ABE NEW TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

LESSON PLANS?

CASAS TESTING?

SCANS?

MODEL STANDARDS?

PRO?

TOPS

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CALPRO

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Additional Materials available through your local
CALPRO Professional Development Center

Introduction

To the new Adult Basic Education (ABE) teacher, the task of teaching basic literacy skills can seem overwhelming. This *ABE New Teacher Resource Guide,* developed by the California Adult Literacy Professional Development Project (CALPRO), is designed to introduce you to the most immediate and important aspects of teaching ABE learners in California.

The teacher new to ABE asks questions such as, "Who will my new students be?" "What are their literacy proficiencies and needs?" "What materials should I use?" "How do I assess my students' skills and document their progress?" In some cases, individual agencies have procedures and practices that address these questions; in other cases, the California Department of Education (CDE) has specific requirements and provides documents to guide you.

This resource guide presents a brief overview of this information, provides examples of the most important documents you will need, and leads you to resources to inform your teaching. The guide is available on the CALPRO Web site at http://www.calpro-online.org.

Teaching ABE can be an exciting and fulfilling experience. We hope that this guide will make your literacy teaching experience more manageable and rewarding.

Who are My Students?
The Native English-speaking ABE Learner

Students enroll in ABE programs to achieve specific life goals. To assist them in this endeavor, teachers should establish a connection with each learner and facilitate his/her integration into the classroom environment. Adults differ from children in their orientation to learning, and teachers of adults must recognize these differences and design instructional activities accordingly. Following are some of characteristics of the adult learner. Adult learners

- *Have extensive and varied life and employment experiences*. Your students have developed learning strategies that they can apply to new learning but may also have developed coping strategies that can inhibit learning and that must be unlearned.[1]

- *Are of diverse ages and ethnicities*. ABE students can range from 16 through 60+ but approximately 25% will be between 16 and 20, and 50% between 21 and 40.[2]

- *May have low self-esteem.* They may have had negative experiences in the traditional K-12 educational system that limit their ability to be self-directed and self-advocates.

- *Are goal-oriented.* They seek practical knowledge to solve problems as workers, parents and family members, and citizens of their local communities. Adult students must see a clear relationship between the instruction that you offer and their individual needs and goals. If they do not see this connection, they may drop out.

- *Represent a wide range of educational levels.* More than 75% of adult learners have had 10 or more years of education,[1] but their acquisition of academic content has been fragmentary at best.

- *Attend classes sporadically.* The adult learner's family and job responsibilities, and problems/issues related to health, housing, food, and transportation all contribute to irregular attendance and the inability to stay on task. Some students drop in and out of classes as their life situations change and may continue this sporadic attendance until they meet their goals.

- *May not be aware of their deficiencies.* They may need help setting priorities and establishing realistic goals that can be achieved incrementally, one step at a time.

- *May need different learning strategies and may have learning disabilities.* Instructional strategies must be varied, and students should be made aware of how they learn best. See Appendix A Resources for Adult Educators for information and resources about teaching adults with learning disabilities.

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[1] The Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center. (2003). *Adult education and literacy instructor starter kit*. Retrieved August 25, 2004, from http://www.aelweb.vcu.edu/pdfs/Instkit.pdf

[2] CASAS. (June 2003). *ABE and ASE learners enrolled in California's federal WIA Title II program 2001-2002*. Retrieved August 25, 2004, from https://www.casas.org/home/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.downloadFile&mapID=845

Before You Start Teaching:
Questions to Ask About Procedures At Your Site

Many types of agencies provide educational services to ABE students in California. You may work or volunteer for an adult school run by a local school district, a community college, a library literacy program, a correctional facility, a county office of education, or a community- or faith-based organization. You will want answers to the following questions before you begin your teaching assignment.

1. **What do I need to know about my classroom? About the school site?**
   Where is my classroom? Is it locked? If so, who will open it?
   What are the security procedures?
   What hours and days will the classes be held? Will I work evenings or Saturdays?
   Is there an instructional aide to help in the classroom?
   Is the room furnished appropriately for adults?
   Who is the agency contact person?
   Where are the restrooms? Are they always open?
   Is there a designated smoking area?
   Where can I park my car?
   Is there another teacher on site?
   Is there access to clerical staff and audio-visual and copier equipment on site?
   Are the students allowed to have food and/or drinks in the classroom?

2. **What routine procedures at my teaching site do I need to know?**
   What's the procedure for being paid?
   How do I handle student attendance? What forms are required and to whom do I submit them? Is there a minimum and/or maximum number of students required for my class?
   How do I request substitute teachers?
   What is the instructional calendar?
   How do I obtain professional development?

3. **How are students registered and placed in my class?**
   Your agency may have a formal process to register new students. If so, when students enter your class, they will have completed an intake form and possibly a placement test to determine their level of basic skills proficiency. Some agencies, however, require that the teacher conduct the registration and placement process with new students. Ask your supervisor about your responsibilities in this area and about the forms, tests, and other resources that are available to you.

Your agency will have a policy regarding when and how often new students can enroll in ABE classes. If it has an *open enrollment* policy, new learners can enter your class at any time during the semester. If it has a *managed enrollment* policy, new learners can enter only at specified times, e.g., monthly, quarterly, or other. Under an open enrollment policy, it can be more difficult to create a sense of community among your students because class membership is in constant flux. It also may be more difficult to implement project-based learning and peer coaching, two instructional strategies that have been shown to target higher level thinking skills[3].

4. What is the level of the class I will be teaching?

The California Department of Education publishes the *Model Standards for Adult Basic Education Programs*. This publication defines three levels of proficiency: Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced for math, reading, writing, speaking, and listening. If all your students fall into just one of these levels, you will be teaching a single-level class. This occurs most frequently in mid- or large-size agencies where there are several different levels of classes. It is common practice in smaller programs to place students of several proficiency levels into one class; this type of class is designated a "multi-level" class.

5. How do I assess my students' needs?

Adults have many reasons for wanting to improve their literacy skills, but for many students, the goal is to obtain a high school diploma or a GED credential. Your agency may assess students during the intake process, or you may be expected to administer your own assessment. Refer to page 11 for more information on accountability and assessment.

6. How can I help my students to set realistic goals?

Students who enter an adult literacy program often have had negative experiences, including failures, in traditional educational settings. As a result, they are apprehensive about returning to school and they lack confidence in their ability to succeed. You can help them overcome this anxiety by encouraging them to set realistic short- and long-term goals. An initial interview with each student can identify his/her strengths and areas needing improvement as well as the goal(s) that prompted him/her to seek help through ABE classes. The interview should provide you information about the learner's educational history; daily involvement in literacy activities;

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[3] Beder, H. & Medina, P. (2001). *Classroom dynamics in adult literacy education*. (National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy Research Report No. 18). Retrieved August 25, 2004, from http://www.ncsall.net/

educational, employment, family, and community involvement goals; and a discussion of work or family commitments that may affect attendance.

Learners may overestimate their basic skills proficiency and therefore have unrealistic expectations about the time required to complete specific goals. They also may be impatient once they have made the commitment to reach a goal. You can use the results of the learner's literacy skills assessment to help the learner develop individual learning plans that establish specific short-term goals and timelines. Learners must receive frequent and concrete feedback about the progress toward their goals; if they do not realize that they are making progress, they may become discouraged and drop out. (For samples of individual learning plans, see Appendix C: Personal Learning Plan.)

7. **What is the core curriculum and what books and materials will be available to my students and me?**
Your site supervisor or program administrator most likely will provide you with the core curriculum for the class you will be teaching. In addition, the *Model Program Standards for Adult Basic* Education lists the math and language arts objectives that are appropriate for each instructional level. Sample course outlines also are available on the *Outreach and Technical Assistance Network* (OTAN) Web site at http://www.otan.us. Click on OTAN for Teachers to access materials for classroom use. Your site supervisor will provide textbooks and other supplemental materials useful in teaching ABE. These may include visuals, real-life objects, video programs, audio-visual equipment, computers, etc. For a list of instructional materials appropriate for certain topics and levels, see the *Quick Search Materials*. Click on "Curriculum and Resources" on the *California Adult Student Assessment System* (CASAS) Web site at http://www.casas.org.

When You Start Teaching: The Lesson Plan

How do I plan and organize my lessons?

The lesson plan format below often is used for effective instruction in adult education classes, especially for ABE learners.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN . . .

Set the Objective	The instructor determines what learners will be able to do upon completion of this lesson.

NOW PLAN THE LESSON . . .

Lesson Stage	Definition
1. Warm-up and/or Review	Instructor provides an activity to focus learner attention on the lesson objective and/or to review the skills/vocabulary previously taught that tie into the current lesson.
2. Introduce	Instructor establishes the purpose of the lesson by stating the objective and relating it to the learner's previous learning, goals, or experiences. "After this lesson, you will be able to . . ."
3. Present	Instructor presents new information and skills, using a variety of strategies, e.g., visual and auditory presentation, modeling with "think-alouds," demonstrations, etc. Instructor checks for comprehension.
4. Practice	Learners are provided opportunities to practice the new skills, both with peer support and independently.
5. Evaluate	Instructor provides an activity that assesses individual learners on attainment of the lesson objective.
6. Apply	Learners use the language/information/material/ in a new situation.
7. Reflection	Learners and instructor discuss the lesson to determine learner progress, effectiveness of instructional strategies, pace of instruction, and implications for future lessons.

Some Instructional Do's

To maximize instructional effectiveness, try the following:

- **DO** involve the learner in planning the learning activities based on his/her initial assessment of skills and his/her identified goals.
- **DO** encourage students to share life experiences, situations, and perspectives and relate these to the learning activities (e.g., oral literacy skills) and the instructional materials.
- **DO** establish a classroom climate of shared trust and one that values mutual respect and enhances learner self-esteem.
- **DO** design activities that foster collaboration and cooperation and that involve all learners[4].
- **DO** treat students as adults, not children.
- **DO** start each instructional session on time, using some whole group activity that builds community, e.g., teach the vocabulary word of the day; ask students to share how they applied skills learned in class to everyday life activities; use a short brainteaser or quick puzzle; bring in a slick magazine or newspaper ad that has a grammatical or spelling error and ask students to "find the flaw."
- **DO** establish classroom rules and consequences collaboratively with the class members and enforce them *equitably*; DO <u>NOT</u> show favoritism for some students over others.
- **DO** apply immediately the consequences for unacceptable behavior.
- **DO** recognize that the individual learner's goals may change; it therefore is critical for you to periodically revisit and readjust goals with the learner so that instruction always moves students toward goal completion.
- **DO** recognize that, with instruction, "one size does not fit all," and that one instructional plan does not fit all learners.
- **DO** offer instruction using a multi-sensory approach, i.e., appeal to as many modalities as possible—visual, auditory, tactile/kinesthetic.
- **DO** provide instruction in small chunks, introducing new material only after previously introduced material has been mastered.
- **DO** revisit and review previously mastered material from time to time so that students keep these skills current.

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[4] Imel, S. (1998). *Using adult learning principles in adult basic and literacy education*. Retrieved August 25, 2004, from ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education database. (ERIC/ACVE Document Reproduction Service No. AB0052)

California Model Program Standards
for Adult Basic Education

The California Model Program Standards for Adult Basic Education, provides programmatic, curricular, instructional, and assessment standards for ABE programs. As a teacher, you will be most interested in the instructional and assessment standards. Below are two lists of the instructional standards and selected assessment standards. These lists, excerpted from Model Program Standards for Adult Basic Education, California Department of Education (1996), provide general guidelines for teaching and evaluating your students.

Instructional Standards

1. Instructional activities focus on the acquisition of basic literacy, work readiness, and the lifelong learning skills necessary for learners to function in work, school, or other situations.

2. Instruction provides learners with appropriate course and lesson objectives and the criteria on which the learners will be assessed.

3. Instructors use bias-free activities, materials, and examples that are appropriate for adults.

4. A variety of grouping strategies (whole group, small group, pair work, individual work) are used to facilitate learner-centered instruction.

5. Instructional activities are varied to address different learning styles. Activities involve a variety of learning modalities, such as aural, oral, visual, and kinesthetic/tactile.

6. Instructional activities develop an awareness of learners' diversity to promote social integration and cooperation.

7. Instructional activities provide opportunities for learners to develop their higher-level thought processes: analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

8. The instructional process encourages learners to take an active role in learning activities and to apply critical thinking skills to solve problems in their lives.

9. Instructional methodology accommodates learners making the transition from ESL programs.

Standards for Learner Assessment

1. Recommended placement in an ABE program is determined by various assessment measures that are appropriate for the learner being served.

2. Various techniques that allow for diverse learning styles and preferences are used to measure learners' progress and competency.

3. Using a variety of formal and informal assessments, instructors continually monitor learners' progress toward the objectives identified in the course outline.

4. Assessment for certification in mathematics and language arts measures the learners' attainment of the advanced developmental skills level. Multiple measures are used to determine learners' competencies.

5. Learners' success is measured by demonstration of competency, <u>not</u> by program seat time.

What Research Says About Teaching Adults to Read

Research conducted by the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy[5] indicates that:

- Low and beginning level students need direct, systematic, and sequential instruction in phonemic awareness and word recognition skills, and

- Intermediate level students, who comprise the largest percentage of adult students, have learned some word attack skills and know basic phonics, but they do not make strong use of those skills. They need to increase fluency, build vocabulary, and enhance background knowledge typically learned in middle school.

In addition, fluency and comprehension improve with repeated oral readings of familiar material. Instructors should <u>not</u> ask learners to read unpracticed material aloud. Instead, instructors should allow learners to practice, understand, and feel comfortable with what they are reading before asking them to face an audience[6].

For a compendium of current information about how adults learn to read, review the publication Research-based Principles for Adult Basic Education Reading Instruction, produced by the Partnership for Reading and written by John Kriudenier at http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/.

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[5] Strucker, J. and Davidson, R. (November 2003). *Adult Reading Components Study (ARCS). A NCSALL Research Brief*. National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. http://www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/research/brief_strucker2.pdf

[6] Moss, B. (2004, June). *Research to practice: Implementing evidence-based research practices in adult literacy programs*. Paper presented at the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Summer Institute, San Diego, CA.

Assessment and Accountability

1. **What are TOPSpro forms and am I required to complete them?**
   The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) is responsible for collecting student demographic information for the California Department of Education (CDE) via a data-collection system known as TOPSpro. Every ABE student in every program that receives funding from the California Department of Education must complete a TOPSpro form upon <u>both</u> entry <u>and</u> exit from a class. This process is ongoing throughout the year, whenever a new student enters your class or whenever a student exits. You will need to find out your agency's procedures for obtaining, completing, and returning TOPSpro forms. More information about this data collection system is available on the CASAS Web site at http://www.casas.org.

2. **How do I track students' goals and outcomes?**
   The TOPSpro form also is used to record each student's goals on entering a class (via the TOPSpro Entry Record), as well as his/her educational outcomes (via the TOPSpro Update Record). Your supervisor will tell you how to complete these forms and will provide information about other required follow-up procedures.

3. **What other measures can I use to assess my students?**
   Assessment is an ongoing process in adult education, and multiple assessment measures should be used. Assessment may be formal (e.g., standardized testing, teacher- or agency-created tests, and computerized tests), or informal (e.g., teacher observation of student performance through a checklist of competencies mastered, student portfolios, teacher interview, peer review, oral presentation, journals, and group projects). The assessment should reflect the instructional objectives. Your agency may provide specific assessments to document students' readiness to enter a GED preparation or high school diploma program, or you may be required to create your own. CASAS also provides tests for various instructional levels. The assessment instruments most appropriate for ABE students are (1) Life Skill Series; (2) Life and Work Series; and (3) Employability Competency Series.

   Visit the CASAS Web site, http://www.casas.org, and click on *CASAS Catalog* to obtain information about these tests.

4. **What is CASAS testing and what are my responsibilities?**
   CASAS provides CDE with an electronic system for collecting data on student learning gains via a series of pre- and post-tests. Certain funding streams require that these tests be administered regularly to document student progress. Ask your supervisor if your class needs to be "CASAS-tested" and what the agency's testing procedures are. The TOPSpro system allows you to generate reports from the test results by student and by class. These results will assist you in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of your students. The TOPSpro Reports Manual, available through CASAS, details each of the reports.

Implications for Adult Educators of the "SCANS" Report

What Work Requires of Schools - The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills

U.S. Department of Labor, June 1991

Seeking employment or better employment is a major motivation of California's adult learners. The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) examined the demands of the workplace and whether adult students are capable of meeting those demands. The following three foundation skills and five competencies were identified as a result of discussions and meetings among business owners, public employers, unions, and workers in shops, plants, and stores.

The Commission ascertained that half of the people entering the workplace lack the knowledge and foundation required to find and hold a good job. The eight requirements listed below (foundation skills and competencies) lie at the heart of successful job performance and should be incorporated into a sound adult education instructional program.

Three-Part Foundation Skills	Five Competencies
1. Basic Skills • reading • writing • arithmetic/mathematics • listening • speaking **2. Thinking Skills** • creative thinking (creates new ideas) • decision making (chooses best alternative, based on facts) • problem solving (recognizes problem; creates and completes a plan of action) • reasoning (uses logic to draw conclusions) • knowing how to learn (uses efficient learning techniques) • seeing things in the mind's eye (understands charts, symbols, pictures, etc.) **Personal Qualities** • responsibility (works hard to attain a goal) • self esteem (believes in own self-worth) • sociability (gets along well with people) • self-management (self-planning and control) • integrity and honesty (chooses the right thing to do)	**1. Resources (uses each wisely)** • time • materials and facilities • personnel **2. Interpersonal Skills** • works well with others • teaches others new skills • serves clients or customers • works with people of diverse backgrounds • acts as leader **3. Uses Information** • acquires and evaluates information • organizes and maintains information • analyzes and communicates information • uses computers to do above steps **4. Works With Systems** • understands how systems work (organizational, technological, social) • works within the system improves and designs systems **5. Technology** • selects the right technology for the task • uses technology to complete tasks • maintains and trouble shoots technology

10 Easy Things You Can Do To Integrate Workplace Basics (SCANS Competencies) Into Your Classroom

The following list suggests ways to incorporate SCANS skills into your daily instruction. The bold-faced type indicates the classroom strategy, and the list below indicates the SCANS skill to which it corresponds.

1. **Start each class with an agenda on the board.**
   SCANS: *Information*:   organizing
            Resources: allocating time
            Interpersonal: negotiating

2. **Put students in teams and assign teams classroom maintenance jobs.**
   SCANS: *Interpersonal*:   working in teams, taking individual responsibility
            Personal Qualities: demonstrating sociability
            Systems: developing system to improve performance

3. **Conclude every lesson by calling attention to the workplace relevance of the lesson and the classroom activities.**
   SCANS: *Systems*:   monitoring performance

4. **Teach students how to organize their classroom materials.**
   SCANS: *Interpersonal*:   teaching others
            Systems: monitoring performance

5. **Monitor students' progress with checklists and weekly tests.**
   SCANS: *Interpersonal*:   organizing and maintaining information
            Systems: monitoring/correcting performance

6. **Pay attention to classroom incidents and conflicts. Develop lessons that teach students how to deal with these issues appropriately.**
   SCANS: *Interpersonal*:   working in teams, negotiating
            Thinking skills: solving problems, making decisions
            Personal qualities: demonstrating sociability

7. **Model appropriate workplace behavior: arrive on time, come with an organized plan, dress appropriately, and maintain a positive attitude.**
   SCANS: *Personal* qualities: taking responsibility, managing self
            Systems: understanding systems

8. **Encourage students to use, fix, or make minor adjustments in equipment, such as hole punch, pencil sharpener, overhead projector, etc.**
   SCANS: *Technology*:   maintaining & troubleshooting equipment and applying technology to task

9. **Designate student trainers, tutors or experts who can train new students and assist classmates as needed.**
   SCANS: *Interpersonal*:   teaching others
            Systems: improving or designing systems

10. **Encourage self and peer revision whenever possible. Teach the appropriate language to make revisions.**
    SCANS: *Systems*:   monitoring/correcting performance
            Interpersonal: taking individual responsibility
            Personal qualities: assessing/managing self

General Strategies for Organizing and Managing an ABE Class

The following list provides the new ABE teacher with some general strategies for organizing and managing the ABE classroom.

- **Begin and end your lesson with the whole group together** to create a sense of class community.

- **Provide a combination of individualized and whole group instruction** during each class session to introduce variety into your instruction and to allow for adequate practice of the lesson objective(s).

  The **benefits of individualized instruction** are:
  - ❑ Adults need to work at their own pace.
  - ❑ Instructional materials can be based on the individual student's assessed level.
  - ❑ Some adults need privacy and quiet to learn.

  The **benefits of group instruction** are:
  - ❑ Adults learn well working with one another, watching and helping each other perform specific learning tasks.
  - ❑ Group work encourages critical thinking and builds communication skills.
  - ❑ Students learn teamwork and how to relate to age, cultural, and ethnic diversity.
  - ❑ Learners discover that they can use their individual skills, talents, and abilities to help others.
  - ❑ Students create social networks that promote regular class attendance.

- **Encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning.** By assisting students in becoming assertive consumers of their own education, you are helping them ensure that they get what they need out of your class as well as providing them with transferable skills that will serve them well in other educational settings throughout their lives. Addressing the importance of student responsibility early on in the learning cycle contributes to clearer expectations in teaching and learning. Strategies for encouraging learners to assume responsibility for their own learning include requiring learners to (1) evaluate their own work or the work of their peers; (2) record the completion of their daily learning activities and assessment results; and (3) maintain a portfolio or notebook of their work to document their progress.

- **Use a topic-driven, rather than a skills-driven, curriculum.** Negotiate with students the themes or topics that they want addressed in the curriculum. This helps students to unite around a topic in which they all share an interest. After initial introductions of lessons, students can branch off in various areas according to their abilities.

- **Let students know that you are there to provide guidance** to them whenever they want and need it. Tell them that you welcome their questions and that there is no such thing as a dumb question. Then be sure to respond sincerely and non-judgmentally to their questions and always respect and show appreciation for their efforts to master a skill.

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- **Use Project-based learning.** Project-based learning can be a powerful motivator for students to attend class. Teachers can get all students involved in projects such as producing a simple newsletter that is published every few weeks; making a video; or creating and publishing a cookbook or a student literacy magazine. Long-term projects allow students to assume responsibility for leadership roles and other tasks, depending on their strengths and interests. There is a role for every student, regardless of his/her academic skill levels. Students can participate in a variety of ways. When every student contributes to a unified effort with a tangible end result, every student can shares in the sense of accomplishment.

- Allow for a range of learning approaches. Allow students the freedom to work in a fashion that is comfortable for them.
    - Some may want to work alone; others may prefer working in pairs or small groups.
    - Some may need you to model a skill repeatedly and then guide them as they practice the skill over and over until they can perform it independently; others may prefer not to have you observe them practicing a skill, but will demonstrate it for you when they are ready.
    - Some students benefit from having information presented through various modalities (auditory, visual, tactile/kinesthetic); others may prefer to learn through one, dominant modality. The more modalities through which you offer instruction, the more likely you are to reach all students.
    - Sometimes students process their learning silently. Silence does not necessarily indicate boredom, confusion, or passivity. Try to find out what the silence means. It is helpful to explore with students how they learn best so you can help students work from their strengths.[7]
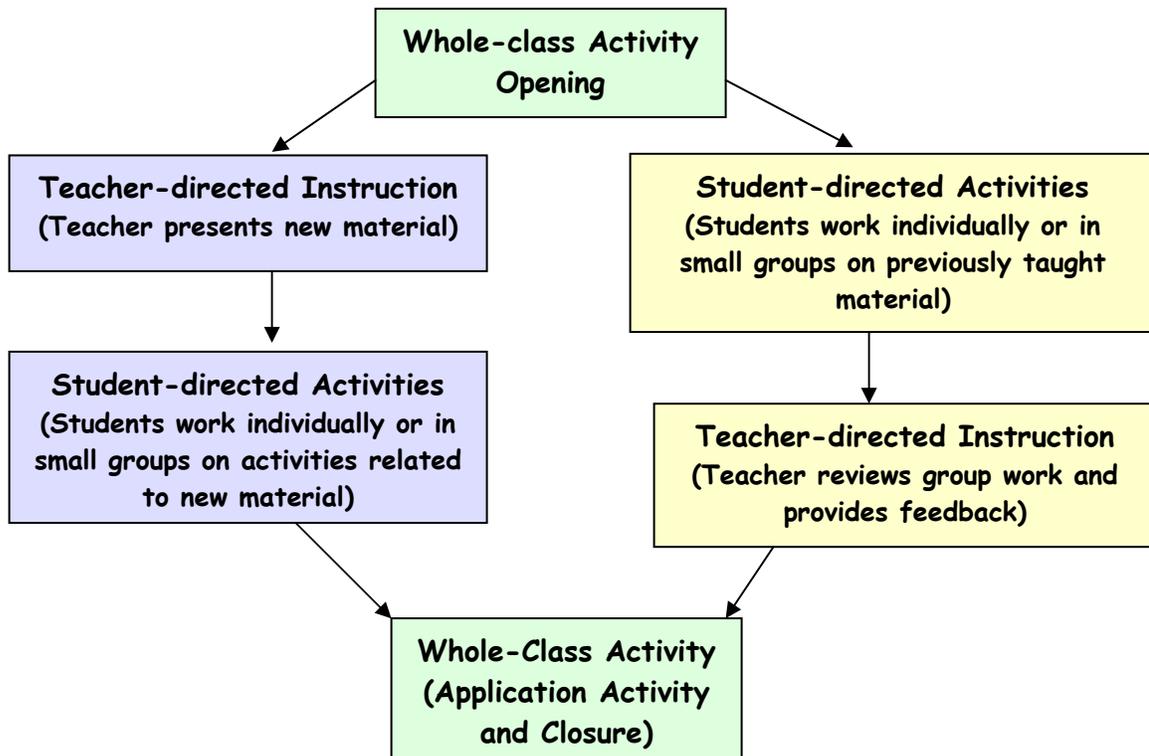
[7] Balliro, L. (1997, September). Ideas for a multilevel class. *Connecting Research and Practice*, 1, Issue C. Retrieved January 26, 2004 from http://www.ncsall.net/?id=443

Multilevel Class Management Models

Most ABE classes have learners with varying skill levels. The same learner may be proficient in one skill area (e.g., writing), but need significant instruction in another (e.g., math). A multi-level class can prove challenging for instructors as they strive to meet individual learner needs, while still creating a sense of class community. The following five models provide some options for managing a multi-level ABE class. Each model has advantages and disadvantages; you may wish to experiment using one or more of these models.

Model 1. Divide and Conquer

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                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │   Whole-class Activity   │
                    │        Opening           │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                     ↙                         ↘
┌──────────────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────────────┐
│ Teacher-directed Instruction │   │   Student-directed Activities│
│ (Teacher presents new        │   │ (Students work individually  │
│  material)                   │   │  or in small groups on       │
│                              │   │  previously taught material) │
└──────────────────────────────┘   └──────────────────────────────┘
              ↓                                   ↓
┌──────────────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────────────┐
│  Student-directed Activities │   │ Teacher-directed Instruction │
│ (Students work individually  │   │ (Teacher reviews group work  │
│  or in small groups on       │   │  and provides feedback)      │
│  activities related to new   │   │                              │
│  material)                   │   │                              │
└──────────────────────────────┘   └──────────────────────────────┘
                     ↘                         ↙
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │   Whole-Class Activity   │
                    │  (Application Activity   │
                    │     and Closure)         │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
```

This model works especially well when an aide assists student-directed groups, as necessary.

Advantages

The "Divide and Conquer" approach provides:
- Level-specific instruction;
- Teacher-student interaction; and
- Self-paced study for learners.

Disadvantages

The "Divide and Conquer" approach presents challenges because:
- It requires extensive preparation;
- Meaningful student-directed activities must be devised;
- It requires a large space; and
- It may publicly identify the skill levels of learners.

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Model 2. Flexible Groupings

This strategy allows the instructor to vary groups and activities to suit different lesson objectives.

Teacher → **Class**   **Pairs**

Small Groups   **Divided Class**
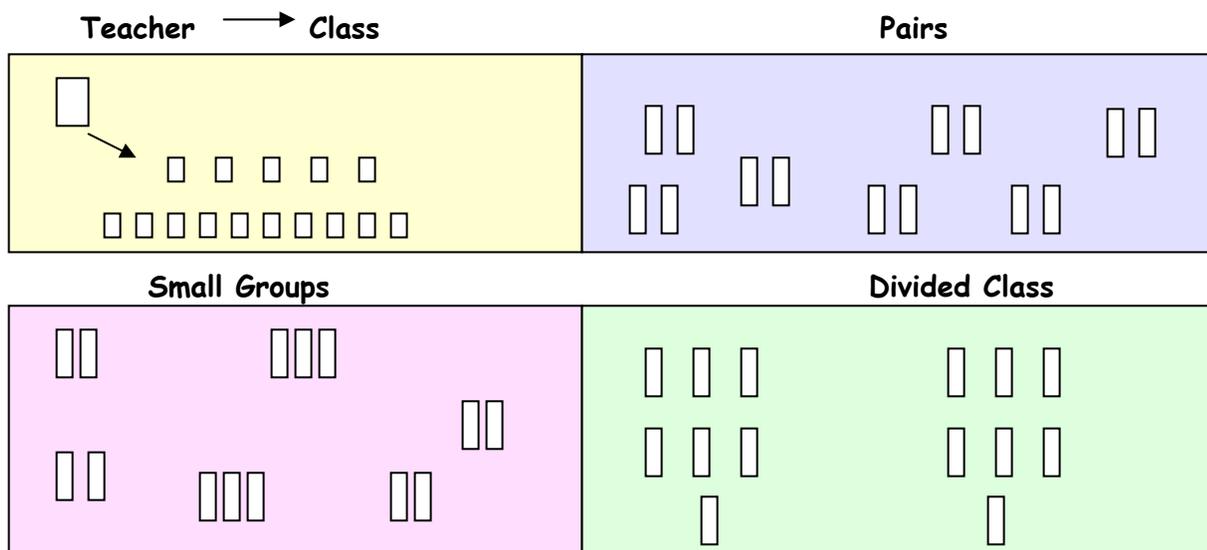
Teacher-led whole class activities are appropriate when:
- Presenting new materials,
- Reviewing previously taught materials, and
- Administering tests.

Pairs may work together to:
- Do research,
- Conduct interviews, and
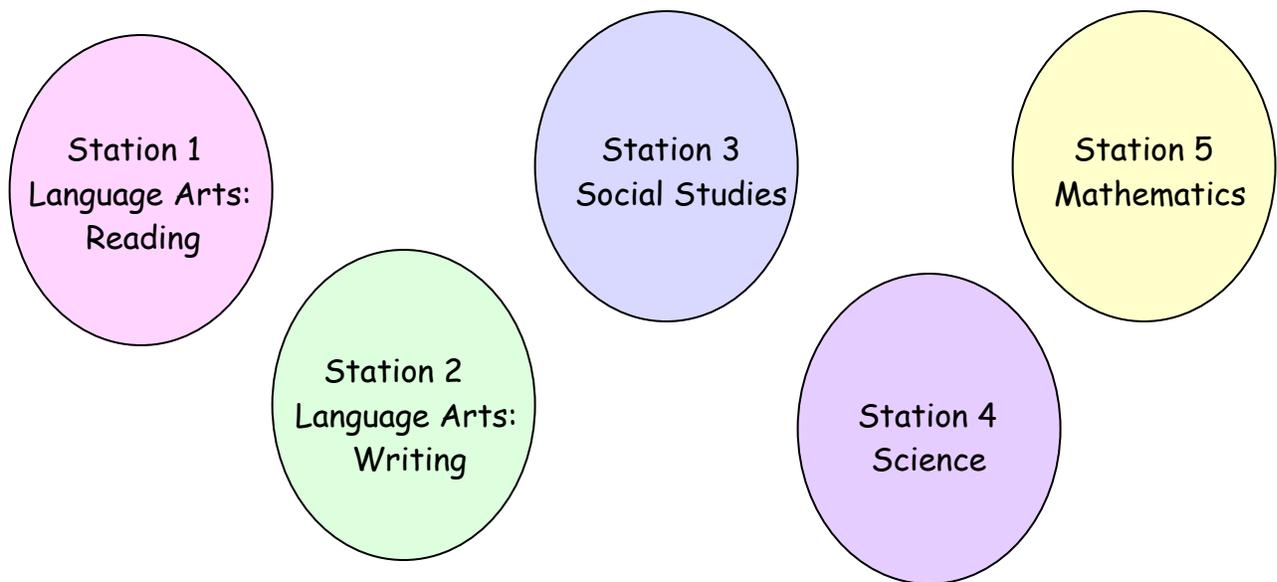- Quiz each other.

Small groups are good for:
- Brainstorming (before a reading or writing assignment),
- Problem solving, and
- Project work.

The **divided class** works best for:
- Debates,
- Competitions, and
- Presentations.

Advantages
Using Flexible Grouping
- Challenges students, and
- Appeals to a variety of teaching and learning approaches.

Disadvantages
Flexible Grouping can pose problems because:
- Instructional materials must suit different skill levels,
- The teacher does a lot of planning,
- The class may not develop a sense of unity,
- Systematic presentation of content may be difficult, and
- Some learners may prefer a more traditional approach.

Model 3. Learning Stations

Learning stations are tables set up with different activities, either within the classroom or in another nearby location. Each station focuses on a specific skill or ability level or content area, and each table is furnished with written directions as well as the necessary equipment and materials for completing the task. One or more students may work at each station at the same time while the instructor circulates among the stations to monitor and assist students. The example below represents 5 learning stations, one for each of the content areas of the GED Tests. This approach could just as easily be used for different skill areas in math (e.g., whole numbers, decimals, fractions, percents, ratio and proportion) or for teaching through different modalities (e.g., listen to an audio tape at one station; view a video at another station; use building blocks or other manipulatives at a third station).

Station 1
Language Arts:
Reading

Station 2
Language Arts:
Writing

Station 3
Social Studies

Station 4
Science

Station 5
Mathematics

Advantages
Learning Stations:
- Give students a choice of activities;
- Offer a change of routine;
- Give students the option of working alone or with others; and
- Offer a novel way to reinforce skills previously taught.

Disadvantages
Learning Stations:
- Require extensive preparation, materials, and space;
- Require self-motivated learners; and
- May not be used to introduce new material.

Model 4. Learning Tables

Learning Tables differ from Learning Stations in that they are permanent groupings. The instructor acts as lead teacher, coordinating two or more groups of learners that meet each class period with a teaching aide or volunteer who serves as group leader. The group leader may conduct group activities but primarily teaches and assists students individually, thus combining group and individualized instruction. The instructor, or lead teacher, floats from group to group, monitoring the process, assisting the group leaders, handling intake of new learners (in an open-entry program), conducting learner interviews, and administering tests.

Instructor

Table 1
Students and
Group Leader

Table 2
Students and
Group Leader

Table 3
Students and
Group Leader
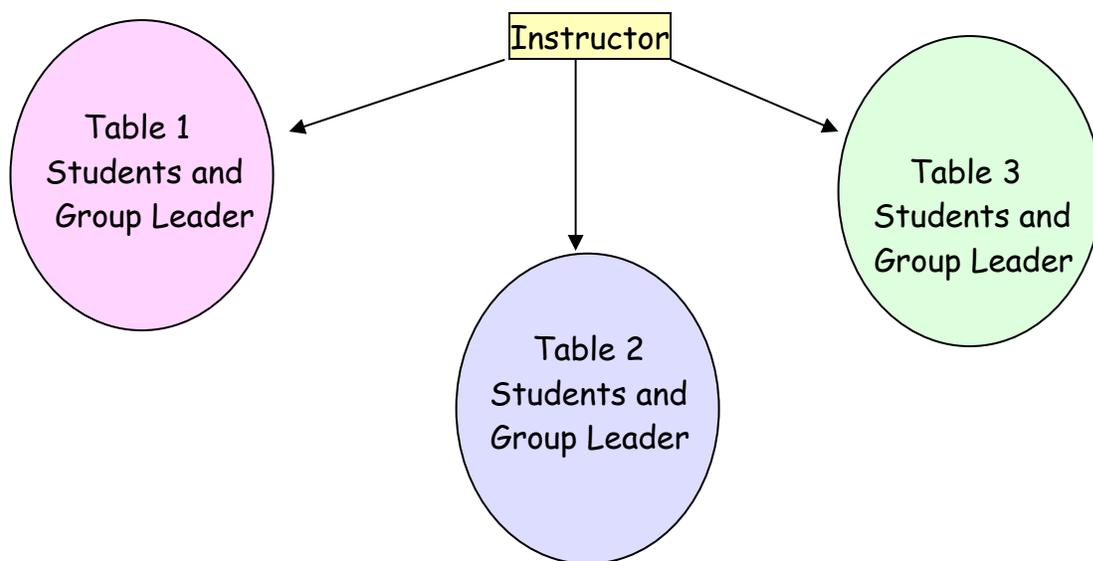
Advantages
Learning Tables:
- Allow individualized instruction in a large multi-level class;
- Provide some group interaction; and
- Free the instructor, allowing time for student interviews and assessments.
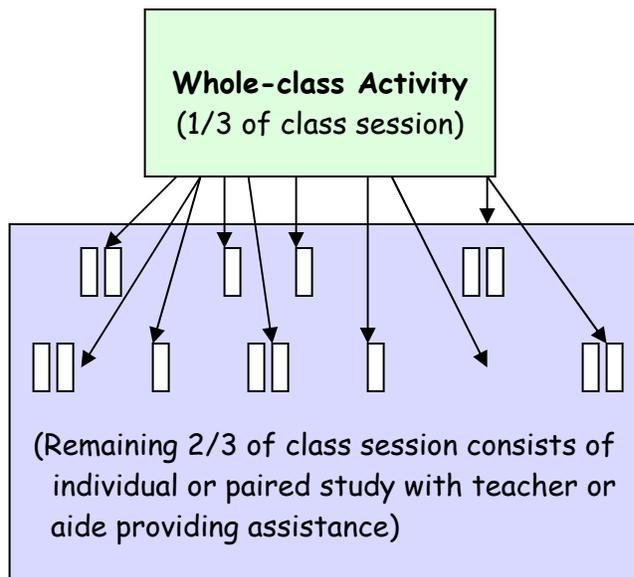
Disadvantages
Learning Tables:
- Require availability of aides or volunteers;
- May be noisy and distracting; and
- Require a large space.

Model 5. From Many to One

Each class begins with an activity for the whole group (e.g., review of a math or grammar rule, introduction of a vocabulary "word of the day", or discussion of current events). This activity takes about one-third of the class time.

The remaining two-thirds of the session is spent on individual or paired study based on individual goals. Some learners may work with paraprofessionals at this time.

Whole-class Activity
(1/3 of class session)

(Remaining 2/3 of class session consists of individual or paired study with teacher or aide providing assistance)

Advantages
The "From Many to One" model:
- Is highly individualized and offers a measure of privacy, and
- Requires preparation on only one group activity.

Disadvantages
The "From Many to One" model:
- Requires a good-sized space to minimize noise and distraction,
- Requires volunteers or aides to provide instruction, and
- May be too solitary for learners working alone.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Resources for Adult Educators

1. Professional Development Training and Workshops
   CALPRO (California Adult Literacy Professional Development Project) provides professional development opportunities and resources for adult educators throughout the state. These include institutes and workshops, online courses, research-based publications, study circle facilitator training, among others. Visit the CALPRO Web site frequently (htt://calpro-online.org) for additional details and news about upcoming events.

2. Online Adult Education Information http://www.otan.us
   OTAN - Outreach and Technical Assistance Network - houses the largest database of adult education materials worldwide. Registration is required, but it's free. Click on *OTAN for Teachers* to access a variety of materials and other resources for classroom use.

3. Data Collection for Adult Learners http://www.casas.org
   CASAS - The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System - provides the California Department of Education with a standardized, electronic system for collecting student demographic data and student learning gains.

4. California Distance Learning Project http://www.cdlponline.org
   CDLP – The goal of the California Distance Learning Project is to expand learner access to adult basic education services in California through distance learning.

5. Professional Associations for Adult Educators

   ACSA - Association of California School Administrators http://www.acsa.org

   CAEAA - California Adult Education Administrators' Association http://www.caeaa.org

   CCAE - California Council of Adult Educators http://www.ccaestate.org

   COABE - The Commission on Adult Basic. http://www.coabe.org

6. Internet Resources

   Cyberstep http://www.cyberstep.org - A partnership of four literacy service innovators addressing the challenge of creating and distributing multimedia learning materials for the hardest-to-serve ABE and ESL adult learners.

LINCS http://www.nifl.gov/lincs/ - The literacy community's gateway to the world of adult education and literacy resources on the Internet. The goal of LINCS is to bring adult literacy-related resources and expertise to a single point of access for users throughout the world.

Literacy.org http://www.literacy.org - A gateway to electronic resources and tools for the national and international youth and adult literacy communities. This site is jointly sponsored by the International Literacy Institute (ILI) and the National Center on Adult Literacy (NCAL) at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education.

NCSALL http://www.ncsall.net/ - The National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy offers numerous publications and teacher training materials, include Study Circle guides on a variety of topics.

The Study Place http://www.thestudyplace.org - Teachers can create lessons using simple forms, find ready-made online lessons, create a class home page using a simple form, and track student progress online. Students can learn English and Math, practice reading, and acquire job skills.

The Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center http://www.valrc.org - This Resource center offers useful online guides for ESL and ABE teachers.

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7. Resources for Teaching Adults with Learning Disabilities

For parents, teachers, and other professionals http://www.ldonline.org

International Dyslexia Association http://www.interdys.org

Learning Disabilities Association of California http://www.ldaca.org

Nonverbal learning disorders http://www.nldline.org

Interactive community resources for adults with invisible disabilities

http://www.ldpride.net

Bridges to Practice, A Research-based Guide for Literacy Practitioners Serving Adult with Learning Disabilities. National Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities Center, Washington, DC 1999.

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8. Publications

Adult Basic Education, An Interdisciplinary Journal for Adult Literacy Educators, P.O. Box 592053, Orlando, Florida 32859-2053

Adult Learning Quarterly, KET Enterprise Division, 560 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502. http://www.ket.org/GED

Focus on Basics, Connecting Research and Practice, World Education, 44 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210-1211, FOB@WorldEd.org; The National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy

Focus Bulletin, Focus Publications, 1938 Crooked Oak Drive, Lancaster, PA 17601. Reviewed and funded by the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, Pennsylvania Department of Education. http://www.paadulted.org

Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, International Reading Association, P>O> Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714. http://www.reading.org

Appendix B

Words of Wisdom
(From those who've been there)
Excerpted from "What I Wish They Had Told Me" by Dr. Nancy Boraks

When teachers were asked what they learned in their first year of teaching adults that they wished they had known before, this is what they said:

♦ *About attendance* —

"**Don't take the poor attendance of an adult as a negative reflection on yourself**. Adults have many other priorities in their lives."

"Treat students like adults. If you treat them like children they go right out the door."

Dr. Boraks summarizes, "The lesson eventually learned is that ABE/GED students with high expectations and equally high vulnerability to physical, psychological, and family stress are less likely to believe that persistence pays. For many ABE students, getting through two classes may take more persistence and energy than it took their teachers to get through two years of college… imagine enrolling in a graduate program where you have no idea how many years it will take to get your master's, and seated beside you is a student who has been in the program for twelve years."

♦ *About adults' sensitivity* —

"Adults are so insecure; they hope to learn, but expect to fail."

"Don't impose your learning expectations on the adult…."

The author adds, "Experienced teachers and administrators suggest that you set short-term goals and impress on adults at the end of each session that they have learned something. In addition, stress learning in such a way that they will be faced with constant evidence of their success."

♦ *About student background —*

Dr. Boraks notes that teachers "had not really expected the **tremendous variability** they found among their adult learners." She urges teachers to "make a special effort to learn about their goals and interests. Make no assumptions that these goals and interests will remain constant for a particular student or that they will be shared by his/her peers."

"Some students want their needs met now; these may not be related to your curriculum…. Students will work harder if they are reading something important to themselves."

In summary, the author adds, "adults **may know their own strengths and weaknesses better than tests can assess them**, so discuss things with adult learners; do not just make a decision about what to teach…."

♦ *About methods and materials —*

Teacher's responses varied, one wishing for "lots and lots of ideas and materials," and another saying, "I wish someone had told me I didn't have to know about all the materials to do a good job…."

The author makes these points: "There is a great deal of danger in assuming that a set of materials or one method or one person has the solution…. Materials and methods can help, but the teacher makes the difference and **teachers who help the most are ones who adapt to their students** and make them feel they have come to the right place…. Teachers also suggested **starting and ending lessons with a quick review, reducing the amount of material presented in any particular session**, and adjusting the rate of presentation to each individual's preferred pace."

For further reading on learner motivation, attendance, and retention, see *Focus on Basics*, Volume 2, Issue A, March 1998, available on the Web site of the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL): http://www.ncsall.net/index.php?id=72

The Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center. (2003). Adult education and literacy instructor starter kit, Section 2, 12–13. Retreived August 25, 2004, from http://www.aelweb.vcu.edu/pdfs/Instkit.pdf

Appendix C

Personal Learning Plan

Name: _____   Date: _____

Long-term Goal:

_____

Date set: _____   **Target date:** _____   **Date met:** _____

Skills and Knowledge Needed: _____

_____

Possible Problems or Barriers: _____

Short-term Goals:
1. _____
Date set: _____   Date met: _____

2. _____   _____
Date set: _____   Date met: _____

3. _____   _____
Date set: _____   Date met: _____

Dates for Progress Review: _____   _____   _____

Progress Notes: (Learner & instructor initial and date)

_____

_____

_____
        Learner's Signature   **Instructor's Signature**

LEARNER / INSTRUCTOR PLANNING FORM

Learner's Name: _____   **Date:** _____

Long-term Goal: _____

Short-term Goal	Steps to Take	By When?

The Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center. (2003). Adult education and literacy instructor starter kit, Section 2, 5–6. Retrieved August 25, 2004, from http://www.aelweb.vcu.edu/pdfs/Instkit.pdf

Appendix D

S.T.E.P.S. Interview Guide
(Student-Teacher Evaluation and Planning Session)

Check Progress:

What progress have you made toward your goals(s)? _____
_____

_____

How do you feel about the progress you have made so far? _____

_____

What do you feel is your weakest area? _____

_____

What is your strongest area? _____

_____

What else would you like to work on? _____

_____

Evaluate Learning:

What materials have you used? _____

Which materials have been helpful? How? _____

_____

Which materials were not so helpful? Why? _____

_____

What do you do with me (your instructor) that is helpful to you? _____

_____

What could your instructor do differently to help you learn? _____

_____

_____

How have you used your learning in your daily life outside the classroom? _____

_____

How much time do you spend on your learning each week (including class time)? _____

_____

Is this enough time? Are you satisfied with your time commitment? _____

_____

What could you /your instructor/the program do differently to help you achieve your goal(s)? _____

_____

Make New Plans:

Would you like to add any goals to your learning plan? If so, what? _____

_____

Would you like to remove or change any of your goals? If so, what? _____

_____

What should the next short-term goals be? _____

_____

Note: Complete a new Personal Learning Plan to reflect new goals.

The Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center. (2003). Adult education and literacy instructor starter kit, Section 2, 10–11. Retrieved August 25, 2004, from http://www.aelweb.vcu.edu/pdfs/Instkit.pdf