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Without the dedication and skill from these wonderful people, this manual would not be possible. Thank you, Advisory Council.
Preface to Trainers and Instructors

The purpose of this training manual is to provide research-based information, professional development training plans, and instructional activities that meet the needs of literacy providers who serve our youngest students. Much research and experience in adult and adolescent learning precedes its writing. The contents can be incorporated into professional development training, integrated into team planning meetings, applied to individual professional development plans or used as an instructional reference to plan classroom lessons.

You will find this manual reader-friendly and inviting. Wide margins provide space for you to record reflections and notes and to encourage you to make the content your own. This furthers the efficacy of this manual as a reference by encouraging customization to meet your needs.

The manual is divided into seven chapters. Chapters one through five focus on research about understanding and teaching our youngest students. Each chapter is organized with headings and sub-headings to guide reading. Included are teaching suggestions to help users make the transition from book-centered learning to student-centered, hands-on learning.

Chapter 6 focuses on professional development plans. Each professional development plan is separated into component parts for easy reading and application.

The focus of Chapter 7 is on instructional activities to enhance classroom teaching and learning. Activities are separated into component parts for easy use. Every effort has been made to obtain permission to use included Internet
sites. At the time of writing, all web sites included were active. Due to the vast, ever-changing world of technology, Internet sites may change or be deleted. You may wish to supplement these web resources with your own.

A bibliography is included for those who would like further research-based reading to enhance the understanding and teaching of the youngest students. We hope you use this manual to make the teaching of your youngest students a successful experience.

This manual is the fifth in the Adult Basic Skills Professional Development Instructor Training Manual Series. Each manual in the series includes narrative chapters on a variety of topics as well as training plans and/or instructional plans. The content of each manual is intended to enrich the user’s knowledge base and professional development. For a complete listing of training manuals, videos, and CD-ROMs visit our web site at www.abspd.appstate.edu.
Chapter 1
The Challenge Before Us

Introduction

It is no secret that an ever-increasing percentage of students fail to reap many of the educational benefits that are available during their elementary and high school years. Many national studies report, and decry, the reputed deterioration of this educational experience. Although our nation has responded with demands for “accountability” in public schools by requiring standardized and criterion-referenced testing, there is no indication that the number of students needing remediation will decrease in the immediate future.

Our technologically oriented society does not absorb as many unprepared youth as it once did. Our youngest
students are seeking out the Adult Basic Skills classroom because, upon entering the job market, they quickly realize that they have “missed the boat.” They are clamoring to get back on board to prepare themselves for meaningful careers and productive lives.

Increasing Numbers

In recent years students have been enrolling in Adult Basic Skills classes in greater numbers and at an earlier age. The 1997-98 Annual Statistical Report of the North Carolina Community College System shows that the number of students under 20 years old who enrolled in extension programs of North Carolina community colleges increased by more than 10,000 between 1987 and 1997, an increase of approximately 50%. This parallels a national trend. Rumberger (2001) reported that the percent of young people completing high school by alternate means increased from 4% in 1988 to 10% in 1998.

Although the state of North Carolina has made a substantial investment in dropout prevention programs in recent years—for example, $30 million in 1993 and each of some preceding years—the dropout rate in the state of North Carolina increased between 1991 and 1996 (Obasohan and
Kortering, 1999). During those years, North Carolina implemented essentially all of the nationally recommended dropout prevention programs, all of which utilized counseling, more social workers, behavior improvement programs, academic enhancement, early identification and intervention, and pregnancy prevention programs. These efforts have not reduced or even stabilized the dropout rate. Further, recent changes such as end of grade tests and a policy of retaining underachieving students in some grades make it likely that the dropout rate will increase. Rumberger reported that students who had been retained were four times more likely to drop out later (2001). It seems safe to predict that the need for GED, Adult High School, and other basic skills programs will continue to increase in future years.

The young students bring special demands to the Adult Basic Skills classroom. As their numbers increase, Adult Basic Skills instructors are faced with new challenges. They attempt to adjust to the unique needs and problems of their youngest students while maintaining the best possible learning environment for those students who have traditionally sought their program.

Unique Challenges

The inclusion of a significant number of recent high school dropouts in the Adult Basic Skills classroom creates a new dimension for the instructor. These young students often do not conduct themselves in the same way the instructor has come to expect from experiences with more mature students. In fact, a young student’s behavior can be quite unpredictable. Although some young students may be very shy and may emulate the classroom etiquette of older students, other young students may take an entirely different approach. Even though they know they need, and actually want, the educational experience provided by the
Adult Basic Skills classroom, some younger students have become so practiced at disruptive classroom behaviors that they simply do not know how to adjust. They may also rebel at being considered like the more traditional older students and create classroom management problems simply because they have built a personality with automatic negative reactions to directives from, and models provided by, older people.

The youngest students may also lack self-discipline. If so, there are two predictable behaviors that may affect their performance in the Adult Basic Skills classroom. One possible behavior is inconsistent attendance. If a friend calls before class and suggests an alternate plan for that day or evening, the young student is less likely to resist the temptation to skip class than an older student. Even if young students have learned to value class time, despite not doing so during their recent public or private school experience, most young students are very susceptible to peer pressure. They can be persuaded to skip class by peers who do not respect the attempts of others to improve themselves academically.

Another behavior that may stem from self-discipline problems is failure to complete, or at least to attempt, out-of-class assignments. The instructor who has learned to expect that most students make a major effort to do homework may have to adjust expectations for some of the youngest students while working with those students to help them become more self-disciplined.

Psychologists recognize that academic achievement by adolescents is influenced by several factors, with peer
influence being a surprisingly powerful force. If their friends value education and academic achievement, students are more likely to strive to do well. The opposite is also true. Students whose friends view academic achievement as meaningless or “not cool” are under considerable pressure to conform to average levels of performance rather than to excel. This is particularly true for African-American students whose academic excellence is likely to have resulted in being “labeled as ‘brainiacs’ and having to cope with the ‘burden of acting white’” (Berk, 1998, p. 378). Students from other cultures are beginning to experience some of the same pressures that African-American students have endured, that is, the pressure to avoid being good students. In recent years, the motion picture industry has created, or at least perpetuated, the term “nerd,” giving a very negative image to the student who excels academically. Since a high percentage of our youngest students are likely to have encountered, or to have been a perpetrator of, this negative attitude toward good academic performance, they have to struggle with the conflict between this philosophy and the desire to succeed in the Adult Basic Skills classroom.

One factor that influences the choice of friends is the attitude of the parents and other family members toward academic excellence. While there are many exceptions, adolescents from families of higher education levels tend to choose friends who value academic achievement. Many of the low achievers who enroll in Adult Basic Skills course work have not had the benefits that young children accrue from having parents who regularly read to them, taught them basic knowledge and skills so that they were well prepared.
for school, and helped and encouraged them when they did homework. Some of those students may have had great academic potential, but that potential was never given a chance to develop.

The young student is not likely to have the same personal baggage and life problems as the older student. This does not mean young students are not likely to have significant personal problems, just that their problems are often different. Whereas older students may talk with the instructor about problems with their children, current or recent marriages, and their jobs, younger students may have internalized more self-centered problems, such as a negative self-image or the attitude that no one really cares about them. Negative self-images are likely because of recent school experiences. These students may have just completed years in school during which they believed they were not smart enough to compete academically. They also may have negative self-images that are based on social acceptance factors, such as the feeling that no one likes them or the belief that they are overweight or unattractive. For example, eating disorders are now so prevalent that many students who are obviously not overweight view themselves as fat, and may suffer significant self-image problems because of their beliefs about themselves.

Some of our youngest students may be desperate for a supportive relationship with an older person. They may suffer from poor parental or family situations. They may have rebelled against their home environment and seek support that they view as unavailable in their homes. In some cases, students may not be able to succeed until that issue is satisfactorily resolved.
What Students Have Told Us

When this topic was selected, we felt that this training manual would be incomplete and might even miss the mark if we did not solicit input from the students we are attempting to describe. When a number of students at Central Carolina Community College were interviewed, a common theme emerged. These students did not “fit in” within the public school environment. Although these students cited different reasons for not succeeding in public schools, and only a few actually said they did not feel that they “fit in,” all believed they had the ability but were unable to express that ability in the environment they experienced in the public school system.

One student told us there were too many students for the teachers to give her the individual attention she needed, and one referred to the size of her school when she explained that it was hard to function in the school community because of people she did not like. While no one mentioned hazing or being treated like an outsider, the prevalence of these activities in the public high schools makes us think that social problems have to be a major cause of depression and low self-esteem in some high school students. The size of the school system is undoubtedly a factor in the failure of teachers to give students personal attention or to adjust for special needs. Another student said, “Not everyone learns the same way, and the public schools don’t make any adjustments for those who don’t learn their way.”
Several students seem to consider themselves to be victims of public school rules and regulations. They seemed to view the structure of their community college as less oppressive. There are two possible explanations for young students accepting the structure of the community college rather than fighting it the way they did the structure of the public schools. First, that structure seems less oppressive when the young student is getting personal attention. The second possible reason is that the student who is asking for another chance is more willing to accept certain rules and regulations previously considered unacceptable.

Perceptions: Instructors Versus Students

When young students fail to perform in the classroom, instructors often label those students as unmotivated or apathetic. The Adult Basic Skills Professional Development (ABSPD) team conducted an informal poll, called the “Younger Student/Generation X Survey,” asking instructors to identify the top three problems encountered when working with this age group. “Lack of motivation” was cited three times as often as any other problem. However, more than one instructor listed apathy and attendance. “Lack of defined goals” and “failing to take learning seriously” were also identified as major problems by several instructors. Some of the instructors cited more empathetic problems including poor self-esteem, multiple barriers, outside circumstances, and students conditioned to fail.

100% of dropouts reported that learning is important, only 7% of teachers thought that dropouts considered learning to be important.
There were also multiple responses to our Younger Student Survey which showed that instructors felt the youngest students could create classroom management issues. Negative behaviors, lack of maturity, and “never having had to take responsibility for their own actions” were most often cited by instructors as the classroom management problems encountered. More than one instructor listed discipline and negative attitudes as problems affecting classroom management. The negativity of these responses may be a reflection of the wording of the survey; these instructors were asked to identify classroom management problems they encountered with younger students.

Still, it appears that both teachers and students tend to blame each other for student failures. However, a small, but substantial, percentage of teachers accept responsibility when their students fail and respond by increasing their efforts to help students. In 1999, Obasohan and Kortering reported a comparative study of how dropouts and teachers rate the factors that contribute to the dropout rate. They sampled 74 teachers and 77 students who had dropped out during the 1994-95 school year. They found significant differences between the perceptions of teachers and dropouts. For example, 100% of the dropouts reported that learning is important, but only 7% of teachers thought that dropouts considered learning to be important. While 96% of the dropouts reported that they actually wanted to learn, only 14% of teachers believed the dropouts wanted to learn. While this disparity can be partly attributed to the bias that can occur when people are asked to respond to questions that have choices, which obviously reflect on the respondent in a positive or negative manner, it would seem that other factors also contribute to this perceptual difference. Perhaps the students really want to learn, but simply do not know how to apply themselves. Perhaps their desire to learn is thwarted by undiagnosed reading or learning disabilities. Maybe these students want to learn but simply lack the self-discipline to apply themselves. Unless they are expected to learn, they become victims of a permissive society, a society
that gives mixed messages when it bombards young students with a variety of things to do other than study. Society seems to expect young students to choose to study “enough” without defining how much is “enough” or relating parameters to individual needs.

Many educators believe that it is important for families to reinforce the value of learning. They believe that parents should begin reinforcement of learning at an early age through activities such as reading to and with the child. In the survey conducted by Obasohan and Kortering, only 16% of teachers thought the families of dropouts wanted them to learn. However, 97% of the dropouts reported that their families wanted them to learn. It is possible that the teachers and dropouts interpreted this question differently; teachers may have thought that “wanting them to learn,” meant actively supporting, rather than just paying lip service to, learning. Whether their families wanted them to learn might be judged differently by teachers who are more familiar with the different ways parents offer support. These teachers may make the comparison to families who devote a lot of effort to assisting their children with learning activities. Undoubtedly, there are cases in which the families wanted the survey respondents to learn, but the teens rebelled against family values in every way, including academically. Perhaps the Adult Basic Skills instructor should not be too quick to blame the family environment.

Research shows that high school teachers and high school dropouts have very different views on the reasons students choose to leave high school.
The role of the family environment may be more complex than “wanting children to learn.” Comparative attitudes of Asian families show that they believe learning depends more on hard work than ability (Rumberger, 2001). This suggests that the attitude of the family toward the components of educational success may introduce negative philosophies.

While researching a variety of publications during preparation for writing this training manual, it was noted that numerous “authorities” believe that young students who drop out of public schools tend not to have as many friends and not to be involved in school activities. Although we believe that to be the case, as does an overwhelming majority of the teachers who responded to the survey of Obasohan and Kortering, the dropouts who responded to that survey did not agree. Ninety-three percent (93%) of those dropouts reported that they had friends in school, but only 20% of their teachers agreed. While only 8% of teachers thought the dropouts were involved in school activities, 81% of the dropouts judged themselves to be “involved” in school activities.

So why do students drop out of school? Is it lack of interest or poor attendance that caused them to fall behind? Could it be discipline or behavioral problems, academic problems, or family problems? As many as 34% of dropouts have cited family-related reasons and 32% work-related reasons, but the majority (77%) cite school-related reasons for dropping out. Further, the dropout rate varies among community environments because perceptions of financial reward for graduation affect dropout rate (Rumberger, 2001). In Obasohan and Kortering’s survey, at least 90% of the teachers who responded considered each of these to be an important factor contributing to the dropout rate. However, not one of these factors was cited by more than 29% of the dropouts (academic problems were reported to be a major factor by 29%). These percentages are probably not expected to be comparable because teachers have tried to identify factors that are important for any of a large number
of the dropouts, but dropouts have focused only on those factors that are significant to them personally. If the dropouts only reported their own personal reason or reasons for deciding to drop out, the fact that only 21% cited family reasons, and no specific reason was cited by more than 29% of respondents, simply shows that students drop out for a variety of reasons and that each of the possible reasons listed above can be an important one. There is also the possibility that the decision to drop out is not made for any logical reason, but is, at least for some dropouts, a “spur of the moment,” rather than a carefully thought-out decision.

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<td></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical illness</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem with teachers</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dislike coursework</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic problems</td>
<td>90%</td>
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Obviously, the previous paragraph did not provide an exhaustive list of possible reasons for dropping out of school. In their survey, Obasohan and Kortering also asked about problems with other students, work responsibilities, financial problems, feeling too old for school, marriage, pregnancy, family responsibilities, physical illness, transportation problems, entering the military, disliking a particular course, and having problems with teachers, counselors, or the school administration.
They even provided the choice of “unknown reasons.” Of these possibilities, the teachers who responded to the survey most often agreed with physical illness (62%), but only 16% of students cited physical illness. There were other factors that also were cited more often by teachers than by dropouts, but the largest discrepancies between student and teacher perspectives were in factors that related to disliking teachers, administrators, or particular courses.

Seventy-six percent of dropouts surveyed cited “problems with teachers” as their reason for dropping out. The next most frequently cited reason for dropping out was “dislike for a particular course,” which was listed by 48% of the dropouts; this reason could also be considered a negative reflection on the instructor of that course. Only 36% of teachers who responded to the survey thought “problems with teachers” was an important reason for students dropping out of school, and only 33% agreed with “dislike for a particular course.” These percentages, along with those discussed in previous paragraphs, show that dropouts tend to blame their teachers, while teachers think the blame for the problems that led to dropping out of school lies with the students. Two conclusions seem appropriate for those of us who attempt to “fix the problem” by teaching Adult Basic Skills courses. First, it seems likely that there were a variety of student-centered problems that kept these students from learning in the past, including self-discipline and behavior problems, immaturity, and possibly learning disabilities. Some of those problems may still be present when our youngest students enter the Adult Basic Skills classroom. The second
conclusion is that the attitude and approach of the Adult Basic Skills instructor can be critical to the success or failure of these young students. Regardless of what teacher characteristic is most important, it is probable that young students will not succeed if the teacher does not show interest in their performance, displays an attitude of superiority, reflects a lack of confidence in the student’s ability, or fails to teach at a level and in a manner that is appropriate for that student.

Perhaps the greatest perceptual difference is not between teachers and students/dropouts, but between good teachers and other teachers. What makes the difference may be the attitude of good teachers, and their faith in the ability of students to learn and excel academically. Dropouts may, to a large extent, be victims of a sense of inferiority that accumulates from repeated bad educational experiences without appropriate intervention by a teacher who believes in them. Low academic performance throughout their school years has trained most of these students to believe that they are “just not smart,” “can’t do math,” etc. Often these beliefs have been upheld and compounded by channeling these students into a vocational track in high school, while the “better students” were put into college preparatory courses. Such experiences can have a powerful effect on self-esteem and lead students to the conviction that they cannot learn as well as most people. The earlier they are tracked, the more strongly they will hold this conviction. The effective teacher knows that students with low self-esteem have untapped abilities and teaches in ways designed to help all students achieve their true potential. The biggest challenge for the Adult Basic Skills teacher is to help our youngest students overcome negative self-images.
Chapter 2
Understanding Our Youngest Students

Introduction

What motivates young students to seek additional education? One research study conducted in Illinois suggests the motivating factors for younger students are very similar to those for adults (Nelson, 1999). Younger students often report they want a GED or high school diploma because it helps them achieve a better job and a better lifestyle (Hayes, 2000). Younger students report choosing the GED over returning to high school because reenrolling in high schools is too much like admitting that dropping out was a mistake. Younger students go to great lengths to justify prior choices, at least to themselves. However, their insecurities are revealed by their fear that returning to high school leads to
ridicule by peers and their seriousness doubted by teachers. They may not admit it readily, but younger students are looking for a fresh start.

Instructors need to understand both the motivations and the reservations of all students. To the extent that younger students are especially sensitive, and therefore vulnerable, understanding what “makes them tick” gains added importance.

Adolescent Development

Experts in human growth and development identify the ages of 13 to 18 as the period of adolescence, and 18 or older as adult. Of course, development occurs as a continuous process, and there is no magic change that marks a true distinction between adolescence and adulthood. People mature on different timetables, and a chronological age of 19 or 20 does not guarantee a given level of maturity. For instance, one of several factors that affects maturity level is the use of alcohol and drugs. Despite the variability, it is helpful to be familiar with the usual developmental patterns of adolescence, as well as the predictable transitions from adolescence to adulthood.

During adolescence, teens usually become capable of propositional thought, one aspect of the “formal operational stage” as defined by Piaget. In propositional thought, the “person can evaluate the logic of propositions (verbal statements) without referring to real world situations” (Berk, 1988, pp. 369-370). This skill is particularly invaluable in math. The difference in rate of propositional thought development may explain why some teens move ahead of others academically; students who develop this skill at a later age are likely to think of themselves, and be thought of by others, as less intelligent. Recent research shows that this ability is developed in the academic areas practiced by the
student. Students who did not understand major concepts and became frustrated in high school are likely to have great difficulty when the basic skills instructor expects everyone to be capable, at a given level, of propositional thought.

Piaget’s theory has been supplanted by the concept of information processing development which says, “cognitive development involves acquiring increasing powerful rules, or cognitive procedures, for solving problems” (Berk, 1988, p. 371). Perfecting cognitive skills requires instruction that identifies the critical features of tasks. The teacher must guide students through increasingly complex problems. It follows, then, that the instructor must identify the students’ levels of information processing skills prior to guiding their further development.

Adolescents may express discomfort with abstract thought and information processing by exhibiting argumentativeness, sensitivity to public criticism, and an exaggerated sense of personal uniqueness, idealism, or difficulty in making everyday decisions. Young students who failed to develop in this area are likely to have difficulty with planning their work, and with self-regulation in general. Some of these characteristics fade as adolescents become more skilled at abstract reasoning. As they mature, students become less self-conscious and self-focused. Decision-making skills improve with increased analytical thinking experience.

Recent studies of brain development have led some scientists to suggest an anatomical basis for the maturation processes just described (Bagley, 2000). Those researchers believe their evidence shows that development of certain areas of the brain continues until approximately age 18 and is followed by pruning of unused pathways. This is particularly true of the brain lobe governing language and emotion, whereas the lobes which function in decision making matures only a few years earlier. If this theory is supported by further research, it will prove the existence of an anatomical basis for expecting teenagers to think differently than adults.
Chapter 1 included a discussion about the powerful force of peer influence during this developmental stage. Students are not likely to strive to do well unless their friends value education and academic achievement. Being popular and “cool” takes on an inordinate importance at this stage.

Many low achievers who enroll in Adult Basic Skills courses may not have had the benefit of supportive parents. Their interest in learning may have suffered from this lack of support, combined with having teachers they perceived as uncaring and friends who were always belittling school as a waste of time.

While older students may have experienced many of the same impediments, they have had time to develop a more mature personal belief system that places less emphasis on “being cool.” They are less likely to be swayed by peer pressure. The dramatic attitude changes (developing a more mature personal belief system that places less emphasis on “being cool”) that would enable our youngest students to perform well must be made in a very short time period. Making these changes may be difficult because young students may be in the same social, and possibly even physical, environment in which they experienced so many academic “failures.”

According to Berk, “Erikson was the first to recognize identity as the major personality achievement of adolescence and as a vital step toward becoming a productive, happy adult” (1998, p. 388). Adolescents struggle with the
establishment of a set of personal beliefs and values, along with personality, that Erikson called their “identity.” Erikson also coined the term “identity diffusion” to represent an undesirable outcome of this process that could leave one shallow and directionless, and “unprepared for the psychological challenges of adulthood” (Berk, 1998, p. 389). Some say that identity diffusion happens often, as evidenced by the number of 18- to 25-year-olds who seem to be very shallow, seem to lack purpose, and are struggling to “find themselves.”

Low self-esteem can have a very negative effect on academic performance. Adolescents develop low self-esteem for a variety of reasons, including failing in school, experiencing abuse at home, being obese, using drugs, experiencing puberty at a significantly different age than their friends, and living in a low-income family.

Because of other problems and pressures, more females than males feel insecure about their abilities. Societal pressures contribute to low self-esteem in females because they worry more about their physical appearance. Females also are more likely to have been victimized sexually, and that victimization can destroy self-esteem. Some female students in the Adult Basic Skills classroom may have failed to achieve their academic potential because they fell victim to societal pressures to “be more feminine.”

The negative effects of gender intensification, which young adolescents experience after puberty, are worse in girls. These negative effects can be overcome if girls are encouraged to question the value of gender stereotypes and explore options, such as careers, without regard to gender traditions. When girls do this, they are more likely to develop a balanced personality, or “gender-role identity, selecting ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ traits that suit their personally chosen goals” (Berk, 1998, p. 399).
Emerging Adults

Significant cognitive development can occur in early adulthood as the young student makes a transition from a preference for abstract systems with a logical, internal consistency to a more realistic perspective. In so doing, the emerging adult allows for vagueness and contradictions in beliefs and thought processes, which in turn allows for adaption to changing circumstances. Berk seems to think that this transition, for which the theory is attributed to Perry, may only occur in those students whose thought processes are enriched by exposure to contradicting philosophies and viewpoints, such as are presented during a college education (Berk, 1998). However, Berk also recognizes Schaie’s theory, which suggests that people do not really advance beyond Piaget’s formal operational stage that should have been attained during adolescence, although they do shift from acquiring knowledge to using knowledge as they are exposed to diverse situations which require reasoning. If Schaie’s theory is correct, abstract reasoning may be underdeveloped in many of our youngest students.

Labouvie-Veif has advanced a theory similar to Schaie’s theory, except that it credits adults with making a transition to an awareness of multiple truths (Berk, 1998). Adult thought processes, according to this theory, also develop a tolerance for a gap between their ideals and what they have experienced in real life. Part of the reason adults give up the need to resolve contradictions is that they are forced to juggle numerous roles, so they become more pragmatic. This is true of many students in the Adult Basic Skills classroom who have sufficient post-high school experiences.

The cognitive processes of adults may decrease as they become more specialized by choosing a certain career or life path. This choice leads to more context bound thinking, which tends to reduce the number of options they recognize. However, this specialization
“opens new cognitive doors to higher levels of competence” (Berk, 1998, p. 438).

Characteristics of Adolescents

Adolescence is characterized by development in cognitive abilities, including the ability to think in abstract terms. After an early adolescent shift in identification with parents and family to strong identification with peers, later adolescence and early adulthood should include the development of more independence from the influence of peers as well as parents. Confusion about who they are and what direction their lives will take may lead to experimentation with lifestyles and a reevaluation of the values of their childhood. During this change process, adolescents need the guidance of parents or other adult role models, as well as the security provided by strong family ties, close friendships, or belonging to productive social groups. As they “find themselves” and redefine their value systems, adolescents either see themselves as unique and worthwhile individuals or become more confused about who they are and what they want from life.

One of the greatest needs of the adolescent is to be recognized as an individual. A Pennsylvania study, Retaining Reluctant Learners in ABE through the Student Intake Period (1993), found that the majority of students who drop out of Adult Basic Skills programs do so in the first three weeks of class. The most commonly cited reason for doing so was “lack of attention from teachers.” That reason actually may reflect another important need of adolescents, the need...
to be heard and taken seriously. Personal attention from the instructor, including listening to the problems and concerns of our youngest students, may be an important factor in their success or failure, and even in the choice to give the program a chance.

Adolescents also need a balance between structure and parenting on the one hand, and the freedom and flexibility to try new things on the other. We should not assume that our young students have outgrown the need for this balance. Providing a structured environment that allows for student exploration is likely to make many students feel more comfortable and allow them to feel less threatened in our classrooms. However, the instructor should watch for signs that students, particularly those who are not progressing satisfactorily, are uncomfortable with either the classroom structure or the freedom to explore. If either problem seems to be developing, instructors must make adjustments quickly so that students do not fall behind or quit before they get started.

A major need of adolescents, and one that is often lacking, is the need for good adult role models. Too often,
adolescents try to emulate famous personalities when all they know about those people are the glamorous sides of their lives. The need for a model, or a “hero,” explains the successes achieved by the “big brother” and “big sister” programs. The number of youth who have not found the appropriate model has increased with the divorce rate and the need for both parents to work more hours per week. It appears that our value systems have switched parents from the role of positive role models to the role of economic providers of “things.” The Adult Basic Skills instructor should be aware that our youngest students might still be seeking a desirable adult model that they can trust. While we cannot expect to be that model for every student, we should look for opportunities to help our students identify such role models.

Unfortunately, many youth today substitute peer approval and acceptance for an adult role model. All youth need the approval and acceptance of their peers, and are likely to be devastated when they do not get that approval. The need for approval is so strong that younger adolescents will do many things they would prefer not to do simply because of peer pressure. To wean themselves from this susceptibility to peer pressure requires maturity and attitude adjustments; those who have not identified a good adult role model are probably more likely to still be highly dependent on peer acceptance. As instructors, we should expect most of our younger students to be somewhat susceptible to peer pressure. If we can identify ways for our young students to find peer approval and acceptance in our classrooms, we may, at least partly, negate the detrimental effects that some students experience from errors in selection of friends.

Adolescents, however, need more than just a role model from the adults who are significant in their lives. They need to feel that adults respect them, and they are usually very adept at discerning when that is not the case. Young students need to be taken seriously by their parents, teachers, and any other adults who are significant to their lives. Recognizing their talents, abilities, and efforts go a
long way toward showing the respect and providing the attention that young students need. Remember that genuine, constructive compliments should outnumber criticisms, and are more productive.

Our youngest students who are most at risk include those who never find good role models, and those (perhaps for that reason) who become excessively dependent on others, usually their peers. Also at risk are adolescents who cannot find meaning in life, cannot cope with problems, and have a tendency to try to escape or withdraw from reality. They often depend on fate and luck rather than planning and working toward goals. They may lack self-control, and, perhaps for that reason, are likely to have poor listening skills. Many times they alienate others, particularly their teachers, by being argumentative, inflexible or compulsive and by doing more than their share of complaining. To the extent that their teachers resent these behavior patterns and react by devoting less time and attention to them, they suffer additional neglect, which is likely to cause them to accelerate negative behaviors.

Since many of our youngest students are still shaping their value systems, listen to them and react with positive responses whenever they are willing to talk (unless it creates a disruption for other students). Provide opportunities for these students to share their ideas and values with each other. Giving these students a chance to interact with others creates a sense of belonging which may enhance both retention and effort. Collaborative learning and other group projects provide excellent mechanisms for accomplishing these goals, as long as the groups are carefully chosen and their work is adequately monitored to insure cooperation.
Family and Social Complications

Kalata (1996) described several family and social factors that have made the childhood of today’s young students dramatically different from that of past generations, and from those experienced by most instructors in Adult Basic Skills programs. She points out that today’s students live in a world that moves faster than ever before, that “people today are being hit by more messages than anyone can attend to,” and that “everything new is quickly embraced and quickly discarded” (Kalata, 1996, 5). Kalata sees this constant change as a cause of what she considers to be the short attention span of today’s youth. She also considers family life and changes in parental employment patterns to be reasons today’s youth are “different.” Today, more families have working mothers, and even if the child’s parents are not divorced, it is likely that both parents work. In fact, the so-called economic boom in our society has led to a time when, in many families, both parents feel they must

<table>
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<th>Characteristics of At-Risk Students</th>
<th>Role of Adult Basic Skills Instructor</th>
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<td>Never find good role models.</td>
<td>Be a good role model.</td>
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<td>Excessively dependent on peers.</td>
<td>Provide opportunities for sharing ideas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cannot find meaning of life.</td>
<td>Provide opportunities for sharing values.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Try to escape/withdraw from reality.</td>
<td>Give chance to interact with others to create a sense of belonging.</td>
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<td>Depend on fate.</td>
<td>Help them plan and set goals.</td>
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<td>May lack self-control.</td>
<td>Listen to their concerns.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May have poor listening skills.</td>
<td>Offer positive responses.</td>
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work to “make ends meet.” Many people work more hours than their counterparts worked 20 or 30 years ago.

Since the divorce rate hit a high in the early 1980s, and “has leveled out at 208 per 10,000 women” over age 15, more of today’s youth have suffered the anxiety of “losing” a parent, and more have had the trauma of adjusting to a stepparent (Kalata, 1996, p. 5). Kalata quotes Ritchie as saying; “even the definition of a family has changed” in the minds of today’s youth (p 6).

The economic experience of today’s youth is highly varied. At a time when shoe and clothing manufacturers, as well as many other industries, have learned to profit by creating “name brands” which children must have to avoid social ostracism, many children have faced periods of deprivation when their parents divorced and their custodial parent faced tough times economically. At the same time, the “economic boom” has led to more people having sufficient disposable income, so material possessions have become a major status symbol. No longer is the “rich kid” frequently “left out” because he or she is labeled as “thinking they are better than everyone else.” Now, many school children have so many material possessions that those who do not are more likely to feel they belong to a lower social class.

Kalata quotes Holtz as saying, “Children who entered low quality child care as infants had the most difficulty with peers as preschoolers.” “These children start school being more easily distracted, less task-oriented, and more hostile”
Kalata also says, “While a mother may not be the only person able to supervise a young child, there seems to be evidence that the lack of a permanent caretaker has poor results” (p. 7). Certainly, our youngest students are more likely than ever before to have been placed in a day care environment at an early age and less likely to have been in a stable family where they received the “constant” care of their mothers. Kalata believes that this childhood experience, combined with the fact that more of today’s youth are likely to have been “latchkey” children, has led to a youth culture in which a “peer-dominated life” is much more common than ever before. These childhood experiences are very likely to have shaped a different set of social values than those with which Adult Basic Skills instructors were raised.

Television and movies are certainly exposing today’s youth to a different set of values, as is the Internet. How can we be surprised that our youngest students do not view education in the same way “we” do, or that they have developed different values than ours?

The variety of television, movie, and Internet experiences available to today’s youth has created an impatience with boredom and a demand for entertainment. Tabloid TV and many television talk shows, as well as popular entertainers and prime-time comedians, must find new and “shocking” ways to appeal to their audiences. Of course, the Adult Basic Skills instructor should not try to compete with those media for the students’ interest by adopting similar tactics, but we should recognize that our youngest students have a lifetime of experience of moving on to something new when they perceive events as “boring.” If this is a contributing reason to lack of success in the public school system, how can we expect our youngest students to enter our classrooms with a dramatically different attitude? Yet, instructors must expect and facilitate attitude changes in order for the classroom to compete for their interest and attention.

One recent change in students’ values is the emphasis on choosing a profession that promises wealth. This is
evidenced by a declining enrollment in the liberal arts on our college campuses. A vast majority of our students now enter programs that are technical and career oriented. Most of today’s students describe the value of education in economic terms.

Kalata quotes Moffatt as stating, “Freshmen students also typically said that their parents had voluntarily given them more freedom—later nighttime curfews, fewer questions about their private behavior” (Kalata, 1996, p. 10). The Adult Basic Skills instructor who takes a “demanding” approach may be a stark change compared to the experience of many of our youngest students. The instructor may be repeating an attitude against which some of our youngest students have already rebelled.

A final social change recognized by Kalata is the decline in respect for public school educators. Some of this change may be “deserved” in the sense that teaching in public schools is less likely than ever before to be the career goal of the better students. However, we seem to have entered a vicious spiral in which the decline in support for education has caused teacher’s salaries to be comparatively low, leading to less interest in the profession, further reducing the level of respect for educators. Students who had little or no respect for teachers while they were in the public schools, regardless of the reason for that lack of respect, cannot be expected to view their Adult Basic Skills instructors in a vastly different light. More than at any time in history, instructors must strive to earn the respect of their students.
Students from Dysfunctional Families

A traumatic childhood can exaggerate many of the problems encountered with our youngest students, and may be expressed as other problems. One type of dysfunctional family with somewhat predictable effects on the child occurs when one or both parents are alcoholics. Whether children of drug abusers suffer the same types of problems has not been adequately established, but some of the same problems are seen if one or both parents are addicted to a given drug. In the Adult Basic Skills classroom, the abused child may express some of the same characteristics as children of alcoholics.

Students who grew up with alcoholic parents often are afraid of expressing feelings and of losing control. They learned at an early age to suppress their feelings; consequently, they are not likely to be able to freely display emotions. They may even have learned to be afraid of all intense feelings, including those of joy.

The approval of others is very important to these students. This stems from a fear of conflict and an overdeveloped sense of responsibility. They may be insecure and need constant reassurance and approval. The fear of conflict can be so extreme that these students are intimidated by anyone with authority, and may even confuse assertiveness with anger. These problems may result from either verbal or physical abuse as a child. Adult Basic Skills instructors should be aware that their authority in the classroom can easily be misinterpreted as threatening or frightening by students with unpleasant childhood experiences.

Instructors should monitor their conduct and their students’
reactions to avoid creating a negative classroom atmosphere.

Students from dysfunctional families may always seem to be “on guard.” They are often unable to relax, “let go,” and have fun. The need to be in control of themselves is so strong that they have an unnatural fear of how others will react if they see them having fun. They are likely to be afraid of standing up for themselves, particularly with the instructor or other authority figures. They avoid conflicts because they feel guilty for not sacrificing their needs for the needs of others. These qualities may also apply to some students who are not from dysfunctional families, but have these attitudes due to their personal value systems.

Outside the classroom, these young students may be experiencing problems in relationships. While this is a possibility for any student, those from dysfunctional families are particularly susceptible to confusing love with pity or to having an inordinate fear of abandonment that leads them to sacrifice themselves in bad relationships. These students also have a higher probability of being in a bad relationship because they have difficulty being comfortable in an intimate relationship. They also tend to seek out other “victims” whose problems complicate their own.

We all have personal lives and personal problems, and any Adult Basic Skills student may be experiencing major stress outside the classrooms. The instructor’s job is to be as empathetic and supportive as possible without compromising the learning experience.
Introduction

Adult Basic Skills students have chosen to return to the classroom for a variety of reasons. There is also tremendous variation in their personalities and backgrounds. However, most of these students share a history of frustration with, and often failure in, their educational experiences.

Unfortunately, these students have too often been labeled as “dull” or “lazy.” Neither is true of the majority of Adult Basic Skills students. In this chapter, we are considering alternative explanations for a lack of success in earlier educational endeavors.
Learning Difficulties

In recent years, many students have been diagnosed with learning disabilities such as dyslexia or other reading problems. However, this does not mean that every student who enters the Adult Basic Skills classroom has been adequately tested and identified or is free of those problems. It is important to recognize the basic types of difficulties that are most often encountered, and when to refer students to a resource center for evaluation of potential learning problems.

Students with either visual processing problems or auditory processing problems face tremendous obstacles in most classrooms. Visual processing problems may be diagnosed as reading disabilities or may take the form of difficulty in remembering or forming abstractions from read material. Auditory processing problems may also appear to be a memory problem; students with auditory processing problems may not be able to follow a series of instructions because they cannot remember more than the first two or three steps. Sequencing difficulties can also occur with either visual or auditory processing problems, so that students may complete the steps of a process in an inappropriate order. A simple procedure to help both groups of students is to give instructions both orally and in writing. Each group of students is then able to process the information in the way that works best for them. However, since we often expect our students to gain much information from outside reading, those with visual processing problems are more...
likely to succeed if they have a “study-buddy,” work in a collaborative group, or get to hear class discussions. Those with auditory processing difficulties can also benefit from having a study-buddy or a tutor if the tutor has access to thorough class notes. Providing a written supplement to the material covered in class can be very beneficial to the student with auditory processing problems.

**Personality Types and Learning Styles**

The persistent mismatch of teaching styles with learning styles is a problem in today's schools. If a public school teacher can develop a teaching style that sufficiently matches the learning style of 60% to 75% of the students, that teacher can claim success. However, this leaves 25% to 40% of students failing to learn from those instructors. These students often move on to Adult Basic Skills classrooms.

Instructors cannot expect students to succeed in Adult Basic Skills course work just because they are “hearing it again.” Success should not be expected just because an Adult Basic Skills class uses a slower pace; nor is it likely to happen because the instructor does a better job of teaching in the same old way. As students mature, they tend to "buckle down." The greater effort may be helpful, but is unlikely to be the solution to all their learning difficulties. Instructors certainly cannot expect a year or two of maturity to make a major difference in our youngest students. Providing an appropriate learning environment for our youngest students requires understanding why they have not succeeded in the past and how their personalities and learning styles differ from those of their more successful peers.

Knowing learning styles research helps instructors to identify and address the temperaments of individuals and the way they learn most successfully. By
understanding the diversity of individuals and their interactions, an instructor can better address students’ needs. A fresh approach for meeting our youngest students’ needs may be all it takes to propel them into a brighter future.

There are many books and studies on personality types. One such book, *Please Understand Me II*, explores the two sides of personality: temperament and character. Think of temperament as that portion of personality with which people are born, and character as the portion people learn. Dr. Keirsey's four temperaments—Intuitive Thinkers, Intuitive Feelers, Sensing Judgers, and Sensing Perceivers—are based on how people communicate with each other and how they use tools to accomplish their goals. The next few paragraphs provide a closer look at each temperament and allow you to see how the strength of one might be stressful for another.

Recognizing the diversity in personality types and the effect that diversity can have on a specific teaching style allows the thoughtful instructor to adjust the classroom environment and adjust teaching strategies in ways that equalize the learning opportunities for all students. It is not necessary that the instructor evaluate each personality temperament. Perceptive instructors quickly learn to recognize signs of each temperament without administering formal tests. It is, however, important that Adult Basic Skills instructors be prepared to teach in a manner that is most effective considering the variety of personality types and
learning styles that usually occur in their classrooms. Studying the characteristics and stressors of each temperament helps instructors to identify their own temperaments and to predict the conflicts between their natural instructional styles and the preferred learning style of each student. The hallmark of a superior instructor is the willingness to make the effort to vary instructional techniques to address a variety of student needs.

All personality types may enter the Adult Basic Skills classroom, but the Sensing Perceivers temperament is most likely to be predominant, particularly among our youngest students. Why does this happen? Research indicates that 7% of high school teachers are Sensing Perceivers, compared to 40% of high school students. A major conflict occurs between Sensing Perceivers and Sensing Judgers; almost half of high school teachers are Sensing Judgers. This explains why many Sensing Perceiver students end up in the Adult Basic Skills classroom, where they often make up more than half of our youngest students.

A quick review of the strengths and stressors for Sensing Judgers’ and Sensing Perceivers’ temperaments shows why they do not function well in a student/teacher relationship. For example, a Sensing Judger teacher values rules, responsibility, and planning but is stressed and frustrated by the spontaneous risk-taking personality of the Sensing Perceiver. Conversely, a Sensing Perceiver student hates inflexibility and being told what to do, which is the natural instructional pattern of the Sensing Judger teacher.

To understand our youngest students, it is important to understand the real reason for their previous failures. Certainly, they may be irresponsible and self-centered, in comparison to more mature Adult Basic Skills students or generations that were raised with the so-called work ethic. However, writing them off as unmotivated is a misjudgment that practically guarantees their failure. Taking time to really understand each of them is highly desirable but difficult. The laudable goal of understanding each of their aspirations and frustrations cannot be met with the time available for
most Adult Basic Skills instructors, unless those instructors begin with a basic understanding of the fundamental reasons behind their students' past failures. Let's begin with a more thorough evaluation of the four temperaments defined by Keirsey, particularly of the Sensing Perceiver's temperament that is so prevalent in the Adult Basic Skills classroom.

Adult Basic Skills students, particularly the youngest students, are more likely to have the Sensing Perceiver personality. The hallmark of this personality is the need to feel free and spontaneous. They are playful and thrive in unstructured settings. To many of their instructors, their most frustrating feature is the joy these students obtain from working around the rules. The better instructors learn to appreciate their creativity and resourcefulness. The major conflicts between Sensing Perceiver students and most instructors arise from the students' disdain for planning, predictability, and rules, and their total resentment of being told what to do. They may also dislike timelines and paperwork. Structuring a classroom in which Sensing
Perceiver students are not turned off by planning, rules, paperwork, and schedules is one of the most challenging tasks an Adult Basic Skills instructor ever undertakes. However, trying to reorient the Sensing Perceiver student to function in a more structured environment, desirable though that seems, is an even more daunting task.

Of course, the Adult Basic Skills classroom contains some students of each of the four temperaments, and classroom composition varies. Although it is not possible to predict which other temperaments are represented in a small class, Adult Basic Skills classes often include Intuitive Thinkers. Because Intuitive Thinkers are analytical and intellectual, things that do not challenge their abilities and intelligence frustrate these students. They also dislike emotional or disorganized environments, and seeing others get “special treatment.” In other words, they likely are frustrated by attempts to cater to Sensing Perceiver students. Since Intuitive Thinkers like to argue and debate, and since they like to pursue things on an intellectual level, it is natural for Sensing Perceiver students to resent them. This conflict, and the tendency of Intuitive Thinker students to

Like exploring new ideas, seeking new knowledge, and problem solving. They learn because they love to learn!
become frustrated with things they perceive as illogical, explains why they may find their way to an Adult Basic Skills classroom. Avoiding the potential conflict between Sensing Perceiver and Intuitive Thinker students is a formidable challenge for any instructor. The Adult Basic Skills instructor also must be keenly aware that being treated as incompetent is the number one source of stress for the Intuitive Thinker student.

Intuitive Feelers usually succeed in school because they want to please others and they like to learn. However, they may not have succeeded in their previous education environment if it lacked harmony, had too much conflict, or if they were treated impersonally. For example, an Intuitive Feeler may become overstressed because the environment was too competitive since they prefer cooperation. They want to be understood and can become upset when their efforts are not understood or appreciated. They thrive on personal attention and love to communicate. Since Intuitive Feelers look for the potential in others, they are likely to value opportunities to participate in collaborative learning,
and they often try to help other class members. When recognized, Intuitive Feeler students can be a valuable resource in the Adult Basic Skills classroom.

Sensing Judgers may be the least likely to be represented in the Adult Basic Skills classroom because their personalities coincide with the system and with most high school instructors. Their strengths are organization, responsibility, planning, and being prepared for whatever comes their way. They become frustrated if things seem to get out of control, with change or inconsistency, or when people do not take things seriously. Failure by a Sensing Judger is most likely the result of a lack of adequate guidelines, goals, and routines. They prefer organized material presented in a logical sequence. The Adult Basic Skills instructor of a different temperament needs to be cognizant of these qualities.
Effects of Negative Experiences

Temperament and learning-style differences are only two of many circumstances that may put a student at a competitive disadvantage; others include health problems, social adjustment problems, and dysfunctional families. Although the major reason for previous failures by many Adult Basic Skills students is likely to be the mismatch of teaching and learning styles, other students may have fallen victim to the “bell curve.” Regardless of the reason for being on the wrong side of the bell curve, students “learn” that they are “below average students.” Once that becomes their self-image, the median becomes a barrier that, psychologically, they are unable to transcend. Changing that negative self-image must be a major goal of the Adult Basic Skills instructor; however, it is a painfully slow process. One way to address self-image problems is to erase the bell curve and thus avoid ranking students. Student success must be measured in terms of gains and competencies, not in terms of student comparisons.

Many students are the product of “tracking” and were labeled as inferior by that system. In fact, even when students are placed into the wrong “track,” that placement tends to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. No matter how schools identify their different tracks, students quickly decipher the code and label the “dummy” group. Years of being associated with the "dummy" group create a negative self-image, which may be overcome only by a very long string of successes. The perceptive instructor identifies ways to permit success, and to build on each success with greater successes.
successes. This process can be augmented by what one researcher describes as “turning liabilities into assets.” For example, the instructor can adjust her or his vocabulary, and perhaps attitudes, by visualizing and describing students as “carefree” rather than “irresponsible,” “flexible” rather than “unpredictable,” “persistent” rather than “stubborn,” and “eager” rather than “impatient.” Actually, many of the descriptions traditional instructors now regard as negative are admired by many students in a high school setting. Joining in that admiration of the at-risk students’ major qualities resolves much of the traditional “us versus them” conflict. Only after that occurs can students build greater self-esteem because they see themselves as “worthy” and “fitting in.”

Remember, no one can change another person who does not want to change. Showing students that you value who they are may just cause them to strive to become better at being who they are. What a great outcome! Be aware that they have worked hard at developing and defending their attitudes, behavior, and personality. It is very likely that they have been badgered to change by adults who have spent far more time with them than you. Criticism invariably makes them defensive; however, praise and encouragement may lead to a desire to improve just to please themselves.
What Students Have Told Us

When we interviewed a small group of students at Central Carolina Community College, two of those students mentioned their public school’s unwillingness to make accommodations when they missed many classes. Another student was living on her own and had taken a full-time job to support herself. She said that she could not fit a work schedule around a public school schedule. Personal and social problems were a major reason these and many other students left the public schools.

Another student said she had “learning disabilities,” for which the public schools could not provide the learning environment that she needed. She spoke of being treated in two different, but equally frustrating, ways. Sometimes she felt that her public school teachers were treating her like she “was stupid.” She reported that other teachers would say, “You are so smart; you could do so much if you would just apply yourself.” She said that no accommodations were made for her difficulties with learning.

One student admitted that he just did not try and had missed a lot of school. He said he only went to public school to begin his senior year so he could play sports; when he became ineligible, he dropped out. Although his reason for wanting to go to public school was social/sports, most of the other students we interviewed cited social and/or family problems as major factors leading them to decide to drop out of the public schools. They needed to be accepted by their peers, and they did not feel that was happening to their satisfaction in the public school system. Even more prevalent was the expression of need for more personal attention from the teachers than they received in public schools.
Introduction

The major role of any instructor is to function as a manager of learning activities. Since most instruction takes place in the classroom, most instructors are, of necessity, classroom managers. Without effective classroom management, there is little hope learning will occur. This is especially true when students are insecure about their own abilities, as is the case for most Adult Basic Skills students.

Many Adult Basic Skills students are insecure about their ability to learn and succeed in basic skills classes. Older students are more likely to become more insecure when placed in the classroom with younger students. Younger students are insecure if a recent history of failure is fresh on
their minds. Effective classroom management is essential if insecure students are going to have a chance to succeed.

Characteristics of At-Risk Students

Probably the most prevalent problem plaguing Adult Basic Skills students is the lack of self-esteem and self-confidence. They have had years of experience of feeling inferior, and those came at the most vulnerable of ages. Although it is probably safe to assume that all of our youngest students suffer, at least to some extent, from this problem, instructors should also be skilled at recognizing the symptoms so they can offer special guidance to students who need it most. Those symptoms include relying on others to explain and re-explain problems and events, being unusually confused if the expectations are changed, and repeating problem behaviors. Relying too much on others and seeming to be unclear about cause and effect are also particularly good indicators of this problem. Students with low self-esteem feel weak and worthless, and probably lack positive role models. Those with low self-confidence may be conditioned for failure to the point that they do not do things correctly simply because they are sure they cannot do things right, so they stop before they succeed or change their work when it is correct.

The problem just described is often associated with feeling unimportant and insignificant. Since these students do not feel needed or wanted, they are unlikely to contribute during class or group work. They are probably not accustomed to receiving any praise or recognition for their
accomplishments. Finding good things to say about them, unless they become overly embarrassed, allows them to start building self-esteem through repeated positive reinforcement. If these students are involved in class, their futures can be positively changed; if they continue to be uninvolved, there is a substantial risk that they will quickly withdraw from the class.

Students who feel no control over their lives and futures are at risk. They feel hopeless and perhaps victimized. They tend to see few options for themselves. Since they feel powerless to make a change, they are not good at coping with the unexpected. They tend to be overly dependent on others because they feel that others control their lives. Students most severely affected by this problem might benefit from counseling.

Low self-esteem is also associated with a lack of self-discipline and self-control. These students have the most difficulty expressing their feelings and may have difficulty selecting behaviors that are appropriate to those feelings. They usually have trouble dealing with pressure or stress and may overreact when they feel threatened. They may create distractions, so they may be viewed as behavioral problems because they do not understand limits and consequences. These problems put students at risk. Most instructors tend to avoid interactions with them, which decreases their chances of success.

Poor communication skills are another indicator of at-risk students. In addition to being poor listeners, these students are argumentative and reject the viewpoints of others. They may be dishonest and have difficulty understanding the feelings and needs of fellow students. Other students may not want to work with them because it is difficult to get them to

At-risk students need to feel important and included.
cooperate. These students may lack the verbal skills to exchange ideas effectively, so other students try to avoid working with them. Making at-risk students feel important and included can be especially challenging, but may be necessary to help them succeed rather than continue a pattern of failure.

Of course, there are other, more obvious indicators that the student is a potential dropout. Most instructors would identify poor attendance, infrequent preparation, and lack of attention in class as indicators that a student is having, or will have, problems completing the course successfully. The symptoms described above may be the only way to identify most at-risk students before they quit, since we have previously indicated that most of the students who withdraw from the program do so during the first three weeks of class. Students who show symptoms of the problems described earlier in this section may be equally at risk of failure as those with the more obvious problems of poor attendance and failure to apply themselves.

Needs of At-Risk Students

The structured classroom environment may be a major turn-off for many at-risk students. Their previous difficulties with structured environments often are the primary reason they did not do well in the elementary or high school experience. This may also be the reason they have not found satisfying and rewarding occupations. The instructor should be prepared for surprises from these students, and one can only be prepared by being flexible. Flexibility and variety are much more likely to spark the interest and maintain the attention of at-risk students than are structure and routine.
Even though they are working in a less rigid environment, at-risk students need to learn to take responsibility for their own actions. Some students are at risk because they were never forced, or never learned, to take responsibility. It is possible to have a flexible learning environment, which allows students freedom to make choices, without sacrificing standards and consequences. Expectations and desired outcomes need to be made clear, as should the positive and negative consequences of meeting or failing to meet those standards.

At-risk students should be expected to respect the rights of other students and not be allowed to detract from the opportunities for others to learn. For some students, this may require a modification of a fairly self-centered personality. Certainly, the class should not be disrupted by threatening behaviors, or by any other inappropriate behaviors. If the instructor chooses to allow students to come to class late, there should be the expectation that the student will not create a scene or demand that the instructor take time from other students to help them catch up. While missing class may be tolerated by some instructors, missing group projects or otherwise failing to do their part in collaborative learning efforts should not be considered to be in the realm of “flexibility.” Many instructors have the attitude that students should not be allowed to attend less regularly than would be expected at their probable future employment. Each instructor has to make a judgment regarding the number of rules and policies that make the course so structured that some at-risk students are destined to fail.
before they ever have a chance to learn, and, hopefully, change their philosophies.

Perhaps the greatest need of many at-risk students is individualized instruction. Even though that may not be possible, the instructor should look for ways to provide personal attention and positive reinforcement to those students. The instructor should provide some of that attention. One should also look for ways to supplement that attention with interactions among students. If tutoring services are available, they should be utilized.

Difficult Students

Some behaviors are obviously unacceptable to everyone, but the Adult Basic Skills instructor may find that the youngest students have different opinions regarding which behaviors are acceptable and which are not. As the average parent becomes more permissive and as family time in a structured environment decreases, instructors can expect that younger students have had fewer opportunities to learn respect for traditional rules and values. An obvious example is the number of students that now expect, and in fact demand, the right to wear baseball caps in the classroom; for teachers who grew up in a different time, that practice is hard to accept. There are certainly more disruptive behaviors that the instructor and other class members may find unacceptable. Conversing during class can be a major distraction for some students, although some regular conversationalists seem oblivious to the possibility that they might be interfering with someone else’s ability to keep up with class instruction. Unfortunately, many of the younger students are not likely to be swayed by arguments such as showing respect for the instructor. Having respect for others is not a courtesy that many were ever taught to practice.
Remember that a substantial number of high school dropouts did not participate in school clubs or sports; their social life was more likely to include drug experimentation and other illegal activities. Hence, their attitudes toward the value of conformity are often quite divergent from the attitudes of their teachers. A higher percentage of dropouts had parents with little or no involvement in their education. Therefore, the young student in the Adult Basic Skills classroom has had little exposure to a philosophy of regard for the value of participation as a component of education.

Besides being rude and disruptive, students can be classroom management problems because they interfere with the class by not being dependable in attendance or group work. Some of the youngest students, and possibly a few older students, have not developed a value system that includes honoring commitments. “Giving your word” does not have the same meaning that it did to previous generations. In saying this, the authors realize that some instructors may be young enough to resent hearing anything else about the “good old days,” and we recognize that our youngest students certainly do not want to hear any such references. However, for the benefit of those readers who have a little more experience, today’s youth are less likely to think that just saying they will do something constitutes a commitment rather than a possibility. When this is expressed by failure to complete assignments, lack of participation in or failure to complete their responsibilities to group projects, or poor attendance, it definitely becomes a classroom management problem.

Through exposure to computers, the Internet, MTV and other music videos, and several other experiences
available to children in recent years, younger students have learned to think about several things at the same time, or at least to switch quickly and easily from one thought topic to another. In the classroom, this may cause the instructor and some other class members to view a student as unpredictable or inconsistent. Inconsistency and unpredictability are two of the more common criticisms of today’s youngest students. To avoid alienating, or at least intimidating, those students through criticism, instructors need to be flexible enough to find value in new directions while reinforcing the major themes being discussed in that class.

Unfortunately, our youngest students sometimes hide a learning difficulty out of fear of losing some of the respect of their fellow students. Many young students may need peer approval or the respect of an older adult to the extent that they hide problems due to the (hopefully) incorrect belief that revealing learning difficulties detracts from the respect that others have for them. Instructors need to take the time to evaluate the reasons students are having problems, and not be too quick to blame a lack of interest or self-discipline.

When students demand to know why they need to learn something, the instructor can choose to treat this demand as a disruption or an annoyance, or as an opportunity. One of the expectations of today’s youth is to know the potential application of knowledge before they take time to bother to learn it. Perhaps this is not surprising, considering how much information is being made available
to them, and how they are constantly required to select a focus from the many available inputs. Surfing the net certainly requires those kinds of decisions. Even if the instructor has been able to rely on the respect and patience of older students in the past, older students will also learn more if the instructor is able to demonstrate potential applications of each topic. Since doing so is beneficial for students of all ages, it is obviously something the instructor should incorporate into instruction.

When any of these behaviors becomes a distraction for other students or interferes with their learning, it is time to take action. It is very important that whatever action the instructor takes draws as little attention to the student as possible. Embarrassing any student is nonproductive and can be especially devastating for the more at-risk students. One or more private discussions with the problem student are obviously the preferred action, and such discussions should include identification of positive as well as negative student characteristics.

**Relating to Younger Students**

Relating to the youngest students requires personal attention; failing to give it leaves them alienated and uninspired. Many crave positive interaction with adults, especially adult role models, and most respond positively to a sincere interest in their lives. Of all the options, this may be the easiest and most effective strategy for reducing the attrition rate.

Our youngest students expect to be stimulated. This is not surprising considering the variety of stimulating activities from which they choose almost on a daily basis. They are accustomed to being entertained or excited, and very few things are as “awful” as being bored. They do not like to spend much time doing one thing, but respond better to projects on which they can quickly demonstrate abilities.
and success. The worst option is work that is both boring and “busy work” rather than “real work.”

To grab the attention of the youngest students, give them “cutting edge” information. They already have access to much of this type of information, and most have learned to seek it out. When the class material is the same “old” stuff they heard last year, or three years ago, they will probably react to it in the same “old” way they did when they failed to learn it the first time. Historical information must be presented very carefully, because they are suspect of anything that sounds like the “good old days.”

Instructors should think carefully before asking young students to express emotions. Even the best young students are likely to find emotions threatening, and those who come to the Adult Basic Skills classroom may be even more intimidated. Some of the students who grew up in dysfunctional families will be most threatened by emotions. In other words, those students may be the most fragile. Our younger students have grown up in a culture that represses, or at least internalizes, emotions. Many are suspect of, and intimidated by, emotional displays, particularly by anyone older or in the presence of anyone of a different age group. They have so little practice at expressing them that they often do not know how to express emotions appropriately.
To appeal to our youngest students, emphasize options. While the older students in the class may know how to set definite goals, most of today’s youth believe in “keeping their options open.” They will probably react well to this phrase, and this theme.

In general, younger students like honesty, feedback, a lot of visuals, and instructors who “speak their language.” Of course, instructors need to be careful about trying to “be cool” and failing miserably. It is wise to be judicious in the use of current expressions and jargon in the classroom.

Many of our younger students (16 to 19 years old) have life experiences and beliefs that are similar to those of people described as “Generation X” (20 to 30 years old). “Generation X” students like to do what Caudron (1997) calls “parallel thinking.” That is, they like to “jump around” rather than go step by step, and many like to focus on multiple ideas at once. Even if one presents material in a logical sequence, in deference to the knowledge that older students prefer logical sequencing, look for ways to address this “need” of the younger students.

Most younger students respond well to being given a sense of control over their own learning. A perception that they are being “force-fed” probably will result in many younger students losing interest. Be honest, because they are good at identifying phonies. Show flexibility by soliciting input from the students regarding course structure, learning methods, and project options.

Caudron (1997) says that “Generation X” has a reputation for being lazy, disloyal, and arrogant, and for having short attention spans. She labels these perceptions as myths and presents
counterarguments for each. She points out that more of them think that hard work is the key to success (74%) than do Americans over age 50 (66%). She labels “Generation X” as “self-building” and “self-reliant” and describes them as having a different learning style rather than a short attention span. Our youngest students are likely to resent any reference to their reputed characteristics, and any other disparaging remarks about their generation.

Caudron lists four keys to communicating with “Generation X” (in addition to not calling them by that name). Those keys are “encourage, build, challenge, and communicate” (Cauldron, 1997).

Mixing Younger and Older Students

Adult Basic Skills instructors often discuss the problems associated with the influx of younger students (Nelson, 1999). Since this is a trend that will probably continue, we suggest you look for the potential for positive outcomes, rather than complain about the negatives.

Adults have the capacity to help and encourage other adult students; in fact, many students respond better to guidance from other students than to direction from the instructor. In collaborative learning, students can model problem-solving techniques that may then be adopted by other students. True collaborative learning fosters shared responsibility for all group members that leads to satisfactory progress. Rewards can take the form of self-satisfaction, or the instructor may find ways to recognize superior group performance.

Collaborative groups are especially effective tools in the struggle to counter and correct math anxiety. Students can build self-confidence from successful problem-solving activities and assignment completion through group efforts. Those students who suffer the greatest degree of math anxiety can avoid the “spotlight” as they develop their own
skills. Alternate learning opportunities provided by various problem-solving approaches portrayed in group discussions enhance success. The emotional support and academic assistance provided by the group can be especially important for adult students.

When building groups, the instructor should avoid the perception that older students are invariably there to assist younger students. It should be made clear that younger students have an equal role within the learning environment. For instance, it is often appropriate to use young students as leaders for technology or computer projects. However, it is important to remember that younger students may be too advanced in computer usage to tolerate the computer-illiterate student of any age.

The challenge for the instructor is to form the most effective learning environments for all group members. The instructor’s choice of exercises for group activities and timely guidance can have major effects on collaborative learning groups. Of course, there is a need for instructor vigilance to help keep the increasing number of younger students from making older students feel uncomfortable. In fact, instructors need to be particularly careful that older students do not drop out because they are afraid to compete with younger students, or because they just do not like the way younger students behave in the classroom. Creating learning partnerships and alliances that make both younger and older students feel valued can go a long way toward meeting that goal (Provenmire, 1999).
Introduction

Nelson (1999) reports that Adult Basic Skills instructors are likely to vent their frustrations with the influx of younger students by making statements such as, “I didn’t sign on to work with kids. I came here to work with adults.” Experienced instructors may be particularly frustrated when the tried and true teaching techniques they have developed over a number of years fail to resonate with the younger students who seem to be invading their classrooms.

Good instructors often despair that students spend too much time complaining about circumstances that interfere with their effectiveness rather than channeling that energy into addressing the issues at hand. Turning that
philosophy back to their own frustrations with younger students is equally beneficial for instructors.

**Student Motivation**

Motivated students employ strategies that demand effort and require the processing of detailed information. Lumsden (1994) emphasizes the importance of a supportive and caring classroom environment as essential to student motivation. Renchler states, “Research in educational settings indicates that many of our present pedagogical practices effectively crush most students’ desire to learn” (1992, p. 1). Horn believes that teachers should use “creative teaching techniques and a variety of classroom structures to appeal to today’s adolescents” (1991, p. 17). Maehr described four components that figure prominently in motivation for learning: self-identity, a sense of autonomy and responsibility, a sense of direction, and feeling competent. Certainly our Adult Basic Skills students need to build confidence in their abilities, and a primary function of the instructor is to guide them in doing so (1982). Creating a classroom environment in which students feel respected and are encouraged to explore has already been mentioned as a way to improve retention and learning. Motivating our youngest students to want to learn is a formidable but essential task. Creating a learning environment that sparks interest and does not remind students of previous failures has multiple benefits, including maintaining students’ interest and providing an atmosphere more conducive to developing self-confidence.

Today’s youth need to learn to take responsibility for themselves and their own actions. An instructor can provide opportunities for young students to take responsibility by giving them logical and reasonable choices, and, where appropriate, by involving them in decision making about the structure of the course. Instructors should carefully analyze
the control level in the classroom and provide sufficient flexibility and freedom of choice to students, particularly their youngest students.

Divergent Learning Styles

The first step in addressing the problems created by divergent learning styles, as well as divergent personalities and temperaments, in the Adult Basic Skills classroom is to recognize their existence. Awareness of how frequently the strength of one temperament is the stressor for another certainly indicates that teaching styles must be varied if all Adult Basic Skills students are to realize their full potential. We suggest the following guidelines be used as a focus for structuring classroom approaches that provide variability.
Make a Paradigm Shift

To work successfully with younger students in Adult Basic Skills, an instructor might need to shift paradigms. Letting go of the traditional “control paradigm” permits the instructor to encourage rather than attempting to control students. Allow young students to capitalize on their strengths.

Offer a Choice

Consider the amount of control you try to exert. Teens need guidance but they also need opportunities to choose. Many, in fact most, younger students, just by virtue of being young, resent being told what to do. Resentment interferes with a student’s performance, especially if the instructor follows the traditional “do what I say” pattern. In Chapter 1, reference is made to the threat that this may represent to students from dysfunctional families. Offering students choices allows their learning to be self-motivated and directed.

Motivate Learning

Remember that for our youngest students learning may not be “its own reward.” To motivate learning, it may be necessary to allow students to do something that is both “fun” and “relevant to their needs.” In fact, reference was made to this tendency in Chapter 3. Most Adult Basic Skills students need to be able to visualize the payoff for their efforts.
Offer Supportive Relationships

At-risk students, especially the younger ones, need to develop supportive relationships. Their success is so tied to this need that the instructor must take a proactive role in assisting with the development of those relationships, both with other students and with the instructor. It is particularly important that a positive and supportive relationship is built between the instructor and the student. This does not require a time-consuming effort. Greetings, smiles, and genuine caring can accomplish this relationship. It is important that instructors project an open and caring persona for students to think of them as someone in whom they can confide and not fear betrayal. Treat the students as individuals. This is especially important for those with the Intuitive Feeler temperament, but it inspires all students.

Encourage Peer Interactions

Younger students need to be appreciated and respected by adults, but a far more significant need is to be respected and accepted by peers. They need to feel like they belong. Peer pressure can be channeled to produce positive rather than negative effect. Feeling like they belong is important to participation and retention.

Provide Role Models

Our youngest students need someone to believe in, and they need role models. Help them find models in educators and in others by noting good peer examples.
Need to Believe in Themselves

The need to believe in themselves is highly important for most Adult Basic Skills students because they have so much experience at failing. Helping them achieve this goal is a worthy, but difficult, objective.

Build Resiliency

Help students build resiliency by instilling positive and hopeful attitudes. Help them identify with their strengths, not with their deficiencies. Our youngest students need to feel that they are in charge of their own lives and that their choices are their own. As students become more resilient, they are more likely to make good choices and less likely to blame others when things go wrong. Teach them that “being happy” is a choice. Help them learn to look at situations in terms of “what they can do about the situation,” not in terms of “what they cannot control.”

Offer Variety

Today’s youth have grown up in an environment that tends to decrease their attention spans and increase their impatience with boredom. Few at-risk students learn from lecture; for many, it only brings back bitter memories and
negative attitudes. By offering a variety of teaching and learning techniques, the instructor heightens students’ attention. Appropriate techniques include role-playing, journal writing, case studies, poems, analogies, games, and group discussions.

Consider Spontaneity

Spontaneity can touch many students in your classroom. Recall the positive qualities of a good instructor: planning, organization, and step-by-step instruction. These are not always considered positive qualities by students. Some students thrive on spontaneity and creativity in their learning environment. Structuring the learning environment around creativity and hands-on projects actually engages many younger students in learning.

Create an Accepting Classroom

The ideal classroom fosters an attitude that a mistake is an opportunity to learn. This learning atmosphere alleviates much of the anxiety that many younger students bring to the classroom. Plan ways for students to experiment and to experience success. Experiencing success early in their new educational setting is especially important. As their self-image improves, they achieve more and greater successes. When possible, avoid time limits. Capitalize on students' strengths. Remember that our younger students usually have greater computer skills and superior study skills in comparison to older students.
Create a Positive Atmosphere

Take steps to create a learning environment free of rudeness, disrespect, and criticism. Acting superior, casting blame, making fun of someone, and criticizing any aspect of a student’s behavior cannot be tolerated. The instructor must personify positive attitudes and encourage all students to do the same.

Anticipate Problems

Anticipating problems, both in learning and in creating an orderly learning environment, allows the Adult Basic Skills instructor to detect them at an early stage. Defuse problems at the lowest level, so they interfere less with teaching and learning. Solving problems early also prevents student resentment toward learning and the classroom environment. In our youngest students, such resentment can happen quickly and can be devastating to their learning progress.

Encourage Student Interaction and Personal Expression

A national survey conducted in 1989 and 1990 by Phi Delta Kappa and analyzed by George and Antes, identified individualized instruction as the most frequently cited characteristic of a successful instructional program for at-risk students. Even if an instructor cannot provide true individualized instruction, there are many ways the instructor can show students that they are cared about as individuals, and that their education is important. The personal touch can turn many negative attitudes into dedicated efforts.
Genuine concern and the personal touch are vital to retention. Earlier we referred to research that shows that the first three weeks are the critical period for student retention. Therefore, it is very important to establish comfortable interactions early in the course. Research also indicates that students categorized as “reluctant learners” enter the classroom with higher expectations and more faith in the educational system. It is perhaps for this reason that these students are most likely to drop out, since they tend to become disillusioned more quickly. The high expectations and greater faith in education may cause these students to appear less at risk in the first few classes. Instructors must get to know students as quickly as possible and provide personal attention as required by each learning style.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

Adult students need to perceive a change in their performance. This is especially true of those young students who have had little success in previous educational settings. They are not able to succeed by merely changing their perceptions of their abilities; students must also experience success. As they experience success, they build self-confidence.

Adult students need to be encouraged to set goals and develop motivation, and to revisit their goals often. Adult students should be allowed to search for meaning and discover relationships between prior competence and new learning.

The ability to put new concepts into long-term memory is affected by the learning environment, the intensity of learning, and the perception of importance by the learner. This is especially true for adult students. Remember that the development of long-term memory is made possible by frequent application and practice.
Adult students, especially our youngest students, like to set their own learning pace. The success rate is significantly enhanced when learning is adjusted to the student’s desired pace.

It is important to get young students involved in the course. Instructors should make use of current educational theory to select activities that make learning an active process. Activities, personal journals, and techniques to inspire reflection are some of the ways that instructors can involve students in the learning process.

Feedback should be specific and reflect how well students perform. Immediate feedback is essential for correcting conceptual errors and for confidence building. Recognition should accompany that feedback; the result is reinforcement of new learning.

Adults who believe they can handle a situation are challenged to do so; those who do not have that confidence are likely to feel threatened rather than challenged. Many Adult Basic Skills students have negative experiences that cause them, at least subconsciously, to be threatened by the classroom environment. Often, they had negative experiences because their previous school experience seemed to associate intelligence with the quick recall of facts; both test and classroom failures may have created a cycle of failure.

Our youngest students are in Adult Basic Skills classes because they recognize a need, but they are likely to require help to process the information provided in those classes. Instructors are often tempted to show how much they know, and often feel pressured to keep up with a planned schedule. However, giving more information than the student can process, or at least knows how to, is
counterproductive. Instructors need to know how students of the various learning styles process information and how to provide assistance for meeting the demands of each style.

What Students Have Told Us

When we asked a group of Central Carolina Community College students to explain the difference between their current and previous educational experiences, their instructor, Carlene Dixon, was always cited as a major difference. Students seemed to credit her sincere concern for their welfare, and the personal attention she gives them as a source of hope. They credit her for giving them a chance to reach their educational goals. These interviews made it apparent that, at least for our youngest students, the teacher makes a world of difference.

These students seem to be goal oriented. They may have had the same, or equally ambitious, goals when they were in the public schools, but they apparently felt the Adult Basic Skills experience would help them achieve those goals.

More than one student spoke of the extent of learning they were able to achieve with the personal guidance they received in the classroom. One student stated that getting to focus on two subjects rather than six was a major factor in his success. He spoke of the focus that allowed the complete formation of concepts rather than getting information fragments as he did in public school. He also said they were
able to do more in class. If there was homework, it was not so intimidating because there “were two things to do rather than six.” Perhaps the students that enter our programs get overwhelmed with having too many subjects and do not really think about any of them. Perhaps they are able to more clearly focus when they can direct their thoughts and efforts to a few subject areas.

Making the subject matter relevant and practical seems to be important, at least for most of the younger students that were interviewed. One student said that public school senior English had too much history, but here he was learning how to write in ways that would help him later in life. Another student expressed great pride in all the things she had written in her adult high school English course. A heavy workload seemed to be acceptable as long as the student understood that it had a practical purpose. Most importantly, these students wanted personal attention throughout the process. The fact that their instructors were there to provide help and guidance at any time seemed to be critical to their current success.

One student reported asking a public school teacher for help, only to be told, “If you had read the assignment you would have understood how to do it.” Another student said he understood that public school teachers could not provide personal attention when they had six classes of 30 students each, but “here the teachers really try to get to know you.”

Three students described how great it was to know and like the other students. Perhaps it is natural for these students to form a bond with those whose public school experience is similar to their own. Perhaps the smaller class size is equally important. Whatever the reason, the sense of belonging that these students get from their instructors and classmates has a major impact on their success in the program. One interviewee said she did not need to be in public school because her self-esteem did not need any more bashing. Structuring a learning environment that can provide personal attention, a sense of acceptance, and a
sense of satisfaction with one’s abilities and accomplishments seems to be the secret to teaching our youngest students.

The “sense of belonging” that younger students get from their instructors and classmates has a major impact on their success in the ABS program.
Chapter 6
Professional Development Plans

Introduction

This chapter presents plans for five complete research-based professional development activities. Each plan can be presented in one workshop. However each of these five plans is divided into sections, thus providing the Adult Basic Skills training facilitator a framework for dividing each into a number of smaller professional development activities that can be adapted to a variety of training environments.

These professional development plans emphasize the major themes of this training manual. The temperaments described in Chapter 3 are incorporated into the plan that
relates personalities to teaching and learning. Using student case histories, participants gain a better understanding of the various learning styles that result from different personality styles. The ideas on how to deal with our youngest students in Chapter 4 are the basis for a plan for developing classroom management styles and a plan for dealing with discipline in the classroom. The attitudes, experiences, and abilities of young students form the research-based background for the professional development plan for realistic goal setting. The professional development plan entitled “Yesterday and Today” is designed to help Adult Basic Skills instructors understand and adapt to their changing classroom composition.

Each professional development plan includes book, articles and Internet resources for those who want additional reading and research. Each plan has a complete set of handouts, although the Adult Basic Skills training facilitator is encouraged to modify those handouts to suit specific needs. Although each plan is presented in a complete form, our goal is to present adaptable plans to encourage modification and tailoring to allow you to best meet your training needs.
Chapter 6: Professional Development Plans

Yesterday and Today

Overview

Understanding the attitudes and philosophies of our younger students is an essential step in learning to relate to them and the challenges they present. Even though every instructor was once a teenager, our teenage experiences are different and varied. Even teens that grow up together experience different fears and problems, and they develop vastly different goals and values. As the world changes, these differences are confounded. Exposure to different music and lyrics, different temptations, different recreational activities, different educational philosophies, and different parental values creates attitudes and behaviors that make understanding our youngest students a challenging task.

To have any hope of viewing situations from the viewpoint of young students, the Adult Basic Skills instructor must make a concerted effort to comprehend the differences between the culture when they were teens and today's teen culture. They must also remember the variety that exists within any culture. The goal of this activity is to provide a format for and practice with this enormous task.
Objectives

The participants will

- gain more appreciation for the differences between the background and experiences of young students and those of the instructor;
- gain more appreciation for the variety of attitudes and behaviors of young students; and
- increase their understanding of young students.

Competencies

The participants will

- know how to relate to the attitudes and philosophies of young students;
- understand how to relate better to their young students;
- know concerns and fears of both the instructors and younger students;
- know how society has changed and how it has affected young students of each generation; and
- know problems that affect many young students no matter when they grew up and other problems or concerns that can be specific to the various generations.

Time

2–4 hours

“I never felt that there was anything enviable in youth. I cannot recall that any of us, as youths, admired our condition to excess or had a desire to prolong it.”

Bernard Berenson
Materials & Equipment

Flip chart or white board
Markers
Room with tables arranged to encourage interaction among participants
A tape or video of the song, *We Didn’t Start the Fire*, and a way to play it. The lyrics are included after the handouts.

Handouts

Changes
Concerns & Fears
Thinking Back
**Procedure**

Introduce the workshop with brief statements about the importance of understanding the attitudes of young students.

Suggest that an essential step in being able to relate to their problems is to practice viewing things from the young students' perspective.

Divide participants into small groups. Distribute the “Changes” handout. Ask each group to complete the “Changes” handout. Ask groups to present the results and make notes on a flip chart or white board.

Play the song *We Didn’t Start the Fire* while participants complete the “Changes” handout. It will help to “jog” memories of some of the participants’ teenage years.

Distribute the “Concerns & Fears” handout. Ask each group to complete the “Concerns & Fears” handout. Ask groups to present the results and make notes on a flip chart or whiteboard. See “Discussion” section for suggestions.

Ask participants to return to their individual seats. Distribute the “Thinking Back” handout. Ask participants to be honest in answering the questions. Let participants know they may keep their answers confidential. Ask them to share only what they are comfortable sharing. See “Discussion” section for suggestions.


Discussion

After participants have had time to complete the “Changes” and the “Concerns & Fears” handout, ask participants whether today’s teens have the same concerns and fears as they did as teens in light of how the world has changed. List responses on a flip chart or whiteboard. Discuss the similarities and differences.

Listen to the song “We Didn’t Start the Fire” and discuss the lyrics. This song relates to events in history from the 50s, 60s and 70s. Discuss how these events may have influenced our world today, thus influencing our younger students.

After participants have had time to complete the “Thinking Back” handout ask them to share with the group how the problems and concerns of today’s teens are similar or different from their own experiences as teenagers. List responses on a flip chart or white board. Discuss the similarities and differences.
Chapter 6: Professional Development Plans

Wrap Up

Based on the results of the discussion, develop (with the participants) a summary statement that emphasizes the wide diversity among teens of any time period, and how the differences among teens are magnified by living in the different cultures that result from a changing world.

Ask the participants to take the “Thinking Back” worksheet home, and to reflect on how their results and the summaries presented by other participants can help them to understand their youngest students.

Evaluation

“How different from the present was the youth of earlier days.”

Ovid, AD 15

Immediately after the workshop, write an activity summary that details reasons for thinking the activity a success or not as effective as hoped. Use the summary as a guide to make a follow-up questionnaire to send to participants. Keep the questionnaire short, but include some “Do you agree that….” as well as “How could this activity be improved?” questions.
Books, Articles, and Web Resources

Study Circles Challenge the Intellect and Strengthen the Professional Community
This article, written by Tom Smith and published in the June 2002 issue of Focus on Basics: Connecting Research and Practice, discusses the use of study circles as professional development activities. One group examined the “youthification” of ABE, i.e. the growing number of younger learners in ABE classes and the impact they have on programs and older students. It includes a summary of how they conducted the study circle.

Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future
This book, authored by Larry K. Brendtro, Martin Brokenleg, and Steve Van Bockern and published by the National Education Service in 1992 gives the reader an in-depth, research-based view of the authors’ work with at-risk youth. It contains an extensive bibliography for additional research.

The ‘youthification’ of Adult Education
This article, written by Pat Nelson and published in the 1999 issue of The Change Agent provides additional insight into the growing numbers of younger students in Adult Education programs.
Complete each of the handouts prior to the workshop and use the understanding gained to plan introductory and summary statements for the workshop.
Changes

How is the world different today than it was when you were a teenager? List the ways it has changed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When I was a Teenager</th>
<th>Today</th>
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Concerns & Fears

List some of the concerns and fears you had as a teenager. Survey the group to see how many in your group felt each item you listed was a significant concern or fear for them.

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<tr>
<th>Concerns &amp; Fears</th>
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<td>PEER PRESSURE</td>
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THINKING BACK

Between 16 and 19 years of age, I was most proud of....

Between 16 and 19 years of age, I was ashamed of....

My worst educational experience was....

The biggest tragedy I experienced as a teenager was....

Between 16 and 19 years of age, my opinion of my parents was....

Between 16 and 19 years of age, my attitude towards rules, laws, and authority was...

The things that I did as a teenager, that I would least want my children to do are...

Thinking back, I am most relieved that I did not have the following experiences that some of my friends and schoolmates had...

One thing that I know today’s teens face that I am glad I did not have to face is....
We Didn't Start The Fire
By Billy Joel

Harry Truman, Doris Day, Red China, Johnnie Ray
South Pacific, Walter Winchell, Joe DiMaggio

Joe McCarthy, Richard Nixon, Studebaker, television
North Korea, South Korea, Marilyn Monroe

Rosenbergs, H-Bomb, Sugar Ray, Panmunjom
Brando, "The King and I," and "The Catcher in the Rye"

Eisenhower, vaccine, England's got a new queen
Marciano, Liberace, Santayana goodbye

CHORUS
We didn't start the fire
It was always burning
Since the world's been turning
We didn't start the fire
No we didn't light it
But we tried to fight it

Josef Stalin, Malenkov, Nasser and Prokofiev
Rockefeller, Campanella, Communist Bloc

Roy Cohn, Juan Peron, Toscanini, Dacron
Dien Bien Phu and "Rock Around the Clock"

Einstein, James Dean, Brooklyn's got a winning team
Davy Crockett, "Peter Pan," Elvis Presley, Disneyland

Bardot, Budapest, Alabama, Khrushchev
Princess Grace, "Peyton Place," trouble in the Suez

CHORUS
We didn't start the fire
It was always burning
Since the world's been turning
We didn't start the fire
No we didn't light it
But we tried to fight it

Little Rock, Pasternak, Mickey Mantle, Kerouac
Sputnik, Chou En-Lai, "Bridge on the River Kwai"

Lebanon, Charles de Gaulle, California baseball
Starkweather, homicide, children of thalidomide

Buddy Holly, "Ben-Hur," space monkey, Mafia
Hula hoops, Castro, Edsel is a no go

U2, Syngman Rhee, payola and Kennedy
Chubby Checker, "Psycho," Belgians in the Congo

CHORUS
We didn't start the fire
It was always burning
Since the world's been turning
We didn't start the fire
No we didn't light it
But we tried to fight it

Hemingway, Eichmann, "Stranger in a Strange Land"
Dylan, Berlin, Bay of Pigs Invasion

"Lawrence of Arabia," British Beatlemania
Ole Miss, John Glenn, Liston beats Patterson

Pope Paul, Malcolm X, British politician sex
JFK, blown away, what else do I have to say

CHORUS
We didn't start the fire
It was always burning
Since the world's been turning
We didn't start the fire
No we didn't light it
But we tried to fight it

Birth control, Ho Chi Minh, Richard Nixon, back again
Moonshot, Woodstock, Watergate, punk rock
Begin, Reagan, Palestine, terror on the airline
Ayatollolah's in Iran, Russians in Afghanistan

"Wheel of Fortune," Sally Ride, heavy metal, suicide
Foreign debts, homeless vets, AIDS, Crack, Bernie Goetz
Hypodermics on the shores, China's under martial law
Rock and Roller Cola Wars, I can't take it anymore

CHORUS
We didn't start the fire
It was always burning
Since the world's been turning
We didn't start the fire
No we didn't light it
But we tried to fight it

We didn't start the fire
But when we are gone
Will it still burn on, and on, and on, and on...

Internet site: www.teacheroz.com/fire.htm
Connecting Personality, Teaching, and Learning

Overview

Understanding the attitudes and philosophies of young students is a noble but daunting goal. Even younger instructors may find this task to be challenging, simply because they approached their youth and education from the viewpoint of a different personality style. Gaining as much understanding as possible is well worth the effort. Unless the instructor is able to appreciate the different personality styles that create learning blocks for young students, attempts to guide and redirect the learning efforts of those students will be little more than a shot in the dark.

When the instructor uses the phrase, "This is how I want you to think about this problem," that instructor should be reasonably confident that this is the most effective and efficient approach for the student. Even then, the instructor must be attentive to every indicator of progress and be ready to make adjustments or use a different instructional approach when needed. Too often, selections of both the initial approach and subsequent adjustments are based on what is comfortable and seems natural to the instructor, or what has worked with previous students. As more young students enter the ABS classroom, previous successes and instructor preferences become less effective as instructional guides. Instructors must be aware that young students are more likely to fail or give up before they have a chance to succeed if they are exposed to the same instructional styles that led to previous bad educational experiences. The selection of a better approach for these students requires that the instructor learn to empathize with the attitudes, prejudices, and philosophies of young students.
Objectives

The participants will
• understand personality types and the role they play in teaching and learning and
• appreciate the effect of varied personality types on attitudes and philosophies of young students.

Competencies

The participants will
• know how to relate to the attitudes and philosophies of younger students;
• know the different personality types;
• know how to identify personality types;
• know how to vary teaching styles to meet the needs of learners; and
• have an understanding of the difficulties younger students may have faced in previous educational experiences.

“Don’t try to fix the students, fix ourselves first. The good teacher makes the poor student good and the good student superior. When our students fail, we, as teachers, too, have failed.”

Marva Collins
Chapter 6: Professional Development Plans

Materials & Equipment

Whiteboard or flip chart
Markers
Masking tape
Younger Student Case Studies
Student Stories (4 included in this plan)
The ABSPD videotape, *Understanding and Teaching Our Youngest Students*
Paper
Internet access or copies of the “Keirsey Four Type Sorter” for each participant; copies can be ordered from www.keirsey.com.

Handouts

When I was in my later teens I was…
My younger students would say …
Procedure

Before the Workshop

Ask potential participants to prepare a case history detailing a student’s attitude and personality during class. Suggest they choose a young student who has experienced difficulty in one of their classes. Caution participants to respect the confidentiality of all students portrayed in their case histories.

The leader should also prepare a case history and consider ways to personalize examples such as using a videotape of a classroom activity presenting the young student in the case history. Make notes of clues to attitudes and philosophies of the young student featured in the case history. Evaluate the personality type and make a list of characteristics that might affect the reactions of this young student in the classroom. Reevaluate your personal experience with this young student to verify the accuracy of your diagnosis and the reactions predicted. A review of Chapter 3 of this training manual is recommended.
Procedure, continued

During the Workshop

Details of how to facilitate each of the workshop activities mentioned below are given in the “Facilitating the Workshop” pages included at the end of this professional development plan.

Activity 1: Stereotypical Thinking

Start the workshop with the “Adults are ... Teenagers are...” activity. This activity helps participants to see that the younger students are not all that different from their older students.

Activity 2: Positive versus Negative

Allow participants to discuss the positive and negative aspects of having classes with younger students. This activity helps participants to see “it’s not all negative.”
Procedure, continued

**Activity 3: I Say, You Say...**
This activity helps participants to see that the younger students today face many of the same concerns, fears, and challenges that the participants faced during their teen years. This activity makes participants really stop and think about some of the things their younger students are dealing with on a daily basis.

**Activity 4: Created Equal but Not the Same**
If possible have younger students “perform” the four student stories. Stories are included as part of this plan.

**Activity 5: Personality Type**
Ask participants to complete the “Keirsey Four Types Sorter.”

**Activity 6: Case Histories**
Ask participants to share their case histories with the group. Facilitate a group discussion to help each instructor with ideas of how to help the students portrayed.
Chapter 6: Professional Development Plans

Wrap Up

Allow the participants to identify what they learned about personality types and empathizing with young students.

Arrange a time or manner for participants to exchange ideas after they have had time to reflect on the workshop material.

Allow participants to make suggestions for a follow-up activity, but have your own ideas.

Evaluation

The author anticipates that this activity generates enough interest and enthusiasm for the facilitator to see positive results. However, verify conclusions through follow-up discussions after the participants have had sufficient time to put the principles discussed in this workshop to practice with their students.

“As teachers, we must constantly try to improve schools and we must keep working at changing and experimenting and trying until we have developed ways of reaching every child [younger student].”

Albert Shanker
Books, Articles and Web Resources

www.keirsey.com
This web site is an excellent source for additional information on temperaments and character. It also contains an online “Keirsey Four Types Sorter” inventory. It takes only 10 to 15 minutes to complete and gives immediate results.

Please Understand Me II
This book, authored by David Keirsey, is the best-selling book on temperaments and character. It is involved reading but gives a complete view of Keirsey’s work.

People Patterns: A Modern Guide to the Four Temperaments
This book, authored by Stephen Montgomery, is an excellent source if you want to learn more about Keirsey’s personality types from a more modern point of view. This is a short (136 pages), easy to read book.

Understanding and Teaching Our Youngest Students
This video, produced by the Adult Basic Skills Professional Development Project at Appalachian State University, provides a brief overview of the contents of the training manual. This video is an excellent resource when conducting training workshops for instructors working with younger students.
Author Notes

Plan to show the videotape *Understanding and Teaching Our Youngest Students* at an appropriate time in the workshop.

Be sure the location of this activity provides sufficient privacy to allow participants freedom of expression. Consider how to provide an atmosphere that is informal enough to stimulate participation without detracting from the attention given by the participants.
Facilitating the Workshop

Activity 1: Stereotypical Thinking

Tell participants that you are going to ask them to complete two statements and that you want them to write down the first answer that “pops” into their mind. The first statement you want them to complete is “Adults are …” and the second statement is “Teenagers are …” Write these two statements on the top of a flip chart page (or whiteboard). Ask participants to share their answers and have someone record the answers under the appropriate heading.

After you have all answers recorded, compare the words used to describe teens and adults. Most often the two lists contain many of the same words. Mark off the similar words saying, “So, you’re saying both teens and adults are …” For the answers that are not the same, refer to answers under the “Teenagers are” list and ask participants, “Have you ever had an adult student who was …”

As a result of this activity the participants are able to conclude that teenagers and adults are not all that different and maybe we are sometimes guilty of putting all teens in the same “basket.”
Activity 2: Positive versus Negative

Based on responses to Activity 1, facilitate a discussion about the positive and negative aspects of having younger students (teens) in the Adult Basic Skills classroom. Participants “see” that there are many positive aspects of having younger students in their classrooms.

Activity 3: I Say, You Say...

Give participants the “When I was in my later teens I was…” handout and ask them to complete it truthfully. Ask participants (who are willing) to share their answers. Record answers for each question on a different sheet of flip chart paper and tape the page of answers to the wall.

Then give each participant the “My younger students would say …” handout and ask participants to complete it the way they think the student portrayed in their case history would complete the statements. If they did not bring a case history, ask them to think of a younger student they have in class and complete the statements from their point of view. Ask participants (who are willing) to share their answers. Record answers for each question on a different sheet of flip chart paper and tape this page of answers next to the answers from the first handout.

Compare and discuss the answers. You will find that both groups had many similar answers. This leads to the conclusion that participants had many of the same experiences and opinions as the younger students are having today.
Another option for this activity is to have younger students fill out the “My younger students would say…” handout and have those responses already listed on flip chart paper. You could tape these around the room while participants are completing the handout.

**Activity 4: Created Equal but Not the Same**

If possible have younger students “perform” the four student stories. Stories are included as part of this plan.

Ask participants to listen to the stories of these four students who recently left high school. Ask them to make note of any characteristics they feel would help them in making an “educational plan” for this student. After each “student” has presented their story, ask participants to share their notes. Make a list of responses.

After all four “students” have presented their story; discuss how the students are similar and different. Discuss how you would structure a classroom to meet the needs of each of these students if all four students ended up in the same class at the same time. Keep the characteristics of each “student” posted so that participants can determine the personality type of each after they complete Activity 5.

**Activity 5: Personality Type**

Ask participants to complete the “Four Types Sorter.” There are several versions of Keirsey’s “Four Types Sorter.” If participants have access to a computer lab they can access the “Sorter” at www.keirsey.com. The Internet version has about 70 questions, takes about 10-15 minutes to complete, and gives immediate results.
If the Internet is not an option for your workshop, consider ordering paper copies. (You can find details at the Internet website or in the back of Keirsey’s book, *Please Understand Me II*. Paper copies are fairly inexpensive.

With either option, Internet or paper, be sure to go through the process yourself prior to the workshop. Be prepared to give in-depth directions on how to complete the “Sorter.”

After all participants have identified their personality types, discuss the different types. Go back to the “student stories” shared earlier and ask participants to identify the personality type of each “student.”

**Activity 6: Case Histories**

You may want to begin this activity by using clips from the ABSPD videotape, *Understanding and Teaching Our Youngest Students*. Briefly summarize the personality types.

Ask participants to form small groups. Explain that they are to discuss the “Student Case Histories” they brought with them. Ask the groups to write a brief report for each student that includes an analysis of the problem, the student’s personality type, and what they would do to enhance the classroom experience for this student.

Have groups share several of their “reports.” Allow time for participants to discuss the results. Tabulate the results of personality types (for all of the students) and discuss why the results might have occurred.
When I was in my later teens I was ...

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<th>Most proud of...</th>
<th>Ashamed of...</th>
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<tr>
<th>Worst educational experience was...</th>
<th>Biggest tragedy experienced was...</th>
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<th>Opinion of parents was...</th>
<th>My attitude towards rules, laws, and authority was...</th>
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<tr>
<th>Problems schoolmates had to face...</th>
<th>One thing I know today’s younger students face that I am glad I didn’t have to face...</th>
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**My younger students would say ...**

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<th>Most proud of...</th>
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<th>One thing I know I have to face that my instructor did not have to face is ...</th>
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Becky’s Story

I am Becky. What was high school like for me? It was the same old thing day after day. We never did anything fun or exciting. And nothing was ever new, always listen to the teacher or work in workbooks. I like action; I like to do things. I wish the teachers had given me projects to do on my own. Instead they were always talking about some theory that no one ever uses.

Why couldn’t we have learned things that would help me in life? I wanted to know how to budget my money and how to plan for big purchases. I wanted to learn how to make things. But we didn’t, we just took test after test after test. I don’t know what the teacher ever did with those tests. Most of them I never saw again. OK sometimes we would get a quiz back three weeks later; what good would that do. Sometimes I would try to get “psyched” and try to do a good job on a test. I couldn’t wait to go to class the next day to find out if all that studying paid off, but I didn’t find out the next day - or the next week - by the time that test got graded and returned I really didn’t care anymore.
Janice was in most of my classes. She thinks she is so hot. Janice was the teacher’s pet. She was always planning and organizing and doing everything just the way the teachers wanted. I don’t think Janice has the word “spontaneous” in her vocabulary. I wanted just once to get higher grades that she did. Sometimes I would plan and study just so I could show her up. A lot of good it did. Even if I had the best score in the class I don’t think my biology teacher would ever have told anybody. What is the point in trying to be the best if nobody ever knows it?

My biology teacher used to fuss at me all the time because I would make little comments to people around me. Couldn’t he have been happy that I was paying enough attention to make jokes about what he said? I like making jokes and wise cracks to get other people to laugh. My comments kept everyone in the class from getting bored. Mr. Johnson sure didn’t like it, instead he thought I should just sit there, and sleep, I guess, and some days I did.

Once in social studies we were supposed to make maps. If Mr. Jones had just let me be in charge of one of the groups we would have had the best map in the whole class. The other kids like me and I can get them to do what I want them to do. Instead he put Janice in charge and she pretty much did everything herself, her own way and what she did was so ordinary. So I helped her spice it up a little bit. Of course,
she took all the credit. So I thought, what’s the point. So I drag myself out of bed, go to school just so I could sit in one place for an hour and then move to another place to sit for another hour and I got so sick of that stupid homework, every teacher wanted everything done exactly the same way. They didn’t care if I was creative. All they cared about was me following the rules and doing things just the way they said to do them.

So one day, I said to myself, “Why am I sitting here day after day, not getting any credit, not having any fun and not getting to learn because my teachers make everything so boring? It was like the teachers were always saying, “Just be yourself; as long as your are like everyone else.” I resent people telling me what to do and how to do it. So I quit going!
Cheryl’s Story

My name is Cheryl. Sometimes I wish I hadn’t had to drop out of school. I really enjoyed being with my classmates and I loved some of my classes. I especially liked physics when we were discussing Einstein’s Theory’s and social studies when we were talking about how societies were formed. But I dreaded the exams. I was so nervous every time there was an exam coming up, I couldn’t sleep the night before. I couldn’t even keep my food down. You see, no matter how well I did someone was going to do better. I hated having to compete with Janice and Biff, they were so smart and they loved those multiple-choice tests. I hated those tests. If the teacher would have just let me write I could have explained the theories we were learning so clearly, but we never had essay tests. It was like they had to give multiple-choice tests so we could practice for our end of course test. Usually there were two choices so much alike that either one could have been the right answer, so it was like you had to guess and if you guessed wrong you got no credit at all. Teachers always seemed to recognize the best guessers even though I knew more about the subject than the students who got better grades did.
I wish all of my classes could have been like drama class. We would work in groups to put together plays. It was great to get to work with other people and learn from each other. And I really enjoyed being on stage. I loved the attention. I loved having the chance to use my imagination to develop a character. There were so many unique kids in my drama class; some of them had so much potential as actors.

But before I could go to drama I had to face another quiz in biology. It’s not that biology is bad but the teacher was so dull. I don’t think he ever cracked a smile. I know that learning is serious, but we could have laughed and had some fun too. We did have one student who used to make the whole class laugh. Mr. Johnson was hard on her. She quit coming to class. I don’t know what happened to her, I hope she is OK. If he had lightened up a little, I think I could have learned something.

Maybe the worse thing was chemistry lab. When I put in too much copper sulfate and ruined the experiment, Mr. Smith did not give me a chance to explain; he just made fun of me in front of the whole class. I wish they had known that the paper got smeared when Becky dripped water on it, so it wasn’t really my fault that I couldn’t read the number of milliliters to use. After that I hated going to chemistry, it was really hard to face everyone. Mr. Smith is so narrow-minded, rigid and heartless; I sure
hope he isn’t like that with his family. Besides we always had to do everything step by step, we never got to use our imagination.

School was OK until we went from the year-long classes to the semester classes. Between being humiliated in chemistry, those dreaded multiple-choice tests and then having to be in the same class for two hours a day -- I just couldn’t handle the change, so here I am.
Janice’s Story

My name is Janice. I did very well in school until my junior year. Then it was like my whole world changed. My other teachers had been so good; their classrooms had always been well organized. I always knew what they wanted me to do and I was good at doing it. Then in eleventh grade I hit that bunch of disorganized teachers who couldn't seem to plan anything. They would start class and say something like, “OK, what are we going to do today.” What kind of a thing is that for a teacher to say, it looks like they would know what we were going to do.

English was the worst. I never knew what was going on. We never stayed on one topic. I had always heard about Shakespeare, but didn’t know much about his plays. What little I had tried to read I didn’t understand very well. In English when we started talking about Shakespeare’s plays, I wanted to go through them from start to finish in a logical fashion. Instead the teacher had us reading parts of one play and then comparing it to parts of another play the next day. Then before we had finished a single play he had us working on poetry or something else. Instead of staying with something until we had finished the topic, everyday we did something different - like we
studied plays one day a week, then poetry one day, then something else; part of the time he compared poetry to football.

Calculus class wasn’t much better than English. I had always managed to get by in algebra. I never really understood what we were doing but I could follow the step-by-step instructions and get the right answers. But this calculus teacher was something else. Instead of telling us the right way to do the problem she would show us several ways. Then she would give us some problems and ask, “What approach would you use to solve this problem?” She would always say, “I’m more interested in your thinking process than in you arriving at the right answer.”

On Fridays, we always had tests. Can you believe it? Every Friday I faced tests in all my classes -- English, calculus, biology and art. After a week of rambling in English, he would give us an essay test. There was no way for anybody to plan and study so they would be able to get the right answers. I’m not too sure that the teacher knew what was right or wrong; I sure didn’t. Biology tests were not as bad as the English tests; at least we had true false tests. I was doing pretty well in biology; I could study and learn the facts. I could answer the true-false questions. Calculus tests were almost as bad as English. There was no way to study for the test after a week of talking about all the different ways you could do a problem. Why
couldn’t she just show us step-by-step how to do the problems and then let us do them?

After the first six weeks, I just couldn’t handle it. So I got a job as cashier at the grocery store. If I’m not busy at the checkout line, I stock the candy and magazines up front. At least there I know what to do. The instructions are clear and I know the rules. If one of the other employees came in late, they got fired or at least they had their pay docked. But back there in high school nobody had to take any responsibility for anything they did, they could come in late, not do their homework, and not study and nobody seemed to care. The teacher was just as likely to put them in charge of a group as me. It didn’t seem to matter that I always planned everything out and followed the rules. I was good in school when we kept the same routine, I just couldn’t handle all that confusion.
Biff’s Story

My name is Biff. I don’t like to brag, but I’m really smart. I love learning new things. New ideas and new concepts excite me. Lately I have been thinking a lot about what made Picasso’s art so good.

I love math, especially calculus. Math has so many really cool things, like chaos theory. In math you always know “Why” and everything is logical. Solving problems is really fun whether it was algebra, geometry or calculus. Using the computer made calculus really great, because the computer could visualize three-dimensional structures and various concepts of physics. I even got the highest score ever for the state high school math contest.

I got a certificate but wasn’t even recognized at the end of the year awards banquet. They made such a big deal over Robert because he set a school record in football. I couldn’t believe they did that after he got kicked off the team for skipping practice, then they let him back on the team and he got in trouble for drinking. Every time he did something like that, they would make an exception for him because he was so fast. Worst of all, he didn’t
even try in any of his classes; I think the teachers just passed him so he could play football. I just don't see the logic of giving an award to someone like that and ignoring what I did.

My worst experience with math was in 9th grade algebra. What I learned that year, I learned on my own. The teacher never taught me anything new. She spent our class time handing out practice sheets - just problem after problem of busy work. I learned how to do those problems months ago. But she made me do them over and over, when I wanted to move onto more challenging things. I had great teachers my sophomore and junior years. My teachers let me work at my own pace, I was always ahead of the class and the teachers were willing to advise me when I couldn't find what I needed.

My first three years of high school really weren't so bad. I didn't have hardly any friends and the other kids liked to call me a nerd. But I didn't let that bother me too much. I was really looking forward to my senior year. What a disaster. Senior English from the football coach and social studies from the drama teacher. There are so many things to learn about history, but instead of learning them we would spend all our time on one event. What was especially bad was being required to participate in plays about the event. The plays
could have been OK if everyone had been serious, but they were just clowning around.

The football coach didn’t know anything about English and everyone knew it. Why should I have to sit in a class with a teacher who didn’t know what he was talking about? I knew more than he did the first day I walked into class but he didn’t seem to want to learn from me. And he didn’t like it when I told him what I thought.

I decided that I was wasting my time because I could read all of those textbooks and learn more important stuff on my own. I’m still learning. I’m just not doing it in those high school classrooms any more. The only problem is that I have to get a high school diploma to go to college.
The major role of any instructor is to function as a manager of learning activities. Since most instruction takes place in the classroom, most instructors are, of necessity, classroom managers. To be an effective facilitator instructors also function as “classroom managers.” Every instructor has a different style of classroom management. Each student has a different style of learning, and each instructor has a different style of teaching. The different styles of management work well with some styles of learning and not so well with others. Instructors must be able to change their classroom management and teaching style to meet the students’ learning needs.

Objectives

The participants will

• identify different classroom management styles;

• identify their classroom management style; and

• identify ways to improve their classroom management.
Competencies

The participants will

• know how to identify classroom management styles and
• know ways to improve classroom management where both teaching and learning are enhanced.

Materials & Equipment

White board or flip chart

Markers

Handouts

Classroom Management Quiz
Classroom Management Profiles
Discuss with participants how they view their classroom management style. Do they like to have all the desks in straight rows? Do they like to control their students or do they like for their students to be independent learners? How do you show you care for your students? Or is it not important to care? What is the role of the instructor in the classroom? Is it to only teach or are there other things an instructor should do?

Write the names of the four styles of classroom management on the board. Ask participants to write down the style that they believe most closely resembles their classroom management style.

Hand out the “Classroom Management Quiz.” Ask participants to complete the “Quiz” and score themselves. Ask the participants if they guessed their classroom management style correctly before taking the quiz.

Hand out copies of the “Classroom Management Profiles.” Ask participants to read and discuss the styles with the person(s) sitting near them.

Discuss as a group which style would work best with their younger students? Or is there a time and place in the classroom for each of the different styles? Discuss times when an instructor should “switch” management styles to meet the needs of the students.
Chapter 6: Professional Development Plans

Wrap Up

Ask participants to find a partner and come up with 3-4 ways to have good classroom management where both the students and instructors are pleased. Ask participants to share their results.

Evaluation

“You cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him to find it within himself.”

Gallileo

Ask participants to write a reflection of what they learned during this workshop and what changes they plan to make within their own classrooms as a result of this workshop.

Consider having a follow-up meeting to discuss the changes made and whether teaching and learning has improved since integrating workshop ideas into their classroom management style.
Books, Articles and Web Resources

A Primer on Classroom Discipline: Principles Old and New
This article, authored by Thomas R. McDaniel and published in *Phi Delta Kappan*, May 1986, was written for classroom management at the elementary school level, however the techniques discussed for effective group management can be adapted for use in the adult classroom.

What is Your Classroom Management Profile?
This article published in Teacher Talk, Volume 1, Issue 2, March 1997, is located on the Internet at Indiana University Center for Adolescent Development’s web page. This professional development activity was adapted from this website. The classroom management styles are adaptations of the parenting styles discussed in Adolescence, by John T. Santrock. They were adapted by Kris Bosworth, Kevin McCracken, Paul Haakenson, Marsha Ritter Jones, Anne Grey, Laura Versaci, Julie James, and Ronen Hammer. (http://education.indiana.edu/cas/tt/v1i2/what.html)
Make sure you take the quiz before the class. Make a list of ways to have good classroom management. Use your list to enhance participants’ ideas.

This lesson plan was adapted from ideas found on the website http://education.indiana.edu/cas/tt/v1i2/what.html.
Classroom Management Quiz

Read each statement carefully, circle the degree to which you agree or disagree, and then use the score sheet to identify your style.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>If a student is disruptive during class, I ask him or her to leave the class immediately, without further discussion.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>I don’t want to impose any rules on my students.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The classroom must be quiet for students to learn.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>I am concerned about both what my students learn and how they learn.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>I always try to explain the reasons behind the classroom rules and decisions I make about the classroom.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>If a student turns in homework late, it is not my problem.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I don’t discipline a student because it might hurt his or her feelings.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Class preparation isn’t worth the effort.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I do not accept excuses from a student who is tardy.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The emotional well being of my students is more important than classroom control.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>My students understand they can interrupt me if they have a relevant question.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>If a student requests to go to the bathroom during my teaching, I honor the request.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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Classroom Management Quiz Scoring

Scoring: To score your quiz and find out what profile you follow in classroom management, read the statements below.

Add your responses to statements 1, 3, and 9. This is your score for authoritarian style. Authoritarian Style Score _____

Add your responses to statements 7, 10, and 12. This is your score for laissez-faire style. Laissez-faire Style Score _____

Add your responses to statements 4, 5, and 11. This is your score for authoritative style. Authoritative Style Score _____

Add your responses to statements 2, 6, and 8. This is your score for indifferent style. Indifferent Style Score _____

Your scores can range from 3-15. A high score indicates a strong preference for that particular style. Now read the descriptions of each management profile.
Classroom Management Profiles

The Authoritarian Instructor

The authoritarian instructor makes all the decisions and discourages student input, comments, or interruptions. The result may be a quiet, orderly classroom, but the order is achieved at the expense of student questions and discussions. This instructor knows what students need to learn and tells them. The authoritarian instructor assumes that those who want to learn will do so because the material is presented well. Varied teaching techniques are considered unnecessary and field trips are out of the question because students seldom maintain a classroom environment when they are not in the classroom. This instructor maintains an aloof, “no excuses,” attitude that results in them being labeled as unfair and uncaring. Any behavior that is inconsistent with classroom rules results in prompt discipline, with no consideration for reasons. Some students describe authoritarian instructors as “control freaks.”

The Laissez-faire Instructor

The laissez-faire instructor places utmost importance on not hurting students’ feelings. As a consequence, this instructor is very hesitant to say “no” to a student and does not like to enforce rules. An instructor with this style assumes that students have valid reasons or unfulfilled social needs when they interrupt lectures or
disrupt class. Impulsive behavior is tolerated because of the belief that students need to “express their individuality.” Hence, few behaviors are seen as problems. The laissez-faire instructor wants to be each student’s friend and encourages social contacts. Boundaries between this instructor’s professional life and social life are undefined, because this instructor cares too much about students to enforce those boundaries. Being the students’ friend is more important than teaching socially acceptable behavior. Unfortunately, this leads to accepting excuses and relaxing demands on students, so they become less motivated.

The Authoritative Instructor

The authoritative instructor maintains a proper balance between classroom discipline and student self-expression. Students are given thorough explanations for rules and reprimands. Discipline is firm but fair. This instructor distinguishes between interruptions and disruptions. Interruptions are encouraged because student input is valued. Although this instructor demands respect and is obviously “in charge,” instructor-student interactions are friendly and demonstrate genuine concern for each student’s learning and welfare. Students know they will receive prompt and carefully considered feedback on homework and other efforts. Students also know this instructor is available for guidance when they need it.
The Indifferent Instructor

An indifferent instructor thinks students are responsible for their own education and does not see the value of preparing new material or employing different teaching techniques. Few demands are placed on students, so very little learning occurs. This instructor does not put much effort into preparation, teaching or classroom management. Discipline is lacking. With little discipline and few demands for student achievement students learn very little. Students are not motivated to learn either academic material or self-discipline. The indifferent instructor uses the same lesson plans year after year. In fact, each day is similar to the preceding day in terms of teaching techniques and class schedule. Students quickly learn how long to expect the instructor to talk and how much “free time” will remain when the instructor quits talking. Students also learn that they do not need to prepare for class nor focus during class because the instructor will not demand that they contribute to the class.
Goal setting is a part of everyday life and a requirement for students in Adult Basic Skills programs. People set goals for themselves on a regular basis. However the goals they set are not always realistic. Our youngest students have a hard time setting realistic goals. Some students are already frustrated with not accomplishing goals that were set out for them before. This is especially true when the goals were set by someone else.

Students need to be reminded that goal setting is an important part of life. When students know precisely what they want to achieve, they know where to focus their concentration to make improvement. Goal setting gives students a long-term vision with short-term motivation. Goal setting helps students “organize their vision.” When students set and achieve goals, it builds their self-confidence and self-belief that they are able to achieve “bigger” and “better” things in life.

The focus of this workshop is to help participants learn a process for helping students learn to set effective, realistic life goals and then break down their life goals into realistic, effective educational goals. Once goals have been established participants learn how to help students prioritize their goals so that students direct their immediate attention toward their most important goals.
Objectives

The participants will

• understand how to set realistic life goals;
• understand how to create smaller educational goals based on realistic life goals; and
• understand the process of guiding students through the process of setting effective, realistic goals.

Competencies

The participants will

• know how to set goals with students;
• know how to set realistic goals effectively; and
• know how to teach goal setting to students.

“The strongest principle of growth lies in the human choice.”

George Eliot
Chapter 6: Professional Development Plans

Realistic Goal Setting

Materials & Equipment

- Whiteboard or flip chart
- Markers
- Masking tape
- Large sheets of newsprint or similar paper (16x20 and larger)

Handouts

- Setting Realistic Goals
- Areas of Life for Goal Setting
- Thinking a Goal Through
- Goal Setting Guidelines for Instructors
- Classroom Goal Setting
- Student Goal Setting
Realistic Goal Setting

Procedure, Part I

Begin by asking participants what a goal is and what are some different types of goals (present goals, future goals, immediate goals, life goals). Make a graphic organizer of their answers on the white board or flip chart. Discuss the answers as the participants respond.

Break participants into three groups. Give each group large sheets of paper and markers. Assign one of the questions below to each group and ask the group to make an outline or graphic organizer to answer their question. The questions are as follows:

- Why do we set goals?
- Where can goal setting go wrong?
- How can we set goals effectively?

You may need to help the groups with the questions by giving some sample answers to each question (provided at the end of the activity). After the groups have made their list or graphic organizer have them hang them on the wall or chalkboard for the whole class to see. Allow time to discuss the answers. Based on discussion groups you may want to add to or change some of the answers.

Students should set short-term realistic goals.
Procedure, continued

Give participants the “Setting Realistic Goals” handout to use as reference material. Ask them to read the handout and compare the information with the “graphic organizers” they have posted on the wall. If ideas are included on the handout but not included on the “graphic organizers” have participants update their graphic organizers.

Discuss any questions they may have about setting effective, realistic goals. Explain that they are now ready to do some goal setting of their own. Post the “Areas of Life” list on the board or flip chart and give each participant the “Areas of Life for Goal Setting” handout.

Ask participants to choose two items from the list to write down goals they want to accomplish in those areas. Hand out the “Thinking a Goal Through” worksheet for them to use as a guide in setting their goals. Discuss with the participants how the answers to the questions on the worksheet “Thinking a Goal Through” act as a guide to help one set smaller goals.

If you fail to meet a goal, analyze what went wrong.
**Realistic Goal Setting**

**Procedure, continued**

Allow participants to share their goals and answers with the group. Explain how they began with a larger goal and used the “Thinking Through a Goal” worksheet to arrive at a smaller goal.

Facilitate a discussion on how this goal setting activity could be implemented in the classroom to help students set effective and realistic goals. Use the “Goal Setting Guidelines for Instructors” and “Classroom Goal Setting” handouts with the student stories and forms to facilitate the discussion.

*My immediate goal is to improve my reading comprehension. My one-year goal is to get a GED. My future goal is to own my own beauty shop.*
Realistic Goal Setting

Wrap Up

Ask participants to work together in small groups to write “Classroom Guidelines for Goal Setting” which could be used by someone who did not participate in this workshop. An example is included as part of this activity.

Evaluation

“A master can tell you what he expects of you. A teacher, though, awakens your own expectations.”

Patricia Neal

Ask participants to write a reflection on what they learned during this workshop. Then have them write a “plan” for how to implement learning from the workshop activities into their work with students. Let participants know that you plan to follow-up in thirty days or so to see if they have implemented their “plan.” A follow-up lunch meeting would be good for discussing what has worked well and what has not.
Books, Articles and Web Resources

Personal Goal Setting--Planning to Live Life Your Way
This article, found on the mindtools website, has great information about setting goals and related topics. This site was used as a resource in writing this activity. (www.mindtools.com)

Study Circles Challenge the Intellect and Strengthen the Professional Community
This article, authored by Tom Smith and published in Focus on Basics: Connecting Research and Practice, June 2002 discusses using study circles as a form of professional development. It gives the results from a study circle where the topic of “goal setting” was discussed. It contains excellent information on goal setting and on how to set up a study circle.

Florida Works: Career Building Skills for Adult Basic Education
This publication is authored by the Florida Human Resources Development, Inc. and was published in 1999 by the Adult Education Division of Workforce Development in Tallahassee, Florida. This publication offers another perspective for helping students to set goals. The goal setting approach asks that students integrate their current thinking with their past experiences.
Author Notes

This lesson can be used in a workshop with instructors and then taken back by the instructors to their classrooms.

The worksheets were formulated from “Personal Goal Setting-Planning to Live Life Your Way” at the website www.mindtools.com.
Setting Realistic Goals

Set Performance Goals

Always set performance goals. Performance goals are goals based on personal performance, skills or knowledge. Do not set goals based on outcomes; outcome goals may cause you not to achieve a goal you have set for reasons you have no control over.

Set Realistic, Specific Goals

Set realistic goals that allow you to measure achievements. Do not let other people (family, friends, media) influence you to set unrealistic goals. Be sure you have sufficient information about the goal you are setting so that the goal is effective and realistic. Be sure to set specific goals, vague goals are practically useless.

Set Goal at the Right Level

Beware of goals that are unrealistically too high or goals that are set too low. Set goals just slightly out of reach. When you feel that a goal is “out of reach,” you are not motivated to achieve it.
Failure and Success in Meeting a Goal

If you fail to meet a goal analyze what went wrong. Did you not try hard enough or was the goal unrealistic? Take action to improve performance or analyze the goal and set a realistic goal.

Reward yourself when you achieve a goal. Take pleasure in the progress you are making toward your lifetime goals. Set new goals to keep you moving forward. Analyze your success. If the goal was easily achieved, make your next goal harder. If the goal took a long time to achieve, make your next goal easier.

Goals tend to change as you mature. Review and revise future goals to reflect growth in your personality.
Areas of Life for Goal Setting

When you start to set lifetime goals it is important to consider what you want to achieve in all areas of your life. Once goals are established they impact all of the decisions you make.

If you want to set goals that cover all the important areas of your life, try setting goals in each of the areas identified below and then use the “Thinking a Goal Through” worksheet to determine the steps it takes to achieve your goals.

**Artistic**
Do you have any artistic goals?

**Attitude**
Is there anything about the way you act that you want to change?

**Career**
What are your future career goals?

**Education**
What are your educational goals?

**Family**
What are your goals as a parent, partner, or extended family member?
Chapter 6: Professional Development Plans

Financial
What are your goals for future earnings?

Physical
What are your goals when it comes to physical health?

Pleasure
What are your goals when it comes to enjoyment in your life?

Public Service
What are your goals when it comes to making your community (the world) a better place?

Social
What are your social goals?

After you have set goals in each of the areas above, prioritize them so that they reflect the way you want your life to be. Be sure that all the goals you have set are YOUR GOALS and not goals that your parents, partner, family or other people around you want them to be.

Now that you have set your lifetime goals, set smaller goals to be achieved to help you meet your lifetime goals. For example, if you set a 20-year plan, now set a 5-year plan. Then set a 1-year plan, a 6-month plan, a 1-month plan, and a 1-week plan. Finally set a daily to-do list.
Thinking a Goal Through

My goal is to _____________________________

What skills do I need to achieve this goal?

What information and knowledge do I need?

What help, assistance, or collaboration do I need?

What resources do I need?

What can block my progress?

Am I making any assumptions?

Is there a better way of doing things?
Goal Setting Guidelines for Instructors

➢ Individualized goals.

➢ Contains well-defined steps that create a visual image of the process.

➢ Short-term goals are packaged in small bits that reinforce early successes; long-term goals speak to “dreams.”

➢ Contracts work for some students.

➢ Goals should expand beyond the academic to include other roles the student has: spouse, parent, worker, etc.

➢ Goals should be re-evaluated periodically with the student; goals change as the student’s self-assessment changes. This is especially helpful when done in a group context to broaden individual lessons and increase mutual support.

➢ “Guesstimate” what the impact of meeting goals will be on family and friends? Consider both positive and negative impacts as students begin to make progress.
➢ Try to deepen an understanding about the roots of potential backlash: when a student’s friends, relatives, and/or spouse attempt to sabotage the student’s motivation.

➢ Groups have the strength to offer opportunities to confirm and validate as well as expand horizons and suggest new directions.

➢ A sense of personal safety is a prerequisite in initiating a group goal-setting process. This is especially true in light of students’ experiences with trauma/violence.

➢ One-on-one is good for those students who don’t work well in groups: those feeling vulnerable or not up to others’ standards.

➢ Students welcome praise, celebration, and awards at certain steps along the way.

Source: Focus on Basics, National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy, June 2002.
Classroom Goal Setting

By Becky Sanders, Sandhills Community College

Our younger students usually come to us soon after leaving the public schools. They dropped out for various reasons. Some have become parents, some have family problems, and still others come to us seeking a different method of getting an education. Whatever the reasons, we have the task of helping them succeed and gain the skills needed to move into college, the military or the workforce. The traditional classroom has not served to help them reach their goals and now they have turned to us. What can we do that is different? How can we open doors that to this time have remained closed? Below is my approach.

Ask students to write down the answer to two questions, “Why are you taking this class?” and “What do you hope to gain from taking this class?” Many younger students state earning their GED or Adult High School Diploma. Suggest to your students that their diplomas are just a step toward larger life goals. By breaking large goals into smaller goals students see their education as a valuable tool in the transition from adolescence to adulthood. Use the “Thinking a Goal Through” worksheet to help students go from large to small goals.
Before students begin to set their own goals, have them read and discuss the stories of three students: Marianne, Dylan and Joseph. (Their stories are included as a part of this activity.) Give students the “Student Goal Setting” worksheet,” and ask them to “lay a path” for Marianne, Dylan and Joseph to follow so that they may obtain their goals. Discuss with students the importance of not only setting goals but also the importance of tracking their progress. Use the goals set by your students as examples for students to suggest ways in which each will be able to track their progress.

After students feel confident about setting goals for Marianne, Dylan, and Joseph, ask students to set goals for themselves. Help students to examine their goals to be sure they are setting effective, realistic goals. Be sure to keep a record of the educational goals each student makes and track the student’s progress toward meeting those goals.

‘Tis a lesson you should heed,
Try, try, try again
If at first you don’t succeed,
Try, try, try, again.

W. E. Hickson
Marianne’s Story

Marianne is seventeen and left school in the middle of her junior year at the local high school. She had an accident and because of too many absences Marianne realized she would fail the school year. She has recovered from the accident but doesn’t wish to return to the local high school because of all the time she has lost.

Marianne knows that she wants to be a cosmetologist and manage her own beauty shop one day. First she needs her high school diploma or GED. Last week Marianne heard her mother’s friend talking about how well her own daughter is doing at the local community college and would be graduating this year. After much discussion, Marianne and her mother agree it is time to look into the community college and see if it is right for Marianne.

Marianne and her mother met with a representative from the community college. After going over her transcript and talking with the representative, all agree that the best choice for Marianne is the GED program.

Help Marianne set goals by completing “Thinking a Goal Through” and “Student Goal Setting” worksheets for her. Remember, begin with long term goals and work toward short term goals. Set steps for each goal. Remember, the GED has five components. Be sure to break Marianne’s goals into manageable steps so that she can keep track of her progress.
Dylan’s Story

Dylan will soon be 18. He feels he is too old to return to high school and he has no friends there. Most of his friends graduated in the spring. Dylan’s parents are adamant that he remain in school and graduate. They have agreed he can check into the community college and see what kind of programs are available.

Dylan gets an official high school transcript and sets up a meeting with the representative from the community college. Dylan and his parents were told that he needs to improve his math skills in order to pass the state competency. He also needs to complete English III & IV, geometry, US history, physical science and an elective if he is to get a high school diploma. Dylan decided the Adult High School Diploma was the best choice for him.

Dylan wants to be a professional photographer. When Dylan graduates he would like to earn his Bachelor of Arts degree and major in Technical Photography. He would like to spend his first two years at the community college in the college transfer program and earn his Associate Degree before going to a University for his bachelor’s degree.

Help Dylan set goals by completing “Thinking a Goal Through” and “Student Goal Setting” worksheets for him. Begin with long term goals and work toward short terms goals. Set steps for each goal. Be sure to break Dylan’s goals into manageable steps so that he can more easily keep track of his progress.
Joseph’s Story

Joseph is 17 but will turn 18 in three months. He has talked to an Army recruiter and would like to go into the Army as soon as possible. The recruiter says Joseph must have a GED or high school diploma before he can enlist in the Army. He also must have reading and math skills that will allow him to do well on the entrance test. Joseph’s scores will determine the amount of his sign-up bonus. His scores will also determine what types of jobs he will be eligible to pursue in the Army.

Joseph calls the community college and sets up a meeting with a representative. At the meeting Joseph finds he only has three high school credits because he dropped out of high school the second semester of the 9th grade. He feels the GED is the best route for him.

Help Joseph set goals by completing “Thinking a Goal Through” and “Student Goal Setting” worksheets for him. Remember, begin with long term goals and work toward short terms goals. Set steps for each goal. Be sure to break Joseph’s goals into manageable steps so that he can keep track of his progress.
Student Goal Setting

Name ________________________________________________
Date _________________________________________________
Goal _________________________________________________
Time needed to reach this goal __________________________
Steps needed to reach this goal __________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

Date goal completed ___________________________________

As steps are completed, check them off. At the end of each class, review what you have accomplished and make plans for the next class. This allows you to chart your progress and stay on track.

Use the “Progress Review” on the next page to keep a daily log of your progress and to plan for your next class. After completing this form place it in a folder or binder. Review it regularly and set new goals as needed.

Share all progress with your instructor.
Keep working towards your goals.
YOU CAN DO IT!
## Progress Review

<table>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Accomplishments</th>
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Dealing with Discipline

Overview

Younger students are more likely to create classroom disruptions and detract from the ideal learning environment for other students. While it may be a good idea for instructors to ignore behaviors that do not interfere with learning, even when the instructor views those behaviors as disrespectful, disruption of the ideal learning environment cannot be tolerated.

There are a variety of reasons that younger students may create more discipline problems. One is simply their age, both because younger students have not had as much opportunity to learn and practice socially accepted behaviors and because they are more likely to “show off” in an attempt to impress their peers, particularly peers of the opposite sex.

In comparison to older students, a high percentage of younger students need basic skills classes because habitual behaviors interfered with learning. Finally, a greater percentage of younger students grew up in families and environments where freedom to express oneself was considered to be significantly more important than obedience and discipline.
Objectives

The participants will

• gain an understanding of why some reactions to discipline problems are unproductive; and
• practice reactions that are more productive.

Competencies

Participants will

• know how to create a good learning environment;
• know how to react to discipline problems in the classroom; and
• know how to relate to younger students.

“A cynical young person is almost the saddest sight to see, because it means that he or she has gone from knowing nothing to believing in nothing.”

Maya Angelou
Dealing with Discipline

Materials & Equipment

Whiteboard or flip chart
Markers

Time
2 Hours

Handouts

Principles for Effective Behavior
Unclear Communication
Prior to the workshop, review the examples of “Unclear Communication.” Select two that you would like to use to introduce this portion of the workshop. Develop one or two examples of behavior problems that disrupt the learning environment and be prepared to explain how the student exhibiting those behaviors might misinterpret, either consciously or subconsciously, the example communications. Review the “Principles for Effective Behavior” and be prepared to discuss why procedures based on those principles are effective.

Begin the workshop by giving two examples of reactions to disruptive behavior that younger students have probably heard before and have practiced misinterpreting. Discuss the possible misinterpretations of each. Then ask participants to give other examples, pausing to discuss possible misinterpretations after each example. When a participant’s example matches an item on the examples given in the “Unclear Communication” handout check that item. Use items that have not been checked to stimulate more discussion, and select one of the unchecked items to provide the basis for a transition to the second phase of the workshop. Give each participant a copy of the “Unclear Communication” handout so they have it for future reference.

Give each participant a copy of the “Principles for Effective Behavior” handout. Allow a few minutes for participants to read the handout and contemplate these principles. Let participants form small groups to discuss how these principles can be incorporated into the management of a classroom with younger students.
Dealing with Discipline

Wrap Up

Allow time for each group to share how they could implement the principles into their classroom.

Evaluation

"Few things help an individual more than to place responsibility upon him, and to let him know that you trust him."

Booker T. Washington

The effectiveness of this workshop can be gauged by whether participants are convinced that the principles of classroom behavior can be employed successfully, or are at least willing to try. Honest opinions on each question can probably be obtained by asking for a show of hands.
Books, Articles and Web Resources

A Biological Brain in a Cultural Classroom
This book is authored by Robert Sylwester and was published by Corwin Press in March 2000. The author of this book applies the latest in brain research and learning theory to classroom management. This book provides thoughtful connections between research and practice and challenges the reader to read, think, apply, and be sensitive to creating the optimum environment for individual success. Included are imaginative data-gathering activities to help students learn to manage their own behavior.

Positive Discipline in the Classroom: Developing Mutual Respect, Cooperation, and Responsibility in Your Classroom, 3rd ed.
This book is authored by Jane Nelson, Lynn Lott and H. Stephen Glenn and was published by Prima Publishing in 2000. This book shows teachers how to develop a community within the classroom and teach students how to be responsible learners and citizens. These are life skills. If students do not have these skills there is no way they can learn. Even though this book is written for public schools, it can be adapted for use in basic skills.
Author Notes

You may wish to discuss the principles of classroom behavior with a trained psychologist and/or do more research on the topic of classroom discipline before the workshop in order to gain a better understanding of these concepts and to be better prepared to generate examples and champion their effectiveness.
Principles for Effective Behavior

♦ You are in charge; assume that role.

♦ Students can behave appropriately; accept nothing less!

♦ Do not allow behaviors that will lead to failure.

♦ Avoid classroom confrontations, both to avoid embarassing the offending student and to avoid providing recognition to the offending student.

♦ When behavior problems arise, isolate the offending student and explain what behaviors are acceptable in your classroom.

♦ Show concern for the student’s learning.

♦ Show that learning by other students is of equal concern.

♦ Focus on success.

♦ Convey the attitude that acceptable behavior is the only behavior that will occur in your classroom.

♦ Demonstrate willingness to devote the time and energy necessary to accomplish the first nine principles.
Unclear Communication

Below is a list of some of the things instructors say and do when a student acts inappropriately and when the instructor does not believe the student is capable of acting appropriately. These unclear teacher communications really say to the student, “Keep doing the inappropriate behavior.”

1. **Ignore the behavior, hoping it will go away.**
   
   Implication: If I act like this isn’t happening, it will stop.

2. **Encourage the behavior**—Do that again. I dare you.
   
   Implication: I would like you to continue the behavior so I can show you what will happen to you.

3. **Honesty about symptom**—Just tell me the truth about it.
   
   Implication: I am more interested in the truth than I am in stopping the behavior that you have lied about.

4. **Concern about symptom**—Aren’t you even sorry you did it?
   
   Implication: It’s more important for you to feel remorse than to change the inappropriate behavior.

5. **Facing the problem**—If you will just face up to the problem!
   
   Implication: Facing the problem, whatever that might mean, is more important than eliminating it by changing the inappropriate behavior.

6. **Effort to change**—If you will just make an effort; try.
   
   Implication: It’s more important to try to change than to achieve a real change.
7. **Willingness to discuss reasons**—Tell me why you did it.

   Implication: The student can and should continue the behavior, but should talk more freely about his/her reasons for it.

8. **Thinking about behavior**—Just think before you act.

   Implication: The student is to continue the behavior but contemplate it each time before acting out.

9. **Willingness to learn and/or accept help**—You have to be open to new experiences. You have to be self motivated and willing to learn. If you would just let me help you, I’m sure we can solve this problem.

   Implication: You do not have to change the inappropriate behavior until you are open, cooperative and motivated. Until that time, it is not necessary to act appropriately.

10. **Learn from experience**—Keep that up and you’ll learn crime doesn’t pay. I guess you’ll have to learn from the school of hard knocks.

   Implication: Keep up the behavior, but learn from it. (Unfortunately, students with behavior problems seem to be slow learners.)

11. **Don’t get caught**—Just don’t ever let me catch you doing that again.

   Implication: Continue the behavior, but don’t get caught doing it.

12. **Abstract, meaningless directions**—Use common sense. Don’t give the teacher a hard time. Grow up. Be mature. Work up to your potential.
Implication: If you don’t have the quality specified (common sense, maturity), it’s OK to behave inappropriately.

13. **Statements of facts**—I see you didn’t bring your paper and pencil to class again. You’re not sitting in your seat. You’re acting out again.

Implication: The instructor is just providing obvious information rather than demanding change. This presumes that the student is unaware of the information and needs to be informed before he/she can change.

14. **Classification systems**—You’re a thief. You’re lazy.

Implication: These classifications are established facts. There is nothing the student can do to change.

15. **Questions**—How many times do I have to tell you? Why did you do that? What did I do to deserve a student like you? How long do you plan to continue misbehaving?

Implication: The student can continue the behavior as long as he/she provides an answer to the questions.

16. **Predictions**—You’ll flunk out of school. You’ll never grow up. You’re going to spend your life in jail. You’ll never amount to anything.

Implication: Keep up the behavior in order to fulfill the prophecy. The outcome has been determined.

17. **If-then contracts**—If you do these ten problems, you’ll get... If you do that one more time, I’ll... If “X” then “Y.”

Implication: The student has a choice; either alternative is acceptable.
18. **Punishments**—If you do that again, I’ll send you to the dean.

Implication: It’s OK to misbehave if you are willing to pay the price.

19. **Wishes, wants, and shoulds**—I wish you wouldn’t. You should know better. I want you to...

Implication: The adult is merely stating a preference which the student is free to disregard.

20. **Reasoning, inspiring, explaining, long lectures.**

Implication: The student doesn’t really understand his/her behavior to have complete insight into the implications of that behavior. He/she needs to have it explained repeatedly.

21. **Inconcruent positive non-verbals**—smiling, affections, nodding head, laughing.

Implication: The instructor is ambivalent about a demand for change.

22. **Indirect messages**—Locks on doors, surveillance, unbreakable furniture, etc. Also classroom interventions designed to help, but that unfortunately gives another message that says, “I don’t expect you to behave.”

Implication: The student is not capable of controlling his/her behavior.
Chapter 7
Classroom Activities

Introduction

In this chapter we present a variety of research-based classroom activities that were developed with our youngest students in mind. Each activity is divided into sections, thus providing the Adult Basic Skills instructor with a framework for dividing each activity into a number of smaller activities that can be adapted to various classroom settings. All activities integrate several subject areas. Computer, creative writing, effective communication and presentation, organization and problem solving skills are integrated and emphasized throughout the activities. The activities are designed to take several classes to complete; it is recommended that the
instructor use all or parts and pieces as they see fit to enhance the teaching and learning of their students.

Our youngest students often come to us with little knowledge of how to learn; some activities are designed to help students get to know themselves and learn how to learn. The “Getting to Know Myself” activity provides students with an opportunity to ask and answer questions about themselves. The “How Are YOU Smart?” activity helps students identify their dominant multiple intelligences and understand how to use these intelligences to enhance learning. The “Learning to Learn” activity helps students evaluate current study habits so they can make a plan to increase their learning effectiveness.

Several activities are designed to help our younger students learn more about the world in which they live. “Global Connections” fosters an understanding of global issues and cultures as students plan trips all over the world. “World Population” helps students understand how population density impacts our lives today and the impact that future growth will have on the lives of their children, grandchildren, and future generations.

Our students often have little knowledge of art. “Creative Writing” helps students understand the value of careful observation as a precursor to descriptive and creative writing. In addition, this activity may help students to look at and truly see a work of art for the first time.

Each activity is designed to appeal to younger students; however, we believe they are effective for students of all ages. Hence, we encourage their judicious use in any Adult Basic Skills classroom. Since the Adult Basic Skills instructor is the ultimate authority on his or her classroom and students, the instructor should evaluate the applicability of individual activities to each situation. We encourage trainers and instructors to modify activities in a way that maximizes effectiveness in the teaching and learning process.
Knowing one’s self plays a major role in life choices. Knowing computer technology and how to complete research on the Internet are also important skills. This activity combines technology and self-examination to develop materials for an effective essay.

This activity provides students with an opportunity to get to know themselves through asking and answering questions about themselves. They have an opportunity to reflect on how they see themselves and how they think others see them.

Internet searches help students to learn about their ethnicity, geographic region, career choices, values and consumerism, and interests. As part of this activity students use organizational skills to develop an essay about themselves.
Objectives

Students will

• improve computer knowledge and skills;
• understand themselves better through self-reflection; and
• demonstrate language skills through writing and communicating ideas effectively.

Materials & Equipment

Internet access
Word processing access

Handouts

Who Am I?
Profiling Me
Searching the Internet
Begin class by asking students, “How much do you know about yourself?” Explain that the better a person knows oneself, the more information one has when it comes to making life choices about education, careers, and families. Explain that this activity provides an opportunity for self-reflection and self-exploration.

Give each student a “Who Am I?” handout. Ask students to fill in the first column with descriptions they would use to answer the question, “Who am I?” When they have filled in the first column ask them to complete the second column with words or phrases that classmates and others might use to describe them. Students may even want to enlist the help of other students to fill in the second column.

Next, give each student a “Profiling Me” handout. Ask students to reflect on their “Who Am I?” handout. Tell them to imagine that they were asked to complete a “profile” of who they are. Instruct them to write a paragraph that advertises them as a human being. Explain that they should use catchy phrases and/or other interesting techniques to capture the reader’s attention. Students should write their “advertisement” so that after reading the description, the reader would know that they are someone worth meeting. Students should start with a topic sentence that catches the audience’s attention and then support it with details. Allow students to share their paragraphs with classmates. Tell them to keep the paragraphs to help them in developing an effective essay later.
Procedure, continued

Ask students questions such as: What do you know about your family tree? What have you wondered about your ancestors? Where did they come from? What they were like? How they lived? Explain that as part of the planning for their essay they will have the opportunity to use the Internet to search for information about their ethnicity, community, values and consumerism, and family issues. Explain that since there are so many areas for possible exploration that they need to limit their search to just those questions that are most important to them as an individual. Give each student a copy of the “Searching the Internet” handout to use as a guide.

Explain that after they have compiled all the information, they should develop an essay about themselves. Explain that the essay should consist of three to five paragraphs. Explain that they need to develop an introductory paragraph that catches the reader’s attention. Based on their Internet search, they should identify at least three areas to explore and write a topic sentence for each; then support each topic sentence with specific details and examples. Next they need to develop a concluding paragraph that summarizes key points in the essay.
Wrap Up

Ask students to share their essays with the rest of the class. This allows students to share who they are while learning about other students.

Emphasize the importance of celebrating diversity of students and what it means to the community.

Assessment


“People often say that this or that person has not yet found himself. But the self is not something one finds, it is something one creates.”

Thomas Szasz
Extension

Encourage students to continue to work on their identity. Some students may wish to begin a family tree or other genealogical study.

Have students identify key sites where they found pertinent information about their communities, home and families.

We all have many roles in life that help to form our individual identities. For example, a woman may be a daughter, mother, worker, English speaker, sister, etc. Have students complete an “Identity Circle.” A sample identity circle is included.

“Tell them... you’re never really a whole person if you remain silent because there’s always that one little piece inside you that wants to be spoken out, and if you keep ignoring it, it gets madder and madder and hotter and hotter, and if you don’t speak out, one day it will just up and punch you in the mouth from the inside.”

Audre Lorde

The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action
Author Notes

This activity was adapted from Lesson Number 17 from the Florida’s GED 2002 Teachers’ Handbook of Lesson Plans (http://www.aceofflorida.org/ged).
**Who Am I?**

In the first column list the words or phrases you would use in answering the question, “Who am I?” In the second column list words or phrases classmates or others use to describe you.

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Profiling Me

Reflect on your “Who Am I?” list. Imagine that you were asked to do a profile of yourself. Write a paragraph that advertises you as a human being. Use catchy phrases and/or other interesting techniques to capture your readers’ attention so that after reading your description, the readers know you are someone they want to meet.

Start by writing a general statement that catches the audience’s attention. Make sure you support your topic sentence with details.
Searching the Internet

Because websites often change or relocate to other sites, you need to conduct a search for the following sites. If you need help getting started, let your instructor know.

Search 1: My Ethnicity
Ethnicity includes your racial background and the particular cultures associated with it. Some people, especially those who are second and third generation-Americans are unfamiliar with their ethnic traditions and/or customs. Others are very conscious of their culture and strive to maintain connections in their daily lives. Search the Internet to find the following:

• World Languages and Regions of the World
• Listening to Different Cultures
• John G. Briggs, “Society grapples with racism.”

What did you learn about yourself from each of these sites?

Search 2: My Neighborhood/City/State/Country
There are many people who define themselves according to the geographic region in which they live. Others may talk about cities, states, national regions, or countries as important to their identity. How do you use your neighborhood to define who you are? Search the Internet for a history of the city in which you live or where you were born and raised.

What did you learn about yourself?
Search 3: Career Explorations
Planning for a successful career begins with knowing about yourself. Try searching the following sites to learn more.

- Youth Indicator Statistics
- Career Tool-kit
- Thinking of College/Vocation

What did you learn about yourself?

Search 4: Values and Consumerism
Your money counts! What is the value of your dollar? How can you make it stretch? Search the Internet for the following sites.

- You’re in My Money
- Where Your Money Goes

What did you learn about yourself?

Search 5: Areas of Interest
Do you participate in sports? Are you a musician? Do you sing? Do you have artistic abilities such as painting or acting? Do your recreational hobbies help define who you are? Search for sites related to your areas of interest.

What did you learn about yourself?
Identity Circle

We all have many different roles in life which help to form our individual identities. Some of our identities may play a more central role in our lives than others, and they may change over the course of a lifetime. Each of our identities gives us social rights as well as responsibilities.

Here is Kim’s identity circle:

Sometimes she finds that her different identities clash. For example, at school she learns about equal rights for women. At work, all of her managers are men.

Use the next page to do an identity circle for yourself.
My Identity Circle

Answer the following questions.

♦ Give examples of conflicting demands made by your different social identities?

♦ In which of your identities do you feel powerful?

♦ In which do you feel powerless?

♦ What gives you a sense of belonging?

♦ What things make you feel excluded?

Adapted from The Change Agent, Issue 6, February 1998, page 10. (Who adapted it from Language, Identify & Power by Hilary Jenks, Witwaterstrand University Press.)
People learn in a variety of ways. They can experience the same class in different ways. Some people do well in a lecture setting and some do not. Some people need hands-on learning to comprehend information. Some people learn well in groups and some people prefer working individually.

Most of our youngest students have not done well in the classroom setting. One reason may be because they have not been taught in a way that triggers their intelligence. Gardner developed the idea that people have different intelligences. They include bodily-kinesthetic, visual-spatial, interpersonal, intrapersonal, musical, logical-mathematical, linguistic, and naturalist. Each of us can have any combination of these intelligences. We learn best by the intelligence(s) that are dominant. This activity helps students identify their stronger and weaker intelligences and understand how to use different intelligences to enhance learning.
Chapter 7: Classroom Activities

Objectives

Students will
- learn about Gardner’s eight intelligences;
- understand how each person has a different combination of intelligences;
- identify their dominate intelligences; and
- learn how to apply the eight intelligences to enhance learning.

Materials & Equipment

Whiteboard
Flip chart
Markers

Handout

Test Yourself
How are YOU Smart?

Procedure

Complete the Multiple Intelligence Inventory yourself and choose one emotion to demonstrate your dominant multiple intelligences. Be ready to share your intelligences with the participants.

Place a list of intelligences on the board before beginning the activity. Discuss with students that people have different intelligences through which we learn.

Let students choose the one intelligence from the list they think is their strongest. Let students who chose the same intelligence work together to prepare a list of statements that describe people who have that dominant intelligence. Have them list their statements on flip chart paper and share their list with the class.

Give each student a copy of the “Test Yourself” handout. Let students complete the inventory to see which are their dominant intelligences. After finishing the inventory, discuss with students the results. Are their dominant intelligences what they thought prior to taking the inventory?
How are YOU Smart?

Procedure, continued

Explain to students that no one uses just one type of intelligence; everyone uses several different intelligences throughout their daily lives. It is just that some intelligences are stronger than others for each individual. Explain that one of the intelligences is not better or more important than another; each has its own strength.

Use ideas from the “Engaging the Intelligences” pages to explain each of the intelligences. Let students ask questions and discuss the concept. Then involve students in activities so that they have the opportunity to use each of the intelligences.

“How intelligence is the capacity to do something useful in the society in which we live. Intelligence is the ability to respond successfully to new situations and the capacity to learn from one’s past experiences.”

Dr. Howard Gardner
Wrap Up

Provide an opportunity for students to talk about each activity upon completion. Ask students how they felt after completing the activity? Did some find the activity easy while others found it hard? Discuss how dominant intelligences influence how one reacts to different activities?

Discuss how understanding multiple intelligences helps students in different learning and work environments.

Assessment

Ask students to write down the answer to two questions.

1. What is the most important thing you learned from this activity?

2. What is one thing that was discussed that you are still unclear about?

“How are YOU Smart?”

“Intelligence is quickness in seeing things as they are.”

George Santayana
Extension

As you plan lessons use ideas from the “Engaging the Intelligences” pages to approach subjects in different ways so that the intelligences are incorporated into each of your lessons.

Let students complete a learning style inventory to access their learning style. Discuss how learning styles and multiple intelligences are similar and different. The more your students understand about themselves and their learning preferences, the more their learning experiences are enhanced.

Discuss different careers that are closely related to the different intelligences. See the “Career Interests” page for careers in each of the different intelligences.

“How are YOU Smart?”

“It is not enough to have a good mind. The main thing is to use it well.”

Rene’ Descartes
Author Notes

This lesson can be used in the Adult Basic Skills classroom and as a workshop for instructors in Adult Basic Skills.

If students have Internet access, you may choose to let students find and complete an inventory on the computer. A list of Internet resources is included.
Internet Resources

Accelerated Learning Network
(http://www.accelerated-learning.net/multiple.htm)
The site provides a brief outline of the eight different intelligences and an easy-to-use inventory to test which of the intelligences you favor.

Learning Styles and Multiple Intelligences
(http://www.ldpride.net/learningstyles.MI.html)
This site provides an explanation of what learning styles and multiple intelligences are all about, an interactive assessment, and practical tips to make your learning style work for you. It discusses the importance of people with learning disabilities understanding their learning style and dominant multiple intelligences so they can develop coping strategies to compensate for weaknesses and capitalize on their strengths.

Multiple Intelligences for Adult Literacy and Education
(http://www.literacyworks.org/mi)
This site focuses on helping instructors and students discover their many intelligences and how to use them effectively in mastering whatever content is being learned. This site is recommend for use in assessing students’ multiple intelligences.

Tapping Into Multiple Intelligences
(http://www.thirteen.org/edonline/concept2class/month)
This site explains the theory of multiple intelligences, how this theory differs from the traditional definition of intelligence as well as the benefits of using multiple intelligences in the school setting to help students learn better.
Test Yourself

It’s not how smart you are that matters, what really counts is how you are smart. That’s the message from noted education professor Howard Gardner of Harvard University.

The practical implementation of Gardner’s "Theory of Multiple Intelligences" forms a significant part of our accelerated learning philosophy. Which of the intelligences do you favor? What are your strengths?

By answering the following questions you will be able to gauge which forms of intelligence are your strongest—and weakest. This will enable you to focus on making sure you make the most of your existing abilities and—if you so desire—see if you can develop some of the others.

Let us emphasize that most of us have a mixed portfolio of intelligences and that there is no purpose in trying to simply label someone as a ‘logical-mathematical’ type or a ‘bodily-kinesthetic’ type. The checklist is designed to help you develop a fuller appreciation of the intelligences you enjoy.

Check each statement which applies to you and add the totals.

Compare the totals from all eight intelligences and you will readily see your greatest strengths and weaknesses. The higher your score, the more you favor that particular intelligence.

The content of “Test Yourself” is provided by Accelerated-Learning, Inc. The original source of this content was from the book *Accelerated Learning for the 21st Century* by Colin Rose and Malcolm J. Nicholl published by Dell of New York.
Test Yourself

Naturalist

☐ You keep or like pets.

☐ You can recognize and name many different types of trees, flowers and plants.

☐ You have an interest in and good knowledge of how the body works—where the main internal organs are, for example, and you keep abreast on health issues.

☐ You are conscious of tracks, nests and wildlife while on a walk and can ‘read’ weather signs.

☐ You could envision yourself as a farmer or maybe you like to fish.

☐ You are a keen gardener.

☐ You have an understanding of, and interest in, the main global environmental issues.

☐ You keep reasonably informed about developments in astronomy, the origins of the universe and the evolution of life.

☐ You are interested in social issues, psychology and human motivations.

☐ You consider that conservation of resources and achieving sustainable growth are two of the biggest issues of our times.

___ Total
Test Yourself

Linguistic

☐ You enjoy word play. Making puns, tongue-twisters, limericks.

☐ You read everything—books, magazines, newspapers, even product labels.

☐ You can easily express yourself either orally or in writing, i.e. you’re a good story-teller or writer.

☐ You pepper your conversation with frequent allusions to things you’ve read or heard.

☐ You like to do crosswords, play Scrabble, or have a go at other word puzzles.

☐ People sometimes have to ask you to explain a word you’ve used.

☐ In school you preferred subjects such as English, history and social studies.

☐ You can hold your own in verbal arguments or debates.

☐ You like to talk through problems, explain solutions, ask questions.

☐ You can readily absorb information from the radio or audio cassettes.

______ Total
Test Yourself

Logical–Mathematical

☐ You enjoy working with numbers and can do mental calculations.

☐ You’re interested in new scientific advances.

☐ You can easily balance your checkbook; do the household budget.

☐ You like to put together a detailed itinerary for vacations or business trips.

☐ You enjoy the challenge of brain teasers or other puzzles that require logical thinking.

☐ You tend to find the logical flaws in things people say and do.

☐ Math and science were among your favorite subjects in school.

☐ You can find specific examples to support a general point of view.


☐ You need to categorize, group or quantify things to properly appreciate their relevance.

____ Total
Test Yourself
Visual–Spatial

☐ You have an appreciation of the arts.

☐ You tend to make a visual record of events with a camera or camcorder.

☐ You find yourself doodling when taking notes or thinking through something.

☐ You have no problem reading maps and navigating.

☐ You enjoy visual games such as jigsaw puzzles and mazes.

☐ You’re quite adept at taking things apart and putting them back together.

☐ In school you liked lessons in art and preferred geometry to algebra.

☐ You often make your point by providing a diagram or drawing.

☐ You can visualize how things look from a different perspective.

☐ You prefer reading material that is heavily illustrated.

___ Total
Test Yourself

Bodily–Kinesthetic

☐ You take part in a sport or regularly perform some kind of physical exercise.

☐ You’re quite adept at ‘do-it-yourself.’

☐ You like to think through problems while engaged in a physical pursuit such as walking or running.

☐ You don’t mind getting up on the dance floor.

☐ You like the most thrilling rides at the fun fair.

☐ You need to physically handle something to fully understand it.

☐ The most enjoyable classes in school were PE and any handicrafts lessons.

☐ You use hand gestures or other kinds of body language to express yourself.

☐ You like rough and tumble play with children.

☐ You need to tackle a new learning experience ‘hands on’ rather than reading a manual or watching a video.

___ Total
Test Yourself

Musical

☐ You can play a musical instrument.

☐ You can manage to sing on key.

☐ Usually, you can remember a tune after hearing it just a couple of times.

☐ You often listen to music at home and in your car.

☐ You find yourself tapping in time to music.

☐ You can identify different musical instruments.

☐ Theme music or commercial jingles often pop into your head.

☐ You can’t imagine life without music.

☐ You often whistle or hum a tune.

☐ You like a musical background when you’re working.

___ Total
Test Yourself
Interpersonal

☐ You enjoy working with other people as part of a group or committee.

☐ You take great pride in being a mentor to someone else.

☐ People tend to come to you for advice.

☐ You prefer team sports—such as basketball, softball, soccer, football—to individual sports such as swimming and running.

☐ You like games involving other people—bridge, Monopoly, Trivial Pursuit.

☐ You’re a social butterfly. You would much prefer to be at a party rather than home alone watching television.

☐ You have several very close personal friends.

☐ You communicate well with people and can help resolve disputes.

☐ You have no hesitation in taking the lead; showing other people how to get things done.

☐ You talk over problems with others rather than trying to resolve them by yourself.

_____ Total

SOCIAL (Interpersonal)
Test Yourself

Intrapersonal

- You keep a personal diary or log to record your innermost thoughts.
- You often spend ‘quiet time’ reflecting on the important issues in your life.
- You have set your own goals—you know where you’re going.
- You are an independent thinker—you know your own mind, make up your own mind.
- You have a private hobby or interest which you don’t really share with anyone else.
- You like to go fishing by yourself or take a solitary hike. You’re happy with your own company.
- Your idea of a good vacation is an isolated hilltop cabin rather than a five-star resort and lots of people.
- You have a realistic idea of your own strengths and weaknesses.
- You have attended self-improvement workshops or been through some kind of counseling to learn more about yourself.
- You work for yourself—or have seriously contemplated ‘doing your own thing.’

___ Total
Engaging the Intelligences

This content of “Engaging the Intelligences” is provided by Literacyworks, an educational nonprofit organization that was created to address the unmet educational needs of underprivileged and underrepresented adults, families and children through the use of technology. Web site: http://literacyworks.org.

Nature

People who are strong in the nature intelligence enjoy interacting with the outside world. They are adept at noticing patterns in nature and can easily distinguish between different species of flora and fauna.

Here are ways to work with this intelligence in your lessons:

• Spend time outside noticing patterns in nature.
• Read books and articles about nature and the environment.
• Take hikes or visit tidepools and record significant features about what you find.
• Compare seeds, seedlings, and adult plants. Mix them up and ask your learners to match each seed to its corresponding seedling and adult.
Language

People who are strong in the language intelligence enjoy saying, hearing, and seeing words. They like telling stories and are motivated by books, records, dramas, and opportunities for writing.

Here are ways to work with this intelligence in your lessons:

- Look at different kinds of dictionaries.
- Read plays and poetry aloud.
- Write a story for a book or newsletter.
- Keep a journal.
- Read from books written by or for new readers.
- Use a tape recorder to tape stories and write them down later.
- Read together, i.e., choral reading.
- Read aloud to each other.
- Read a section, then explain what you’ve read.
- Read a piece with different emotional tones or viewpoints—one angry, one happy, etc.
- Trade tall tales, attend story-telling events and workshops.
- Explore and develop the love of words, i.e., meaning of words, origin of words, idioms, and names. Research your name.
Spatial

People who are strong in the spatial intelligence remember things visually, including exact sizes and shapes of objects. They like posters, charts, and graphics. They like any kind of visual clues. They enjoy drawing.

Here are ways to work with this intelligence in your lessons:

- Write a language experience story and illustrate it.
- Study and create maps, diagrams and graphs.
- Color code words so each syllable is a different color.
- Write a word on the blackboard with a wet finger. Visualize the word as it disappears. After it disappears see if you can spell it.
- Take a survey. Put the information in a chart.
- Write words vertically.
- Cut out words from a magazine and use them in a letter.
- Use pictures to stimulate reading or writing.
- Visualize spelling words.
- Use the say-copy-look method of spelling.
- Use colorful newspapers like USA Today.
- Use crossword puzzles.
Logic/Math

People who are strong in the logic/math intelligence enjoy exploring how things are related. They like to understand how things work. They like mathematical concepts. They enjoy puzzles and manipulative games. They are good at critical thinking.

Here are ways to work with this intelligence in your lessons:

• Arrange cartoons and other pictures in a logical sequence.
• Sort, categorize, and characterize word lists.
• While reading a story, stop before you’ve finished and predict what will happen next.
• Explore the origins of words.
• Play games that require critical thinking. For example, pick the one word that doesn't fit: chair, table, paper clip, sofa. Explain why it doesn't fit.
• Work with scrambled sentences. Talk about what happens when the order is changed.
• After finishing a story, mind map some of the main ideas and details.
• Write the directions for completing a simple job like starting a car or tying a shoe.
• Make outlines of what you are going to write or of the material you’ve already read.
• Write a headline for a story you’ve just completed.
• Look for patterns in words. What’s the relationship between heal, health, and healthier?
• Look at advertisements critically. What are they using to persuade you to buy their product?
Body Movement

People who are strong in the body movement intelligence like to move, dance, wiggle, walk, and swim. They are often good at sports. They have good fine motor skills. They like to take things apart and put them back together.

Here are ways to work with this intelligence in your lessons:

• Go through your wallet and pull out three things to talk about.
• Trace letters and words on each other’s back.
• Use magnetic letters, letter blocks, or letters on index cards to spell words.
• Take a walk while discussing a story or gathering ideas for a story.
• Make pipe cleaner letters. Form letters out of bread dough. After you shape your letters, bake them and eat them!
• Use your whole arm (extend without bending your elbow) to write letters and words in the air.
• Change the place where you write and use different kinds of tools to write, i.e., typewriter, computer, blackboard, or large pieces of paper.
• Write on a mirror with lipstick or soap.
• Take a walk and read all the words you find during the walk.
• Handle a Koosh ball or a worry stone during a study session.
• Take a break and do a cross-lateral walk.
Musical

People who are strong in the musical intelligence like the rhythm and sound of language. They like poems, songs, and jingles. They enjoy humming or singing along with music.

Here are ways to work with this intelligence in your lessons:

- Use a familiar tune, song, or rap beat to teach spelling rules or to remember words in a series for a test.
- Create a poem with an emphasis on certain sounds for pronunciation.
- Clap out or walk out the sounds of syllables.
- Read together (choral reading) to work on fluency and intonation.
- Read a story with great emotion — sad, then happy, then angry. Talk about what changes — is it only tone?
- Work with words that sound like what they mean (onomatopoeia). For example: sizzle, cuckoo, smash.
- Read lyrics to music.
- Use music as background while reviewing and for helping to remember new material.
- Use rhymes to remember spelling rules, i.e., "I before E except after C."
Social

People who are strong in the social intelligence like to develop ideas and learn from other people. They like to talk. They have good social skills.

Here are ways to work with this intelligence in your lessons:

• Take part in group discussions or discuss a topic one-to-one.
• Read a dialogue or a play together.
• Do team learning/investigating projects.
• Set up interview questions. Interview your family. Write the results.
• Write notes to one another instead of talking.

Self

People who are strong in the self intelligence like the rhythm and sound of language. They like poems, songs, and jingles. They enjoy humming or singing along with music.

Here are ways to work with this intelligence in your lessons:

• Go on "guided imagery" tours.
• Set aside time to reflect on new ideas and information.
• Encourage journal writing.
• Work on the computer.
• Practice breathing for relaxation.
• Use brainstorming methods before reading.
• Listen to and read "how to" tapes and books.
• Read "inspirational" thought-for-the-day books.
• Read cookbooks.
Engaging the Intelligences

References

Language


Spatial


Logic/Math


Body Movement

Musical

Social

Self
Career Interests

Nature
biologists, farmers, landscapers, park rangers

Language
journalists, lawyers, poets, politicians, teachers, translators, writers

Spatial
architects, designers, engineers, inventors, mechanics, navigators, sculptors, visual artists

Logic/Math
accountants, computer programmers, engineers, mathematicians, researchers, scientists

Body Movement
actors, athletes, artisans, dancers, firefighters, physical education teachers

Musical
composers, disc jockeys, musicians, singers

Social
business people, counselors, salespeople, politicians

Self
philosophers, researchers, theorists
Learning to Learn

Overview

Many of our younger students come to us not knowing how to learn. Learning “how to learn” is an important step in the path to effective learning and future success. According to one author, “The path to effective learning is through knowing yourself, your capacity to learn, the process you have successfully used in the past, and the interest in, and knowledge of, the subject you wish to learn” (Landsberger, 2002).

There are four basic steps to learning: begin with the past, proceed to the present, consider the process and subject matter, and reflect on each learning experience. This activity acts as a guide to help Adult Basic Skills students understand how to learn and identify areas for improvement to help them learn more effectively. The procedure for completing this activity has four parts. This activity is most effective when conducted over a period of four different class meetings.

Subject Areas
- All

Skills Emphasis
- Study Skills
- Information Retention
Objectives

Students will
- understand the basic steps to learning;
- understand how to “learn to learn”; and
- identify areas to help them learn more effectively.

Materials & Equipment

Whiteboard or flipchart
Markers

Handouts

The Past
The Present
The Process
The Review
Part 1: The Past

Begin this activity with the question, “How do you learn to learn?” After a few minutes of discussion divide students into small groups. Ask each group to brainstorm and discuss the skills that are important for successful learning. For each skill they identify, they should also discuss why that skill is important. Suggest they identify someone in the group to be the “recorder” to record the skills and their importance. After the groups have completed their tasks, ask each group to share several things from their list. List the skills on the board. Take time to discuss why each skill is important.

Explain to the students that learning how to learn is an important step in the path to effective learning and future success. The path to effective learning is through knowing yourself, knowing your capacity to learn, knowing the steps used to learn in the past, and the interest and motivation for learning the subject matter in the present educational setting. Explain that today you are going to “guide” students through a four-step process of “learning to learn.” Explain that through a series of questions and discussion you are asking them to reflect on how they have learned in the past and to examine how they are learning in the present.

Give each student a copy of “The Past” handout. Ask students to reflect on their past learning experiences and to answer the questions truthfully.
Procedure, continued

After students have had time to complete the handout, go over each question with the class asking students to share some of their past learning experiences. Allow time for students to ask questions. Ask students to make a “Learning Improvements List” by writing down one or more skills they would like to work on to improve future learning.

Part 2: The Present

Begin with a brief review of Part 1. Explain to students that you want them to examine their present learning situation. Give each student a copy of “The Present” handout. Remind students that you want them to take an honest “look” into their present learning situation. After students have finished, discuss each question with the class. Allow time for students to share their answers and to ask questions.

Based on discussion and questions, you may want students to complete a learning styles assessment. Ask students to review their “Learning Improvements List” which they made during the first part of this activity. Allow time to help students “make a plan” to improve their future learning.
Part 3: The Process

Review the last two activities completed. Explain that students are going to examine the process for learning a particular subject. Ask students to use a recent learning experience to answer the questions. (You may want to have them refer to a particular section of their textbook or provide them with “subject matter” for this activity. Give each student a copy of “The Process” handout. Ask students to answer the questions truthfully.

Allow time for class discussion and questions. Ask student to review and revise the plan they made at the end of “The Present” activity. Allow time for students to share the revisions they are making to their “Plan.”

Part 4: The Review

Review the last three activities. Explain that you want them to reflect on a recent learning experience. Give each student a copy of “The Review” handout. Ask students to identify a recent learning experience. Give several examples such as complete the GED pretest for science, complete a chapter on China in social studies, read a book review, etc. Ask students to complete the questions on the handout in reference to the recent learning experience they identified.

Allow time for class discussion and questions. Ask students to review and revise the plan they made at the end of “The Past” activity or they may want to make a new plan. Allow time for students to share their plans.
Wrap Up

Ask students to reflect on what they learned and how it will help them with future learning. Advise students that in a week or so you will follow up on how well they are “sticking to” their plan.

Assessment

You will probably be able to assess the success through discussion and questions asked during the activity.

You could also collect copies of each students “plan” and after a couple of weeks talk to each student about how their plan is working. Discuss how they might make additional changes to learn even more effectively.

“Tasks begun well, likely have good finishes.”

Sophocles
Extension

Consider additional activities from this manual to complement this activity. In Chapter 6 there are activities for assessing learning styles and setting goals. Use the “Getting to Know Myself” activity from this chapter to help students learn more about themselves. Then consider the “How Are YOU Smart?” activity to help students understand and access multiple intelligences.

In addition to these activities consider activities to help students with additional learning skills such as time management, organizational skills, test taking skills, effective study habits, active listening, taking notes, etc. Excellent resources on these topics, and at least 80 additional topics, can be found at www.iss.stthomas.edu/studyguides. This site is written for higher education, but activities can easily be adapted for Adult Basic Skills.

“Education is a companion which no misfortune can depress, no crime can destroy, no enemy can alienate, no despotism can enslave.

Joseph Addison
Author Notes

This activity was adapted from *The Study Guides and Strategies* web site created by Joe Landsberger, University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota. Permission is granted to freely copy, adapt, print, transmit, and distribute the study guides found at the web site when used to benefit learners. Web site: www.iss.stthomas.edu/studyguides.
The Past
Examine your past learning experiences by asking yourself the questions below. Record your answers.

1. Did I like to read?

2. Did I know how to summarize?

3. Did I ask questions about what I studied?

4. Did I review?

5. Did I have access to information from a variety of sources?

6. Did I like to study alone or with a group?

7. Did I need several brief study sessions or one longer session?

8. What were my study habits?

9. How did my study habits evolve?

10. Which study habits worked best? Which did not?

11. How did I best communicate what I learned? Through a written test, a project, an interview...
The Present

Examine your present learning experience by asking yourself the following questions. Record your answers.

1. What am I presently learning?

2. How interested am I in learning this?

3. How much time do I want to spend learning this?

4. What competes for my attention?

5. Are the circumstances right for success?

6. What can I control, and what is outside my control?

7. Can I change these conditions for success?

8. What affects my dedication to learning this?

9. Do I have a plan?

10. Does my plan consider my past experience and learning style?
The Process

Examine your learning process by asking yourself the following questions. Record your answers.

1. What subject matter am I presently learning?
2. What is the heading or title?
3. What are key words that jump out?
4. Do I understand the key words?
5. What do I know about this subject already?
6. Do I know related subjects?
7. What kinds of resources and information will help me to learn?
8. Will I only rely on one source (a textbook) for information or will I need to look for additional resources?
9. As I study, do I ask myself whether I understand?
10. Should I go more quickly or more slowly?
11. If I don’t understand, do I ask why?
12. Do I stop and summarize?
13. Do I stop and ask whether it’s logical?
14. Do I stop and evaluate (agree/disagree)?
15. Do I just need time to think it over and return later?
16. Do I need to discuss it with other “learners” to process the information?
17. Do I need help from a teacher or tutor?
The Review
Examine your present learning experience by asking yourself the following questions. Record your answer.

1. What did I do right?
2. What could I do better?
3. Did my plan coincide with my strengths and weaknesses?
4. Did I choose the right conditions?
5. Did I follow through? Was I disciplined?
6. Did I succeed?
7. Did I celebrate my success?
What should our students know and understand about the world? What skills will they need to confront future global problems? According to The American Forum for Global Education students need to study global issues, global culture, and global connections. It is imperative that our students be prepared to become responsible citizens in a world where countries are interconnected and changing rapidly.

Students often have little world knowledge. Most of our students have had little chance to travel. This activity is designed to foster an understanding of global issues and cultures through the planning of a trip. Researching, making a scrapbook, sharing with others and writing about their “trip” allows students the opportunity to study global issues such as cultural diversity, human rights and values, and the diversity of places and environments around the world.
Objectives

Students will
• expand their world view;
• understand the physical and human characteristics of places and regions; and
• understand the similarities and differences of different cultures.

Materials & Equipment

Computers with Internet access
Information about how to contact embassies and consulates of other nations
Print and online reference materials about different regions
Notebook and / or scrapbook

Handouts

Before You Go…
Your Destination
Tell students they are going to plan a trip to different regions of the world. The entire class could choose one location to visit or by having students work in pairs or small groups they could plan trips to several destinations and then share with the class research results and travel plans. Suggested destinations are given on the “Your Destination” handout.

Brainstorm and discuss what questions a traveler needs answered before leaving on a trip. Sample questions are given on the “Before You Go…” handout. Students can brainstorm and discuss the kinds of arrangements they must make before leaving home if they want to have a satisfying and successful trip. List ideas on the board. Be sure the list includes transportation, accommodations, itinerary, packing, language, and customs.

Based on the brainstorm and discussion, outline the specific requirements and responsibilities for each group. Consider making a “Requirements and Responsibilities” handout. Allow time for additional questions and discussion after students have read the handout.
Global Connections

Procedure, continued

Students should keep a notebook and/or scrapbook containing their research, notes, and visuals. Let students know that their notebook should be organized to share with other students. Students should plan and present an oral presentation of their findings and recommendations. Be sure to include time for the audience to ask questions of the presentation group.

If you are able to locate people in the community who have traveled to or lived in a studied destination, invite him or her to visit the class after students have completed their presentations. Invite the guest to share stories, pictures and souvenirs, and answer questions students may have about their destination.

A person who has actually visited or lived in a region can share insights about the region that are almost impossible to duplicate from other sources.
Chapter 7: Classroom Activities

**Wrap Up**

Review with students the many different skills they used in completing this project.

Ask students to share the most interesting thing they learned about another country or culture.

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**Global Connections**

“The earth is a Paradise, the only one we will ever know. We will realize it the moment we open our eyes.”

*Henry Miller*

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**Assessment**

Have students evaluate each other based on a 3-point rubric.

3 points: exhibited strong research and writing skills; worked well with the group; completed all elements of the project.

2 points: exhibited average research and writing skills; worked with the group; completed most elements of the project.

1 point: exhibited weak research and writing skills; had difficulty working with the group; did not complete the project.
Extension

Ask students to use what they learned to write a fictional journal about a one-week visit to one of the destinations they learned about. The journals should be written in the first person.

Ask students to write an article for a travel magazine about one of the destinations they learned about.

Ask students to compare and contrast cultures of two different regions they learned about.

Ask students to compare his or her life to the life of an average person his or her age from one of the areas they learned about.

Have the class to the “Make a World Book” activity. Suggestions are included at the end of this activity.

“Writers seldom write the things they think. They simply write the things they think other folks think they should think.”

Elbert Hubbard
Author Notes

Consider using this activity as a semester project where groups plan travel to different regions every week or two.

Students can increase their vocabulary through maintaining a vocabulary list that includes new words with definitions and context sentences. Consider requiring a minimum number of words in their vocabulary list.

The American Forum for Global Education Internet site (www.globaled.org) was used as a source for this activity.
Before You Go...

Below are ideas and questions to help facilitate brainstorming and discussion about information that is needed to plan a trip. Based on the results of the brainstorming and discussion, the students and the instructor can decide on the responsibilities and requirements for the group projects.

**Destination**

- Where do you plan to travel, i.e. exact and approximate location? See the “Your Destination” handout for suggestions.

**Transportation**

- How will you travel from home to your selected destination?
- How far is your destination?
- How long will it take to get there?
- How will you get around once you arrive?
- How much will transportation cost?
- What documents will you need to leave the United States, enter your selected destination, and return?
Accommodations

• What kinds of accommodations are available? Campgrounds? Private homes? Youth hostels? Motels?

• How much will accommodations cost?

• How do you make reservations?

Itinerary and Packing

• What sights do you want to see in this area?

• How much time (days or weeks) do you need to see the sites?

• What kinds of clothes should you pack? In packing be sure to consider the climate and what you plan to do while there? Besides clothes, what else should you pack?

• How much spending money should you take? Cash, travelers’ checks or credit cards? What about currency exchange? Compare the value of the US dollar with the value of the currency in the chosen destination.
Language and Customs

- To be goodwill ambassadors for the United States, what should visitors know about the customs and value and belief systems of the people you are going to visit?

- Do we, as Americans, have any customs or value and belief systems that might surprise or offend your hosts?

- What should travelers be aware of (or do) to be sure they do not upset or annoy their hosts?

- What should visitors know about the languages, foods, and religions before traveling to this area?
Miscellaneous

• What would you like to learn about the people whom you might meet in this region and what would you like to share with them about your life in the United States?

• What types of clothes do the people wear? Do the men, women, and children dress differently? Why do they dress as they do?

• Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of living in this region.

• How has technological advancement impacted the region? Will you be able to e-mail your friends and family?

• What kinds of problems are experienced in this region, i.e. population, pollution, economic, etc?

• What special plants or animals live in the area?

• If you and a person from this region could exchange one personal item or possession, what would you want to give and what would you want to receive? Why?

• If you wanted to bring gifts back to the United States for family and friends, what type items would you most likely find available for purchase? What items does this area have for purchase that could not be brought back into the United States?
Your Destination

Africa

North Africa
Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia

West Africa
Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo

Central Africa
Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Republic of Sao Tome and Principe, Zaire

East Africa
Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda

Southern Africa
Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe
Asia

Southwest Asia
Middle East: Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Arabian Peninsula: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen
Northern Tier: Cyprus, Iran, Turkey

East Asia
Japan, Mongolia, North Korea, People’s Republic of China, Republic of China (Taiwan), South Korea

South Asia
India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka

Southeast Asia
Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar (Burma), Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam

Central Asia
Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Georgia, Armenia
Pacific Realm

Australia, New Zealand, Melanesia, Polynesia, Micronesia

Europe

Europe British Isles
Ireland, United Kingdom (Scotland, Wales, England)

Northern Europe
Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland

Western Europe
France, Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco

Southern Europe (Mediterranean)
Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, Andorra, Malta, San Marino, Vatican City

Eastern Europe
Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Poland, Ukraine, Moldova, Hungary, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Albania-Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia
The Americas

North America
Canada, Mexico, United States

Central America
Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama

Caribbean Islands
Bahamas, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Puerto Rico (US), Virgin Islands (US), Anguilla (UK), St. Kitts and Nevis, Antigua and Barbuda, Guadeloupe and Martinique (Fr.), St. Lucia, St. Vincent and The Grenadines, Grenada, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago Curacao (Neth.), Aruba (Neth.)

Northern South America
Columbia, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana

Central South America
Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Peru

Southern South America
Paraguay, Uruguay, Argentina
Make a World Book

As a group, brainstorm an outline for the writers of each article to follow so that articles contain the same type of information in the same order. A listing of possible topics to include in each article is on the next page. This listing is only suggestions of some of the items that might appear on the class-generated outline. The outline need not be limited to these topics.

Ask students to brainstorm the sources they can use to gather information. They may suggest encyclopedias, books published for travelers, web sites sponsored by governments or other credible organizations, etc.

Review with students the basics of note taking. Remind students to avoid plagiarism, explaining that in the proposed “World Book” they can summarize or paraphrase information from other sources but they must identify the sources by means of parenthetical documentation and end-of-article bibliography.

You may want to give students minimum and maximum word counts and typing specifications so that all articles will look the same.

Help students decide if all members of a group will be writers or if one will function as an editor/proofreader. Another alternative is to assign one student from each group to an editorial board that is responsible for writing an introduction to the encyclopedia after its members read and edit each article.

After first drafts are reviewed and each group has revised its article, students should work on the cover and binding for their “World Book.”
Topic Suggestions

**Geography of the Country:** longitude and latitude; size; height above sea level; advantages and disadvantages of being located where it is located, i.e. near the sea, landlocked, etc.

**Population:** birth and death statistics; major changes, if any; cultural groups and conflicts

**Human Rights:** value and belief systems

**Climate:** three hundred sixty-five identical days each year or variations

**Economy:** imports; exports; industries; currency and exchange rate in US dollars

**History:** changes over time

**Politics:** form of government; stability of government

**Military:** type of military; how large

**Education:** literacy statistics; average number of years of school per individual; access to higher education

**Health Issues:** major diseases; access to medical services

**Attractions:** historical sites, art, museums, etc.
Students make decisions based on data in their daily lives. Reading charts and graphs, interpreting data and making decisions or drawing conclusions based on the information are skills needed to be informed and responsible citizens.

This activity helps students learn about the world population and how the population has changed and continues to change.

One goal of this activity is to enhance academic skills. However, an underlying and perhaps the major goal is to help students gain a better understanding of the world and how population and population density changes as it relates to land area. Through research and class discussion students become aware of how population density affects the world; how population density impacts our lives today; and the impact that future growth will have on the lives of their children, grandchildren and future generations.
Objectives

Students will

• understand the world’s population;
• be able to organize and interpret data;
• be able to make charts and graphs; and
• use critical thinking and problem solving.

Materials & Equipment

For this activity, students need access to the Internet and/or other sources from which to collect the required information.

Each student needs a copy of the “Our World Population” handout, paper, pencil, and a calculator.

To make the graphs it may be helpful to provide paper, colored pencils, markers, rulers, protractors, and compasses.

World maps and globes are highly recommended to help students “see” the continents during class discussions.
Students can gather data on the population and land area for each of the seven continents using the Internet or other sources. Suggested Internet sites are included at the end of this activity. Ask students to organize their data using the “Our World Population” handout and then to complete the handout.

Students can make bar graphs and pie charts to show the best “picture” of their data. It is suggested they make three graphs; one must be a bar graph and one a pie chart. Remind students to make neat graphs and charts with proper labels.

Students can rank the population and land area from smallest to largest. Discuss and compare the graphs. Discuss the math skills used such as reading and calculations using larger numbers, changing fractions to decimals and decimals to percents, using division, estimation and rounding.

Ask students to answer questions based on their charts and graphs. Suggested questions are included at the end of this activity. Some questions may require additional research. Students can write a short article based on conclusions they drew from their charts, graphs, and class discussion.
Wrap Up

Students can share their articles by reading aloud or posting them in the classroom for others to read.

Assessment

“Population, when unchecked, increases in a geometric ratio. Subsistence increases only in an arithmetical ratio.”

Thomas Malthus

Conduct an informal analysis of the class discussion.

Collect the charts, graphs and stories for evaluation.
Extension

Students may conduct additional research about each of the continents’ past and future predicted population growth using the Internet, encyclopedia, or newspaper and magazine articles. Include additional math skills such as map reading, conversion between time zones, or using degrees to determine the size of the wedges in their pie charts.

Students may focus research on Mexico, United States, Canada or even the local area (city or county). Have students study the impact of population growth for different states or cities. Discuss and write about the impact this growth will have on their lives and their children’s/grandchildren’s lives.

“In a foreseeable future we shall be smothered by our own numbers… Preoccupation with survival has set the stage for extinction.”

John Steinbeck
Author Notes

This lesson may be divided into several classes or if the primary goal is to focus on making graphs supply the students with the data for the chart.

There are many Internet sites that contain all the data students will need to complete this activity; www.worldatlas.com was the site used to complete the answer key.
Suggested Questions

1. Which two continents have about the same population? (Africa and Europe)
2. How do these two continents compare in land size? (Africa is larger)
3. Which has more people per square mile? (Europe)
4. How does North America compare to Europe in population? (Europe has more people)
5. What continent is about the same size as Europe and Antarctica together? (North America)
6. What continent is around three times the size of Europe? (Africa)
7. As the world population continues to increase, what effect will this have on us, our children, grandchildren, etc.?

Questions below may require additional research.

8. How does the population density of cities or deserts compare to the population density of the continent as a whole?
9. If Antarctica was omitted would the world population density change? Would this change better reflect the population density? Why or why not?
10. If the population increases according to predictions, what effect will this have on our food supply, housing, roads, schools, etc.?
11. How do we slow population growth?
12. Should government be allowed to limit the number of children families are allowed? Which countries have limits on the number of children allowed? Does this limitation on the number of children create problems? What kinds of problems?
13. Discuss ways we, as citizens, could help/hurt our future where population growth is concerned.
## Our World Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continent</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Land Area (square miles)</th>
<th>Population %</th>
<th>Land Area %</th>
<th>Population Density</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Antarctica</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>North America</td>
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<tr>
<td>South America</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Population % = Population (in millions) divided by the total population.
Area % = Area (in millions of square miles) divided by the total area.
Population Density (# of people per square mile) = Population (in millions) divided by the area (in millions of square miles).
Our World Population Answers
(Answers may vary slightly based on research source.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Land Area (square miles)</th>
<th>Population %</th>
<th>Land Area %</th>
<th>Population Density</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>771,000,000</td>
<td>11,608,000</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antarctica</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5,100,021</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>3,637,249,000</td>
<td>17,202,000</td>
<td>60.8%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>211</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>30,264,000</td>
<td>3,132,059</td>
<td>.5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>728,435,000</td>
<td>3,837,081</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>471,166,000</td>
<td>9,449,460</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>339,000,000</td>
<td>6,879,000</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>5,977,114,000</td>
<td>57,207,621</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>104</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source for population and land area: www.worldatlas.com. Population %, Land Area % and Population Density were calculated. Percents rounded to nearest tenth or whole number for easier graphing.
Total Population of the World by Decade, 1950–2050

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>World Population* (number of people)</th>
<th>Land Area** (in square miles)</th>
<th>Population Density (# of people per square mile)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>2,556,000,053</td>
<td>57,500,000</td>
<td>44</td>
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<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>3,039,451,023</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>3,706,618,163</td>
<td>57,500,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>4,453,831,714</td>
<td>57,500,000</td>
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<td>1990</td>
<td>5,278,639,789</td>
<td>57,500,000</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>***5,977,114,000</td>
<td>57,500,000</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>***6,848,932,929</td>
<td>57,500,000</td>
<td>119</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>***7,584,821,144</td>
<td>57,500,000</td>
<td>132</td>
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<tr>
<td>2030</td>
<td>***8,246,619,341</td>
<td>57,500,000</td>
<td>143</td>
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<tr>
<td>2040</td>
<td>***8,850,045,889</td>
<td>57,500,000</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2050</td>
<td>***9,346,399,468</td>
<td>57,500,000</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Time Almanac 1999, p. 150*, p. 154**  *** projected population
One of the greatest qualities of art is the way it "speaks" to each of us. People may share opinions about a work of art and even feel similar emotional responses, but ultimately our reactions to art and our interpretations of it are as individual as we are.

In this activity students express their unique responses to art by writing stories inspired by paintings in an art museum. Before they put their imaginations to work, each person has a chance to get to know a painting by observing it closely, making a list of its details, and writing a description of it. Such an exercise helps students understand the value of careful observation as a precursor to descriptive and creative writing. It also helps learn how to look at and truly see a work of art.
Objectives

Students will

• understand the value of careful observation;
• understand the differences between descriptive and creative writing;
• learn to distinguish between factual and judgmental language;
• learn to write descriptive text using only facts;
• learn to write creative stories using both facts and judgmental language; and
• learn to look at and truly see a work of art.

Materials & Equipment

Pictures of famous paintings
Masking tape

Handout

Visual Story Guidelines
Collect pictures of famous paintings (postcards, books, calendars, etc.) that portray at least one human figure or use the Internet to print pictures. Internet sites are included at the end of this activity. Tape the pictures to a wall in the hallway or around the classroom to simulate an art gallery.

Let students select a painting of interest to them. Give each student a copy of the “Visual Story Guidelines.” Go over the guidelines with the students. Ask students to carefully observe their picture selection and list as many details as possible about the appearance of the painting. Explain that they should list only physical aspects of the painting. They should avoid emotions, assumptions, and making judgments about the painting.

Instruct students to write a description of their painting using the list of details they created and their memory of the painting. Explain that they should describe the painting in such a way that a person reading their description could easily find the work if they looked through the pictures or visited a museum. Tell students to avoid using language that makes assumptions about what is happening in the painting or that expresses their own opinions in any way. For now, students should simply describe what physically appears in the painting.
Procedure, continued

Ask volunteers to read their descriptions aloud. Ask the listeners to name the details they remember. Discuss any judgmental language (viewer’s interpretation or feelings) that “slipped” into the descriptions. Remind students that their descriptions are to include “just the facts.”

Ask students to choose a partner. Let students exchange descriptions. Ask students to sketch a picture based on their partner’s description. Ask students to find their partner’s painting. Partners should not give any hints. Allow students to take the descriptions, as well as their drawings, with them as they search.

Have students evaluate their descriptions. After they have had time to find the paintings their partners described, gather the students together to discuss the effectiveness of the descriptions. Start by asking how many of them found the paintings their partners described. Have volunteers discuss the aspects of the descriptions that helped them find the correct painting.

Give students time to write stories about their paintings. See the “Suggestions for Instructors” for additional procedures for story writing. Display the students’ stories along with their selected pictures.
Wrap Up

Ask several students to re-read their descriptions and show the sketches created based on the descriptions. Does the writer think the description “worked?” Does the sketch show any details of the actual painting? Let the class discuss how the descriptions could be improved?

Ask other students to read their stories and show the picture of the painting. Do the students think the story captures the essence of the painting?

Assessment

Let the class rate the descriptions as they are read aloud and discussed. Consider a rubric such as:

1 = Inadequate description
2 = Adequate description
3 = Good description
4 = Excellent description

Evaluate stories using a similar rubric.

“The difference between the almost right word and the right word is really a large matter—’tis the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning.”

Mark Twain
Extension

Field Trip: Take students on a field trip to a museum. Allow them to study the artwork and make a selection about which to write their stories.

Newspaper Stories: Let students choose a funny or unusual photograph in the newspaper, cut it out and glue it onto a piece of paper. Ask students to write about what is happening in the photo and what happened later after the photo. Let students share their stories with each other and the instructor to get ideas for revision. Let students write their final draft. Bind the pictures and stories to make a book.

Photo Stories: Let students take pictures of people, including other students, in action. Post the pictures on a bulletin board. Discuss as a class what is happening in each picture. As action verbs are used write them on the board. Let students work in small groups to write sentences using the action verbs to describe the photos. Let the class match the sentences with the photos. Let students write stories about the photos. Bind the photos and student stories to make a book.

“The pen is the tongue of the mind.”

Cervantes, Don Quixote
Creative Writing

Author Notes
This activity was adapted from a lesson at http://educate.si.edu/resources/lessons/collect/telpai/telpai0a.htm
Suggestions for Instructors

Writing a story about their painting helps students combine the visible aspects of art with the feelings and ideas art inspires.

Explain that the students should use their descriptions of the paintings as a basis for creating their stories, but allow them to revisit the paintings if necessary. Tell the students that, unlike their descriptions, the stories need not be limited to physical facts. Any emotions or judgments the students wish to incorporate into their stories, as well as any way they wish to interpret what is happening in the paintings, is fine.

One way students might want to approach their stories is to concentrate on what is currently happening in the painting. Explain that if they take this approach, it might be helpful to treat the painting as if it were a frozen frame in a movie. To set the painting into motion, they can mentally "unfreeze" the frame.

Other approaches to telling the painting’s story include writing about what has just happened or about what is going to happen. Explain to the students that whatever they write, they must not contradict any factual information about the painting.
VISUAL STORY GUIDELINES

List details

- List every detail that you see in the work.
- Do NOT include emotions that the work evokes.
- List countable things, such as all the red, blue, or black items in the work.
- Write all the things that are NOT in the picture. For example, do you see all the fingers on the subject's right hand? Did the painter portray both the left and the right side of the subject's face?
- Do NOT include reactions to the content of the work

Write a short description

- Provide information but withhold all judgments.
- Write so that another person can read the description and instantly recognize the work.

Share descriptions

As you listen to your classmates' papers, keep these questions in mind:

- What details do you remember from the description?
- Did the writer include any comments that were not just descriptions? If so, what are they?

Tell your story

- Tell the “story” of the painting.
- Write the story of what has just happened or what is about to happen.
Internet Resources

Museums on the Internet
(http://www.museumca.org/usa/)
This site is a great starting point for a “tour” of museums around the world. This site includes links to museums and galleries in the United States as well as links to cultural institutions worldwide.

The Smithsonian Institution
(http://www.si.edu)
This is the home page of sixteen museums and research institutes, including the National Air and Space Museum, the National Museum of American Art, the National Museum of American History, the National Museum of Natural History, and the National Portrait Gallery. For Spanish-speaking or bilingual students, check out "¡del Corazón!," an electronic magazine that offers images of Latino artwork from the National Museum of American Art as well as lessons and activities based on these works.


