context clues to help understand and better predict the content of the text

The strength of this exercise lies in its transferability. The learner can take this method and apply it to an unfamiliar text. The learner can use it successfully without having a tutor nearby.

With listening exercises, it is also possible to use context clues. You may be able to show your learner a picture related to the speech sample or preteach (teach before listening) some vocabulary. However, when context is developed in this manner, there are few transferable skills that the learner can use when faced with a new listening exercise.

How can I help my learner develop transferable prediction skills?

There are different ways to teach prediction skills. One way, with the use of

a taped story (or story you read aloud), is to stop at intervals and ask learners to guess what will happen next. Note how the same story is now used in a different way.

Example of a prediction skills activity

Tape: It was late. She was tired, hungry and angry. She spent the entire day babysitting five children and all she wanted to do now was rest.

Tutor: What do you think she did after she returned home?

Learner: Ate and relaxed.

Tape: Once she got home, she had a shower and soaked in the bathtub. She read a book and started... for the first time all day, she started to relax. All of a sudden, there was a loud noise, like glass breaking and footsteps. She was startled, and jumped out of bed. Her heart was pounding loudly; she felt nauseous, thinking about the stories she had heard in the recent news.

Tutor: Okay. What did she do after she heard the strange sounds?

Learner: Maybe, she called the police.

Throughout the exercise, the learner was required to listen to the information while considering how the information given to her might affect the development of the story.

Getting learners to listen to the information while anticipating what will come next helps ensure that they will listen to the information that is important.

Keep in mind that in a reading exercise, a learner is given the luxury of time. The learner can spend one minute or fifteen minutes looking at context clues before deciding what prereading questions should be written. Trying to practice prediction skills while listening to speech is much more difficult, and developing this skill can take a long time. When doing this type of activity, you may want to do it for a short period of time. Use it as one component in your lesson rather than as a general focus.

Applying the skill to the “real world”

Why should my learner work on improving her prediction skills?

Making predictions makes it much easier to determine what the learner should concentrate on listening for next. Many ESL learners get “English headaches” from concentrating on every word a speaker says because they

are not sure when to listen closely and when to relax. (Think about how you feel after an important meeting, where you were required to listen closely and analyze everything that was stated.)

Prediction activities can also be tied to specific tasks. If your learner is a university student or has a job where she frequently has to attend lectures, you may want to teach your learner how speeches are generally written. If she knows the importance of the introduction, conclusion and other speech markers (first of all, my second point is etc.), she can more readily determine when she should pay close attention and when she can relax.

Making inferences; interpreting the underlying meaning

Making inferences can be extremely difficult for some learners. While the literal meaning of a statement can be discovered using a learner's knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, being able to understand inferred meaning will be an ongoing process. A learner's ability to infer meaning will improve as she learns more about the social conventions and body language of the new culture.

Unfortunately, this is not an easy skill to teach. The speaker and events need to be taken into consideration when considering the inferred meaning:

- The speaker – her personality, mood, attitude and relationship to the person spoken to
- The events – what has happened prior to this speech sample; what may be the result to this conversation

Often, inferred meaning is subtle, culturally dependent and open to interpretation. Take for example the statement, "Are you doing anything Saturday night?" Most of us see this as the start of an invitation. To say, "nothing" and then decline the subsequent invitation would be considered rude. ESL learners may not be aware of the significance of the question, "Are you doing anything Saturday night?"

C: A Listening Lesson: Using teaching strategies to assist the learner

Naturally, the best ESL workbooks and textbooks will present listening activities in an integrated manner. There will be reading, writing, speaking and listening exercises regarding a particular theme. Activities will reinforce each other, helping to develop the context and enabling the learner to develop each skill more effectively.

Should you and the learner opt to use other types of listening materials – television shows, video clips or movies, you will need to plan the lesson in a way that enables the learner to access prior knowledge before moving into

the listening lesson itself.

Session 6 provided you with many different ways to set up a reading lesson in order to support your learner. You will notice that the structure of a listening lesson is similar to the structure of a reading lesson. In both types of lessons, it is important to have:

- introductory or “pre” activities to ensure that the learner understands the context.
- activities to increase skill development (to be done while using the materials you have chosen).
- follow-up or “post” activities.

Sample Lesson

Before the session: Planning your listening lesson

Choose suitable materials

- The listening comprehension exercises that you use can come from a variety of sources. There are many ESL kits that have a variety of thematic listening exercises, which are appropriate for a variety of levels.
- Learners may want help with “authentic speech,” or the spontaneous speech that they hear everyday, which is very different than the speech samples heard on tape. For example, most ESL material is scripted; it does not have a lot of the filler (uh, umm, at any rate...). You may want to look at other sources, such as TV, radio, presentations or festivals in the community to give learners more listening practice in a more authentic context.

Basic steps during the session

Before listening: Preparing to Listen

Start with introductory (or prelistening) tasks that allow learners to connect what they will hear with their own knowledge and experience. This is

important. It will enable the learner to connect the words she hears to the larger context, and result in better listening comprehension.

Example:

Akbar, an upper-intermediate learner, is interested in improving his listening skills and gaining more exposure to a variety of different accents. As a member of the multicultural council, he is also interested in learning more about the stories of other immigrants and refugees.

Akbar and his tutor opted to use parts of a series from the CBC news archives, which feature stories of Vietnamese refugees in from the late 1970's to the year 2000. The video clips are between 2 and 20 minutes each and are available in the CBC archives.¹ For this particular lesson, they will be using story #10 in the series.²

Before listening / viewing

The tutor could give some preliminary information and initiate the conversation by asking a few questions.

Today, we are going to hear an interview with Barry McCorquandale and Peter Tran. In this video clip, the situation facing refugees in the early 1980's is discussed. Before we take a look at it, we have some questions to discuss.

- *What do you consider the most significant problems that immigrants and refugees face?*
- *Why is finding a good job often difficult for immigrants and refugees?*
- *Do you find that some people can feel comfortable in Canada quicker than others? Why is this? (For example: Is it related to age, education or support systems?)*
- *What can be done to make the lives of immigrants and refugees easier?*

During the listening: Determining the Focus

There are many different ways that you can set up listening tasks while the learner is listening to the speech sample. The activity that you choose will depend upon the skills that you want your learner to develop, as discussed in **B: Techniques for Teaching Listening**.

¹ Canadian Broadcast Corporation. Boat People: A Refugee Crisis. In *CBC Archives* [on-line], Available: archives.cbc.ca/300c.asp?id=1-69-524 [July 2003]

² Canadian Broadcast Corporation. Adjusting to Canada: From ABC's to -40 Degrees. In *CBC Archives* [on-line], Available: archives.cbc.ca/400.asp?id=1-69-524-2715 [July 2003]

As a higher-level learner, Akbar wants to be able to understand the main idea and supporting details of the material he uses. The tutor has decided to further reinforce the pre-listening exercise by having Akbar write out his own opinions in one column of the grid. Akbar is to listen for the opinions expressed in the video and decide how they are similar or different than his own views. A discussion about the similarities and differences could be a post-listening activity.

My opinion	The opinions expressed in the video	Similar?Different?
The most significant problem is the lack of support. It is hard to have a good job. Everyone is so busy, they cannot go back to school. A mother cannot call a sister or her mother to help her. She must do everything alone.		

After the listening: Other options to link the listening to the learner’s life

- Ask questions regarding how your learner feels about the speech sample.

Have you heard a similar story before? How was this person’s story similar to or different from Peter Tran’s story?

- Ask the learner to evaluate what he has read.

Imagine you are meeting someone who wants to interview you for a local newspaper. The topic is about the difficulties new Canadians face. The reporter wants to discuss what you consider the three most significant difficulties. What will you want to discuss?

This listening exercise is over 20 years old. What issues still exist for immigrants today? What issues are no longer as significant as they were before?

- Ask the learner to synthesize the material read.

What is the main idea of this? What do you think about this news story?

Other variations to the lesson

Another strategy the author could have used is the K-W-L * strategy. This highly adaptable strategy can be used for reading and listening exercises. The pre-listening questions could have guided what the learner writes in the “K” column. The learner could have posed his own questions in the “W” column and written down the answers he heard in the “L” column during the listening exercise. Follow-up exercises may include questions where the learner personalizes the information given and relates it to his own life.

Sample grid

K - What I know	W - What I want to learn	L - What I have learned
It is hard to get a good job.	How other immigrants who cannot find work in their field cope.	Peter Tran did not get a job in his field; he started his own business.

* The K-W-L strategy is a way to:

- connect prior knowledge with what will be learned
- allow the learner to define what it is she would like to learn from the passage
- listen for the information the learner is interested in

A tutor can introduce this strategy to a learner, practice it a few times with the learner and then the learner can implement this strategy on her own.

Additional Sources

Brown, H. Douglas. *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education, 1994.

Brown provides additional techniques to teach specific listening skills.

Mendelson, D., and J. Rubin, eds., *A Guide for the Teaching of Second Language Listening*. San Diego, CA: Dominic Press, 1995.

This book contains a lot of background information as well as explores a number of areas not discussed in this manual. Sections that may be of interest include the chapters entitled:

- *Assessment of Second / Foreign Language Listening Comprehension*
- *Pronunciation Practice as an Aid to Listening Comprehension*
- *How to Become a Good Listening Teacher*
- *Applying Learner Strategies in the Second / Foreign Language Listening Comprehension Lesson*

Nunan, D. and L. Miller eds., *New Ways in Teaching Listening*. Alexandria, VA: TESOL, 1995.

This book contains additional information about listening for the main idea and helps increase the learner's prediction abilities. The use of listening exercises with authentic resources is also discussed.

Polland, Laurel and N. Hess. *Zero Prep: Ready-to-Go Activities for the Language Classroom*. San Francisco: Alta Book Center Publishers, 1997.

Although this book was originally designed for the ESL classroom, there are activities (for all skills) that can be adapted for a one-on-one tutoring situation.

Some interesting exercises are discussed in the listening section. Specific directions are included for variations on the dictation.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ESL Literacy

ESL Literacy

There are numerous factors that affect how quickly learners will progress in their English studies. In addition to motivation, support systems and health, your learner's level of education in her primary language also affects the rate of second language learning.

If your learner is an ESL literacy learner (preliterate, nonliterate, or semiliterate learner), you may find that some time will be needed to develop preliminary skills. Some learners will have difficulty holding a pencil and may not understand the importance of lines on paper, or the meaning of written symbols. Some learners may even have difficulty distinguishing the similarities and differences between written symbols (or letters).

Exercises, such as the one highlighted below, can assist learners in distinguishing the similarities and differences between letters.

Circle the matching shape

A	B	D	A	E
F	H	L	T	F
D	B	D	P	G
L	I	T	V	L
P	P	D	D	M
M	N	W	M	A

If this proves to be too difficult for the learner, other exercises (which focus on easier to distinguish shapes such as circles and triangles) could be used.

A learner who has spent all his life recognizing that a cow is a cow whether it faces left or right will not instantly appreciate the significance of the difference between p and q without it being pointed out.¹

¹ Jill Bell and B. Burnaby, *A Handbook for ESL Literacy*. (Toronto, Ontario: The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1984), p. 35. Used by permission.

Patience is necessary when working with ESL literacy learners. Be prepared to do a lot of repetition with these learners as they develop preliminary skills. Your learner may have difficulty forming letters even after you have taught her how to hold a pencil and make use of lined paper. Some learners may not leave spaces between words when writing, because they do not know that the space is significant.

It is important to note that ESL literacy learners may not be used to sitting at a desk for an extended period of time. While sitting under florescent lights at a table in the library or at a local community college may seem comfortable to you, it may not be a welcoming environment for some ESL learners who have never been in a classroom situation. It is particularly important to let these learners take breaks and move the tutoring session from the designated site to an outdoor venue when it seems appropriate.

A: Assessing the Preliterate, Nonliterate or Semiliterate Learner

Many of the questions highlighted in Session 3 would also be appropriate for learners at this level. However, if the learners are at a very low level, they may not be able to comprehend what you are saying or have the vocabulary necessary to respond. You may have to ask a family member with stronger English skills to help translate or seek out information about your learner from program staff.

1. Assessing Reading and Writing

- a. In order to determine whether your learner is familiar with the Roman alphabet, have her complete an alphabet cloze.

Example: A B C ___ E F G H ___

- b. Have your learner read two simple sentences with visual aids to see if she is able to use sight words in context. You may also be able to determine whether or not she has any knowledge of phonics.

Example: He likes to go for walks.

Walking on ice is dangerous.

- c. Have your learner copy a short piece of writing onto lined paper. You will be able to determine whether or not the learner can:

- follow oral directions
- write from left to right

- start writing at the top of the page and continue each new line underneath the previous sentence
- recognize and match shapes
- form letters (has the muscle control to form letters)

2. Assessing Progress

You may find that the checklists available in Session 3 need to be refined further for your learner. Using a blank form, you could fill in the criteria that you feel best suits your learner. A sample is shown below.

Skills	Yes	Somewhat Highlight problem areas	No
Recognizes similar shapes			
Can match similar letters			
Knows the Roman Alphabet			
Knows some common words by sight			
Knows the sounds consonants make			
Reads from left to right			
Can hold a pencil properly			
Can form letters			
Writes from left to right			
Writes from the top of the page to the bottom			
Leaves spaces between words			
Forms letters within the lines			

B: Planning the Lesson

In Session 3, we were introduced to Carine and saw a variety of lesson plans developed for her throughout the manual. These lessons were designed knowing that she was literate in her primary language, French. There were many assumptions that we could make. There were also few concepts that needed to be pretaught before moving directly into content areas.

In Session 4, we saw an information gap exercise for Carine to help her learn Canadian money. Now, assume that Naw-Po (who is semi-literate) made the same request. How would that lesson be different? What additional steps would need to be taken before the information gap exercise would be meaningful for Naw-Po?

Sample breakdown of pertinent lessons

Part 1: Ask Who?

Learning objective: Naw-Po will be able to use money and understand the terms used when describing money.

Part 2: Ask What?

Teaching Naw-Po the names of Canadian coins and their worth

She will need to know:

How to count in English (multi-lesson)

How to distinguish coins and bills used in Canada

How to make purchases using coins

How to make change using coins

Part 3: Ask How?

Teaching Naw-Po how to count in English

Activities I could include:

Drills using cue cards with the numbers (1, 2, 3) on them

Drills using cue cards with the written number (one, two, three) on them

Follow up worksheets and activities (i.e. BINGO, number dictation)

Teaching Naw-Po the coins and bills used in Canada

Activities I could include:

Drills using cards with pictures of (and actual) coins and bills along with the dollar amount

Drills using cards with pictures of the coins and bills

Follow-up worksheets and activities (BINGO, role-play purchasing items and giving change; coin matching games)

Sample Lesson Plans

Lesson Plan #1 (in this sequence)

Student	Naw-Po
Date	Sunday, July 27th
Objective(s)	<p>She will be able to count, say and print (using upper case letters) the numbers 1 - 12.</p> <p>She will know the written form (one, two etc.) of each of these words by sight.</p> <p>She will be able to respond to the questions: "How many...?" "What is the number?"</p> <p>She will be able to make sentences using, "there is...", "there are..." and "it is..."</p>
Materials	<p>12 cue cards that have the following: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12</p> <p>12 cue cards that have: one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve</p> <p>12 pencils</p> <p>lined paper</p> <p>dice (two)</p>
Overview (relevance of lesson to learner)	Show the cue cards with the numbers on them. Explain that today we will learn the numbers in English.
Presentation/ Exercises	<p>Part 1: Pencil Drill Section A: Basic Drill Hold up one pencil. <i>Say, "pencil"; have learner repeat.</i> <i>Say, "one pencil"; repeat and have learner repeat.</i> <i>Say, "There is one pencil"; repeat and have learner repeat.</i> Hold up two pencils. <i>Say, "Two pencils"; repeat and then have learner repeat.</i> <i>Say, "There are two pencils"; repeat and then have learner repeat.</i></p> <p>Continue the exercise using numbers 3 to 12. Repeat the exercise until the learner is comfortable with the numbers and can say the phrases without prompting.</p> <p>Section B: Response Drill Using the pencils, have the learner use the phrases in response to the question, "How many pencils?" <i>Example: Tutor (holding a pencil): There is one pencil.</i> <i>Learner: There is one pencil.</i></p> <p><i>Tutor (holding a pencil): How many pencils?</i> <i>Learner: There is one pencil.</i></p> <p>Continue until the learner has practiced all 12 numbers.</p> <p>Part 2: Using Cue Cards (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12) Repeat Section A using the cue cards. Repeat Section B using the cue cards (Using the phrases: "What is the number?" / "It is...")</p> <p>Part 3: Using Cue Cards (one, two, three, four, five etc.) Hold up the cue card with "one" in one hand, hold the cue card with "1" in the other hand. Say, "one"; repeat and then have the learner repeat. Trace the letters <u>o</u>, <u>n</u>, and <u>e</u> on the cue card; have the learner trace the letters on the cue card as well. Take the lined paper. Write the letter <u>o</u>n one of the lines; and have her trace the <u>o</u> with her pencil. Let her practice writing the <u>o</u> repeatedly on the same line. Write the letter <u>n</u> on one of the lines; have her trace the <u>n</u> with her pencil and practice writing the <u>n</u> on the line. Repeat the process with the letter <u>e</u>. Write the word one on a line; have the learner write the word out repeatedly on the line.</p> <p>Hold up the cue card with "two" and repeat the steps, giving the learner additional practice printing the letters <u>t</u> and <u>w</u>. Continue until all the numbers (to 12) have been used, and the letters have been practiced.</p> <p>Optional Section: Time Discuss time using a digital watch. Use the phrase, "It is ... o'clock."</p>

<p>Summary (summarize what has been taught and how it is important for the learner)</p>	<p>Matching games could be played with the cue cards and the pencils.</p> <p>Homework: Naw-Po will practice writing the numbers 1 - 12.</p>
<p>Personal Reflections on the lesson</p>	<p>Naw-Po already knew the number system (1, 2, 3, 4, 5 etc.) and did a great job of picking up the English words for each number. She had some difficulty with the "thr" sound in three. "Twelve" was also a bit difficult for her to say.</p> <p>Because she was able to do the lesson so quickly, we had time to enrich the lesson and learn how to tell time (just on the hour.) At a later date, she could learn quarter after, quarter to and other vocabulary associated with telling time.</p> <p>Future plans Lesson 2: Review numbers and learn 13 to 20, 21- 29, and 31- 39. Lesson 3: Review numbers and learn 40 - 100. Lesson 4: Naming the money used in Canada.</p>
<p>Items to include in portfolio</p>	<p>Naw-Po's written work.</p>

You will notice that during these lessons, a lot of repetition and support is given to Naw-Po. The following lessons elaborate upon the theme and significant build-up occurs. It is not until the fourth lesson that money is even introduced, which is a significant contrast to the approach used with Carine in Session 4.

Lesson Plan #4

Student	Naw-Po
Date	August 17th
Objective(s)	She will be able to name the coins used in Canada.
Materials	<p>Vocabulary cards with one of the following words on each: penny, nickel, dime, quarter, loonie, toonie</p> <p>An additional set of cards with the following:</p> <p>.01 or 1¢ .05 or 5¢ .10 or 10¢ .25 or 25¢ \$1.00 \$2.00</p> <p>Coins and pictures of all the above noted</p> <p>Handouts from <i>Hands On! A Collection of ESL Literacy Activities</i> (included in the tutor training manual)</p>
Review (of the last few lessons)	<p>Review numbers that were learned the last few sessions.</p> <p>Say a number (from 1 - 100) and have the learner make it using the cue cards from lesson 1.</p> <p>Do verbal exercises where the learner must provide the next number (i.e. 14, 15, 16, ____)</p> <p>Dictation: Say a number and have the learner write it (as a number.)</p> <p>Take a look at her homework from last day (practice writing the numbers from 1 - 100 on lined paper); help her where necessary.</p> <p>Dictation: Say a number and have the learner write it (as a word.)</p>
Overview (relevance of lesson to learner)	<p>Show a picture of a woman purchasing something at the store. She is looking in her wallet and trying to find the money. Ask, "What do you do?" (Have bilingual dictionary on hand for Naw-Po.)</p> <p>Listen to responses. Let the learner know the reasons why the strategies she uses are good. Add your additional ideas using the picture to build the context. (For example, point to the register display and say, "Look at numbers.")</p> <p>Link this discussion to the need to know the numbers. (For example, not all cash registers have totals that are visible. Point to the register display and say, "I cannot see.")</p>
Presentation	<p>Take coins and pictures of bills available; lay them out on the table. Point to the penny, say "one cent" and have the learner repeat. Take the card that says "\$0.01 or 1¢" and have the learner put it close to the penny. Say the word, "penny" and have the learner repeat. Take the card that says "penny" and place it on the other side of the penny. Repeat for each coin.</p>
Exercise(s) (include targeted and open exercises)	<p>Part 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Say "one cent" and have the learner point to the correct coin. 2. Repeat with all the coins. 3. Repeat steps 1 and 2. This time, state the items in random order. <p>Part 2:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Say "penny" and have the learner point to the correct coin. 2. Repeat with all the coins. 3. Repeat the steps in random order. <p>Part 3:</p> <p>Repeat exercise. This time, say "penny" or "one cent" and have the learner choose the correct card and place it next to the item. Repeat with all coins.</p> <p>Part 4:</p> <p>Do page 217 of the tutor training manual from <i>Hands On!</i> together (Using ideas presented on the handout). Do page 219 (from <i>Hands On!</i>) together.</p> <p>Part 5:</p> <p>Using the pictures on page 223 from <i>Hands On!</i>, have the learner tell you how many pennies, nickels, dimes etc. they would use to make each purchase.</p>

<p>Summary (summarize what has been taught and how it is important for the learner)</p>	<p>Take an empty BINGO grid and have the learner lay coins (or pictures of coins) on 24 of the squares. Say the name (or value) of a coin and have the learner pull the appropriate coin(s) off the grid. Round Two: Say a "price" and have the learner pull coins off the grid that amount to that price.</p> <p>Homework: page 220 from Hands On! Naw-Po is to tell me about her next trip to the store. What did she buy? What did it cost? What coins did she use to purchase it? What things did the clerk at the store say?</p>
<p>Reflections on the Lesson</p>	<p>Naw-Po worked very hard during the lesson and accomplished quite a bit. In addition to the planned lesson, we also discussed paper money, which was easy for her to remember. No drills were done since she did not think it was necessary.</p> <p>Naw-Po has some difficulty with the differences between numbers such as 13 and 30, 14 and 40 etc. We discussed the differences in the vowel sound between numbers such as 15 and 50 and the importance of emphasizing the "n" sound when talking about "teen" numbers. Naw Po can add and subtract (as demonstrated by the exercises that she did later in the lesson on page 220). She has obviously worked with money in Myanmar and feels relatively comfortable with it. Naw Po knew the majority of the numbers when written in their numerical form; however, as words (one, two, three...) she is still uncertain about some of them. Review work will need to be done during the next few lessons.</p> <p>Objectives for the following sessions: Give her more practice writing words such as cent, penny, nickel etc. She will be able to do basic transactions at a store (respond to requests for money and give appropriate amounts of money). She will be able to check change received to make sure that it is correct.</p> <p>Future plans Lesson 5: Practice purchasing food items using money; discuss phrases used for purchasing.</p>
<p>Items to Include in Portfolio</p>	<p>Written work.</p>

Once again, the tutor was able to do some of these activities with Naw-Po because she had some of the prerequisite skills. Although Naw-Po was only in school a short time and has difficulties reading and writing, she does possess numeracy skills. She knows what numbers are and she is able to do basic addition and subtraction. What if a learner who was preliterate (did not understand that there was a sound-symbol correlation or a numerical system) made the same request? What activities would work for a preliterate learner? What additional steps would need to be taken?

Teaching numbers to a preliterate learner may be very time consuming. You may find that, rather than just using one or two tutorial sessions to "teach English numbers," you may have to spend several sessions just establishing what numbers are. Cards such as the ones shown below may assist the preliterate learner, while others will need to see real objects because they will not know that the pictures represent real objects.

1	☺
---	---

2	☺ ☺
---	----------

3	☺ ☺ ☺
---	-----------------

Once again, you may want to spend some time allowing your learner to distinguish similarities and differences in written symbols. "Circle the matching shape exercises" could be adapted and used in lessons which focus on numbers.

1	6	7	1	9
2	1	5	3	2
3	3	5	8	6
4	1	2	4	9
5	8	5	6	7
6	9	6	8	7
7	1	3	2	7
8	2	9	8	3
9	9	6	3	8

C: Additional Activities

The following are all possible adaptations to Naw-Po's lesson plan # 4.

1. Listening grids

In the sample lesson plan, the learner was required to point at the coin when the tutor said the name (or the worth) of the coin. With a learner who cannot yet write but needs additional practice to improve manual dexterity, the tutor may have chosen to have the learner circle the amount she heard from a list.

The following grid could be used in this type of exercise.

\$0.01	\$0.05	\$0.10	\$0.25	\$1.00	\$2.00
\$0.01	\$0.05	\$0.10	\$0.25	\$1.00	\$2.00
\$0.01	\$0.05	\$0.10	\$0.25	\$1.00	\$2.00
\$0.01	\$0.05	\$0.10	\$0.25	\$1.00	\$2.00

2. Concentration Cards

For additional reinforcement, the learner may want to play "concentration". In the "reflections" section of the lesson plan, you will notice that Naw-Po needs some additional practice writing words such as *penny*, *nickel* and *dime*.

In order to get additional practice writing the words, the tutor could have Naw-Po write each word on its own cue card. Another set of cue cards could be made by the tutor, which has pictures of each coin on it.

Steps:

- Take the two sets of cards and place them upside down (written word face down) on a table. These cards will be placed in random order.
- Flip one card over and say the amount or the name of the coin.
- Flip another card over and say the amount or name of the coin. If there is a matching pair, keep them. If the cards do not match, put them upside down again.
- Repeat the process. The person with the most matched pairs wins!

3. BINGO

In the sample lesson, the learner took real coins and placed them on the grid. For additional writing practice, the learner could also have written the names of the coins on the BINGO grid before the game was played.

4. Vocabulary Games

Crossword and word find puzzles also work well with ESL Literacy learners.

a. Word Find Puzzle

Penny	<i>Ashhpenny</i>
Nickel	<i>Nenickela</i>
Dime	<i>Dimekinie</i>
Quarter	<i>Semiquarter</i>
Loonie	<i>Abbaloonie</i>
Toonie	<i>ttoonieism</i>

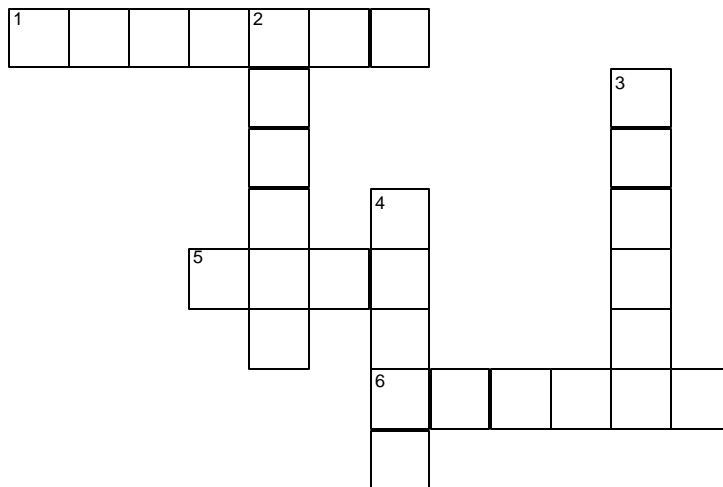
b. Crossword Puzzle

Across

1. twenty-five cents
5. ten cents
6. five cents

Down

2. two dollars
3. one dollar
4. one cent



In conclusion, many of the strategies and approaches discussed in the tutor training workshop will also work well with ESL Literacy learners. For example:

- TPR has been successfully used with literacy learners.
- The Language Experience Approach is valuable when used with literacy learners who have some oral skills in English. Using LEA reinforces the connection between written and spoken language.
- Word families can also be used to teach sound patterns (once the learner sees the connection between the written word and the object it represents.)

Additional Sources

Adelson- Goldstein, Jayme. *Listen First: Focused Listening Tasks for Beginners*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

The student book has 10 units based on life-skills. Lessons are task-based and help learners build vocabulary.

The teacher's book has notes for each activity, including pre-listening and follow-up activities. The tapescript and an answer key are also included.

Burnett, Kathy. *Hands On! A Collection of ESL Literacy Activities*. Halifax, Nova Scotia: Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre, 1998.

This is a good resource for those who are teaching preliterate or nonliterate learners. The book is set up to assist the learner in vocabulary development and to increase basic literacy skills. Each section is set up with a general learning objective, specific goals and a multitude of different lesson plan ideas. All the materials are included.

Topics for the lessons include:

- *The alphabet (upper and lower case letters; using a pencil and forming letters)*
- *Numeracy (numbers from 1 to 100)*
- *Dates (days of the week, months of the year and the seasons; asking and responding to questions)*
- *Responding to personal information (such as name, address, telephone number etc.)*
- *Money (Canadian coins, adding and subtracting, vocabulary associated with making purchases)*
- *Time (asking for and telling the time)*

- *Weather (describing the weather)*
- *Emergency (associated vocabulary and dialogues)*
- *Community (describing buildings and activities in a town; describing a location)*
- *Parts of the Body (and common health problems associated with the body)*
- *Family (names of family members)*
- *Health (common health problems and medication; to ask and respond to questions about health)*
- *Food (names of common food; inquiring about food in a grocery store; discussing likes and dislikes)*

Boyd, John R., Mary Ann Boyd and Paula Kezwer. *Before Book 1: Listening Activities for Pre-Beginning Students of English*. Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., 1994.

This kit includes tapes, a workbook and an accompanying teacher's manual that includes transcripts of the tapes as well as lesson plan ideas.

Topics covered include: numbers, letters, money, time, clothing, household items, parts of the body, Canadian geography and food.

Dietrich, Darcy. *Thematic Units for ESL Literacy Learners*. Regina: Regina LINC Consortium, 1995.

This book includes six units (in 3 binders) and a teacher's manual. All supplementary materials are included.

Gati, Sally. *Literacy in Lifeskills*. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle Publishers, 1992.

This kit includes two workbooks and cue cards. The kit contains plenty of worksheets where learners can practice their writing skills; visuals are also included which help learners develop the appropriate context for the new vocabulary. A teacher's manual is also included.

Themes include: numbers, the alphabet, introductions, personal information (addresses, dates), time, money, family and health.

Holt, Grace Massey and Susan Gaer. *Bridge to Literacy: English for Success (Book 1)*. Carlsbad, CA: Dominie Press, Inc., 1993.

This activity book includes prepared lesson plans focusing on a variety of common, everyday themes such as food, job skills and recreation. Although printed in the U.S.A., some of the content is transferable. Each lesson stresses a cultural concept as well as specific functions, grammar and vocabulary. For tutors who want to have more ideas regarding how to use sight words (or Total Physical Response) in the content of a lesson, this would be a good resource. Accompanying the learner's book is an instructor's manual. The instructor's manual includes: suggested materials, preparation (warm-up exercises), presentation tips (for the main portion of the lesson) and follow-up. The main portion of each lesson focuses on all skill areas (listening, speaking, reading and writing.)

Although the lessons are designed for the classroom, there are certain aspects of each unit that can easily be adapted to a tutoring situation.

Nishio, Yvonne Wong. *Longman ESL Literacy*. Boston, MA: Addison Wesley Longman. 1991.

Includes a student book with ten units, which emphasize life skills such as writing checks and responding to telephone calls. A teacher's manual is also included with step-by-step lesson plans and supplemental handouts. Picture and vocabulary flashcards are also available.

Selman, Mary and Linda Mrowicki, *A New Start Canada*. Agincourt, Ontario: Dominie Press Ltd., 1984.

This kit contains tapes, student workbooks and textbooks as well as a teacher's guide. The teacher's manual explains how the materials can be used with literate and non-literate learners. Lesson plans are set up and include objectives, materials and detailed steps. There is a variety of themes in the kit. The language taught is functional (asking for things, responding to a request, paying bills) and focuses on the immediate needs of learners.

Websites

The National Centre for ESL Literacy Education

Includes numerous academic resources regarding teaching ESL Literacy, as well as links to numerous other literacy sites.

Available at: <http://www.cal.org/ncele/>

The following is an excerpt from Hands On! A Collection of ESL Literacy Activities.¹

MONEY

How much is it?

Objective

To introduce money and prices.

Goals

- To recognize Canadian coins and their values.
- To request information about money and prices.
- To respond to questions about money and prices.
- To introduce basic numeracy concepts.

Suggestions

- When possible, use real coins and bills. Plastic Canadian money is available at educational resource stores.
- Flyers are a good source for practicing reading prices.
- It is important for learners to feel comfortable with numbers 1-100 before learning prices.
- Collect the price tags from articles you buy.
- Go to a store and practice reading prices.
- Money stamps and money Bingo are available at educational resource stores.
- When practicing to count and add, it is useful to use the 1-100 number paper on page 2.7
- Introduce learners to the different ways to write prices (\$.05, 5¢)

Activities

- Have a variety of coins. Ask learners to match 10 pennies with a dime, two nickels with a dime, two dimes and a nickel with a quarter, etc.
- Instructors say a price and ask learners to write it. Increase difficulty as learner is ready.
- Have combinations of real coins or pictures of coins and ask learners to write the total values.
- Pre-teach is/are. Practice asking and responding to the question "How much is/are ___?" using real items belonging to the learners.
- Collect a variety of price tags. Say a price and learners choose the correct one. Discussion can follow as to possibilities of what item the tag came from.
- Make a prices Bingo. Copy the blank Bingo card from this kit and write prices in the blanks.
- Make money Bingo. Copy the blank Bingo card from this kit and put pictures or stamp of coins in the blanks.
- Role-play buying items and practice giving change.
- Practice giving change. Learner has \$10 bill and buys something from the flyer; another learner gives the appropriate change.

¹ Kathy Burnett, *Hands On! A Collection of ESL Literacy Activities*. (Halifax, Nova Scotia: Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre, 1998.) Reprinted with permission.

Instructors can:

- read a word and ask learners to point to it.
- provide real coins and ask learners to match the coins with the pictures.
- white-out several letters and ask learners to fill in the blanks

Learners can:

- put the coin in the box.
- cut up this page and then match the picture, word, value, and the real coins.



penny
.01 or 1¢



nickel
.05 or 5¢



dime
.10 or 10¢



quarter
.25 or 25¢



loonie
\$1.00



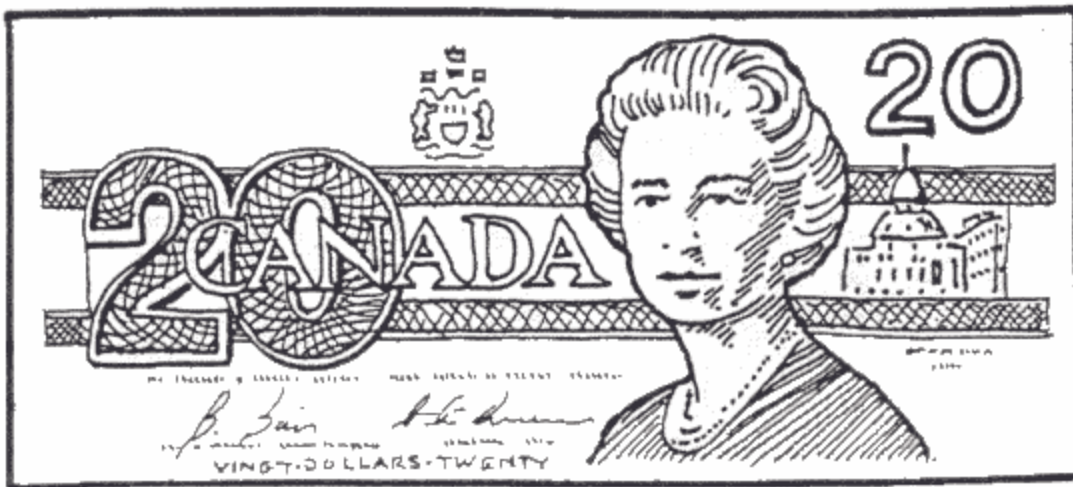
toonie
\$2.00



\$ 5.00 bill



\$10.00 bill



\$ 20.00 bill

Instructors can:

- review the names of the coins.
- say the name of the coin and ask learners to circle its value.
- say the value of a coin and ask learners to point to it.
- show a coin and ask learners to point to its value.

Learners can:

- look at the picture and circle its value.
- write the names of the coins in the blanks.
- have several real coins and place them on the words that represent their values(e.g. put a dime on .10).
- after placing real coins on the values, add the total value of the coins and write it in the blanks.



.10

.05

.25



\$1.00

\$2.00

.01



\$1.00

\$2.00

.25



.25

.05

.10



.01

\$2.00

.10



.01

\$1.00

.05

Instructors can:

- say an amount and ask learner to circle it.
- show learners a written amount and ask learner to circle the same amount..

Learners can:

- match coins with the values on the paper.
- circle the smallest amount.
- circle the largest amount

.05	.10	.25	.15
.25	.35	.75	.50
.40	.20	.60	.30
.75	.45	.95	.65

\$10	\$30	\$50	\$60
\$11	\$2	\$8	\$5
\$17	\$13	\$15	\$19
\$55	\$50	\$20	\$15

\$10.25	\$22.35	\$2.25	\$5.25
\$15.20	\$13.10	\$17.50	\$19.70
\$55.95	\$15.55	\$20.65	\$50.75
\$37.17	\$98.97	\$75.57	\$49.27

Instructors can:

- say the name of one coin and ask learners to circle it.
- say the value of a coin and ask learners to point to the picture.
- show a coin and ask learner to point to the picture.
- write the value of a coin on a sheet of paper and ask learners to point to the coin.
- say the value of a coin and ask learners to point to the word.

Learners can:

- look at the picture and circle the name of the coin.
- write the names of the coin in the blank.
- put a real coin in the blank.
- write the value of the coins in the blank.



penny

nickel

dime



dime

loonie

quarter



toonie

penny

nickel



quarter

toonie

loonie



penny

quarter

dime



penny

nickel

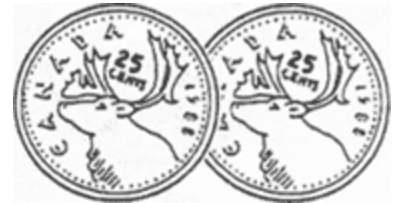
dime

Instructors can:

- say an amount and ask learners to point to it.
- say an amount and ask learners to circle it.
- use real coins in place of the illustration on this page.

Learners can:

- draw a line from the left column to the matching value in the right column.
- write the total amounts beside the illustrations.
- work in pairs. Cut the paper down the middle. Each partner takes half the sheet. Each learner cuts up her paper. Learners take turns asking each other for the amount on each piece of paper. (e.g. Learner A has two nickels. He ask his partner, "Do you have ten cents?" Learner B gives her partner the picture of a dime.)



Instructor can:

- pre-teach - (minus) and = (equals)
- say the total and learners write it.
- say the names of the coins and ask learners to write the words.
- change the plus signs to minus (where appropriate) and teach subtraction skills.

Learners can:

- add the coins and write the total value.
- write the names of the coins.
- writes the values of the coins.
- match real coins with the illustrations.
- match real coins with the illustrations and write the total amount
- explore different combinations of coins to equal the same total.



+



= _____



+



= _____



+



= _____



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= _____



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= _____



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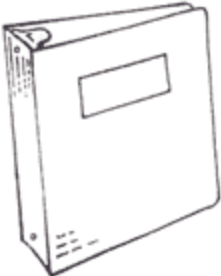



= _____

Instructors can:

- introduce the vocabulary on this page.
- hold up a picture and ask learners to say the word.
- hold up the word from this page and ask learners to read it.
- hold up the price and ask learners to read it.
- cut up the pictures and the words and ask learners to match them.
- introduce the question, "How much is the ___?"

Learners can:

- copy the words on a separate paper.
- copy the prices on a separate paper.
- work in pairs and ask each other, "How much is the ___?"
- look in current flyers for these words. Compare the price.





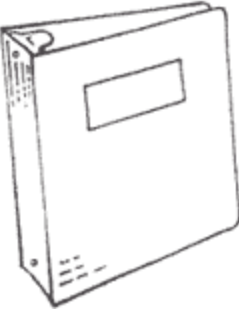

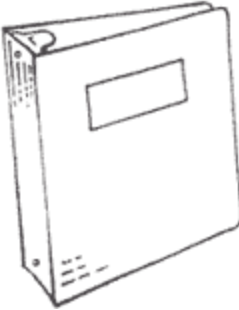





 <p>pencil .25</p>	 <p>brush \$4.99</p>
 <p>binder \$7.78</p>	 <p>watch \$32.50</p>
 <p>eraser \$3.00</p>	 <p>kettle \$37.29</p>

Instructors can:

- pre-teach the question: "How much is ___?"
- ask learners to work in pairs. From the previous page, give three words with prices to one learner. Give the other three words and prices to the other learner. Learners ask each other the question "How much is the ___?" and write the prices in the blanks.

Learners can:

- from the previous page copy the prices in the blanks.
- cut up the words from the previous page and match the words to the pictures on this page.
- look in current flyers and write the price of the items on the page.

 _____	 _____	 _____	 _____
 _____	 _____	 _____	 _____
 _____	 _____	 _____	 _____

Do you have change?

1. Identify and teach key vocabulary from the picture (bus, change, \$5, etc.).
2. Write vocabulary from the illustration on separate pieces of paper and ask learners to match the words with the picture.
3. Show a word from the illustration and ask learners to point to it.
4. Look at the picture and ask learners to identify what is happening.
5. Instructor writes what the learners say in sentences.
6. Instructor reads the sentences.
7. Learners read the sentences.
8. Instructor writes out a word from each sentence and asks learners to fill in the blank.
9. Instructor cuts up one sentence and mixes the words up. Learners put the words in order to remake the sentence.
10. Cut up the story into sentences and put them in order.
11. Learners can copy the sentences onto a separate paper.



Instructors can:

- say an amount and ask learners to point to it. show coins and ask learners to point to the amount on the paper.
- give learners a variety of coins. Show them a written amount and ask them to give you the same amount in coins.
- give learners a page of picture coins and this page. Cut them up and ask learners to match them.
- make two copies of this page. White out some amounts from one copy and different amounts from the other copy. Ask learners to work in pairs. Learners read the amounts together starting at 5 cents, 8 cents, etc., reading the amounts to each other. When there is a blank, one learner says the amount and the other writes it in the blank.

Learners can:

- have a variety of coins and place the correct amount of coins on the written numbers.
- cut up this page and put the amounts in order from smallest to biggest amounts.
- copy the amounts to a separate piece of paper.

5¢	8¢	10¢	15¢	18¢	20¢
25¢	30¢	35¢	38¢	45¢	47¢
50¢	51¢	54¢	61¢	65¢	70¢
76¢	83¢	85¢	90¢	92¢	95¢
\$1.00	\$1.15	\$1.25	\$1.55	\$2.00	\$2.05
\$2.10	\$2.25	\$2.48	\$2.65	\$2.75	\$3.00



penny

nickel

dime

quarter

loonie

toonie

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Spelling

Spelling

Sometimes, the biggest issue is a learner's own fear of making mistakes. Encouraging learners to take risks is important in learning a language and spelling is no exception.

Some strategies that your learner may use include:

- Start by trying to write down the first letter of the word.
- Put down any other familiar letters in the word.
- Break the word into syllables for other possible clues.
- Think of rhyming words your learner knows how to spell (i.e. if your learner needs to spell, "Frank" you could brainstorm other words such as bank, tank).
- Read back what she has written thus far (to see what the word now sounds like).
- Ask someone for help.
- Use a dictionary.

Some learners may prefer to learn how to spell a word using visual stimuli – by seeing the word in print, closing their eyes, trying to remember how to spell it and then checking the original word to ensure that it is spelt correctly. Other learners would prefer to write the new word out several times to help them remember. Some learners would rather take a more analytical approach and attack the spelling of the prefix, the base word and the suffix separately.

A: Spelling Activities ¹

1. Word Jigsaws

By cutting a word into smaller pieces and having the learner put it in the right order, we can give the learner additional opportunities to practice spelling.

stra	te	gies
------	----	------

str	a	te	g	ies
-----	---	----	---	-----

s	t	r	a	t	e	g	i	e	s
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

¹ Jill Bell and B. Burnaby, *A Handbook for ESL Literacy*. (Toronto, Ontario: The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1984.)

Note how the first example is much easier than the last two examples. With beginning learners, you may want to have them work with the syllables, as shown in the first example. More advanced learners can use the last two examples.

2. Word Search Games

(for beginning learners, use words that are horizontal only)

s	s	p	e	l	l	i	n	g	a
j	e	t	p	s	u	f	f	i	x
h	a	p	r	h	y	m	i	n	g
i	a	m	a	r	r	e	d	a	r
p	r	e	f	i	x	n	o	w	y
m	e	e	t	e	m	e	f	r	u
e	c	s	y	l	l	a	b	l	e
d	i	c	t	i	o	n	a	r	y
p	a	p	e	j	i	g	s	a	w
r	a	b	i	n	a	y	r	s	a

What words related to the section above can you find in this word search game?

3. Issues

1. Sometimes a spelling problem is a listening discrimination problem. If your learner is making the same error repeatedly, check to make sure that your learner hears the sound correctly.

For example, Hyun – Chu often uses the letters “r” and “l” interchangeably when she writes. When writing out a dictation exercise about a boy named Ryan, she wrote his name “Lion.”

2. Learners should also know some of the acceptable letter patterns in English. **Nf**, for example, is not a pattern that is used in English. If learners are told that this combination will not be in an English word, it is easier to spell (and understand) sentences like, “I want a hamburger ‘n’ fries.”
3. We study word patterns (or word families) so the learner may recognize and read vowel and/or vowel-consonant sound combinations. This method also assists the learner in improving her spelling as well. Once the learner knows that “kn” makes an “n” sound, it is much easier to sound out and spell words like knife and know.

You will notice that all the skills are developed in an integrated way. Improving one skill (for example, listening discrimination) improves not only the learner’s listening ability, but pronunciation and spelling as well.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Idioms and Advanced ESL Learners

Idioms and Advanced ESL Learners

Advanced ESL learners will often have different requests than beginning or intermediate learners. They may want specific types of cultural or workplace information, or may even be interested in preparing for specific exams such as TOEFL (an examination used to determine eligibility to some postsecondary institutions).

While it would be impossible to provide information regarding all the needs your advanced learners may have, included below is a brief overview of an area that will likely be problematic. Idiomatic expressions often pose difficulty for advanced learners; native speakers often use them without even recognizing how these expressions function or the literal meaning that ESL learners may be deriving from their use.

Idioms

Idioms are commonly used expressions that have no literal meaning. For example, “You’re pulling my leg” does not necessarily mean that someone is on the floor, gently tugging at your pant leg. Rather, it indicates that an attempt has been made to fool or deceive someone.

Advanced ESL learners will find idioms such as this particularly difficult to understand. Many of the methods that these learners have used to gain meaning (through the analysis of grammar or word parts) will not be useful when applied to idiomatic expressions.

Idioms need to be learned as whole expressions; knowledge of the individual words will not help the learner understand the intended meaning of an idiomatic expression. Naturally, this can be time consuming. The learner will need to learn each idiom individually and, whenever possible, in context so she can better understand the definition you give.

It is important to note that learning the meaning of an idiomatic expression does not necessarily mean that the learner will be able to use it. A mini-lesson on idioms should include both *controlled practice* (fill in the blank, choose the best idiom) as well as *free practice* where the learner can use the new expressions in a conversation. Free practice is particularly important when learning idioms because idiomatic expressions are situational. For example, it may be appropriate for you to tell a friend that she is “dressed to kill” when you are out on a Saturday night but to use this phrase with an employer could result in a few blank stares. Other idiomatic expressions may be useful in both casual conversation and the workplace,

particularly those connected to sport such as:

- to go to bat (for someone)
- to level the playing field
- to hit a home run

Other Considerations When Teaching Idioms

- There are different ways to teach new idioms. Generally, it is a good idea to find examples of idioms in the thematic work that you are doing and discuss them in that context. For example, if your learner was interested in purchasing a car, you could tell your learner a story (or read a story) regarding a car that was “a lemon” or “a real steal.”
- Television is a great source of idioms. Using popular TV shows and movies can be a great way to introduce the learner to new idioms.
- Learners can also be encouraged to start an idiom notebook where they write down idioms heard (or read) in social situations, the media and at work. The learner can bring these to the tutoring session for discussion and clarification. The tutor can use these idiomatic expressions as review / warm-up exercises for subsequent lessons.

Additional Sources

The following are websites that have been around for a few years, which have alphabetical lists of idioms (should you need to find a way to explain what an idiom means.)

- <http://www.eslcafe.com/idioms/>
- http://home.t-online.de/home/toni.goeller/idiom_wm/
- <http://a4esl.org/q/h/idioms.html>

The following books may be helpful, particularly if your learner is interested in a short “idiom lesson.” These resources are produced in a manner that makes it possible to develop a 30 – 40 minute lesson using a thematic approach. Once again, when using these resources, ensure that there is ample practice and review. Only a few new idioms should be introduced each lesson.

Collis, Harry. *101 American English Idioms: Understanding and Speaking English Like an American*. Chicago: Passport Books, 1987.

Collis, Harry. *101 American English Idioms: Understanding and Speaking English Like an American*. Chicago: Passport Books, 1987.

These books, which are to be used in conjunction, offer funny pictures that offer the literal translation with dialogues that demonstrate how they are to be used. The teacher's manual supplies additional controlled exercises (i.e. select the best idiom to complete the sentence, fill in the blank, matching, and word search exercises.) Ideas for free practice are also included.

Pederson, Kristin. *A Fine Kettle of Fish: Sixteen Idiom Theme Units for Intermediate Level ESL Students*. Toronto, Canada: ESL Resources, 2002.

Each lesson starts with an introduction of new idioms and some suggested ways to introduce these to your learner. Dialogues, a fill-in the blank exercise sheets and short writing exercises, are included in each chapter. This book is a good source for those who want photocopiable worksheets.

Adams, Thomas and Susan Kuder. *Attitudes through Idioms*. Boston, Massachusetts: Heinle & Heinle Publishers, 1994.

This book has lessons that introduce idioms gradually throughout a reading and listening lesson. Generally, the lesson starts with a short dialogue that introduces two new idiomatic expressions. Subsequent expansion exercises introduce new phrases where learners are to discover the meaning of the idioms through context. This book is suitable for learners working with a tutor but may be difficult for them to do on their own.

Fragiadakis, Helen Kalkstein. *All Clear: Idioms in Context*. Boston, Massachusetts: Heinle & Heinle Publishers, 1994.

This book introduces numerous idioms connected to a theme. A tape (so learners can listen to the conversation the idioms originated from) is included, along with numerous exercises. This is a good, thorough book, which the learner could find success with when used as homework. However, if used for an entire tutoring session, it could be overwhelming. Tutors may need to find ways to break up the information and review only what has been taught.

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