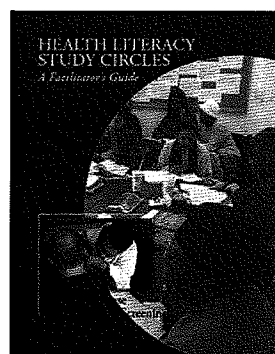
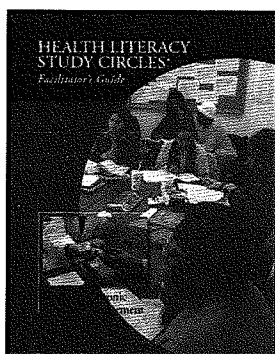
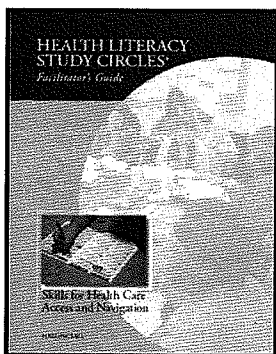


# HEALTH LITERACY IN ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

## Designing Lessons, Units, and Evaluation Plans for an Integrated Curriculum



**HALL/NCSALL 2007**

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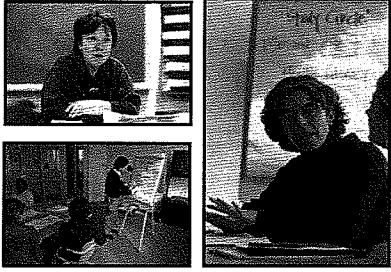
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## Preface

This guidebook is designed for use by educators who are interested in integrating health literacy skills into their current adult education instruction (ABE, GED, and/or ESOL classes). The approach taken here reflects an emphasis on literacy, numeracy, and communication skills and draws on the existing strengths of adult educators. The guide provides tools for the development of health literacy units, lessons, and evaluation plans.

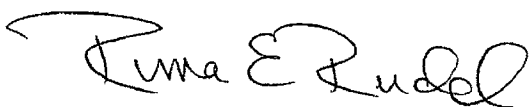
The overall goal is to enhance students' abilities to engage in health activities. Findings from national surveys indicate that the majority of U.S. adults have difficulty using health materials and are stymied in their attempts to engage in the wide variety of health activities needed to maintain their own and their families' health and well being.

These materials were developed as part of the ***Health Literacy Study Circles<sup>+</sup>*** Series -- program facilitation guides created for professionals responsible for continuing education courses for adult educators. The series consists of three facilitation guides, each addressing sets of literacy skills for critical health issues: access to and navigation of health services, management of chronic diseases, and engagement in disease prevention and screening. These guides were distributed to all state adult education offices and are posted on line. They have been piloted and used in cities and states throughout the country.

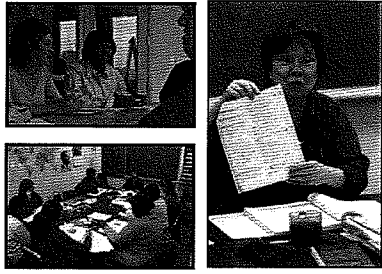
Many adult educators – both those who participated in one or more ***Health Literacy Study Circles<sup>+</sup>***, as well as some who have not been able to do so, requested that a smaller and more accessible set of materials be developed for teachers themselves. This guidebook provides an overview of the skills based approach and offers suggestions for conducting a needs assessment as well as templates for health literacy unit, lesson, and evaluation design.

Readers will be interested in the various sample health literacy lessons contained in each of the ***Health Literacy Study Circle***<sup>+</sup> guides. The sample lessons were used during the course of the study circle. Participants used or adapted lessons of choice in their own classes and then analyzed their experiences with other participants. The sets of lessons within each guide do not represent full health literacy units but instead provide examples of types of lessons, types of topics to be addressed, and skills to develop –for various levels of instruction.

We hope this material is useful to you and helps support you in your very important work. Researchers and practitioners in the health fields are coming to recognize that health literacy is not independent of general literacy skills. Policy makers are more aware of how much adult educators can and do contribute to the development of health literacy among adults.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rima E. Rudd". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rima" being the most prominent.

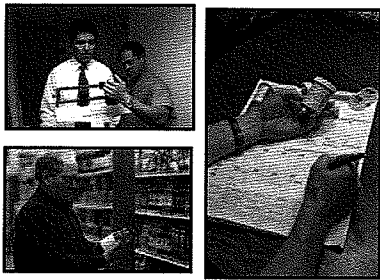
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## Introduction and Background

### What is “health literacy”?

The definition of the term *health literacy* is still evolving. Many definitions focus on adults’ ability to use health materials. In 2007, the National Institutes of Health offered the following definition:

*Health literacy incorporates a range of abilities: to read, comprehend, and analyze information; decode instructions, symbols, charts, and diagrams; weigh risks and benefits; and, ultimately, make decisions and take action.*

Health literacy is often viewed as functional literacy and focuses on the skills adults need in order to make use of health resources, make health decisions, and take actions for their own and their families’ well being. Health literacy extends beyond the ability to read a health information brochure to include following safety guidelines on products, determining the best health plan, using a label to take medicine, communicating symptoms to a health professional, requesting information, and advocating for one’s rights to a safe work environment or to dignified treatment.

### Why integrate health literacy into adult education?

A growing body of public health and medical literature indicates that those who are poor and those with less education are more likely to face health problems than are those with higher income and more advanced education. For example, the 1998 report from the Secretary of Health and Human Services to the President and Congress indicated that health status is related to income and education.

- Children in lower income families are less likely to receive needed health care than are children from higher income families.
- Adults under the age of 65 with low family incomes are less likely to have health insurance coverage compared to adults with higher incomes.
- Life expectancy is related to family income. People with lower family income tend to die at a younger age than are those with higher income.

- Adults with low incomes are far more likely to report fair or poor health status compared with adults who have higher incomes.
- Infant mortality is more common among the children of less educated mothers than among children of more educated mothers.
- Adults with less education are more likely to die from chronic diseases, communicable diseases, and injuries than are adults with more education.<sup>1</sup>

To fully address health disparities will require an effort on the part of the medical field, adult educators, as well as adult learners themselves. The role that adult educators can play is a significant one. Working with students in adult education classes represents an important opportunity to reach out directly to people who may face health disparities. Helping students to develop skills that can be applied to health contexts is an important step toward improving health outcomes for our students and their families.

## **The Role of the Adult Educator**

Improved health literacy is one of the objectives for our country, as noted in *Healthy People 2010*, the document that offers the 10-year health goals and objectives for the nation. The Department of Health and Human Services calls for partnerships between the public health and adult literacy fields in *Communicating Health (2003)*, an action plan for the nation. In addition, the importance of these partnerships is highlighted by the National Academies of Science in the Institute of Medicine report *Health Literacy: A Prescription to End Confusion (2004)*.

During 2004, Surgeon General Carmona noted in several speeches that “health literacy is the currency for all I am trying to do to reduce health disparities in the United States.” Health literacy is of critical importance. Increasingly, health policymakers are recognizing how much they can learn from adult educators who are experts in teaching literacy skills to adults. Policy reports have highlighted the need for partnerships among professionals and practitioners in the two fields of health and adult education.

The role that adult educators can play in addressing adult learners’ health needs is illustrated in the table below. The table provides examples of the ways in which the work of adult educators can complement the efforts of medical professionals to ultimately improve health outcomes.

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<sup>1</sup> Pamuk, Majuc, Heck, Reuben, & Lochner. (1998). *Socioeconomic Status and Health Chartbook. Health, United States, 1998*. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.



## **Shared Goals but Different Roles in Health Literacy**

### **What health professionals should do...**



### **What adult educators can do...**



- Make disease prevention and health care services and resources available
  - Offer and clearly explain appropriate screening procedures
  - Diagnose and explain illnesses and develop an action plan
  - Prescribe medicines and explain their purposes and side effects
  - Teach patients how to use medical tools, such as inhalers and glucose meters
  - Suggest measures to promote and protect individual, family, worker, and community health
- Develop students' capacity to participate in planning by seeking clarification and offering suggestions
  - Help students learn to locate information to guide their health-related decisions
  - Enhance students' ability to complete forms, make inquiries for information, and navigate new environments
  - Strengthen students' ability to read charts and scales and interpret ranges
  - Teach students to ask questions about tests, test procedures, and results
  - Teach students how to read medicine labels, calculate amounts and timing of dosages

## **What is a “skills-based approach” to teaching health literacy?**

The topic of health often represents an area of great interest to students but one that can be complex and even intimidating for instructors. Health information changes so rapidly that it is impossible to expect adult educators to stay abreast of it all. Moreover, some topics, such as cancer or HIV/AIDS, can raise sensitive issues and make discussion in the classroom uncomfortable for students and teachers alike. Consequently, teachers may avoid or limit the time they spend addressing health issues in class.

The skills-based approach seeks to avoid the challenges and limitations of focusing on health content by focusing teachers' attention on the reading, writing, math and communication skills that adults need to carry out the wide range of activities needed to manage their health. Skills, rather than health content, thus become the driving force behind the design of units and lessons. While this approach limits the health content needed for instruction, it still provides opportunities for expanding the content through the invitation of guest speakers or field trips to health facilities where students can gain more specific health information. The focus, however, remains on skills.

A skills-based approach to health literacy is important for several reasons. First, in our adult lives we are all faced with a number of health related tasks – deciding what foods to eat and whether or not to smoke, accessing health care, filling out forms, communicating with health professionals, and finding our way in medical environments. These tasks are demanding for all of us, but particularly difficult for adults with limited literacy and/or language skills. The skills-based approach attempts to strengthen the capacity of adult learners to carry out a broad range of tasks in their daily lives and thereby address the health disparities that are evident in our society.

A second important reason for using a skills-based approach has to do with what it requires of teachers. Health content alone can limit teachers' willingness or ability to address health in their classrooms; however, teaching basic reading, writing, math and communication skills is exactly what adult educators do all the time. A skills-based approach does not increase demands on teachers; it asks teachers to identify the links between what adults need to do for their health and the kinds of skills that they currently do, or reasonably can, teach in their regular classes. This approach thus builds on teachers' existing expertise to address an important area for students' skill development.

A final reason for the use of a skills-based approach to health literacy instruction is the transferability of these literacy, numeracy and communication skills across

multiple contexts. Advocating for one's self, asking questions for clarification, understanding instructions, and navigating new environments are activities that we may need to carry out for our health, our children's education, our lives as citizens in communities and more. The teaching of these skills within adult education classes thus represents an exciting opportunity to better equip adult learners to carry out their roles at work, as parents, and members of their communities.

## **Making the Link between Health-related Tasks and Basic Skills**

As a first step in integrating health literacy skills into ABE/ESOL instruction, it is important to see the links between health-related tasks and basic – reading, writing, math and communication – skills. This section provides an introduction to help you make such connections as you begin to think about how to integrate health literacy skill development into your teaching practice.

### **What are “health activities”?**

Health activities are part of everyday life. We maintain and safeguard our health and that of loved ones, fellow workers, and neighbors. We make decisions about food purchases and preparation. We buy and use home products that include food and cleaning chemicals, as well as appliances and equipment. We are concerned with the quality of our houses or apartments and community. We pay attention to work processes and chemicals. We take action when we are well to prevent illness and disease.

We seek care when we do not feel well and make decisions about when we, or those we love, need to talk with a doctor, nurse, dentist, or pharmacist. We have to sift through papers and fill out forms when we apply for insurance or benefits. We need to be aware of and advocate for our rights.

As these examples suggest, the universe of health activities is quite large. One way of organizing these activities, often used by public health experts, is into the following five groups:

1. **Health Promotion:** Those actions we take to stay healthy. Included are everyday decisions about eating, exercise, and rest.
2. **Health Protection:** Those actions we take to protect our health and that of our community. Included are rules and regulations about product labels, clean air and water, and safe food and products.

3. **Disease Prevention:** Those actions we take to prevent disease and to detect disease at very early stages. Included are actions such as use of sunscreen or participation in a screening test.
4. **Health Care and Maintenance:** Those actions we take when we seek advice or help from health care professionals, whether we are well, ill, in recovery, or when we need to manage a chronic disease. Included are well baby visits, checkups, and advice and care when we do not feel well.
5. **Navigation:** Those actions we take to obtain health coverage and care and to make our way through the hallways of health institutions, agencies, and service providers. Included are decisions about benefit packages, giving informed consent for procedures, and completing the many forms needed to obtain coverage and care.

Table 1 below offers a brief description of each of these groups of activities with examples of materials adults use and tasks they undertake.

**Table 1: Health Activities, Materials, and Tasks**

<b>Health Activities</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Materials Adults Are Expected to Use</b>	<b>Tasks Adults Are Expected to Accomplish</b>
<b>Health Promotion</b>	Enhance and maintain health	Label on a can of food or recipes Articles in newspapers and magazines Charts and graphs such as the Body Mass Index Health education booklets (such as well baby care)	Purchase food Prepare a dish from a recipe Plan exercise Maintain healthy habits (re.: nutrition, sleep, exercise) Take care of everyday health (self and family members)
<b>Health Protection</b>	Safeguard health of individuals and communities	Newspaper chart about air quality Water report in the mail Health and safety posting at work Label on a cleaning product	Decide among product options Use products safely Vote on community issues Avoid harmful exposures
<b>Disease Prevention</b>	Take preventive measures and engage in screening and early detection	Postings for inoculations and screening Letters reporting test results Articles in newspapers and magazines Charts and graphs	Take preventive action Determine risk Engage in screening or diagnostic tests Follow up
<b>Health Care &amp; Maintenance</b>	Seek care and form a partnership with a doctor, dentist, or nurse	Health history forms Labels on medicine Health education booklets Directions for using a tool such as a peak flow meter	Seek professional care when needed Describe symptoms Follow directions Measure symptoms Manage a chronic disease (follow regimen, monitor symptoms, adjust regimen as needed, seek care as appropriate)
<b>Navigation</b>	Access health services, and get coverage and benefits	Application forms Statements of rights and responsibilities Informed consent forms Benefit packages	Locate facilities Apply for benefits Fill out forms Offer informed consent

The health tasks listed above cover a broad range. The work of the Study Circle+ Series, and hence this guide, focuses on three specific areas of health where disparities are prevalent and where adults with limited literacy skills may face serious barriers:

**Health Care Access and Navigation:** Adults with less income and less education do not have the same access to health care as do adults with more income and education. In order to access care, adults need to fill out forms, interact with bureaucracies and sometimes find their way in new and often confusing environments like big hospitals. Stronger skills in vocabulary, advocacy, and in completing forms, for example, can help adult learners gain access to coverage, care, and services and help them better understand their rights and responsibilities.

**Chronic Disease Management:** Adults with less education are more likely to die of a chronic disease than are adults with more education. In order to manage a chronic disease such as asthma, diabetes, or hypertension, adults need to be able to understand and follow instructions, administer medicines safely, and effectively communicate with medical professionals about their care. Adults need strong skills related to using labels and documents, describing feelings and changes in their bodies, and understanding and using measurement tools.

**Disease Prevention and Screening:** Adults with less education and less income do not engage in disease prevention activities and take part in screening programs at the same rate as do those with higher education and income levels. On a daily basis, adults face decisions about what foods to eat and habits like smoking or exercise. Adults need to be able to find and make sense of health information to guide their decision-making, take part in health screening activities and be able to communicate with medical professionals about screening results. Adults need strong literacy skills to grapple with consent documents and follow-up reports. Prevention and screening tasks also often require that adults have some familiarity with math concepts such as rates and proportions as well as risk and probability.

Every day, in adult education classrooms, adult educators teach reading, writing, oral presentation, oral comprehension, and math skills – the same skills adults need to use health print materials, to apply basic math to health problems, and to engage in dialogue and discussion with health professionals. Teachers can direct their instruction more directly toward addressing the health literacy needs of their students by better understanding the links between health tasks and basic skills. The next section provides some examples to illustrate these links and how these skills can be addressed in an ABE/ESOL classroom.

## **Health Materials, Tasks, and Skills**

Many ordinary health tasks require us to use specific materials. Parents turn to the label on the package to find out how much medicine to give children. Elders fill out Medicare forms to obtain needed services. Consumers read product labels as they mull over which products will best serve their needs. Patients are given discharge instructions when they leave the hospital to return home and minister to their own needs. Sadly, over 800 articles in public health and medical journals indicate that health materials are often complex, contain scientific terms instead of everyday language, and are written at reading levels beyond the level of difficulty found in high school texts. Indeed, studies indicate a mismatch between the demands of health materials and the average reading skills of U.S. adults. Many health materials – the tools that are supposed to help us by providing information, directions, rights and responsibilities – do not serve this purpose.

Being able to read health materials and carry out health care tasks require background information that is often not provided nor made explicit. Consider the label on food products. Does everyone know names of the types and forms of sugar? Or, consider what seems to be a simple direction: take one tablet *three times a day*. The doctor, dentist, nurse, or pharmacist knows that medicine needs to be in the body throughout the day. As a result, they want the patient to take the medicine at very different times of the day so that it is distributed evenly. However, this information is not stated. The patient who anticipates a very busy day and who follows directions by taking one pill at 7 am, one pill at 7:30 am, and one pill at 8 am may harm him or herself. As another example, the chart on the box of an over-the-counter medicine often requires sophisticated reading and math skills in order to determine how much medicine to take.

Those responsible for health communication need to make changes in the materials they prepare. Health care professionals also need to improve their communication skills so that the patients they see are well equipped to take care of themselves and their loved ones. Adult educators can contribute to improved health literacy because they are well situated to improve the skills that adults need to make use of necessary materials and carry out common health tasks.

The following tables, which are organized around the areas of Health Care Access and Navigation, Chronic Disease Management, and Disease Prevention and Screening, carry forward the notion of a health task and its related materials. Each table outlines some of the skills necessary to carry out the health tasks and offers suggestions for lessons or activities that can be used to develop those skills.

**Table 2: Health Care Access and Navigation Examples**

<b>General Tasks with Specific Examples</b>	<b>Materials and Tools Adults Are Expected to Use</b>	<b>Skills Adults Need</b>	<b>Lesson Ideas</b>
<p><b>Locate appropriate services</b> e.g., find listings of health centers; find services within a hospital</p>	<p>Telephone book Maps</p>	<p>Use an index Use a map Ask for directions Use a telephone book Recognize names of hospital departments</p>	<p>Groups of students work together with a telephone book to find health centers near their homes</p>
<p><b>Apply for health insurance</b> e.g., identify rights and responsibilities; compare health care plans; compare costs and co-pays</p>	<p>Health insurance booklets Application forms</p>	<p>Complete forms Read for relevant information Read and use charts Calculate and compare costs</p>	<p>Look at and talk about sample insurance forms to discuss common sections and needed information Use simple word problems to practice calculations for co-pay</p>
<p><b>Provide information</b> e.g., provide personal health history; describe symptoms</p>	<p>Family history forms Medical history forms</p>	<p>Ask health providers for clarity Fill out forms Use descriptive vocabulary</p>	<p>Provide generic family history forms for class to analyze Determine how/why doctors use health history forms</p>
<p><b>Make and keep appointments</b> e.g., schedule an appointment; get directions</p>	<p>Telephone Map Bus Schedule Calendar</p>	<p>Plan Record Use reminder cues Use a calendar</p>	<p>Role play a patient making an appointment and getting directions to the facility</p>



**Table 3. Chronic Disease Management Examples**

<b>General Tasks with Specific Examples</b>	<b>Materials and Tools Adults Are Expected to Use</b>	<b>Skills Adults Need</b>	<b>Lesson Ideas</b>
<b>Recognize and act on symptoms</b> e.g., make note of changes in or onset of symptoms; make an appointment	Health education booklets and brochures Calendar	Read commonly available health education booklets for relevance Expand reading vocabulary Observe and take notes	Ask students to write about a change in themselves, a child, a parent, or a friend Ask students to underline words used to describe the “before” and the “after” states
<b>Provide information</b> e.g., describe feelings; talk about change	Journal or logbook Calendar	Use descriptive vocabulary Present health issues in a time sequence	Write about a series of events in sequence over time
<b>Learn more about your chronic disease</b> e.g., locate information at the library; find information on the web	Dictionary Patient education booklets Web sites	Use a dictionary Ask health providers for clarification Do research	Interview a person with a chronic disease and write about what they have to do each day
<b>Develop a treatment plan with a health professional</b> e.g., provide updates; participate in planning	Journal Calendar	Ask questions Express needs and objections Give feedback on health status Analyze treatment options	Develop a plan for adding a new activity (e.g., journaling, exercise, medicine) to one’s daily activities Discuss what makes it hard or easy to change one’s routine.
<b>Take Medicine</b> e.g., follow directions on labels; measure amounts; count pills; plan timing	Clock Calendar Labels	Read and comprehend labels Use clock and calendar to plan when to take medicines Develop reminder cues	Read a medicine label and discuss instructions
<b>Measure and Monitor</b> e.g., use a peak flow meter to determine need for medicine	Measurement tools (e.g., peak flow meter, scale, chart, thermometer)	Measure and record Understand and use measurement scales Use a chart	Keep a daily diary of a measure (such as weight) or an event (such as hours slept)

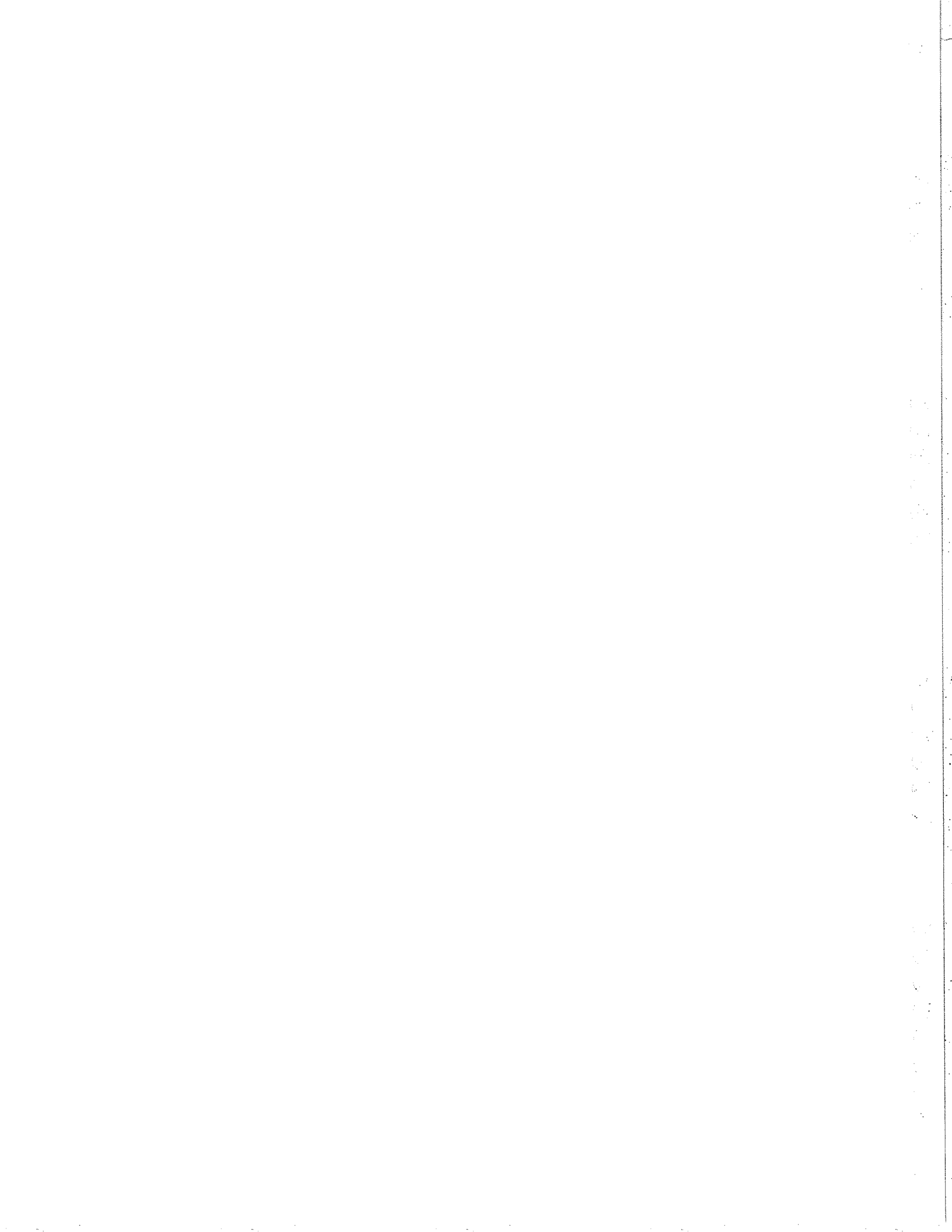
**Table 4: Disease Prevention and Screening Examples**

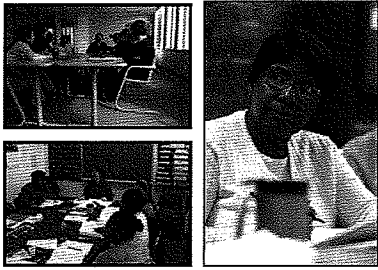
<b>General Tasks with Specific Examples</b>	<b>Materials and Tools Adults Are Expected to Use</b>	<b>Skills Adults Need</b>	<b>Lesson Ideas</b>
<p><b>Be attentive to public health recommendations</b> e.g., notice health posters in public places; look at health-related newspaper articles</p>	<p>Articles in newspapers and magazines Postings Public announcements on radio Web sites</p>	<p>Read newspaper Comprehend radio announcements Differentiate between commercials and official health warnings</p>	<p>Look at Web sites to determine the “sponsor”</p>
<p><b>Take disease preventive action</b> e.g., stop smoking; use condoms; use sunscreen</p>	<p>Articles in newspapers and magazines Public announcements Web sites</p>	<p>Read package labels Locate supports and resources</p>	<p>Compare and contrast two labels on sunscreen packages to determine use with a child</p>
<p><b>Determine need for specific screening test</b> e.g., make a decision about taking a screening test</p>	<p>Graphs and charts Health information booklets and web postings</p>	<p>Understand mathematical concepts and expressions of risk: percentage, proportion, and probability (1 in 100, 30% higher risk)</p>	<p>Use simple word problems to interpret expressions of risk</p>
<p><b>Participate in screening programs</b> e.g., get an HIV test; get a dental checkup</p>	<p>Directions for preparation Informed consent documents</p>	<p>Fill out forms Ask questions</p>	<p>Provide generic family history forms for class to determine what screening programs are appropriate  Review sample directions for a screening test and discuss the sequence of steps</p>
<p><b>Take follow-up action</b> e.g., change a behavior; meet with doctor or dentist</p>	<p>Follow-up letters Directions</p>	<p>Ask for clarification Plan for various outcomes Use reminder cues  Understand test result vocabulary, i.e., normal range, positive, negative, false positive, false negative, typical, and atypical</p>	<p>Provide a scenario and practice using decision trees (if A then B, if X then Y)</p>

As you move forward in your work of integrating health literacy into your ABE or ESOL instruction, you will want to keep in mind this framework of tasks, materials, skills, and lessons:

- health-related tasks
- the materials they require
- the skills required to accomplish the tasks
- lessons and activities to develop those skills

The sections that follow will guide you as you determine what tasks and skills to focus. The steps include: conducting a needs assessment, outlining a plan for a health literacy unit, developing a linked group of health literacy lessons, and designing a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of your work.





## Conducting a Needs Assessment

Before launching into the design of health literacy lessons and units, you will want to learn about your students' needs and interests in the area of health literacy. Gaining such insight will help you understand their needs and focus your unit and lesson plans on those skills most needed. This will help you draw your students' attention and offer clear benefits to them.

### What is a Needs Assessment?

A needs assessment identifies needs in relation to an issue or service. Many assessments identify “felt needs” and pose the question: *What do you need in relation to a particular issue?* Some assessments identify needs as perceived by an outside observer or professional: *Given what I have observed, X is missing in this community or Y is very hard for most people.*

In this case, a needs assessment will allow you to find out “what’s going on” with your students in relation to their interaction with health professionals and institutions, as well as their efforts to manage their own and their families' health. Through the needs assessment, you will explore the challenges and barriers related to literacy, numeracy and communication skills that your students face.

The term “needs assessment” typically implies that we are looking for students' needs or identifying problems that your students experience. Another way to think about this activity is to think of yourself as conducting an “inventory” of your students' experiences to gain insights into their strengths and needs.

### Before Using the Needs Assessment Activity

The activity outlined below is built around a set of photographs that relate to the three areas of Health Care Access and Navigation, Chronic Disease Management, and Disease Prevention and Screening. These photographs have been used in multiple settings and have proved to be quite an effective as “triggers” to stimulate thought and discussion on health literacy issues. You may choose to focus on one set of the photos, or all three areas. Working in small groups, your

students will examine the photos, which feature people engaging in a variety of health-related tasks. Students will answer questions in response to the pictures, and you will summarize their responses on the board or on newsprint.

This activity has been adapted from the needs assessment activity used in the Health Literacy Study Circle+ on Chronic Disease Management. This activity was selected since it is appropriate for use with a wide range of language and literacy levels. You may wish to explore alternative approaches to needs assessment as described in the Study Circle+ Facilitator Guides for Health Care Access and Navigation, and Disease Prevention and Screening. <sup>2</sup>

This activity has been designed to work with high beginning to intermediate ABE or ESOL students; however we also offer suggestions for making adaptations to the activity for other groups of students. As you prepare to carry out this activity with your students, you may wish to consider the following questions:

- *How well suited is this lesson to your students' skills or proficiency levels?*
- *How might you adapt it to make it more appropriate for your students?*
- *Which of the optional activities are you likely to choose? Why?*
- *How might you work this lesson into what you are currently doing with your students?*

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<sup>2</sup> The Health Literacy Study Circle+ Facilitator Guides are available online at: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/curricula.html>

## Health Literacy Needs Assessment Activity

### Health-related Tasks Addressed in This Lesson

- Learners will identify barriers that make it difficult for them to interact with health systems and manage their health.

### Skills Focus

- Learners will increase their vocabulary for talking about health issues and challenges

### ABE/ESOL Level

Intermediate ABE/ESOL with possible adaptation to other levels

### Time

1 hour

### Materials

- Blackboard or newsprint paper
- Markers
- Handouts:
  - Photos
  - Worksheet: Talking about Photographs

### Purpose:

By looking at photographs of people engaged in various health-related tasks, learners will think about their own experiences and knowledge base related to health. They will also discuss barriers that they commonly face in trying to carry out health-related tasks.

After the activity, teachers will be able to identify the concerns that learners have in the area of health. This feedback will inform teachers' subsequent lessons on the development health literacy skills.

Note that the photographs have been organized into the three areas of health care access and navigation, chronic disease management, and disease prevention and screening. To help you focus your lesson and unit preparation, you may wish to limit the discussion to one set of photos initially, and then later on discuss another set. Alternatively, you may wish to have students discuss all the pictures and then organize results of the discussion into the three areas and develop units and lessons accordingly.

### Steps

1. **Introduce the activity.** Explain to students that you are interested in doing some work in your class related to health. In this activity, you will ask students to think about their experiences in health and share their ideas. Point out that you will use this information to guide future activities in your class.

2. **Small group work.** Organize the class into small groups of three to four and assign two pictures to each group. Each picture is accompanied by questions to guide the discussions. Read the questions out loud or ask students to read the questions as they discuss the pictures within their groups. The groups will have about 30 minutes to discuss the pictures.

Distribute one copy of the worksheet titled **Talking about Photographs** to each group and ask for a volunteer in each group to note answers to the questions on the worksheet.

3. **Large Group Discussion.** Ask each group to share their responses to the questions about each picture. Either you or a class volunteer should record the responses to the questions on the board or on a newsprint (or transparency).
- **Large Group Discussion.** After each group has had an opportunity to share their ideas, allow time for the class to add other tasks and challenges/barriers. Invite the students to share final thoughts and questions on the ideas brought up during the activity.

### **ESOL Teaching Tip**

To facilitate small group discussion in beginning ESOL classes, you may wish to provide the learners with a set of key words related to the photographs. This will provide the learners with a working list of vocabulary that they can use to begin talking about what they see in the picture. Here are some suggestions for three of the photographs.

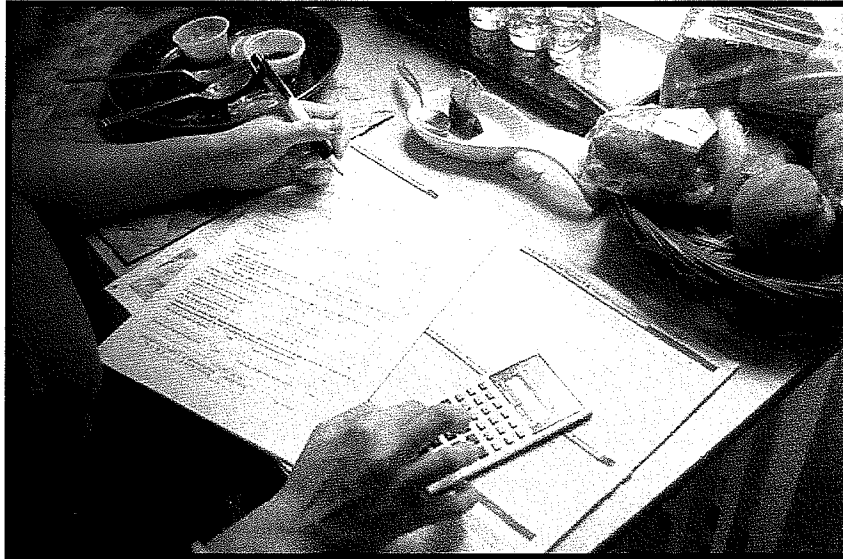
<b>Picture 1: At the Pharmacy</b>	<b>Picture 2: At the Dentist</b>	<b>Picture 3: Medicines and a Calendar</b>
<i>directions</i>	<i>changes</i>	<i>appointment</i>
<i>medicine</i>	<i>complaint</i>	<i>calendar</i>
<i>order</i>	<i>diagnose</i>	<i>dose</i>
<i>pharmacist</i>	<i>medical history</i>	<i>plan</i>
<i>pharmacy</i>	<i>patient</i>	<i>reminder</i>
<i>prescription</i>	<i>physician</i>	<i>schedule</i>
<i>refill</i>	<i>symptoms</i>	

### **Advanced ABE and GED Teaching Tips**

To make the lesson more challenging for learners, use the lesson as a writing exercise. Instead of organizing the learners into small discussion groups, ask the learners to write essays (descriptive essays or personal narratives) in response to one of the pictures.



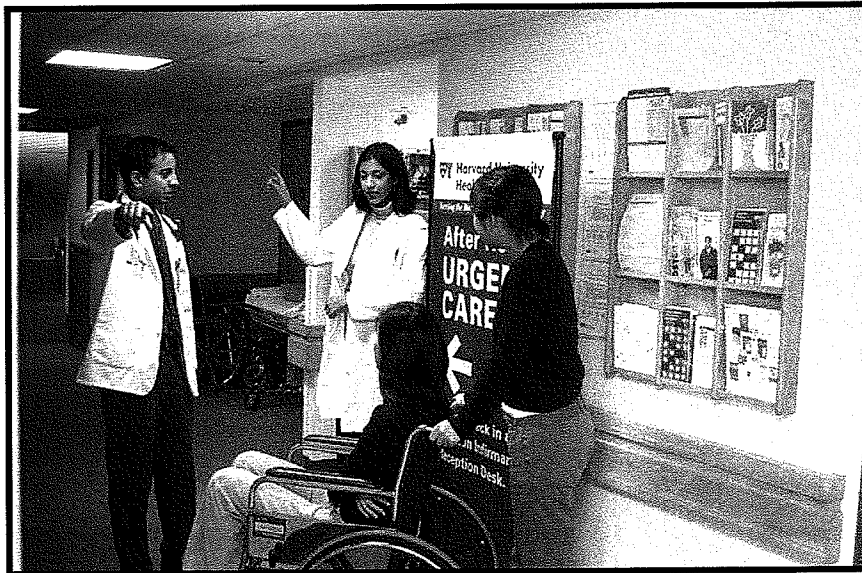
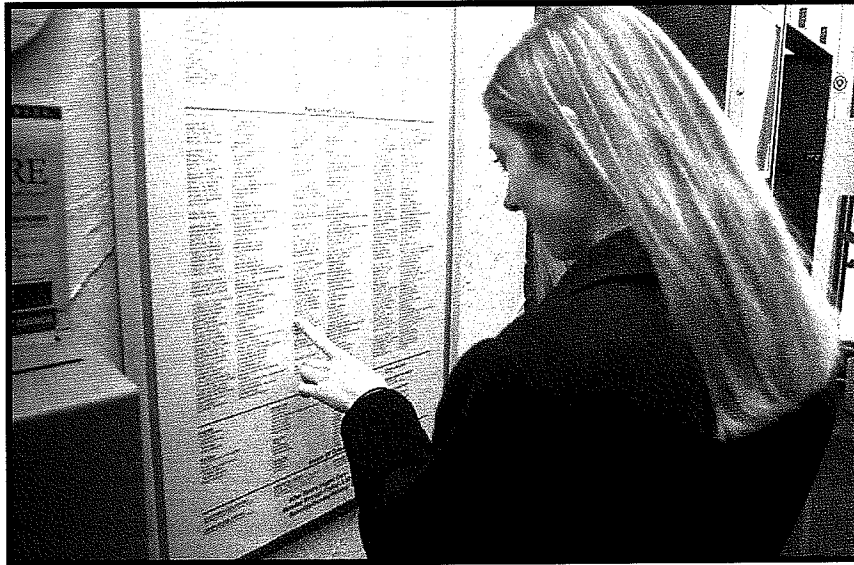
## **Health Care Access and Navigation**



### **Discussion Questions**

1. What is happening in each picture?
2. How does each picture remind you of your own experiences?
3. What is difficult about doing these kinds of activities?

## **Health Care Access and Navigation**



### **Discussion Questions**

1. What is happening in each picture?
2. How does each picture remind you of your own experiences?
3. What is difficult about doing these kinds of activities?

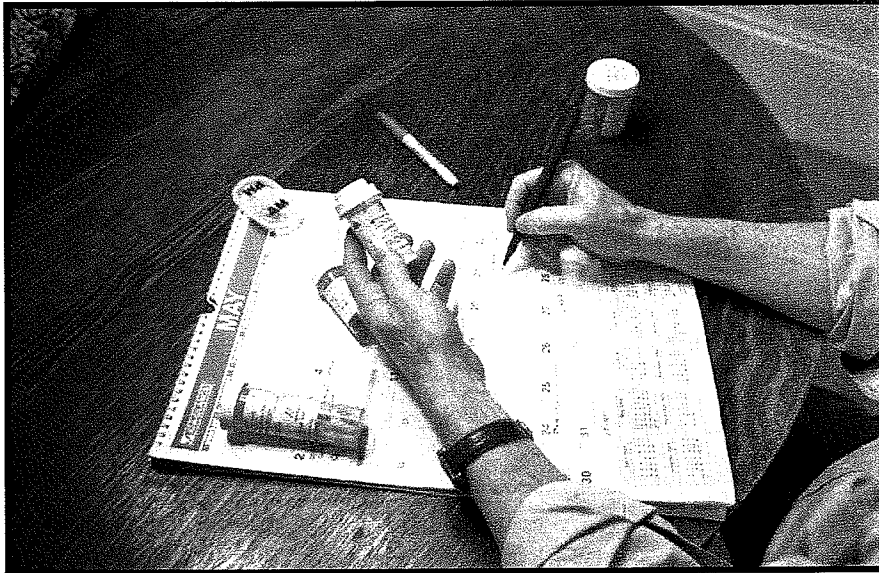
## **Health Care Access and Navigation**



### **Discussion Questions**

1. What is happening in each picture?
2. How does each picture remind you of your own experiences?
3. What is difficult about doing these kinds of activities?

## Chronic Disease Management



### Discussion Questions

1. What is happening in each picture?
2. How does each picture remind you of your own experiences?
3. What is difficult about doing these kinds of activities?

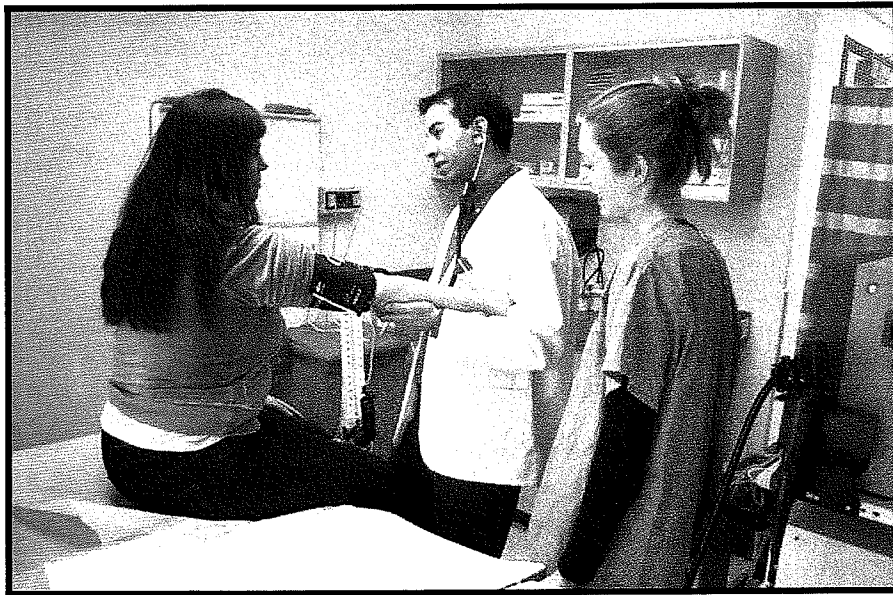
## **Chronic Disease Management**



### **Discussion Questions**

1. What is happening in each picture?
2. How does each picture remind you of your own experiences?
3. What is difficult about doing these kinds of activities?

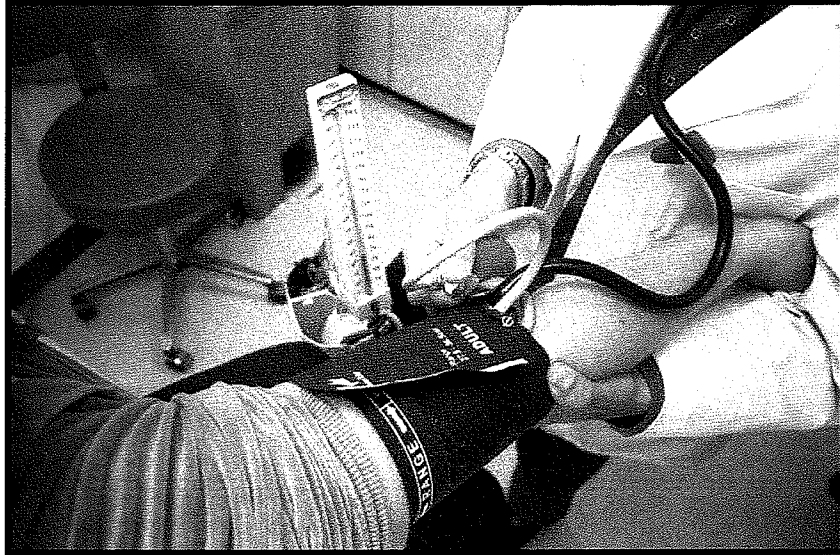
## **Chronic Disease Management**



### **Discussion Questions**

1. What is happening in each picture?
2. How does each picture remind you of your own experiences?
3. What is difficult about doing these kinds of activities?

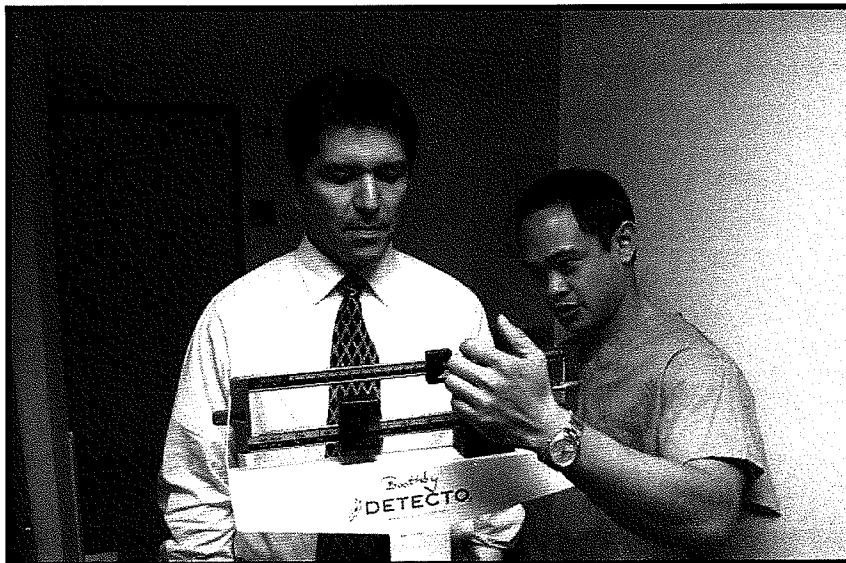
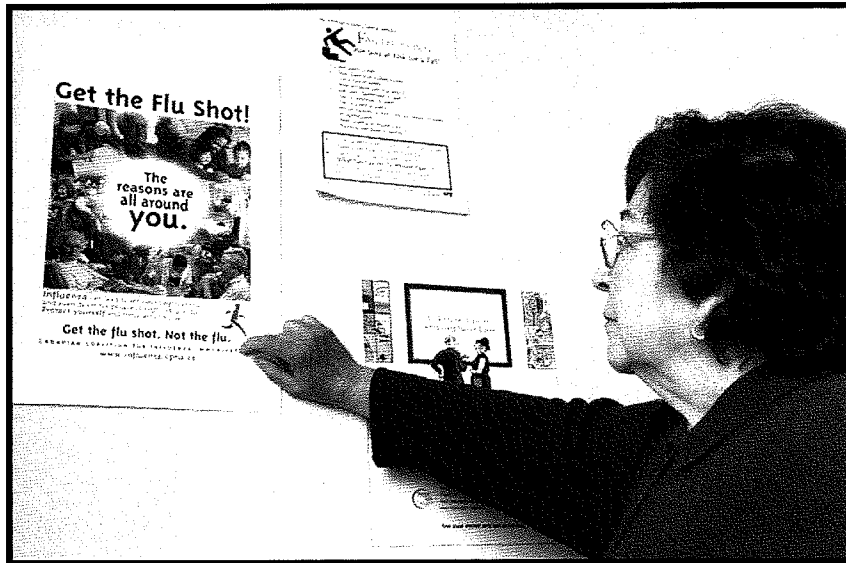
## **Disease Prevention and Screening**



### **Discussion Questions**

1. What is happening in each picture?
2. How does each picture remind you of your own experiences?
3. What is difficult about doing these kinds of activities?

## **Disease Prevention and Screening**

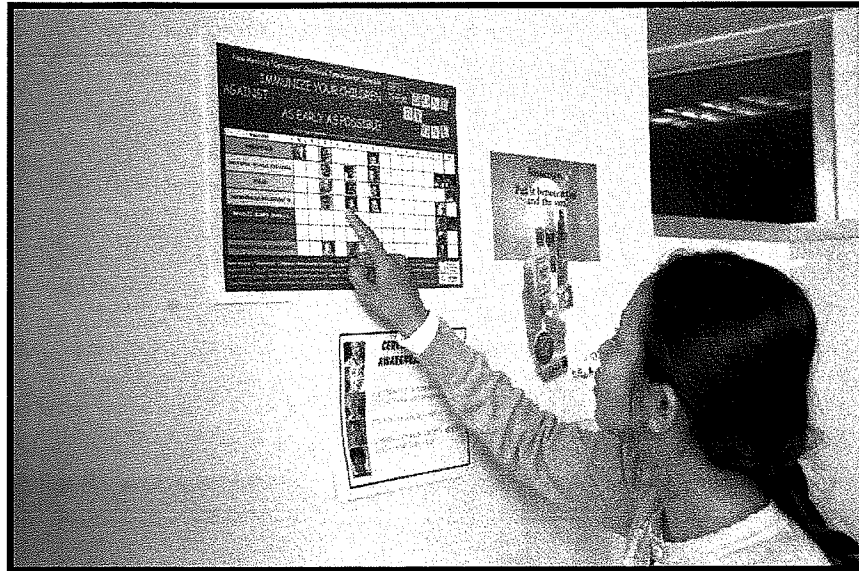


### **Discussion Questions**

1. What is happening in each picture?
2. How does each picture remind you of your own experiences?
3. What is difficult about doing these kinds of activities?



## **Disease Prevention and Screening**



### **Discussion Questions**

1. What is happening in each picture?
2. How does each picture remind you of your own experiences?
3. What is difficult about doing these kinds of activities?

## Worksheet: Talking about Photographs (Notes from small group discussions)

<b>What are people doing in the pictures?</b>	<b>What can be difficult about doing these things?</b>
<i>Picture #</i> _____	
<i>Picture #</i> _____	



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## Developing a Health Literacy Unit

Once you have conducted your needs assessment, you will have a list of skills and topics that you can use to design health literacy unit and lesson plans. You will likely want to begin by outlining a unit plan and then moving on to develop individual lesson plans within that unit. Later in this section, we offer a template for a plan to help you organize your unit. Before moving to the template, however, it is important to reflect on the findings of your needs assessment and organize the ideas uncovered in the needs assessment process.

For our purposes, we think of a health literacy unit as...

*A set of 6 – 8 separate but related lessons that address a set of skills needed for accessing health care and navigating health care systems, managing a chronic disease, or engaging in prevention and screening activities.*

There are multiple ways of organizing the skills and topics revealed by your needs assessment into a unit. Here are some examples within the three areas covered by the Study Circles<sup>+</sup>:

- A unit can focus on an overall **concept**.
  - ❖ For *Health Care Access and Navigation*, the concept might be patient rights and responsibilities. The lessons in the unit could address various health literacy tasks and skills such as reading and understanding consent forms, asking about patient rights, and obtaining second opinions.
  - ❖ For *Chronic Disease Management*, the concept might be time. The lessons in the unit could address various health literacy tasks and skills that involve time, such as using a calendar to schedule a doctor's appointment or using a clock to determine when medicine should be taken.
  - ❖ For *Disease Prevention and Screening*, the concept might be risk. The lessons in the unit could address various health literacy tasks and skills that relate to risk, such as understanding risk factors, assessing personal disease risk, interpreting mathematical expressions of risk, such as "1 in 10," "a 30% chance," or "three times as likely."

- A unit can focus on a specific set of **health-related tasks** with lessons addressing the skills needed for those tasks.
  - ❖ For *Health Care Access and Navigation*, the task might be applying for health insurance. The lessons in the unit could address the underlying skills needed to accomplish the task, such as filling out a form, talking to an insurance agent, using the Internet, or describing your medical history.
  - ❖ For *Chronic Disease Management*, the task might be taking medicine so the unit might address skills needed to accomplish the task, such as measuring liquid doses and scheduling when to take medicines.
  - ❖ For *Disease Prevention and Screening*, the task might be having a screening test done. The unit could focus on asking questions about the test, preparing for the test and discussing results and follow-up.
  
- A unit can focus on a specific set of **health literacy skills**.
  - ❖ For *Health Care Access and Navigation*, the skill might be filling out forms in health care. The lessons in the unit could address the range of forms that adults are expected to understand in health care settings, such as informed consent forms, medical history forms, or insurance forms.
  - ❖ For *Chronic Disease Management*, the skill might be measurement. Lessons in the unit could incorporate materials from different chronic diseases, all of which involve measurement (e.g., glucose meter, peak flow meter, scale, measuring cups and spoons)
  - ❖ For *Disease Prevention and Screening*, a skill might be reading charts and tables. Lessons could thus incorporate charts and tables related to disease prevention and screening (e.g., BMI chart, immunization chart, table of recommended health screenings).

The worksheet that follows, entitled My Health Literacy Unit Ideas, provides you with a set of guiding questions to help you use the information obtained in the student needs assessment to begin designing a health literacy unit.



## **Making Plans: Issues to Consider**

As you prepare to develop health literacy unit, lesson and evaluation plans, there are a number of issues to consider that might shape your work. These relate both to the feasibility of your plans and the process you use to develop them.

### **Feasibility**

In addition to determining lesson plans and evaluation tools, a number of issues may influence how you choose to design a unit and a plan for evaluation of that unit. The list below is designed to highlight several such issues.

**Time:** Think about how much time in your classes you can realistically devote to skills related to managing a chronic disease. You might have time for only a few lessons; you may want to carve out a lesson a week; you may have a full week or a month.

**Integration:** Review other lessons you currently use or might develop that would provide some context or support for your plan. For example:

- You may already have a lesson on asking for clarification at work/at children's school, and you could build on this lesson as you translate the same skills into medical or social service settings.
- You might currently do a life skills lesson on finding desired items in a grocery store, and you might follow up with a lesson that looks at the organizational logic used to shape health centers.
- You may find that you already teach lessons on percentages and fractions and only need to use the example of benefits calculation.

**Resources:** You will want to consider the resources you have available or might locate to help you develop and carry out your plans. For example, you might already have or can easily find authentic materials, community health resources, possible guest speakers, Web sites and publications on specific topics, and articles with background information on health.

**Challenges:** You will need to anticipate problems you might encounter in carrying out your plans, and think about how to overcome them. You may face issues such as having relatively little discretionary time because you must prepare students for GED tests; you may find that other program staff do not understand the point of health literacy skill development and are therefore not supportive.



## **Process**

The process of developing a plan is an iterative one. We develop goals and plans based on those goals. However, some goals are not easily achievable. Therefore, we suggest that once you have drafted your unit and evaluation plans, you go back and review the goals and objectives. You may need to modify your goals and/or your objectives based on the time you have. You may need to increase time for the unit by building in practice time between lessons.

Review and assess the goals and objectives you have set and the lessons/activities you have designed to achieve them. Be sure that they are logically connected. Consider the following questions as you review and revise your materials:

- 1. Is the goal achievable within the time available?*
- 2. Will the objectives listed lead to the goals you've defined?*
- 3. Will the lessons and activities help accomplish those objectives?*
- 4. Will you be able to determine if the unit has been successful with the evaluation plans you've outlined?*

## **Overview: The Health Literacy Unit Template**

The *Health Literacy Unit Template* is adapted from an organizational format developed by John Dirkx and Suzanne Prenger (1997).<sup>\*</sup> The template features the following components:

### **Thematic focus and/or title**

The thematic focus is the grouping of health literacy tasks addressed in the unit. The focus will most likely be a subset of one of the three critical areas addressed in the Health Literacy Study Circle+ Series: Health Care Access and Navigation; Chronic Disease Management; and Disease Prevention and Screening.

For example, if you are working with Chronic Disease Management, you might consider a thematic focus on issues related to planning and scheduling. This would include lessons on skills related to the use of a clock and of a calendar. As another option, you might prefer to focus on skills related to scales and measures, with examples drawn from measurement tools. A focus on medicine might enable you to develop lessons focused on reading labels, using charts, or measuring amounts.

### **Student population**

Identify the student population (e.g., beginning ESOL, pre-GED, and parents in a family literacy program) and the skill level (e.g., beginning literacy, advanced math) so that others will know for whom the health literacy unit was designed.

### **Major tasks addressed in this unit**

Identify the various health literacy tasks that are addressed in the six to eight lessons in the unit. These tasks should be specific things that people are expected to do when dealing with accessing health care, managing chronic disease, or engaging in disease prevention and screening activities.

### **Inspiration for unit**

Write down your students' words or describe one of their experiences that prompted you to think about the need for this health literacy unit. This will help you focus on students' concerns and needs as you plan the health literacy lessons.

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<sup>\*</sup> Reference: Dirkx, J. M., & Prenger, S. M. (1997). *A Guide for planning and implementing instruction for adults: A theme-based approach*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers. Used with permission.

## **Unit objectives**

State the learning objectives that guide your decisions about which six to eight lessons will make up this unit. Think about what students will be able to do after you have taught the unit. Objectives should be specific, achievable, and measurable.

One such objective might be -- Students will be able to fill out a medical history form. Another might focus on efficacy building -- Students will indicate that they feel more confident about being able to ask questions for clarification.

## **Lesson ideas**

Identify six to eight lesson topics that will help you achieve your unit objectives. You may want to create all of your own lessons, or you may want to include lessons developed by others. You may wish to consider how the lessons are sequenced. Ask yourself, *how do my lessons build on each other? Should certain lessons come before others?*

One effective way to help learners acquire complex health literacy skills is to identify the prerequisite skills needed for a particular task, and determine where your learners have mastered them. For example, if you want to teach an ESOL lesson on how to make and keep a doctor's appointment, you may first want to teach a lesson on how to use a calendar and how to tell time. A lesson on using labels to determine correct dosage might be preceded by a lesson about tables -- how they are organized and how to read them.

## **Skills to be addressed**

In order to accomplish health literacy tasks, people need a variety of skills. Lesson plans should focus on reading, writing, speaking, listening, and math skills, as well as efficacy and advocacy. Some examples include reading a chart or a map of a hospital, filling out a form, communicating with medical professionals, or determining eligibility for health care coverage.

## **Group discussion methods**

Identify the discussion methods you might want to use with each lesson. Various methods might include pair work, individual reflection and writing, small group discussions, and brainstorming. You will then be able to review the list of discussion methods in the unit to determine if you have used a variety of instructional formats to address various learning styles.

## Health Literacy Unit Template \*

<b>Thematic focus and/or title of unit:</b>	
<b>Student population and level:</b>	<b>Major tasks addressed in this unit:</b>
<b>Inspiration for unit:</b>	
<b>Unit objectives:</b> Learners will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>	<b>Lesson ideas (6-8):</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2.</li><li>3.</li><li>4.</li><li>5.</li><li>6.</li><li>7.</li><li>8.</li></ol>
<b>Skills to be addressed</b> ( <i>e.g., reading, writing, math, oral communication, self-efficacy, self-advocacy</i> )	<b>Group Discussion Methods</b> ( <i>e.g., pair-work, brainstorming, small group discussion, individual presentations, role play</i> )

\* Adapted from Dirks, J. M., & Prenger, S. M. (1997). *A Guide for planning and implementing instruction for adults: A theme-based approach*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers. Used with permission.

## Sample Health Literacy Unit #1 Health Care Access and Navigation

<b>Thematic focus and/or title of unit:</b> Health care access and navigation	
<p><b>Student population and level:</b> Beginning to intermediate ESOL</p>	<p><b>Major tasks addressed in this unit:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find your way around a hospital</li> <li>• Locate medical services in your community</li> <li>• Read a hospital map</li> <li>• Communicate with medical professionals</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inspiration for unit:</b> <i>I brainstormed with my beginning ESOL students one day about the problems that often overwhelm them when they have to go to the hospital or see a doctor. I asked the learners to name three things they would like to learn how to do in order to avoid these problems. They identified: reading a map, learning more hospital words, and feeling more confident when speaking to a doctor.</i></p>	
<p><b>Unit objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners will be able to identify five common medical departments and offices in a hospital (e.g., pediatrics, ambulatory care...).</li> <li>• Learners will be able to list medical services available in their local community.</li> <li>• Learners will be able to locate a medical service on a hospital map.</li> <li>• Learners will be able to state three expressions to be used to ask for directions and for clarification.</li> <li>• Learners will be able to describe two differences in doctor-patient communication in the U.S. and home countries.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lesson ideas (between 6-8):</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Arrange a hospital tour for the students to familiarize them with local services.</li> <li>2. Groups of students work together with a telephone book to find health centers near their homes.</li> <li>3. Teach the Study Circle+ sample lesson, <i>Exploring Hospital Vocabulary</i>.</li> <li>4. Ask students to collect maps of local hospitals and clinics. Have students practice locating departments.</li> <li>5. Have students create skits that help them practice expressions for asking questions about directions and clarification.</li> <li>6. Ask students to discuss differences and similarities in doctor-patient communication in the U.S. and home countries. Students can prepare a short essay or presentation to share their ideas with classmates.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Skills to be addressed:</b></p> <p><b>Oral communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow directions</li> <li>• Make requests</li> <li>• Request clarification</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read signs</li> <li>• Read a map</li> <li>• Read an index</li> </ul> <p><b>Self-efficacy</b></p>	<p><b>Group Discussion Methods:</b></p> <p>pair work brainstorming small group discussion individual presentations role play</p>

## Sample Health Literacy Unit #2

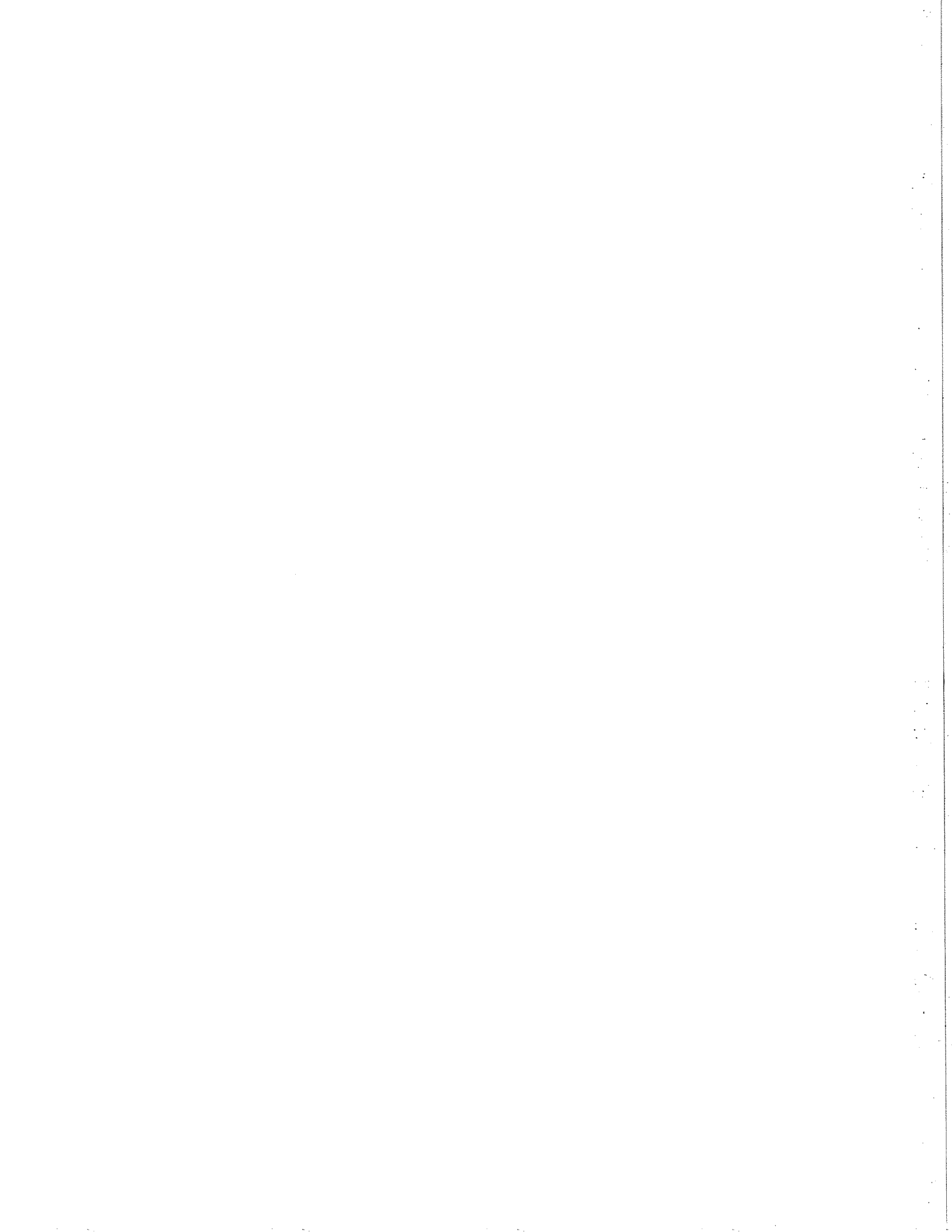
### Chronic Disease Management

<b>Thematic focus and/or title of unit:</b> Timing and scheduling medicine	
<b>Student population and level:</b>  Intermediate ABE	<b>Major tasks addressed in this unit:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine the necessary time between doses of medicine</li> <li>• Use cues to remember medicine</li> <li>• Read a medicine label</li> <li>• Communicate with medical professionals to ask questions about new medicine</li> </ul>
<b>Inspiration for unit:</b> I visited my mother to help her set up her weekly medicines and realized how difficult this task could be. I considered the needs of my students -- some of whom were caring for children or parents with a chronic disease, or taking care of their own chronic disease. I asked my students to identify the most difficult tasks they have to do. Many of them mentioned how hard it was to remember to take their medicine. Others stated that they did not know what to do if they missed a dose.	
<b>Unit objectives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners will be able to identify five common problems people face when they need to take medicine on a regular basis.</li> <li>• Learners will be able to formulate questions about new medicine to ask professionals.</li> <li>• Learners will be able to read two medicine labels and complete a calendar schedule for correct dosage throughout the day and week.</li> <li>• Learners will be able to list two ways to organize medicines (by time of day, by day of week).</li> <li>• Learners will be able to list three cues to action – strategies for remembering to take medicine.</li> </ul>	<b>Lesson ideas:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct interviews with people managing a chronic disease about problems they faced remembering medicine and strategies they developed.</li> <li>2. Present interview findings to class, and write a booklet addressing strategies for taking medicine.</li> <li>3. Create skits that help students practice questions for a health professional about proper use of medicine.</li> <li>4. Read and analyze a variety of prescription labels on medicine bottles to figure out needed timing. Use an analogue clock to set the correct times.</li> <li>5. Read the directions for over-the-counter medicines and determine how much to take over the course of a day.</li> <li>6. Read a story about a person who must take different medicines for arthritis. Develop a calendar to show when to take the medicine.</li> </ol>
<b>Skills to be addressed:</b> <b>Oral communication:</b> Request clarification <b>Plan:</b> Use a calendar to schedule <b>Read:</b> Prescription labels <b>Write:</b> A pamphlet about how to remember to take medicine <b>Use tools:</b> A clock and a calendar <b>Self-efficacy:</b> Feel confident about asking a doctor to explain the purpose of a medicine, signs of trouble, and what to do if a dose is missed	<b>Group Discussion Methods:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pair-work</li> <li>• Brainstorming</li> <li>• Small group discussion</li> <li>• Individual presentations</li> <li>• Role play</li> </ul>

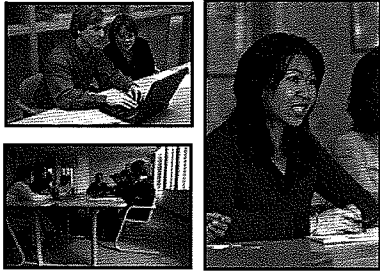
## Sample Health Literacy Unit #3

### Disease Prevention and Screening

<b>Thematic focus and/or title of unit:</b> Health Screenings	
<b>Student population and level:</b>  Intermediate ABE	<b>Major tasks addressed in this unit:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss risk for disease with a doctor</li> <li>• Discuss screening tests with a doctor</li> <li>• Outline possible test findings and plan for each type of finding</li> <li>• Make decisions about getting screening tests</li> <li>• Understand screening results</li> <li>• Make plans for follow-up</li> </ul>
<b>Inspiration for unit:</b> Many of my students are middle-aged and overweight and have not recently had blood pressure and cholesterol checks. They have concerns about paying for screening tests and find numbers in results confusing.	
<b>Unit objectives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners will be able to understand concepts such as numerical ranges and statements of probability as they pertain to health risks.</li> <li>• Learners will be able to formulate questions about screening tests to ask a doctor.</li> <li>• Learners will be able to design action plans for different possible screening test findings.</li> <li>• Learners will be able to use a decision matrix tool for making decisions about obtaining screening.</li> </ul>	<b>Lesson ideas:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review numerical ranges with a variety of examples, including temperature, weight, cholesterol, etc.</li> <li>2. Practice interpreting ranges used in health information/recommendations.</li> <li>3. Review the concept of probability. (Use the Study Circle+ Disease Prevention and Screening sample lessons, <i>How Likely is Likely?</i> and <i>Introduction to Probability</i>)</li> <li>4. Practice interpreting health risk statements that students locate in the news/magazines/newspapers.</li> <li>5. Create skits that help students practice questions for a health professional about the need for and results of screening tests.</li> <li>6. Assess student interests and make sample action plans – e.g., for better diet, exercise.</li> <li>7. Use the Study Circle+ sample lesson, <i>Making Important Health Decisions</i>.</li> </ol>
<b>Skills to be addressed:</b> <b>Oral communication:</b> Request clarification <b>Plan:</b> develop an action plan <b>Read:</b> health information <b>Write:</b> skits and action plans <b>Use tools:</b> phonebooks, Web <b>Self-efficacy:</b> feel confident about asking a doctor to explain the purpose of a screening test and what results can reveal	<b>Group Discussion Methods:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pair-work</li> <li>• Brainstorming</li> <li>• Small group discussion</li> <li>• Individual presentations</li> <li>• Role play</li> </ul>







## Creating Health Literacy Lesson Plans

At this point, you have had a chance to think about what kinds of lessons you want to include in your health literacy unit(s). Now, it is time to think about exactly how you will carry out each lesson. To assist you in this process, we have developed a health literacy lesson template. Each lesson plan will focus on a limited set of the health-related tasks and skills included in your unit. The template provides you with a framework for thinking about the content and organization of your lesson. Lesson plans produced using this template will not only guide *you* in carrying out your lesson; they also provide clear information to *other teachers* with whom you may wish to share your teaching materials and ideas later on.

As you begin using the template to design your health literacy lessons, keep the following questions in mind:

1. *Will my students find the lesson topic interesting and useful? (Does this lesson address concerns raised by students in the needs assessment activity?)*
2. *Are the activities within the lesson appropriate for my students' skill levels?*
3. *In what ways does the lesson link to skills and topics I am currently addressing in my classroom?*

## **Overview: The Health Literacy Lesson Template**

The template is based on one developed for the *HEAL: Breast and Cervical Cancer Curriculum*, developed by World Education in cooperation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2002. The template includes the following components:

### **Health-related Tasks Addressed in this Lesson**

This provides the overall direction for your lesson. The tasks refer to the real life activities in which adults engage in taking care of their own and their families' health. These tasks should be included within the list of tasks addressed in your unit plan. Examples include: obtaining health insurance, visiting a doctor for medical care, or making sense of health information.

### **Skills Focus**

This is a key piece of your lesson plan as the skills focus determines the content and types of activities that you choose to include in your lesson. You should think of these skills as those required in order to carry out the health-related task(s) you listed above. Lesson plans should focus on reading, writing, speaking, listening, and math skills as well as efficacy and advocacy. Skills may include things such as making requests, following oral directions, reading a chart or table, calculating elapsed time, and evaluating statements of probability.

### **ABE/ESOL Level**

This refers to the ability level of students, such as beginning ESOL, intermediate ABE, or GED. This information will help you determine the most appropriate level of challenge for your students and will also provide an outside reader with a clear sense of the type of student for whom the lesson was designed.

### **Duration**

The duration of the lesson refers to the time needed to carry out the activities included in the lesson plan. You may wish to design a lesson that can be carried out as one whole, or part of, a class session.

### **Materials**

Here, you will provide a list of all materials needed for the lesson, including handouts, as well as any special materials, such as post-it notes, markers, or other items you or your students will need to carry out activities.

### **Key Vocabulary and Expressions**

This list helps you to keep in mind the key vocabulary and expressions that you will cover in your lesson. Once you have drafted your lesson plan, you will want to review this list to be sure that all terms listed have been included within the

lesson's activities, and conversely, that you have included in this list all key terms that you want to highlight in the lesson.

## **Purpose**

This section provides a brief statement of the overall purpose of the lesson. This statement serves to keep your design of activities focused on your goals for the lesson and provides an outside reader with a clear orientation to the aims of the lesson.

## **Steps**

This section is the heart of the lesson plan. Writing out the steps will help you to think through the order and logic of activities in the lesson. This section also provides an outside reader with step-by-step instructions on how to carry out the lesson plan, including the materials used, at what point, etc. The number of steps will vary, based on individual lessons.

## **Follow-up Activity**

It is often helpful to think about additional activities that students can do to reinforce or apply new skills obtained through a lesson. These follow-up activities may include writing activities, field trips, as well as survey or other research activities conducted outside the classroom. These activities encourage you to think beyond the immediate activities of the lesson to how you might extend student learning in related ways.

## **ESOL/Advanced ABE/GED Tips**

In many instances, the information and skills covered in health literacy lessons and units are applicable to both non-native and native English speakers alike. This section encourages you to think about variations on the lesson that would work for different groups of students. You may wish to note ideas for adapting a lesson plan to a different audience, whether it is ESOL or a higher or lower level of students.

## **Technology Tips**

In this age of abundant information, you can often find Web-based resources that can enhance the design of your lessons or offer interesting follow-up activities. This section is designed to encourage you to explore such possibilities and make them apparent to an outside reader of your lesson plan.

Note: See Appendix for sample health literacy lessons based on this template.

<b>Lesson Plan Template*</b>
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Lesson Title: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Health Care Access and Navigation Tasks Addressed in this Lesson</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪</li><li>▪</li><li>▪</li></ul>	<b>Purpose</b>
<b>Skills Focus</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪</li><li>▪</li><li>▪</li></ul>	<b>Steps</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2.</li><li>3.</li><li>4.</li><li>5.</li><li>6.</li><li>7.</li><li>8.</li></ol>
<b>ABE/ESOL Level</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪</li></ul>	<b>Follow-Up Activity</b>
<b>Duration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪</li></ul>	<b>ESOL/Advanced ABE/GED Tips</b>
<b>Materials</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪</li><li>▪</li><li>▪</li></ul>	<b>Technology Tips</b>
<b>Key Vocabulary and Expressions</b>	

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\* Reference: The *HEAL: Breast and Cervical Cancer Curriculum*, developed by World Education in cooperation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2002. Used with permission.

## **Study Circle+ Guides Lesson Plans**

As was noted in the preface above, various sample health literacy lessons were contained in the handouts for the **second** session of each of the ***Health Literacy Study Circle+*** guides. The sample lessons were used by the participating teachers during the course of the study circle – between meetings -- so that they could test out the interests and responses of their own students. The teachers then returned to the study circle meeting [session three] to describe their work and analyze their experiences with other participants.

The sets of lessons within each guide do not represent a full health literacy unit. Instead, they provide examples of types of lessons, types of topics to be addressed, and types of skills to focus on – for various levels of instruction.

Sample lessons can be reviewed on line at the following links:

<http://www.ncsall.net/index.php?id=25>

or

[www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/curricula](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/curricula)

**You will find the following sample lessons on line:**

### ***Chronic Disease Management Lessons***

**Lesson 1: (ABE)** Learning to Live with a Chronic Disease

**Lesson 2: (ABE)** Developing Problem-Solving Skills

**Lesson 3: (ABE)** How to Manage Your Medicines

**Lesson 4: (ABE)** How to Take Your Medicines on Time

**Lesson 5: (GED)** Language for Describing Symptoms

**Lesson 6: (GED)** Using Bar Graphs to Learn about Literacy and Health Outcomes

**Lesson 7: (ESOL)** Communication between Patients and Doctors

**Lesson 8: (ESOL)** Questions to Ask Your Doctor

**Lesson 9: (ESOL)** Talking about Symptoms to Your Doctor

## ***Health Care Access and Navigation***

- Lesson 1: (ESOL)** Examining Language Barriers in Health Care
- Lesson 2: (ESOL)** Exploring Hospital Vocabulary
- Lesson 3: (ESOL)** Filling Out Health Care Forms
- Lesson 4: (ABE)** Determining Income Eligibility
- Lesson 5: (ABE)** Completing Medical History Forms in Health Care Settings
- Lesson 6: (ABE)** Filing a Complaint with OSHA
- Lesson 7: (ABE)** The “Logic” of Hospitals
- Lesson 8: (ABE)** Selecting a Health Plan

## ***Disease Prevention and Screening***

- Lesson 1A: (ESOL)** Health Screening Tests
- Lesson 1B: (ESOL)** Talking About Health Screening Tests
- Lesson 2: (ESOL)** Health Care Every Day, Every Month, Every Year
- Lesson 3: (ABE)** Inquiry-based Project on Preventive Screening Resources in the Community
- Lesson 4: (ESOL)** Filling Out Health Care Forms<sup>3</sup>
- Lesson 5: (ESOL)** Understanding Family Medical History Forms
- Lesson 6: (ABE)** Using a Body Mass Index Table
- Lesson 7: (ESOL)** Talking About Symptoms to Your Doctor
- Lesson 8: (GED)** Making Important Health Decisions
- Lesson 9: (ESOL)** Introduction to Informed Consent
- Lesson 10: (ESOL)** How Likely is Likely? Vocabulary for Talking about Probability
- Lesson 11: (ABE)** Introduction to Probability
- Lesson 12: (GED)** Exploring Health Risks as Probabilities

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<sup>3</sup> This lesson was originally developed for the Health Care Access and Navigation Study Circle<sup>+</sup>

## **Post-Teaching Reflection Sheet**

This reflection sheet was developed for participants in the ***Health Literacy Study Circle***<sup>+</sup>. Teachers are encouraged to devote time to reflect on their practice, particularly when trying a new approach or integrating new activities. The study circles afforded an opportunity for teachers to share their reflections with others. After you have tried out your new health literacy lesson(s) with your students, you might find it helpful to answer the following questions.

**Title of the Lesson:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date(s) lesson was taught:** \_\_\_\_\_

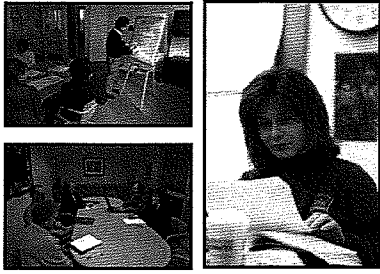
**Class Level:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Reflection Questions**

1. How successful was the lesson? (Did you meet your teaching goals)?
2. What specific features of the lesson went well? (What features did the students respond to most positively?)
3. What specific features of the lesson did not go well? (What features did the students have the most difficulty with?)
4. What adaptations (if any) did you make to the lesson for use in your classroom?

5. What might you have done differently to make the lesson more effective?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What teaching suggestions and tips would you offer a teacher who is interested in using this lesson?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. Having now taught this lesson, what changes might you wish to make to your health literacy unit? Are there other lessons that you would like to add to the plan or elements that you wish to delete? As you answer these questions, keep in mind the issues raised by your students during the needs assessment and the skills they need to develop.





## Designing an Evaluation Plan

An evaluation plan can help you think through the types of evaluation questions you want to ask and how to go about seeking answers to them. Consider giving some thought to assessing the effectiveness of the new materials and activities that you are using as you plan your lessons and units.

### Types of Evaluation

Many evaluators suggest that we focus on two levels of evaluation: *process evaluation* and *outcome evaluation*. Carol H. Weiss, a well-known expert on evaluation, defines *process evaluation* as “a study of what goes on while a program is in progress.”<sup>4</sup> The purpose of this evaluation will be to understand whether the teaching process is going as planned, whether the students are as engaged as anticipated, and whether activities you designed to build skills are indeed accomplishing what you had hoped they would. Process evaluations enable us to pause and redesign our plans as needed.

We rarely have the time and luxury to evaluate everything. You will need to determine when feedback is most useful. Which specific aspects of your lessons, such as planned activities or time for practicing a new skill, do you want to examine closely?

Consider how you might get feedback from students as well as peers. For instance, you might have an informal discussion with your students after a lesson. Ask them “What did you learn?” or “Did you have enough time?” or “What did you value most or least?” You might also ask a colleague to observe a lesson so they can share insights with you.

As Weiss notes, *outcome evaluation* looks at “whether or not the program produced the intended program effects.”<sup>5</sup> In this instance, an outcome evaluation will determine whether your unit has achieved what you hoped it would. In your

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<sup>4</sup> Weiss, C. (1998). *Evaluation: Methods for Studying Programs and Policies*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p.334.

outcome evaluation, you will want to consider the effect of the unit on students' skills, knowledge, attitudes/beliefs, and actions.

Outcome evaluations help you determine whether a lesson or a full unit achieved the results you expected. Many evaluators urge us to focus on proximal and distal outcomes.

*Proximal outcomes* are those that can be evaluated immediately, such as increased knowledge, perceptions, and skills.

*Distal outcomes* are those that come a bit later and that generally focus on results when new knowledge, perceptions, and skills are applied to real life circumstances.

## **How to Draft an Evaluation Plan**

The attached two-page template provides one way of organizing your plans for evaluating your unit. Ultimately, you may prefer to use a different format. The purpose of this exercise is to allow you the opportunity to think through what you want to evaluate for your unit, and how you might go about doing it. The partially filled-in template is provided as an example.

As you use the template (or some other format) to develop a plan for evaluating your unit, keep the following questions in mind:

1. *What will the students be able to do after you teach this unit?*
2. *Does the focus on knowledge, perceptions, skills, and actions cover the kinds of changes you hope to see in your students? What else might you add?*
3. *What can you do to document that the desired changes have taken place in students' knowledge, perceptions, skills, and actions?*

## Evaluation Plan Template

<b>Unit Focus/Theme:</b> <hr/>		<b>Sequence of lesson topics:</b> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.
<b>Goal:</b> <hr/>		
<b>Major Objectives:</b> Students will be able to do the following: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		
<b>Level of Evaluation</b>	<b>Possible Evaluation Questions</b>	<b>Evaluation Measures</b> (How I will get feedback)
Process Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do the lessons address student needs?</li> <li>• Are students engaged in lessons?</li> <li>• Do the activities help students increase their knowledge?</li> <li>• Do the activities help students change their perceptions?</li> <li>• Do the activities help students develop new skills?</li> </ul>	

**Evaluation Plan Template (p. 2)**

<b>Level of Evaluation</b>	<b>Possible Evaluation Questions</b>	<b>Evaluation Measures</b> (How I will get feedback)
Outcome Evaluation	<p><b>Proximal Outcomes:</b> Have students acquired new knowledge, perceptions, attitudes, and/or skills?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did students increase knowledge? (e.g., vocabulary)</li> <li>• Did students change perceptions? (e.g., increased self efficacy for interacting with social service staff)</li> <li>• Did students develop new skills? (e.g., fill out family health history form)</li> </ul> <p><b>Distal Outcomes:</b> When, where, and under what circumstances have students applied new knowledge and new skills?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What actions have students taken outside the class?</li> <li>• Have students taught or helped others?</li> <li>• What benefits have students reported?</li> </ul>	

## Sample Evaluation Plan #1

### Health Care Access and Navigation

<p><b>Unit Focus/Theme:</b> Health Insurance for My Children</p> <p><b>Goal:</b> Build skills needed to obtain and apply for an entitlement program such as health insurance for children under 18</p> <p><b>Objectives:</b> Students will be able to locate programs, request information and forms, prepare for and complete application process</p>		<p><b>Sequence of lessons</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Needs assessment: Barriers we've faced getting insurance for our children</li> <li>2. How to use a telephone book</li> <li>3. How to manage phone trees</li> <li>4. How to be an advocate: Strategies for talking with staff of social service agencies</li> <li>5. How to assemble a family folder of important documents</li> <li>6. How to use open entry forms</li> <li>7. Vocabulary building: Words we find on application forms</li> <li>8. Student Reports: What I've learned about getting insurance in our state</li> </ol>
Level of Evaluation	Evaluation Question	Evaluation Measures
Process Evaluation	<p>Do the lessons address student needs?</p> <p>Are students engaged in lessons?</p> <p>Is there sufficient time for students to practice and build skills?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Observation: Match unit goal with findings from needs assessment.</li> <li>2. Class activity: Ask students how they feel about the lessons.</li> </ol>
Outcome Evaluation	<p><b>Proximal:</b></p> <p>Did the students increase their knowledge?</p> <p>Did the students change their perceptions?</p> <p>Did the students increase skills?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Vocabulary test [10 key words]</li> <li>2. Class activity: ask students to use a scale to rate level of confidence for each of the skills listed in unit objectives.</li> <li>3. Observation: ask students to role play an applicant asking a staff person questions for clarification.</li> <li>4. Problem solving test: ask students to read the eligibility requirements in an application and list out needed documents.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Distal:</b></p> <p>Have students applied new skills?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask students to keep a journal about their actions taken over two to three months.</li> <li>2. Ask students to write a story.</li> <li>3. Ask class to tally action taken by members of the class.</li> </ol>

## Sample Evaluation Plan #2

### Chronic Disease Management

<p><b>Unit Focus/Theme:</b> Timing and Scheduling Medicine</p> <p><b>Goal:</b> Build skills needed for proper dosing, timing, and scheduling of medicines</p> <p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will be able to read a medicine label to determine dosage and timing.</li> <li>• Students will be able to request information and clarification about the purpose and correct use of medicines.</li> <li>• Students will be able to use a clock and/or a calendar to schedule medicines.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Sequence of lessons</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Needs assessment: Identify barriers people face when they need to take different medicines to manage a chronic disease.</li> <li>2. Conduct interviews with people managing a chronic disease about problems they faced remembering medicine and strategies they developed.</li> <li>3. Present interview findings to class and write a booklet addressing strategies for taking medicine.</li> <li>4. Create skits that help students practice questions for a health professional (doctor, nurse, and/or pharmacist) about proper use of medicine.</li> <li>5. Vocabulary building: words we find on medicine labels.</li> <li>6. Read and analyze a variety of prescription labels on medicine bottles to figure out needed timing. Use an analogue clock to set the correct daily times, and a calendar to determine how many days to take the medicines.</li> <li>7. Read the directions for over-the-counter medicines, and determine how much to take each day.</li> <li>8. (Optional) With your students, read the article, "Use Medicine Safely" from the FDA web site at <a href="http://www.fda.gov/opacom/lowlit/englow.html">http://www.fda.gov/opacom/lowlit/englow.html</a>.</li> </ol>
Level of Evaluation	Evaluation Question	Evaluation Measures
Process Evaluation	Do the lessons address student needs? Are students engaged in lessons? Is there sufficient time for students to practice and build skills?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Observation: Match unit goal with findings from needs assessment; ask students</li> <li>2. Class activity: Ask students</li> </ol>

**Sample Evaluation Plan (p. 2)**

<b>Outcome Evaluation</b>	<b>Proximal:</b> Did the students increase their knowledge? Did the students change their perceptions? Did the students increase skills?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Vocabulary test (10 key words)</li><li>2. Class activity: Ask students to read a medicine label and identify time of doses for a 24-hour period.</li><li>3. Observation: Ask students to role-play a patient who needs to ask the doctor about the purpose of a new medicine and the correct usage.</li><li>4. Problem solving test: Ask students to read a story about Mr. Smith and use a calendar to plan his week's medicine.</li></ol>
	<b>Distal:</b> Have students applied new skills?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Ask students to keep a journal and describe the actions they have taken for themselves or for others.</li><li>2. Ask students to write a story.</li><li>3. Ask class to tally action taken by members of the class.</li></ol>

## Sample Evaluation Plan #3

### Disease Prevention and Screening

<p><b>Unit Focus/Theme:</b></p> <p>Health Screenings</p> <p><b>Goal:</b> Build skills needed for understanding, participating in, and taking follow-up action on, health screening tests</p> <p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners will be able to understand concepts such as numerical ranges and statements of probability as they pertain to health risks.</li> <li>• Learners will be able to formulate questions about screening tests to ask a doctor.</li> <li>• Learners will be able to design action plans for different possible screening test findings.</li> <li>• Learners will be able to use a decision matrix tool for making decisions about obtaining screening.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Sequence of lessons</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Needs assessment: Identify barriers students face to understanding health risks and participating in screening tests.</li> <li>2. Vocabulary building: Review names of screening tests, the parts of the body to which they pertain, and the diseases for which the tests screen.</li> <li>3. Web research: Look up on-line information on tests discussed in class and present findings in class.</li> <li>4. Math review: Review percents, decimals, ratios and probability.</li> <li>5. Review and practice interpreting health risk statements that students locate in the news/magazines/newspapers. [Use one of Study Circle+ lessons on probability.]</li> <li>6. Create skits that help students practice questions for a health professional about the need for, and results of, screening tests.</li> <li>7. Assess student interests and make sample action plans – e.g., for better diet, exercise.</li> <li>8. Use the Study Circle+ sample lesson on decision-making.</li> </ol>
<b>Level of Evaluation</b>	<b>Evaluation Questions</b>	<b>Evaluation Measures</b>
Process Evaluation	<p>Do the lessons address student needs?</p> <p>Are students engaged in lessons?</p> <p>Is there sufficient time for students to practice and build skills?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Observation: Match unit goal with findings from needs assessment; ask students what they see as their needs.</li> <li>2. Class activity: Ask students to provide feedback on the unit lessons.</li> </ol>



## Notes

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