

Professional Development Monthly Advisor and Planner (PD MAP)

Theme: Selecting Materials for Adult Learners

September 2010

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Welcome to the September Professional Development MAP!

It's September and adult education and family literacy classes are in full swing around Colorado. Of special significance this year is Adult Education and Family Literacy Week taking place September 13-19. This Congressional declaration was sponsored by Rep. Jared Polis [D-CO] with twenty co-signers in the House. Colorado's Governor Bill Ritter signed a similar proclamation. Hats off to CAEPA Board members who championed the proclamation through the governor's office.

This issue of the PD MAP focuses on selecting materials that are of relevance and interest to adult learners and are at an appropriate skill level. Two broad categories of materials are addressed: first are published textbooks and electronic media written specifically for adult learners by specialists in the field; second are authentic materials written for the general American audience, sometimes referred to as "real life" texts. There are valid justifications for using both types of materials with adult learners; the teacher's role is to find the optimal balance of materials during instruction. There are thousands of textbooks and authentic materials available to teachers. Links to specific materials for teaching ABE, ASE, and ESL have been provided in previous PD MAPs. The articles in *this* PD MAP focus on how teachers, when faced with a plethora of potential materials for use in the classroom, can effectively evaluate these materials and make appropriate choices for their learners. Appropriate materials meet learners' needs, interests, and skill levels and motivate them to persist in their studies.

Best Regards,

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Self-Study:

Educational Functioning Levels

National Reporting System

<http://www.nrsweb.org/docs/ImplementationGuidelines.pdf> Scroll down to pages 21-26/154

This document describes what adult learners can be expected to know and be able to do when they are initially placed into instruction. The tables describe four areas: basic reading and writing, functional and workplace skills, numeracy skills (ABE/ASE only) and listening and speaking (ESL only). These levels are used in Colorado AEFL programs and nationwide. When evaluating textbooks or authentic materials for use in the classroom, check to see if the content and skills taught match the EFL descriptors for the intended learners.

Creating Authentic Materials and Activities for the Adult Literacy Classroom: A Handbook for Practitioners

Jacobsen, E., Degener, S., and Purcell-Gates, V., National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL), 2003

<http://www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/teach/jacobson.pdf>

This handbook explains the research behind using authentic materials with ABE/ASE/ESL learners as a motivator for diversifying their home literacy practices, guides teachers in selecting and/or developing materials and activities that are contextualized in their learners' lives, and explains how contextualized instruction can fit with standardized assessment. A 3-step self-paced online module using the handbook is available at <http://www.ncsall.net/?id=1068>

How to Choose a Good ESL Textbook for Adult Education and Family Literacy Learners

Santopietro-Weddel, K., Northern Colorado Professional Development Center, 2009

<http://ae.stvrain.k12.co.us/ncpdc.html> (Scroll down to Independent Study Courses)

Through this self-study course teachers will understand the benefits of using textbooks for classroom or individual instruction, identify types and major components of ESL textbooks, identify criteria for choosing and evaluating learner-centered, effective ESL textbooks, and create program-specific criteria for choosing textbooks. The course describes five categories of textbooks, more than a dozen components of student books and teacher guides, and three checklists of standards of effective instructional materials for ESL adults. Web links to major publishers of ESL textbooks for adults are included.

From Lessons to Life: Authentic Materials Bridge the Gap

Spelleri, M., ESL Magazine, March/April 2002

<http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED472794.pdf>

(Scroll down to page 50 of the pdf)

This article justifies the use of authentic materials with ESL learners, explains the teacher's role as filter and cultural guide for the materials, explains how to use authentic materials in a lesson and provides sample criteria for selecting authentic materials.

Fry Readability Formula, Flesch-Kincaid Readability Formula, Gunning-Fog Index

Fry: <http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/fry/fry.html>

Flesch-Kincaid: Available in Microsoft Word for electronic text. Use the Help feature for instructions.

Gunning-Fog (and others): <http://www.readabilityformulas.com/gunning-fog-readability-formula.php>

An important step in when considering whether to use a particular textbook or authentic material with adult learners is to check its readability level to assure that the readability is neither too hard or too easy for the intended learners. Teachers can use any of these readability formulas.

Textbook Selection for the ESL Classroom

Garringer, D., Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, 2002

<https://www.cal.org/resources/digest/0210garinger.html> or

[http://www.cal.org/resources/digest_pdfs/0210garinger.pdf](http://www.cal.org/resources/digest/digest_pdfs/0210garinger.pdf)

This article guides teachers through a process of evaluating ESL textbooks. Four criteria are considered: the textbook's alignment with the program's curriculum and goals, the language skills presented in the textbook, the exercises and activities, and practical concerns. A checklist is included.

Using the Newspaper in Adult Literacy and ESL Instruction

Thinkfinity, Self-paced online course, 60 min. approx. completion time, free

<http://literacynetwork.verizon.org/TLN/courses>

When finished with this course, instructors will be able to identify components of a newspaper that can be used to prepare lessons for adult literacy students and will have practiced six ways to use newspapers with adult literacy students. These lessons can be used in small groups, with classes, or in one-to-one tutoring with ABE/ASE and ESL learners.

News for You (Subscription fee required)

<http://www.newsforyouonline.com>

News for You is a print and/or online news source for people who are learning to read, write, or speak English. Seven new stories based on world and national events are posted weekly for 48 weeks a year. The articles are written at ABE reading levels 3-6 and ESL levels high-beginning and low-intermediate. Each online article also includes audio where readers can listen to the whole article or sentence by

sentence. Each online article is accompanied by interactive exercises to enhance understanding of the key concepts. A teacher's guide is included each week.

The Outside World as an Extension of the EFL/ESL Classroom

Pegrum, M.A., Internet TESL Journal, Vol. VI, No. 8, August 2000

<http://iteslj.org/Lessons/Pegrum-OutsideWorld.html>

This article defends the use of authentic materials and experiences at all levels of ESL as a bridge between the classroom and the outside world, describes 15 activities for ESL learners from beginning to advanced, and describes potential problems that teachers must keep in mind when using the outside world as a resource.

Choosing and Using Web Sites for Literacy Instruction: Evaluation Resources and Strategies

Hacker, E., 2000 National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL)

<http://www.ncsall.net/?id=312>

This article shows adult education teachers how to think critically when choosing Web sites for instruction. It presents questions to ask in four areas: authorship, design and navigation, content/information, and currency. Additional considerations covered are graphic design, reading level, and accessibility to learners with disabilities. Though written at a time when using the Web was new to many teachers, the evaluation process still rings true.

Using Video with Adult English Language Learners

Burt, M., Center for Adult English Language Acquisition (CAELA), 1999

http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/video.html

This digest focuses on using video with adults learning English as a second language (ESL). It provides a rationale for using video with these learners, presents guidelines for selecting and using videos in instruction, discusses some commercial videos used in adult ESL programs, and concludes with a discussion of the future of video use in instruction.

Using Software in the Adult ESL Classroom

Gaer, S., Center for Adult English Language Acquisition (CAELA), 1998

http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/SwareQA.html

This digest focuses on selecting and using software with adults learning English as a second language (ESL). It identifies criteria for selecting software that is appropriate for adult learners, explains how to prepare learners to use the software, how to coordinate the software with the curriculum, how to integrate software into instruction and ways to conduct follow-up activities.

Selecting and Sharing Books with Young Children

Thinkfinity and the National Center for Family Literacy, Self-paced online course, Parts I and II, 45 min. approx. completion time each Part, free

<http://literacynetwork.verizon.org/TLN/courses>

This course helps family literacy instructors understand essential criteria for selecting books for children (birth to age eight) and helping young children select books. Characteristics of quality are covered and six methods for choosing books are presented. In the second part, teachers explore the impact of early book experiences on children, expand read-aloud techniques, and learn book-sharing strategies.

Collaboration with Colleagues:***Using the National Action Plan to Improve Health Literacy***

September 13th, email discussion list

National Institute for Literacy, Health Literacy Discussion List

<http://www.nifl.gov/lincs/discussions/healthliteracy/10action>

The NIFL health literacy online discussion list lets you connect with adult educators around the nation through email. Subscribers discuss critical issues in health literacy for adult learners, share resources, experiences, and ideas, ask questions of subject experts, and keep up-to-date on new developments.

The list is moderated by an individual with significant expertise in the topic.

To subscribe: <http://www.nifl.gov/lincs/discussions/healthliteracy>

Foundations of Teaching Adult Numeracy facilitated online course

September 20 - October 29, Fee: \$179

World Education Inc. and ProLiteracy

For course description: <http://newreaderspress.com/downloads/NU10F.pdf>

To register: <http://www.newreaderspress.com/Items.aspx?hierId=6528>

Questions: 888.528.2224 ext. 221; prodev@proliteracy.org

Teaching and Learning in Authentic Contexts

Study Circle, National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy, 2003

<http://www.ncsall.net/?id=897>

This three-part study circle examines the research that supports teaching and learning in an authentic context, discusses the practice of contextualized instruction, and examines the challenges and supports for teachers as they implement contextualized teaching in their classes. To conclude, participants plan lessons to make their instruction more contextualized. All necessary materials are downloaded from the CAELA site. The study circle can be facilitated locally by using the Facilitator Guide or by CDE/AEFL professional development staff upon request.

Contact Jane Miller, miller_j@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-6611.

To conduct a 60-90 minute staff discussion of any articles in Self Study, use the following resource:

Guidelines for Facilitating Discussion Groups

<http://www.calpro-online.org/pubs/DiscussionGuidelineforResearchPublications.pdf>

Workshops, Trainings, Conferences:

Foundations in Family Literacy Training

September 8-9, 2010, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm

Boulder Valley School District, 6500 Arapahoe Ave., Boulder

Sponsor: CDE, Office of Federal Program Administration-Even Start and AEFL Office

Contact: Karen Carr, BVSD, 720.561.5826; karen.carr@bvsd.org or

Debbie Butkus, BUTKUDL@D11.ORG

[Download registration flyer](#) (pdf)

Adult Education and Family Literacy Week

September 13-19, 2010

Nationwide celebration to raise awareness of adult education and family literacy issues. This Congressional declaration, H. Res 1472, was sponsored by Rep. Jared Polis [D-CO] with twenty co-signers in the House. The website below provides suggested activities organized by three roles: program directors, instructors, and partners. Check with your program director for local activities and celebrations.

<http://www.ncladvocacy.org/aeft.html>

Volunteer Training

September 18, 9:30 a.m. – 12:40 p.m.

Literacy Coalition of Colorado

Highlands Ranch Library, 9292 Ridgeline Blvd., Highlands Ranch

A variety of 90-minute workshops on topics pertinent to ABE, GED, and ESL instruction.

To register contact: Karen Bowen, 720.497.7758

Colorado Nonprofit Association 2010 Fall Conference and Exhibition

September 30 – October 1

Sheraton Hotel Downtown Denver

For information and registration: <http://www.coloradononprofits.org/FallConference/default.asp>

Questions: 303-832-5710 or 800-333-6554

Community College of Aurora, www.ccaurora.edu, Dates: September 8 - November 20
EDU 133 Adult Basic Education (ABE)/Adult Secondary Education (ASE/GED)

Red Rocks Community College, Arvada Campus, www.rrcc.edu
EDU 134 Teaching English as a Second Language to Adult Learners
 Dates: Oct. 2 & 16, Nov 13, Dec. 4, and attendance at Rendezvous Oct. 22-23 or CoTESOL Nov. 12-13

CCOnline, www.cconline.org, Dates: October 4 - December 12
EDU 131 Introduction to Adult Education
EDU 132 Planning, Organizing and Delivering Adult Education Instruction
EDU 134 Teaching English as a Second Language

Additional Professional Development Resources:

Developing Materials and Curriculum: The Process and the Product

Ullman, C., Becker, A., *Focus on Basics*, Volume 1, Issue D., December 1997
 National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL)
<http://www.ncsall.net/?id=430>

This interesting article describes how teachers at one adult education program wrote their own textbook on the topic of immigrant rights based on learner interest and input.

CDE/AEFL Professional Development Hours

All professional development options listed on this PD MAP earn CDE/AEFL PD Hours as described in the *Guide to Professional Development Reporting* at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeadult/download/pdf/GuideToPDRreportingV2.pdf>
 For annual AEFLA reporting, teachers completing Self-Study or Collaboration with Colleagues options simply confer with their program director and record the number of PD Hours earned on their *Teacher's Annual Professional Development Activity Record*. Teachers completing workshops, training, or courses for credit receive certificates with PD Hours or transcripts.
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeadult/download/pdf/AnnualPDActivityRecordFY09v3.pdf>
 The PD options listed under the Self-Study strand are not acceptable for the LIA Portfolio training hours or for renewing a LIA. <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeadult/LIAIndex.htm>

Follow-up to This Month's Professional Development

The CDE/AEFL office is hosting a 1-hour discussion on Friday, **October 1**, 2010 at 9:00 am to follow-up with teachers who complete any of the PD options listed in this month's PD MAP. The conference call allows teachers across the state to connect with each other to ask and answer questions about this month's theme of *Selecting Materials for Adult Learners* and to share successful strategies and ask for advice regarding challenges. Teachers who participate in the conference call earn 1 additional PD Hour. Please register online by Wednesday, September 29 at <http://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?formkey=dFlnem5sQUJlaVHU3UTNsajNpWVN6eHc6MA>

To find this issue of the PD MAP on our Web site go to:
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeadult/PDMAP.htm>

PD Advisory Group Mission Statement

To create an integrated, accessible, and flexible system of professional development for adult education teachers in Colorado.

"For the whole point of pedagogy is that it is a way of short-circuiting the slow process of natural discovery and can make arrangements for learning to happen more easily and more efficiently than it does in natural surroundings."
 Widdowson, H. G. (1990). *Aspects of language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

October 2010 PD Monthly Advisor & Planner
Theme: Student-Centered Learning

CDE/AEFL Professional Development Advisory Group members:

Jane Miller, CDE/AEFL; Mary Jo Sobocinski, McLain Community High School, Lakewood; Connie Davis, Northern Colorado Professional Development Center, Longmont; Debra Fawcett, CDE/AEFL; Dave Askeland, CMC Adult Education, Breckenridge Campus; Karin Hostetter, Summer Scholars, Denver; Carmen Collins, SD-11 Adult and Family Education, Colorado Springs