



# Teaching adult basic education

only study guide for  
**ABT1519**

University of South Africa, Pretoria

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# Introduction

Welcome to **Teaching Adult Basic Education**, one of the modules in both the Higher Certificate and the Diploma in Adult Basic Education and Training.

The module is an introductory one at level 5 of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and is meant to outline adult learning information that is of practical value to an entry-level adult basic education and training practitioner.

In this Introduction we tell you more about the contents of the module, **Teaching Adult Basic Education**. In it you will find basic information about

- the aims of the module
- the learning outcomes of the module
- the units in the module
- the study guide material
- tutorial support
- assignments and assessment
- study expectations

## Aims of the module

This module aims to give a general overview, along with some practical examples from adult teaching. It focuses on language and numeracy. It builds upon the foundation of mother-tongue and basic literacy and numeracy. It aims to impart general knowledge skills required to teach a variety of ABET learning areas at different ABET levels

## Learning outcomes

The statements of learning outcomes provided below tell you what **results** are expected from your study of this module. You will be told what content you are expected to know as well as what you should be able to do or demonstrate. To achieve these learning outcomes you will have to read and study this study guide, engage in the recommended study activities, and complete all the assignments.

At the end of the module, you should be able to do the following (both in spoken and appropriate written form):

- (1) use outcomes and assessment criteria to plan lessons
- (2) develop skills for teaching literacy and numeracy in a variety of contexts and levels
- (3) have a general overview of different methods of teaching ABET



## The module units

The module **Developing Academic Skills for Studying ABET** consists of the following topic areas that are covered in six study units:

Unit	Title	Topics covered
1	Unit standards	Knowledge of unit standards. Using unit standards to plan and facilitate learning. Outcomes in terms of the levels.
2	Using language to communicate	Learners express themselves and practice. Language elements taught within a meaningful context. Language elements useful for everyday interactions. Language activities are integrated. Learner communication is acknowledged. Learners express personal opinions and critical viewpoints.
3	Reinforcing mother-tongue literacy	Mother-tongue used in learning events. Reading strategies in mother-tongue used for target language. Writing strategies used in target language. Critical response to texts elicited.
4	Managing language in a learning situation	Strategies for language difficulties. Relevant terminology explained. Language idiom and grammar explained. Academic language explained. Language-related comprehension problems dealt with. Different levels of oral and written language recognised.

5	Visual literacy	Relevant symbols explained to learners. Layout and style explained to learners. Visuals in line with learners' abilities.
6	Critical reading comprehension	Use of different parts of the text. Meaning and use of punctuation. Appropriate reading strategies explained. Origin, purpose and intended audience discussed. Learners questioned for understanding. Distinguishing fact from fiction and persuasion.
7	Mathematical and technical instruments	Appropriate use of the calculator. Appropriate use of measuring instruments. Understanding the practical implications of readings from technical and mathematical instruments. Learners' own estimation and interpretation skills developed.
8	Producing texts and assignments	Details of text requirements explained. Learners helped to structure texts. Learners' progress monitored. Learners encouraged to produce texts reflecting their own processes and methods.
9	Accessing and managing information	Storing and retrieving documents. Logic of filing system explained. Learners shown how to maintain an organised file.

## The study guide material and readings

This module is taught in two ways:

- (1) through the study guide and the prescribed reading
- (2) through interaction with a tutorial group (if you can attend one)

## *Units*

The printed course material is divided into six **units**. Each unit covers topics related to one of the learning outcomes.

## *What is in each unit?*

Each unit contains the following elements:

- (3) Aims
- (4) Learning outcomes
- (5) Content material
- (6) Activities
- (7) Readings
- (8) Further reading

## *Aims*

These provide a **general** statement on what you will learn in the unit and on what material has been provided to help you to do this.

## *Learning outcomes*

These are **specific** statements about what you will be able to do when you have worked through the unit and engaged in other course activities related to the unit.

## *Content material*

This is the material you will read and think about. Other supporting materials, mainly readings, may also be used.

## *Activities*

A number of activities are included in the study material. These tasks should help you check your own understanding of the material. The activities will include questions, exercises, self-tests and ideas to think and write about.

## *How much time must I spend on each unit?*

How long do I need to study this module and each unit of this module? This module is rated at 12 credits. This means that it is assumed that you will spend about 120 hours of study on this module. Usually this means that you must plan to spend time

- reading the material
- engaging in activities as you read, and attending tutorials
- writing assignments, and preparing for and writing the examination

## We recommend that you study for the following number of hours:

Reading through this introduction and the six units (40 hours) (about 6 hours per unit)

Doing activities and attending tutorials (40 hours)

Writing assignments (this includes preparation, reading, writing and careful editing): (20 hours)

Preparing for and writing the examination (20 hours)

### *Study groups*

Studying by yourself can be a lonely task. A rich source of support, information and experience is your fellow students (whether support is given informally, through a study group that you set up, or by a UNISA tutorial group).

### *Support from the module coordinator*

You can make use of the support given by the module coordinator. You are welcome to make appointments to see the coordinator and you can also communicate with him or her by letter, telephone, fax or e-mail (details are given in the tutorial letter).

## Assignments and assessment

### *What will be assessed?*

In this module assessment will be based on **assignments** and the **examination**.

### *Assignments*

You will be asked to complete **two assignments** during the course. Each written assignment has a due date and must be sent in by that date. The second assignment is worth 10% of the final mark.

Completion of the **first assignment** is a requirement for examination entry. **NB:** If this assignment has not been submitted you will not be allowed to write the examination.

### *Examination*

This will be written at one of the recognised UNISA examination centres. The examination will last two hours.

### *Things to remember about assessment*

In thinking about assessment, remember that what should be assessed is **your demonstration** that you have achieved the **learning outcomes** of this course. You will need to

- (9) show that you **know** the contents of the module

- (10) demonstrate that you have the **skills** to think critically and plan your assignments
- (11) display **attitudes** that indicate that you are able to combine your knowledge and experience meaningfully

The following will **not** help you demonstrate that you have achieved the learning outcomes:

- (12) Writing what you have learned by **rote** (this means learning words, texts or facts off by heart without really understanding their meaning). You will not do very well in your assessments if you simply write what is in the study material.
- (13) Not making use of your own experience. We are very interested in your experiences, ideas, feelings and activities as an adult learner yourself. You will do well in your assessments if you combine what you have learned from the study material with your own well thought out ideas. You will do well if you can show us that you can use what you have learned in your work and activities.

### *Study expectations*

To be successful in this module you will need to spend a considerable number of hours reading and studying the course material. The module was written on the assumption that you have a Grade 12 competence in the language of instruction and in reading and writing skills. It is further assumed that you can learn from predominantly written material and that you can find, analyse and evaluate information relevant to the learning programme. Lastly, you will have to do the assignments and prepare for the examination.

# UNIT 1

## Unit Standards

### 1 INTRODUCTION

The Department of Education has developed a syllabus for ABET and laid down certain guidelines. The syllabus is divided into learning areas and the guidelines are the Unit Standards. For each Unit Standard there are specific outcomes which have to be reached. To help with this, you are provided with Assessment Criteria. If you follow these you will have a clear idea of what to cover in your lessons. We will be discussing these in this unit and will look at how they can be used in lessons.

#### SPECIFIC OUTCOME 1:

Apply the requirements of the relevant ABET learning area unit standards.

#### Assessment Criteria

Knowledge and skills required by learners in terms of Unit Standards for the learning area at an ABET level are described.

The relevant Unit Standards are used to plan and facilitate learning.

Learners' performance can be described in relation to the ABET levels and outcomes.

Exemplars of learners' work are identified as being at the relevant ABET level.

### 2 THE LEARNING AREAS

The curriculum framework clusters learning subjects into fundamental and elective areas.

The fundamental areas are those learning areas which are basic to all learning. To be able to continue in any other learning area you need the fundamental areas, that is you need to be literate in language and mathematics. Each of them is given a certain number of credits.

**The fundamental Learning Areas are:**

Language, literacy and communication – 23 credits

Mathematical literacy, mathematics and mathematical sciences – 16 credits

Life orientation – 16 credits

The Elective Component consists of academic and vocationally related Learning Areas and learners must complete Unit Standards totalling 51 credits for this component. The choice must be made as follows:

The learner must choose one Learning Area, and complete all the Unit Standards listed for that Learning Area.

In addition, the learner must choose additional Unit Standards from any of the other academic or vocationally related Learning Areas to make up a total of 51 credits in all for the Elective Component.

**The academic Learning Areas with their Unit Standards are:**

- Human and Social Studies – 23 credits
- Natural Sciences – 15 credits
- Economic and Management Sciences – 21 credits
- Arts and Culture – 17 credits
- Technology – 11 credits
- Additional Language – 23 credits

**The vocationally related Learning Areas with their Unit Standards are:**

- Applied Agriculture and Agricultural Sciences
- Ancillary Health Care
- Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMME)
- Travel and Tourism
- Information Communication Technology (ICT)
- Early Childhood Development (ECD)
- Wholesale and Retail

This curriculum framework must equip learners with the knowledge, attitudes, skills and critical capacity to participate fully in all aspects of society.

**Specifically, it must enable learners to**

- develop literacy, language and communication skills in more than one language
- develop numeracy and mathematical skills
- develop a critical understanding of the society in which they live
- develop a critical understanding of the context in which learners live, work and interact with others
- develop technical and practical skills, knowledge and understanding
- develop an understanding of the world of science and technology

Language, literacy and communication and mathematical literacy, mathematics and mathematical sciences, along with life orientation, are the fundamental areas. Look at the other learning areas

again and you will see that it is almost impossible to deal with them unless the learners have a knowledge of reading,

### *Writing and mathematics*

Let's take an example. In human and social sciences you may want to deal with parts of the body. You will look at a picture of the skeleton and talk about the **number** of bones, possibly in the fingers or the ribs. You would write words on the board or point to them on a poster and the learners would **read** them. This makes the syllabus **cross-curricular**, in other words it cuts **across** the curriculum. So you will find yourself dealing with two or more learning areas in one period. Another example would be a lesson on the status of women. This would fall under life orientation. In the lesson you might give figures (numbers) or percentages for the number of women in government (mathematical literacy). In the same lesson questions of culture (arts and culture) or economic problems (economic and management science) might be discussed. The lesson can really be described as cross-curricular.

Although the lesson is cross-curricular, the educator must keep the main Learning Area in focus. So if the lesson is language related, the focus and outcomes will deal with language. New words will be learnt, and the learners will gain practice in speaking and writing and participating in discussion in the target language etc.

#### ACTIVITY



Name the main learning area the following lessons would fall under.

(1) In what ways would they be cross curricular? (dealing with more than one learning area)



Lesson	Learning area	Cross-curricular
Treatment of a person with tuberculosis		
Opening a bank account		

Each learning area has Unit Standards that will guide you in the content you will have to cover.



### 3 UNIT STANDARDS

Each of the above learning areas is “translated” into Unit Standards. These have been approved by SAQA (The South African Qualifications Authority), which has been set up by the government to make sure we all follow the same curriculum and that the standards are appropriate for each level.

#### **A Unit Standard tells us:**

what the level of learning is

what the purpose of the learning outcome is – why is it relevant?

how the learning outcome will be assessed

what critical cross-field outcomes the unit standard will achieve

As an example, look at the following Unit Standard:

(1) **Title:** Engage in speaking and listening interactions

(2) **ABET Level:** 2

(3) **Credits:** 6

(4) **Learning area:** Language, literacy and communication

(5) **Purpose:**

This Unit Standard will be useful for learners who are acquiring an additional language, and wish to communicate orally with speakers of other languages on a simple level in various contexts

(6) **Learning assumed to be in place and recognition of prior learning**

Listening and speaking skills in the target language at ABET Level 1.

(7) **Range statement for the whole Unit Standard:**

This standard applies only to learners acquiring an additional language. Mother-tongue speakers starting an ABET programme for the purpose of literacy are assumed to have these skills. Learners should be able to communicate in the following settings in routine situations:

Social

Work (eg simple accident reports)

Study

Community and religious contexts

Doctor/clinic/nurse

Official/commercial (eg post-office, bank)

You will see that the Unit Standard clearly sets out the level, learning area and title. It also tells you:

**The purpose** – the aim of this particular unit standard

**Learning assumed to be in place** – You cannot facilitate this lesson unless the learners have Level 1.

**The range** – The range tells you briefly what areas that unit standard is going to cover.

So now we know what the unit standard is all about. Each unit standard has specific outcomes and critical crossfield outcomes. What are outcomes?

## 4 OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION (OBE)

*What do we mean by an outcome?*



*Did I hear you ask exactly what we mean by an outcome? Let's think about this in relation to driving a car. If you were teach-*

*ing someone to drive a car, what would you teach? Would you need to teach the learner about how brakes are manufactured or how to fix a cam belt? There is so much that we can teach about cars. You would have to decide exactly what the learner driver needs to know to get a driver's licence. You would probably need to teach him/her the different road signs (knowledge), and how to change gears, park, reverse and brake on a hill (skills). You would also need to teach some road courtesy such as being a considerate driver and why it is important to drive carefully at all times (values).*

*A good driving instructor also has to think about how the learner driver will be assessed. He/she will have to do a driving test. While the learner is being tested, the examiner will probably be able to see whether the driver is considerate or not. In this way the driver's values will be assessed. Maybe the examiner will ask a few questions like "What should you do when you drive near children?" Drivers also need a knowledge of road signs and road rules and they are expected to do a written or oral learner's licence test. They need to pass this before they are allowed on the road. In this way the learner's competence is demonstrated to the driving examiner. How do I know all this? Oh, lots of prior learning. I had to repeat my driving test four times before I got my licence!*

### *Two kinds of outcomes*

We have just seen how a learner – let's call him Joe – has to achieve the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will demonstrate that he is a competent driver. If Joe passes his driver's licence we can say that he has achieved the specific outcomes required for driving a light motor vehicle. In order for us to assess whether Joe is competent, he will have to demonstrate his competence as a driver when he goes for his driver's test. For this test, he will probably have to drive on the road and it is likely that his examiner will ask him questions to see if he knows the rules of the road. And, if Joe passes his driver's test he will be regarded as a qualified or licensed driver. But Joe will only qualify to drive a car. His driver's licence will not qualify him to drive a truck or fly a plane. If he wants to do that he would have to achieve other outcomes specific to driving a truck or flying a plane. Although some of the competencies that he acquired learning to drive a car will be the same as those necessary for driving a truck, he will need to become competent in other specific skills. We've given Joe due credit for achieving his outcomes, but now let's take a closer look at what we mean by outcomes:ek lief jou

There are two kinds of outcomes that concern us as practitioners.

- **Specific outcomes** tell us what competence or ability a learner should demonstrate or show in a particular learning area. Learners in a first-level class in Communication will have to show that they have achieved certain specific outcomes. When we assess these learners we need to check their progress to find out whether they have achieved the specific outcomes. When the learners have achieved the correct number of specific outcomes they will have enough credits or building blocks to receive a certificate for Communication at level 1. Each of the 8 learning areas has its own specific outcomes.

But there are outcomes that are generic to all levels and to all learning areas. There are the critical cross-field outcomes.

- **Critical cross-field outcomes** are the outcomes that are generic or common to all eight learning areas. They are the outcomes that we should achieve regardless of what it is that we are learning and regardless of the level at which we are studying. These outcomes involve the ability to
  - (1) solve problems
  - (2) work as a member of a team
  - (3) organise and manage one's activities
  - (4) collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate material
  - (5) communicate using visual, mathematical and/or language skills
  - (6) use science and technology effectively
  - (7) demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems

## ***MAIN PRINCIPLES OF OBE***

**We have already touched on some of the main principles of OBE:**

knowing the outcomes

discussing the outcomes with learners

knowing how your learners will be assessed

telling your learners how they will be assessed

teaching what is relevant

building on learners' prior knowledge

reflecting on your teaching

problem solving

working in a group and organising group members

teaching across the curriculum

thinking and doing

communicating  
learner-centred teaching  
evaluating information  
thinking about health and the environment and other systems

Now let's go back to our Unit Standard and look at the specific outcomes for the unit "Engage in speaking and listening interactions".

For this there are five specific outcomes (SOs). These are steps towards achieving the aim or purpose of the unit.

- S01 Initiate and maintain conversation
- S02 Ask and give information, explanations, directions and instructions
- S03 Make and respond to offers and requests
- S04 Express and respond to opinions and feelings
- S05 Listen and respond to oral text

Each specific outcome has several assessment criteria.

## 5 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Assessment Criteria are ways of assessing whether your learners have achieved the outcomes. They also give you direction towards what you need to cover in the lesson. Only when you know that all the requirements in the Assessment Criteria have been met can you continue to the next level. We will look at the Assessment Criteria for SO4 above.

### ***SO4 Express and respond to opinions and feelings***

#### ***Assessment Criteria***

- Opinions are given.
- Feelings are expressed in appropriate vocabulary.
- Own opinions and feelings are linked to the topic under discussion.
- The opinions and feelings expressed by others are responded to appropriately.

Now that we have all the information from the syllabus we can begin to plan the lesson. It is easy to teach in the old-fashioned way and tell learners what to think. Learner-centred teaching is much harder. You have to use your imagination and try to think of creative ways of involving the learners. To do this, you will need to spend extra time on careful preparation.

## 6 STEPS TOWARDS PLANNING A LESSON

### 6.1 What are you going to teach?

It's best to keep to one topic. Don't try to cover too much in one lesson. For example, teach addition or subtraction or multiplication or division. Don't try to cover them all in one lesson. As a general rule, keep to one specific outcome and do it thoroughly. You may need more than one lesson to cover a single outcome. For this learning area you should be able to cover the SOs in one lesson. By the end of the lesson you will know whether you need to repeat it, perhaps with different activities.

### 6.2 What is the purpose of the lesson?

Study the assessment criteria carefully. Once you understand what is expected you can begin to plan the lesson. The specific outcome for this lesson is to “**Express and respond to opinions and feelings**”. In this lesson you know that you want the learners to be able to express an opinion and to listen carefully to someone else's opinion. So we have to think up a topic on which everyone has an opinion. It also needs to be something that they feel strongly about so that they learn the vocabulary they need to express their feelings. The topic must be something that interests them and touches their lives and about which they feel strongly. It could be work related or have to do with their community. It could be something you will deal with in another lesson, for example a lesson on health. A suggestion might be:

Prejudice against people who have HIV/AIDS.

#### ACTIVITY



Write down three topics that would be suitable for this SO.



## 6.3 What do you know about the topic?

Some lessons, such as lessons on health, require factual information. You need to be sure of your facts, or do some research if necessary. Never make up answers. It's better to say "I don't know but I'll find out" rather than give wrong answers.

Now we come to the actual planning of the activities.

## 6.4 What are the most interesting materials I can use in this lesson?

Consider what teaching materials you could use. Do you need posters, pamphlets or other materials? For this lesson you could find a poster or pictures showing people having a conversation.

### 6.4.1 Choosing appropriate materials

How do I know what print materials would be effective for my learners?

Unfortunately there is no simple answer to this question.

Here are some important points to remember:

- For materials to be effective for your specific learners they must relate to the learners' own lives. This means they must be appropriate for your learners. A book that is aimed at teenagers in Soweto may not be a good choice for your older learners in rural KwaZulu-Natal.
- Materials must match your learners' educational level. For example, you may think that an easy reader on Johannes Dlamini living in Gauteng is suitable for your class in Tembisa. This book may relate to your learners' lives very well, but if the level of the language used in the text is too high for your learners it will discourage them.
- The purpose of the materials should match the reasons why your learners come to class. This means that you may need to develop or choose material that will teach your learners what they want to learn. It is no good using material that teaches learners English when what



they want to do first of all is to improve their Xhosa reading and writing skills.

Choosing effective materials for your learners also has to do with developing or choosing the right type of materials for what you want to teach. If you want your learners to interact in a group, the activity on your worksheet should encourage cooperative learning.

*(photograph: three ladies discussing the choice of materials)*

*[for additional information, please let a friend or family member assist you in interpreting this photograph]*

- There are certain guidelines on design and layout that apply to basically all print materials. Then there are also some guidelines that apply specifically to ABET materials.

We need to keep these points in mind when we develop or choose materials.

So you can see that the answer to the question “What print materials will be effective for my learners?” deals with a range of factors. We need to think about the following:

*Who are my learners?*

Material must be appropriate for their situation, their needs and their level of learning.

*What is the purpose of the material?*

It should teach what my learners want to learn, but within the framework of the national policy. If I am teaching in a big company, I must also take that company’s specific ABET needs into account.

*What type of material should I use?*

What type of material will serve my purpose?

*What should it look like?*

The design and layout of print materials should be inviting. Like well-prepared food, it should stimulate your appetite.

## 6.5 The purpose of activities in the lesson

The activities we use help learners to discover information for themselves. To hold the learners’ interest we need to design different activities for individual work and for pair and group work. As a general rule learners should not repeat the same tasks in the same way throughout the lesson.

## 6.6 Group work activities

This should be the most important part of the lesson. Group work not only increases the learners’ knowledge, it also gives them an opportunity to work as a team, to learn leadership skills and to work out problems. It is the best way of meeting the critical cross-field outcomes.

Think about interesting ways in which the groups could work on the topic. When you have decided on a task, ask yourself: **Would I enjoy doing this?** If the answer is “No” then think again. We think role play would work well for this lesson.

### Role play

When we do role play we ask learners to act – to play a role, to pretend they are someone or something else.

In a role play learners make up the story for themselves from a situation you give them. For example, in a lesson on health you may ask them to role-play a visit to the doctor. So you might

have the learners taking the different parts of doctor, nurse, patient, patient's husband or wife. The more learners you involve, the more the learners will enjoy the activity. At the end of a role play activity it must always be discussed.

How did the learners feel in the different roles?

What did they think of different things that were said?

Would they act in a similar way if they came across the situation in life?

In this lesson we want the learners to be able to express their own opinions and feelings. A role play on the topic chosen would give them an opportunity to do this, particularly in the discussion after the role play.

### Discussion groups

In a discussion people express different points of view. For this SO it would be a good idea to choose something on which people have very different opinions. In discussing the topic they will need to listen carefully to what people say. Before organising the discussion, think of leading questions that will get the discussion going.

### ACTIVITY



Look at the following questions for a discussion on crime in the community. Choose those that would encourage discussion in a group. Tick those that you think suitable.

(1) Is there crime in your area?	
(2) What do you think should be done about crime?	
(3) Why do you think there is so much crime in your area?	
(4) How many times have the schools been broken into?	
(5) Suggest five ways of persuading young people to leave crime alone.	

The first question only requires a "Yes" or "No" answer, so it is not a good way of starting a discussion. Question 4 requires a factual answer and again may not lead to discussion. However, question 5 suggests a clear direction for the group discussion and would keep the group focused on the topic.



## 6.7 Telling a story

A story is a good way of getting learners interested and involved. You could tell a story or read one. It must be a story which relates to the topic you have chosen. It should also relate to your learners' lives. After telling the story, ask some prepared questions about the content of the story and about the learners' opinions of the story. Good discussion questions would begin with:

How would you...?

What do you think of...?

Why do you think...?

How do you feel about...?

What would you do about...?

## 6.8 Pair work

In our lesson this might be a good time to use pair work. Let a pair of learners answer each other's questions and then tell the class what the other person said.

In this way they will not only have the opportunity to express their own opinion but also to listen carefully to what their partner is saying.

## 6.9 Putting it all together

Now that you have some ideas you need to begin putting it all together. First we have to remind ourselves of the Assessment Criteria.

- Opinions are given.
- Feelings are expressed in appropriate vocabulary.
- Own opinions and feelings are linked to the topic under discussion.
- The opinions and feelings expressed by others are responded to appropriately.

## 7 EXAMPLE OF A LESSON PLAN

The following is an example of a lesson that meets these criteria:

- (1) **Title:** Engage in speaking and listening interactions  
**Topic:** Prejudice against people who have HIV/AIDS
- (2) **ABET Level:** 2
- (3) **Credits:** 6
- (4) **Learning area:** Language, literacy and communication

## *SO4 Express and respond to opinions and feelings*

### *Assessment Criteria*

- Opinions are given.
- Feelings are expressed in appropriate vocabulary.
- Own opinions and feelings are linked to the topic under discussion.
- The opinions and feelings expressed by others are responded to appropriately.

### *Introduction:*

Explain the purpose of the lesson and the topic to be discussed.

Read a story from the newspaper in which a person with HIV/AIDS was avoided by the community and left to starve.

(At this stage you want to find out how well they can express themselves. Help them with difficult words.)

Ask the following:

How did you feel when you heard this story?

### ACTIVITY



Think of other questions you could ask.



### **Individual work**

Give them time to think about the subject and what has been said.

### **Pair work**

Ask them to talk to the person sitting next to them about how people in the community feel about HIV/AIDS using words like fear, acceptance and help.

Ask each member of a pair to describe what the other person said.

### **Group work**

In groups, discuss:

What fears do people have about HIV/AIDS?

What are the reasons for their fears?

Find at least three ways in which you can overcome their fears.

### ACTIVITY



Can you think of a role play in which the learners would be able to show how they feel?



### Report back

Each group appoints a leader to report back on their findings.

### General discussion

The whole group discusses the topic and learners give their opinion on what has been said.

### Assessment

The facilitator listens to the discussions and helps both with words and with information about HIV/AIDS. It is important for the educator to make sure the Assessment Criteria are being met.

- Opinions are given.
- Feelings are expressed in appropriate vocabulary.
- Own opinions and feelings are linked to the topic under discussion.
- The opinions and feelings expressed by others are responded to appropriately.

### ACTIVITY



Draw up a lesson plan and include all the phases of the plan.

These should include an introduction, individual, pair and group work, general discussion and assessment.



## 8 IDENTIFYING A LEARNER'S LEVEL THROUGH EXEMPLARS

### *Case study: A new learner comes to class*

Mrs Nkosi's Level 2 class had been in progress for ten minutes when there was a knock on the door. It was an English class and they were discussing the status of women in the community. Mrs Nkosi was irritated with the interruption but when

she went to the door she found a new learner, Mrs Mashele. She seemed quite confident, addressed Mrs Nkosi in English while she apologised for being late. Mrs Nkosi seated her quickly with one of the groups and continued the lesson. Mrs Mashele seemed to be take part fully in the discussion and was soon making friends. Mrs Nkosi spent most of her time with the slower learners who needed help. Towards the end of the lesson she asked the learners to write a few sentences on what they had discussed. It was only then that she found that Mrs Mashele could hardly read or write even though her language was good. She had sat through the whole lesson in the wrong class.

### ACTIVITY



What was the first thing Mrs Nkosi should have done when the learner entered the class?



How do we know at which level to place a learner?

The first thing to do is to find out whether he/she has been to a class before. If it is a new learner there are various exercises you can ask him or her to do. If the learner has attended an ABET school, we could ask for the learner's portfolio. What is important is that we have an example of the learner's work.

Whether the learner is new and is able to read and write or whether the learner has come from another school, we need to check their work against the Assessment Criteria for the different levels. Only in this way can we correctly assess what level the learner should be at.

## 9 CONCLUSION

In this unit we took a detailed look at how to use Unit Standards and Assessment Criteria. We discussed outcomes and different activities. We also gave an example of how a lesson could be planned to make sure it complies with the Standards and Criteria. In the next unit we will be looking in more detail at activities in which language is used to communicate.

# UNIT 2

## Using Language To Communicate

### 1 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we will look at ways to encourage learners to express themselves correctly in the target language – English, Afrikaans or any other language. The secret to learning a language is to speak it. Learners need to have the confidence to communicate in different circumstances and with different people they may come into contact with.

#### SPECIFIC OUTCOME 2:

Provide opportunities for learners to use language communicatively and critically

##### Assessment Criteria:

All learners are given opportunities to express themselves and practise the target language.

Language elements (eg vocabulary, grammar, spelling) are taught within a meaningful, real-life context.

Language elements taught (eg vocabulary, grammar, spelling) are useful for everyday interaction in the target language.

Speaking, listening, reading and writing activities are integrated and reinforce one another.

Meaningful communication by learners is acknowledged, even if linguistic errors are made.

Learners are encouraged to express personal opinions and critical viewpoints.

## 2 ALL LEARNERS ARE GIVEN OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES AND PRACTISE THE TARGET LANGUAGE

### *Classroom atmosphere*

The classroom may be under a tree or in a school but how learners respond and whether they continue to come to class will depend on the manner of the educator. Every learner is an individual with their own personality. Some will be shy, others talkative. Some will question everything and others will be afraid to answer in case they are wrong. How the educator treats them is very important for the learning experience. Learners need to feel comfortable asking questions, asking for help in their work and expressing their opinions. The educator's task is to make the atmosphere comfortable for learning.

### 2.1 Creating a warm atmosphere

- Respect your learners. They may not be literate but that does not make them ignorant. They have their own skills and have learnt to cope with the world without being able to read and write.
- Treat them as your equals.
- Greet them individually by name.
- If they are shy, speak to them before the lesson starts and ask what they have been doing during the week.
- Listen to what they are talking about when they come into the class. This way you will know what interests them and what is happening in their lives.
- Make learning fun. If they enjoy the lesson they will come again
- Respect their ideas and opinions even when you think they are wrong.

Some learners are more difficult to deal with than others. They may need special attention. They may be too shy to take part in the class. Others may be too demanding and talkative so that they intimidate (scare) other learners.

### 2.2 How to deal with shy learners

People may be quiet for different reasons. Some may have problems at home they don't want to talk about. Others may have had bad experiences at school with teachers. Some may be afraid of saying something stupid. If you try to force them to speak in front of the whole class they may never come again. It is better to find ways to make them feel that they are accepted and put them at ease.

- Chat to them about their lives before and after the class.
- Always use **pair work** at some point in the lesson. Walk around the class and make sure one person is not doing all the talking.
- Organise the classroom so that learners are sitting in groups.

- Ask them to help you with small jobs in the classroom.

## ACTIVITY



A new learner arrives at the classroom door after the lesson has started. She is about fifty years old and looks nervous. She is a domestic worker and her employer has just dropped her off. She whispers that she has heard about the class and would like to learn. She doesn't know anybody in the class.

What do you do?



Did you remember to introduce her to other learners?

## 2.3 Dealing with talkative learners

Some learners are just too talkative. They take over any discussion you are having. Then other learners keep quiet. Even if they don't agree they don't feel confident enough to express their views. To encourage participation, you sometimes need to restrain the most talkative people without making them feel unwanted. What do you do?

## ACTIVITY



Solomon is the only man in the class. He has very strong views about everything. He interrupts learners when they have something to say and the women now keep quiet when he opens his mouth. How do you make sure he gives the others space to participate?



There are different strategies for dealing with a very talkative person. You could:

- Make him a group leader responsible for encouraging others to talk.
- Speak to him quietly and suggest that he gives others the opportunity to express their views.
- When moving around the groups, intervene and suggest that his opinions are worth listening to but it is time to hear what others think.

## 2.4 Making the lesson meaningful

For a lesson to be meaningful it must have meaning in learner's lives. The context needs to be taken into account. However, do not underestimate their interest. People in rural areas may want to talk about the problems of the city, especially if they have relatives who have migrated.

At the beginning we said that is important to listen to what interests the learners. Listen to what they say to each other as well as to you. You need to know why they have come to the class and check that you are meeting their needs. You can do this by discussing their goals with each individual.

## 2.5 Discussing short- and long-term goals

When you have new learners or are starting a new level it is a good idea to set short- term and long-term goals with each one of them. In this way you will know what they really want from the lessons and you can help them to be realistic.

Let them write down their goals if they can write, or you write for them if they can't. Put this statement in their files and look at it from time to time, along with the learners, so that you can all check whether they are meeting those goals. Change the statement when the learner meets the goals or has new goals she wants to set. This process will tell you what really interests the learners.

The form could look like this:

**Monica Mashele**

**15 January 2009**

<p><b>Short-term goal</b> In three months I want to be able to:</p>	<p>answer the phone and take messages write a formal letter in English</p>
<p><b>Long-term goal</b> In six months I want to be able to:</p>	<p>read recipe books discuss work with my employer</p>

You should work with the learners on their goals for each learning area you will be covering. Let them keep a copy of their goals in their portfolio and keep one for yourself in their file.

## 3 ENCOURAGING DISCUSSION IN THE TARGET LANGUAGE

We keep on stressing that it is important for the educator to listen to the learners. If the learners are not interested, or if the lessons do not meet their needs, you will have a high drop-out rate.

In language lessons everyone needs as much practice as possible in speaking, reading and writing. There are many topics you can choose to help learners to practice these skills. However, the topics need to catch the learners' interest. If you have been listening to your learners you will



know some of the things that interest them. You may also have your own ideas on what should be covered in the lesson.

Make a list of the topics that you feel are important. Topics like elections will come up occasionally but others, like HIV/AIDS, are always important. Don't always choose serious topics. Topics such as which team you support will make the lessons fun.

Once you have your list you need to consult your learners and ask for their ideas. What do they think is important? What could you add to the list? In this way the learners will begin to own the lessons and become actively involved in the learning process. As your learners become more confident you could ask them to introduce the topic. You will need to ask them at least a week before the lesson so that they can prepare.

### ACTIVITY



You are a facilitator for an ABET class in an informal settlement. Write a list of six topics you think might interest your learners in a language class.



To sum up:

To encourage learners to express themselves in a discussion you should:

- make sure that the atmosphere in the classroom is friendly
- encourage shy learners
- encourage talkative learners to listen to others
- use pair and group work
- set goals for individual learners
- involve the learners in setting the topics to discuss

## 4 LANGUAGE IN A MEANINGFUL, REAL-LIFE CONTEXT

### 4.1 Teaching vocabulary, grammar and spelling in context

Look at the list you have made. Does it include different activities the learners will do regularly, such as shopping, going to the post office, filling in forms, speaking to their employers and a number of other activities? Do they want to open a bank account? These are important elements of everyday life for many people. When teaching language, your lessons need to be grounded in the lives of your learners.

To achieve this, make a list with your learners of things they do every day. Highlight those things which they find difficult. Then centre your language lessons around that list.

The list will depend on the context in which they live. Domestic workers will have a different list from those who live in rural areas. The list will also depend on the age of the learners. Workers will have different problems from those of pensioners. Make sure you can meet their goals in your lessons.

**ACTIVITY**



Draw up lists of activities you think learners might come across in different contexts: Underline those that are the same.

Rural women	Factory workers	Domestic workers



## 5 LANGUAGE ELEMENTS TAUGHT ARE USEFUL FOR EVERYDAY INTERACTION IN THE TARGET LANGUAGE.

Preparation is very important for a successful educator.

Once you know what is needed you can begin to prepare lessons on language, spelling and grammar around these topics.

- Think about the words that the learners may find difficult and write them on the board.
- In grammar exercises, use sentences that the learners may come across in their daily lives.

- Make a note of mistakes that are made in discussions and use the end of the lesson to go over these mistakes and explain the correct use of words like him/her, buy/bought.
- Collect different material for your lessons. Do you have copies of forms your learners might need to fill in? Some examples would be forms for an ID document, or application forms for a pension or child maintenance grant? Is there anything you need to find out?

Classroom activities are the backbone of your work, but you will have to back them up with field trips. Going to the ATM or the local supermarket are two activities that might be necessary. At the ATM the learners will be able to read and follow the instructions on the screen. You can arrange trips to the library and supermarkets and other organisations.

At the same time we have to be practical and realistic. Learning a language will not automatically improve the economic status of a learner who has no other marketable skills. However, in a world where so much depends on literacy, where we have to read road signs, signatures, telephone messages etc, literacy will give many learners confidence and make their lives easier. Many learners drop out of adult classes once they have gained what they wanted from them.

## 6 SPEAKING, LISTENING, READING AND WRITING ACTIVITIES ARE INTEGRATED AND REINFORCE ONE ANOTHER.

When we plan language lessons it is important to have continuity in the lessons. To make the lesson meaningful and to reinforce their skill, make sure they do all three in the lesson. In this way words will be seen, heard with the right pronunciation, spoken and written.

Let's take an example.

Your learners want to know how to answer the telephone and take messages for their employers. This will involve speaking, spelling and grammar.

During your lesson you could plan the following activities:

### 6.1 Speaking and listening

You would discuss the correct way of answering the telephone. Words are written on the board and any difficult ones are repeated by the class. Discuss various messages that they could be asked to repeat, for example a message for an employer about a meeting, a message from a friend of the employer's about a social event or a message about a medical appointment.

**Pair work** is the one of the best ways of doing this activity. Let the pairs role-play, taking telephone messages of different kinds. One person is the caller and the other answers. Then they reverse roles.

Change pairs and repeat the exercise.

## 6.2 Writing

The pairs should write down the messages they have received. Ask the learners for words they might find difficult. Write the phrases they found difficult on the board.

## 6.3 Reading

Let them read their messages to each other in **groups** and correct their mistakes.

The educator goes round the pairs and groups, listening for difficult words, writing them on the board and helping where necessary.

## 6.4 Grammar

The educator could go through the past, present and future tenses with the class.

She said she had done the typing.

She said she was doing the typing.

She said she would do the typing.

### ACTIVITY



Work out activities which combine reading, listening, speaking and writing in a lesson on healthy ways of eating. Think about any pamphlets/booklets you might be able to get.



Did you manage to include speaking, listening, reading and writing activities in your lesson? Of course, how much you are able to do will depend upon the level of your learners.

## 7 MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATION BY LEARNERS IS ACKNOWLEDGED, EVEN IF LINGUISTIC ERRORS ARE MADE.

### 7.1 Giving learners confidence

We began this module by stressing that it is important for the learners to feel comfortable in the literacy class. They need to feel respected by the educator. It is also important that they respect and encourage each other. The educator has to ensure that they do not laugh at each other's

mistakes. There also needs to be an opportunity in each language lesson for learners to speak, listen to each other, read and write.

Shy learners are afraid to speak. Even those who are not normally shy may be afraid of making mistakes. If the educator constantly interrupts them to correct them, or if work is marked with lots of corrections then they may feel like giving up.

There is a danger that the educator could seem to be patronising towards the learners (speak to them as if they are children). When an educator praises excessively (too much) then the learner may not trust the educator to correct mistakes.

So how can we encourage learners while at the same time teaching them the correct way to speak and write?

## 7.2 Encouraging communication

As a general rule:

### *When learners are speaking:*

- Choose a topic that interests the learners or let them choose one themselves.
- Don't interrupt to correct learners when they are speaking.
- At the end of the conversation, comment favourably on the content. You could say something like: 'A better way of saying this.....'
- After the conversation, write difficult words or correct grammar on the board.
- Only give them a word or phrase when they ask for it and let the conversation continue.
- Make a note of common mistakes.
- Towards the end of the lesson mention the common mistakes and how to correct them.

### *When learners are doing written work:*

- Choose a topic that interests the learners or let them choose one themselves.
- Encourage rough work first.
- Comment favourably on the content.
- If appropriate (suitable), let the learners read their work to the group or whole class.
- Go through the rough work with the learner, explaining difficulties.
- Only mark the final work and if there are many errors correct the more common ones with the learner.
- Make a note of common mistakes and go through them with the whole class.

## ACTIVITY



One of your learners takes a long time to say anything. Other learners become irritated and interrupt to complete his sentences for him. What do you do?

It takes tact and patience to enable individuals to express themselves without feeling embarrassed. If a learner is constantly interrupted and corrected, she will eventually not speak at all. The opinions of learners should also be respected.



## 8 LEARNERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO EXPRESS PERSONAL OPINIONS AND CRITICAL VIEWPOINTS.

When learners feel comfortable and relaxed during the lessons they will be more ready to say what they think. Everyone has opinions and it is the educator's duty to make sure they are able to express them without fear. However, there are a few signs the educator has to watch out for:

- When someone expresses a strong opinion, the other learners may not feel able to disagree.
- If the class is mixed, with both men and women, the women may allow the men to speak and may not contradict them.
- The educator (you) may have strong opinions and if you say what you think too soon the learners will keep quiet.
- Shy learners will wait for others to speak and only nod in agreement.
- Learners sometimes mock people who disagree with them.
- Learners may feel awkward about speaking in the target language and the educator may have to help them find the right words.
- Some learners may take disagreement with what they say personally and become quiet or angry.

It is important for the educator to set the tone in the class. If the educator encourages learners to say what they think without fear of being laughed at or shouted down, they will be more willing to speak. What we are stressing is respect for other people's opinions and the right to express those opinions.

## 9 CONCLUSION

In this unit we have looked at different ways in which learners can be given the opportunity to express themselves freely within the lessons. The right atmosphere in the classroom is important. If that is achieved the learners will not feel they are being judged for what they say. They will also learn respect for each other and for the educator. In the next unit we will consider reinforcing mother-tongue literacy and numeracy.

# UNIT 3

## Reinforcing Mother-Tongue Literacy

### 1 INTRODUCTION

In unit 3 we look at different strategies you can use with your learners to make sure what they learn becomes part of their life. There are various ways in which you can repeat lessons and make them easier for the learners to understand.

#### SPECIFIC OUTCOME 3:

Reinforce prior mother-tongue literacy and numeracy learning

#### Assessment criteria:

Literacy and numeracy skills learnt in previous courses are reinforced and recycled.

Use of mother-tongue languages by learners is permitted during learning event where it enhances learning and increases understanding.

Application of reading strategies acquired in mother tongue is discussed with reference to the target language (eg word attack skills, recognition of spelling patterns, guessing from context, using picture and layout clues, skimming, scanning, prediction and personal interpretation).

Application of writing strategies acquired in mother tongue is discussed with reference to the target language (eg planning written work, structuring, drafting and self-checking).

Critical responses to text are elicited from learners (eg identifying purpose, distinguishing fact from opinion).

## 2 LITERACY AND NUMERACY SKILLS LEARNT IN PREVIOUS COURSES ARE REINFORCED AND RECYCLED.

Every good school teacher knows that at the end of any holiday and the beginning of a new term she has to find out what the learners have retained from the previous term. Educating is like building. If the foundation is shaky at some point the building will fall. So it is very important that you build new bricks on a solid foundation. A common English saying, 'practice makes perfect', is very true. It certainly applies in adult education. We reinforce numeracy and literacy skills by practice, that is by going over again what we have learnt before.

You will have already learnt about how adults learn and how this is different to the ways younger learners learn. Let's look at some of the general characteristics of adult learning. Of course no two people are the same and some adults will be quicker than others.

### *Characteristics of adult learning*

Difficulties	Reason
Learners may forget things very easily	As we grow older short-term memory may be declining and without practice an adult may forget things from one week to the next.
Learners may quite often grasp things more slowly than you imagined.	The learner is trying to relate what you are saying to her past experiences. Her own fears and self-doubts may be a block to learning.
The learner may be quiet and you may not always know whether she understands the work.	The learner may have had bad experiences with learning in the past.
The learner will not find it easy to adopt new habits, eg writing and spelling.	The learner will have coped in the world without these skills
The learner may not be able to concentrate for long periods.	Adults who have not been used to this type of learning may have a short concentration span. It takes more effort to learn new things.
The learner may be depressed or worried.	Pressures at home and work can interfere with learning.
The learner may be tired after working all day and so may you be.	When tired you can only concentrate for short periods.



## *Boredom*

All this means that an educator needs to make sure skills are developed through constant repetition. Educators can get into the habit of doing the same things in the same way year after year. When this happens both the learner and the educator could become bored.

To stop the lessons from becoming boring, we have to think up new ways of doing the same thing. Try the following:

- Maintain contact with other educators and exchange ideas.
- Spend time searching for new material and new ideas, in the library, on the internet or in bookshops
- Go to conferences to keep up to date

### ACTIVITY



Make a list of people and places you could go to for ideas for your lessons. Don't forget that school teachers may be helpful.



Most of us have selective memories. This means that we remember things that affect our lives but forget a lot more. How much do you remember from what you learnt at school? If we are reminded then we do remember and the more we are reminded the more this knowledge becomes part of our way of life. The other important aspect of learning is understanding. We can learn things by rote and not understand what we have learnt. But we cannot build on what we have learnt if we do not understand the foundation.

## **3 THE IMPORTANCE OF RECORDS AND PORTFOLIOS AS AN AID IN REINFORCING SKILLS**

We need to stress the importance of keeping good records and of the learner's portfolios. These will give you an indication of what needs special attention.

### **3.1 The educator's records**

The educator should keep records of all the learner's work. This record would include marks the educator has awarded for different pieces of work and tests and comments she has made. These should be available to and discussed with the learner. The knowledge of both strengths and weaknesses will enable the educator and the learner to work together at areas that need more help.

The educator also needs to analyse all her records so that she knows where to target her lessons. These records will show the progress of the class as a whole and will show the educator what

areas need reinforcing. However, even when the learners appear to have understood the material and learned the skills, it is still important to keep on repeating the lessons in different ways. Think how forgetful we all become as we grow older.

### 3.2 The learner's portfolio

Every learner should have a portfolio in which all her work is filed and which is accessible. The learner should keep this file herself, although some learners may, for family reasons, ask you to take care of it. The portfolio will encourage the learner as she/he sees how the work has progressed.

The portfolio should include:

- The aims set out by the learner at the beginning of each new level and learning area. The learner and educator need to look at these regularly to see if they are being met.
- The learner's work. The educator needs to encourage self-assessment where the learner can discover the strengths and weaknesses in his or her work. The learner will have a say in which skills need to be reinforced.

## 4 USE OF MOTHER-TONGUE LANGUAGES BY LEARNERS IS PERMITTED DURING LEARNING EVENTS WHERE IT ENHANCES LEARNING AND INCREASES UNDERSTANDING

We know that the mother-tongue is important in learning. Young learners who move from a school where they are taught in the mother-tongue to a school where they are taught in English or Afrikaans struggle to keep up with the class. How much more difficult would it be for adults who have not had exposure to other languages? Wherever possible educators should use the mother-tongue when teaching.

### ACTIVITY



Look at the different learning areas and list those in which the mother tongue could be used to enhance understanding.



You will have noted that in most learning areas educators can use the mother-tongue in the lessons. Even when the textbooks are in another language the educators can explain the ideas in the mother-tongue.

## Case study

### Kgomotso fails maths

Kgomotso enjoyed maths. She liked dealing with numbers. In level 1 and 2 she passed easily. She was looking forward to level 3 maths. However, the only educator the ABET centre could get to teach level 3 maths was Mr Van Rooyen. He did not speak any of the indigenous languages but taught in English. Kgomotso found that she couldn't understand Mr Van Rooyen's explanations. She looked around the class. There were many puzzled faces. She did not want to interrupt the class by asking too many questions so she tried to think of another solution. The next lesson she sat next to her friend who spoke English very well. When she did not understand her friend whispered the explanation to her. This annoyed Mr Van Rooyen. It also meant that the friend missed some of the explanation while she was translating for Kgomotso.

#### ACTIVITY



What do think Mr Van Rooyen could have done to make the lesson more understandable?



Could you think of a strategy for Mr. Van Rooyen? In any group of adult learners you may have one or two learners whose mother-tongue is different from that of the rest of the class. If you do not speak their language it could cause difficulties. If a learner does not understand most of the lesson she is likely to drop out. Translating everything for one or two learners could interrupt the flow of the lesson.

A few suggestion are:

- If most of the class has a different mother-tongue to the educator then a translator would be needed. This could be either a learner, another educator, or a volunteer.
- If one or two learners have a different mother-tongue the educator may need to give them individual attention during the class after the demonstration or explanation.

We learn in our mother-tongue first. Any explanations given are much easily understood. When teaching another language we can use the same strategies we use to teach literacy in the mother tongue. Let's remind ourselves of some of the reading strategies we could use.

## 5 APPLICATION OF READING STRATEGIES ACQUIRED IN THE MOTHER-TONGUE

The strategies we used for teaching the mother-tongue can also be used when we teach another language. It is important for us to keep these strategies in mind and use a variety of methods to help our learners. So let us look at a few of them.

## 5.1 Word-attack strategies

Word-attack strategies help learners decode, pronounce, and understand unfamiliar words. They help learners attack words piece by piece or from a different angle. The following are some of the word attack strategies:

### *Use picture clues*

If possible use a reader with pictures. Look at the illustrations and see whether they provide a clue to the word.

Are there people, objects or actions in the picture that might make sense of the sentences?

### *Sound out the word*

Together with the learners, start with the first letter, and say each letter-sound out loud.

Blend the sounds together and try to say the word. Does the word make sense in the sentence?

### *Look for chunks in the word*

Look for familiar letter chunks. They may be sounds/symbols, prefixes, suffixes, endings, whole words or base words.

### *Write the word on the board.*

Cover the ending or the beginning of the word. See whether the learners understand the word, for example write meaning**less** and cover **less**. Or: Read each chunk by itself. Then blend the chunks together and sound out the word—for example, **impossible**, **achievements**, **assessing**, meaning**less**. Discuss how words can change to the opposite by adding a prefix or suffix. Does that word make sense in the sentence?

### *Connect to a word you know*

Think of a word that looks like the unfamiliar word.

Compare the familiar word with the unfamiliar word. Decide if the familiar word is a chunk or form of the unfamiliar word. Use the known word in the sentence to see if it makes sense. If so, the meanings of the two words are close enough for understanding.

### *Reread the sentence*

Read the sentence more than once.

Think about what word might make sense in the sentence. Try the word and see if the sentence makes sense.

### *Keep reading*

Read past the unfamiliar word and look for clues.

If the word is repeated, compare the second sentence with the first. What word might make sense in both?

### *Use prior knowledge*

Think about what you know about the subject of the book, paragraph or sentence.

Do you know anything that might make sense in the sentence? Read the sentence with the word to see if it makes sense.

## **5.2 Recognition of spelling patterns (adapted from an article by Diane Snowball on the internet)**

New writers often try to use the sounds in words to figure out their spellings; experienced writers often use this phonetic strategy first, and then try other approaches, including applying common spelling patterns. So it is definitely worthwhile to help learners hear the sounds in words by developing phonemic awareness, and then exploring sound/symbol relationships and spelling patterns —especially if you continuously encourage learners to think about what they say

### *Strategy 1: Develop phonemic awareness*

- I find that learners develop the ability to hear sounds in words when I involve them in lots of shared reading of poems, chants, songs, and big books with repetitive refrains and rhyme. I ask learners to listen for and identify rhyming words, and clap when they hear them.
- Select words learners know — from books, rhymes, songs, and so on — and discover together how knowing one word can help with the recognition or writing of others, just by changing the beginning letter(s). For example, write the words black, back, crack, quack on a chart. Invite learners to suggest other words with the same sound: pack, sack, whack, track. Ask learners, “How will this help you with your reading and writing?”

### *Strategy 2: Explore sounds*

- Tell learners you have noticed them listening for sounds in words they are trying to write — so you will help them discover how different sounds can be written. Reread familiar books, rhymes, chants and songs, asking learners to listen for words with a particular sound. List these on a chart; for example, words with a “k” sound: kite, cat, school, bike, Christine, truck, cake, back.
- Help learners to identify the letter(s) that represent this sound. Underline these and ask learners to group the words according to the different ways the sound is represented. For example:

kite, bike, cake

cat, cakes

chool, Christine

truck, back

Reinforce how the same sound may be represented in more than one way, depending on the word. This is important for learners whose first language is not English, particularly if their first language is a phonetic language.

- During the next few lessons, ask learners to find other words they know with this sound and add them to the class list. I usually explain that learners must say a word to listen for the sound, and I do not confuse them by referring to the sound by a particular letter name. As other sounds are explored, ask learners how this will help them with their writing.

### *Strategy 3: Discover spelling patterns*

- Tell the learners that thinking about what a word looks like is a useful spelling strategy, so you are going to explore some common spelling patterns together. Reread a familiar big book, poem, or so on, selecting a particular spelling pattern to look for. For example, look for and list words with ea, such as: bead, bread, dead, instead, great, read, treat, break.
- Ask learners to identify and underline the ea spelling pattern in each word, say the words, and group them according to their pronunciation, such as:

bead, read, treat

bread, dead, instead, read

great, break

- Select one of the words and show how knowing it can help with the spelling of other words in that word family. For example, great: greater, greatest, greatly, or break: breaking, breaks. Ask learners to try this with the other words you've found. Talk about how thinking about spelling patterns and building on word families can help with reading and writing.

## **5.3** Guessing from context

Sometimes the meaning of a word can be worked out from the context. Read the whole sentence and it gives you a clue to the meaning. These are good exercises to do with your learners. Here are some examples.

*Tick the right answer*

(1) If I don't give some water to my **violet** today, tomorrow it will be brown, and then it will die.

<b>Violet is</b>				
A kind of dog		A kind of plant		A kind of water

(2) I was ecstatic when I got free tickets to the Chiefs soccer match

<b>Ecstatic means</b>				
Very strange		Very busy		Very happy

(3) We like the new learner. He is very **affable** and kind to everybody.

<b>Affable means</b>				
friendly		strong		strict

**ACTIVITY**



Make up or find three sentences in which the word can be guessed from its context.



## 5.4 Using picture clues

Picture clues can be used either in the early stage of learning a language or later in story books. You will already know how they are used in mother tongue literacy. The method is the same for learning another language. The method can be summed up as follows:

For a poster

Start a discussion by asking questions from the picture like:

- What do you think is happening?
- Who do you think the people are?
- What do you think they are doing?
- Take one of the sentences that the learner says and write the sentence on the board.
- The class reads the sentence.
- Write the sentence on a strip of card and place it under the sentence on the board.
- Cut out the sentence strip into words and rebuild the sentence on the board using Prestik.

- The learners take the words and rebuild them into a sentence. They can copy the sentence into their books.

### *Reading an illustrated book in a nutshell*

- Read the text together.
- When you come to difficult words, look at the illustration and discuss what is happening.
- Connect the words with the picture.

## 5.5 Scanning and skimming

Scanning means we look quickly and choose. To show the learners how to scan:

Bring a newspapers, books or magazines to the class and ask the learners to take a quick look at article headlines or chapter titles and read out one that interests them.

Ask them to read out the subheadings in the article.

Ask them to read the first and last sentences of a paragraph and guess what it is about.

### ACTIVITY



Collect magazines or newspapers which could be useful in lessons.



### *Skimming*

Skimming is another quick way of finding relevant material so that you don't waste time on unnecessary reading. You would use this skill to run your eye down the text rapidly to see if there is anything relevant on the subject you are studying. For example if you are teaching a lesson on HIV/AIDS you might collect pamphlets from the local clinic. Instead of reading every word, ask the learners to run their fingers down the lines looking for the words HIV/AIDS.

## 5.6 Prediction strategies

Prediction strategies are a way in which learners can develop their reading ability and enjoyment. The following is one way of using prediction strategies in a lesson. This was adapted from the internet ([readwritethink.org/lessons](http://readwritethink.org/lessons)), one of the useful tools which give educators ideas for activities and lessons.



## *Preparation*

- Choose a book that appeals to learners.

## *Instruction and activities*

- (1) Ask learners to share definitions of the word *prediction*, and work from their definitions to form a class definition of the word.
- (2) Ask learners to brainstorm situations in which they use the ability to predict what will happen next. If learners have difficulty thinking of examples, ask leading questions to help them draw up a list of ways in which they have already used prediction strategies. When you look outside, what can you predict about the weather?
  - Do you ever know what someone else, like a family member or friend, will say in a particular situation?
  - What can you tell about a story by looking at the cover of the book?
- (3) Move from the question about the cover of a book to talk about the prediction project that learners will complete in this lesson: The class will listen to the beginning of a story and then each student will predict the way in which the story will end.
- (4) To give learners some practice with prediction, show the front cover of a book and ask learners to predict what the book will be about based on the images and words they see. Record learners' predictions on the board or on graph paper.
- (5) Read the book, pausing where appropriate to point out details in the book that confirm the predictions that learners made based on the cover.
- (6) Read the book to a point just before the final significant event.
- (7) Ask learners to summarise what they has happened so far in the story, noting their comments on the board or on graph paper, so that they can refer to the information as they work on their own endings for the story.
- (8) List the names of the characters and their roles in the story for learners to refer to later as they create their own endings.
- (9) Ask learners to share any personal experiences that they have had in similar situations.
- (10) Summarise all the information that learners can use to predict how the story will end.
- (11) Explain that their ending must be based on information that was read during the beginning and/or middle of the story. The story has to make sense.
- (12) Hand out drawing materials, and ask learners to draw and/or write their endings.
- (13) As learners work, remind them to refer to the lists of characters and story elements as necessary. Because you do not want them to peek at the ending, do not allow them to explore the book on their own. However if they ask you to reread the page, do so.
- (14) Once learners have drawn their endings, ask them to share their drawings with the group. Remind learners that all endings are valid.
- (15) Discuss similarities and differences between learners' endings and ask them to explain the choices that they have made. Encourage connections to details from the story, personal experience, and prior knowledge.
- (16) Once all learners have had a chance to share, read the ending to the story.
- (17) Ask learners to point out ways in which their own endings link up with the portion that was read aloud. Encourage learners to talk about how they predicted events in the ending of the book accurately.

### *During discussion*

Generally observe learners' interaction and participation as they listen to the story and make predictions. Notice whether all the learners contribute to the large group discussions, and particularly encourage those who do not usually participate.

### *During writing and illustrating*

As learners work on their own endings to the story, look for ways in which learners' writing and drawings relate to the story. Provide reinforcement for strong links with details from the story, personal experience, or prior knowledge. If you notice learners who are off target, ask questions that point to the lists and brainstorming that learners have done to help them make stronger predictions.

Another way would be to use both the beginning and end of the story and predict what is in the middle by asking questions. Try the following:

- Discuss with learners and write on the board what you know about the beginning of the story.
- Do the same with the end of the story.
- Write down questions that will tell you what you need to know to understand what happens in the story.
- Write down your own predictions.
- Read the story and see if your questions are answered.

Much of this work can be done in groups with the learners making predictions as a group and sharing their predictions with each other.

## **5.7 Personal interpretation**

We all have slightly different responses to what we hear and read. It is important that these individual responses by learners to stories should be acknowledged.

When it comes to reading stories or other literature:

- Encourage learners to give their own responses.
- Ask whether they can relate the story to their own experience.
- Stress that there are no right or wrong interpretations or responses to the story.
- Encourage learners to listen to each other's responses.
- Always say a word of encouragement.
- Always give your own interpretation last (if at all). If you speak first learners may simply repeat what you have said.

## 6 APPLICATION OF WRITING STRATEGIES WITH REFERENCE TO THE TARGET LANGUAGE

As in reading, so in writing the same strategies are used to help learners in the target language as in their mother tongue.

### 6.1 Planning written work

When you plan written work with the learners it should be discussed at the beginning of the lesson. The topic needs to be something that the learners are familiar with. It also needs to be relevant. There is no point in asking a group of unemployed learners to write about “My Holiday”, or a group of domestic workers to write about “My Hobbies”.

If the written work has to do with factual knowledge such as HIV/AIDs or Nutrition, make sure you have covered it thoroughly in previous lessons.

Plan the work with the learners before they start writing. The more interested they are, the better they will work.

Before beginning the work the educator needs to make sure of the following:

- Instructions are very clear.
- Difficult words on the topic are written on the board. Ask the learners to suggest words.
- Learners write down their ideas.

### 6.2 Structuring

To help explain the structure of written work, start with an example. If you want the learners to write a story, begin by reading or telling a short story. You could use an incident a learner has talked about in a lesson. After you have told the story, discuss the structure by

- pointing out the different elements of the story – introduction, building up to the climax, conclusion
- drawing the structure on the board – filling in the different elements
- dividing the different parts into paragraphs
- deciding with the learners on the theme of the story they will write

#### *Formal texts*

All writing should follow the same format, with an introduction, body divided up into paragraphs and conclusion. For instance, letters have a similar structure whether formal or informal: introduction, topic under discussion, conclusion.

With a letter there is the added formality of writing the correct address and date.

## 6.3 Strategy for developing the written work

First, have learners write notes or a mind map in their rough books. Let them discuss these together as they develop their thoughts. But encourage them to do their own work. Learners must come to believe that their own thoughts and opinions are important.

After writing down notes let them plan the structure from the notes.

Then the learners should write a rough draft.

## 6.4 Self-checking

Learners should be encouraged to read their draft aloud to themselves and then to each other before writing out the final copy. At this stage the educator will read the draft and make suggestions. She may point out spelling and grammar mistakes before the final work is complete.

# 7 CRITICAL RESPONSES TO TEXT ARE ELICITED FROM LEARNERS

## 7.1 Identifying purpose

When reading books and articles it's a good idea to ask questions about the content and the purpose of the book or article. In the work or educational culture of many adults authority is not questioned. Educators need to encourage learners to look at texts critically. We have heard people say: "Never believe everything you hear on the news", but if you question a statement the reply is, "It's true, it was on the news."

Encourage your learners to ask critical questions. You may do this by beginning to look critically at statements people make. Let's remind ourselves of how we did this in our work on study skills by looking at the statement:

*Young women in the townships get pregnant so that they can claim child benefits. They use the money to buy things for themselves.*

Along with the class, ask the following questions:

### *Question to ask*

<b>Who is making the statement?</b>	Is it someone who is working and resents people who get benefits? Is the statement made by a man who thinks that women should not get the money? Is it made by a married woman who is prejudiced against single mothers?
<b>What experience or proof does the speaker have?</b>	How many young pregnant mothers who claim benefits does the speaker know? Is the statement based on hearsay or taken from the newspapers or from research that has been done?
<b>Why is the person saying this?</b>	Does the speaker want to change your attitude to mothers' claiming benefits?
<b>Who is the person speaking to?</b>	Is it a group of people who all think the same? Is it a group of young people who are being warned not to do this?
<b>If the speaker has proof, when did he obtain this proof?</b>	Was it recently, last year, or when child support grants were first introduced?
<b>What is the tone of voice?</b>	Is the speaker angry or prejudice?

In the same way, when we watch television or listen to the radio we need to think about the speaker's bias (strongly for or against something). We show our bias when we listen to politicians. If we belong to their party we agree with them. If we belong to a different party we criticise them. In our academic work we learn to question everything even when we start by agreeing with what the author is saying – as we should all politicians even when they are from our own party.

Encourage learners to ask these questions when they are watching TV or listening to the radio. The educator could bring a radio into class and listen with the learners to, a talk or chat show.

When it comes to texts the educator needs to show that she too can be critical of the text by saying things like, "I'm not sure that the author is being completely accurate here", or "I've had the opposite experience, what about you?"

Invite learner's responses by asking questions:

Is this true to your experience?

Do you think the author is exaggerating?

Is the author playing down the facts?

Do these statistics reflect this community?

Do you think the author is writing about what he knows?

Always encourage the learners to give reasons for their answers and respect their answers.

## 7.2 Fact and opinion

The difference between fact and opinion has to do with proof. The learners will understand this if they look at a few statements. As they read them they will decide whether they are fact or opinion.

- (1) Zandele is sixteen and her boyfriend is twenty-three.
- (2) I have seen many young girls in my area who go out with older men.
- (3) There are ten young girls in my area who go out with older men.
- (4) Young girls like older men.
- (5) A survey at local schools showed that 60% of girls writing matric had boyfriends over twenty.

**ACTIVITY**



Make up a table with sentences in which the learners distinguish between fact and fiction. Let the learners work individually or as a group. It is better if the sentences all concern one topic. The learners should tick the appropriate box.

Sentence	Opinion	Fact



When you do this exercise, have a discussion afterwards on the reasons for the particular decisions they made.

## 8 CONCLUSION

We have considered various ways of reinforcing learning. It is important to use the mother-tongue wherever possible. It is also a good idea to use the strategies used in teaching in the mother-tongue when teaching in the target language. This applies to both reading and writing. Strategies such as word attack, skimming and scanning are helpful in reading. Learners should be free to express their opinions without fear of being teased or shouted down. Above all, the atmosphere of the lessons should be such that learning is facilitated. In the next unit we will be discussing how to manage language in a learning situation.



# UNIT 4

## Managing Language In A Learning Situation

### 1 INTRODUCTION

It is important to understand that the older you become the more difficult it becomes to learn new things. When learning a new language it is not only the words that are different but also the grammar and idioms. We have to develop different strategies to deal with some of the difficulties. We will deal with some of these in this unit.

#### **SPECIFIC OUTCOME 4:**

Manage language in the learning situation

#### **Assessment criteria:**

Strategies for dealing with language difficulties which may affect learning are suggested.

Relevant terminology of the learning area, including acronyms and abbreviations, is explained.

Language idiom and grammar, which are specific to the subject, are explained to learners (e.g. boot-up a computer).

Language commonly used in academic discussion and assessment (eg. compare, contrast, consists of) is explained to learners.

Appropriate strategies are used to judge whether learners' comprehension problems are language-related.

Language-related comprehension problems are remedied (e.g. by using translation, illustration, demonstration, role play, practical tasks, rephrasing)

Different levels of oral and written language (in terms of ABET levels) are recognised when presented with exemplars.

## 2 STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES WHICH MAY AFFECT LEARNING ARE SUGGESTED

Understanding is the key to learning. It is necessary for the classroom to have different aids for the learners to access when problems occur. The educator should also be able to encourage cooperation among the learners in overcoming difficulties. She should take care to speak clearly and with correct pronunciation. The following strategies are suggested:

- **Have two dictionaries in the classroom.** Make sure there are at least two dictionaries in the classroom. Ideally learners should have their own dictionaries, but this is not always possible. If this is a problem, bring dictionaries for the learners to use in the lessons. One should be an English dictionary (or a mother-tongue dictionary). The second should be a translating dictionary from the target language to the mother-tongue. Time should be taken for all learners to gain practice in using the dictionaries.
- **Posters as a reminder.** Decorate the classroom with posters showing pictures of different words the learners have used in lessons. Write the words underneath the pictures. Refer to them from time to time. Make sure the writing on the posters is clear.
- **Speaking clearly.** Many people have problems with hearing as they grow older. It is also true that when we are listening to a new language words sometimes get lost when spoken too quickly. Educators need to be aware of this when addressing the class. Speak slowly and pronounce words clearly. Let the learners repeat new words after you so that they can also practice pronunciation.
- **Writing new words and sentences on the board.** All new words need to be seen as well as heard. The educator will already have prepared sentences on cards. Remember always to write down new words when they come up in conversation. Hearing **and** seeing improves memory.
- **Peer assistance.** Encourage learners to help each other. Sometimes another learner can give a clearer explanation than the educator. Explaining to someone else also makes the learning material clearer to oneself.
- **Pair work.** Use different strategies such as dialogue for pair work.
- **Repetition.** We don't always remember a word or sentence the first time we see or hear it. Repetition is the way we remember language. Remember that one lesson is not enough. When giving a lesson you need to repeat words and sentences from previous lessons.

### ACTIVITY



You are teaching an English lesson on introducing one person to others. Think of four different activities you could include in the lesson using repetition without boring the learners.



### 3 RELEVANT TERMINOLOGY OF THE LEARNING AREA, INCLUDING ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS, IS EXPLAINED.

Acronyms are a short way of referring to an organisation or discipline. Begin by talking about acronyms which are used a lot, such as ABET.

For example, we could write:

The **Adult Basic Education and Training** classes are held in KwaZulu-Natal

If we use acronyms we would write:

The **ABET** classes are held in KZN.

Think of other acronyms the class will know.

#### ACTIVITY



Draw up a list of acronyms which are familiar to most learners.



#### *Having fun with acronyms*

Divide the learners into groups. Let the groups choose a name for themselves and make it into an acronym. The other groups have to guess what the name is.

Explain acronyms which they may come across in reading or in their every day lives.

#### ***ABBREVIATIONS***

In language we use abbreviations and the learners will need to know them. In an English lesson, for instance, you will need to show them how these abbreviations work.

Write out a sentence and ask the learners to read it and then write it out again using the abbreviations. The following would be an example:

Mister Nkosi and Reverend Moagi live in Nelson Mandela Street.

The learners would write: Mr Nkosi and Rev. Moagi live at No 4, Nelson Mandela St. These abbreviations are quite simple to understand. Words which are not immediately obvious, such as eg (for example) and etc (and other similar things), are more difficult.

Make use of symbols and abbreviations often in your lessons so that learners can practice and remember what each means.

## ACTIVITY



Write down a few sentences you would use in a lesson, using abbreviations.



You could also get the learners to make up sentences in groups and test each other.

## 4 LANGUAGE IDIOM AND GRAMMAR, WHICH ARE SPECIFIC TO THE SUBJECT, ARE EXPLAINED TO LEARNERS.

Learners will probably be aware from their children and grandchildren and from watching TV how much technology is changing the world. Those who have cell phones will no doubt know about sms's and the peculiar language which is used. For instance, U is used for "you" and 4 for "for". We live in a confusing world where one kind of technology takes over from another. Each kind has its own particular language and grammar, and most of these expressions have become universal. Think of computers, cell phones, DVD's etc. Each has his own specific language.

There is no reason why learners should not be exposed to much of this technology. It will give them confidence and an ability to talk to the younger generation on equal terms.

When explaining terms it is best to demonstrate while you are explaining. Have a picture with the different parts labelled. If you are lucky enough to have access to a computer or to be able to negotiate the use of one with a school or other institution, make use of it with groups of learners. It is important, however, that you learn these terms yourself so that you are confident about explaining them. If not, invite an expert to your class to explain the terms to the learners.

**ACTIVITY**



List some of the specific terms used for the following:

Cell phone	Computer	Agriculture	Dressmaking



You will note that we have added two common activities. As technology develops it affects everything we do. New designs are meant to improve our lives but they need special understanding. Now let us look at how to help learners deal with the language used in academic discussion.

## **5 LANGUAGE COMMONLY USED IN ACADEMIC DISCUSSION AND ASSESSMENT IS EXPLAINED TO LEARNERS.**

When using academic language with learners, it is a good idea to start with simple explanations. In the classroom, demonstrate the difference between terms like compare and contrast. You could use learners' height or dress colour, or perhaps bring plants to the lesson.

Let's remind ourselves of the difference between compare and contrast

**compare** 1: note the similarity or difference between: 2: compare to point out or describe the resemblance of: 3: be similar to or have a specified relationship with To compare, the dictionary says, is to look at the similarities or differences.

**contrast**: the state of being noticeably different from something else when put or considered together. Here the focus is on the differences.

So you could compare the different shades of blue in a dress or contrast it with a different colour.

Some of the other words we looked at in the module on study skills were:

**describe**: give a detailed account in words.

You could ask the learners to describe what they saw when coming to lessons, or to get together in pairs to describe each other.

**explain**: 1. make clear by giving a detailed description 2. give a **reason** for.

It is easiest to use explain with "why" or "what" in a question. Explain why the man in the story ran away. Explain what happens to water when the sun shines.

**consist of**: the different ingredients or elements

What does a loaf of bread consist of?

It is very important for learners to understand what is being asked in the questions. By knowing the difference between these words they can engage in academic discourse.

## ACTIVITY



Give an example of how you can use the words in a simple sentence or demonstration to show what they mean.

compare

contrast

describe

explain

consist of



We have looked at ways of helping learners to understand words and their meanings. How do we know whether they have understood?

## 6 APPROPRIATE STRATEGIES ARE USED TO JUDGE WHETHER LEARNERS' COMPREHENSION PROBLEMS ARE LANGUAGE-RELATED.

Language comprehension is about understanding the language.

The first test of how much a learner understands is to read a story or text to the learner. If the learner understands what is being read then the educator may have a good idea that it is the written word and not the spoken word which is the problem. If the learner is able to understand and also to discuss the contents of the story and its implications then the educator knows that the problem is reading rather than speaking.

Understanding a language is firstly about the spoken word. This should involve lots of activities in the lessons where the learner is able to communicate in the target language. As these activities build on each other, the learner's vocabulary and grasp of the language increases. Activities should include the opportunity for learners to tell stories, give reports, and interact both informally with friends and in formal situations such as work.

Strategies for testing language comprehension include the following:

- **Listening:** The educator needs to move around the room when she has given the learners an activity. By listening she can pick up problems and be available to answer questions. The questions the learners ask will help her assess how much the learner understands.
- **Questioning:** When walking around during lessons the educator might question her learners on what they are saying. And perhaps ask them to explain more fully what they mean.
- **Self-assessment test:** Encourage the learners to assess how they are getting on and work with them on self-assessment. If there's a good relationship between the learner and the educator the learner will know when to ask for help. In self-assessment the learner is able to chart his own progress and set his own goals.
- **Reading aloud to each other: peer assessment:** Learners can read aloud to each other. The person being read to can ask questions. The educator will also be able to help with difficulties. She will listen for understanding in the reading of the text.
- **Repeating the activity in the mother-tongue:** If learners are having difficulty in expressing themselves then asking them to say what they understand the story or text to be about in the mother-tongue will give a strong indication of how much they have understood.

Now let's look at ways of overcoming these problems.

## 7 LANGUAGE-RELATED COMPREHENSION PROBLEMS ARE REMEDIED

Most of the comprehension problems we come across can be remedied by good preparation in language classes. Comprehension is a skill like any other, for instance riding a bicycle. Once learnt it becomes automatic. You don't have to think about it.

## *Reading comprehension*

The key to teaching reading comprehension lies in developing the habit of “interacting” with the text and monitoring one’s understanding. This means that you are not only reading the words but thinking about the meaning, the content as you read. As you continue to read you become more skilled. This is why it is so important to encourage reading in learners and to set an example yourself by talking about the books you are reading.

### *Skilled readers:*

- (1) Predict what will happen next in a story using clues presented in the text.
- (2) Create questions about the main idea, message or plot of the text.
- (3) Monitor understanding of the sequence, context, or characters.
- (4) Clarify parts of the text which have confused them.
- (5) Connect the events in the text to prior knowledge or experience.

- To encourage the above, an educator should:
- Read the title and build ideas on what might happen – prepare for the story.
- As you are reading, discuss whether the first idea has to be changed.
- Note confusing terms and try to work out their meaning from the context.

Different activities in lessons can help learners develop reading skills. It is a good idea to get ideas from various sources. The following lesson plans on comprehension strategies were taken from the internet. Source: Southwest Educational Laboratory: [www.sedi.org/reading](http://www.sedi.org/reading).

<b>ACTIVITY TITLE:</b> Cause and Effect	<b>COGNITIVE ELEMENT:</b> Language Comprehension
<p><b>ACTIVITY:</b> Create a chart with two columns entitled “cause and effect.” As you read a story for the class, pause to discuss cause and effect in the story, and note cause and effect events from the story on the chart. Start with books with one cause and several effects before moving on to ones with several causes and effects.</p> <p><b>Notes:</b> This activity does not depend on writing or reading skills, so it could be used with learners of any age. However, the nature of this task is, on the surface, more appropriate for young learners.</p> <p><b>Reader Type:</b> Pre-readers and emergent readers</p>	



<b>ACTIVITY TITLE:</b> Cliffhanger	<b>COGNITIVE ELEMENT:</b> Language Comprehension
<p><b>ACTIVITY:</b> Read part of a short story to your learners — everything but the ending. Ask them to discuss or write down what they think the ending will be. Invite learners to write an ending in the style of the rest of the story. Pay attention to the sentences and clauses that learners use in their discussions or writing — does the ending they generate fit with the themes of the book? This activity will help learners understand sequencing of events and styles and how those variables affect the meaning of the story as a whole.</p> <p><b>Notes:</b> New learners can still do this task, but without the ability to write, they will need to simply discuss and describe how they think the story will end.</p> <p><b>Reader Type:</b> Pre-readers, emergent readers, and developing readers</p>	
<b>ACTIVITY TITLE:</b> Telling a story.	<b>COGNITIVE ELEMENT:</b> Language Comprehension
<p><b>ACTIVITY:</b> The teacher covers up the text of a book and shows the pictures. The learners then create a story from the pictures, which the teacher writes on chart paper. When the learners complete their story, the teacher removes the covers from the book and reads the actual printed story. The class then compares and contrasts their version of the story with the actual story.</p> <p><b>Notes:</b> This task seems to involve some literacy skills — even though the teacher is doing the writing, the learners compare what she writes with what is written in the book. Therefore, this would not be an appropriate task for pre-literate learners.</p> <p><b>Reader Type:</b> Emergent readers and developing readers</p>	
<b>ACTIVITY TITLE:</b>	<b>COGNITIVE ELEMENT:</b> Language Comprehension
<p><b>ACTIVITY:</b> Hand out a sheet of drawing paper to each group, pair or individual. Direct the learners to fold the paper long ways. The top flap of the paper will be equally divided into four equal parts. Cut at the fold of the <b>top flap only</b>. The first flap will be for the title, the second flap will be labelled beginning, the third flap will be labelled middle and the last flap labelled end. After sharing a story read aloud to the class, pairs or individuals the learners will illustrate or write about the story. Another version of this activity is to label the first flap main character, the second flap setting, the third flap, problem and the last flap solution.</p> <p><b>Notes:</b> This task does not explicitly depend on reading skills (beyond recognizing the terms on the paper), but it is still a task which would be more appropriate to use with older learners.</p> <p><b>Reader Type:</b> Emergent readers and developing readers</p>	

## *Different strategies for helping comprehension problems*

Let's look at the different strategies you can use for helping with comprehension problems.

### *Translation*

This means that you translate the words and sentences into the mother-tongue. The best way is to ask the learners to do this among themselves. In this way they help each other while learning. Only when they are stuck do you need to help.

### *Illustration*

Use books and posters to illustrate the topic. When you are making your own posters make sure the pictures are clear and the writing neat.

### *Demonstration*

Demonstrate actions, describing what you are doing and get the learners to copy your actions. In a lesson it is an opportunity for learners to be active instead of sitting and repeating words and sentences. You can play games using this method.

#### ACTIVITY



Describe and demonstrate a game you could play in a language class.



### *Role play*

Make role play a regular part of classroom activities.

- If your learners are not used to role play then you should demonstrate first with a couple of the learners. Role play is important for several reasons.
- It provides an opportunity for the learners to be creative while they are learning.
- All learners can take part when this is done in groups.
- It gives learners an opportunity to practise language.

### *Practical tasks*

Give the learners tasks such as making shopping lists, planning for a party, exchanging recipes etc. Find out if they are planning anything, such as a wedding or a social and use this in the lesson.

## *Rephrasing*

Say something in a different way. For example, You have the opportunity to... can be changed to: You have the chance to... Can you connect this...? can be changed to: Can you link this...?

## **8 DIFFERENT LEVELS OF ORAL AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE (IN TERMS OF ABET LEVELS) ARE RECOGNISED WHEN PRESENTED WITH EXEMPLARS.**

An exemplar is an example, pattern or standard. You may have an exemplar of how to write an essay or a writing frame. The Western Cape Education Department has an exemplar on the internet for ABET Numeracy. This includes learning programme outlines as per module, giving the Unit Standards, Specific Outcomes and Assessment Criteria for each level.

An exemplar can also be a case study. This is an example in the form of a story which makes a point. Sometimes the story tries to persuade the reader or listener to think differently. Let's look at an example.

If your learners think that nursing someone with AIDS is dangerous, you can tell a story of about a young mother who was left to die on her own and then discuss the consequences.

Case studies can be true stories or can be taken from newspapers or other media. By telling or reading a story the learner's knowledge of everything involved in the topic is increased. They may be more easily persuaded by a story than if you simply told them the facts. They may feel personally involved and be more likely to remember a story than a list of facts.

Using case studies in language lessons should lead to discussion of the topic. When choosing the exemplar the educator needs to bear the following in mind:

### **(1) Relevance to the learner**

- Is it appropriate for adults?
- Will the learner find it interesting and relevant?
- Are you using real-life materials?
- Does it relate to materials suggested or supplied by the learner?

### **(2) Relates to learning needs and learning goals**

- Is it at the right level?
- Does it relate to the learner's goals?
- Are you able to adapt it if necessary to make it easier or more challenging?

Exemplars need to be chosen carefully and used appropriately. They are a good way of increasing language ability and maintaining interest in the lesson.

## 9 CONCLUSION

In this unit we have looked at different ways of managing language in the learning situation. We have considered strategies for dealing with difficulties, terminology, grammar and academic discussion. We have looked at comprehension problems and how to overcome them and at the best ways of using exemplars. In the next unit we will be considering visual literacy.

# UNIT 5

## Visual Literacy

### 1 INTRODUCTION

As we grow from child to adult we explore and learn with all our senses. The more we use our different senses in a learning experience, the easier it is to learn. The one we use most in lessons is sight. We see pictures all around us of people, views, the furniture in our houses. In this unit we will be discussing how we use these senses in lessons.

#### **SPECIFIC OUTCOME 5:**

Help learners with visual literacy.

#### **Assessment criteria:**

Relevant symbols and units of measurement, and their uses, are explained to learners (e.g. &, X, =, @)

Layout and style of visuals used in materials are explained to learners (e.g. charts, graphs, tables, diagrams, conventional uses of colour, comic bubbles)

Visual aids used by practitioners are in line with learners' visual literacy abilities (e.g. Practitioner does not write on board in cursive or italics if learners do not understand.).

### 2 RELEVANT SYMBOLS AND UNITS OF MEASUREMENT, AND THEIR USES, ARE EXPLAINED TO LEARNERS.

We use symbols in mathematics and your learners will need to know these symbols. Many of your learners may already know.

In order for the learners to remember these symbols and understand what they mean you could write sums out in words for them to translate into symbols. An easy example would be:

Ten plus six equals sixteen (or you could leave out the answer).

The learners would then write  $10 + 6 = 16$

You should have learnt different methods of doing this in your numeracy module.

There are some lessons where we could use teaching materials rather than visual aids. This is particularly true of mathematical literacy.

In a lesson on measurement in which we concentrate on weight measurement, we should bring into the classroom scales and various objects to be weighed. Let the learners feel and guess the weight of different objects. The educator can organise a guessing game in which each learner guesses the weight of a particular object. In other lessons such as measurement, rulers, tapes etc are essential.

#### ACTIVITY



ABET educator Mrs Nkosi has been offered money for paint to improve the look of the classroom. The learners had decided they would do the painting themselves. Before the paint was ordered they had to know the area covered by the walls. Mrs Nkosi decided to include an activity in a lesson where the learners measured the walls. Describe briefly how you would facilitate this.



There are some lessons which do not use instruments. We need to look at how to present visuals so that learners will have no difficulty in understanding them.

## 3 LAYOUT AND STYLE OF VISUALS USED IN MATERIALS ARE EXPLAINED TO LEARNERS

### 3.1 Layout and style

When choosing posters, textbooks and other visual materials the technique is to make or choose those that are clear and interesting. The best are those that provoke discussion. When making posters, be sure to:

*Plan your layout carefully. Take the following into account:*

- Headings and subheadings.
- Organising the information into sections.
- There should be balance and simplicity.
- Deciding where you want to add graphics, photographs, graphs, etc.
- Do not try to present too much detail. Less is more.
- Leaving enough white space — don't clutter the poster. The layout should be clean and simple.
- Provide your name and contact details for people who might want to discuss it with you.
- Information should flow (viewing sequence) by column or by row.
- Go through the design with the learners, showing how one idea flows into another.

Colour plays an important role in design.

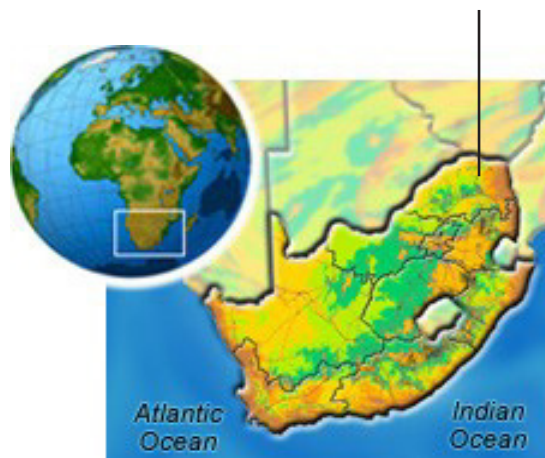
Choose colours that complement each other. Certain colours, like certain yellows, are difficult to see and read. Text and background colours should complement each other. Make sure your foreground colour (text) is clear and soft on the eyes when combined with the background colour.

Some colours are always used to depict certain features.

You could begin by asking the learners what some colours remind them of. Colours may mean different things in different cultures. It would be interesting to discuss this with the learners.

Both in printed texts and in the outside world different colours conventionally represent or signify certain things. Take the following examples:

- Discuss the colours we can see on a robot. Red means stop, green go.
- Traditionally red is for danger – fires on the weather map are depicted in red. You will notice this on the weather map on TV.
- Look at a map with the learners to show that water (the sea, river and lakes) is always blue, the desert areas are brown and the tropical areas green. Look at the way borders and roads are coloured.



You could get the learners to draw a map of their area using the conventional colours. As well as maps, visual literacy includes understanding charts of various kinds.

### 3.2 Presenting charts and graphs

In the range statements for ABET Levels 2 and 3, the learners have to be familiar with charts, graphs, tables, and diagrams. At Level 2 they need to be able to understand them, and at Level 3 to draw them.

The best way of helping learners to understand charts and graphs is to demonstrate how they are drawn up. Draw a graph on the board. Begin by asking learners about something that affects their daily lives. For example, you could ask them how long it takes them to get to classes. (You could also do this exercise with the ages of the learners.)

1 hour					
30 min.					
25 min					
15 min					
5 min					
	Lindiwe	Kagiso	Sibongele	Irene	Stephen

Discuss with the learners why it is useful to know how long people take to get to various institutions, for example for purposes of planning schools, shopping centres, post offices etc.

A simple pie chart could show the proportion of men and women in the class.

Ask the learners to see whether they can find charts in newspapers or magazines. Learners with children at school could copy charts from their textbooks.

**ACTIVITY**



In Mrs Nkosi's class 10% of the learners have 5 children below the age of 16 years, 30% have 4 children, 10% have 2 children and the rest of the learners are grandmothers. Draw a pie chart as you would in class and explain who would need this information and why it would be useful.



It is important when looking at visuals to explain their importance. Government departments may need information for working out budgets, for example for child support grants. Explain how much easier it is to see a chart than to have long lists of figures.

At Level 2 the learners need to be able to answer questions about the charts. In this way you can assess whether the learners understand and can read the charts. Start with something simple.

**ACTIVITY**



Develop a set of 4 questions you could ask about the pie chart you have drawn above.



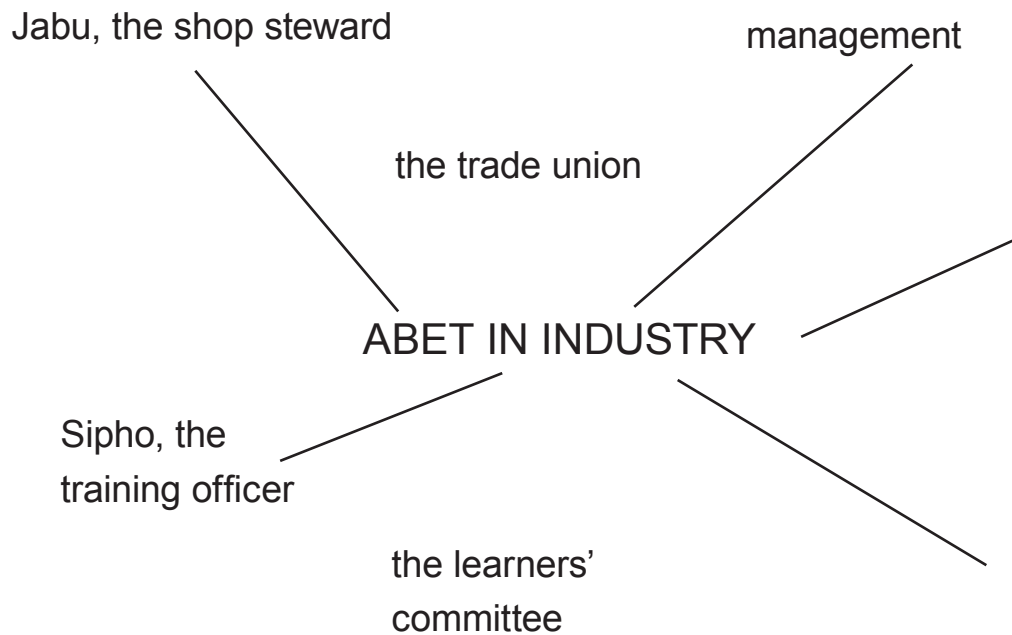
At Level 3 the learners will be expected to be able to draw charts themselves. The educator needs to remind them how charts are drawn up and give them time to read the charts before providing figures and percentages and asking the learners to draw up charts, graphs and tables.



### 3.3 Interpreting diagrams

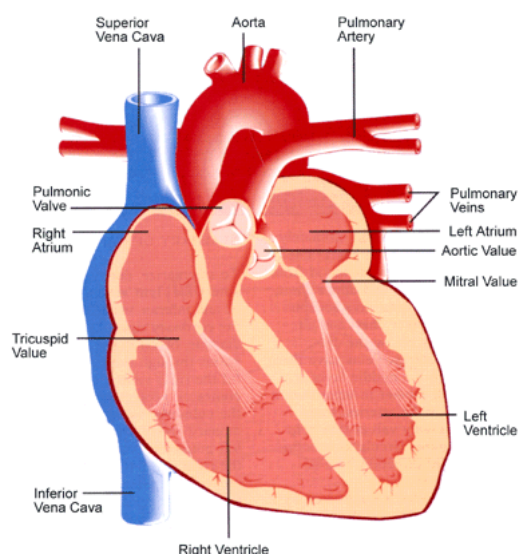
A diagram is a simple drawing showing the basic shape and layout of something and the way it works.

Begin with something simple. Here is a simple diagram showing how many people are involved in an ABET training programme in industry.



Depending on the context the educator might do simple diagrams with learners on the different areas of life, for example. a working day in the life of a rural woman. In different learning areas diagrams are more specific.

In human and social studies you may have to study diagrams of the body. You could show the learners the shape of the different organs and point out the colours that are always used. Below you can see red for arteries and blue for veins.



In natural sciences some diagrams show the structure of leaves. In technology they show how electricity works.

When presenting diagrams, be clear about what is happening in the diagram. Some may appear very complicated when first seen. When asking the learners to draw charts and maps or diagrams, it is important for the educator to have done them herself. Do not ask the learners to do something you cannot do.

To summarise: when presenting charts, graphs, maps and diagrams:

- Choose clear simple layouts to begin with.
- Draw charts etc on the board to show how this is done.
- Start from what is known of the topic before moving on to what is not known.
- As far as possible, show the usefulness of what is being presented.
- Ask questions to ensure the learners understand what they are looking at or drawing.

In addition to charts, graphs and diagrams, cartoons are a useful tool in education.

### 3.4 Presenting cartoons

Cartoons make a humorous social or political statement. On the whole it is better to choose those which make a social rather than a political statement. You may use them to stimulate discussion. If you are doing this in a language class, remember that the emphasis will be on speaking or writing the language and learning new words. The critical crossfield outcome may be human and social sciences or other learning areas. Cartoons may be single drawings or comic strips. A single cartoon without many words could be presented for discussion.



(Mail & Guardian, January 11 2005)

A cartoon could use one or two words to make the point. These are written in a bubble above the speaker's head. In a lesson you would white out the bubble and ask the learners to suggest what the speaker might be saying.



(Mail & Guardian, August 25 2006)

ACTIVITY



Find a cartoon from a newspaper or magazine that you could use in a lesson and write four questions about the cartoon for the learners to answer.



Instead of a single cartoon you might want to use comic strips. Again, you could write out some of the words and ask the learners to write in their own.

*Madam & Eve for July 18, 2003*



(Mail & Guardian, July 18 2003)

In all your lessons, as well as choosing clear pictures and other visual materials, your own presentations need to be clear.

## 4 VISUAL AIDS USED BY PRACTITIONERS IS IN LINE WITH LEARNERS VISUAL LITERACY ABILITIES

When writing on the board or making posters, make sure the learners will be able to see clearly what you have done.

- Bear in mind that older learners may have sight problems. Write boldly and use large letters.
- Write clearly using a style that your learners are used too. For new learners it may be better to print.
- Use a ruler if necessary. If you tend to slant when writing on the board, practise before the lesson.
- Both in writing and in designing posters, be neat. Do not tear but cut out pictures neatly. Make sure the pictures are straight. Leave room for printing underneath the pictures.

## 5 CONCLUSION

In this unit we have looked at different ways of presenting visual material. We have considered different forms of visual aids and suggested ways in which they can be used. In the next unit we will look closely at enabling readers to interpret texts critically.

# UNIT 6

## Critical Reading Comprehension

### 1 INTRODUCTION

In unit 6 we'll be looking more closely at critical reading with your learners. We'll consider ways in which learners can learn to read more understandably and quickly access different parts of the text.

#### **SPECIFIC OUTCOME 6:**

Help learners with critical reading comprehension

#### **Assessment criteria:**

Learners are helped to use the different parts of a text (e.g. contents page, glossary, index, page numbers, captions, headings, boxes).

The meaning and use of punctuation used in texts is explained to learners.

Appropriate reading strategies are explained to learners (e.g. pre-reading, scanning, skimming, guessing from context, predicting).

Learners are questioned on the origins, purpose and intended audience of a text, fuller explanation is given when required.

Learners are questioned to ascertain how much is understood; fuller and alternative explanations are given when required.

Learners are encouraged to distinguish fact from opinion and persuasion where relevant.

### 2 LEARNERS ARE HELPED TO USE THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF A TEXT

One of the most important aspects of education is that the educator should direct the learners to places where they can find the answers to their questions for themselves. Once they know where to look the learners can educate themselves. An educator can set a good example by admitting to ignorance when asked a question. Say to the learner, "I don't know but I'll find out, and you also try to find out, and we will discuss it next time". Remember to say where you got the information

from when you have the answer. This is much better than guessing.. The learners should know that the educator is also involved in life-long learning.

It is important to have a dictionary available in every lesson. Ideally you should have at least two: a mother-tongue English dictionary, and an English dictionary. Of course if you are teaching another language the dictionaries should be in that language. In addition, have as many books as you can in the classroom so that learners can get used to handling books.

Take your learners on trips to the library and show them how to find different topics in the books. If you do not have a library nearby, make arrangements with your local school. Go round the library with the librarian and your learners. Each learner should be given a book to look at which has following: contents page, glossary, index, page numbers, captions, headings and boxes.

- Show learners how to use the contents page to find out what the book is about.
- Demonstrate how to find difficult words in the glossary and how to find difficult words in the index.
- Next look at the page numbers indicated in the index. Once all the learners have found the page, look for captions, headings, and boxes.
- Explain how these different parts of a book will help learners find out what they need to know.
- Let the learners practise in pairs by reading parts of the contents page, captions, headings etc to each other.

Give them particular words and phrases they can look up either in pairs or individually. Do this in pairs rather than groups, as each learner must get a turn, and in a group some may do most of the work while the others sit back.

When doing written work, encourage learners to use headings.

Once the learners have had practice in this, take another trip to the library.

- Divide them into pairs or groups of three and give them each a different topic to look up.
- Ask them to write down the name of the books in which they find something useful and the page number of the section. They should make notes of what they find and share this information with the rest of the class later on.

## ACTIVITY



When giving tasks to pairs and groups you need to be specific. Think of three questions you could ask on a particular aspect of health that would help them search for the answers in the library.



## *Summary*

To help learners use different parts of the text:

- Have one or two dictionaries in the class for reference
- Have books on hand that the learners can look at and handle
- Show learners contents page, glossary, index, page numbers, captions, headings, and boxes
- Give the learners practice in using these different parts
- Take a trip to the library and let pairs look up different topics

### 3 THE MEANING AND USE OF PUNCTUATION, IN TEXTS USED, IS EXPLAINED TO LEARNERS.

Being able to understand punctuation is important for readers as punctuation gives meaning to the text. It helps us follow the writer's ideas. Punctuation separates different ideas and emphasises other points the writer wants to make. To understand how punctuation works, we will look at how texts can change with punctuation.

#### *The comma*

To illustrate how important punctuation is, you could refer to a book by Lynn Truss on using punctuation called: *Eats shoots and leaves*.

The title tells you how important punctuation is because putting in commas alters the meaning of the title.

First you must realise that "shoots" and "leaves" have several meanings. Both shoots and leaves can be used as nouns and verbs with different meanings.

Shoots are the first growth of a plant, but "shoots" is also an action carried out with a gun. Leaves, of course, refers to either the leaves on a tree or the act of going away. Now let's look at the effect of commas on the title of the book.

We can say the man

**eats shoots, and leaves.** With the comma after shoots it would mean he eats plant shoots and goes away.

**eats, shoots, and leaves.** In this case with the comma after eats, and shoots, the meaning could be that the man eats, then shoots with his gun or bow and arrow, then goes away.

Let's look at a simpler sentence:

She went to the school head office and the bank.

She went to the school, head office and the bank. Here the comma shows that she went to the school first, then to head office and then to the bank.

She went to the school head, the office and the bank. The comma shows that she went to the school head and then the office and then the bank.

#### ACTIVITY



Think of four sentences you could use to demonstrate the importance of the comma to your learners.



#### End punctuation

To show how punctuation can emphasise what the writer wants to say, we can use a period (full stop), a question mark or an exclamation at the end of the sentence.



A period ends a sentence.

A question mark shows that a question is being asked.

An exclamation mark indicates strong emotion.

A simple example would be:

He was drunk. Using a period makes this a statement of fact.

He was drunk? The statement is being questioned. Really, I don't believe it.

He was drunk! This could mean he was very drunk or that the speaker was surprised.

### ACTIVITY



Think of four other statements of which the meaning changes when a period or question mark or exclamation mark is used. They should be short so that your learners can easily understand the difference.



We have given a few examples of how punctuation influences the meaning of the text. You will have found others. As you continue with your learners you will be explaining the meaning of other punctuation marks: the colon, semi-colon etc.

The best way of learning punctuation is to read aloud with expression. Learners should have lots of practice in reading to you and to each other. After a lot of practice, when reading to themselves they should hear the writer's words in their heads.

Choose books which are interesting and have plenty of action to begin with. They should also be stories that the learners can relate to. We will be looking at these pre-reading techniques in the next section.

## 4 APPROPRIATE READING STRATEGIES

### *Pre-reading techniques*

Choosing the right materials is the key to holding the interest and enthusiasm of your learners. In the beginning, try to get books with pictures which illustrate the story. When learners are beginning to read it is a good idea to make a habit of reading to them for ten minutes at the end of each lesson.

Most of the activities below can be done in groups. You must, however, give your learners very clear instructions. Let the groups compare notes. If you do not have enough books for all the learners, let the groups share.

Follow some of the strategies suggested below. Explain each step you are taking to the learners.

- Before the learners begin to read the story look at the cover and try to guess from the picture what the story is about. Look at the title of the story and brainstorm ideas of what the story might be about.
- Notice the structure of the text.  
Is it a story or is it factual?  
  
Do the chapters have headings?
- Page through the illustrations and see whether they provide any clues to the story. Make predictions about the story. If you find clues, try to relate the story to the lives and experiences of the learners. This is particularly important if the book is factual.
- Draw up a mind map with the title of the story at the centre and the suggestions and predictions of the learners radiating outwards.
- Discuss the purpose of the story.
- Make a list of questions the learners want answered.
- Scan the text for headings and subheadings.
- Skim the first page for words or phrases that the learners don't understand.
- In factual texts, look at the beginning and end of the paragraphs. The beginning gives you the main idea. The body of the text contains details and the last sentence is a summary. Discuss which paragraphs are relevant.
- When the learners have read the story, go back to your mind map and lists of questions. Change them and add new information.

The aim of these exercises is to make the learners keen to read the book and discover how the story unfolds.

### ACTIVITY



You should already have started making a collection of suitable books, articles and magazines. If not, begin now. Look for pictures with stories attached for your collection.



## 5 THE ORIGINS, PURPOSE AND INTENDED AUDIENCE OF A TEXT

When we watch television or listen to the radio we need to think about the speaker's bias. Is he or she strongly for or against something?. We show our bias when we listen to politicians. If we belong to their party we agree with them. If we belong to a different party we criticise them.

Discuss with the learners their reactions to speeches by politicians or well known people. You may bring a radio into the class and listen to a chat show and talk about the prejudice of the callers. Point out that in the same way authors have a particular point of view. What we choose to write and how we write it are all personal choices. So when we read books we still need to ask questions and not simply accept the content as the whole truth. The following questions which we discussed in the module on study skills could be asked.

<b>Who is the author?</b>	Is the author a man or a woman? For example, if it is a man writing about women's issues you would have more questions to ask about the intention of the work. The same would apply if it is a white person writing about black problems or a university professor writing about rural areas.
<b>What are the author's credentials?</b>	You will usually find a short description of the author on the back cover or the inside page. Has he/she studied the topic? Has he/she had experience of the topic? What research has she/he done?  Has the author had the same experiences as the learner?
<b>Who is the intended audience?</b>	Is the text written for learners at school, university or for a wider public?
<b>What is the purpose of writing this book/article?</b>	Does the author want to change your mind? Is it to raise your awareness?  Even storybooks (novels) have a purpose. Sometimes the story is a moral one showing what will happen if you act in a certain way.
<b>What is the social and historical context?</b>	In what year was this book/article written? What was happening at the time? Where was it written? You may, for instance, be reading about stories during the time of apartheid. Older learners will be able to relate their experiences during that time.
<b>Are these facts or is it the person's opinion?</b>	Are the facts presented? Is more than one opinion described, or are you simply told what the author thinks?

<p><b>What is the tone (mood) of the article?</b></p>	<p>Is the tone angry or calm? Look at the words used. Words such as disgraceful, bitter etc show anger. Other words such as hopeful, exciting etc show a more positive mood. What we need to look for is a balance of mood.</p>
<p><b>Who is left out of the book?</b></p>	<p>Sometimes books or articles leave out the lives or experiences of certain people.</p>

The educator will discuss these questions with the learner before and after reading the book, giving explanations when required.

**ACTIVITY**



Which of the questions above would you discuss with learners before reading a book or article?

Which might you ask at intervals during reading?

Which would you discuss after reading?



Asking questions enables learners to read intelligently. In this way it builds up learners' self confidence.

## 6 LEARNERS ARE QUESTIONED TO ASCERTAIN HOW MUCH THEY UNDERSTAND

Prepare for the lesson by going through the text and noting possible difficulties. Write these on the board and go through them at the beginning of the class. Refer to them during the session as well, as you come across them.

A good educator will encourage learners to ask questions. Learners will know that there is no shame in not understanding what is being taught. If the question is vital to the understanding of the text the educator will pause to give an explanation. In other circumstances the educator could say that she will answer the question at the end of the session. She will also encourage learners to answer each other's questions. Say things like:

Yes that is a difficult word. Can any of you think what it means?

That is an important question. You have to understand that to understand the story.

Who can guess what he is saying?

I'm glad you asked that. Let's go over it again. What do you think it could mean?

Add the difficult words and phrases to the board and the learners may copy them when they do their individual work.

If you have a good open relationship with your learners then you will know whether they understand the content of what you are teaching. However, there could be several reasons why learners do not ask questions when they don't understand something. They may be tired and have stopped concentrating and so miss what you are saying. They may be worrying about something at home. They may be too shy and not want to interrupt. It is important then to check regularly to see whether the learners understand.

**Do not** ask the question: Do you understand? This is because learners may say yes even if they don't understand. Others may think they understand but in fact be understanding the material in the wrong way.

Stop at various points of the reading and say things like:

That's interesting. I wonder why he said/did that? What do you understand him to be saying?

This word has several meanings. Can you think of the best one in the context?

Have you come across this word or phrase before?

Another strategy is to have the groups work on specific questions after you have all done the reading. Try to make the questions interesting.

If you are reading a story you might ask questions like:

What do you think of the main character in the book?

Which one of them can you identify with? Why?

Read page 10 where it tells you what the man did. Why do you think he did that?

What else could he have done?

Turn to page 12 where the woman talks to the child. In your own words and in pairs continue the conversation.

What you are trying to do is to involve the learners in the story. As you go from group to group you will be able to hear whether the learners understood the story and help them where necessary.

## ACTIVITY



You have been reading an article from a magazine with the learners. The article is about a woman who had started a business sewing school uniforms. Write down four questions you could ask the groups to discuss. Remember you want to find out whether they understood the article.



## 7 LEARNERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO DISTINGUISH FACT FROM OPINION AND PERSUASION WHERE RELEVANT

We have already touched on the importance of distinguishing fact from opinion in reading texts. When reading texts or newspapers or magazines learners need to be able to tell whether the writer is presenting facts or his or her own opinion. When we express an opinion we very often want to persuade others to agree with our point of view. Sometimes we are not even aware of how we are persuaded by outside sources.

### *Case study*

Mrs Nkosi had decided to work with her learners on different items they were likely to have on their shopping lists. She had carefully cut out pictures from advertisements and pasted them on a large sheet of cardboard without labelling them. In the lesson she asked learners to name the different items and as they did so she wrote the names on the board. "Colgate", called one learner. Another said "Kelloggs". A third called out "Sunlight". When she had written up the list she noticed that half of them were brand names. This happened even when the brand she had pasted was different to the one they named. Thinking about this, she decided to have a lesson on persuasion. The learners had been so persuaded by the advertisements that they had come to associate the brand with the item.

### ACTIVITY



Can you think of other forms of persuasion besides advertisements?



Persuasion need not always be a bad thing. We persuade our children to do what is right. A preacher may persuade us to do good works.

What other forms of persuasion did you think of? Politicians try and persuade us to vote for their party. Shops may try to persuade us to open an account. Newspapers try to persuade us that their view of society is the right one.

When dealing with texts in your lessons you will need to aware of this. One way is to compare two newspaper accounts of the same incident. How was it reported? What was the view of the journalist? Make two columns in which you note the differences. Discuss with the learners what is being said and how the same incident can be seen from two different points of view.

## 8 CONCLUSION

We have looked at different strategies for helping learners to think about and critique what they are reading. We have shown our learners how to find passages in the text easily, look closely at the meaning of punctuation and be critically aware of what the author is saying and how he or she is saying it. In the next unit we will be looking at the use of technical instruments.

# UNIT 7

## Mathematical And Technical Instruments

### 1 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we will be considering ways of using mathematical and technical instruments which will help learners develop their skills. In modern society the use of these skills makes life much easier and enables learners to develop in their careers and personal lives.

#### **SPECIFIC OUTCOME 7:**

Mediate skill and understanding in the use of mathematical and technical instruments to learners.

#### **Assessment criteria:**

Appropriate use of a calculator is facilitated, demonstrated and explained.

Appropriate use of measuring instruments is facilitated, demonstrated and explained.

Understanding of the practical implications of readings taken on technical and mathematical instruments is facilitated, demonstrated and explained. (eg angle measurements, measurement of pH levels, air pressure).

Learners' own interpretations and estimation skills are developed and brought into context (eg use of personal measurements is linked with mathematical or technical notation).

### 2 APPROPRIATE USE OF A CALCULATOR IS FACILITATED, DEMONSTRATED AND EXPLAINED

It is a good idea to have calculators for the learners or, if a calculator for each learner cannot be afforded, have one for every group.

A calculator is just a tool. It is used a lot in today's society, so learners should learn to use it. At the same time, learners should learn basic mathematics, be able to do mental calculations, and master long division and other basic calculations.

Mathematics is a field of study that builds on previously established facts. A learner who does not know how to do basic multiplication (and division) will have a hard time learning further mathematics. Mastering long division precedes understanding how fractions correspond to the repeating infinite (non-terminating) decimals, which then paves the way to understanding irrational numbers and real numbers.

You could use a calculator occasionally for special projects or when teaching specific concepts, or just for fun. It could be used in science or geography projects for example, or for exploring certain new concepts, playing number games or checking homework.

### *Things to keep in mind when using a calculator*

When a calculator is used more freely, one should pay attention to following points:

- A calculator is a **tool** for doing calculations. So is the human mind, and the paper and pencil method. Learners should be taught **when** to use a calculator, and when mental computing (or even paper and pencil methods) are more effective or appropriate. Choosing the right “tool” is part of an effective problem-solving process.
- It is very important that learners **learn how to estimate** the result before doing the calculation. It is so very easy to make mistakes when punching in the numbers, and a learner must not learn to “rely” on the calculator without checking the reasonableness of the answer.

When you introduce a calculator to learners and demonstrate the various things it can do, give the learners practice in using it. You could, for instance call out addition or multiplication sums and see how quickly they can do them using the calculator.

Have a large poster or drawing of a calculator in the classroom for learners to refer to when necessary.

#### ACTIVITY



Draw a picture of a calculator – you should have a large picture in the classroom or if you cannot get hold of one, draw one on the board. Draw lines from the symbols to show the learners what each symbol means.



Now let's look at other instruments that could be used in the classroom.

## 3 APPROPRIATE USE OF MEASURING INSTRUMENTS IS FACILITATED, DEMONSTRATED AND EXPLAINED.

There are several measuring instrument that the learners need to be able to use skilfully. These include instruments to measure length, weigh objects, measure temperature etc.



When presenting a lesson on measurement, concentrating on weight measurement, for instance, we would bring along scales and various objects to be weighed. Let the learners feel the weight of different objects. The educator can organise a guessing game in which each learner guesses the weight of a particular object. In other lessons on measurement, rulers, tapes etc are essential.

**ACTIVITY**



You are planning a lesson on weight measurement with an ABET class of rural women. What pair and group activities would you plan? Say what instruments you would be using.



We need to look for contexts in which learning to use measuring instruments would be useful to learners. The following table contains a few suggestions which you could use in the classroom.

**ACTIVITY**



Fill in other situations in which using measuring instruments would be useful.

Context	Activity	Instruments needed
In the home or at work	Putting up a shelf	Ruler Tape Spirit level
	Laying a carpet or papering shelves	Ruler
	Cooking	Scales
Health	Taking a body temperature	Thermometer
	Weighing oneself or others	Scales
Future planning	Planning a house or shed	Ruler, set square
Weather conditions	Measuring the outside temperature	Thermometer


The learners themselves may have projects at home in which using one or more of these instruments would be useful. Encourage learners to make suggestions of how their life could be made easier with these skills.

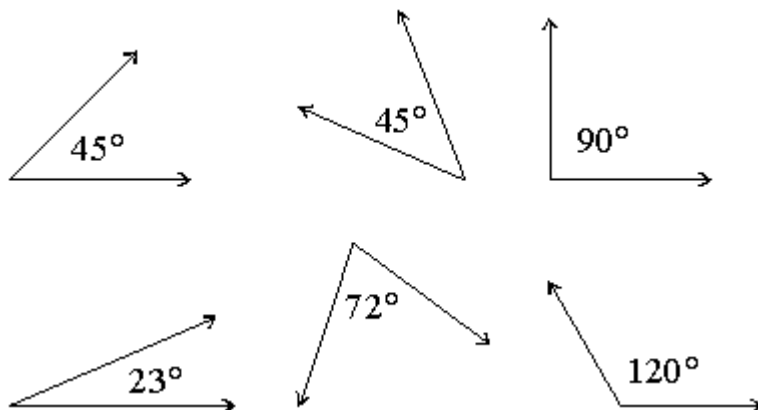


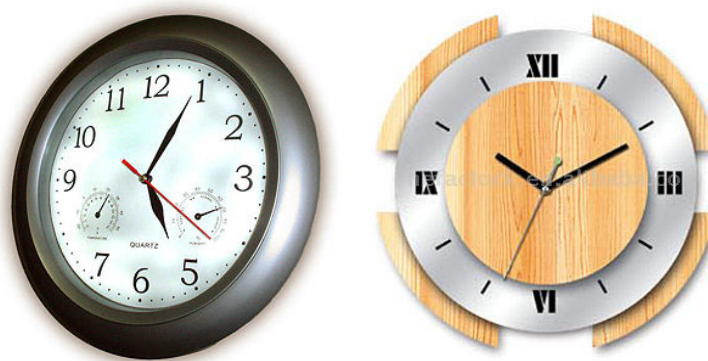
## 4 UNDERSTANDING OF THE PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF READINGS TAKEN ON TECHNICAL AND MATHEMATICAL INSTRUMENTS IS FACILITATED, DEMONSTRATED AND EXPLAINED

It is important for learners to understand the practical implications of the readings they take on mathematical instruments. These must clearly be shown to have value for their lives and environment. As in all kinds of practical teaching, the educator begins by demonstrating how the instruments are used. Let's look at a few examples.

### 4.1 Angle measurements

We measure the size of an angle using degrees.





The easiest way to begin demonstrating angles is by looking at a clock. See these examples of the different angles and times.

Turn the minute hand of the clock round to demonstrate the different angles and time.

Next you need to introduce the learners to a protractor and show them how to measure angles using this instrument. Learning to be accurate in measuring angles can be useful to learners in various ways.

- **Pie chart** – when the learners are at level 3 they will need to be able to draw pie charts. It is important that they learn to do this accurately so that the chart clearly shows the different aspects recorded.
- **Building** – some learners may be involved in building projects at their homes.
- Angles could be useful for simple tasks like putting up **fence posts** to make sure the post is at a  $90^\circ$  angle. More difficult tasks such as **laying tiles** also require accurate measurement.
- **Roofs** – it is important that the two sides of the roof are at exactly the same angle or they will not meet.
- **Road signs** – road signs such as those indicating a hill will show the angle of the hill.

## 4.2 pH levels

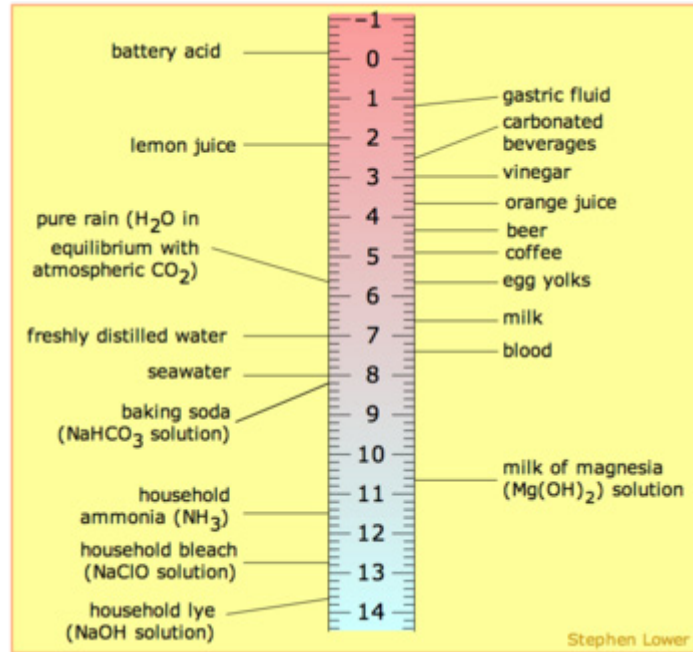
At present pH measurements are part of routine tests done to check potable water quality, soil usability for different plants and water quality in aquaristics. They are done to control industrial processes, in wine-making and beer-making, to check milk quality, to check cosmetics, not to mention all the pH measurements performed many times a day in laboratories throughout the world to control reactions and analyse conditions.

The pH can be measured in several ways, two of which are widely used. One – which is simple and often precise enough — is to use pH strips (pH papers). Second, more costly and more demanding in terms of procedures that have to be followed, but giving much more precise results — is a potentiometric method that uses pH electrodes and pH meters. We will concentrate on using pH measurements with a pH strip or litmus paper as it is commonly called.

The pH readings tell you about the acidity and alkaline content as the paper changes colour. Pure water is said to be neutral. The pH of water at  $25^\circ$  Celsius ( $77^\circ$  Fahrenheit) is close to 7.0. Solutions with a pH of less than 7 are said to be acidic and solutions with a pH greater than 7

are said to be basic or alkaline. pH measurements are important in medicine, biology, chemistry, food science, environmental science, oceanography and many other applications.

### Some common pH levels



### *pH measurements in the classroom*

- (1) In a cup or beaker, measure the pH of the distilled water you will be using. Dip the pH paper or calibrated pen or meter into the water and obtain a reading.
- (2) In another cup or beaker, mix 40 g of dried and sieved soil with 40 ml of distilled water (or other amount in a 1:1 soil to water ratio) using a spoon or other utensil to transfer the soil. Stir with a spoon or other stirrer until the soil and water are thoroughly mixed.
- (3) Stir the soil-water mixture for 30 seconds every 3 minutes for a total of five stirring/waiting cycles. Then allow the mixture to settle until a clear liquid forms (about 5 minutes).
- (4) Measure the pH of the liquid using the pH paper, pH pen or meter.

#### ACTIVITY



Acidity in water can affect our both our health and the plants that grow in the area. Describe a lesson in which you used the pH measurements in soil on plant growth.



## 4.3 Air pressure

The most common application of air pressure is to inflate tyres with the aid of a bicycle pump or another kind of pump. This can easily be demonstrated in the classroom. To understand how air pressure works, different experiments can be done in the classroom. The following suggestions come from Gloria Heard on the internet: [www.oot/edi/-smile/ph9008.html](http://www.oot/edi/-smile/ph9008.html)

**Objective:** To get a better understanding of air pressure and how it affects our daily lives.

### Recommended strategies:

- (1) Get the class's attention by having them do breathing exercises, inhaling and exhaling two or three times.
- (2) Next, ask class how this process is related to air pressure.
- (3) Give a review of the basic concept of air pressure, that is, how air can be weighed, that air takes up space, and where and how air is found.
- (4) Take out two plastic bottles and ask the class whether the bottles contain air. Demonstrate to the class that the bottles contain air by sucking or taking most of the air out of one bottle. Ask the learner to compare the changes in the two bottles.
- (5) Next, ask the learners whether they think that the bottle can be brought back to its original shape? Do this by blowing air back into the bottle.
- (6) Repeat the same activity using a balloon.
- (7) Have the learners split into groups of four, go to assigned stations, and try to understand the principles that we have discussed.
- (8) Learner helpers will be assigned to the stations for assistance.

### Station 1:

Learners will do this activity to test whether there is air in something.

Material needed: 8-ounce plastic tumblers; Tissue; deep bowl filled with water

Procedure:

- (1) Look at the glass. What is in it?
- (2) Crumple the tissue and put it in the bottom of the glass.
- (3) Turn the glass over (be sure the tissue does not fall out) and push it mouth first into a deep bowl of water.
- (4) Now remove the glass without tipping it.
- (5) What happens to the tissue?
- (6) What can you say about this?

### Station 2:

Learners will demonstrate and learn what air can do to an egg.

Material needed: Hard-boiled egg, peeled; glass milk bottle; kitchen matches

Procedure:

- (1) Stick two matches in the pointed end of the egg.
- (2) Holding the bottle upside down, light the matches and put the egg into the mouth of the bottle, pointed end in first. Hold the egg lightly against the mouth of the bottle — don't push! Keep the bottle upside down.

(3) What happened? What can you say about this?

**Station 3:**

Learners will learn how air can be compressed.

Material needed: Clear plastic 16-ounce shampoo bottle filled with water; medicine dropper filled with a small amount of water

Procedure:

- (1) Observe the medicine dropper floating in the bottle.
- (2) Gently squeeze the bottle.
- (3) What happened? What can you say about this?

**Station 4:**

How can air pressure make things stronger?

Materials needed: Paper straws; raw potato

Procedure:

- (1) Hold a straw near one end and try to stick the other end in a potato. What happened?
- (2) Place your finger over the top of the straw and stick the other end into the potato (do it fast and hard). What happened?
- (3) What can you say about this?

**Conclusion and evaluation:**

We can conclude from this lesson that learners will be able to understand air pressure, how and when it works, and some of the concepts related to air pressure.

**ACTIVITY**



Name ways in which air pressure affects our daily lives



We have looked at the importance of demonstrating different mathematical instruments in the lessons. However learners may already have had experience of taking accurate readings without the instruments.

## 5 LEARNERS' OWN INTERPRETATION AND ESTIMATION SKILLS ARE DEVELOPED AND BROUGHT INTO CONTEXT

Have you ever watched a cook throw together a perfect cake without a recipe and without measuring the ingredients? Maybe you do it yourself, or maybe your mother or grandmother or even your father cooks in this way. They can't tell you how much flour or sugar they use. They cook by instinct. It is frustrating if you are watching and want to cook the same thing yourself.

Traditionally people built simple houses with perfect proportions, with the roof properly angled, using traditional ways of doing things. Today many of these skills have been lost, although some remain with the older people.

We need to give credit for skills which learners already have, and at the same time introduce new measurement skills that will help us deal with the more complex lives we lead today. In simple terms, trying new recipes requires the ability to weigh different components. Building a larger house is quicker if we are able to plan and build with proper mathematical instruments.

Lesson plans should include estimating which skills the learners already have. These skills are then linked to the taking of accurate measurements, which are recorded in mathematical terms. In this way what is seen and felt begins to make mathematical sense. It also makes sense in the context of the learner's lives. How you develop the lesson, and what you use, will depend on the context of the learners and their daily lives.

### ACTIVITY



You have a class of domestic workers. They would like to develop their skills so that they will be able to start small businesses of their own. Think about a lesson in which they can learn to use mathematical skills and instruments to help them begin to realise their dream.

What activities could you give them?



## 6 CONCLUSION

In this unit we looked at how measuring instruments can be used appropriately to improve skills and mathematical ability. We discussed the use of technical and mathematical instruments, giving credit to the learners' own interpretations and skills and building on them. In the next unit we will look at how to help learners produce texts.

# UNIT 8

## Section 1: Producing Texts And Assignments

### 1 INTRODUCTION

In section 1 of this unit we will be exploring ways in which we can help learners produce texts and assignments. This will include the purpose, the structure and the monitoring of learners' progress. We will focus on the learners' needs and their situation.

In section 2 we will be looking at the importance of being able to access information and keeping documents in files.

#### **SPECIFIC OUTCOME 8:**

Help learners to produce texts and assignments

#### **Assessment criteria:**

Details of the text required are explained to learners in terms of purpose, topic, length, time frame, medium.

Learners are helped to structure texts (eg focus on subject, logical sequencing, coherence).

Learners' progress is monitored and constructive feedback is given at timely intervals.

Learners are encouraged to produce texts which accurately reflect their own processes and methods instead of copying form without understanding.



## 2 DETAILS OF THE TEXT REQUIRED ARE EXPLAINED TO LEARNERS IN TERMS OF PURPOSE, TOPIC, LENGTH, TIME FRAME, MEDIUM

### *Case study*

Mrs Nkosi couldn't understand what was happening to her group of learners. One by one they had stopped coming to class. She had started with twenty. Now there were only eight. She knew that they had all enjoyed the classes. They liked and respected her. When they arrived they always used to chat to her. There was a friendly and relaxed atmosphere during the lessons. There was often laughter as they talked to each other. They listened to the lessons and tried their best. Why had they stopped coming? What was she to do? When MaMashele, one of the remaining eight, missed several classes she decided she must act. In the afternoon she went to visit MaMashele to ask her what was wrong. MaMashele was quite embarrassed. We like you she said and the classes are fun, but they aren't any use to us, and we are very busy women. We give up a lot to come to the classes. Mrs Nkosi was shocked. She had tried so hard to make the lessons interesting. She went home very thoughtful.

### ACTIVITY



Mrs Nkosi invited all her present and past learners to tea. She asked them to tell her frankly what they thought.



There are several things Mrs Nkosi could do. First, she should ask the learners what they wanted to get out of the classes. What would be **useful** to them?

Secondly, it was clear from what MaMashele had said that Mrs Nkosi had not clearly explained the **purpose** of the activities in the lessons.

### *Purpose*

Before she begins an activity, the educator has to be very clear in her own mind what the purpose of the activity is. She also has to be very clear in explaining the purpose to the learners. The learners will want to know:

- Why are we doing this? What is the point of this exercise?
- How will it be useful to us?
- Will it make my life any easier?

Once the learners understand the purpose of the activity they will be more motivated to learn and to practice.

## *Topic*

The choice of the topic is important. We have already stressed that the learners should have some input into the type of topic chosen. The educator should also read the learners' goals (see unit 1) and try to meet those goals in the topics she and the learners have chosen together.

### ACTIVITY



Think of some of the things the learners may want to do, for example writing a formal letter. Draw up a list of five possible topics.



Once the topic is chosen and the purpose explained, there should be some discussion with the learners about the topic. Let pairs exchange ideas about the topic. Before they begin to write there are other things they need to know;

### *What length is this assignment?*

Be sure to be clear about how much you want them to write. Half a page, a page, two pages?

This is going to depend on the level of your learners and the task you have set. By level 2 the learners should be able to produce two to three related paragraphs. For a project they should be able to write two to three pages.

If you make the assignment too long the learners will feel failures if they can't do it. If it is too short the learners will be bored.

### *How much time do I have to do it in?*

This will depend on the assignment. Make sure you allow enough time for the learners to complete their work. Remember that some learners are slower than others. The educator needs to allow time for the slow learners as well as making sure the faster learners are not bored.

### *What is the medium?*

Should the assignment be done in pen or pencil? Or, are there drawings involved that would need coloured pencils? Rough work should be done in pencil.

## **3 LEARNERS ARE HELPED TO STRUCTURE TEXTS**

It is helpful to keep the range statements in mind as well as the specific outcomes when you prepare lessons for each level. The range statements begin with the statement: Learners are able

to produce a variety of text types. These types are indicated as narrative texts, persuasive texts, practical and social texts (for all levels).

**Narrative texts:** Life stories, stories, (simple for Level 1) reports of incidents. For Levels 2 the following are added: postcards, stories (fiction and non-fiction), narratives based on personal or second-hand experience. For Level 3 narratives can be based on reading and research.

**Persuasive:** Viewpoints on personal, community and work-related matters. For Level 2 the following are added: short personal adverts, viewpoints on personal, political, community and work-related matters. For Level 3 the following are added: articles for a newsletter, letter to the editor.

**Practical and social:** Forms, notices, shopping lists, things-to-do lists, invitations, messages and telephone messages. For Level 2 the following are added: simple versions of other practical texts such as notices, lists, instructions and directions, diaries, For Level 3 we add basic CV's.

For Levels 2 and 3 factual texts are included.

**Factual:** Simple summaries, simple notes, short essays, comparing simple tables, graphs and diagrams. For Level 3 the following material is added: completion of tables, graphs and diagrams.

By looking at these range statements an educator has a good idea of the scope of the unit standards for each level and is able to structure lessons accordingly.

The difference in the levels is the length of the text, and the spelling and grammar expected. The texts are also structured differently for different levels. From Level 1 onwards the learners gradually increase the level of written work and thus the structure becomes more complicated. The basic structure remains the same. However, learning is a process whereby the learners build on the basics. There are several exercises an educator can do with the learners at all levels as they work on the structure of written assignments. Here are a few examples.

## 3.1 Exercises that can be included in a lesson to help the learners understand structure

### 3.1.1 Making up a story

This is a fun exercise to do with learners. The educator starts with a sentence that begins a story. Mrs Makhubele was walking down the road when. .... The learners in turn add sentences to the story. The educator writes the story on the board as the learners continue the story.

When all the learners have had their turn the educator and the learners decide on a title for the story. The educator points out that a story has to have a beginning, a middle in which the story is developed and an end. Together the educator and the learners may change the story to improve it as they divide the story into paragraphs.

When the exercise is complete the learners may do the same in groups, making up and writing their own stories. Afterwards they should read their different stories to the class.

### 3.1.2 Scrambling sentences in a story

The learners are given a worksheet on which the sentences making up a story are given out of order. As individuals or in groups they unscramble the sentences to form a coherent story. An example of a story which has been scrambled is given below.

#### **Mamshele has problems**

She can't see the point of this.

In the Level 1 class she learned to read and write.

They worked in groups and in pairs.

MaMashele decided to try the classes again.

MaMashele had been going to ABET classes to be able to help her grandchildren with their homework.

When Mrs Nkosi came to visit she asked why MaMashele had left.

She had enjoyed the classes and made many friends.

When the church choir started to meet on the same night as the ABET classes she left the classes.

MaMashele felt the choir was useful.

She felt she had learned all that she needed to know.

Mrs Nkosi explained to MaMashele why writing essays was important.

They were writing stories about what they did at home.

When the learners have completed the exercise the educator discusses how the learners could divide the story into paragraphs.

#### **ACTIVITY**



Write a short story appropriate for Level 1 consisting of about 4 sentences and scramble the sentences.



You will no doubt have developed or read about other exercises that you could do with your learners to help them structure their written work. So let us remind ourselves of the steps needed to write an essay or assignment.

The main stages of essay writing are:

- Noting how many pages you are expected to write
- Thinking about the essay topic
- Gathering material for the essay
- Getting some ideas on paper
- Organising the material

- Writing a first draft
- Reviewing your work in the light of the title
- Writing a final draft

In this module we deal with focusing on the topic and logical sequencing and coherence.

## 3.2 Keeping the subject in focus

The subject of the text should be written clearly on the board and copied by the learners and underlined.

There are 2 questions educators could ask learners to help them focus on the subject:

What are we writing about?

Why are we writing this?

What are we writing about? This question needs to be discussed with the learners before they start planning their written work. It should be asked again as ideas are gathered and the first draft is written. When the draft is complete the learner should go back to the topic and ensure that the subject has been covered. Peer assessment will help here. Learners could discuss together how they covered the topic. They would also look at whether some of the work needs to be rewritten if it strays off the subject or needs to be added to.

Why are we writing this? This gives purpose to the text. It may be a formal topic, such as a business letter, or an informal one, such as a letter to a friend or a story.

### ACTIVITY



How would you explain to the learner the purpose of the following written work?

A letter to a friend

A fictional story

An article for a newspaper



### 3.3 Logical sequencing

#### *The outline*

If the writing is factual it is a good idea for the learner to draw a mind map and then label the different aspects in sequence before writing the draft. In doing this the learner will be able to see how one thing follows naturally from the other. The facilitator can discuss with the learner the reasons why he or she has chosen the particular sequence. A factual piece of writing should contain the following:

- Introduction
- First paragraph – point 1
- Second paragraph – point 2 etc
- Conclusion

If the writing is a story the learner could write short notes and then develop the story. These notes would provide an outline of the story.

In a story:

- The first sentence must interest the reader or arouse curiosity.
- The story should build up to a climax. Usually the climax is not given away at the beginning.
- The story should end in a satisfactory way.

#### *Coherence: Linking sentences and paragraphs*

We link sentences and paragraphs with words and phrases so that one idea is linked to another like a chain.

A linking word is also called a “conjunction”. It can be used to link sentences and paragraphs.

Here are some examples of linking words and phrases:

I want to visit my sister in Ulundi. **However**, I have a funeral to go to over the weekend.

Mr Nkosi enjoys going to soccer matches. **He** supports Kaiser Chiefs.

Mrs Nkosi has a small business. **In addition** to that she looks after three children.

My first point is. . . . . My second point is

#### ACTIVITY



Write sentences using the following link words. These should be simple sentences you can use in a lesson.

Later, for example, but, in fact, as a result, until now



Linking words and phrases are also used from one paragraph to the next. For example:

An essay on health

After the introduction the first paragraph is on the state of health in the community.

End the paragraph with “**But** the most serious health hazard is waste **in the streets**”.

Begin the next paragraph with “**In the streets** around ..”

See how the words **but** and **in the streets** introduce the second paragraph.

Just as we have an introduction to a text, the sentence at the end of each paragraph should introduce the next paragraph.

In the next section we will look at the importance of monitoring and constructive feedback.

## 4 LEARNERS’ PROGRESS IS MONITORED AND CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK IS GIVEN AT TIMELY INTERVALS.

### *Case study*

Mrs Nkosi was very worried. She had been very busy lately with problems at home. She was making a dress for her daughter’s matric dance and it was taking a long time. Besides there was the normal cooking and cleaning. The vegetable gardening project she was managing was running into difficulties and she had to spend a lot of time sorting out the problems. Now she sat in the classroom looking at the latest work her ABET learners had done. They were not good. In fact they were very bad. She thought about it. It was true she hadn’t been able to give as much time as she would have liked to the class. In class she had sometimes been distracted, thinking about other things while the learners were working. But it had seemed to be going well. The learners remained enthusiastic and attentive in class. She may have been a little quick when marking their work but she had always written positive comments to encourage them even when the work was not very good. Well, she thought, something has got to change.

#### ACTIVITY



Suggest reasons why the learners’ results may have been very bad.



Even ABET educators have times when things are not going well because of other problems in their lives. Fortunately Mrs Nkosi is a conscientious educator and realised that she had to change. There were two things that had to change. She had to give more time to monitoring the learners’ work and she had to change the way she was giving feedback.

## 4.1 Monitoring

It is important to pay attention to the learners' work in the lessons and to check their progress. To do this an educator must:

- Be active when the learners are working, either when they are doing written work or when they are discussing work in groups. Walk around the classroom listening and helping.
- Give advice and help when it is needed.
- Check the learners' portfolios regularly and see whether they are making progress.

## 4.2 Constructive feedback

It is a good thing to be positive in your feedback to the learners. However, your feedback needs to be constructive. It is better not to use a red pen and put crosses all over the learners' work. Where possible, have the learner with you when you mark their work.

Constructive comments could include:

I can see you have worked hard. Now you need to pay attention to .....

I like your idea. If you change the sentence like this.....it will be more accurate.

I agree with what you say. It will make more sense if you change.....

In other words, try to say something positive about the work. Then point out the weaknesses.

If the work is very bad, work with learner individually to find out where the difficulty lies and let them do it again.

Sometimes learners are not confident enough to do their own work.

## 5 LEARNERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO PRODUCE TEXTS WHICH ACCURATELY REFLECT THEIR OWN PROCESSES AND METHODS INSTEAD OF COPYING FORM WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING.

### *Case study*

Mrs Nkosi was going through the learners' work one sunny afternoon. After a while she felt sleepy. She forced herself to stay awake and wondered why she was beginning to feel bored. Then she realised that all the learners' work was the same. Although it was correct on the whole, similar sentences and patterns appeared in each learner's work. Did they understand what they were writing? She wasn't sure. Too often they had asked about the correct way of doing or saying things.



## ACTIVITY



Most of the work was copied from the board and from textbooks. She decided she would have to find ways of giving them the confidence to find their own ways of doing things.

What methods could Mrs Nkosi use to build up the learners' confidence and ensure that they understand the lessons?



Some of the things Mrs Nkosi could do are:

- Encourage learners to write about their own experiences.
- Introduce controversial topics with which some of the learners will agree and others will not agree.
- Question learners on what they think about the subject discussed and affirm their ideas.
- Introduce them to different processes and encourage them to develop their own.

The traditional method of teaching, the teacher-centred method, was based on memory and not understanding. Learner-centred methods (OBE) are based on learners' experience and encourage understanding and creativity.

## 6 CONCLUSION

In this first section of the unit we considered different ways of helping learners to produce written texts and assignments. We looked at the purpose of learning, the structure of texts, monitoring learners' progress and encouraging learners to do their own work.

In the second section we will look at organising that work in files.

# Section 2: Accessing And Managing Information

## SPECIFIC OUTCOME 9:

Help learners to access and manage information.

### Assessment criteria:

Learners are shown how to store and retrieve documents from relevant filing systems.

The logic of filing systems used is explained to learners (eg alphabetical, chronological, by surname, code or reference number)

Learners are shown how to maintain an organised file of all relevant documents and texts.

## 1 LEARNERS ARE SHOWN HOW TO STORE AND RETRIEVE DOCUMENTS FROM RELEVANT FILING SYSTEMS.

If learners have computers (which most learners do not) documents can be stored on the computer but it is always wise to have a backup system.

For most learners documents will be stored in files and portfolios. The educator should have files, clearly labelled with the topic, which she can bring to class. These files could contain pamphlets, newspaper articles and notes on different topics. Put these files in an accessible place and show the learners how to use them and how to return them to the right place.

Learners could use this example to develop their own carefully labelled files. In the class learners should be able to find what is required immediately if the filing is correct.

### ACTIVITY



What sort of materials could you use for learners to make their own files if they cannot afford to buy files?



## 2 LOGIC OF FILING SYSTEMS USED IS EXPLAINED TO LEARNERS (EG ALPHABETICAL, CHRONOLOGICAL, BY SURNAME, CODE OR REFERENCE NUMBER)

### *Filing*

Once you have your information, whether it consists of notes from different sources or articles cut out of newspapers, it is important to keep it filed so that you can easily turn to any information you want. You don't want to waste time paging through scraps of paper and books to find what you are looking for.

### *Filing according to categories*

First you need to put everything you have on a certain topic together. You should have separate files for ABET, health, women, youth etc. If you cannot afford to buy files use folded cardboard to make files.

The trick is to label everything clearly.

### *Filing chronologically (according to date)*

Once you have your notes and other resources in categories you need to file each topic according to date. Write the date on your notes and make sure you have put the dates on any newspaper or magazine articles you have. This will enable you to make sure you have the most up-to-date material and will also help you when you come to use this information in your assignments.

## 3 LEARNERS ARE SHOWN HOW TO MAINTAIN AN ORGANISED FILE OF ALL RELEVANT DOCUMENTS AND TEXTS.

It is important for the educator to set an example. If you arrive in class and have to page through notes and files searching for something you appear disorganised and untidy.

Discuss with the learners what sort of filing system is most appropriate for their needs. Demonstrate with your own filing system.

## 4 CONCLUSION

Filing is important in learning. Not only does it make documents easily accessible but it also helps one organise one's life. If you are organised in what you do it is easier to organise your thoughts, say in writing an essay. Learning to file is therefore an important aspect of the education process.

## *FINALLY*

We have now come to the end of this module. We have taken a general look at different aspects of teaching. You will be able to add to the suggestions made and continue to learn new methods and develop your own methods.

As you continue your work we hope that your contribution to community empowerment through ABET will continue.

