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Using Show and Tell in the Beginning ESOL Classroom

Purpose
To help beginning ESOL students develop speaking skills with the use of Show and Tell.

Rationale
Show and Tell, commonly used in childhood education, can be a unique way to help adult ESOL students develop their speaking and presentation skills. Show and Tell might also take on a deeper meaning for adult ESOL students who have traveled from their home country or who have moved frequently, says Sarah Lynn, a freelance teaching trainer, materials writer, and ESOL teacher with the Bridge Program at Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. (Lynn’s experience with Show and Tell provides much of the background for this article.) As students share personal information or objects during Show and Tell, it can help create connections in the classroom.

You can use Show and Tell as a warm-up activity—or you can expand it so it becomes a fully developed classroom activity. Here is how you can use Show and Tell with students. The end of this article also includes ideas on expanding Show and Tell for use with higher-level ESOL and ABE students.

The Basic Activity
1. Ask students if they have heard of Show and Tell. Explain that it is a common activity used in children’s classrooms. Give an example yourself by coming to class with an object that you can briefly show and explain.

2. Encourage students to bring an object that has significance for them. If you need examples of the kinds of objects students can bring, here are some examples that Lynn shared (if you are teaching beginning ESOL, you will want to explain these to students in simpler language):

   • A student named Janice showed the class a pebble she carries with her. Janice had been in a motorcycle accident in the mountains and was bleeding uncontrollably. A friend used a smooth pebble from the ground to help control the bleeding. Later, paramedics said the stone stopped Janice from bleeding to death.

   • A student named Edith showed a silver medallion she wears daily. The medallion was a farewell gift from her aunt before Edith began her trip from Guatemala to the United States. During her dangerous journey, Edith often touched the medallion to feel protected by her aunt.

More Information
Show and Tell could be a class activity or just a warm-up to your regular lesson. Here are some additional warm-up ideas, some of which you can expand to be part of your actual lessons.

Using the “Traditional Irish Blessing”
http://www.todays-weddings.com/planning/readings/irish.html
ProLiteracy director of special projects Linda Church had literacy-level students choose something to use as a read-aloud warm-up activity to start each class. They chose the first stanza of the “Traditional Irish Blessing.” Students initially worked on vocabulary and comprehension. Then, they worked on feelings and improving fluency as they read. They did this to start each class for several weeks. It was easy for them to see how much they had improved.

Poetry in the Adult ESL Class
http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/poetry.html
The Center for Adult English Language Acquisition provides ways to use poetry in the adult ESOL class. Again, poetry could be used at the start of your class or as a fully developed class activity.

Continued on page 4
3. Decide before class how much time you want to devote to Show and Tell. Do you want one or two students a day to present? If you have a smaller class, do you want all students to present on the same day? Do you want to have a different student present every day you meet, so your lessons will always include a Show and Tell activity? Inform your students accordingly so they can prepare.

4. Encourage students to think in advance about what they want to say. Depending on their proficiency level and comfort speaking to a group, some students will probably make notes or write out what they want to say in advance of class.

5. On the day of presentations, the student presenting should write the name of their object and a few keywords on the board. They should speak for about three minutes, pointing to keywords as appropriate.

6. Students can ask questions of the presenter. You can also encourage students to provide feedback on a piece of paper, to help hone their listening skills. Their sheet might look like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Show and Tell</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My name: __________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classmate’s name: __________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   1. What is the object? __________________
   2. What is the object’s story? __________________
   3. Why is it important to my classmate? __________________

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**Additional Practice and Notes**

If you want to use Show and Tell in a higher-level ESOL class or in an ABE class, consider the following ideas:

- Use Show and Tell to give advanced students practice with a specific speaking skill, such as persuading, asking permission, or contradicting. This takes the focus away from objects commonly used in Show and Tell and challenges students to hone their speaking and presentation skills while using a skill they have been learning in class.

- Ask students to bring in something theme-related for Show and Tell. For example, you might ask the class to bring in an object that makes them laugh, an object related to their family, or something important to their native country’s history or culture.

- Have students bring in (or show on their mobile device or computer) a news article that interests them. They should tell the class in a few sentences what the article is about and why they find it interesting.

- Pair students together for traditional Show and Tell. However, each person in the pair should tell the other person about the object they brought to class. Then, the second person tells the class about their partner’s object and why it is special for him/her.
9 Ways to Give Effective Feedback to Language Learners

Purpose
To help guide adult education language instructors in giving effective oral feedback and error correction to their students.

Rationale
Providing feedback and error correction to students when they are speaking is part of a language instructor’s job. However, the way each instructor provides this feedback may be a little different. Some instructors aim for explicit feedback—correcting mistakes the moment they occur—while others prefer to correct errors only when they get in the way of clear communication. Although there is no right or wrong approach, there’s no question that language learners need feedback to progress in their learning. The tips below give guidance in providing effective feedback and error correction from a number of sources (see sidebar).

Although most of these tips apply to the ESOL setting, other adult education instructors may find some applicability in their classroom.

How to Give Effective Oral Feedback and Error Correction

1. **In advance of an activity, decide how you will correct students’ errors.** For example, if students are learning a specific way to say a certain phrase, pronunciation point, or vocabulary words, then you’ll want to correct any mispronunciations accordingly. However, if you have a few students doing a role-play activity in front of the class, you don’t want to interrupt their role play just to correct errors. You can discuss errors right after the role play—and after praising what the role play participants did well (see tip four).

2. **Give students as many opportunities as possible to self-correct.** Students are more likely to remember mistakes and not make them in the future if they can identify what they need to correct. If you hear an error, you might repeat it to the student and put emphasis on the mistake. For example:
   - **Student:** She play soccer.
   - **Teacher:** She play soccer?
   Or, depending on the activity, you can focus on an error in front of the class (without singling out the person who made the error), and have the group make the correction together. This is another great way to find out if there are larger misunderstandings about something the class is learning.

   Another strategy is to rephrase the statement correctly without pointing out that you have done so. Although not all students will hear the difference,
those focusing on that particular aspect of speech will notice the difference and may even ask you about it.
Learning to identify one’s own errors will be easier for a higher-level student than for someone at a lower level.

3. **Consider error correction on a continuum.** At beginning levels, you want to help build students’ confidence to be able to use the language. As they move to intermediate and advanced levels, precision becomes more important so errors do not “fossilize”—or become a permanent part of their language. Although beginning learners do need some error correction, focus more on mistakes that hinder communication or that relate to what you are studying in a given lesson.
You’ll also want to consider if the error is one you hear frequently from other students (meaning you will probably want to correct the student or students who said it, so the class does not continually make the same error). You’ll even want to consider who made the error. For example, if a shy student makes the error in front of the whole class, you may want to focus on recognizing their contribution to the class rather than focusing on the error.

4. **Provide positive feedback.** Language learners thrive on knowing when they have done well. To bolster their confidence, use phrases such as “That’s right!”, “Keep up the good work,” or “You’re doing great” when they have spoken correctly.

5. **Provide criticism in a nonthreatening way.** When you make a correction, try to steer clear of phrases that criticize the speaker or might sound hostile, such as, “That’s wrong,” “Don’t you remember?”, “This is really easy,” or “You have to try harder.” Instead, consider phrases that show the student that English is a difficult language to learn:
- Almost!
- That’s a tricky one.
- Let’s try that again.
- English is very difficult.
- This one is hard for many students.

6. **Create an atmosphere where students are not uncomfortable if they make a mistake.** If you make a mistake as an instructor, let them know. If you have time during class one day, have the students teach you a few words in their native languages. They may realize just how easy it is to make mistakes when learning another language!

7. **Depending on your class size, ask students how they would like errors corrected.** This may be harder to do in a larger class. In a small group or one-to-one situation, if the students’ proficiency is intermediate or advanced, you can ask them how important error correction is. This gives you permission to correct errors—and gives you a sense of how much the students want to focus on accuracy versus just general good communication.

8. **During group activities, make a note of errors you hear and review them as a whole group.** This gives you a chance to point out errors and make all students aware of inaccuracies. It also avoids singling out any one student for mistakes.

9. **Provide feedback and error correction as quickly as possible.** Otherwise, it will not be relevant. Again, it’s not always appropriate to correct a student the moment he or she makes the error, but you’ll want to do it not long after the activity or speech in question.
Creating Essays with an Online Essay Map

Purpose
To help ABE and higher-level ESOL students prepare for essay writing with the use of an online essay map.

Rationale
Good essay writing takes preparation. Many students may not realize how much preparation is needed in writing a quality essay. The online essay map on pages 9 and 10 (available at http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/essay-30063.html), from the International Reading Association and National Council for Teachers of English, allows students to plan their essay step by step and screen by screen. Although the essay map is geared toward a K–12 setting, it can just as easily be used in adult education.

At the end of essay map completion, students can save, print, or even share their essay map. An online essay map gives students a new way to organize information for essay writing. It also may be favored by students who are comfortable with computer and Internet use. Here’s one way you can use the essay map with your students.

The Basic Activity
1. Make sure you have enough access to computers for all of your students. The online essay map also requires a Flash player. If the computers you are using do not have Flash, you can download it at http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/. Or, search online for "download Flash."

2. Review the essay maps on pages 9 and 10 of this issue before meeting with students. Be prepared to review introduction, main ideas, supporting details, or conclusion as necessary, depending on what your students have already learned about essay writing. We recommend you use this essay map after you’ve already

More Information
Here are more essay-writing resources.

How to Write an Essay in 5 Steps
http://adulted.about.com/od/writinghelp/tp/How-To-Write-An-Essay-In-5-Steps.htm
A short synopsis on essay writing from About.com.

Essay Topics for GED Practice
http://abeged.com/essaytopics.html
Eight topic ideas for students practicing for the GED® test.

Writing Topics
The writing topics at the link above are provided by the company that makes the TOEFL test.
taught your students the basics of writing an essay. However, you could still use the map with first-time essay writers. Page 9 shows a blank map, and page 10 shows what a complete essay map looks like.

3. In class, tell students they will use an online essay map to prepare to write. Lead them to the website listed in the “Rationale” section of this article. Ask them to type in their name and essay topic. Once they provide that information, they can continue on to essay planning.

4. Guide students through each screen that appears as part of the map. Students are prompted to provide an introduction, three main ideas, three supporting details under each main idea, and a conclusion. One nice feature is that students can click back and forth between each area without having to complete the previous area. In other words, students may still be developing their supporting details for Main Idea One, but they can use the back arrows to go to Main Idea Two and fill out the related information.

5. Encourage students to provide as much information on the essay map as you would like them to provide. You may want them to work on their map over more than one class session.

6. When your students are finished with their maps, they have the option to print, save, or share (email) it. Decide which you would like them to do and instruct accordingly. If you want them to save the maps, caution them to save before closing out of the program or starting a new map to avoid previously entered information from getting deleted.
You can show them what a final essay map looks like—see page 10 (essay content shown comes from Respond to Literature, Level F, published by New Readers Press in 2007 and is used with permission). Although the map on page 9 is blank, it still shows how the information flows along.

7. If you do not have computer access or have students who prefer to write their thoughts down on paper, you can still copy and use the blank, printed version of the essay map on page 9.

8. Have students write their essays with the help of their map. Or, you can expand the use of the maps by having students share the maps with each other and provide feedback.
Helen Keller

Introduction
Helen Keller was a famous American woman of the 20th century. Even though she could neither hear nor see, she became a teacher and a person who fought for those with disabilities.

Main Idea 1
Helen was a determined child.

Supporting Details
1. 19 months old—had a terrible fever affecting her sight and hearing. Her parents searched for help.
2. Helen learned sign language with a teacher’s help to overcome her frustrations.
3. Learned how to dress herself and use a knife and fork.

Main Idea 2
Helen was very intelligent.

Supporting Details
1. Developed her own signs to communicate.
2. She learned to sign English and learned to communicate and read in four languages.
3. She wrote on a typewriter. She eventually went to Radcliffe College.

Main Idea 3
Helen cared about others.

Supporting Details
1. Fought for the right of women to vote.
2. Spoke about the fight against poverty as a way to prevent some causes of blindness.
3. Wrote articles about racial equality, child labor, and other human rights issues.

Conclusion
Helen Keller overcame many obstacles and wanted other people to see her as being no different from a person who could see and hear. Her determination, intelligence, and activism for human rights are an inspiration to all people.
Teaching the Value of Good Credit

Purpose
To round out a lesson on credit for ESOL or ABE students by adding a focus on resources and ideas to manage bills when their budget is tight.

Rationale
The U.S. economy may have made strides recently, but that doesn’t mean some people are not still struggling to pay bills—including many adult students. Some students may think the best way to handle bill problems is to ignore them. They may not realize that ignoring these problems can mar their credit history, making it harder in the future to get a loan.

The activity below is a lesson you can add to any class focus on credit or money management. It comes from the Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center’s Money Talks curriculum, available at http://moneytalks.valrc.org/ and is used with permission.

The Basic Activity
1. Before class, download the “Whole Curriculum” link found on the Money Talks website. It is a large PDF file, so it may take a few minutes to download. Also download the “Teacher’s Guide” link for further resources.

2. Once you have downloaded these resources, print pages 105, 106, 108, and 111 from the “Whole Curriculum” link. These are part of the unit focused on credit and are geared toward beginning and intermediate ESOL students. Although there are many other resources you could use in your curriculum, for the purposes of this article, you will focus on the resources found on these pages. (Also note that Money Talks has materials with the same theme but geared toward advanced students. Those resources begin on page 207 of the curriculum).

For the picture story on page 111, make enough copies for each student. You can also find the picture story on page 13 of this issue. On pages 1 and 2 of the Money Talks

More Information
Here are a few more sites with great resources for adult financial literacy.

FDIC Money Smart Curriculum
http://www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/moneysmart/adult.html

Financial Resources and Economic Education
http://lvnj.org/content/financial-literacy

Money Wise
http://www.money-wise.org

Financial ESL Literacy Tool Box
http://www.esl-literacy.com/fit/

Practical Money Skills
http://www.practicalmoneyskills.com
This site requires a registration, but it is free to use.
Teachers Guide, there is an explanation of how to best use picture stories (the Money Talks curriculum includes several picture stories).

3. In class, ask students why credit cards can be good or bad. For example, they may help to pay for something when there is no other source of money, but they may come with high interest rates. Or, users may have trouble paying off their credit card debt.

Ask students why it is important that they pay credit card bills on time. What happens if they do not pay their bills on time? What should someone do if they cannot pay bills on time? What does it mean to have good or bad credit?

4. Give each student (or pair of students) a picture story called “Bad Credit—No Loan!” Read the story below aloud to them (this is the same story that appears on page 106 of the curriculum and page 13 of this issue). You can also give students a copy of the story text, although we recommend you go through the story at least once with students focusing only on the pictures, not the text.

### Bad Credit—No Loan!

Ali has many bills to pay. He cannot pay his credit card bill for $1,250. He is frustrated. He throws his bills in the trash.

Ali’s wife is pregnant. They see a house they want to buy. They meet with a loan officer at the bank. They show him a picture of the house. The loan officer says, “You don’t pay your bills on time. Your credit is bad. No loan for you!”

Ali needs good credit. He cuts up his credit cards. He organizes his bills. He saves money. He starts to pay his bills on time.

Ali calls his landlord. He says, “Please write a letter that says I pay my rent on time every month.” His landlord says, “Okay, no problem.”

The next year, Ali, his wife, and his little boy meet the loan officer. The loan officer says, “Your credit is good. We can give you a loan.”

Ali and his family buy a new house. They have another baby. They are very happy.

5. Discuss the story with students and go over any difficult vocabulary. This might include frustrated, organizes, cuts up, and loan officer.

6. Once you feel confident that students understand the story, review the following discussion questions:
   a. What did Ali do to try to pay his bills on time?
   b. Why did he write a letter to his landlord?
   c. Would you do the same things Ali did? Or would you do something differently?
   d. What might have happened if Ali did not change the way he organized his money?

7. Discuss with students the importance of communicating with bill-related companies when you have trouble making payments. Many are willing to work with you if you show you want to pay, even if it is a small amount. As outlined on page 108 of Money Talks, there are also services that offer credit counseling. One such source is The National Foundation for Consumer Credit & Debt Advice (http://www.debtadvice.org or 1-800-388-2227, or 1-800-682-9832 in Spanish) or The Association of Independent Consumer Credit Counseling Agencies (http://www.aiccca.org or 1-800-450-1794).

8. For further expansion, see the activity on page 108 of Money Talks. This prompts students to write a letter to the landlord in the story to provide evidence to the bank that Ali pays his rent on time.
Picture Story and Activities
Bad Credit – No Loan!

Lesson 4: Credit
Worksheet 4-2 page 1

Picture Story – Bad Credit – No Loan!

www.valrc.org/courses/moneytalks
Beginner/Low-Intermediate           Unit II: Planning for the Future

Used with permission from Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center. Money Talks Curriculum. http://moneytalks.valrc.org/
Encourage Students to Finish Their GED® Test in 2013

http://www.gedtestingservice.com/educators/closeout

The new GED® test goes into effect in January 2014. Let students who have incomplete scores know that if they do not complete their test in 2013, they will have to start over when the new test goes into effect. Approximately one million students have started but not completed the GED test, according to a press release from the GED Testing Service®. Called the Closeout Campaign (see link above), the GED Testing Service has ads that programs can use to get this message out to students.

Get Ready for the 2014 GED Test

http://www.gedtestingservice.com/educators/new-assessment

The GED Testing Service has various resources available to help you and your students learn about test changes. Go to the link above for more information—and check out new and updated New Readers Press related resources (see blurb below). Inform your students (and instructors) that the new GED test, which will be available solely online, will only be offered at authorized testing centers.

New Readers Press Resources to Help Students Prepare for the New GED® Test


Check out these New Readers Press (NRP) resources to help your students prepare for the revised GED test, which goes into effect in January 2014. “Teaching Adults: A 2014 GED Test Resource Book” is an addition to NRP’s popular Teaching Adults series and is a resource guide for GED® test preparation instructors. It includes an overview of the new 2014 test, a description of new test item types, and activities for each subject area as well as interdisciplinary activities. It also addresses the needs of adult learners and how to select engaging materials. The best-selling NRP “Scoreboost” has been revised for the 2014 GED® test and now includes an additional math book to cover more intensive skills and new math, language arts, and thinking skill lessons. Each unit review also has additional online practice questions for the new item types.
Global Talent Bridge: Building Opportunities for Skilled Immigrants


This 76-page resource helps to support instructors working with students who may have a good deal of education or specialized work skills in their native country. Created by World Education Services, the resource guide offers solutions to help integrate skilled immigrants into the U.S. work force so they can maximize their skills. The guide also offers ideas for classroom instruction to give this group of students practice with the skills and education they used outside the U.S.

Container Gardening


Looking for a unique way to get students’ hands dirty—and give them practice with math and science? This lesson on container gardening, available on the National Gardening Association’s website, provides a lesson on how classrooms can develop a garden using five-gallon containers. Although the lesson is geared toward K–12 instruction, it could be used in adult education if the program has space for the garden and access to potting soil, seeds, and five-gallon containers.

Internet Basics Curriculum

http://literacy.broadband.ri.gov/resources/curriculum/

Although using the Internet might be second nature for many adult education instructors, that’s not always the case for students—even in today’s digital age. The curriculum at the link above, designed by Broadband Rhode Island, provides five modules and teaches about Internet use to novice students. The modules, available in both English and Spanish, cover website basics, search basics, email, review, and Internet safety and privacy. Most modules take about two hours to complete, according to the website. There is also a short lesson for students who need help with mouse and keyboarding skills.

2013 USCAL Registration Now Open

http://www.uscal.org

The U.S. Conference on Adult Literacy (USCAL) brings together adult literacy advocates and educators to share new ideas, learn from leading thinkers, and inspire one another. Perhaps that’s why so many attendees describe USCAL as the highlight of their year. Join us at the 2013 conference, to be held October 31–November 2 in Washington, D.C., and discover what the buzz is all about. The conference will offer 100+ professional development workshops that share proven successful strategies and practical tools for adult literacy instruction, program management and leadership, and advocacy. USCAL registration is now open. Visit http://www.uscal.org, or contact conference@proliteracy.org for more information.

Tech Tips for Teachers

http://techtipsforteachers.weebly.com/index.html

Discover how to better integrate technology in your classroom with the blog at the link above. Written by staff members at World Education for the LINCS Region 1 Professional Development Center, some recent articles have covered surveying and creating graphs, using online audio articles, and using the web to support persuasive writing. You can also click on links in the blog to focus on activities specifically related to ESOL, games, reading, writing, listening, or Google.

Resource for Students to Practice English Online

http://englishworldwide.ning.com/page/about-this-site
http://englishworldwide.ning.com/group/idioms/forum/topics/idioms-for-colors

A new website called Learn English with a WorldWide Perspective is another resource to help students practice their English independently online. Instructors on the site share or guide lessons via blogs, videos, and discussion. One recent popular discussion focused on introducing idioms for colors (see second link above). The website notes that it is an online English language learning network.
Studying for the GED test can be a challenge, and students often feel frustrated, says Chris Richards, an instructor and site coordinator with Seeds of Literacy. However, Westry proved herself to be ideally motivated. “Her continued optimism and passion to work through it separated her from others who either become more focused and less cheerful, or those who are good natured but don’t attend for very long,” says Richards.

Richards also notes that Westry was particularly direct about staying in control of her education. She actively asked for feedback and expressed concern about her progress.

“‘The help I got at Seeds made the difference,’” says Westry. “‘The staff and tutors keep you going and make sure you are on the right track.’”

Although balancing school with family can be hard for anyone, Westry says her children—now 14, 13, and 12—have been supportive. “‘With them older, it’s a lot easier,’” she says. “‘They know my goals, and they try to help me.’”

Westry’s motivation—and the help from Seeds staff—led her to earn her GED diploma in November 2012.

Although Westry was initially considering a career in healthcare administration, she now realizes she has a strong interest in child development and psychology and will begin related college classes this summer.

Westry’s commitment to education also led her to volunteer with Seeds, something she will begin soon.

Westry believes she can help keep students at Seeds encouraged by sharing her experience with the program. “‘It’s never too late. Stop making excuses,’” she says. “‘If you want it, you’re going to do it.’”