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SABES

System for Adult Basic Education Support

Funded by the Massachusetts Department of Education

An Update on the ABE Curriculum Frameworks

BY JANE SCHWERDTFEGER

It's hard to believe 10 years have gone by since over 70 practitioners from the field, staff from Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS) and the System for Adult Basic Education Support (SABES) began developing curriculum frameworks for Massachusetts. The goal of having curriculum frameworks is the same now as it was then: to provide guidance to ABE programs for developing ABE curricula and instructional materials that are based in sound adult educational theory and rooted in the experience of practitioners and students. All involved, then and now, wanted to ensure that the frameworks' learning standards would be grounded in learner needs and aspirations. After a decade, we are finalizing our ABE frameworks, and we want to update you on that process.

How Did We Get Here?

The frameworks were the first response to a call from both national and state initiatives to improve literacy for adults and children: the National Literacy Act (1991), the Massachusetts Education Reform Act (1993), and the Workforce Investment Act (1998). By 1994, Massachusetts pre-K-12 teachers began work on frameworks for their students. By 1995, however, many ABE practitioners in our state felt that that adopting K-12 curriculum frameworks was not appropriate for adult education. A year later, 15 groups of ABE practitioners convened to answer the question, "What should adult learners know and be able to do as lifelong learners, parents, workers, and community members?" These committees worked in study groups to create the guiding principles and standards, tested them in their classrooms, and evaluated the results. In 1997, writers synthesized the recommendations for each area into a coherent whole.

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F O R E W O R D

From time to time, Field Notes offers an "open" issue. Without the structure of a theme, writers can submit articles on topics outside of a prescribed subject, and that's just what happened here.

Jane Schwerdtfeger from the Department of Education's Adult and Community Learning Services offers up-to-date information on the status of the curriculum frameworks. Dan O'Malley, a counselor at the Hampden County House of Correction, shares a shorter version of a paper for his doctoral degree on the No Child Left Behind Act and its effect on ABE teachers and students. Writing from her perspective as an education professor at Suffolk University where she teaches courses in instructional design, Barbara Ash suggests three ways ABE teachers can contribute to their profession. Joanne Mason reflects on her own language learning process and how that informs her classroom practice. Some of you may recognize Linda Werbner's name from previous issues of Field Notes. (Think Jack Kerouac in the writing issue. Linda sends a piece from Russia, where she examines the changing use of textbooks in the Russian classroom.

As always, we include a piece of student writing. Oggie Djizov, a student of Mary Ann Sliwa's from the Field Notes Advisory Board, contributes an article about his experiences in a career exploration mini-grant project. Another advisory board member, Ellen Bourne, interviewed Christine Taylor of the Framingham Adult ESL Program for this issue. The interview tells a story about the rise of a successful, multi-site program from its humble beginnings.

Finally, this open issue gave me a chance to write a review of a powerful publication and to interview its author, Peggy Rambach. Under the Sugar Palm Trees captures the personal narratives of Cambodian refugees in vivid detail and would make an excellent addition to any ABE/ESL resource library.

We always welcome your submissions. Check out the last page of each issue for upcoming topics and deadlines. If you have an idea for an article, please contact Lenore Balliro, editor, at <lballiro@worlded.org>.

And remember that back issues of Field Notes can be found online at <www.sabes.org>. You can also find submission guidelines and frequently asked questions about the submission process.

Apologies to Suzanne Speciale, whose name was spelled incorrectly in the last issue of *Field Notes* and whose article was left off of the Table of Contents page. Sorry Suzanne!

Field Notes Mission Statement and Editorial Policy

Mission

Field Notes is an adult basic education (ABE) quarterly, theme-based newsletter. It is designed to share innovative and reliable practices, resources, and information relating to ABE. We attempt to publish a range of voices about important educational issues, and we are especially interested in publishing new writers, writers of color, and writers who represent the full range of diversity of learners and practitioners in the field.

Field Notes is also a place to provide support and encouragement to new and experienced practitioners (ABE, ESOL, GED, ADP, Family Literacy, Correction, Workplace Education, and others) in the process of writing about their ideas and practice. Editorial support is always provided to any writer who requests it. Teachers, administrators, counselors, volunteers, and support staff are welcome to write for *Field Notes*.

Our Funder

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Our Editorial Policy

Unsolicited manuscripts to *Field Notes* are welcome. If you have an idea for an article or wish to submit a letter to the editor, contact Lenore Balliro, editor, by phone at 617-482-9485, by email at <lballiro@worlded.org>, or by mail at 44 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210. Submission deadlines for upcoming issues are published in each issue of *Field Notes*.

Opinions expressed in *Field Notes* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editor, SABES, or its funders. We do reserve the right to decline publication. We will not publish material that is sexist, homophobic, or otherwise discriminatory.

Our Reprint Policy

Articles published in *Field Notes* may be reprinted in any publication as long as they are credited to the author and *Field Notes*.

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An Interview With Christine Taylor of Framingham Adult ESL

By ELLEN BOURNE

From a part-time ESL teaching job that she took to earn Christmas money, Christine Taylor has built Framingham ESL PLUS (FAESL) into a 600 student, 500 waiting list omnibus program. The program, which includes family literacy, GED preparation, and citizenship, celebrated its 20th anniversary this spring. Here's how Taylor expanded the program from 30 students in a night program, which met in an unheated building, to a three-site program

EB: You started your teaching career as an elementary school teacher. How did you get involved teaching adults ESL?

CT: I originally answered an ad in the paper in December 1984. I was looking for part time work for Christmas shopping money. The ad was placed by a group of Town Meeting Members who saw a need for lowcost, centrally located English classes in Framingham. We didn't anticipate 30 students to register the first night! We thought there might be 10 or 12.

A lot of students that first year were from the prison release center. I had no idea exactly what students' backgrounds were.

Later we used space at the St. Stephens School where we had three classes, four hours a week. We taught without heat with mittens, hats, and coats on.

EB: Who were the other early financial supporters?

CT: About four years into the program, we got a small state employment and training grant. Around 1990 we started getting

money from the DOE, who is still our largest funder.

EB: You started with night classes. When did you add the day component to the program?

CT: I was teaching full time in the public schools, so the first three years the morning program was a separate program. We ran it at a loss for a couple of years until people found out about it by word of mouth.



Director Christine Taylor and counselor Frank Lockwood distribute cake at the 20th Anniversary Celebration of Framingham Adult ESL Plus last March.

EB: As your enrollment grew from 30 students to over 600, what changes occurred?

CT: We kept adding components: babysitting, citizenship, GED. A former student, Fernando Castro, a citizen, said he'd like to fund our citizenship program.

EB: You eventually made the leap from working full time as an elementary school ESL teacher (plus part time adult ESL teaching) to full time director of the FAESL program. Was that a scary jump?

CT: Yes, that was a tough leap. When we finally found a way to fund my position just for the adult program, I could say "This is my job, it is a viable program, and it's going to keep going." Doing it part time was the really tough part.

A few years ago I reluctantly quit teaching in the program. I miss teaching, though. If I didn't have to sleep, I would teach!

EB: Six years ago you hired a curriculum and staff development specialist and an assessment specialist. Why?

CT: The state really has a lot of requirements...teacher preparation time, assessment hours, curriculum hours, and placement hours. If you try to put all those hours on a part time teacher, it's impossible. So we took a lot of those hours and put them into those two positions. We especially needed someone to help us with implementing assessment requirements.

EB: Tell us about the student population. How has it changed over the years?

CT: We have 32 countries represented in the program right now and 14 languages over all. The Brazilian population started increasing about eight years ago. Before that the population was predominantly Hispanic. I remember one year that we had more Chinese students than any other nationality. We translated all our materials to Chinese that year. We focused on them, we went out to speak to the Chinese churches and the Chinese restaurants. If you focus your recruitment effort, the people are there.

EB: You have an extensive list of volunteers. How did you recruit them and how do you use them?

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An Interview...

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CT: We've had a lot of good publicity through the newspaper that was generated partially because originally our registrations were first come, first serve. Now the student population is determined by a semiannual lottery. People were actually sleeping out at night in front of the Fuller Middle School so they could get a spot. People would read about this and they'd start calling and ask what they could do to help. With some seed money from the Junior League of Boston we developed conversation group leader guides that we use today. A number of our volunteers are former students who wanted to stay connected with our community. Many of them help with the lotteries, which we have in the fall and the winter when 600 students show up for 60-70 slots.

EB: In your opinion, what are the key components of a successful program?

CT: 1) Make things easy for teachers. For example, we developed a form for teachers that has the students' names and the total number of hours possible written at the top of each month. Teachers just subtract the number of absences. We put all necessary forms in a large green notebook for each teacher, so instead of trying to collect information from teachers

every third night, everything is now together in the green notebook. Now our teachers, who are traveling and have no desk to put things in have everything in one place.

2) Give teachers time to teach. In a part time program you can't start eating up teaching time with too many (nonteaching) tasks.

We hired a permanent substitute/tester in the morning and in the evening. It gives us flexibility: if someone calls at the last minute, we have a sub already. And if we don't need a sub we always have other program needs.

3) Give every student a book. Every student in our program gets a book each semester. We try to see that teachers select the text they feel works with the curriculum. I never tell a teacher what to teach from.

EB: What remains a challenge?

CT: The hardest thing is not having our own space. If we did, teachers would have a place to keep things in a central location. Students could drop in, use computers, and borrow books from a lending library.

Another big challenge is outside fundraising. When I ask for funding, I ask for the things that DOE is requiring such as counseling, two to one prep time, registration time, and noninstruction time. But then a lot of times outside funders say, "I want to give you money for X or Y only," But the community

has always stepped up whenever we've needed anything.

Experiencing these things contributes to effective management. The danger as a program gets larger is that you stop seeing students as individuals. Administrators should still chat with students in the halls and get into every class at least once a semester to introduce themselves and ask how things are going. You also need to tap into your business community. We were very fortunate to have Middlesex Savings Bank and other businesses do fundraising with us.

EB: What is your advice for new programs?

CT: I think it's hugely important for directors to be connected to the classroom. If, as a director, your background isn't in teaching, you need to get in and actually teach a class, because you need to sense the needs of the students and what the teachers are experiencing. You need to experience the very basic things: where the materials and the copy machine are and how easy they are to access, and what to do when students come in late.

EB: What are you proudest of? What are you proudest of?

CT: Students taking initiative. For example, students held a dance and got the Brazilian American Association (BRAMAS) to sponsor it. Students set up, hired a band, and sold tickets. From the proceeds of the dance, BRAMAS will make a donation to our program to support additional classes.

We're seeing students moving into positions of authority. We just had our first student elected to town meeting. To see the students begin to move out and be able to express what has been inside them all these years is tremendous.

Ellen P. Bourne teaches citizenship in the Framingham Adult ESL Plus program. She can be reached at <ellenbourne@hotmail.com>.

Field Notes Needs New Advisory Board Members for 2005-2006

- Meet twice a year (fall, spring) at location fair to all participants.
- Offer feedback and suggestions on current and future issues of *Field Notes*.
- Help recruit writers or write an article yourself.
- Receive a stipend of \$150.00 per meeting.
- To apply, please send an email with the following information: name, address, phone, email, position, program and a brief explanation of why you would like to serve on the advisory board to editor Lenore Balliro at <lballiro@worlded.org>.

Frameworks...

Continued from page 1

These drafts became the foundation upon which the field could build consensus. Additional adult educators reviewed and commented on the drafts, and second drafts were redistributed to the field for response. Despite staff turnovers at ACLS, work on the frameworks moved forward; six of the seven frameworks were edited for consistency and format in 2001/2002. Since then, practitioners, ACLS, and SABES staff have continued to move the frameworks forward to finalization.

During this period of development and refinement of the frameworks, ACLS encouraged programs to use the drafts. Between 1997 and 2002, practitioners developed curriculum or aligned their program's curriculum to the frameworks, and ACLS disbursed \$3.5 million through professional development grants to support the work. Staff from programs, SABES, and ACLS offered countless workshops at conferences on using the frameworks. Perhaps you've attended the well-received "Curriculum 101" workshop currently offered by the SABES curriculum and assessment coordinators.

Despite—or perhaps because of—this long history, some practitioners know a great deal about, and regularly use the frameworks while others know very little about them. The frameworks' long-term unfinished status has left some practitioners wondering what to do. ACLS is working diligently with practitioners to finish the frameworks this summer.

Where Are We Now?

All frameworks will be finalized in a similar format, so they can be used together and integrated more easily. Here's a brief update:

The Common Chapters section for the curriculum frameworks has

changed little, and is an excellent resource with which to begin your frameworks exploration. This section briefly outlines the rationale behind using frameworks and explores the importance of habits of mind in strengthening lifelong learning skills.

Since the English Language Arts (ELA), Math, and ESOL frameworks (grouped together because of the

the strands and standards, adding benchmarks, developing proficiency levels, updating the resource section, and reorganizing the format.

The Math framework has changed little; a committee of five practitioners, most of whom were the original framework developers are finalizing it, and the final draft is projected to be finished

"What should adult learners know and be able to do as lifelong learners, parents, workers, and community members?"

essential skills they teach) are aligned with many of the primary goals learners have, their learning standards have been made more measurable.

The ELA framework will have six proficiency levels, and the Math and ESOL frameworks each have six proficiency levels, so one can more easily determine when learners make progress. These levels, intended to be useful for both new and experienced teachers, also provide common guidelines for interpreting learners' skill levels for both informal classroom and standardized assessment.

The ELA framework was revised to finalize the standards and decrease the number of proficiency levels. The framework was submitted to the Massachusetts ABE field via the ACLS Web site in May, and some of the feedback was incorporated into the final version.

A committee of eight practitioners (two from each region) began revising the ESOL framework in the fall of 2004, and the final draft is projected to be finished this summer (2005). These practitioners revised the framework by finalizing

this summer (2005). The History and Social Sciences and the Health frameworks have not changed since the 2001 edits. No specific deadline is available for final versions.

The Science, Technology, and Engineering framework will have new material integrated from the Massachusetts ABE Science team. No specific deadline is available for final versions.

Our goal is to align our curriculum, instruction, and assessment processes. The new ABE tests for Reading and Math were built on the Math and ELA (Reading) standards. If the standards outline what students should know and be able to do, then our goal is to have programs' curricula inform their instruction, and instruction aligned with the new tests. When all three are aligned, then the tests will be better able to capture literacy gains. These tests will replace our use of the TABE in 2006.

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Frameworks...

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What's Left to Do?

The priority of ACLS is to finalize the ELA, Math, and ESOL frameworks. ACLS will ask for the field's feedback on the final drafts of these documents by submitting the drafts on our Web site and requesting that feedback be sent to ACLS. Then the final versions will be sent to Commissioner of Education David Driscoll and the Board of Education for approval. Next in priority is finalizing the Science framework, and then the History and Social Sciences and Health frameworks, which will go through the same process.

Once Finalized, Are the Frameworks "Set in Stone"?

After the Commissioner and Board approve them, our goal is to give programs, staff, and students a chance to use the frameworks for a designated period of time without revision. During this time, ACLS will provide a mechanism for practitioners to give feedback. In the future, ACLS staff, working with practitioners, will consider and use the feedback received to update the frameworks.

As we all know, it is not an easy task to reach consensus or complete standards or frameworks; many states are only now embark-

ing on developing their own learning standards. Most important, the frameworks represent not what ACLS or SABES thinks, but rather the combined skills of over 70 practitioners—what they think is effective practice based on many years of teaching experience. As a frame and a guide to practitioners' and learners' goals for their classroom teaching, the frameworks really can make teachers' and programs' work easier.

Kudos to all the practitioners, education experts, program administrators, business, labor, and community service workers, and adult learners who have helped to bring the frameworks this far over the past ten years.

Find the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks on the Massachusetts Department of Education Web site at **<www.doe.mass.edu/acls/frameworks/>**.

You can also request hard copies through ACLS: contact Jane Schwerdtfeger at [<janes@doe.mass.edu>](mailto:janes@doe.mass.edu) for details.

Jane Schwerdtfeger is the curriculum and assessment development specialist at ACLS. She can be reached at [<janes@doe.mass.edu>](mailto:janes@doe.mass.edu).

Listservs: Who, What, How, and Why?

A listserv, sometimes called an electronic list, is an easy way to keep up on the most recent issues in the field or to have online discussions with people who have similar interests. You usually have to subscribe to a listserv, but it's easy. First time subscribers might want to check out the following national listservs. Your regional SABES center will have information about lists serving your region.

National Institute for Literacy (NIFL): Online Discussion Lists

<http://www.nifl.gov/lincs/discussions/discussions.html>

NIFL currently sponsors 13 listservs, covering assessment, ESOL, LD, technology, women in literacy and sundry other topics. To view archived messages and/or to subscribe to any of these listservs, visit the Web address above.

AAACE-NLA: National Literacy Advocacy

<http://lists.literacytent.org/mailman/listinfo/aaace-nla>

The goal of this list is to keep advocates informed about critical legislative and public policy issues so that timely, coordinated policy actions are possible. It also serves as a forum for discussion of these issues. The list is sponsored by the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education. To subscribe, go to the Web address above, scroll down the page and follow the instructions and you will be subscribed.

TESL-L: A list for ESL teachers worldwide

To subscribe, send an email message to [<LISTSERV@CUNYVM.CUNY.EDU>](mailto:LISTSERV@CUNYVM.CUNY.EDU).

Leave the subject line blank. In the body of the message, type:

SUB TESL-L Yourfirstname Yourlastname

Example: SUB TESL-L Lucinda Neves

Letter From Russia

A Change of Attitude: Textbooks in the Russian EFL Classroom

BY LINDA WERBNER

Editor's Note: Linda Werbner, a former ABE teacher based in Lynn, MA, is working as a teacher trainer in Russia.

There was a time in the not-so-distant Soviet past when it was boasted that on any given day, school children from Moscow to Vladivostok would be working out of the same textbook, on the same page. Certainly a staggering and dubious achievement of synchronized pedagogy!

Whether this is merely a Soviet urban myth or fact, it's impossible to know now. What's certain, however, is that such a feat would have been a point of pride and how this strange little *anekdotii* illustrates the once near-mythical importance of the textbook in Russian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. Mind you, I wrote *once*.

In the new Russia, the textbook still has a respected place in the language classroom, especially in public schools. But there is a new breed of teacher, particularly in higher and adult language education, who relies more on her own personal resource pack than a standard, one-size-fits-all textbook, like many American ABE/ESL teachers.

State of Teaching in Russia: Some Background

As a Senior English language fellow (yes, I'm an ELF!) for Northwestern Russia with the US Department of State I am in constant contact with teachers—both green and seasoned, from elementary schools and technical colleges all the way up to the elite St. Petersburg State University (President Vladimir Putin's alma mater), from

the provincial hinterlands to the twin metropoli of Moscow and St. Petersburg. I am privy to their classrooms, lesson plans, and the sobering socioeconomic challenges that Russian teachers face. I see how they somehow manage to make ends meet (by interpreting, translating, and giving lots and lots of private



lessons) with their salary that rarely jumps to the double digits.

I am also familiar with the monumental changes teachers face as the Ministry of Education begins to implement a massive high-stakes testing program—the Unified General Exam or “YeGE”—in the thousands of schools throughout this, the largest country on the planet. This exam—which has echoes of the SAT in that it will be a tool to determine entrance to university—will have a dramatic impact on the way teach-

ers teach and the materials they use. The YeGE is an attempt to standardize the curriculum and raise the standards—in a sense, to ensure that “no child will be left behind” in Russian schools. For public school teachers, it will result in a stronger allegiance to the textbook and, unfortunately, a tendency to “teach to the test.” Sound familiar? For the most part, higher education will be blissfully exempt from the YeGE furor.

Over 10 years after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the tidal wave of change that perestroika and glasnost ushered in—some of it good and much of it not so good—I was curious to see if the textbook was still a touchstone for Russian language teachers. I asked several movers and shakers in the English language teaching community here in St. Petersburg—one of Russia's largest student towns—their thoughts on teaching without the book. Here are their varied responses and musings on teaching without the textbook.

Necessity of Teacher-Made Materials

Tatiana Kholostova, an innovative and tireless veteran teacher at one of the city's most esteemed lycees (like a very specialized, post-high school college) teaches ESP (English for Special Purposes) for students in the travel and tourism and hospitality

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Letter From Russia

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courses, many of whom are already working at the city's best hotels like the Europa and the Radisson. They need to know English to help people make reservations and arrange conferences and respond to questions and complaints.

Kholostova is working with a group of students in the food service sector and one of the most important tasks—indeed, one that they are tested on—is to recite the ingredients—in English—for a cocktail, she says with a laugh. There are very few Russian-authored textbooks out there for this sort of thing, she acknowledges. As a result, she generates her own materials and over the years, has compiled her own de facto “textbook” replete with menus, plane tickets, and hotel receipts from her travels, lists of practical vocabulary words (i.e., different types of plates and silverware) as well as grammar exercises, dialogues and role plays. Kholostova admits she supplements her homemade textbook with select excerpts from a Heinemann ESP textbook for the hospitality industry. “Someday I plan to write my own textbook,” she says, between classes. Like most Russian teachers, she teaches from the early morning to the evening, “That is, if I can find the time.”

Triumph of DIY

Creative and enterprising teachers like Kholostova are quite common in Russia, I have found. They relish the task of creating their own materials and some have even gone so far as to self-publish their homemade, photocopied textbooks. Not surprisingly, students prefer teacher-made textbooks to glossy and expensive books published abroad, according to a baseline study report conducted last year by the Russian Ministry of Education and the British Council.

The survey, covering 5,000 respondents and over 100 institutions of higher learning throughout Russia, revealed that over 90 percent of students find teacher's personal resource packs more effective and motivating to course books published in Russia or abroad

These days, the Russian EFL market is glutted with textbooks—Russian, British and American, primarily—and teachers have a much richer choice. At professional development workshops and TEFL conferences representatives from book publishing companies are a common sight and they will bend any available ear to wax excitedly about the merits of their textbooks.

Textbooks and Teacher Training: I Pledge No Allegiance

In my work at the teacher recertification academy, where I conduct methodology workshops for English teachers who are brushing up on their skills, I claim no allegiance to any particular textbook. Of course, there are certain ones that I borrow from more than others (i.e., Diane Larsen-Freedman, Penny Ur, Martin Parrott) but I am more or less a “free agent.”

The fact is, there simply aren't any textbooks out there—or maybe I haven't found them yet—that suit each and every group I work with. For example, on Mondays I have highly-experienced teachers who expressed interest in learning innovative ways to teach TOEFL, modern American literature, cross-cultural communication, and Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences.

While my Thursday groups are wildly mixed, with former librarians, engineers, and even physicists who became teachers after they were “down-sized” or simply wanted a career change. These teachers have received only perfunctory training in education and haven't had any student teaching experi-

ence. It should be reiterated that teachers in Russia receive a shamelessly small salary (about \$75 a month) one that makes it nearly impossible to live on. For this reason, there has been a mass exodus of people from the profession and schools are scrambling to fill the open slots. Classes are large and often staffed with ill-prepared and inexperienced teachers who often don't last the month.

My workshops and seminars run the gamut from straight methodology, grammatical and lexical work, to country studies (basically, information about the geography, history, and culture of cities and towns) and modern American literature to simple language practice. We also talk about issues like discipline, how to get learners to work in groups and cooperatively, as well as autonomously, with wild digressions into topics like American imperialism, politics, the lyrics of a Bob Marley song, a line from a poem by Mandelstam about how to live with an oppressive government, the drug problem that is raging in Russian (and American) schools. Now, if anyone knows of a trainer's textbook out there that encompasses all of these topics and issues, please let me know.

As you can see, the textbook has not gone the way of the dodo in Russian EFL classrooms; its role has changed, merely. It now plays second fiddle to the teacher-created resource pack. In this Russian revolution, it is the gentle and creative hand of the teacher that is quietly making history.

Linda Werbner, formerly based in Lynn, MA, sends this piece from northwestern Russia. She can be reached at <lwerbner@hotmail.com>.

Learning Spanish, Teaching English: Transferable Insights

BY JOANNE MASON

The man turned around in his seat and asked me, “*Hablas Español?*” I was full of regret, as I used to speak Spanish reasonably well. But that was years ago and now I was faced with this kind soul who was on the wrong train, heading to a city nowhere near where he needed to be. We tried to converse in our rudimentary English and Spanish, but I could not make it clear to him that he needed to get off the train, reverse his direction, and start again. Fortunately, another Spanish speaker overheard our dilemma and translated. That moment was an epiphany—I need to brush up on my Spanish!

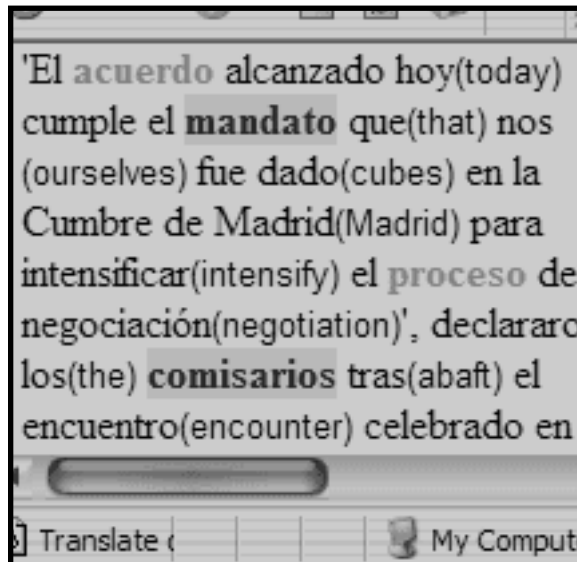
I studied Spanish for five years as a teenager and took to it immediately. I loved the sound of it and the challenge of the grammar. My friends and I often incorporated Spanish into our conversations, just for fun.

Wanting to explore something new, I took German in college. Aside from briefly dating a guy who was a fluent Spanish speaker, my Spanish started to fall apart. I always intended to get it back, but until recently, I hadn’t made a concerted effort.

Now I’m trying. It’s challenging fitting language study into a full life of work and family responsibilities. As I have researched classes and materials and tried to practice, I have a greater understanding and respect for the adult ESOL students I have known over the years.

Of course, I cannot claim my experiences in learning Spanish to be the same as my students’ learning

English. The two are not nearly the same. My survival in this region does not depend on my learning Spanish. I am not adjusting to a new culture, alphabet, or sound system. I do not need to worry so much about communicating with a child’s school or making an effective complaint to my landlord. I am not



working additional jobs to make ends meet, like so many of my students did. I don’t have children to care for. Still, there are similarities worth examining. It’s no easy task being an adult language learner.

Formal Study

When I get home from work at the end of a long day, it’s tempting just to relax in the confines of my native language. It’s sometimes a struggle to find the energy to get out workbooks and tapes or try reading passages. I think of a Chinese woman I once tutored, who worked 11-hour days, 7 days a week, and still managed to study. She’s an inspiration! Unfortunately, my

energy level doesn’t nearly compare, but I’m working on it.

Like many adult students, I have had some difficulty scheduling classes around my work hours and other commitments. When I did find a class, the results were disappointing. The teacher assumed we knew certain features of Spanish, but when we didn’t, she did not provide much supplemental explanation. She asked us open-ended questions, but then told us what to say without giving us any opportunity for creativity or experimentation. I dropped the class after a few weeks, empathizing with some ESOL students who didn’t click with their classes. Finding the right class and the right teacher takes time and while I know both are out there, I haven’t had a chance to try again.

Since then, I’ve been using the study-at-home method. Like many students, I have software and workbooks full of vocabulary lists, dialogues, fill-in-the-blank exercises, and matching activities. I know that these might not necessarily be the best tools, but I use them anyway, hoping that the few words or grammar points I studied over grapefruit in the morning will still be there at night. If I get sidetracked or busy for a few weeks, I’ll need to review again and again to get back up to speed.

Language in Action

My “workbooking” will only take me so far. I need to use

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Learning Spanish...

Continued from page 9

Spanish regularly, in a real context, and discover its nuances. I eavesdrop on the subway, concentrating to catch a word or two, wondering what particular variety I'm hearing and how many slang expressions are mixed in. I try watching Spanish-language television. Like my students who have watched American TV, I am struck by how overwhelming the rapid speech can be. I can sometimes get through the news if there are accompanying visual cues. I've also watched the movie *Airplane!* in Spanish. I better understand the importance of context—knowing how a newscast works or the background of a classic comedy made it easier for me to comprehend the language.

My attempts at producing Spanish are influenced by emotional factors. When I feel more confident, I hope to find a Spanish conversation group. Until then, my

opportunities to speak are limited. My Spanish comes out slowly and deliberately, even though I know I should just let it fly. I feel shy about

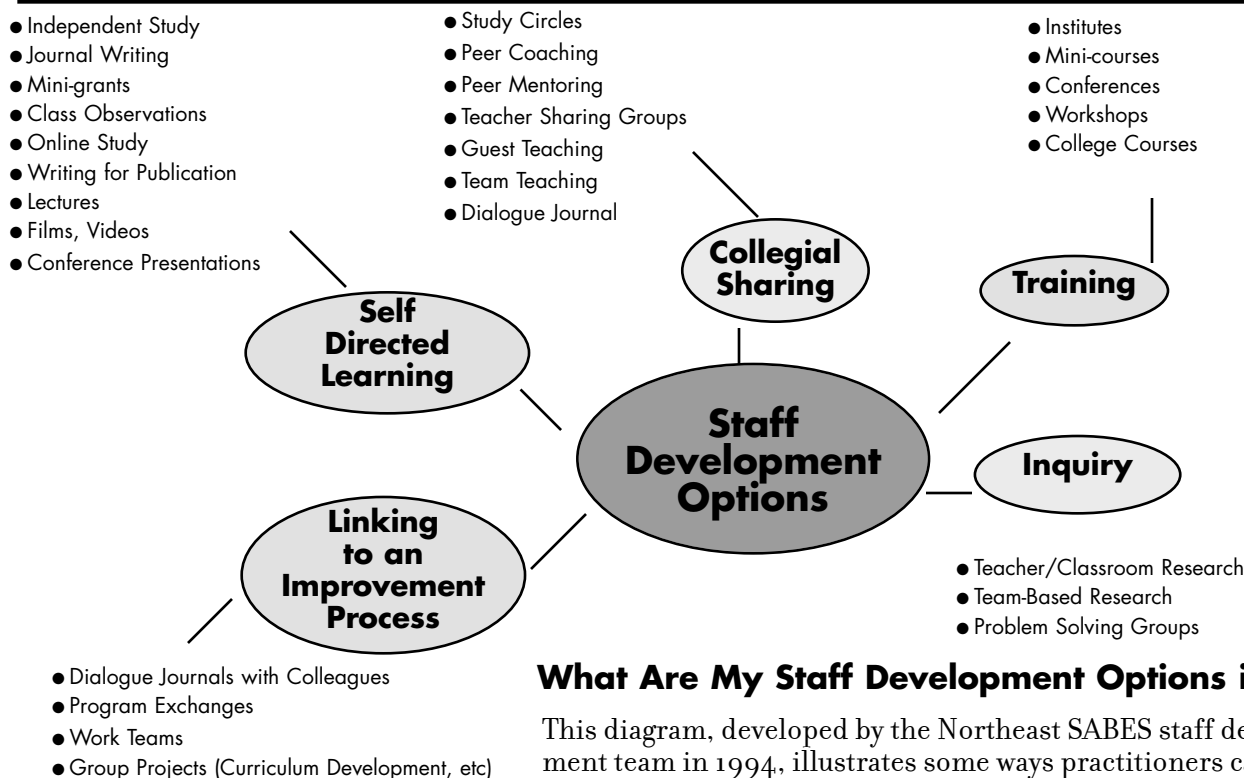
It seems simplistic, but my understanding of what adult students experience in learning a new language has increased a hundred-

What was the gender of that noun? Do I use ser or estar to express that?

making mistakes and nervous about being misunderstood as I quickly try to conjugate verbs in my head or search for vocabulary. What was the gender of that noun? Do I use *ser* or *estar* to express that? Should that sentence be in the preterit or imperfect? I'll never get the accent right. And this is just in practice! I feel apologetic about my "bad Spanish," echoing what I've heard some students say about their English. I'm reminded how anxiety could affect them as they struggle with the activities of day-to-day living with a new language.

fold. I appreciate more the necessity of patience with students, of giving them as much time as possible and as many ways as possible to make things stick and of accommodating their learning styles. And while I knew all this before, I know it better now. It has been reinforced. It's one thing to know all this in theory; quite another to go through the experience yourself.

Joanne Mason is a volunteer for the Eastern Massachusetts Literacy Council. She can be reached at <jmason88@msn.com>.



What Are My Staff Development Options in ABE?

This diagram, developed by the Northeast SABES staff development team in 1994, illustrates some ways practitioners can engage in staff development activities.

Under the Sugar Palm Trees: Memoirs of Cambodian Refugees Living in Lawrence, Massachusetts

EDITED BY PEGGY RAMBACH, TRANSLATED BY NIKKI TOEUR
STORIES BY BAN SAT, METH CHANG, DUCH OUK, HENG SOK, SOPHEAP YIN, BO TOEUR,
KRY VHEAN, SENG YIN, PHAY SEANG, AND NHEK BUT
REVIEW BY LENORE BALLIRO



Sister Elana Killilea, Director of the Asian Center of Merrimack Valley in Lawrence, knew the power of stories for healing. She envisioned a project where home-bound seniors in the Cambodian community could come together and share their stories with each other—and ultimately the wider community—through a series of memoir workshops resulting in a publication.

When Sister Elana met Peggy Rambach, a writer who has taught writing workshops in many non-traditional settings, her vision came to life. With the assistance of translator Nikki Toeur, an outreach worker at the center, Peggy worked with a group of Cambodians from age 30–70+, for two hours, twice a week, for six weeks. She gently coaxed the specifics of their stories and recorded them in translation. The

project resulted in the first of three publications about Southeast Asians through the Center: *Under the Sugar Palm Trees*.*

Peggy's reflection on the process of collecting the memoirs was as interesting to me as the powerful final product. As a writing instructor, she drew from a repertoire of

strategies she uses in any workshop to encourage the concrete, sensory images that make stories compelling.

For example, in asking the participants to recall the games of their childhoods, instead of their childhoods in general, Peggy provided a narrowed focus that allowed for an engaging starting point. Participants were already very willing to tell their stories because they wanted to share them with their children, and they could tell them in Khmer, which allowed for fuller expression. As participants talked, Peggy asked guiding questions to encourage specificity: What color was the blanket on your bed? What did the bags of rice look like? What did your house smell like? In reading the memoirs, we appreciate the complex texture of the everyday lives that result, in part, because of these details.

In the introduction of the collection, Peggy discusses the title: "I also asked the participants to describe the landscape, and many of them mentioned the sugar palm tree. Its fronds provided shelter, and the sugar made from the nectar sealed marriages, and in trade, staved off starvation. It rose, a constant on the Cambodian landscape, no matter what happened beneath it." Peggy explained how she spent 30 minutes one session carefully recording the process of extracting the nectar from a sugar palm tree.

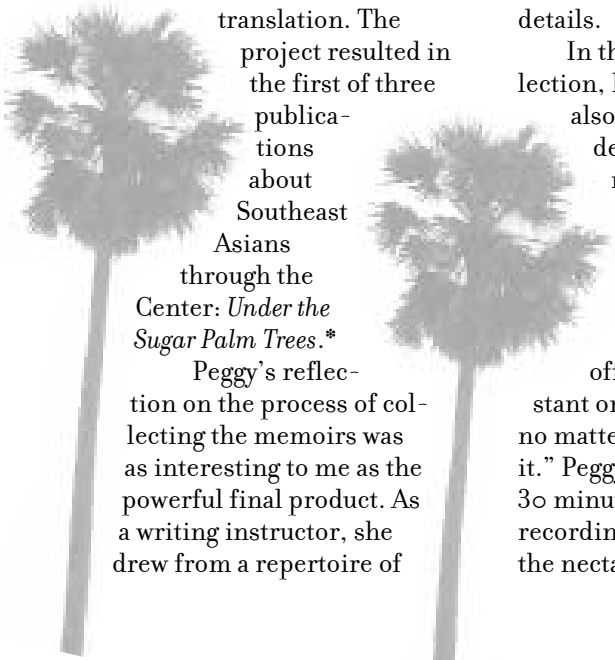
Peggy admitted that it was often a challenge to draw from such intense content: trauma, war, escape, resettlement. She noted that her role was not a therapist; in remaining detached from the emotion, she could better capture the sequence and details of the stories more accurately, thus serving and honoring the participants' need to tell their histories in the most powerful way possible.

Peggy edited the stories "for fluidity, without losing the storyteller's voice." This part was hard at times. Some of the participants were from tiny villages, difficult to find and name accurately. Peggy was lucky to get the assistance of an ESOL teacher, Elaine McKinnon, who helped look up history and provided context. She also drew from Bruce Sharp's *A Short History of Cambodia*. Friends designed the book, and the Asian Center had it published through a press in Maine.

As a finale to the first part of the project, participants did a reading of their work, a moving experience for them and their families, some of whom heard the stories of their parents for the first time.

To help orient the reader, *Under the Sugar Palm Trees* opens with a map of Cambodia and is followed by several pages of

Continued on page 12



Under the Sugar Palm...

Continued from page 11

Sharp's *Recent History of Cambodia*. The history helps us understand the role of Cambodia in the Vietnam War and explains the vicissitudes of an often-corrupt government. The stories that follow form the heart of the book. These are tales of extreme loss and longing, escape and anguish, hunger and exhaustion. Some of the stories recount repeated separations and reconnections with family; others paint small interiors: still lifes with bags of rice and mosquito nets.

We learn about the scent of roach urine that permeated village huts and could sting the skin; of savage mutilations performed by the Khmer Rouge. The most difficult for me were stories of women who lost their children—from kidnapping, death, or separation during escape.

Despite the horrors, there are a few places in the narratives where the celebratory spirit and humor of the participants shines through. Seng Yin tells of her marriage to Kry Nhean: "The celebration went

on for two days and one night, and people danced the whole time."

As I was reading these narratives, I could hear the voices of my Cambodian students in Providence, the women who trusted me with their stories and allowed me insight into their journeys. I was also transported back to a brief journey through Southeast Asia. One event in particular came to mind: after visiting the site of a former detention center in Phnom Penh run by the Khmer Rouge, a museum with graphic depictions of death and torture, I stepped out into the sunshine to witness a long line of Cambodians across the street, dressed in finery and bearing plate after plate of food and gifts. They were celebrating a marriage, and the wedding ritual filled the area with promise and hope.

At the end of the collection, Peggy includes a helpful glossary. She also adds descriptions of the games participants played in childhood. This light touch softens the book with its humor and teasing. "Ban also remembered a game after Bo and Duch demonstrated theirs. And when she mentioned it, everyone else remembered it too. It's

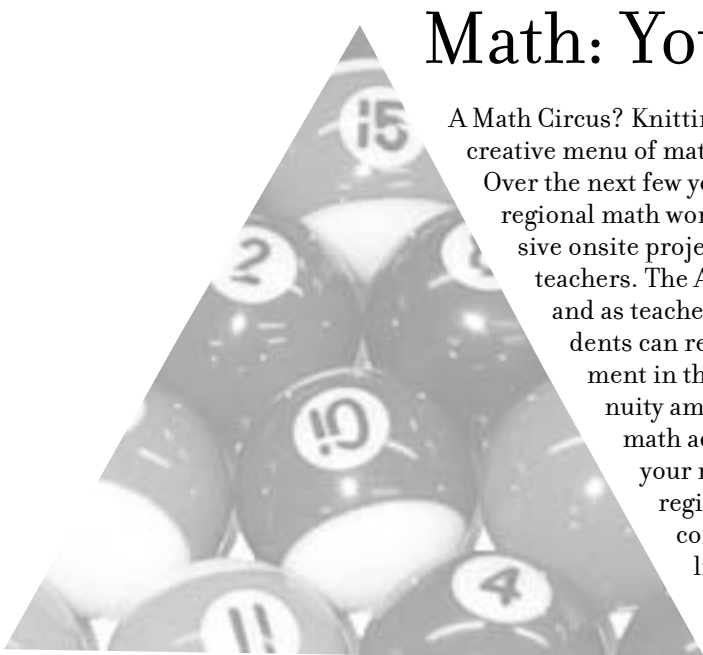
called "Fighting the Fire" or "Wy Gol Gol Pung." "Girls play it," Ban said, "with a small fire. Boys play it with a big fire because they like to show off."

I highly recommend this book as captivating and enlightening reading, especially for teachers working with Cambodian students. It offers an approachable historical summary and it touches the heart.

Lenore Balliro is the editor of Field Notes. She can be reached at <lballiro@worlded.org>

*Other titles published by the Asian Center include: *Means of Escape: Memoirs of Vietnamese Immigrants and Refugees Living in the Merrimack Valley of Massachusetts* and *A Name Like Me: Essays and Poems by Vietnamese and Cambodian Teenagers Living in Lawrence, Massachusetts*. To learn more about these titles or to order them, please go to <www.asiancentermv.org/Publications.htm>

Math: You Gotta Love It



A Math Circus? Knitting and Math? Math for the Non-Math Teacher? Watch for a creative menu of math workshops and events as the SABES math initiative unfolds. Over the next few years, in collaboration with TERC, SABES will be offering regional math workshops and minicourses, events and publications, and intensive onsite projects, all with an eye toward making math more accessible to teachers. The ABE math frameworks will take center stage in this initiative, and as teachers gain greater ease and confidence in approaching math, students can reap the benefits. With a new Massachusetts ABE math assessment in the works, the math initiative can help teachers plan for a continuity among assessment, instruction, and content. Watch for rollicking math activities at the Network 2005 conference, and stay tuned to your regional SABES resource centers for upcoming events in your region. If you want to join the initiative in a sustained way, please contact Lenore Balliro, math initiative coordinator, at <lballiro@worlded.org> or your regional SABES office.

No Child Left Behind: Implications for ABE Programs

BY DANIEL E. O'MALLEY

Many of us have heard about the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), a reauthorization of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act, but as adult educators, we may not have thought about its relevance to our work and our students' lives. However, an understanding of this complex act can indeed help us in our teaching by supporting students in becoming more aware of their rights as parents with school aged kids. Further, because the act has provisions for Even Start programs and provides a formal policy definition of "reading," and because it contains stipulations for teacher preparation and certification, it holds additional implications for adult literacy educators.

The stated purpose of the No Child Left Behind Act is as follows:

The purpose of this title is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high quality education and reach, at minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments.

Almost all public schools fall under the ambit of NCLB. The overall objectives of NCLB are to teach all children to be proficient in reading, math, and science by 2014. To ensure that schools are meeting the requirements of NCLB, all schools and all school districts must set annual progress targets called "adequate yearly progress," where 95 percent of students are tested to determine whether the students have achieved academic progress.

Highly Qualified Teachers

An integral part of NCLB is the new definition of what constitutes a "highly qualified teacher." Throughout the legislation, reference to "highly qualified teachers" appears with frequency. The minimum educational requirements to become a



Photo source unknown

highly qualified teacher are as follows:

- Be certified by your state.
- Pass your state's teacher examination.
- Have a bachelor's degree with training in your subject area.
- Hold a license to teach in your state.

NCLB requires highly qualified teachers in all Title 1 classrooms by the end of 2005-2006 school year.

The highly qualified teacher requirements apply to elementary, middle, and high school teachers who teach core subjects. Core subjects include "English, reading, language arts, mathematics, science, foreign language, civics and government economics, arts, history and geography." Teaching in more than one core subject area requires competence in each specific core subject.

Many schools have granted emergency or provisional waivers for teachers, especially if the teacher holds expertise or demonstrates that certification procedures have been initiated. However, under NCLB, teachers can no longer work under a provisional status.

Newly Hired and Veteran Teachers: Differences

The act does distinguish between newly hired and veteran teachers. Newly hired elementary school teachers must have a bachelor's degree and have passed a state test demonstrating knowledge in reading, writing, and mathematics. In middle or high school, a newly-hired teacher must also have a bachelor's degree, have majored in or have an advanced degree in the core subject taught, and have passed a test in the academic area taught. For veteran teachers, it appears that they must meet the requirements of a highly qualified teacher prior to the end of the 2005-2006 school year.

"Reading First"

The cornerstone of NCLB is teaching children to read using "scientifically based reading research" and using "diagnostic reading assessments." (More about these two areas later in the article.) The act further provides funds for early reading for preschool children and for parents

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No Child Left Behind...

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under Even Start Family Literacy Programs. For preschool children, NCLB identifies preschool language skills that must include the following:

- recognizing letters of the alphabet;
- knowing letter sounds, sounds blends, using increasingly complex vocabulary;
- knowing that written language is comprised of phonemes and letters, syllables, words and sentences;
- having a level of spoken language, vocabulary, and oral comprehension; and
- knowing the purpose and conventions of print.

Under the Even Start program, funds are provided to help parents help their children by teaching the parents to read, and by providing support services such as testing and counseling. If a program receives "Even Start" funds, the law mandates an "independent evaluation of the program." Some independent evaluators may not consider whole language based on "scientifically based research".

Legally Sanctioned Definition of Reading

NCLB provides a legally sanctioned definition of reading. Reading is now defined as "a complex system of deriving meaning from print" that requires all of the following:

- the skills and knowledge to understand how phonemes, or speech sounds, are connected to print;
- the ability to decode unfamiliar words;
- the ability to read fluently;
- sufficient background information and vocabulary to foster reading comprehension;
- the development of appropriate active strategies to construct meaning from print; and

- the development and maintenance of a motivation to read.

The statute also lists what is considered to be the "five essential components" of reading:

- phonemic awareness;
- phonics;
- vocabulary development;
- reading fluency, including oral reading skills; and
- reading comprehension strategies.

Strikingly absent from the list of essential components is any mention of reading within or for "context," or the premise that "context" is a critical component of reading comprehension. It would appear that any reading program that did not incorporate the "five essential components" of reading into their reading programs would be in violation of NCLB.

Scientifically Based Reading Research

The act also mandates how students are to be measured using diagnostic reading assessments based on scientifically based reading research. Assessments must consist of a "screening reading assessment" to identify children at risk for delayed development, a "diagnostic reading assessment" to identify a child's strengths and weaknesses, and a "classroom based instructional reading assessment" where the child is observed performing academic tasks.

A failure to utilize reading programs that meet the "scientifically based reading" standard could result in the loss of federal funding for any "Reading First" initiative.

By implication, scientifically based reading research places a burden on colleges and universities preparing students to teach to utilize programs that are scientifically-based. In addition to a definition of scientifically based reading research, NCLB has a definition for what constitutes scientifically based research. The definition is

quite long and very complicated and for the sake of brevity will not be repeated, but it should be noted that the technical definition of what constitutes "scientifically based research" appears almost 80 times in full text of the legislation.

Parental Rights

The bill also provides extensive rights for parents of children in Title 1 schools.

At both schoolwide programs and target assistance programs, parents of children in Title 1 schools have the right to know if the teacher is state-certified, the name of the teacher's college, and her major area of study. Under the act, schools are obligated to provide annual report cards on their schools and annual yearly progress reports. In certain circumstances, schools must provide students with a variety of school choice options.

The consequences for failure to make adequate yearly progress can be dramatic and expensive for a school system. A school that fails to make adequate progress for four consecutive years can result in the replacement of the entire school staff—from principal to all teachers.

A failure to make progress for two consecutive years allows any student to move from the failing school to a non-failing school. However, if all schools in a district fall into the failing category, the child has right to attend a non-failing school with transportation provided by the failing school district. Thus, if all schools in Springfield, for example, were in the failing category, the student could arguably request to be sent to private school, although such an issue would need to be resolved in court.

If a school fails to make progress for three consecutive years, the school district must provide supplemental educational services (SES). The service can

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range from private tutors to after-school programs to summer school all at no cost to the parents. Interestingly, the tutorial services can be provided by for profit corporations as long as the corporation has met state requirements, again at the school district's expense

Additional Parental and Student Rights

Under NCLB, A "child in need of services" will receive "the reasonable adaptations and accommodations for students with disabilities." "Reasonable" applies to children who already have Individual Education Plans (I.E.P.). Parents also have the right to transfer their child from a school deemed unsafe, and they have the right to see the school's annual report card.

ESOL

Parents of English language learners also have extensive rights to ensure that their child is receiving proper instruction in English using "research-based language instruction curricula for English language learners that are effective with this population." The school must also notify the parents of the child's yearly progress in English. Moreover, the child's teacher must

be fluent in both written and oral communications skills in English.

Even Start

Family literacy, including ABE, receives extensive consideration under NCLB. The overall purpose of the family literacy section of NCLB

fications established by the [respective] State... ." For new personnel hired after December 2004 who provide academic instruction, there is also the same requirements of having obtained an associate's, bachelor's or graduate degree and meeting the qual-

The ramifications of NCLB extend beyond the K-12 system.

is to provide intensive instructional assistance to adult literacy programs. By helping parents achieve some increased level of literacy, it is anticipated that there will concurrent increased educational growth in their children. NCLB provides that any program receiving funds under Even Start actively identify and recruit adults with "low levels of income" and a "low level of adult literacy." The adult learner, including teenage parents, can receive counseling, testing and other support services (e.g. transportation, day care) under the Even Start provisions of NCLB.

Literacy and support programs must be designed to accommodate participant's work schedule and should include "high-quality, intensive instructional programs." After

December 2004, any staff that provides academic instruction under NCLB's Even Start sections "shall have obtained an associate's, bachelor's, or graduate degree in a field related to early childhood education, elementary school, or adult education; and shall meet quali-

fications for elementary school or secondary school education or adult education provided "as a part of an Even Start program or another family literacy program." Even Start programs under NCLB are also required to operate on a year round basis and "use instructional programs based upon scientifically based reading research for children and adults, to the extent that research is available". NCLB also provides for independent evaluation of Even Start programs.

The ramifications of NCLB extend beyond the K-12 system. Of course, if the mandates of NCLB remain unfunded or underfunded, then our children will inevitably be "left behind."

Daniel E. O'Malley is the education reintegration counselor and college coordinator at the Hampden County House of Correction. He can be reached at <Dan.Omalley@sdh.state.us>

For a longer version of this article, submitted in partial fulfillment of a doctoral degree, contact the author.

Field Notes Welcomes Submissions!



- ◆ Letters to the Editor
- ◆ Teaching Tips
- ◆ Articles
- ◆ Lesson Plans
- ◆ Book Reviews

We also try to include a piece of student writing in each issue. Ideas? Please contact Lenore Balliro, editor, at <lballiro@worlded.org>.

Student Writing

Career Exploration Student Leadership Mini-Grant

BY OGGIE DJIZOV

*M*y name is Oggie Djizov and I am a student in the advanced class for ESL in the Norwood Adult ESOL Program. I would like to tell you my opinion about the Career Exploration Student Leadership mini-grant funded by the the Massachusetts System for Adult Basic Education Support (SABES).

The day when I started this program, I didn't know that we were going to have this project. I thought that I could learn English grammar only. Soon I figured out that we had conversations about everything in class with other students. Also, what became more important for us was meeting with our guests for different projects.

We had a lawyer who explained everything about the steps we have to follow for naturalization (becoming a U.S. citizen). We had a realtor, mortgage loan officer, medical translators, all visit us.

Meeting with the specialist from Massachusetts Employment and Training Center was so exciting. He made a point of going over all the details of this department. This was so useful for us because most of us are unemployed and we really need help to find a job.

I think this leadership project is very useful for the students because all of us need more experience in talking in a public place. Also, working with the other students from the beginner class is very useful because we have a chance to see ourselves in the position of helpers to others who need more information.

I think that this kind of course with a leadership program is very useful for all the advanced students. We can learn how to lead and help others.

I really appreciate the teachers, the hard work, and the help. I hope that if I have any chance I will take this class again. Thanks so much!

Oggie Djizov is a student at the the Norwood Adult ESOL Program. He can be reached through his teacher, Mary Ann Sliwa, at <masliwa@comcast.net>.

The Massachusetts Adult Literacy Hotline

Want to volunteer to tutor in an adult basic education program? Need to link an adult learner with ABE or ESOL services?

Call the Hotline! Referrals in English and Spanish.



Love in the Classroom

by Al Zolynas
—for my students

Afternoon. Across the garden, in Green Hall, someone begins playing the old piano— a spontaneous piece, amateurish and alive, full of simple, joyful melody. The music floats among us in the classroom.

I stand in front of my students telling them about sentence fragments. I ask them to find the ten fragments in the twenty-one-sentence paragraph on page forty-five.

They've come from all parts of the world—Iran, Micronesia, Africa, Japan, China, even Los Angeles—and they're still eager to please me. It's less than half way through the quarter.

They bend over their books and begin. Hamid's lips move as he follows the tortuous labyrinth of English syntax. Yoshie sits erect, perfect in her pale make-up, legs crossed, quick pulse minutely jerking her right foot. Tony, from an island in the South Pacific, sprawls limp and relaxed in his desk.

The melody floats around and through us in the room, broken here and there, fragmented, re-started. It feels Mideastern, but it could be jazz, or the blues—it could be anything from anywhere.

I sit down on my desk to wait, and it hits me from nowhere—a sudden, sweet, almost painful love for my students.

"Nevermind," I want to cry out. "It doesn't matter about fragments. Finding them or not. Everything's a fragment and everything's not a fragment. Listen to the music, how fragmented, how whole, how we can't separate the music from the sun falling on its knees on all the greenness, from this moment, how this moment contains all the fragments of yesterday and everything we'll ever know of tomorrow!"

Instead, I keep a coward's silence. The music stops abruptly; they finish their work, and we go through the right answers, which is to say we separate the fragments from the whole.

Reprinted with permission of the poet.

Contributing to Your Profession: Three Opportunities

BY DR. BARBARA ASH

If you are an experienced teacher you know what works for your students and what will make a lesson “click.” You can contribute to your profession and enhance your own professional development by sharing your expertise. Here are three ways you can contribute.

1. Write an Article for a Professional Publication

Most professional organizations have newsletters or publications directed to teachers in the field, and these publications seek and welcome articles written by practitioners. Similar to *Field Notes*, submission guidelines are available at the Web site of the professional association or from the publisher of the journal or newsletter.

Begin your article by brainstorming ideas and jotting down the two or three key points you wish to convey. Similar to preparing objectives, zero in on what you really want your readers to know. In other words, keep it simple. An engaging article includes some of the following: interesting stories, personal anecdotes, examples, or case studies that may be helpful to underscoring your key points. It is helpful to have a colleague read your piece for clarity and correctness. The newsletter or publication editor may assist with this step, but you are more likely to have a “ready piece” put into print if your article is grammatically correct and presented in the format recommended by the publisher.

2. Mentor a New Teacher or a Gifted Student

Although the terms coaching and mentoring are sometimes used interchangeably, they have substantial differences. The primary goals of

a coach are to improve performance and impart skills. The coach’s role is heavy on “telling” and provides immediate feedback. The goal of mentoring, on the other hand, is to provide support and guidance for the personal growth of the protégée. A mentee is usually in charge of his or her learning and is participating voluntarily; the mentor is seldom the mentee’s boss. The mentor often serves as a role model who makes suggestions and connections (Harvard Business Essentials, 2004, p. 107).

Shea (1997) defines mentoring as “a significant, long-term, beneficial effect on the life or style of another person, generally as a result of personal one-on-one contact. A mentor is one who offers knowledge, insight, perspective, or wisdom that is especially useful to the other person” (p. 9).

Mentoring can be informal or highly structured, and the relationship between mentor and mentee may be of long- or short-term duration. Mentoring can include a one-to-one model; group mentoring with the assistance of a facilitator; and virtual mentoring, which is conducted by email, telephone, and/or videoconferencing.

What do mentors do? Shea (1997, p. 10) and Kaye and Scheef (2000, p. 2) suggest that mentors set high expectation of performance; offer challenging ideas; help build self-confidence; create inclusion and foster a collaborative environment; develop leadership talent and preserve institutional memory; teach by example; share critical knowledge; and offer encouragement and inspiration. Lifelong friendships and mutual respect are additional rewards for the mentor and mentee.

Where Can You Publish?

Field Notes. A theme-based quarterly of SABES designed to share innovative practices and resources in ABE throughout Massachusetts. New writers, writers of color, and writers whose first language is not English are especially encouraged to submit. Accepts articles, lesson plans, reviews, and more. Extensive editorial support offered. Find complete submission guidelines at <www.sabes.org>.

Focus on Basics. Nationally distributed quarterly publication of the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy presents best practices and current research on adult learning and literacy. For more information, go to <www.ncsall.net/>.

The Change Agent. Published twice a year through the New England Literacy Resource Center, focuses on civic participation and social justice in teaching and learning. Seeks news articles, poetry, stories, opinion pieces, interviews, reviews; and other writing for each issue. For more information, go to www.nelrc.org/changeagent/ or contact the editor, Angela Orlando, at <aorlando@worlded.org>.

3. Design and Deliver a Workshop

First, decide which professional organization’s conference and format would best suit your topic or your interests. The local professional organizations include but are not limited to the following: the Massachusetts Coalition of Adult Education (MCAE), Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts (LVM), Massachusetts Association of Teachers of Speakers of Other Languages (MATSOL), Massachusetts Association of Bilingual Educators (MABE), and the Commonwealth Workforce Coalition. Next, put your thoughts on paper so you will have a proposal in

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hand when the opportunity arises. Generally, the guidelines and deadlines for proposals for conference and workshop presentations are available from the organizations sponsoring the conference.

The structure for the design and delivery of a workshop can be simple. The first part of the structure has two basic ingredients: (1) what you want your audience to know, and (2) a description of what you are trying to convey.

- Although conducting a formal needs assessment may not be practical, coworkers, directors of professional adult basic education organizations, and SABES staff may provide feedback on pressing topics and both the “real” and “felt” needs of your prospective participants. Once you have identified a topic, you can begin your presentation design.

- Write one or two learning objectives. Depending on the length of the proposed workshop, keep your objectives simple and focused.

- Outline the content of your presentation. Keeping your objectives in mind and using the content outline, write a brief description of your proposed presentation. This piece should inform the learners of what they will know at the conclusion of your presentation. List the key benefits of attending your session and include any unusual or special features of your workshop. This is a marketing piece that will be used to entice people to attend your workshop. Samples of conference abstracts are often included on the Web page of the sponsoring agency. For example, if you go to <www.TESOL.org>, and click their conference link, you will find samples of accepted proposals that can help you with language and format. Once your proposal has been accepted, you can expand your delivery outline to ensure that your presentation will be a success:

- Select appropriate presentation delivery methods or techniques and match these to your content outline. Your methods may include lecture, role-playing, group activity, or a combination of these.

- Prepare a dynamic opener and memorable closing. Both the opener and the closing are important components of your workshop design. The first interaction with your audience is critical to establishing rapport and credibility. For this purpose, an icebreaker or short introductory activity is useful. It will relax your audience and foster an interest in your subject.

- Prepare your visuals: transparencies, flip charts, videos, slides, tapes, CDs, white boards, or PowerPoint presentations. Visuals should be bulleted, simple, and colorful, and include pictures, graphs, or illustrations that make an impact.

- Plan ahead and conduct a stand-up rehearsal. Solicit feedback from a colleague, and time your presentation. Practice again until you feel comfortable.

- Prior to your presentation, locate and review the facility. On the day of your presentation, arrive early, check out the workshop seating; and if possible, try out the equipment. Plan for any contingency; back up your mediated presentation; bring an extra bulb and extension cord for your projector; and sufficient handouts to ensure an adequate supply for all participants.

Your Presentation Checklist

- Anticipate potential problems. (Do you have enough handouts? Is there enough seating?)

- Have an assistant on hand to help with equipment, distribute handouts, or help with any unexpected problems.

- Get your important information out first.

- Provide time for questions,

follow-up, and group interaction.

- Speak loudly enough for those in the rear of the room to hear comfortably.

- Face your audience and maintain eye contact.

- Start and end promptly on time; avoid obvious clockwatching.

- Smile—be honest and genuine.

- Provide for participant evaluation, and critique your own session.

Some Final Thoughts

As adult basic education teachers, you have numerous ways to contribute to the profession and at the same time enhance your own professional development and that of your fellow practitioners. If you are an outgoing extrovert, you may jump at the chance to develop a “live” presentation. Another colleague may be more comfortable writing an article for a professional publication, and a third may enjoy the interaction that mentoring provides. The choice is yours!

Dr. Barbara Ash is professor of education at Suffolk University in Boston where she teaches courses in adult learning, training methods, teaching and learning styles, and instructional design. She has served on the board of MCAE for many years. She can be reached at <bash@suffolk.edu>.

References

Harvard Business Essentials (2004). *Coaching and mentoring*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Kaye, B. & Scheef, D. (2000). *Mentoring* (ASDT Info-line). Alexandria, VA: American Association for Training and Development.

Shea, G. F. (1997). *Mentoring: How to develop successful mentor behaviors*. Menlo Park, CA: Crisp.

Mark Your Calendar

The ABE Calendar is compiled by Lou Wollrab, Central Resource Center, SABES. The calendar is updated regularly and may be viewed at <www.sabes.org>.

June 23-29

American Library Association (ALA), Annual Conference

Location: Chicago, IL

Contact: ALA, 800-545-2433,

Web site <www.ala.org/ala/eventsandconferencesb/annual/2005a/home.htm>

June 27-29

Centre for Literacy of Quebec, Summer Institute 2005

ABE & Literacy, Media and Technology: Points of Entry, Points of Connection

Location: Montreal, Quebec

Contact: Centre for Literacy, 514-931-8731, x1415,

Web site: <www.centreforliteracy.qc.ca/>

June 27-30

National Educational Computing Conference (NECC), 2005 Conference

Digital Illuminations: Sparking a Revolution in Learning

Location: Philadelphia, PA

Contact: NECC, 800-280-6218,

Web site: <<http://center.uoregon.edu/ISTE/NECC2005/>>

July 14-17

Alliance for Nonprofit Management/National Council of Nonprofit Associations, Joint Conference

The Communities We Serve: Building Capacity for Impact

Location: Chicago, IL

Contact: The Alliance, 202-955-8406,

Web site: <www.allianceonline.org/annual_conference/2005_conference.page>

October 26-29

ProLiteracy Worldwide, 2005 Annual Conference

Location: Tucson, AZ

Contact: ProLiteracy, 315-422-9121, x319,

Web site: <www.proliteracy.org/conference/>

Student Wiki Now Available!

A wiki is a Web site where everyone can edit or add pages and links. A wiki is the simplest way ever to create and collaborate on the Web. A new wiki has been created by David Rosen for adult literacy/ABE students who want to write together. It includes tips for teachers on getting started. For more information, go to <www.seedwiki.com/wiki/writing_together/writing_together.cfm>

Help Us Update Our Mailing List (Please!)

Are you receiving too many copies of *Field Notes*? Do you need more copies for your staff? Please let us know so we can keep the mailing list updated. Each ABE/ESOL teacher in Massachusetts is entitled to a copy. Fill out the form below and mail it, or email the information to the address below. Thanks!

Please remove the following names from the *Field Notes* mailing list:

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Mail to Heather Brack, World Education, 44 Farnsworth St., Boston, MA 02210, or email information to <Hbrack@worlded.org>.

Upcoming Issues of *Field Notes*

Fall 2005:

Workforce Development
(*Sorry, full*)

Winter 2005

Classroom Climate/Classroom Management
Submit by Sept 15

Spring 2006

Staff Development
Submit by December 15

Summer 2006

Summer Reading (details to follow)

Fall 2006

ABE Math (details to follow)



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