

Notebook

Resources for the Adult Educator

A Membership Publication of ProLiteracy

In this issue



Professional Development



Social Studies



Speaking



Citizenship



Exploring Resources



Tutor Profile

Notebook is published three times a year by ProLiteracy, the largest adult literacy and basic education membership organization in the nation. *Notebook* is just one of the many resources we provide to our members, who consist of organizations and individuals that share a passion for adult literacy and its potential to improve lives.

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Editor's Corner

Welcome to the Winter issue of *Notebook*. We hope these articles will recharge your teaching as we enter into 2025.

Our first article focuses on helping students connect what they're learning to what's happening in the real world. You may teach students how to get a driver's license or calculate a tip, but those things are just in theory if they haven't been put into practice. "Bridging Classroom Lessons to the Real World" suggests ways to apply what students are learning to create memorable lessons.

Our second article, "Help Students Analyze Pictures Critically," focuses on looking at pictures from the news or other sources. With images all around us via social media, news sources, and elsewhere, students should know how to analyze pictures with a critical eye. Our article helps them to develop this skill and provides two pictures to use with the activity.

Our next article focuses on pronunciation for English language learners (ELLs). You may have noticed that speakers of the same language tend to make the same pronunciation mistakes. "Common English Pronunciation Errors for Speakers of 6 Languages" provides a summary of the types of pronunciation mistakes often made by speakers of some common languages. Keep our article handy to remind yourself of pronunciation challenges so you can work on them together.

Next up is a citizenship-focused lesson. Does your program offer citizenship prep? If so, you'll want to know about the recent changes to the N-400 form. Our article "Citizenship: Practice With Addresses for the N-400 Form" features an excerpt from the newly revised *Ready for the Interview* book from New Readers Press.

Finally, our Tutor Profile features Vince Scalise of Adult Literacy League in Orlando, Florida. Scalise is a volunteer tutor who often uses karaoke to improve students' English skills. Scalise just received the Ruth J. Colvin Award for Tutor Excellence at the ProLiteracy Conference on Adult Education 2024.

-The Editor

Bridging Classroom Lessons to the Real World

Purpose

To share ways that teachers can connect their lessons to the real world with tangible experiences.

Rationale

Much of the information you may teach to ELLs (or other literacy learners) will relate to something practical. This may include buying items at the supermarket, managing local transportation, or using recreational services. All of these involve English and some cultural knowledge.

Frequently, these lessons will take place in a classroom setting. Students may obtain valuable practice from the lessons, but they may lack a real-world component.

When possible, students can benefit from lessons with real-life, tangible experiences. *Notebook* asked tutor Lisa Noyes of Nashua Adult Learning Center in Nashua, New Hampshire, to share some ways that she brings classroom lessons to life. Here are some highlights from what she shared:

Bridging Classroom Learning and Real Life

1. **The supermarket.** Consider setting up scavenger hunts, having students ask an employee for help or ordering from the deli counter. Students who are on a class tour of the supermarket can also discuss how they cook with different products. While at the supermarket, you may want to show students how to use self-checkout if they are new to it.
2. **Farmers markets.** “Introduce yourselves to local farmers and merchants, and talk about their products. There are often free samples, animals, live music, and food,” Noyes says.
3. **Department of Motor Vehicles.** Dealing with the Department of Motor Vehicles office always seems to be a chore, even if you know English well. One idea is to take students on a field trip where you can show them forms they may have to fill out, and they can see in person how the waiting system works.



Professional Development

Making Classroom Lessons Relevant to Real-Life Needs

Lindsay Hyland of The Literacy Council of Green County in Monroe, Wisconsin, works primarily with Spanish speakers, most of whom work in cheese factories or dairy farms. Hyland will focus on basics like personal information and the alphabet. However, she always begins a lesson by asking about work or problems at work. Here’s how that helps her make lessons more relevant to students’ everyday lives:

- Students practice words related to cheese in their work setting, like *chunk*, *block*, *sliced*, and *diced*.
- Students learn English to describe work problems, such as, “The knife isn’t cutting,” “The machine isn’t working,” or “The salt content is too high. How do I retest it?”
- To help a student who babysits and has some English-speaking children and parents, Hyland has taught health terms like *sore throat* and *fever*. After that, they have practiced sentences like, “Your child has a fever (or sore throat, toothache, etc.). You need to come and get your child.”
- For a learner who works in a school kitchen, they have practiced the names of various kitchen items and phrases, like, “What can I help you with?” or “Do we have more milk?”

Restaurant Phrases for Practice

Lisa Noyes says that practicing English at a café or a restaurant is particularly popular with students. With that in mind, there are several phrases you may want to pre-teach to prepare students for what they will have to say. Here are some phrases:

- Could I see a menu, please?
- What are today's specials?
- A table for two, please.
- Could we have another minute, please?
- What would you recommend?
- Could you please make that without cheese? (or without another type of ingredient)
- I'm allergic to _____.
- Could I have more water, please?
- Could I have the check, please?



4. **Parking.** Give students a hands-on experience with how to use your local parking system. For example, do they have to use an app to pay? Or is there a parking machine where they will get a receipt to place on their windshield? Go with students to see how your local parking system works so they're more familiar with it when they are on their own.
5. **Playgrounds.** A playground is a good place to visit if you have several students with young children. Teach vocabulary for the playground equipment and expressions related to playing, safety, and turn-taking. Consider teaching songs and finger-plays like "Itsy Bitsy Spider" and "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star."
6. **The library.** Tour the various areas of the library or see if library staff can provide a tour. Read a picture book together, and point out different parts of the book, such as the title, author, and illustrator.
7. **Cafés.** Encourage a fun gathering with your students at a local coffee shop. If time permits, you may want to make a café get together a regular event. You can discuss available drinks and practice ordering. For example, "a small, hot pumpkin latte with skim milk" or "a medium, iced mocha cappuccino with skim milk in a to-go cup." These show how complex the orders can get.
8. **Restaurants.** Plan a visit to a local restaurant, but practice in advance some common restaurant phrases (see our sidebar). You also could use a take-out menu from the restaurant to practice ordering-related conversations. Then, students can use what they learned from practice when they are actually at the restaurant.
9. **Hiking and conservation areas.** Walk with students on local walking/hiking trails. If possible, have students look for certain items while walking, or lead a nature bingo game to reinforce vocabulary (e.g., *acorn*, *fern*, *tracks*). Show students how to recognize local hazards like poison ivy and ticks. "Once students know where to park and are familiar with a trail, they often return with families and friends," Noyes says.
10. **Holiday season.** Consider driving around neighborhoods that have lots of decorations. Teach Christmas carols and other holiday songs, bake and exchange cookies, or throw a holiday party with a game of White Elephant (a gift-swapping game where players take turns selecting or stealing gifts).
11. **Tourist spots.** Take students to places that visitors to your area may enjoy. This will help educate them about your area but also give them places to take their own visitors.

Help Students Analyze Pictures Critically

Purpose

To share ways to use pictures to encourage critical thinking, creativity, and reflection among students.

Rationale

So much information about the world nowadays comes to us in a visual form, such as an image in a post through social media.

To help students think more critically about images they see, you can spend some time helping them analyze pictures. These can be pictures from the news, public social media posts, or other pictures that you have found.

This activity provides a couple of sample pictures on page 7 that you can use while following all or some of the suggested activities. However, you also can use these same activities with other pictures, no matter where you find them.

The Basic Activity

1. **Identify the picture that you would like to share with students.** The pictures used with this article come from Wikimedia Commons, which is a free source of photos (see sidebar). Ideally, you'll use a picture relevant to your current lesson. However, picture analysis could be an engaging break from current studies.
2. **Ask learners how many pictures they think they see every day on social media, shared by friends and family, pictures that they've taken, etc.** Briefly discuss why they think pictures are so popular and why it may be helpful to take a closer look at the images we see. Students will have their own ideas on this topic, but make sure to mention that some images may be manipulated. This point isn't relevant to the photos we share with this article, but it's an important news literacy skill for students to consider. Let students know that they will spend some time analyzing a photo.
3. **Share your chosen picture with students, but don't provide any other context yet.** Simply ask, "What do you think is happening in this picture?" Accept all answers, even if they seem silly. This is the time for creativity and brainstorming.



Social Studies

More Ways to Use Wikimedia Commons

Wikimedia Commons provides free media files, including pictures, that are in the public domain. The site contains more than 110 million files. Wikimedia Commons is part of the Wikimedia family, which includes the popular Wikipedia.

If you'd like to use Wikimedia Commons for more image analysis, here are some other areas of the site that you may want to check out:

Picture of the Day/Media of the Day

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

Check out or follow Wikimedia Commons' Picture of the Day or Media of the Day (which has videos) to discover more visuals from around the world.

Photos of People

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:People>

Pictures of people often make for great discussions in classrooms. Find a variety of categorized people photos at the link above, such as people by decade, birthdays, people with objects, and many more.

(continued on page 6)

(continued from page 5)

More Ways to Use Wikimedia Commons

Street Food

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Street_food

Who doesn't like to talk about food? These pictures of street food around the world are sure to generate healthy discussion, including food likes and dislikes.

Photo Challenge

<https://tinyurl.com/zmtffzne>

Are you and/or your students amateur photographers? Then you may want to submit a picture for one of Wikimedia Commons' challenges. Each challenge has a different set of requirements. You have to be a Wikimedia Commons user to submit a photo. It's free to sign up.

4. **Ask students to describe the photo.** Here are a few examples of questions that you can ask to encourage students to look at a photo with a more detailed eye:

- What time of day do you think it is?
- Who do you think is in the photo?
- What emotions do you think the people in the photo are feeling?
- How would you describe the people in the photo? What are they wearing?
- What are some other things that you see in the photo?

You can give students time to answer these questions orally with a partner or to write down their thoughts.

5. **Let students know what is actually happening in the photo you're using.** Here is information you can provide about the photos with on page 7 (descriptions provided by Wikimedia Commons):

- Photo 1: Army Spc. Brandon Garrison takes a turn on Santa's lap to ask for a baby daughter during the Virginia Ann Wiedmaier Holiday Dinner, Dec. 3, 2007. Garrison was injured in March 2007 in Afghanistan when he was thrown from his Humvee.
- Photo 2: Grandma with birthday card from the Queen.

6. **Now that students have a little more context about the photos, ask a few additional questions for oral or written discussion:**

- Did the photo description surprise you? Why or why not?
- Do you think the photo does a good job of telling a story? Why or why not?
- What else would you like to know about what's going on in the photo?

7. **For extra practice, you can invite students to find another photo they think is interesting and answer the same set of questions about it.** This could be done as a class presentation, if there's a way that all students can see the photo.

8. **If your students are interested in photography, encourage them to take a photo or two by the next class that they can share and discuss with classmates.**

9. **If you have students with a strong interest in technology and artificial intelligence, you can encourage them to use an AI tool to create a picture and then share it with the class.** Some popular tools include Canva (<https://www.canva.com/ai-image-generator/>) and Leonardo AI (<https://leonardo.ai/>).

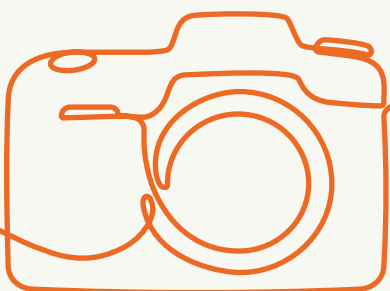


PHOTO 1



Wikimedia Commons

PHOTO 2



Wikimedia Commons

Finding More Pictures

News for You

<https://www.newsforyouonline.com/>

News for You, published by New Readers Press, offers easy-to-read news stories that can help students learn to read, write, speak, and understand English. Seven new stories are posted each Wednesday on the website, along with audio, exercises (and a Teacher's Guide), vocabulary, a crossword puzzle, a word search, and a poll. Almost all stories have one or more pictures that could make for interesting discussion points with students. Every Monday, there is a weekly News Roundup of breaking stories. *News for You* is also available as a print edition. A subscription is required to access the stories and any related images.

What's Going On in This Picture?

<https://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-whats-going-on-in-this-picture>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/27/learning/how-to-teach-with-whats-going-on-in-this-picture.html>

The New York Times has a popular free section called "What's Going On in This Picture?" where learners are asked: *Look closely at this image, stripped of its caption, and join the moderated conversation about what you and other students see.* Whether your students take part in the online conversation or simply discuss photos with you and their fellow classmates, you'll find some great photos for discussion. The second link above discusses how to teach with "What's Going On in This Picture?"



Speaking

More Information

The following videos and websites have good information on pronunciation errors that are common in different languages and were used to help write this article.

The 5 Pronunciation Mistakes that German Native Speakers Make in English (And How to Fix Them!)

<https://tinyurl.com/hvdy6r5a>

5 Common Pronunciation Mistakes Chinese Speakers Make

<https://tinyurl.com/3ztejawn>

The 7 Pronunciation Mistakes that Spanish Native Speakers Make in English (And How to Fix Them!)

<https://tinyurl.com/ythf9jzk>

10 Pronunciation Mistakes Russian Speakers Make

<https://tinyurl.com/yvkuew92>

5 Pronunciation Mistakes Typical of French and Italian Speakers

<https://tinyurl.com/4e2ypu4d>

Packard Communications

<https://packardcommunications.com/blog/>

Speak Fluent

<https://www.speakfluent.ca/blog>

Common English Pronunciation Errors for Speakers of 6 Languages

Purpose

To provide a handy list of common pronunciation errors made by speakers of six different languages when learning English. This can help teachers and tutors determine which pronunciation challenges to address.

Rationale

When you want to help ELLs speak better, clearer English, it's sometimes overwhelming to decide where to focus your efforts. You may pick up on common errors made by speakers of a certain language, or you may detect the same types of errors no matter your students' native languages.

To help make things a little easier, we have compiled a list of common pronunciation errors made by speakers of six different languages. Often, these sounds are a challenge because they may not be a part of the speaker's native language.

You can keep the list handy when you're looking for pronunciation exercises. We also suggest a few helpful pronunciation resources in our sidebars.

Common Pronunciation Errors

French

- pronouncing "th" as an "s" or "z"
- not pronouncing the letter "h"
- pronouncing what should be an "ih" sound (as in *kid*) with an "ee" sound
- stressing all vowels in a word versus stressing just one vowel sound
- making the "r" sound from the back of the mouth versus the front of the mouth, the latter of which is more common in English

German

- pronouncing “th” as an “s”
- making a throatier “r” sound versus a smoother “r” sound
- pronouncing “w” as a “v”
- using a rising pitch pattern that makes certain statements sound like questions
- making words like *pet/pat* and *met/mat* sound similar

Italian

- not pronouncing the letter “h”
- adding a vowel sound (particularly “a”) at the end of words
- pronouncing “w” as a “v”
- pronouncing all verbs ending in “-ed” the same way versus the correct pronunciation with a “d,” “t,” or “-ed” sound
- stressing all syllables in a word versus making some of the syllables weak

Mandarin Chinese

- not pronouncing the “s” on the end of words, such as plural words or third-person singular words
- reducing multi-syllabic words to have fewer syllables
- pronouncing “r” as an “l” sound at the beginning of words
- not adding tense markers, such as “-ed” for past tense (Example: “I play yesterday” instead of “I played yesterday”)
- pronouncing “v” as an “f” or “w”

Russian

- pronouncing “th” as a “t” or “z”
- shortening double vowels (e.g., *door* and *pour* become *dur* and *pur*)
- pronouncing “w” as a “v”
- stressing all syllables in a word versus making some of the syllables weak
- pronouncing “-ing” at the end of a word as “n” (e.g., “brin” instead of “bring”)

Spanish

- pronouncing “b” and “v” the same
- pronouncing “th” as “t”
- not pronouncing the letter “h”
- pronouncing “sh” as “ch”
- using a long “e” sound for words with a short “i” vowel (e.g., *heat* instead of *hit*)

More Information

Pronunciation Studio

<https://pronunciationstudio.com/blog/>

Although this company focuses on British English, much of the information it shares can still apply to American English pronunciation challenges.

14 Fun English Pronunciation Practice Exercises

<https://www.boldvoice.com/blog/english-pronunciation-practice>

This fun article from BoldVoice shares tips like practicing tongue twisters and acting out movie scenes.

15 Minute Morning Pronunciation Practice for English Speakers

<https://tinyurl.com/3jycnhup>

Accent’s Way English with Hadar shares a practice that English learners can use daily to help pronounce English more clearly.

50 Tongue Twisters in English for Pronunciation Practice!

<https://tinyurl.com/56rs9w2v>

Are your students ready for a challenge? Share the video link above from mmmEnglish so they can discover challenging but fun tongue twisters.

How to Say the “TH” Sound

<https://tinyurl.com/tuhpkw6p>

With many non-native speakers of English struggling with the pronunciation of “th,” this video from Clear English Corner with Keenyn Rhodes helps address how to say it correctly.



Citizenship

More Information

Citizenship: Passing the Test—Ready for the Interview

<https://www.newreaderspress.com/citizenship-ptt-rfi-sb-4th-edition>

The N-400 application for citizenship was substantially revised this last April.

ProLiteracy's New Readers Press and author Lynne Weintraub recently completed a new edition of *Ready for the Interview* that aligns with the changes to the application to help students prepare for their interview.

Ready for the Interview is based on the questions students will encounter on the application for citizenship (N-400), and which subsequently form the basis of every citizenship interview. In the new N-400, some questions were added, combined, or rephrased, while others were eliminated.

In addition, new sections have been added, the order of the questions has changed, and the instructions for filling out the form have changed. All of this is reflected in the 2024 edition of *Ready for the Interview*.



Citizenship: Practice With Addresses for the N-400 Form

Purpose

To provide citizenship students with practice writing their current and previous addresses to complete the N-400 form.

Rationale

Those who are applying to become U.S. citizens have to know or remember a lot of information about their life to complete the N-400 form. Much of that information may be easy to recall, but personal information like addresses may be more challenging. That's because addresses in English may be harder to remember. Or, students may have moved around a lot and do not recall all of those addresses easily.

The activity below is an address-related excerpt from *Ready for the Interview*, a book from New Readers Press that was recently updated to include changes to the N-400 form. The excerpt is best used in an ELL class focused on citizenship. You would want to use it after students already have some familiarity with the N-400 form.

The Basic Activity

1. **Ask students why knowing their current address is important for the citizenship process.** Discuss possible answers, such as to make sure they will receive mail related to obtaining their citizenship.
2. **Let students know that they will read about needing their address for the N-400 form.** Provide them with a copy of the reading from page 12 of this issue, where it says "Former Address" at the top.
3. **Give students time to read the story of Hai.** You can also have students read it aloud. Emphasize what it says about letting USCIS know if you change your address during the citizenship process. See if students have any questions.

4. **Turn their attention to the area called “Hai’s Form” on that same page.** Point out that most applicants will need to fill in their current address followed by their previous addresses over the past five years. Ask students if they know all their addresses from the past five years. Go over the form excerpt and see what questions students have. Remind students that the area where they enter the addresses may look different if they are applying online, but they still need to know their previous addresses.
5. **Provide students with page 13 from this issue, which says, “What Will Hai Say?”** Have students answer the first question based on Hai’s current address (the correct answer is C).
6. **Turn students’ attention to the short dialogue from page 13.** Ask for a volunteers to practice it with you so you can model it. Next, give students time to practice the dialogue with a partner. Answer any questions that remain.
7. **Let students know they will now have a chance to write their current and previous addresses for a practice N-400 form.** Provide students with the form excerpt on the second half of page 13 of this issue. Before students work on this, find out if most students know their previous addresses. If not, you may want to complete this part of the activity in the following class or have students complete it as homework.
8. **Answer any questions that remain about filling out the address information correctly.**



More Information

Changes in the New N-400 Form Application for US Naturalization You Should Know

<https://tinyurl.com/295zk93t>

This four-minute interview from USCitizenshipTest.org provides an overview of changes to the N-400 form that students can watch and understand.

Immigration Nation

<https://tinyurl.com/438fnsek>

The site iCivics Education has a game to help users identify eligibility for legal U.S. residency. The game describes time requirements for eligibility to apply for citizenship for legal residents. Although the content of iCivics Education is geared toward elementary and high schoolers, you may still get some use from a game like this with adult students.

US Citizenship Podcast

<https://www.uscitizenpod.com/>

Find lots of citizenship preparation material on the site US Citizenship Podcast, which has both videos and articles related to the topic. The site is managed by teacher Jennifer Gagliardi. The site also has mock citizenship interviews.

Citizenship: An Overview of the Citizenship Course

<https://www.proliteracy.org/education-network/>

Each person who comes to the U.S. seeking citizenship must pass a Citizenship Test. This course provides an overview of the Citizenship Test, including the three components of the test and what they test on. This course is also valuable for anyone using the *Citizenship: Passing the Test* series from New Readers Press. It takes about an hour to complete and also has an exam. The course is on ProLiteracy’s Education Network, which is free to join but requires a username and password.

Former Address



Listen to Hai



I have lived at the same address since October 2016. In the last five years, I had only one address. If your address changes after you send your citizenship application, you have to tell USCIS your new address.

USCIS needs to know where to send your interview notice. If you move, the Post Office will not forward mail from USCIS to your new address. If you have an online account with USCIS, you can change your address there. Or you can print form AR-11 and mail it to USCIS.

Hai's Form

Part 4. Information About Your Residence

1. Physical Addresses

List every location where you have lived during the last 5 years if you are filing based on the general provision under **Part 1, Item Number 1.a**. If you are filing based on other naturalization eligibility options, see **Part 4** in the **Specific Instructions by Item Number** section of the Instructions for the applicable period of time for which you must enter this information. If you need extra space, use the space provided in **Part 14. Additional Information**.

Current Physical Address

In Care Of Name (if any)

Street Number and Name

☒ Apt. ☐ Ste. ☐ Flr. Number

City or Town

 State ZIP Code

Province

Postal Code

Country

Dates of Residence: From (mm/dd/yyyy)

Dates of Residence: To (mm/dd/yyyy)

Physical Address (Street Number and Name)	City or Town	State / Province	ZIP Code / Postal Code	Country	Dates of Residence	
					From (mm/dd/yyyy)	To (mm/dd/yyyy)
N/A						

2. Is your current physical address also your current mailing address?

☒ Yes (If you answered "Yes," skip to **Part 5**.) ☐ No

What Will Hai Say?

You live at 3235 North 58th Street, right?

- _____ a. No. I don't.
 _____ b. 8 years in Oakland.
 _____ c. Yes, 3235 North 58th Street.



Hai's Interview

EXAMINER: Now, Mr. Pham, could you tell me how long you've been at your current **residence**?

HAI: What do you mean?

EXAMINER: You live at 3235 North 58th Street, right?

HAI: Yes.

EXAMINER: How long have you lived there?

HAI: Since 2017, I think. . . . No—since 2016.

EXAMINER: 2016?

HAI: Yes, since 2016.

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From Ready for the Interview.

Your Form

Part 4. Information About Your Residence

1. Physical Addresses

List every location where you have lived during the last 5 years if you are filing based on the general provision under **Part 1, Item Number 1.a**. If you are filing based on other naturalization eligibility options, see **Part 4**, in the **Specific Instructions by Item Number** section of the Instructions for the applicable period of time for which you must enter this information. If you need extra space, use the space provided in **Part 14. Additional Information**.

Current Physical Address

In Care Of Name (if any)

Street Number and Name

Apt. Ste. Flr. Number

☐ ☐ ☐

City or Town

State

ZIP Code

Province

Postal Code

Country

Dates of Residence: From (mm/dd/yyyy)

Dates of Residence: To (mm/dd/yyyy)

PRESENT

Physical Address (Street Number and Name)	City or Town	State / Province	ZIP Code / Postal Code	Country	Dates of Residence From (mm/dd/yyyy)	To (mm/dd/yyyy)



Exploring Resources



New from NRP: *Communicating at Work: Practical English for the Workplace*

www.newreaderspress.com

This new, two-book series for workplace communication skills at the Beginning and Intermediate levels will focus on developing adult ELLs' listening, speaking, high-frequency structures, and vocabulary for typical workplace scenarios that are common across roles and industries. Though oral communication is the emphasis, the books will also work to build learners' workplace reading and writing skills. Importantly, the books will align with state and national standards. These books will be available by spring of this year.

New on Education Network: Navigating Today's Media

www.proliteracy.org/education-network

Media creators want you to believe their messages without question. It's your job to look deeper and figure out what these messages mean. In this free course on ProLiteracy's Education Network, you will learn about different types of media and how they shape the way you think, act, and feel. In the course "Navigating Today's Media," you will:

- Define media, media messages and affects, and media literacy.
- Analyze or break down hidden media messages.
- Recognize bias and perspective in media messages.
- Evaluate sources and share media responsibly.

This one-hour course is geared toward students.

Use of ProLiteracy's Education Network is free but requires you to create an account with a username and password.

ProLiteracy Conference on Adult Education Promotional Video

<https://tinyurl.com/y5z8kt85>

Did you make it to the ProLiteracy Conference on Adult Education in Baltimore this past October? If so, you joined 400 adult literacy practitioners and program administrators who took part in four days of professional development and best practices to help more adults learn to read, write, use technology, and speak English. The link above is a short video that captures the highlights. You can watch it or share it with others on social media.

Pathways: *Florida's Adult Learner Essays Book*

https://floridaliteracy.org/books/Pathways_2024EssayBook_Web.pdf

<https://floridaliteracy.org/essaybookhome.htm>

Since 2005, the Florida Literacy Coalition (FLC) has published its annual book of learner essays. The 2024 edition is 255 pages and can be downloaded for free from the FLC website. The essays come from ELLs, literacy, and family literacy learners across the Sunshine State. Essay themes this year include adult education experiences, bravest moments, goals, and many more. Use the essays to provide reading activities and writing prompts for your students or to teach new vocabulary. At the second link, you can access FLC's previous essay books.

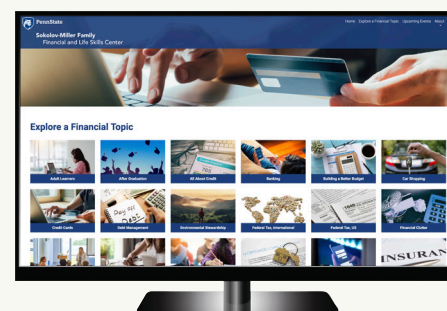
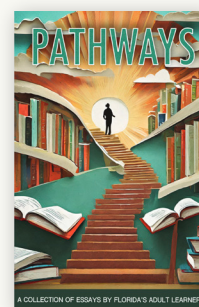
Penn State's Self-Study Lessons on Financial Literacy

<https://financialliteracy.psu.edu/explore-a-financial-topic>

Penn State's Sokolov-Miller Family Financial and Life Skills Center provides a series of self-study units and webinars related to a variety of financial literacy topics, including car shopping, credit, identity theft, saving and investing, and more. Although the lessons are appropriate for college students, you may find them helpful to use with adult literacy learners.

 ProLiteracy®

Conference on Adult Education **2024**



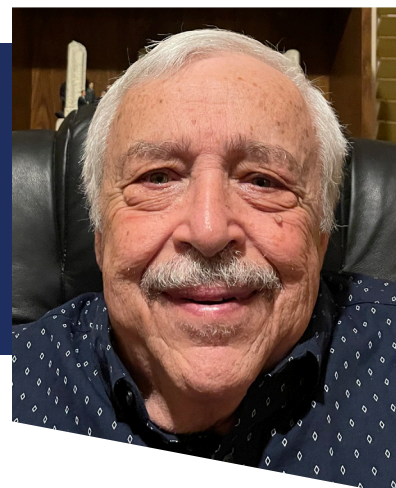
Notebook

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Tutor Profile

Vince Scalise Makes Learning English Fun



Volunteer tutor Vince Scalise wants to make his classes for ELLs fun—and he definitely seems to reach that goal.

Scalise's classes through the Adult Literacy League (ALL) in Winter Park, Florida, regularly feature karaoke to give students practice singing the songs that they're learning. Scalise leans heavily on classic music from The Beatles, The Eagles, and other artists to teach English through song.

Scalise also once dressed up as a gorilla for Halloween—an act funny enough to lead to the nickname "ESL Gorilla," which is also the name of his YouTube channel with content for ELLs.

Scalise began tutoring adult literacy students at ALL in 2001, after a sales career at Nabisco.

When approached in 2008 to help start their ESOL program, he initially hesitated but realized he enjoyed

working with people from other countries. He says he has some empathy for them as he lived in Spain when his father was in the Air Force.

One absolute he has for his class: "My goal is that this class is not going to be boring. I will not allow boredom. I'm not a big grammar teacher, and I'm not a big spelling teacher," he says.

Instead, he'll teach songs like Frank Sinatra's "My Way" or Bruce Springsteen's "My Hometown" and have students dissect the story told in the song.

Scalise will use the songs to teach pronunciation, have students fill in missing lyrics, and sing songs together.

His YouTube channel regularly provides content connected to his lessons that students can watch in advance.

In addition to wearing the gorilla

suit for Halloween, he's also worn a Santa suit around Christmas and a Ben Franklin bald cap.

"Everyone leaves Vince's class smiling, laughing, and looking forward to the next one. Vince embodies what it means to share the joy of learning with others who desperately need it," says Peyton Whittington, development and communications manager for ALL.

Scalise currently volunteers about 15 hours a week with the program. He leads a conversation class, job-interview class, and a citizenship class. He has helped more than 150 students at ALL become citizens.

Scalise recently received the Ruth J. Colvin Award for Tutor Excellence at the recent ProLiteracy Conference on Adult Education in Baltimore.