**Supporting English Language Learners**

**Overview**  
This companion document offers activities and additional resources to support adult education programs and workforce development partners in helping English language learners enter and progress along career pathways. The activities in this document are intended to be completed collaboratively with adult education and partner staff to increase the awareness of the challenges English language learners may encounter when learning new material. The activity descriptions indicate when the activity might occur (before, during, or after the video) and the estimated time it will take to complete the activity. Some or all of the activities can be completed during one cross-training session or be spread across multiple sessions.

**View the Training Video**   
The training video related to this guide can be accessed on the [PA Adult Education Resources YouTube channel](https://youtu.be/F6dvmjriabg). The total run time for the video is 34 minutes and 37 seconds.

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Pre-video Activity-True or False*(40 minutes)*

**Directions:**

1. Read each statement and mark if you think the statement is true or false.
2. Watch the video and listen for the correct answers.

**Statements:**

1. Teachers/instructors should correct every error an English language learner makes. **True or False**
2. Whole class activities are better for English language learners than small group or peer work. **True or False**
3. Two ways you can help English language learners better understand training content is to use visuals and speak a little slower (but not too slow). **True or False**
4. Teachers/instructors should increase wait time for answers to questions when working with English language learners. **True or False**
5. When presenting a lot of new content, it's good for students to just listen and take notes. **True or False**

*See answers in the* [*Answer Keys*](#AnswerKeys)*.*

During Video Activity #1 - Social and Academic Language*(20 minutes)*

**Directions:**

1. Complete the chart below while watching the video from the 4:46 mark to the 6:15 mark.
2. Pause the video at the time of 6:15 and complete the reflection question in the chart before watching the rest of the video.

| **Social Language** | **Academic Language** |
| --- | --- |
| * What does BICS stands for? * Is social language used in formal or informal atmospheres? * What are the five context examples shared in the video for social language? | * What is another name for academic language? * Does academic language take more or less time to develop than social language? * What are the three supports suggested in the video for teaching academic language? |

Reflect on a time when you had to learn a difficult academic concept. What type of support was most helpful to you, or what type of support do you wish you would have had to help you learn the material?

*See answers in the* [*Answer Keys*](#AnswerKeys)*.*

During Video Activity #2 - Cultural Considerations*(60 minutes)*

**Directions:**

1. Pause the video at the 14:43 mark.
2. Review the following chart.
3. Resume the video and make any additional notes related to cultural norms that you may want to discuss with your workforce and education partners or English language learners.

| **American Norms** | **Cultural Considerations** | **Suggestion** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Shaking hands when greeting/meeting someone | * Some cultures do not shake hands and may find a firm handshake a sign of aggression. * Some cultures shake hands first with older individuals then shake hands of younger individuals. * Some cultures may greet men and women differently. | Discuss in class when handshakes may or may not be used in the work in which the training is aligned.  Discuss ways to appropriately decline a handshake. |
| Student making eye contact with a teacher to indicate they are listening | * Some cultures and religions have strict rules regarding eye contact between men and women. * Some cultures use length of eye contact to non-verbally express their feelings. | Consider having students complete a quick survey prior to training to indicate if there are specific norms that might make them uncomfortable.  Use oral language to express feelings whenever possible. |
| Student asking the teacher a question to clarify understanding | * Some cultures believe it is disrespectful to ask a teacher any questions. | Discuss the importance of asking questions, especially when related to the health and safety of themselves and others. |
| Using thumbs up, okay sign, or pointing with your finger | * Some finger gestures used in America are used as offensive gestures in other countries. | Discuss possible finger gestures that may be used in the work in which the training is aligned.  Use oral language to express ideas whenever possible. |

Additional Notes and Comments:

Post-video Activity #1 - Say it Another Way  
*(30-60 minutes)*

**Directions:**

1. Read each original statement.
2. Work with a partner to update the statement to make it more easily understood by an English language learner.
3. With your partner, write down some other possible statements that may be used in the training that may need to be adjusted.

| **Original Statement** | **Updated Statement** |
| --- | --- |
| *Example: I whipped up food for a client.* | *I cooked food for a client.* |
| 1. The testing dates for the exam are up in the air right now. |  |
| 1. Give it a go and see how it turns out. |  |
| 1. Look up the multiple ways this device can be used. |  |
| 1. Did you get a call back from the customer? |  |
| 1. Did you point out to the patient that their blood pressure was higher than the last time you took it? |  |
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Post-video Activity #2 - Challenges and Solutions Chart*(60-90 minutes)*

**Directions:**

1. Read each challenge.
2. In a small group, discuss possible solutions to each challenge.
3. Record two possible solutions that may work best for the training partner and the English language learner.
4. Discuss additional supports and resources that may be needed to implement the suggested solutions.
5. OPTIONAL: Have small groups share out to large group and discuss additional challenges and solutions that may be applicable to the training.

| **Challenges** | **Possible Solutions** |
| --- | --- |
| One of the exams taken during the training includes a written essay, and the student sometimes has difficulty writing what they know but is very good at explaining what they know verbally. |  |
| Some vocabulary used in the training has multiple meanings in the English language. For example, in the training, “table” refers to a chart, not a place you sit to eat. |  |
| The training is currently all lecture and has no opportunities for small group or partner work. |  |

Post-video Activity #3 - Simplify the Sample*(40-60 minutes)*

**Directions:**

1. Read the excerpt from the sample workplace document.
2. Work in pairs or small groups to determine what technique(s) could be used to help an English language learner better understand the sample.
3. Have each group share out their ideas to large group.
4. As a large group, decide which ideas could be implemented in the training and what additional resources may be needed to implement the ideas.

***General Safety Rules***

***Conduct****Horseplay, practical jokes, etc., are forbidden. Employees are required to work in an injury-free manner displaying accepted levels of behavior. Conduct that places the employee or others at risk, or which threatens or intimidates others, is forbidden.*

***Housekeeping***  
You are responsible for keeping your work area clean and safe. Clean up several times throughout the day, disposing of trash and waste in approved containers, wiping up any drips/spills immediately, and putting equipment and tools away as you are finished with them.

The following areas must remain clear of obstructions:  
• Aisles/exits  
• Fire extinguishers and emergency equipment  
• All electrical breakers, controls, and switches

*Accessed at* [*https://builtinsurance.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Construction-Employee-Safety-Manual.pdf*](https://builtinsurance.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Construction-Employee-Safety-Manual.pdf)

| **Idea Workspace** |
| --- |
|  |

# Additional Resources:

[Health Care Career Pathways and English Language Learners](https://www.paadultedresources.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/health_care_career_pathways-12-22-17.pdf) - The Health Care Career Pathways and English Language Learners (ELLs) is a report produced by the National Institute for Literacy that explores the growing demand for workers in health care careers and strategies for helping ELLs get on a career pathway. It explores the challenges facing ELLs and showcases programs that are having success. This resource will help you understand the challenges faced by ELLs and strategies for dealing with those challenges.

[Sector Strategies and Career Pathway Maps](https://www.paadultedresources.org/sector-strategies/) - The blank career pathway maps can be used by workforce partners to help adult learners understand the various occupations that may exist along a career pathway in their local area. Additionally, there is a collection of sector-specific information ranging from definitions to job descriptions to workplace videos. Specific examples from manufacturing and healthcare, including alignment with College and Career Readiness Standards, are included in these archived resources.

[20 Ways to Use Career Pathway Maps](https://www.paadultedresources.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/20-ways-to-use-career-pathway-maps-12-18-17.pdf) - This one-page document lists 20 ways career maps can be used in adult education. Case managers and teachers can do these suggested career map activities to support career awareness, career exploration, and career goal setting with adult learners.

[Partnership List for Supportive Services](https://www.paadultedresources.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Adult-Career-Pathways-Partnerships-Combined-PDF_1_14_2022.pdf) - This is a listing of the various partners that may be able to provide supportive services to adult learners while they pursue training.

[Preparing English Learners for Work and Career Pathways](https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/ELL_Context_Instruction_508.pdf) - This brief describes program models designed to strengthen the alignment of adult education, employment, and skills training. The Instruction section outlines the skills that ELLs need to succeed at work and in postsecondary education and offers ideas for teaching practice.

[Supporting the Educational and Career Success of English Language Learners under WIOA](https://youth.workforcegps.org/resources/2017/01/18/14/30/EKFA_English) (EKFA) - A part of the Enough is Known for Action Series, this technical assistance document focused on English Language Learners is part of a series of resources the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education developed to provide strategies and examples of state and local partnerships that facilitate the reengagement of out-of-school youth.

[Remote ESOL Project](https://edtech.worlded.org/remote-esol-project/) - This site holds information for teachers, administrators, policy makers, and researchers interested in leveraging educational technology to support enrollment, attendance, achievement, and completion in remote ESOL programming for adults. The information here stems from six months of research done in 2021 to uncover examples of promising practices and programming, most of which sprung up in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, when remote instruction and distance education were the only modalities of learning possible in many places.

# Answer Keys:

Pre-video Activity - True or False

1. False
2. False
3. True
4. True
5. False

During Video Activity #1 - Social and Academic Language

* What does BICS stands for? *Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills.*
* Is social language used in formal or informal atmospheres? *Informal atmosphere.*
* What are the five context examples shared in the video for social language? *Food, language, art, dress, music.*
* What is another name for academic language? *Cognitive language.*
* Does academic language take more or less time to develop than social language? *More.*
* What are the three supports suggested in the video for teaching academic language? *Scaffolding, visual organizer, and cooperative group activities.*