Editor’s Corner

Happy New Year!

Who couldn’t use a laugh these days? Laughter eases tension—and easing tension is a great way to help our students learn more. By laughing together, the “affective filter” theory referred to in adult education is lowered: Students form bonds, become more comfortable, and are able to learn more.

This issue of Notebook includes some articles that we hope will get you and your students laughing—and, in turn, learning more.

Our article on managing stress involves a classic episode from the beloved TV show “I Love Lucy.” Although we classify the article as related to Listening and Speaking, its potential goes beyond those skills. The article helps students, through laughter, to feel more comfortable in class. The article also contains a lesson to help students manage stress. Like laughter, managing stress is something important for everyone.

Teacher Barbara Linderman, featured in the Tutor Profile, also makes comments related to helping students feel more at ease. An award-winning educator, Linderman is based in Alaska. We’re pleased to profile someone from a state we don’t hear from often enough.

Although our remaining articles may not elicit chuckles, they should provide instructors and students with information about important tests and skills.

“What to Expect with the 2014 GED® Test” provides insight into the upcoming GED changes for 2014—and how you can make use of the remaining time and resources with the current test.

“Calculating Tips” provides a lesson on helping students calculate percentages, a skill they can use with sales tax, restaurant tips, and many other situations.

“Exploring Sodium” covers an area of science to help students working toward their GED or other more advanced educational aspirations.

Finally, Exploring Resources includes some great websites on ways to help students improve computer literacy, resources on upcoming conferences, and more.

Enjoy our latest issue. Please stay in touch with your ideas for future articles.

The Editor
“I Love Lucy” Laughter as a Stress Reliever

Purpose
To engage high beginning, intermediate, and advanced ESOL students in laughter while helping them develop listening, speaking, and other skills.

Rationale
Adult education students often come to class after long days at work or time spent caring for others. They are frequently tired and stressed, and may be nervous or unsure of themselves in the classroom. By engaging in a fun activity—one that will ideally elicit a good deal of laughter—the class becomes a more comfortable place for learning. Laughing lowers what is commonly referred to in adult ESOL as the “affective filter”—learning blocks related to anxiety, self-doubt, and boredom.

The lesson presented here comes from the New England Literacy Resource Center’s website, Managing Stress to Improve Learning (see sidebar on this page). The lesson is used and adapted with permission from the program. It was written by Jeri Bayer of The Welcome Project in Somerville, Massachusetts. You can find this specific lesson online at http://tinyurl.com/9w8q4ht.

The Basic Activity
Before Watching the Clip

1. Prepare the following materials in advance of the class:
   a. A video clip of the famous “Lucy and Ethel at the Candy Factory” episode from the “I Love Lucy” show. The clip is three minutes long. You can find it on YouTube at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0YG5R9i53A. If available, you can also use DVDs of old “I Love Lucy” episodes.
   b. The technology to show the clip (either a computer with projection beam, a tablet if you are in a small-group tutoring situation, or a TV with a DVD player).
   c. A script of dialogue from the clip (see page 4).
   d. A roll of paper towels and a bag of chocolate kisses. You should also have aluminum foil (cut into squares large enough to wrap each kiss), two hats, and a rectangular table.

2. Before you show the clip, facilitate a discussion about “funny things” that happen in our lives, including at work. Distinguish

More Information
Managing Stress to Improve Learning is a new website hosted by the New England Literacy Resource Center. It helps adult educators learn how chronic stress, adverse life conditions, and trauma affect the brain and learning. On the site, instructors can find ideas about how to integrate stress management and promote mental health in the adult education classroom. We encourage you to explore the many resources available on the site.

Managing Stress to Improve Learning (main page)
http://www.nelrc.org/managingstress/
between *fun* and *funny* by writing these two words on the board and discussing the difference in meaning. Also write the word *laugh*, a word that is not spelled the way it sounds.

3. **Ask if students are familiar with the “I Love Lucy” show.** Explain that it is a famous TV show from the 1950s. Lucy Ricardo, aka Lucille Ball—famous for her comic wit and red hair—and husband Ricky Ricardo (Desi Arnaz) were characters on the show, along with their neighbors Fred (William Frawley) and Ethel Mertz (Vivian Vance).

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**“I Love Lucy” Candy Factory Script**

**Boss:** All right girls, listen carefully. This is the wrapping department.

**Lucy:** Yes ma’am.

**Boss:** Now, the candy will pass by on this conveyor belt and continue into the next room where the girls will pack it. Now your job is to take each piece of candy and wrap it in one of these papers and then put it back on the belt. You understand?

**Lucy:** Yes sir. Yes ma’am!

**Boss:** Let ‘er roll! Let ‘er roll! Well, wait here. Somebody is asleep at the switch!

**Lucy:** What are you doing up here? I thought you were downstairs boxing chocolates.

**Ethel:** Oh they kicked me out of there fast.

**Lucy:** Why?

**Ethel:** I kept pinching them to see what kind they were. This is the fourth department I’ve been in.

**Lucy:** I didn’t do so well either.

**Boss:** All right, girls. Now this is your last chance! If ONE piece of candy gets past you, and into the packing room UNWRAPPED, YOU’RE FIRED!

**Lucy and Ethel:** Yes ma’am.

**Boss:** Let ‘er roll!

**Lucy:** Oh. This is easy!

**Ethel:** Yeah. We can handle this okay!

**Lucy:** Listen…Ethel…I think we’re fighting a losing game.

**Lucy:** Here she comes!

**Boss:** Well…fine…you’re doing splendidly! Speed it up a little!
It is a show beloved by many Americans, and you can still sometimes watch reruns on TV today. Although many episodes from the show are famous, the one set in a candy factory is particularly memorable. Explain to students that they will watch the candy factory clip to show a funny situation at work. They will then act it out. Tell students the clip shows Lucy, Ethel, and their boss.

Watching the Clip

4. **Play the three-minute clip.** Check comprehension. The dialogue is fast so students may not have understood much of what was said, but they should be able to describe the basic action of the story if you provide prompts.

5. **Play the clip a second time after asking students to focus on the dialogue.** Ask students what, if anything, they understood of what was said.

6. **Hand out the script and read it aloud slowly.** Discuss the meaning. Play the clip a third time, and ask students to follow along with the script.

Getting Ready to Perform

7. **Ask three students to play three roles.** Break students into groups to practice the dialogue with each other, paying attention to pronunciation. Encourage them to use as much expression as possible (this is especially important for the boss). Check in with the different groups to help with pronunciation.

8. **Ask everyone to gather around the rectangular table.** Explain that two people will be needed to operate the conveyor belt using the roll of paper towels. Ask for volunteers.

9. **Ask for another volunteer to be the candy “dropper” (the person to place the chocolate kisses on the conveyor belt).** Ask for volunteers to play Lucy, Ethel, and the boss. Set Lucy and Ethel up behind the table, as in the video clip, with a pile of foil squares in front of them. Give them each a hat to wear. (There may be more students than there are roles. The extras can be the audience and have roles in the next round.)

Practicing the Clip

10. **Once everyone is in place, call “action,” and let the scene play out as it will.** Lots of laughs are guaranteed! Repeat to give roles to those students who did not have one the first time.

11. **At the next class meeting, show the clip again for the sake of those who were absent from the previous class.** Then arrange for a repeat performance of the seasoned actors or anyone else who would like to participate.

12. **To close, ask how everyone is feeling.** If it doesn’t come up, inquire if people are feeling relaxed. Remind everyone that watching something funny can help relieve stress—and help encourage better learning.

**Additional Practice and Notes**

Although you could do this lesson over one class session, you don’t have to do so. It may be better to break it up over two or three sessions, which will also encourage students who were previously absent to see the clip and practice the role play.

Here are some extension ideas with the lesson:

- Mix up the order of the script, and have students work in small groups to put the script text in the correct order.

- Present the script with missing words, and have students listen to the clip again to write in the missing words. Use the lesson with higher level students as a foray into script writing—perhaps for a role play, simulation, or even a theatrical performance.
More Information

TV411 is a new site to help adults gain basic reading, writing, math, and science skills for educational, career, and personal goals. Lessons for reading, writing, vocabulary, math, science, and finance are available on the site. Some lessons are also available in Spanish. The lessons are provided in multimedia formats. TV411 is part of the global nonprofit Education Development Center’s Learning and Teaching Division. There is a wealth of good resources on the TV411 website. Here are a few highlights you can view first.

TV411 (main page)
http://www.tv411.org

Teaching with TV411
http://www.tv411.org/teaching-tv411

Use this page to help guide you through how to use TV411’s lessons. You may decide to use the site’s lessons in a similar manner as we did in our article, or you may find new ways to use the website’s lessons.

Navigating TV411
http://www.tv411.org/navigating-tv411

This site will orient you to how TV411’s various lesson components work.

Purpose

To expose students to information on sodium—its nutritional value, ideal daily limits, and the purpose of sodium in cooking.

Rationale

This lesson from TV411.org exposes learners to sodium and some basic information about the periodic table of elements. It includes information on cooking and nutritional values of sodium, so the content is also appropriate for a math or cooking lesson. This lesson is used and adapted with permission from Education Development Center, Inc. For more information on TV411’s resources, see the sidebar on this page.

The Basic Activity

1. In preparation for your lesson, watch the 10-minute video clip “Video: Salt,” available at: http://www.tv411.org/science/tv411-whats-cooking/video-salt. The video shows the host making spicy shrimp with couscous. While she is cooking, the host and a guest talk about what sodium is and how it is different from salt, how much sodium humans need in their diets, and how much salt she will add to what she is cooking. The video presents the material in an upbeat, easy-to-follow fashion (it might also make you and your students hungry!).

2. Make sure to arrange for Internet access for your students, either with a computer that has Internet access and a projector or through computers that students can use individually or with a partner.

3. Before watching the video, ask students what they know about salt and sodium. Are they the same thing or are they different? Do they think their diets contain a lot of sodium? Why or why not? Why do they think we add salt to many dishes that we cook?

4. Show the video. Stop periodically to check comprehension.

Continued on page 7
5. After watching the video, students can take TV411’s quiz on salt. Go to http://www.tv411.org/science/tv411-whats-cooking/salt-science-lesson. Students will read a short introduction and then complete a 13-question quiz about sodium. The answers to the quiz are available in the video. Check in with students to see how they did.

6. Next, students will follow some brief lessons and quizzes online about elements and chemical compounds. Again, make sure students are following the prompts accurately. Answer any questions that arise.

7. Guide students through the next part of the lesson about protons, neutrons, atoms, and nuclei.

8. The lesson continues by introducing students to the periodic table of elements and asking questions about it. Again, guide students through this part.

More Information

Continued from page 6

Science
http://www.tv411.org/science
This page shows the various science-related lessons available on TV411.

Math
http://www.tv411.org/math
This page shows the math-related lessons on TV411. Some topics, such as the salt video profiled in our article, have related math and science lessons.

Expansion Activities

There are other ways you can use the TV411 lesson on salt.

For example:

- The class can cook the spicy shrimp recipe. Or, students or instructors can cook the dish at home, perhaps comparing versions of the dish with and without salt. The recipe is available on the website as a PDF (a document you can easily print) at the following site: http://www.tv411.org/sites/default/files/TV411_Recipe_Pineapple-Shrimp.pdf.

- Students could read food labels for a day to measure the amount of salt in their daily diet.

- If your students are also focused on math skills, they can complete TV411’s math-geared lesson on salt, available at http://www.tv411.org/science/tv411-whats-cooking/salt-math-lesson.

Recipe

**Spicy Pineapple Pepper Shrimp**

Serves 4

**Ingredients**

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1½ pounds large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 green bell pepper, seeded and cut into chunks
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and cut into chunks
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ small white onion, cut into chunks
- 2 teaspoons red chili flakes
- 1 cup canned pineapple chunks with juice
- 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro (optional)
- Salt to taste

**Directions**

In a sauté pan or wok, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add shrimp and cook, stirring, for about 1-2 minutes or until shrimp begins to turn pink. Add the green and red peppers, onion, garlic, and chili flakes. Taste and add salt if necessary. Lower heat to medium and cook about 8-10 minutes, or until shrimp is cooked and peppers are slightly tender. Stir in pineapple with juice. Continue cooking for 4-6 minutes until pineapple is heated through and juice begins to bubble and thicken. Remove from heat. For an extra kick, stir in some cilantro. Serve over steamed couscous.
What to Expect With the 2014 GED® Test

By Meagen Farrell Howe, Educational Consultant, Farrell Ink, LLC, Cleveland, Ohio

Purpose
To explain changes to the upcoming GED® test.

Rationale

Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
The new test will follow the Common Core State Standards, or CCSS. The development of the CCSS has been a grassroots effort over many years to improve interstate communication about education. The CCSS is like a national atlas. It provides a road map of the landmark knowledge and skills in mathematics and English language arts that students are required to master at each grade level on their journey to high school graduation. However, the CCSS cannot measure or dictate how each individual will move forward on the learning path. The GED Testing Service has selected specific standards from CCSS to use as Assessment Targets.

Computer Based
In 2014 all tests will be delivered and managed on computers at authorized testing centers. The mathematics test will provide a formula list and an on-screen calculator (TI-30XS) for select problems. The onscreen calculator has similar functions as the handheld Casio FX-260 calculator.

Important note: The GED Testing Service actively refutes and litigates claims that the GED test can or will be offered online outside of authorized testing centers. Such claims should be considered a scam and reported to the GED Testing Service.

Pricing
For the first year, the 2014 GED test will cost at least $120. This price may be set higher by jurisdictions and may increase in future years.
Two levels of credential

The new test will have one basic “passing” level for those test takers who are looking for a high school equivalency diploma. Test takers who score higher will be awarded a “career- and college-readiness” credential. This higher credential may be required for applications to some postsecondary programs, scholarships, job training programs, or job applications.

Varied test question formats

Although the test still will have multiple-choice questions, computer-based testing allows for a wider range of question formats that can be scored instantly. Technology-enhanced question formats include: short-answer written response, hot spots, drag and drop, and cloze reading with drop-down menus.

Interdisciplinary subjects with integrated writing

Writing will no longer be an independent subject. Test takers will be required to write short answer responses related to science. Analyzing mathematical representations will be assessed within science and social studies. Reading will include 75 percent non-fiction texts, including science and social studies content.

Extended response replaces the essay portion

There will no longer be a one-sentence prompt and five-paragraph essay. Test takers will be expected to provide written extended responses to one- or two-source texts, up to 650 words in length. Extended response will be required in both the reading and social studies test sections. Test takers should cite the source text to support their arguments. Test takers can use 45 minutes in reading and 25 minutes in social studies to analyze the texts and type an organized response.

Webb’s Depth of Knowledge replaces Bloom’s taxonomy

In all subjects, the CCSS have increased the level of analytical skill required by high school graduates. Instructors can take this opportunity to make learning both more fun and more challenging. The 2014 revision uses Dr. Norman Webb’s Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels to develop a four-point score to measure the complexity level required by test items. Approximately 80 percent of test items will be written at levels two and three, with the other 20 percent written at level one. The DOK four-point score measures skills in four areas:

1. RECALL: of a fact, information, or a procedure
2. BASIC APPLICATION: of a skill, concept, or procedure using two or more steps
3. STRATEGIC THINKING: reasoning, developing a plan or sequence of steps, answering questions with more than one possible answer—generally takes less than 10 minutes
4. EXTENDED THINKING: requires investigation and time to process multiple conditions of the problem or task and requires non-routine manipulations
Calculating Tips

More Information

Here are some more lessons and resources regarding how to calculate percentages.

Free 15% and 20% Tip Table
http://www.itipping.com/free-tip-table.htm
Use this website as a shortcut to find 15% or 20% tips. Students could cut this out and keep it in their wallets. (You probably don’t want to encourage this until they have mastered how to calculate these percentages on their own.)

Tip Calculator
http://webmath.com/tip.html
As the name implies, you can place a certain dollar amount into this calculator and indicate the tip percentage you want to give. It will provide you with the answer. This could be a way for more advanced students to set up problems and check themselves.

How to Calculate a Restaurant Tip
This video is a little over a minute long and presented by an educator.

Purpose
To help ABE students calculate tips.

Rationale
Calculating tips is something students have to do in many situations, particularly at restaurants. If they know how to calculate tips, students can apply that same skill of percentage calculations in other areas of their life, including how to calculate the amount one might save during a sale while shopping. The lesson shown here is adapted from TeachersDomain.org and used with permission. (This year, the website is transitioning its material to www.pbslearningmedia.org.) The original version of the lesson, called “Using Percents to Calculate Tips,” is available at http://www.teachersdomain.org/resource/vtl07.math.number.per.lptipping/.

The lesson assumes some familiarity—but not complete mastery—of calculating percentages. The lesson also involves a short video that is available online. Although it would be helpful to include the video as part of your lesson, it is not necessary.

The Basic Activity

1. Ask students how often they eat at sit-down restaurants where a tip is usually given to the server. What do they do when it is time to calculate a tip? What kind of tip do they usually give? Review the customary rule of a 15% tip, or even 20% if the service was outstanding.

2. Distribute the handout on pages 12 and 13. Review it with students.
3. **Prepare students for a one-minute video on tipping that you will show them.** The video is from TV411.org (for more information on TV411.org, see the sidebar on page 6). The video is available at http://www.tv411.org/math/fractions-decimals-percentages/video-tipping. Point out to students that the video uses some estimation skills. If you have already taught those skills in class, it will be a quick review. If you have not covered those skills, you can address them along with the video. Discuss the strategy illustrated in the video.

4. **To check student comprehension, you can offer them the following assessments.** See the worksheets below, or find Word versions of them at http://www.teachersdomain.org/resource/vtl07.math.number.per.lptipping. Level A has students calculating 10% and 5% of given whole numbers. Level B is somewhat more difficult, with students calculating 15% and 20% of given whole numbers; however, students must also extend their reasoning to calculate 35% of a whole number.

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**Answers**

Here are answers to the “Calculating Tips” handout and the two Assessment sheets.

**Assessment Level A (below)**
1) 4; 2) 9.5; 3) 17; 4) 8; 5) 0.5; 6) 3.2

**Assessment Level B (below)**
1) 6; 2) 14.25; 3) 25.5; 4) 6; 5) 9.6; 6) 180; 7) $28.00

**“Calculating Tips” Handout (page 12)**
1) 9; 2) 25; 3) 150; 4) 2.5; 5) divide; 6) 7.2, 1.1, 1.25, 1.678; 7) 4.5; 8) 12.5; 9) 75; 10) 1.25; 11) 9; 12) 30; 13) $3.59

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**“Using Percents to Calculate Tips”**

**Assessment Level A**

Name: __________________ Date: __________

Answer the following questions without using a calculator or double digit multiplication.

1. 10% of 40 =
2. 10% of 95 =
3. 10% of 170 =
4. 5% of 40 =
5. 5% of 10 =
6. 5% of 64 =

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**“Using Percents to Calculate Tips”**

**Assessment Level B**

Name: __________________ Date: __________

Answer the following questions without using a calculator.

1. 15% of 40 =
2. 15% of 95 =
3. 15% of 170 =

Using a similar strategy, answer the following questions.

4. 20% of 30 =
5. 20% of 48 =
6. 15% of 1200 =
7. 35% of $80.00 =
“Calculating Tips” Handout

In restaurants, it is customary to tip at least 15% of the total bill. To figure out this amount, sometimes it is easier to break it up into two calculations: 10% and 5%.

10% of a number is \( \frac{10}{100} \) of that number or \( \frac{1}{10} \) of the number.

Solve the following. The first problem has been completed for you. Be sure to show your work.

1. 10% of 30 = \( \frac{1}{10} \) of 30 = \( \frac{1}{10} \times 30 = \frac{30}{10} = 3 \)

Here is a visual representation of this.

10 groups, 10% of 30 = 3

1. 10% of 90 =
2. 10% of 250 =
3. 10% of 1500 =
4. 10% of 25 =
5. Fill in the blank: In general, when we take 10% of a number we ______________ by 10.
6. Examine the table below. The column on the right represents 10 percent of the number in the left column. The first three are done for you. Fill in the rest of the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>10% of Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>230</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$16.78</td>
<td>$1.678</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even though it’s easy to figure out 10% by moving the decimal point, you must always be able to justify this procedure mathematically, as follows:

5% of a number is \( \frac{5}{100} \) of that number or \( \frac{1}{20} \) of the number. However, it’s easier to solve 5% by figuring out 10% and cutting the 10% calculation in half.

For example: 5% of 30 is equal to one-half of 10% of 30
So we take \( \frac{1}{2} \) of 3 and get 1.5

Answer the following questions.

7. 5% of 90 =
8. 5% of 250 =
9. 5% of 1500 =
10. 5% of 25 =

To find 15% of a given number you calculate 10% of the given number and then 5% of the given number. Then add those two together. Use this method to calculate the following percentages:

11. 15% of 60 =
12. 15% of 200 =
13. 15% of $24.00 =
New Booklets Help with Reading, Writing, and Motivation

http://sites.nationalacademies.org/DBASSE/Adult_Literacy/index.htm

The National Academies of Science has new, free PDF resources available. “Developing Reading and Writing” has findings and instructional recommendations based on a 2012 research synthesis report called “Improving Adult Instruction.” In addition to the research findings, the booklet also includes best practices for instruction. “Supporting Learning and Motivation” includes research about instructional design and adult motivation. The resources are available online for free or in print for a small fee.

“Making Sense of Decoding and Spelling”

http://lincs.ed.gov/publications/making_sense

A new resource, “Making Sense of Decoding and Spelling,” can help ABE teachers more effectively teach decoding and spelling. This publication is an evidence-based course of study designed to teach adult learners to decode and spell words accurately and fluently, according to the publication’s website. The free materials, all available online, include a teachers’ guide, lesson plans, and a learner activity book. The Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the National Institute for Literacy, and the U.S. Department of Education Office of Vocational and Adult Education funded the research from which these publications were created.

Teaching Computer Literacy: “Log on and Learn”

http://lvnj.org/content/computer-literacy

Literacy Volunteers of New Jersey has online training resources for adult literacy programs that would like to improve students’ computer literacy skills and incorporate computer technology into their classes. “Log on and Learn,” which targets both adult literacy instructors and students, has sections to assist students with email, using the Internet, learning about Microsoft Word, building computer vocabulary, and more. The weblink where you can find the guide also lists other helpful online sites that students can use. The guide is available free as a downloadable PDF or in print for a cost.

Helping Students with Discounts on a Mobile or Landline Phone

http://www.lifelinesupport.org/ls/

This website details a federal program that helps eligible individuals pay for wireless or home telephone service. Households that meet eligibility requirements can receive up to $9.25 per month in Lifeline discounts and may also receive additional state support. Approximately 2,000 telephone companies are eligible to provide these discounts, according to the website. Users can review the website to find out if they are eligible for the program. Participating phone companies in their state are also listed.

Fun Puzzles for Adult Learners


The Challenger series from New Readers Press has some fun online puzzles for adult learners, including word scrambles, word searches, and crosswords. When you get to the website, click on “Online Components.”
Easy Stories for English Learners with Video and Audio

http://cdlponline.org/

Help students develop their reading and listening skills in English with stories centered around topics of interest to them, including Health & Safety, Working, School, Family, Money, and more. The site, created by the California Distance Learning Project, has a wealth of stories under each topic area. Some also have video. The stories show the text, and students can read the text while listening to the audio. Stories are accompanied by practice activities.

USCAL Southern Regional Conference

http://www.uscal.org

Mark your calendar for the USCAL Southern Regional Conference, to be held May 1–3 in Nashville, Tennessee. Topics will include basic literacy and ESOL instruction, grant writing, and volunteer retention and recruitment. For more information, including accommodations, offsite event details, and workshop descriptions, contact conference@proliteracy.org.

Patient Education Tools

http://cch.northwestern.edu/edtools/

Help students learn about common health issues such as asthma, diabetes, flu shots, and the importance of mammograms with the help of this website, developed by the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. The site has short videos about its health topics, and some material is also available in Spanish. A resource on heart disease is even available in Hindi.

“Laptop Letters”

http://www.makebeliefscomix.com/How-to-Play/Educators/Family-Literacy/Laptop-Letters-eBook/

A new resource from MakeBeliefsComix.com helps ESOL students write important letters to their children. The resource, called “Laptop Letters: Sending Wise & Loving Messages to Young People in Your Life,” helps teachers use classroom exercises to encourage students to write notes and messages to children in their lives. The book includes writing prompts, and students can write the notes on computers, mobile phones, or paper. There are also sample letters and notes in the book.
Some adult education tutors come to their programs with a background in teaching. Others come with a completely unrelated previous career. Barbara Linderman has been able to transfer her dedication to helping and educating others from her previous experience as a registered nurse to her volunteer work at the Alaska Literacy Program (ALP) in Anchorage.

Linderman had always enjoyed reading—so much so that her mother had to hide books and other written material from her at a young age so she wouldn’t read them. Although she has always had an appreciation for literacy and reading, her primary career became nursing. “As a registered nurse, you are always teaching,” Linderman says. At one point in her nursing career, she began to work as a nurse educator, which got her to think more seriously about the skills involved with teaching adults. A manager encouraged her to delve further into adult education. After dabbling with related courses at a local college, she decided to get her masters degree in adult education from the University of Phoenix via an online program.

After a reorganization at her job and eventual retirement, she decided in 2008 to voluntarily teach basic literacy to immigrants and refugees. She now teaches one to two classes at a time at the ALP, for a total of about six hours a week, says ALP manager Gladys Geertz. “She walks in with a smile, at the end of her first class she takes a break and walks her dog, and she returns to teach another class,” says Geertz.

Linderman currently teaches preliterate students in one class and advanced students in a second class. One might wonder where students in an ESOL class in Alaska hail from, and Linderman reveals they are, literally, from all around the world—Bhutan, Somalia, Dominican Republic, Peru, China, Korea, Belarus, and Mexico are just some of the countries that her students call their native home.

In 2012, Linderman received the Alaska Adult Education Association Volunteer of the Year Award. She received this award because of her dedication and also because of her willingness to try new things in the classroom, Geertz says. “She attends [training] classes and then tries new methods with our students,” says Geertz.

“It’s about getting students to relax and enjoy the class,” Linderman says. “I can be intense, but I get myself to relax, too. Once the students are comfortable, they are free to begin learning English.”

Linderman also encourages students to get out in the community to practice English. For example, during the most recent holiday season, Linderman suggested that students attend local Christmas bazaars to practice English and to get a sense of American holiday traditions.

Linderman’s commitment to teaching has also led her to join her program’s training team to prep new volunteers to teach ESOL.