

It's more than just lighting!

CREATING A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

What helps people learn?

Models

Hearing others speak; seeing others read or having others read to them; and seeing others write

Purpose

Having a reason for speaking, reading, writing, or learning

Confidence

Believing that they can learn

Reading

Having access to interesting, stimulating materials and meeting their goals

Support

Getting encouragement and reinforcement from others

Teaching

Characteristics of Effective Instruction

Respect for Learners

- ✓ Feel listened to
- ✓ Have input
- ✓ Feel comfortable/safe



Experience-based learning

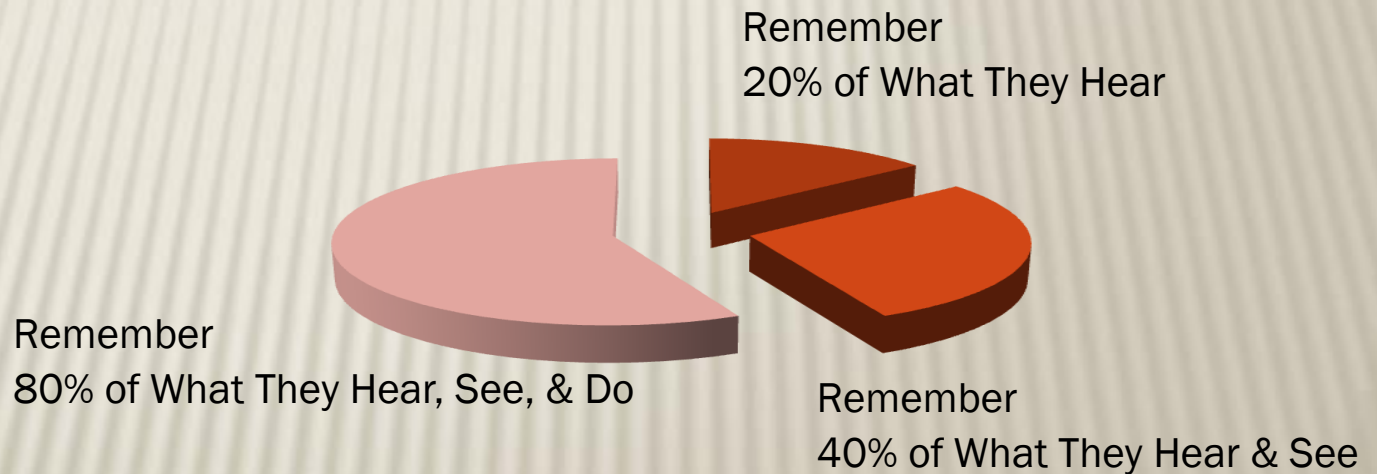
- ✓ Builds on the learner's life experiences

Relevance of subject matter

- ✓ Useful for learners' lives
- ✓ Has immediate application

THE 20% - 40% - 80% RULE

Adults learn best when they are **actively involved** in the learning process.



As adults, the learners bring much to the learning process. Incorporate these strengths into the lesson.

i.e. If the learner is very interested in soccer, try to use soccer-related reading materials and vocabulary to develop conversation and grammar skills! They will be more comfortable with the topic and, most likely, will find it easier to express themselves.

Establish an atmosphere where the adult learners feel that they are participating in their learning and they feel safe to make mistakes. It is from our mistakes that we learn the most.

i.e. Include them in the goal setting process – ask them what they want to achieve and use their words.

i.e. Incorporate laughter! Encourage the learner to try new things –allow them to see you make mistakes!

i.e. Make time for general conversation, workbook activities, games, computer work, and even TPR – incorporate a variety of activities to keep it interesting.

Consider this...

- culture
- learning styles
- comfort level and pace of learning
- space – is it sufficient to work on tasks
- varied learning activities –
 - ✘reading out loud
 - ✘journaling
 - ✘conversation
 - ✘Total Physical Response (TPR)
 - ✘cd and dvd series
 - ✘Field trips
- varied materials –
 - ✘white board
 - ✘computer-based learning
 - ✘workbooks
 - ✘games
 - ✘realia – encourage them to bring in materials that are relevant to their needs

What do you need to consider & where to turn to get started...

MAKING IT HAPPEN

Can you imagine...

Think about surviving without the ability to communicate. How would you get what you wanted or needed? How difficult would it be?

Can you follow signs? Can you read the directions on a medicine bottle? Can you ask for directions when lost?

Understandably, people learning English can feel frustrated, discouraged, and embarrassed if they are unable to communicate through either speaking or writing.

As a tutor, you may have to be creative! Don't be afraid to:

- ☛ use non-verbal communication when working with beginning level English Language Learners. We do it already! Waving someone into a room; smiling and nodding our heads; pointing; and other gesturing.
- ☛ Always have pictures and a dictionary on hand.
- ☛ And, when necessary, ask for a translator.

SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

LANGUAGE & COMMUNICATION

Four Basic Language Skills	<i>RECEPTIVE</i>	<i>EXPRESSIVE</i>
<i>ORAL</i>	LISTENING	SPEAKING
<i>WRITTEN</i>	READING	WRITING

Consider this...

- **Receptive** skills – listening and reading -- are the easiest to learn
 - **Expressive** skills – speaking and writing -- are the most difficult to learn
 - But you should always incorporate all basic language skills into your lessons – learners may not be able to successfully complete each skill but they will begin to connect the dots, so to speak, and recognize patterns as their skills improve.
-

And always remember:

- × Translation is not needed to learn another language – English ONLY in class. A tutor can teach English to someone whose language they do not know!
- × Gestures and context are important in meaningful communication
- × Build on words and concepts already taught

The tutor's job is to help learners be able understood to carry out a specific function.
i.e. asking for clarification; giving information; interviewing; etc...

COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH

A valuable approach for language learning – it encourages positive interaction and enables *all* learners to contribute in the best way they can.

Get the learner's needs met

Use language to create meaning (*more than grammar or rules!*)

Understand that 'errors' are a natural part of the learning process

Know that some learners are very good at **MIMICKING**...teach the sentence...move beyond simply repeating by creating a context of the sentence

Relate the new language to the learner's **CURRENT ABILITY** and **PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE** and experience

Focus on English that will be **MOST USEFUL** to the learner

Don't forget...

Diverse Language Abilities

Language skill levels can be different for each adult learner.

Be aware of your learner's:

**COMFORT &
LEARNING RATE**

4 Principles

Meaningful Communication

Is the material germane?

Success, Not Perfection

Communication is better than correct grammar!

Anxiety

Anxiety and language learning do not mix!

Exposure

You know the old phrase "Use it or lose it!"

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

- ⇒ Tutors helping learners develop their English skills to get what they need and want.
- ⇒ Tutors focusing on teaching learners how to USE the language to create meaning rather than HOW language works.
 - Some learners might want the ‘rules’ but many are more focused on expressing themselves in that moment
- ⇒ Tutors knowing that all learners will make progress if they are encouraged to try to use the English skills they are learning without worrying about accuracy.
 - Make the learning environment safe – allow, even encourage, mistakes; incorporate laughter; learn a few words in their native language – model the learning curve; and make sure the learner feels involved in the process.

*Word of
warning...*

If the English Language Learner has limited speaking skills, **don't** assume that they do not understand what they hear or read!

SOME ACTIVITIES...

Think-Pair-Share

Given time to think about a problem;
Share their ideas with another person;
Share their ideas with a larger group.

Round-Robin & Roundtable

Each individual in the group is invited to participate in a discussion, sharing an idea, providing an example;

Round-robin sharing is oral;

Roundtable sharing is in writing – one group, one paper and pen that is moved to each group member.

Jigsaw

Each member of the group becomes an 'expert' and shares that expertise or knowledge

Smaller groups are created with assigned 'topics' – individuals work with the smaller group and bring information back to the original group

Distributes learning, encourages learner interaction, and reduces the amount of reading one learner has to do

ASSESSMENT...NOT JUST A ONE TIME OCCURRENCE

Informal or Alternative

- Interview
- Oral reading
- Activity log
- Learner journal
- Assessment kit
- ESOLA
- CASAS oral screening tool
- Slosson's oral reading test

Formal

- CASAS
- TABE
- Slosson's

Curriculum-based

- Responses direct tutor to specific area or level within material



NO, IT IS NOT A TEST!

- ✘ We do not award certificates (General Educational Development) or degrees...however we do implement Comprehensive Adult Student Assessments System.
- ✘ **But** we do need to know where a learner is starting so that we can offer the best possible approach and tap into the most useful materials and resources.
- ✘ When possible, we try to provide every new learner with a Learner Orientation prior to their first meeting with a tutor. But sometimes you will need to conduct the assessment with your new learner.
- ✘ And, of course, you will be assessing the learner throughout the time you are working together to track your progress!

Many learners struggled in school and when they hear the word 'test' they panic!

We never tell learners that we are going to test them but, rather, indicate that we are going to ask them some questions to identify their strengths and see what we need to work on.

I always say that I want to be sure I start them in the right book or series... *it is to help me.*

I also tell them that I am going to take notes so I can remember everything we talk about. *Again, to help me!*