

3 TEACHING WITH THE 6 PRINCIPLES

Questions for Discussion and Application

Principle 1: Know Your Learners

- 3.1.1.** What are your techniques for getting to know your students? What information does your program provide you and what information do you gather yourself? Do you have an intake protocol? How do you use this information you collect to plan instruction?
- 3.1.2.** What is your approach for learning about your students' home culture and languages? How much do you know about the immigrant, ethnic, and cultural groups represented in your class? Where did you gain that knowledge?
- 3.1.3.** How much do you know about your students' educational background and the educational system of their home country? Where can you find reliable information?
- 3.1.4.** How does your program conduct needs assessments? Who are the stakeholders in the program where you teach? How do you gauge what goals, wishes, and needs each group of stakeholders has?
- 3.1.5.** Have you ever participated in a formal needs assessment project? How did your experience compare to the needs assessment Nessa and Cullen conducted (pp. 31)? What have you gleaned from their experience that you did not consider before?
- 3.1.6.** Have your English learners produced any of the following types of products: autobiography, life experience story, group anthology, or family history? How could you use these products to create high-interest, comprehensible reading materials for your new students?

Principle 2: Create Conditions for Language Learning

- 3.2.1.** What are some cross-cultural communication issues that frequently arise between students in your class or between you and the students?
- 3.2.2.** What are your approaches to building trust and respect among the adult learners in your classroom?
- 3.2.3.** What is your preferred approach to creating a physical environment in the classroom to promote collaboration and interaction among the students? How is this approach working for you? If you could change one thing, what would make the greatest impact?
- 3.2.4.** How do you provide orientation to new students? How do you make sure that newcomers feel welcome, integrate into the class, and stay in the program?
- 3.2.5.** How do you teach learners to gain from learning activities that are new to them (e.g., task-based, project-based, interactive, or collaborative learning)?
- 3.2.6.** What are your best strategies for guiding learners to practice and extend their language learning outside the classroom?
- 3.2.7.** What are some learner goals that are meaningful, challenging, but achievable within the context of your instruction? What are the main action steps to help learners succeed with those goals?
- 3.2.8.** How can you guide or assist learners to form a detailed, vivid image of themselves as capable multilingual persons? What language can you use in your instruction, commentary, and feedback to motivate learners to sustain effort to achieve that successful multilingual future self? What type of learning activities are likely to further this mission?
- 3.2.9.** Identify learning activities that your students find inherently enjoyable. What in particular do they enjoy in these activities? How can you put these activities in support of the learning goals and objectives you have identified for your teaching?

Principle 3: Design High-Quality Lessons for Language Development

- 3.3.1.** Write a list of language objectives for your class that relate to the standards document your program uses, serve the learning goals your students have, and match the English language functioning levels of your students. Use learner-friendly “I can” statements. (Refer to tables 3.1 and 3.2.)
- 3.3.2.** Create a menu of topics and objectives for your class in a form that helps the students make a meaningful choice about their learning. Use images and examples to convey what is entailed.
- 3.3.3.** Choose a text about a topic that appeals to your students. Modify this text to make it comprehensible for your students, using the techniques listed in table 3.3.
- 3.3.4.** Identify a content learning objective for your class. Create several learning activities that will make that content comprehensible to students, using the techniques in table 3.3.
- 3.3.5.** Write step-by-step task explanations for a new learning activity. Create a classroom display that shows your students the steps to follow.
- 3.3.6.** Try out several teacher talk moves that promote *Accountable talk* in the classroom (p. 47). Reflect on the outcome. How can you promote active listening and extended talk by students that helps them verbalize their thinking?
- 3.3.7.** What is your thinking process for grouping students for collaborative learning? What is collaborative groupwork like in your class? What are the techniques you use to ensure that group collaboration is productive for language learning?
- 3.3.8.** Table 3.4 shows a number of language practice techniques that teachers can use throughout the lesson. The explanation of the techniques appears in Appendix A. Which of these are familiar to you? Which of these are potentially useful to you? Select the one you might like to try first and think through how you would implement it.
- 3.3.9.** You find many suggestions on p. 49 for what to collect for your instructional materials library. What materials have you collected already that lend themselves to open-ended tasks that prompt discussions and problem solving? How do you use these materials?
- 3.3.10.** How do you integrate technology and digital literacy into your teaching? What are the most critical digital literacy skills that your students need?

- 3.3.11.** What are your thoughts about the jigsaw lesson in table 3.5? How does this type of lesson serve differentiation? Is it applicable to your class? How would you implement a jigsaw lesson?
- 3.3.12.** Which types of learning strategies do you teach your students? Many language learning strategies are listed on pp. 52-53. Of these, which ones are familiar to you and which ones are new? Check Appendix A for some of the lesser known strategies. Discuss your understanding of these strategies with your group.
- 3.3.13.** What are your key approaches to teaching critical thinking and problem solving to adult English learners? Collect several problem scenarios that lend themselves to the approach Adelson-Goldstein recommends (p. 54) for teaching problem solving in the language classroom.
- 3.3.14.** What does it mean to “make thinking visible” and what is its purpose? What tools do you use to help students record and organize their thinking?
- 3.3.15.** What is your approach to preparing higher order thinking questions for your lessons?
- 3.3.16.** What can teachers do in the classroom to promote self-directed learning? What do you do intentionally to prepare students to become independent learners outside the classroom?
- 3.3.17.** How does your own personal history prepare you to spread a passion for reading self-selected texts? Many adult learners don’t have pleasant experiences with reading. What is your approach to introducing them to the magical power of books?
- 3.3.18.** What are your best ideas for growing students’ vocabulary, particularly in a self-directed way?
- 3.3.19.** Most adult English learners have very limited opportunities for advancing their writing skills on their own. Explore opportunities for writing in English outside the classroom and even possibly getting useful feedback to improve.

Principle 4: Adapt Lesson Delivery as Needed

- 3.4.1.** How do you activate and assess students' background knowledge for the lesson? What can you do when you realize that some students are not yet ready for the lesson you planned for them?
- 3.4.2.** What are your preferred techniques for checking learners' comprehension throughout the lesson?
- 3.4.3.** What are the instructional routines in your classroom? How do these routines contribute to productivity in learning?
- 3.4.4.** What is scaffolding and how does it aid the acquisition of language skills? Of the types of scaffolding listed in table 3.7, which ones do you use regularly? How do these scaffolding techniques work for you?
- 3.4.5.** How can you adapt learning tasks during the lesson for individual learners' English language functioning levels?
- 3.4.6.** How do you interpret the difference between the teachers' interaction with students in the two classrooms on p. 60? Why is the approach in Classroom 2 preferable? Reflect on your own instruction in comparison to the interaction in these two classrooms. Do you see implications for change?
- 3.4.7.** Is there a need for teaching academic language in your instructional context? Do the curriculum and standards for your program contain academic language targets? If so, what are these? What use do you see for the academic language poster in table 3.8?

Principle 5: Monitor and Assess Student Language Development

- 3.5.1.** What are the purposes and forms of assessment in the adult English language program or classes where you teach?
- 3.5.2.** How do you monitor learners' language errors and what is your thinking process about how you respond to the errors that you notice?
- 3.5.3.** Think about learner errors that you have noticed. Which ones might need more than error correction? How could you address these through form-focused instruction?
- 3.5.4.** Which of the oral feedback strategies (figure 3.2) do you use? Which ones do you not use and why? How intentional are you about your oral feedback strategies?
- 3.5.5.** Write your own examples for each type of oral feedback strategy listed in figure 3.2. Practice these in a role play to grow your repertoire of research-supported oral feedback strategies.
- 3.5.6.** Design a clear approach for responding to student writing, or think about the commenting approach you already have. Why is this commenting approach useful for students? How can you teach students to use constructively the comments you give?
- 3.5.7.** Do you employ any self-assessments or peer assessments? Share these with your group. How do your students benefit from participating in these types of assessments?
- 3.5.8.** How do you design rubrics to assess performance on tasks? Share your rubrics with your peers. How do these rubrics help learners focus on the most important elements of the performance? Do the rubrics provide guidance to your students on how to prepare for the task?
- 3.5.9.** What is your experience with standardized tests and adult English learners? Which tests are these? How do the learners benefit from taking these standardized tests? What do standardized test results tell them about their English language skills? Are there any problems with the use of these tests that should be addressed?
- 3.5.10.** How do your learners share the products of their learning in meaningful ways? What ideas do you have for growing these opportunities?

- 3.5.11.** Do you collect and evaluate artifacts of student learning? What do these artifacts signal about the nature and pace of English language development in adulthood? How do you use these artifacts to improve instruction for future students? What other types of artifacts may yield useful information for continuous improvement of teaching?
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Principle 6: Engage and Collaborate within a Community of Practice

- 3.6.1.** The opening vignette shows a teacher and a tutor coordinating their effort to support learners with a reading strategy that could help them learn independently outside the classroom. In your teaching context, are there opportunities for coordination between faculty, administrators, volunteers, and staff that could potentially benefit learners? What benefits could result from coordination?
- 3.6.2.** How do you engage in reflective practice? What sort of questions do you tend to reflect on? Do you have any colleagues whom you would consider to be your critical friends, people you trust who can support your critical self-reflections?
- 3.6.3.** How do you stay current in TESOL and adult education? What types of ongoing professional development options are available to you? How would you describe your participation in these opportunities?
- 3.6.4.** Which of the professional development associations mentioned on p. 71 are you familiar with? To which professional development associations/groups do you and your colleagues belong? How do you benefit from being a member? What do the different associations offer you?
- 3.6.5.** Do you develop curriculum or co-plan with others? Do you share assessments, materials, and resources? How do you find the time and motivation to sustain collaboration? How do you, your colleagues, and your students benefit?
- 3.6.6.** How do you utilize publicly available instructional resources? Where do you find the best free guidance, lesson plans, materials, and activities?
- 3.6.7.** What kinds of community partnerships does your program participate in? What are the goals of these partnerships? What kinds of roles have you performed in them? What benefits and resources have resulted from these partnerships?
- 3.6.8.** What are the most pressing advocacy needs of your program?
- 3.6.9.** What kinds of advocacy roles have you undertaken? What were the needs and how did you advocate? How did you feel about serving these roles? What are you truly passionate about?
- 3.6.10.** How can adult students participate in decision-making in your program? What are some of their important issues and concerns?