Non-language outcomes

Activities and resources

Elaine Jackson
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Introduction

RATIONALE

Many adult migrants enter English language and literacy classes with limited ability to function effectively as language learners. While these limitations may relate to emotional and psychological factors such as dealing with the experience of migration, they often relate as much, or more, to the learners’ histories of exposure to the processes of formal learning.

Background of learners

Many adult migrants enter language training classes with the equivalent of primary school education or less. Others come from educational backgrounds severely disrupted by war and political turmoil in their county of origin. Still others come from regions where access to education may be heavily determined by factors such as status, wealth and gender.

Learners of this profile are unlikely to possess a sufficient body of knowledge and learning skills and strategies to enable them to participate successfully in the language learning experience. Lack of success in the initial stages of learning often leads to frustration on the part of learners, who may not understand what the educational context expects and demands of them, and to disillusionment and hopelessness. A similar frustration may also be experienced by the teacher who cannot understand the failure of learners to progress and who may miscast them as unmotivated, disinterested or slow.

The learning context

Identifying what it is that learners need to be taught about both the learning context and learning processes themselves is problematic for most highly literate adults. This is because, for them, the experience of acquiring this knowledge and these skills lies deep in their educational past. There is also a tendency to assume that because all adult learners have informally or semi-formally learned a wide range of skills in their lifetimes, the formal learning context will represent no more than a simple variation of learning environment, and that learners will quickly learn to understand and control it.

There are no widely recognised or accredited diagnostic testing materials to assist teachers to assess their learners’ levels of familiarity with or control of effective learning strategies for language learning or for other learning purposes. Although publications abound in the area of study skills and learning how to learn, these often take as their point of departure an already substantial bank of basic learning knowledge and skills. These publications, therefore, fail to address the specific learning needs of adults with limited formal educational experience and limited literacy in the first language or in English. Very few address the development of learning knowledge and skills where these learner features are combined with low levels of oracy in English.
As Australia heads into the post-industrial era it is becoming clear that effective participation in the workplace will increasingly be determined by the ability to operate successfully in the education and training processes which surround the industrial reform agenda. Crucial to full and effective participation in ongoing adult education and training is knowledge of, and control, over the wide range of learning technologies, resources, techniques and skills which are part of the basic baggage of the literate and effective learner. Crucial to teachers’ competence to teach effectively and systematically in this under-resourced area of learner need is the ability to:

- identify and diagnose gaps in learning knowledge and skill
- set and achieve concrete learning objectives related to this area
- integrate the teaching of these skills with the teaching of language and literacy, and
- clarify to their learners the increasingly close relationship between education, training and employment.

This publication attempts to assist teachers with these tasks by:

- identifying basic skills and knowledge about formal learning processes commonly lacking for learners with low literacy and limited formal educational experience, and
- providing sample teaching activity sequences to show how this very complex area of learner need might be approached through the teaching of language and literacy.

**HOW CAN THIS BOOK BE USED?**

The material in this book is intended for use in the following ways:

In combination with its companion volume Non-Language Outcomes in the Language Classroom: Curriculum Guidelines (Jackson, 1993)

*Non-Language Outcomes in the Language Classroom: Curriculum Guidelines* identifies learning skills development as a major complementary outcome of the teaching of language and literacy. It identifies those learning skill areas which low literacy, limited formal education learners may need assistance with and groups them into four categories:

- **Category 1** In the language classroom
- **Category 2** Learning strategies
- **Category 3** Becoming a self-directed learner
- **Category 4** Understanding the social context.

*Curriculum Guidelines* also offers teaching objectives for each identified skill area and methodological assistance with the integration of the learning skill outcomes into ordinary language and literacy teaching practice. Brief activity sequences for selected learning skill areas are also presented.

The current volume picks up the first three of the above categories, and provides elaborated sample teaching sequences for the learning skill areas which constitute each of them. On the whole, the learning skill areas are presented in the same order in both volumes.
As a support document for Competency 2 of the Certificate in Spoken and Written English (NSW AMES/NCELTR, 1993)

Competency 2 sets learning skills outcomes for Stages 1, 2 and 3 of the Certificate in Spoken and Written English. [For Stage 1 that competency is, ‘can understand the context of the language classroom’, for Stage 2 it is, ‘can use a range of learning strategies’, and for Stage 3 it is, ‘can use a range of learning strategies relevant to the particular focus context’.]

As with the language and literacy competencies, Competency 2 is broken down into elements and performance criteria from which teachers are able to develop teaching and learning objectives. Both the Curriculum Guidelines and this publication are intended to assist teachers to give substance to Competency 2 by providing examples of teaching objectives and activity sequences for achieving the performance criteria. Teachers need to decide for themselves how the objectives and sequences are best adapted for their current learner group.

As a source of ideas for activities

The primary aim of the material in this book is to provide teachers with ideas about how to approach the teaching of learning skills to the target learner group. The book is not and cannot be used as a course book. The sample activity sequences illustrate ways in which the teaching of particular learning skills might be integrated with the teaching of particular language and literacy skills to a particular profile of learner. This does not mean either that only those language and literacy skills can be taught in tandem with a particular learning skill or that only that learning skill can be taught with those particular language and literacy skills. Teachers are invited to consider the activity sequences as a whole, to identify what is useful and not useful, necessary and not necessary for their current learner profile and to adapt the material to fully suit the needs and language levels of their learner group.

As a source of idea for materials development

Most activity sequences are followed by two or three worksheets. Because this book is not a course book, these worksheets are intended as illustrations only of material which might be developed to support the teaching activities. In general, the worksheets are pitched at Stage 1 learners with low literacy. Teachers of Stage 1 learners may be able to use many of them as they are, but in most cases adaptation will be needed to cater for lower language and literacy levels. Teachers of Stages 2 and 3 may find them useful only as points of departure for the development of suitable materials.

In all cases, supplementary materials will need to be developed to adequately cover each of the learning skills areas.

As a source of ideas for methodology

The sample activity sequences are necessarily presented as ordered and discrete. In practice this is neither achievable nor desirable. Many aspects of learning skills development can be simultaneously taught and there is often no obvious reason why one should precede the other. Particular language and literacy
activities may lend themselves to a multiplicity of learning skills outcomes. Learning skill areas also overlap to a considerable extent as will become evident when using the materials.

Teachers may find it useful to approach the material in this book by first familiarising themselves generally with the learning skill areas contained in it and then dipping selectively into it for examples of activities which can be used to develop multiple skills. Integrating learning outcomes with one another as well as with language and literacy outcomes ensures that learners do not perceive this area of skills development as tagged on or irrelevant to the expected major outcomes.

**HOW IS THIS BOOK ORGANISED?**

The material in this book is organised into 3 sections. Each section focuses on a different category of learning skills and contains a number of sub-sections which elaborate the learning skills falling within that category.

Each section begins with an overview which introduces the category of skills and explains its relevance to the language and literacy classroom or training room.

Each sub-section contains:

- a table showing the language and literacy context through which the particular learning skill might be taught. These language and literacy context can be readily referenced to competencies in the *Certificate in Spoken and Written English*.
- a sample activity sequence focusing on the learning skill
- a summary of the knowledge and learning skills outcomes for the sample activity sequence, and
- two or three worksheets as examples of support materials.

**WHO CAN USE THIS BOOK?**

This book is intended for use by teachers of English as a Second Language to adults in a variety of teaching/learning contexts and with a range of learner profiles.

The sample activity sequences focus on learning skills development for learners with limited educational experience (less than seven years), low levels of oracy and literacy in English, and possibly with limited literacy skills in their first language. Thus it is particularly relevant for teachers of learners with this profile. However, the ideas and materials are also relevant for teachers of learners with seven to twelve years formal learning experience.

Teachers of learners with post-secondary educational experience may also find it helpful to read through the material with a view to identifying learning skills outside their learners’ current repertoire. Cultural differences in attitudes to various aspects of learning and the learning environment may require explicit treatment if learners are not to be disadvantaged within the Australian education and training context. Teachers will need to develop language and literacy activities more suited to their learners’ levels of English to address these issues.
The material can also be used by teachers of English speaking background learners with high levels of oracy but low levels of literacy and formal educational background. Teachers of these learners may wish to retain many of the ideas contained in the sample teaching sequences while adapting the levels of language and literacy to suit their learners’ needs.

**METHODOLOGY**

The units of work contained in the materials are presented as relatively discrete units forming a series. It is important that teachers understand that the presentation of the units in this way has been done purely for reasons of practicality and convenience.

There is no correct order for the teaching of learning to learn skills. Indeed the concept of order itself is misplaced, since it implies that one unit must be completed before others are begun. This is not the intention of these materials.

Nor is it the case that all learner groups will be equally in need of all aspects of the learning to learn skills contained within the units. Some learners and learner groups will already possess a range of learning skills which do not need to be re-taught.

Teachers should be guided in their decisions about the selection of teaching content by:

i) **Diagnostic assessment**

It is extremely important that teachers do not make assumptions about learners’ levels of learning skills. This may be particularly tempting to do where learner levels of oracy are relatively high. However, there is no necessary relationship between oracy levels and learning skills. Similarly, even where literacy levels are relatively high, awareness of the cultural expectations of the adult learning context in Australia may not be. This means that aspects of classroom genre and techniques of self-directed learning, self assessment and monitoring for example, will need to be explicitly addressed with higher level as well as with lower level learners.

Teachers of all levels of learner therefore need to critically assess the learners’ learning skills. This assessment need not be formal. In most cases it cannot be formal. It would, for example, be almost impossible to assess the range and type of memory and retention strategies used by individual learners in language learning without extensive bilingual assistance and inordinate amounts of time.

It is, however, important that assessment be informed, that is, that teachers look at particular aspects of learners’ classroom performance with a view to assessing whether there are gaps in learners’ learning knowledge and skills which are preventing the learner from maximising the current learning opportunity.

Many teachers rely exclusively on observation to provide them with this information. While observation will provide a certain amount of feedback to teachers on learner’s level of learning skill, it is also true that teachers can only observe what is there to be observed. If occasions do not arise which call for the demonstration of certain learning skills, then teachers will be unable to assess whether the skill is present or not.

It is therefore recommended that teachers adopt a more pro-active approach to assessment by actively creating learning situations which demand the
activation of certain learning skills.

Introducing a simple activity surveying class surnames or filling in identification sections of a form will quickly identify those learners who use pencil and rubber for first attempts at writing. Asking learners to produce an item of teaching material from the previous week or search for a specific language item previously taught will soon identify those learners whose methods of storing and retrieving information are inadequate or inappropriate to the learning context.

Assessment of learners’ learning skills will also necessarily be on-going over a period of concurrent development of language and literacy skills. This will be so because learning skills cannot be activated devoid of a meaningful context calling for their activation. As language and literacy develop, strategic gaps in learners’ learning skills may continue to emerge and teaching strategies will need to be implemented to close these gaps. This type of on-going assessment may still be thought of as diagnostic regardless of the fact that it does not take place either prior to or on the very initial stages of a course of instruction.

ii) Appropriacy

Certain skills may be more usefully taught either prior to or concurrently with certain others. For example, it would be pointless to launch into the teaching of cognitive strategies for memory and retention where learners are still unaware of the functions of the basic implements of learning. The skills involved in self-monitoring and self-assessing would seem to be predicated on Understanding Student-Teacher Roles and Understanding Learning As Doing.

Some degree of control over the functions of a range of learning implements and aids as well as over the systematic storing of information to be learned also underpin self-monitoring and assessment skills since in order to check, revise and study material out of class, that material must be meaningfully categorised and easily retrievable. A range of strategies eg circling, underlining, highlighting may be implemented to assist memory and retention.

iii) Need to disseminate institutional informational at certain fixed points

Information about aspects of learning such as learner entitlement, attendance requirements, punctuality, a language training plan and learner options within it, institutional assessment practices and requirements form an extremely important part of the context of formal learning. Awareness of the institutional parameters of learning assists learners to locate themselves as learners and to assume some of the responsibilities which the learning process demands.

Most information of this type will need to be passed on to learners in the initial stages of their course. There is, however, no reason why the greater part of this information and awareness cannot be brought to learners’ attention using the same integrated teaching methodology as with other areas of learning to learn skills. This means that teachers should be pursuing concurrent language and literacy objectives within which issues of attendance, assessment and so on are addressed.

iv) Need to achieve a balance between the teaching of

a) language and literacy
b) knowledge and learning skills
Teachers should attempt to maintain a balance between these two aspects of their teaching at all times.

With learners of low literacy and low formal education this means:

- realising the need to be selective and proceed slowly
- attaching all knowledge and learning skills development to language and literacy activities, ie contextualising them
- resisting the temptation to talk at learners about learning skills instead of working with learners to develop them
- resisting the get it over and done with approach to knowledge and learning skills development
- recognising that knowledge and learning skills are developed through the medium of language and literacy
- keeping accurate personal and institutional records, eg lesson plans, checklists of objectives covered of skills taught
- building skills systematically across a number of areas.
Section 1
In the language classroom

OVERVIEW OF SECTION

An essential part of learning to learn is coming to terms with practices and procedures associated with the learning environment. These include things to do with:

- the physical environment
- the institutional environment
- the interpersonal environment and
- the cultural environment.

To teachers, as highly trained and literate representatives of the culture within which they operate, these things often appear self-evident. As a result, it is often difficult for teachers to sufficiently detach themselves from their background of learning and literacy to be able to identify the points at which learners are failing to make contact with the learning process. This difficulty is exacerbated in the adult learning context by the fact that there is a strong temptation to assume the existence of a universal set of learning skills and knowledge by sheer virtue of a person's adulthood. The net effect of these factors can easily be a lack of teacher explicitness about precisely what it is that is expected of learners, and a lack of teacher awareness of the need to actively teach certain skills and knowledge.

For learners, the classroom or training room represents the hub of their learning activities. This is the case even where learners are sufficiently skilled to be able to undertake independent learning outside the classroom or where some of the learning takes place on the job (for example in industrial training contexts). It is therefore extremely important that learners feel secure in their understanding of the basic demands and expectations of the environment within which they are spending their time and of the processes occurring within that environment.

Learners who have low levels of literacy and/or formal education are unlikely to share these common understandings of requirements, purposes, procedures and processes. However it is not just this group of learners who are at risk. Learners who have high levels of formal education in their country of origin, but who come from cultures where educational processes and expectations differ significantly, may also experience difficulties with these aspects of their learning environment. Unless actively and explicitly taught, these underlying understandings remain invisible and greatly affect learners' potential to succeed and progress.

These common understandings and basic features of the education and training context are the focus of this section.
1.1 Identifying basic implements for effective classroom learning

INTRODUCTION

Learners with low levels of literacy and formal education are often unaware of the standard tools of literacy such as pens, pencils, rulers, rubbers, exercise books and folders and consistently come to class without them. Even where learners are aware of the need for these implements they may not be aware of:

- the need to bring them regularly
- the range of their functions, or
- strategies for keeping them together.

For example, many learners come with a pencil, but do not realise that a pencil is usually reserved for drafting, drawing or marking rather than for writing itself. Learners who are not familiar with a range of storage means (manila folders, clipboards, ring files, etc) often do not bring more than one item to the classroom because of the difficulty of carrying them.

Teachers are also often surprised to find that learners with quite high levels of literacy and formal education come to class similarly poorly equipped. In many cases this results from:

- culturally dissimilar classroom practices, for example learners may be handed out everything they need at the beginning of a course
- uncertainty in the learner about the range of implements and materials required.

It is therefore important for teachers to check both their own and their learners’ assumptions about what is needed for effective learning in the classroom or training room.

Coming to class adequately prepared for the learning experience also saves a lot of valuable teacher and learner time, which is otherwise spent locating sufficient numbers of implements, or negotiating exchanges of implements. It also underpins and facilitates the teaching of other strategies. For example, different methods of highlighting important or difficult items for retention are best taught when each individual learner has the necessary learning implements. Drafting strategies in writing are difficult to teach if there are only 3 pencils and 4 rubbers in a class of 20.
ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spoken language</th>
<th>Learning skills and knowledge</th>
<th>Written language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• understanding spoken instructions</td>
<td>• identifying given range of classroom implements</td>
<td>• filling in forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• identifying functions of implements and utilising them</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

NB: Teachers will have their own opinions about what constitute basic implements for effective learning. Learners will benefit from an expanded rather than a restricted approach. There is no real reason why classroom accessories like staplers, hole punchers, white-out or pencil sharpeners cannot be included along with the more traditional pens, pencils, rubbers and rulers. Having these accessories in the classroom at all times as a routine part of the classroom environment actively assists learners to develop valuable skills for learning outside as well as inside the classroom.

Before beginning work with your learners in this area of skill, you may like to read through the 1.4 Organising Materials. These two units can be easily integrated with each other and worked simultaneously at the very beginning of your course.

Activity 1 – Show and tell

• Ask learners to show you and the class what educational aids (eg writing implements) they have brought with them to class.
• From the pool of items, select a limited number (say 8) and name them. Get learners to contribute as much as possible to the naming process. You could, for example, assign one or two items per small group and do a dictionary exercise.
  Your list might include items such as pen, coloured pencil or pen, pencil, pencil sharpener, rubber, ruler, highlighter, pencil case.
• Devise language activities to reinforce the names of the items. Make sure you avoid getting bogged down in the naming exercise. Learners do not need to know the name of every different pen type present in the classroom – pen will do.

Activity 2 – Talking about functions

• Ask learners to suggest what each of the selected items is useful for. Teach the required language simultaneously.
• Use Worksheet 1.1A to fill in those functions mentioned by your learners.
**NB:** Most standard classroom items are intimately related to literacy. This means they are necessary either for writing text (pens, rulers, pencils) or operating in some way on text (rubbers, highlighters, marking pens etc). Learners who have low levels of formal education and literacy in L1 may not be fully aware of the distinct and multiple functions of some writing implements. It is often for this reason, rather than forgetfulness for example, that learners fail to bring required items.

**Activity 3 – Filling in the gaps**
- Ask learners to think of two or more ways in which pencil and coloured pen may be used. This can be done using L1 and dictionary assistance. For example, pencil is useful for:
  - drafting written material
  - acting as highlighter ie being used to circle, underline etc
  - marking out errors.

Coloured pen or pencil is useful for:
- marking out errors or omissions
- acting as highlighter
- distinguishing one piece of text from another eg items copied from the board in one colour, items for revision in another colour.

- Assist learners to express these in simple English.
- Add them to Worksheet 1.1.

**Activity 4 – Recycling**
- Use Worksheet 1.1B to look at the selected items and their functions from a slightly different perspective. This will also assist learners to come to grips with the language content.

**Activity 5 – I’m a learner**
- Organise class into small groups. These may be L1 groups.
- Give each group a picture of somebody working at a particular job eg nurse, car mechanic, builder, person working in the home.
- Ask each group to list 5 items these people need to do their jobs (their job kit).
- Get each group to report back. Avoid spending too much time on naming and teaching the items from these job kits.
- Prepare a worksheet for learners to fill in selected occupations and job kit items. Include a space on the worksheet for learner as an occupation.
- Now focus on learning as an occupation with its own job kit items. Get learners to agree on the essential implements required by a learner. Fill these in the space provided on the worksheet.
NB: It is important to help learners create an identity as learners. This identity has its place alongside the many other roles that learners play in life such as parents, cooks, friends and so on. As with these roles, a person’s identity as a learner demands particular behaviours and the possession and manipulation of particular implements. Giving learning equal status with work helps to build pride in the processes of achievement as well as self-esteem and confidence.

For those learners who are currently unemployed, learning in fact represents paid work and a form of pre-vocational training. Learning as a job is far from an empty analogy.

**Activity 6 – Reaching agreement**

- Now that your learners have an expanded understanding of the role of the selected learning items, negotiate with them a point in time by which all learners will be coming to class equipped with an agreed learning kit.
- Provide whatever further assistance is needed to make this a reality. You could, for example:
  
  - assign a class pair or small group the task of purchasing for the whole class two boxes of pencils, pens etc. This will be cheaper and quicker than each learner buying each item separately.
  - take your group to a local newsagent or supermarket to purchase the items.

**Activity 7 – Providing practice**

- Provide regular opportunities for your learners to use these implements in their various functions in class time. For example, you could:
  
  - encourage the use of pencil and rubber in first attempts at written work e.g. class surveys or questionnaires, joint or independent text construction of various written genres
  - encourage learners to operate critically on written texts themselves using coloured pens and pencils to work out agreed errors
  - encourage learners to use highlighter or coloured pen to identify from each lesson items which are problematic for them personally (giving a focus to home study and revision)
  - encourage the use of ruler, highlighter, coloured pen or pencil for marking important information (asterisks, circling etc)
  - encourage the use of rulers, colours and so on in subdividing information/written material for easier accessibility (e.g. for marking off sections of written text).
Knowledge and learning skills: summary of outcomes

The activities in this unit assist learners to:

- increase their awareness of the necessary learning implements
- increase their awareness of the potential uses of such implements
- develop the ability and motivation to assume increased responsibility for having necessary implements for learning
- develop/practise categorisation skills
- develop/practise techniques for foregrounding important or relevant information
- identify and categorise items for home study and revision
- increase their sense of self as learners.
1.1 Identifying basic implements for effective classroom learning

WORKSHEET 1.1A

What is it for?

1. I use a pen for ________________________________

2. I use a pencil for ________________________________

3. I use a coloured pencil or pen for ________________________________

4. I use a ruler for ________________________________

5. I use a highlighter for ________________________________

6. I use a rubber for ________________________________

7. I use __________________ for ________________________________

8. I use __________________ for ________________________________
1.1 Identifying basic implements for effective classroom learning

**WORKSHEET 1.1 B**

**What can I do with it?**

**To correct my work I can use:**

- ______________________
- ______________________

**To write things for the first time I can use:**

- ______________________
- ______________________

**To mark important things I can use:**

- ______________________
- ______________________

**To help me remember things I can use:**

- ______________________
- ______________________

**To mark things I don’t understand I can use:**

- ______________________
- ______________________

**To mark things I have to study at home I can use:**

- ______________________
- ______________________

**I can:**

- asterisk  *
- underline
- circle
- tick  ✓

**my writing**
1.2 Identifying and understanding basic institutional requirements and procedures

INTRODUCTION

Many educational providers currently impose limitations on the amount of tuition available per learner in terms of number of hours or number of courses. Amount of tuition may also be influenced by an individual learner's progress against expected course outcomes measured by on-going or end-of-course assessment procedures. It is therefore of crucial importance that learners are:

• advised of their tuition entitlement (where applicable), and
• made aware of all factors affecting decisions about their continued enrolment in courses.

These factors include regularity of attendance since:

• irregular attendance is commonly used as an indicator of a learner’s commitment to the learning process
• irregular attendance will often be reflected in poor progress and inadequate performance in assessment tasks
• either or both of the above may result in exclusion from further learning opportunities.

Learners need to be made explicitly aware of the attendance requirements of the institution and/or funding body and actively engaged in monitoring their own attendance.

This activity sequence aims to introduce learners to such requirements and to explore issues surrounding non-attendance and lateness, including cross-cultural issues. It also aims to develop the learners’ self identities as learners and to encourage learners to assume responsibility for their learning.
Section 1 In the language classroom

ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spoken language</th>
<th>Learning skills and knowledge</th>
<th>Written language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• personal identification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• giving reasons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• dates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• days of the week</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• time</td>
<td>• understanding attendance requirements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• understanding procedures for attendance and non-attendance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 1 – Using the class roll

• As part of literacy activities requiring learners to recognise their full names, enlarge the class roll or create another version of the class roll specifically for class use. The roll may contain full names only, but might also contain additional information e.g. address, country of origin. Place this larger roll in a position easily accessible to learners.

• Have learners practise ticking off their own name each day as they enter the class/training room.

• Initially you may make this task more achievable for learners with low literacy levels by:
  – using bold script, enlarging, circling, highlighting, underlining crucial information, for example the initial letter of the surname
  – providing a ruler so that learners can more accurately trace the route from their surnames to the current attendance date on the grid structure of the roll
  – making sure that all spaces in the grid structure are filled either with ticks for present or A for absent so that learners are not confused about where to place their ticks
  – limiting the block of time for which attendance is recorded to one week or a fortnight at a time. This will make the grid structure smaller and more manageable.

As learners become more confident with this skill, these supports may be progressively withdrawn.

• You may extend this activity by focusing on other items of personal identification. For example, names and surnames may be covered and learners asked to recognise themselves by address.

• Learners may also be encouraged to use a signing in book to monitor their attendance. Since standard sign-in books are not provided, use models (e.g. the staff sign-in book) to construct a simply formatted text for classroom
use. You may then use this text to develop the same skills and awareness as the class roll.

A sample sign-on text might look like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Time In</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Time Out</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Reason for lateness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AYOUB, Ali</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEN, Mei Ling</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>KILINC, Fatmeh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOPEZ, Manual</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The language of days, dates and months as well as clock time may be pre-taught or taught concurrently with this activity.

**Activity 2 – Monitoring one’s own attendance**

- Provide time at the end of each week or fortnight for learners to total their own attendance over that period. Learners keep a simply formatted personal record of attendance in an easily accessible place eg on the inside front of a folder. This record highlights the number of absences as well as classes attended and is progressively added to as the course continues.

A sample format might be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. 1/2/94 to 15/2/94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Encourage learners to compare their number of absences to the institutional requirements for attendance (which should be explicitly stated eg maximum of 5 days absence per course).
Section 1 In the language classroom

NB: Some teachers currently attempt to encourage punctuality by explicitly marking as absent learners who come more than 20 minutes late or leave more than 15 minutes early from class. In the absence of consistent policy guidelines teachers and learners need to make their own decisions about what constitutes adequate attendance and an adequate excuse for non-attendance or lateness. However this is done, it is important that the ground-rules be agreed to and explicitly known. Furthermore they should be related to the wider context of punctuality within the culture (eg for interviews, appointments, work) to avoid being perceived as arbitrary and punitive.

Activity 3 – Exploring excuses

- In the context of language activities related to simple reason-giving (I can’t come tomorrow because...) use picture cues to elicit from learners a range of possible excuses for absence. Examples could be illnesses, appointments with community agencies, children, visiting friends, seeing friends off at the airport and waiting for tradespeople.
- Alternatively invite learners to volunteer common reasons for non-attendance. List these and encourage learners to categorise possible excuses into those relating to children/family, the home, external agencies, recreation and so on.
- Learners work in L1 groups to prioritise excuses in relation to lateness/absence for study/work according to their acceptability in the country of origin. You may wish to construct a grid on the whiteboard highlighting differences between cultural groups.
- Learners prioritise the range of excuses in terms of what they feel would be considered acceptable or appropriate in Australia in the study and employment contexts.

NB: As with many other activities in this book, this activity is primarily directed at raising awareness of cultural appropriacy and procedures. It is not designed to give unambiguous answers. Learners should note that sickness is the most commonly given reason for absence and be introduced to the concept of medical certificates for prolonged absence.

Activity 4 – Making excuses

- Use the worksheet provided to get learners to reflect on how absence is most likely to be recorded in the specified context. You may wish to simplify the worksheet or deal initially with only two or three of the contexts mentioned.

NB: There are a number of ways in which excuses for lateness and absence are recorded in the educational and employment context in Australia. They may be made orally or in writing. They may be made before or after the event. If they are written there may be context specific ways of recording them (eg bundy clocks, notes, leave forms, sign on books). There will also be situations in which it is inappropriate to offer any excuse.
Activity 5 – Practice with spoken texts

• Learners practise the language of oral excuse making (I can’t come tomorrow/ on Tuesday/ next week because...; I didn’t come yesterday because...).
• Extend these activities to making simple telephone calls to different teaching centres/sites within the institution.

Activity 6 – Practice with written texts

• Use a range of models to jointly develop a class leave form. Photocopy and use for the duration of the course. Place copies beside the roll or sign on book. Increasingly transfer responsibility to learners for recording their own absences and offering reasons for them.
• You may wish to include the writing of school notes as a literacy activity in this unit of work. Many adult learners have children of school age, and school absence notes are a compulsory legal requirement.

Knowledge and learning skills: summary of outcomes

The activities in this unit assist learners to:

• increase their understanding of institutional attendance and punctuality requirements in the study and employment context
• increase their awareness of the cultural appropriacy of excuse types and excuse procedures
• develop self-confidence because of an increased ability to respond in culturally appropriate ways (both spoken and written)
• develop the ability and motivation to assume increased responsibility for monitoring their own attendance/punctuality
• develop/practise categorisation skills
• develop/practise techniques for foregrounding important or relevant information
• increase their sense of self as learners.
WORKSHEET 1.2
You will be absent tomorrow from these places. How will you make your excuse?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where</th>
<th>By speaking</th>
<th>By writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. studying in this class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. working in a factory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. studying at TAFE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. studying at university</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in a group of 100 students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. working in a shop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. working in a government office</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. working in a non-government office</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. your child’s school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(your child will be absent)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*By speaking: Where, Before, After, No excuse, Note, Sign-on book, Form, Bundy*
1.3 Recognising and accessing a range of on-site learning resources

INTRODUCTION

Most educational providers offer a range of on-site learning resources for learner use both in and outside of classroom hours. However, these valuable resources often remain unused because:

- learners are unaware of their existence
- learners come to class with the expectation that all learning will occur in the classroom using traditional teacher-centred *chalk and talk* methods
- learners are aware of their existence but do not know how to use them
- learners are unaware of their uses for learning purposes, or
- learners are afraid of unfamiliar technological equipment.

An important part of building learner autonomy is equipping learners with the knowledge and skills to utilise the fullest possible range of learning resources, beginning with those which are readily accessible in the place of learning. These resources may include:

- human resources eg other students in classroom activities, at coffee breaks and on excursions, teachers, library assistants
- written resources eg course books, library books, dictionaries, reference books
- technological resources eg language laboratories, independent learning centres, language masters, cassette recorders, videos, computer assisted learning programs, interactive video disks.

Many learners’ access to certain of these resources will initially be limited by their level of literacy. For example, reading written instructions relating to technological learning aids (computers, interactive disks, language laboratory equipment) makes significant demands on literacy skills as does the accessing of all written resources. However many learners may be familiar with the operation of the same technological aids in other contexts. For example they may have used cassette players, videos, or computers for entertainment. Teachers need to build on this knowledge and skill and assist learners to transfer it to the learning context.
Section 1 In the language classroom

ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spoken language</th>
<th>Learning skills and knowledge</th>
<th>Written language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• understanding spoken instructions</td>
<td>• identifying on-site learning resources</td>
<td>• understanding spoken instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• expressing purpose</td>
<td>• identifying and accessing educational functions of on-site resources</td>
<td>• expressing purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• lexis of learning eg record, revise, repeat</td>
<td>• developing awareness of potential uses off-site</td>
<td>• lexis of learning eg record, revise, repeat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• developing awareness of other learners as learning resource</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 1 – A short tour

• As part of an introduction to the institution, take learners on a short tour. This tour might include the staffroom, the clerical and reception area, the student coffee area, the student noticeboards, the Individual Learning Centre (ILC), the library, the other classrooms and childcare facilities.
• Learners take with them on the tour a handout showing simply labelled photos of activities carried out in the designated areas. Learners tick off the areas as they encounter them.

Activity 2 – In the classroom

• Using the same handout, ask learners to identify those areas where English language learning is taking place. This can be done verbally or by ticking, either as a class, group or pair activity.

NB: Learners routinely identify teachers, classrooms and ILCs as language learning resources. It is essential that learners come to see human resources, including other learners as equally valuable language learning resources. This recognition helps to promote learners’ willingness to see interaction with the wider community as a crucial learning resource. This in turn assists learners in the development of autonomous learning skills by promoting the assumption of responsibility for participating in non-classroom based linguistic interaction.
Activity 3 – Expanding the lexis

- Using the same pictorial or language stimulus, learners identify what resources are being utilised in each learning situation. Assist learners to name each resource.
- Using Worksheet 1.3A, learners indicate those learning resources they currently make use of, those they do not and the reasons why not. Alternatively, discuss these resources and learners’ use of them informally.

Activity 4 – How resources can be used

NB: The aim of all activities in this book is to promote learner reflection on different aspects of the learning process and the learning environment. Teachers should seek to extend their learners as active agents in the learning process. This will often mean directing learners’ attention to possibilities they have not thought of themselves. These possibilities should of course be incorporated into the teacher’s practice.

This activity will involve the concurrent or pre-teaching of the relevant language items.

- Over a number of consecutive teaching days, focus on one of the above learning resources in Worksheet 1.3A. This involves tailoring all or a part of that day’s teaching around the specific uses of the resource.
- Group learners and ask them to suggest three ways learners can use the resource for language learning.
- Quickly compare responses and write a comprehensive list on the board.
- Alternatively, use Worksheet 1.3B to record major and minor uses of the resources. (On Worksheet B, either teacher or learners insert picture of resource in box and name of resource into blank space.)
- As a guide to completing Worksheet 1.3B, the language learning uses for a cassette recorder might be:
  - listening to English songs
  - listening to English language cassettes
  - repeating things I find difficult
  - recording myself when I speak or read
  - recording other people
  - checking my pronunciation
  - recording something from the radio.

NB: For the rest of the activities in this sequence the resource referred to is the cassette recorder.

- Ask learners to underline, tick or in some way highlight those uses which they have never tried.
- Continue with language and literacy activities, modelling some of the uses of the resource, preferably in a way that involves the learners from the outset.
- A useful activity sequence for using the cassette recorder combined with understanding spoken instructions would be:
— learners in groups note down the labels on the cassette buttons (eg play, FF, rec etc.) and identify the volume control
— learners match the words or abbreviations with simple meanings eg rewind – go back, FF – go forward, play – start
— learners practise locating items on a cassette. Initially these items should already be familiar to learners through classroom use. For example, learners could locate the beginning of a listening exercise recently completed in class
— use models of other texts to jointly construct a set of spoken instructions, for example, for telling someone:
  . how to record their voice onto the cassette
  . how to use the cassette to self-correct and re-record themselves
  . how to set up, load and find the beginning of a cassette
— learners practise recording themselves or other learners giving instructions about how to use the cassette in different ways
— learners listen to themselves and each other and offer corrections. They then re-record corrected versions.

**Activity 5 – Hands on the ILC**

- Take learners to visit the ILC with the visit focusing on the use of cassette players there. Introduce learners to a range of texts and cassettes appropriate to their language and literacy levels, interests and future employment or study goals.
- Introduce learners to the ILC borrowing system and make them aware that cassettes as well as books can be borrowed.
- Using their new skills learners practise using cassette players in the ILC for educational purposes eg to listen, repeat, record, correct, re-record or revise.

**Activity 6 – Following it through**

- Return to the initial list of uses of the cassette recorder (Activity 4). Learners mark the uses with which they now feel more comfortable. This may be done using a simple self-assessment sheet of the “Now I can ...” type.
- Routinely incorporate into teaching practice:
  - group work with cassette recorders
  - class or group correction techniques using cassette recorders
  - the expectation that individual learners assist the teacher to set up, load and operate the recorder whenever it is used in the afternoon.
- Set aside a period of time each week where learners reflect on their learning experiences both on and offsite. With low level groups, this might be done pictorially and might be limited to looking at what learning resources have been used in the class that week for what purpose. These reflection activities provide valuable recycling of lexis as well as concepts.
They also help to embed thinking about learning as a routine part of learning itself.

- Use the same or a similar cycle of activities to acquaint learners with other on-site resources.

**NB:** The eventual aim of all learning to learn skills development is the creation of active, self-motivating and regulating learners. Although the focus of this unit is on on-site resources, teachers should be constantly guiding learners towards an understanding of how these resources can be used at home and in the community to promote language learning.

### Knowledge and learning skills: summary of outcomes

Activities in this unit will assist learners to:

- become acquainted with a range of learning resources
- feel more comfortable with the physical operation of technological resources
- understand the educational and language learning uses of these resources
- participate in these uses
- recognise the process of reflecting about learning as a significant part of learning
- accept responsibility for control over this aspect of learning
- appreciate the value of self and peer assessment techniques
- function more comfortably in cooperative learning tasks.
1.3 Recognising and accessing a range of on-site learning resources

WORKSHEET 1.3A

The things listed below can help you to learn.

Tick the boxes to show if you use them or not.
If you do not use them tick the box to show why.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>I use</th>
<th>I don’t use</th>
<th>I haven’t got one</th>
<th>I don’t know how to use it</th>
<th>My English is not good enough</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cassette player</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>library books</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language master</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>newspapers and magazine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>radio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other learners in my class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learners in other classes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>videos</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.3 Recognising and accessing a range of on-site learning resources

WORKSHEET 1.3B

Learning English with ______________

I can use a ______________ to:

1. ______________________________
2. ______________________________
3. ______________________________

Some other ways I can use it are to:

4. ______________________________
5. ______________________________
6. ______________________________
7. ______________________________
8. ______________________________
1.4 Organising materials

INTRODUCTION

The ability to organise learning materials in a systematic way is crucial to successful learning. Unfortunately, most learners associate the acquisition of this skill with teacher concerns for neatness and tidiness of presentation rather than with its benefits to them as learners. So too do many teachers and this often means that they are reluctant to teach such a skill. Furthermore, it is difficult for most highly literate people to remember how materials organisation skills were taught and acquired.

It is crucial for teachers to recognise that their own skills in organising folders, creating and accessing files and filing systems, using telephone books and directories and so on underpin their ability to function effectively in domestic, study, training and employment contexts, and that these skills are just as important for their students.

Developing materials organisation skills assists learners by:

- increasing their awareness of the need to categorise in order to maintain control over large amounts of information/material
- increasing their ability to categorise
- familiarising them with systems for ordering and sequencing materials eg alphabetical, numerical, chronological, categorial
- familiarising them with a range of common storage means eg manila folders, ring files, clipboards, exercise books, notepads
- encouraging them to think critically about the appropriacy of certain storage means for particular purposes
- familiarising them with a range of storage and categorisation aids eg adhesive labels, plastic envelopes, cardboard dividers, tabs, the use of colour coding etc
- facilitating the systematic placement and ordering of materials for fast and accurate retrieval of information for class activities and for home study and revision.

These organisation skills also:

- promote awareness of larger systems of information storage eg Dewey numerical system in libraries, alphabetical systems for cataloguing
- make initial contact with these systems and the public institutions which use them less alien and more accessible
- alert learners to the centrality of this skill to many work environments.

Learners who are illiterate in their first language (L1) or have low levels of formal education unlikely to possess these skills to any significant extent in the educational context.
Learners with quite high levels of literacy in L1 and in English, with average to high formal educational backgrounds, also may not have, or may fail to activate, these skills. The explanation for this is usually to be found in differing pedagogical cultural practices. Learners from some cultures, for example, are used to working from set texts or course books into which the answers to exercises are written. There is thus no call for any learner-centred system of materials organisation.

Teachers should therefore not assume that their students are already in control of these skills, but should explicitly seek to develop them where required.
ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spoken language</th>
<th>Learning skills and knowledge</th>
<th>Written language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• oral transaction for purchase</td>
<td>• identifying a range of storage means</td>
<td>• can be applied to any selected literacy activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• reason giving</td>
<td>• identifying differing purposes of range of storage means</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• simple comparisons</td>
<td>• identifying educational advantages of effective storage of information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• lexis of storage means, storage aids etc</td>
<td>• developing classification skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 1 – Identifying the issue

• Ask learners to locate for further use a specific worksheet used about one week ago.
• Observe:
  – how learners locate the item (by discussion, comparison of worksheets, shaking out exercise books)
  – how many learners do not have the item (at home, lost, never received because of absence)
  – how much class time is expended in retrieving the item.
• Draw learners’ attention to the results of the observations. This can be done in a humourous and unintimidating way.

Activity 2 – Exploring the possibilities

• Display a selection of possibilities for materials storage, eg manila folders, ring files, exercise books, clipboards, notepads, individual pieces of paper.
• Teach lexical items where necessary.
• Together consider each example in terms of its suitability for:
  – incorporating worksheets or other printed material distributed in class
  – preventing material from falling out or becoming damaged
  – ease of materials location
  – portability etc.
Activities

NB: At very low levels the most appropriate way to begin the materials organisation process may be by using exercise books into which handouts are cut and pasted.

Since most learners receive many supplementary worksheets, ring files are probably the most efficient way of storing these alongside personal handwritten notes.

It is important to draw learners’ attention to the disadvantages of certain commonly used storage means eg clipboards.

- Learners complete the worksheet (this unit) to focus on the advantages of certain storage means.
- You may wish to simplify this worksheet. Having the storage means on display and dealing with each one in turn will assist learners with this task.
- Together decide on an appropriate storage means for the course duration.
- Encourage learners to purchase the item by a certain date or day.

Activity 3 – Setting up a system

- Take into the class some models of different ways of organising materials eg alphabetical, by dates, numerical, categorical, or a combination of these. Alternatively, take learners in small groups to visit the administrative or resource sections of the teaching institution, and look at how written material is stored and filed.
- Learners pool the examples of organisational systems they have seen and add any they may think of themselves.
- Learners locate class materials used over the past week or few days.
- Learners select a method for ordering their learning materials.

NB: Teachers need to consider the advantages and disadvantages of each of these organisational systems and guide their learners towards informed choices. Alphabetical order is, for example, limited by the small number of letters and is in any case unusual in the internal organisation of books and folders. At very low levels, simple consecutive numbering may be the easiest way to begin.

With other than very low literacy learners, dating may be the most appropriate means of organising materials. Ordinal number, days and months of the year will need to be concurrently taught. A large wall calendar will assist learners with dating materials and provide a useful literacy activity.

An easy way into the systematic dating of all materials is for the teacher to initially date all materials prior to distribution. Learners are then required only to highlight the date and its position on the page (ie top right hand corner for ease of retrieval).

- Increasingly withdraw from the process allowing time during each class for learners to organise their own material.
- Encourage continued use of the system by:
  - regular informal checks
  - regularly requiring learners to retrieve and replace earlier items (eg for revision).
Activity 4 – Keeping materials up-to-date

- Together decide on a procedure for allowing learners to keep their materials complete and up-to-date. Often learners have incomplete sets of materials from the preceding classes. Responding individually to requests from learners for worksheets they have missed or lost is time consuming. Asking learners to share materials is equally unsatisfactory.

You could:

- have a designated area of the room, and a tray where additional copies are routinely placed for collection, or
- have each learner team up with one or more other learners and be responsible for taking second copies of distributed material when a learner is absent. This responsibility can also be extended to making photocopies of handwritten notes to pass on to absent classmates.

**NB:** Setting these procedures in motion helps to transfer the responsibility for all aspects of learning from the teacher to the learner. These skills will later be called on in other education and training contexts. Many areas of employment (e.g., office work) assume these skills.

Activity 5 – Categorising information

**NB:** Learners regularly receive material other than classroom materials. This may include information about childcare, excursions, community services, learner plans, and so on. Learners with low literacy skills are often unfamiliar with ways of keeping material of one type separated from others and do not recognise the benefits of doing so.

- Take in examples of folders in which material has been subdivided in some way (e.g., resources from the clerical and administrative staff or personal resources).
- Draw attention to the organisational aids used, including, for example, staples, paper clips, bulldog clips, plastic envelopes, cardboard dividers, adhesive tabs, and coloured dividers.
- Together examine the material other than classroom worksheets distributed in the course so far, and subdivide this material into a number of appropriate categories.
- Encourage learners to create simple names for the categories themselves.
- Learners then consider the storage aids they have encountered during this activity and the advantages and disadvantages of different aids. (For example, bulldog clips appear easy and effective, but can be cumbersome and dislodged easily in folders.)
- Learners select those most suitable for their own needs and set a date by which relevant storage items are to be brought to class.
- A supermarket visit may encourage more discussion of possible methods as well as reinforce the related language and allow an opportunity for price comparisons.
- Assist learners to set up and use their chosen systems. For example, if plastic envelopes are chosen, provide adhesive labels and have learners fill
in the category names as a class activity. (Adhesive labels can also be used to give a more institutional look to the cover of a book or folder. Printing learners’ names in bold and adding an institutional logo can help to establish learners’ sense of themselves as learners.)

- Aim to make available at all times a range of commonly used equipment, including stapler and staples, paper clips, pencil sharpener, scissors, cellotape, hole-punch and adhesive labels.

**Knowledge and learning skills: summary of outcomes**

Activities in this unit will assist learners to:

- increase their awareness of the range of storage means and storage aids
- increase their ability to assess the suitability of these to their current educational context
- develop their materials organisation skills
- development greater familiarity with a range of commonly used learning equipment
- increase their sense of self as learner
- assume greater responsibility for particular aspects of the learning situation
- increase their awareness of the benefits of implementing organisational systems
- locate, retrieve and replace material studied at home
- facilitate home study and revision
- practise categorisation skills.
### WORKSHEET 1.4

Below are some examples of different kinds of books and folders. Tick (✔) the advantages of each one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Pieces of Paper</th>
<th>Clipboards</th>
<th>Manilla folders</th>
<th>Ring files</th>
<th>Exercise Books</th>
<th>Notepads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is big enough</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can use it for everything in my course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing falls out</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is cheap</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can buy it at a supermarket</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is easy to carry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can keep everything in order</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things won't get dirty or damaged</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I only need one for my whole course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Later, I can use it again</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can find things in it quickly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I study at home, I can add things to it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For our class we have decided to buy ___________________.
We'll bring it to class on _______________ (day/date).
1.5 Understanding classroom management techniques and activity types

INTRODUCTION

Many learners are unfamiliar not only with concrete aspects of the learning process such as learning implements and resources, but also with classroom processes and learning activity types.

This may be because learners have encountered only a limited range of learning environments and activities. It may also be because learners bring to the classroom specific cultural expectations about the purpose, the conduct and processes of learning. These expectations may involve highly traditional concepts of teacher-centred classrooms with little active learner input. They may include, for example, fixed expectations about seating arrangements, teacher-student proximity, working individually and talking in class.

Language learning classrooms which promote a high degree of student interaction as a technique for effective language learning will almost certainly involve learners in:

- unfamiliar activity types such as classroom surveys, information gap activities, sequencing, role plays and working from cassette recorders and videos
- unfamiliar learner groupings such as pair work, small group activities (e.g., text reconstruction), and whole group activities (e.g., discussion and peer assessment).

In addition to this, the relationship of the particular activity or learner grouping to language learning can often be unclear to learners. This may result in an apparent lack of motivation to undertake the task and in a very real frustration for both learner and teacher who do not share a common perspective on the value of the task.

Familiarising learners with classroom management techniques and activity types thus always involves making explicit to learners the connections between the activity and the language objectives being pursued. This enables learners to adjust more readily to unfamiliar expectations by providing them with a tangible and practical advantage for making changes to their approach to language learning.

No activity sequence is offered for this unit. Activities are never conducted solely for the purpose of introducing the activity type and an activity sequence to introduce activity types would thus be superfluous.
1.6 Understanding teacher-learner roles

INTRODUCTION

The roles of teacher and learner are differently defined in different cultures. In most cultures, role is closely connected with status. In cultures where the status of teachers is high, certain areas of responsibility will be regarded as the sole prerogative of the teacher. These areas of responsibility often include control over:

- the setting of learning goals (content)
- the means by which these goals are to be achieved (methodology)
- classroom interaction
- assessment practices
- the physical aspect of classroom environment
- enforcement of attendance and other aspects of learning behaviour.

Learners entering the ESL classroom or training room are often bewildered by what they may perceive as the teacher’s reluctance to act like a teacher. This may encompass aspects as diverse as the way the teacher dresses and sits, the way he or she speaks to the learners, or the fact that the teacher actively seeks learner input and assistance in reaching decisions about what is to be taught. Many learners also simply transfer the experiences and expectations of childhood education to the adult learning context without recognising that the status of the participants has altered.

Understanding that the processes of teaching and learning in adult learning are co-operative and interdependent is an important step in moving learners away from the teacher centred curriculum. It provides the basis from which further steps in the direction of autonomous learning may be taken. Ultimately it is hoped that learners will acquire the skills with which to identify and satisfy their learning needs using teachers as only one part of a wide variety of learning resources.

Getting this process underway can be difficult and mutually frustrating and confusing, with both parties to the learning process feeling that the other is, in a sense, opting out.

Teachers need to begin this process immediately by gradually but systematically transferring responsibility for aspects of the classroom context to the learners. This may be done in very practical ways as well as by cross-cultural activity comparisons and discussions with higher level learners.
**ACTIVITIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spoken language</th>
<th>Learning skills and knowledge</th>
<th>Written language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• polite request</td>
<td>• developing awareness of teacher expectations in the adult learning context</td>
<td>• can be applied to any selected literacy activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• polite interruption, enquiry, suggestion</td>
<td>• developing awareness of learning as doing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• lexis of classroom practice and procedures</td>
<td>• developing awareness of rationale for self-directed learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• reason giving eg why, because</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity 1 – Talking about expectations**

- Organise learners into pairs. Use L1 pairs if you think this will generate more discussion. Ask learners to think of two ways in which their present learning environment differs from learning environments of their previous experience. Encourage learners to comment on aspects related to:
  - the teacher
  - what the teacher does
  - the learners
  - what the learners do.

- Ask learners to contribute their ideas and assist them to formulate these in simple English.
- Make a list on the board. Make a copy of the list and a class set of copies for use in Activity 2.
- Encourage as much discussion as possible about learners’ memories of learning experiences. This often takes some time as these experiences will lie a long way in the past for many learners. Add to your list as different aspects emerge.

**Activity 2 – Classifying the differences**

- Using photocopied clean lists from Activity 1, assist learners to classify the differences they have identified.
- If you have not already done so, actively teach strategies for physically classifying information (using different coloured highlighter or coloured
Section 1 In the language classroom

pencil, using circling or underlining, numbering etc). Provide the headings yourself, for example:

– what the teacher looks like
– what the teacher does
– what the teacher doesn’t do
– what the learners do.

Activity 3 – Conducting a survey

• Use Worksheets 1.6A and B (first two columns only) or a similar worksheet to re-inforce some of the items which have arisen so far.
• Ask learners to fill in the worksheets with yes or no or simply by ticking or crossing each item.

Activity 4 – Focusing on the Australian ESL classroom

• Using information from the preceding activities, draw learners’ attention to the differences and similarities between the Australian ESL classroom and classrooms of their previous experience.

NB: The focus here is on the ESL classroom or training room. However, many aspects of the learning environment such as casualness of teacher dress, use of first names, and assumption of learner responsibility are aspects of the wider adult learning context and learners need to be made aware of this.

• Get learners to pool their knowledge about Australian classroom practice to fill in the final column of Worksheet 1.6A and/or B.
• If learners have had no previous contact with learning institutions in Australia, get them to predict what they will be like.
• Go through their responses as a whole class activity. Indicate simply the reasons why certain things they may think of as unacceptable teacher or learner behaviour are either permitted or encouraged.
• Comment explicitly on perceptions that are wrong.

NB: Many learners equate lack of rigid physical organisation and control of the classroom with some deficiency in the teacher. They may perceive teachers as untrained volunteer workers, as lazy, as ill-prepared, and as unable to maintain control and command respect. Perceptions like these can be very damaging to classroom atmosphere and to learners’ willingness to participate fully. Although it is difficult to discuss with low oracy learners the reasons why adult and child learning contexts differ, it is important that these issues are raised as early as possible and gradually made the agreed base from which responsibility for learning is transferred to the learners.

Activity 5 – Making it more visible

• Ask learners to select five things about teacher and learner behaviour in Australia which are very different to behaviour in their country of origin.
Encourage learners to list those aspects of classroom practice which they individually find it most difficult to accept. Use Worksheet 1.6C to record these.

**Activity 6 – Exploring the reasons**

- Organise learners into pairs or small groups. Give each group one or two items from the list of teacher and learner dos and don’ts in Activities 2, 3 and 4. Allow learners to use L1 if appropriate.
- Ask learners to think of one or two reasons why teachers do, or do not do, certain expected things or why learners are, or are not, encouraged to assume certain responsibilities. A sample cue card might look like this:

  1. My teacher likes me to sign the roll myself. **Why?**
  2. My teacher calls me by my first name. **Why?**

  1. In this classroom, I do a lot of things together with another learner. **Why?**
  2. It is OK for me to interrupt the teacher. **Why?**

- Ask learners to report back orally. Assist them to formulate their answers simply. Encourage other learners to volunteer additional or alternative reasons.
- From learners’ responses, isolate the following main points (simplified if necessary):
  - learners are now adult whereas their memories are of childhood learning experiences
  - being adult means being able to do things for yourself
  - most adults want to work. When you go to work you will need to use your English.
  - learning a language to speak and use is not like learning something to pass an exam
  - talking to others in class helps you to practise English
  - the teacher wants to know about how much you understand. It helps him/her to plan.
  - you will learn English faster if you use it outside the classroom. Books and text books only help.
  - learning is a job. You have to work hard to learn well.

- Organise learners into small groups. Use worksheet 1.6D as a matching activity. Cut the sentences into their three parts. Assist learners to order the beginnings of the sentences from 1 to 10, and ask learners to find one appropriate reason for each aspect of classroom practice.
**Activity 7 - Learning as a job**

- Use Worksheet 1.6E to encourage learners to reflect on who is responsible for different aspects of learning and teaching.
- Ask learners to add any additional learner or teacher responsibilities to the list provided.
- Some items (e.g., testing) are the responsibility of teacher and learner jointly. You might choose to enlarge on this at this point or to postpone discussion of self-assessment and monitoring practices until a later time.

**Activity 8 – Using strategies**

- Brainstorm with learners the other adult learning contexts they may find themselves in later. Include in your list: TAFE, labour market programs, on the job training, private colleges, university.
- If you have not already dealt with strategies for working out what to do or how to behave when you are unsure about something, use Activity 3 in the following unit to do this (1.7 Understanding Classroom Genre). If you have already equipped your learners with these strategies, take this opportunity to recycle them.

**Knowledge and learning skills: summary of outcomes**

Activities in this unit will assist learners to:

- practise classification skills
- practise marking important information in written text
- develop an awareness of the expectations of the adult learning context
- develop an awareness of successful language learning as doing
- develop strategies for coping when unsure about classroom practice and procedure
- assume greater responsibility for a variety of aspects of the learning environment.
### WORKSHEET 1.6A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It is OK for my teacher to</th>
<th>in my country</th>
<th>in your country</th>
<th>in Australia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. wear a short skirt if she is a woman</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. wear slacks if she is a woman</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. wear an earring if he is a man</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. wear bright colours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. have long hair if he is a man</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. have an unusual haircut</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. wear unusual clothes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. sit on the desk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. put his/her feet on a chair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. cross his/her legs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. call learners by their first name</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. join in activities with the learners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. laugh and joke a lot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. shout at learners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. touch learners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. hit learners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. sit very close to learners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. use a text book all the time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# 1.6 Understanding the teacher - learner roles

## WORKSHEET 1.6B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It is OK for learners to</th>
<th>in my country</th>
<th>in your country</th>
<th>in Australia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. talk when the teacher is talking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. talk to other learners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. have long hair if they are men</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. study together</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. ask another learner to help them</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. call the teacher by his/her first name</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. interrupt the teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. talk when another learner is talking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. get up and move round the classroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. eat and drink in class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. laugh at other learners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. forget their books and pens</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. ask the teacher to repeat something</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. come to class late</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. leave class early</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. say they don’t want to do something and not do it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. tell the teacher they don’t understand something</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. tell the teacher the lesson is too hard or too fast</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. laugh at the teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. say things about the teacher’s clothes or hair or body</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.6 Understanding the teacher - learner roles

WORKSHEET 1.6C

Differences in teacher and learner behaviour between Australia and my country of origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher behaviour</th>
<th>Learner behaviour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### WORKSHEET 1.6D

#### Talking about why

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>My teacher calls me by my first name</td>
<td>because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Sometimes I work with another learner in class</td>
<td>because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Sometimes I work with 2 or 3 other learners in class</td>
<td>because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>I can ask the teacher to say something again</td>
<td>because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I can tell the teacher the lesson is too fast</td>
<td>because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I use lots of different ways to learn in class like cassettes, going on excursions, different activities</td>
<td>because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I don’t do much homework, but my teacher asks me to practise English when I go shopping or to the bank or to the station</td>
<td>because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>My teacher doesn’t do everything for me</td>
<td>because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>My teacher doesn’t tell me what to do all the time</td>
<td>because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>My teacher doesn’t mark the roll</td>
<td>because</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 1.6 Understanding the teacher - learner roles

**WORKSHEET 1.6E**

**Whose job is it?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>MY TEACHER’S JOB</strong></th>
<th><strong>MY JOB</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Coming to class every day on time
2. Planning lessons
3. Organising my book or folder
4. Speaking English outside
5. Studying at home
6. Learning English
7. Explaining things I don’t understand
8. Helping me to understand how to learn best
9. Organising my life so that I have time to study
10. Talking to people in shops, at the bank, at the station...
11. Testing my English
12. Making sure I do everything I can to learn more English
13. Asking questions when I don’t understand
14. Making sure I am polite to my teacher and other learners
15. Moving the chairs and tables so I can work together with other learners

**TEACHING IS MY TEACHER’S JOB** **BUT** **LEARNING IS MY JOB**
1.6 Understanding the teacher-learner roles

WORKSHEET 1.6F

I’m a learner?

I’m a Cook
I need:
________________________________________________________________________________________________

I’m a Doctor
I need:
________________________________________________________________________________________________

I’m a Mechanic
I need:
________________________________________________________________________________________________

I’m a Hairdresser
I need:
________________________________________________________________________________________________

I’m a Learner
I need:
________________________________________________________________________________________________
1.7 Understanding classroom genres

INTRODUCTION

Classrooms and training rooms are highly specific cultural sites. The processes and procedures occurring within them are to a large extent mediated by language as are most forms of human communication. Increasing control over the linguistic resources of a culture confers increasing control over interactional and behavioural appropriacy within any given context.

Along with familiarity with learning materials and resources, activities and groupings, learners need to develop an ease with the interactive demands of the learning environment.

These include familiarity with appropriate:

- learner-learner forms of address and greeting
- learner-teacher forms of address and greeting
- forms of request, interruption, turn-taking, commenting, offering and accepting assistance, giving instructions etc
- forms of asking for repetition, clarification, explanation of meaning, louder or slower speech
- forms of suggesting and giving opinion about pace of learning, length of activities, balance of activities etc
- forms of leaving and re-entering classroom
- forms of organising self and others into learner groupings and initiating joint learning tasks
- forms of giving and accepting feedback.

Since these are particularly language dependent, control of them will depend largely on the extent to which they are explicitly identified and actively taught as fundamental to classroom procedure.

Cultural factors also play a significant part in the need for explicit teaching of appropriate classroom procedures. Learners from cultural backgrounds where it is, for example, unacceptable for learners to offer suggestions or comments on teaching and learning, to interrupt the teacher, to state opinions, or to leave the classroom will be simultaneously acquiring the language to do so and the awareness that such behaviour is considered both appropriate and desirable.

Many of these language skills also underlie the move from learner dependence to learner autonomy. Learners who control the linguistic mechanisms for interrupting, asking for repetition, clarification, explanation and so on can be sure of having their learning needs met. Learners who are linguistically in a position to offer suggestions, comments, critical feedback on teaching and learning issues are likely to become aware of these as real issues for themselves as learners, either within or outside the formal learning context.

It is clear that the parameters of acceptable classroom interaction will vary both from institution to institution and from teacher to teacher. It is important that learners know that this is so. It is also important that they identify in their own minds these aspects of learning as issues of relevance to other institutional contexts and to be equipped with strategies for responding appropriately.
ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spoken language</th>
<th>Learning skills and knowledge</th>
<th>Written language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• using polite forms of address</td>
<td>• understanding the interactive classroom</td>
<td>• reading written instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• making polite requests</td>
<td>• understanding teacher expectations</td>
<td>• reading classroom texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• asking for clarification/assistance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• classroom lexis</td>
<td>• asking for clarification/assistance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• understanding spoken instructions</td>
<td>• understanding teacher expectations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 1 – Talking about forms of address

• Organise your learners into L1 groups.
• Ask learners to identify the way in which:
  – a child would address a teacher
  – an adult would address a teacher

in their country of origin.
• Ask learners to agree on a rough translation of this into English.
• Draw a grid on the board with the countries represented in your class on the vertical axis and the forms of address for teachers of children and adults on the horizontal axis. Allow each group to explain what occurs in their country of origin.
• Assist each group to fill in the grid on the board for their particular country or nationality.
• Actively draw out comments on aspects of address which are important for different cultures, eg different forms of address for male and female teachers, younger and older, more and less senior teachers.

NB: Even within the Australian context, different forms of address for teachers will be appropriate in different educational institutions. The aim of this activity sequence is primarily to raise awareness of the issue, rather than to provide right or wrong answers. Once the issue is established, you can teach your learners strategies for working out what is appropriate in each of the learning contexts they may later enter.
Activity 2 – Understanding forms of address in Australia

- Ask your learners to volunteer forms of address they have heard or seen in Australia. List on the board.
- If any major forms of address are missing, comment on this and add them to the list. Your list will probably look something like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jenny</th>
<th>Miss teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miss Jenny</td>
<td>Mr teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Jenny</td>
<td>Teacher Jenny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Davidson</td>
<td>Teacher Joe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Davidson</td>
<td>Sir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Joe</td>
<td>Madam or Ma'am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe</td>
<td>mate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss</td>
<td>Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Davidson</td>
<td>Ms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Assist your learners to identify forms of address which are not used at all in adult learning contexts eg teacher, Miss, Teacher Jenny, Teacher Joe.
- Ask learners to reflect on the form of address they have been using to date. If it is one of the above, be explicit in drawing attention to its inappropriacy.
- Get learners to physically eliminate these forms of address from the list.
- Make a clean list of those forms of address which remain.
- Ask learners to number them in order of formality, or introduce a simple diagrammatic continuum showing movement from most informal to most formal. Make sure that your learners are focusing on the adult learning context.

Your continuum may look like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>very formal</th>
<th>formal</th>
<th>informal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr Davidson</td>
<td>Ms Davidson</td>
<td>Jenny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Beattie</td>
<td>Mr Beattie</td>
<td>Joe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Specifically outline the contexts in which the very formal would be used (eg university, hospitals, surgeries).
- Draw attention to the contexts in which mate is used.
- Focus learners on the formal and informal items. Be explicit about the fact that these two forms of address (Mrs, Ms, Miss, Mr and surname, or the use of the first name) are the only real options in most adult learning contexts.
- State your own preferred form of address as teacher. Allow learners to choose the one they feel most comfortable with, but insist that culturally acceptable forms of address are consistently used. For example, do not accept Miss Jenny or Mr Ben.
- Use Part 1 of Worksheet 1.7A to summarise what you have talked about with learners.


**Activity 3 – Developing strategies**

- Ask learners to volunteer situations where they have been unsure about appropriate forms of address. List them on the board.
- Encourage learners to talk about how they dealt with these situations. List their responses simply on the board.
- Ask learners to complete the list with any additional strategies not yet represented. For example, your list might be:
  - I do nothing
  - I walk away
  - I get a friend/my children/my husband/my wife to do it for me
  - I ask my friend before I go
  - I ask the person if I can call them Ben (for example).
- Assist learners to group these into strategies which help improve their English and strategies which do not.
- Use Part 2 of Worksheet 1.7A to help learners record strategies they can use in other educational contexts.

**NB:** It is worthwhile spending some time talking about these strategies since they are all-purpose strategies for a variety of contexts where learners may be unsure about either appropriate language or appropriate procedures. Simple strategies like these can be powerful confidence boosters to learners of any level.

**Activity 4 – Understanding classroom organisation**

- Organise learners into L1 groups.
- Ask learners to discuss (in L1 if necessary) how classrooms were usually organised in their country of origin. Learners should comment on:
  - class size
  - where learners sat eg on floor, chairs, behind tables
  - how learners sat eg in rows, circles
  - where the teacher stood or sat.
- Allow learners to report back for their country of origin. Perhaps construct a similar grid on the board to that constructed in Activity 1.
- Draw out common areas of experience. Most learners will be used to rows and columns of learners with the teacher standing out the front and behind a desk.
- Encourage as much talk as you can about your learners’ memories of their classroom experiences.
- Using Worksheet 1.7B, assist learners to fill in Column 1.

**Activity 5 – Learning about the Australian classroom**

- Ask learners to describe the ways in which their present classroom is different to what they expected.
- Make a simple list together with learners on the board. In your list, try to focus on the physical aspects of the classroom or training environment and
its organisation. The feedback you get may be more extensive than you intended. For example, learners may comment on teachers’ dress, teachers’ relationship with learners.

- Use Worksheet 1.7C to assist learners to think about why the arrangement of the seating is different. The worksheet is partially completed. Use white-out to transform it into a pro-forma and think of other reasons to add.
- Return to Worksheet 1.7B and complete Column 2. Encourage learners to use highlighter to foreground three ways in which their current classroom differs significantly from classrooms in their previous experience.

**NB:** Learners are often unsure about why they are being asked to participate in different types of learner groupings. Although some reluctance to do things differently is almost inevitable, you can promote a greater degree of acceptance by explicitly:

- commenting on the purpose of the activity
- commenting on why it is best done in a certain way
- relating each activity to your overall goal for the day/week
- relating each activity to those immediately preceding it.

**Activity 6 – Broadening the issue**

- Use a similar approach to acquaint your learners with classroom practice in regard to:
  
  - appropriate forms of address for other learners
  - eating, drinking and smoking in class
  - talking in class
  - gender and racial discrimination
  - turn-taking in class.

  In each case, remember to incorporate the strategies to overcome uncertainty in Activity 3.

**Knowledge and learning skills: summary of outcomes**

Activities in this unit will assist learners to:

- actively compare and contrast aspects of their current learning environment with classroom practice in their country of origin
- actively compare and contrast child and adult learning environments
- develop strategies for dealing with cultural and linguistic uncertainty in educational and other contexts
- develop an informed understanding of current classroom expectations.
1.7 Classroom genre

WORKSHEET 1.7A
Talking to my teacher

Part 1

I come from _____________________________________________________
In my country, I call the teacher _____________________________________
In English this means______________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

In Australia, things are
the same ✗

different ✗

Teachers of adults are usually called________________________________
(or)
________________________________________________________________

My teacher likes me to call her ______________________________________
him ______________________________________
Before I called her/him ____________________________________________
but now I will call her/him _________________________________________

Part 2

When I go to another school or to TAFE or university, I won't be sure what to call the teacher. But I can do something.

I can
1. _____________________________________________________________
2. _____________________________________________________________
3. _____________________________________________________________
4. _____________________________________________________________
1.7 Classroom genre

**WORKSHEET 1.7B**

I come from _________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In my classroom in .................</th>
<th>In my classroom in Australia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. My class had .................students</td>
<td>1. My class has............. students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2. The teacher usually stood  
  •  
  • | 2. The teacher usually stands.  
  •  
  • |
| 3. The teacher usually sat  
  •  
  • | 3. The teacher usually sits  
  •  
  • |
| 4. The teacher never sat  
  •  
  • | 4. Sometimes the teacher sits  
  •  
  • |
| 5. The students usually sat  
  •  
  • | 5. The students usually sit  
  •  
  • |
| 6. The students never sat  
  •  
  •  
  • | 6. The students sometimes sit  
  •  
  •  
  • |
| 7. In............, my classroom looked like this: | 7. In Australia, my classroom looks like this: |
|  | ![Diagram of classroom layout] |

In my classroom in Australia:

1. My class has............. students
2. The teacher usually stands.
3. The teacher usually sits
4. Sometimes the teacher sits
5. The students usually sit
6. The students sometimes sit
7. In Australia, my classroom looks like this:

![Diagram of classroom layout]
1.7 Classroom genre

WORKSHEET 1.7C

1. We sit in a circle because:
   • we can all see each other
   • the class is smaller
   • we can talk to each other easily
   • ____________________________
   • ____________________________
   • ____________________________

2. We sometimes sit in groups because:
   • we need to help each other do something
   • each person can say more
   • ____________________________
   • ____________________________
   • ____________________________

3. We sometimes sit or stand in pairs because:
   • some things we learn need 2 people
   • we have to talk a lot. Our English will get better this way
   • ____________________________
   • ____________________________

4. Our teacher sometimes stands in front because:
   • she wants to show us something on the board
   • ____________________________
   • ____________________________

5. Our teacher sometimes sits or stands with us because:
   • she wants to check our English
   • she wants to help us
   • ____________________________
Section 2
Developing learning strategies

OVERVIEW OF SECTION

Developing learning strategies involves assisting learners to call upon an increasing range of strategies to improve their efficiency in achieving a language learning goal or objective.

Although all the activities in this book are directed at the development of learning skills and strategies, those in this section focus on the development of particular cognitive strategies for learning.

All adult learners come to the instructional context with a range of cognitive strategies at their disposal. As teachers, we can never be quite sure which strategies learners control and which they do not in relation to any given task.

However we can advance the following probabilities:

• low levels of formal education may coincide with low levels of L1 literacy. This means that cognitive strategies for processing written information effectively may not be familiar to learners.
• low levels of L1 literacy may coincide with low levels of formal education. This means that many cognitive strategies for processing both written and oral-aural information may be unfamiliar to learners.
• if learners’ levels of formal education are low, it will be some time since they last attended an educational institution. In the interim, standard literacy and learning aids will have become more sophisticated.

This means that devices for operating on or with written information (highlighters, plastic envelopes, adhesive labels etc) may not be familiar to learners. Equipment which assists the implementation of learning strategies (photocopiers, language masters, cassette recorders) may also be unfamiliar.

• Learners’ learning strategies may reflect those valued in the instructional context of the culture from which learners come. This may mean for example that although learners may be aware of certain types of input processing strategies, strategies which focus on learning by activating the subject matter of instruction (ie language) may be unfamiliar to them.

It may also lead to a strong dependency on a particular learning style and a reluctance to depart from the learning strategies favoured by that learning style.

• Learners may require assistance transferring strategies they employ in informal learning contexts to formal learning contexts. The reverse is also often the case. Learners whose learning strategies have been formed primarily by exposure to formal learning contexts, however limited this exposure may have been, may have difficulty adopting strategies more suited to informal learning contexts.
Section 2 Developing Learning Strategies

This may mean that many strategies employed by learners, while appropriate to a range of other learning goals, are inappropriate for effective language learning.

• Because learners’ ability to operate on or with written information may be poor, learners may have developed particularly strong active or innovative ways of dealing with oral-aural input by way of compensation. These strategies, while idiosyncratic, may be valuable and at the same time provide a useful way into the teaching of cognitive strategies.

The activities in this section assist learners to:

• identify strategies they already employ to learn
• reflect on the adequacy of these strategies for language learning
• broaden their repertoire of oral-aural and written skills and strategies
• choose from their increasing repertoire as appropriate to the purpose of the language activity, and
• perceive interactive learning strategies as a vital component of second language learning.

It is not possible within the scope of this book to do anything more than begin these processes.

Teachers unused to the explicit teaching of learning skills and strategies as part of language teaching will find valuable assistance in the reference texts listed in the professional reading on page. In most cases, however, intermediate to high levels of oracy and literacy are presumed in these textbooks and the language of instruction is that of the participant learners. It is also often presumed that learners already possess most of the skills in question so that the primary aim of the text is merely to activate these skills and strategies in relation to the acquisition of a new language. The emphasis is thus less on an integrated approach to skill building than on skills transfer.

Teachers of low oracy, low literacy learners from backgrounds of limited formal education should therefore consult these texts with a view to:

• developing a general understanding of the area
• expanding their knowledge of the repertoire of learning strategies for language learning
• modifying suggested activities for their particular learner profile, and
• integrating learning strategies development with language and literacy teaching.
2.1 Understanding learning as doing

INTRODUCTION

Learners who have not experienced a significant period of formal learning have usually learned very valuable skills in informal ways. Many, however, equate the notion of learning with the processes of formal education and have difficulty recognising their skills as the product of valid learning experiences.

The activities in this unit assist learners to:

• acknowledge the nature and extent of their own prior learning
• make the connection between learning something and doing it
• make the connection between language learning and other practical learning experiences
• identify ways in which language learning may be achieved.

These activities are also useful in preparing learners for work-related courses and contexts, where it is important that they can both identify and talk about skills they possess which may be job-related, but for which they have no documentary evidence such as certificates, diplomas, or degrees.

It is important for both teachers and learners to be realistic about taking on new language learning strategies and to be content with the initially very small steps that they may take toward active independent learning. Teachers often encourage learners to join clubs where English is spoken or engage in volunteer work. In many cases, these contexts will be both culturally and linguistically extremely demanding and may achieve the opposite of the desired outcome. Suggesting that adult learners spend one hour a day revising at home can also be unhelpful since adult lives can rarely accommodate this and cultural attitudes may make it impossible.

If teachers expect learners to undertake independent learning activities either in or outside the classroom, they need to ensure that they have both the language and the skills necessary to do them. Understanding learning as doing therefore goes hand in hand with the skills development contained in other units.
ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spoken language</th>
<th>Learning skills and knowledge</th>
<th>Written language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• lexis of common domestic and job-related activities</td>
<td>• developing awareness of classroom processes</td>
<td>• developing checklists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• lexis of learning-related activities</td>
<td>• developing autonomous learning skills</td>
<td>• developing familiarity with written classroom activity type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• lexis of personal skills/abilities</td>
<td>• developing repertoire of learning strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• talking about the past and past educational experience</td>
<td>• encouraging choice of realistic, achievable strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• developing classification skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 1 - Thinking about past learning experiences outside the school environment

- Using Worksheet 2.1A, ask learners to write down 5-10 things they learned to do outside the environment of formal schooling. (This can be done individually or in pairs. It may be useful to group pairs by gender to create a strong sense of shared experience.)
- Encourage learners to think across the entire period from childhood through adolescence and to include the early years of their working lives either as paid or unpaid workers and as workers about the home.
- Ask learners to note down who taught them these things, and to note this in the second column.
- Ask learners to note how they learned these things in the third column.

Activity 2 - Talking about past learning experiences at school

- Devise a worksheet on which learners list a number of practical skills they learned at school. These skills may range from the very practical, such as sewing or woodwork, to the less obviously practical, such as how to use a dictionary or how to calculate amounts of money.
- Encourage learners to include a mix of skills so that the skills mentioned do not completely overlap with those in Activity 1.
- In a separate column, ask learners to note down how they learned these things. They could do this using general statements eg by watching, listening, or by listing specific activities eg by making an apron or by making a bowl.
**NB:** The more specific learners can be about how they learned the easier it will be for you to make the connection between learning something and doing it. This is because most skills are acquired by practice not presentation. Getting your learners to focus on what they did in order to learn will allow you to focus on what they need to do in order to learn a language. It also places language learning, which many learners may have never previously done in a formal setting, on a par with other types of learning they are familiar with and have been successful at. It highlights similarities rather than differences and reduces the conceptual gap between taking on language learning and taking on other types of learning.

**Activity 3 - Modelling**

- Draw learners’ attention to how much of the learning mentioned in the Activities 1 and 2 is accomplished by doing in context, that is, practising things in the context which requires them to be done.
- Take an example of one or two learning experiences from the range provided by your learners and model the component skills. For example, cooking involves learning about:
  - selection of ingredients
  - compatibility of ingredients
  - measurements (amounts, time, temperature)
  - utensils, their functions and appropriacy
  - monitoring progress
  - presentation of food

  as well as a host of other skills. These skills are mastered by assisted, then unassisted, practice.

**Activity 4 - Jointly constructing**

- Select another example from the range of learning activities mentioned in Activities 1 and 2.
- Together with your learners, draw out the component skills involved in learning to do that activity.

**Activity 5 - Language learning: making the links**

- Organise your learners into pairs or small groups.
- Using Worksheet 2.1B, ask each group or pair to note down 5-6 things you need to do in order to learn a language. Encourage your learners to use dictionaries where appropriate.
- Pool each group’s responses orally and make a final list of about 12 items. Ensure that the list includes items such as select, repeat, revise, make time, as well as speak to people, read magazines and newspapers, practise, learn grammar and so on.
- Allow learners to complete their list by adding missing items to those already on their worksheet.
**Activity 6 - Categorising**

- Using Worksheet 2.1B once more, ask learners to categorise things they think can only be done with a teacher in a classroom and things they can do themselves outside the classroom.

**Activity 7 - Expanding the repertoire**

- Ask learners to indicate those activities they already do on a regular basis outside the classroom.
- Focus on activities outside the classroom. Identify learners who have indicated that they do these activities on a regular basis. Ask them to specify what they do and how they do it.
- Each of the items on the list can be expanded in this way using quite simple language.
- Alternatively worksheets from other learning skills textbooks (e.g., Willing p 19) can be used as expanded checklists where learners mark any out of class language learning activities they already do.

**Activity 8 - Trying something new**

- Ask your learners to review the expanded list of activities or strategies and select two or three which they do not currently utilise as part of their language learning repertoire.
- Encourage learners to try out these strategies over an agreed period of time.
- Provide feedback time on a regular basis for discussing successes and difficulties.

**Knowledge and learning skills: summary of outcomes**

The activities in this unit will assist learners to:

- reflect on past learning
- identify different ways of learning
- categorise information
- use techniques for highlighting relevant material in written text
- transfer learning skills already possessed into the formal learning context
- understand the demands and expectations of the formal learning context
- understand the need for active, independent learning outside the formal learning context.
Worksheet

WORKSHEET 2.1

Learning outside school

I learnt by

I learnt from

I learnt how to
2.2 Memory and retention strategies - oral/aural

INTRODUCTION

Adult learners come to the language classroom with a wide range of memory and retention strategies already at their disposal. These strategies are employed on a daily basis for dealing with the demands of everyday living; remembering shopping lists, appointments, bills, important events, and the multitude of other things that comprise daily life. These simply cannot be done without deploying memory aids and strategies, whether these be conscious or not.

Many learners also come to our classrooms with the experience of having learned second and even third languages, often informally in family or community contexts. The memory and retention strategies developed by learners in informal learning contexts provide a valuable base from which teachers can:

• raise learners' awareness of the strategies they already control and deploy
• engage learners in activities which cause them to reflect on whether or not these strategies are useful for language learning
• selectively teach strategies which are useful for language learning.

In teaching language learning strategies, we need to be conscious of the fact that memory and learning are not synonymous. Memory and retention strategies directed at remembering individual vocabulary or grammatical items cannot represent the main focus of learning strategy teaching. Learners learning a second language for immediate use in the context of daily life, study and work are required to activate the linguistic information stored and retrieved by placing it appropriately in a context of use.

Language learning strategies therefore need to focus on the remembering and retrieval of language in context. Memory strategies directed at retaining features of the context(s) in which the language items occur are likely to produce more useful results than those which promote the learning of a large number of unrelated items.

Memory is also well served by opportunities for practice and success. In the context of language learning for active participation in a variety of contexts within the target culture, this involves assuming an active rather than a passive orientation towards language.

We can assist our learners by

• focusing on strategies aimed at retaining meaning in context
• focusing on strategies which give strong emphasis to the value of interpersonal learning
• focusing on strategies which involve remembering by doing
• highlighting the links between succeeding and remembering.
ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spoken language</th>
<th>Learning skills and knowledge</th>
<th>Written language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• expressing habitual actions</td>
<td>• developing classification skills</td>
<td>• writing recounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• expressing agency</td>
<td>• developing discrimination skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• participating in casual conversation</td>
<td>• developing interactive learning skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• lexis of learning strategies</td>
<td>• developing skills in setting learning objectives and working towards their achievement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• recounting events orally</td>
<td>• developing contextualised learning strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 1 - Talking about remembering

• Ask your learners to tell you some of the many things they have to remember on a day to day basis.
• Complete Worksheet 2.2A by adding some of the most common suggestions made by your learners in column 1 (about 10).
• Ask each learner to highlight one or two items from column 1 which they have particular difficulty remembering.
• Set aside the worksheet and ask your learners what strategies they usually use for remembering. These may be humorous and highly idiosyncratic. Cultural differences in the way people remember things may also emerge.
• Return to the worksheet and complete Column 2 by adding the most commonly suggested strategies to the list.
• Ask learners to match any particular strategies they use from column 2 to remember any particular items from column 1.

NB: The aim of this activity is primarily to raise learners’ awareness of how much they have to remember and how competent they already are at doing it. Its secondary aim is to promote strategy sharing in a supportive environment and reflection on the adequacy of individual strategies.


**Activity 2 - Thinking about language learning**

- Organise learners into pairs or groups of three. L1 groupings may be beneficial to discussion and clarification.
- Ask learners to look again at Column 2 of Worksheet 2.2A.
- Using different coloured highlighters, ask learners to indicate:
  - those strategies they feel can definitely not be applied to learning language
  - those they feel can be applied
  - those they are not sure about.
- Encourage learners to come up with reasons why certain strategies can or cannot be used and assist learners to formulate them in simple English.
- Groups can compare their opinions about the strategies by reporting back on OHT.

**Activity 3 - Sharing strategies for remembering**

- Compile a second worksheet similar to Worksheet 2.2A but focusing on those strategies most learners agree are useful for language learning.
- Ask learners to contribute additional strategies they use and consider successful for language learning (either in groups or as a class activity).
- Learners complete Worksheet 2.2B beginning with their own ideas and then adding other learners’ suggestions.
- Supplement learners’ suggestions with suggestions of your own. Have learners record these on the same worksheet.

**NB:** It is worthwhile spending some time on Activity 3. Try to get your learners to think as concretely as possible about what it is they do that they feel aids them with learning and remembering. For example, learners who say ‘I learn at home’ or ‘I practise at home’ are not providing the teacher, their classmates or themselves with any useful strategies. A strategy is the ‘how’ of doing something.

At low levels of oracy, learners will be struggling to express the ‘how’ of what they do. You can assist them by being aware of the strategies they are likely to use and helping them to formulate these in simple English. A learner who says ‘I ask my wife to help me with things I don’t understand’ or ‘I read my worksheets aloud to myself’ or ‘I look for difficult words and phrases and write each one again’ or ‘I repeat the whole sentence, not just the word’ may be providing another learner with a strategy that he or she is not familiar with, but may be willing to try out.

As a teacher, you may recognise the limitations of many of the strategies your learners will provide, particularly of those which depend heavily on the rote learning of discrete linguistic items. Learners are usually extremely committed to these ways of learning and in some cases they also represent a predominant cultural learning style.

If you wish to move your learners into more contextualised learning strategies, you will need to broaden the strategy base very gradually, moving backwards and forwards between individualised learning (learning done alone) and interpersonal or interactive (learning involving others) and acknowledging the value of both.
Activity 4 - Classifying strategies

• Organise your learners into pairs or small groups.
• Ask your learners to indicate using highlighters those strategies which involve only themselves as individuals and those which involve learning with or through others.

Knowledge and learning skills: summary of outcomes

The activities in this unit will assist learners to:

• recognise the usefulness of many of the memory and retention strategies they use in day-to-day life
• be aware of a range of new strategies for memory and retention
• be aware of the relationship of materials organisation to retention
• use strategies to identify problem items
• increasingly self-monitor retention using above awareness
• be aware of strategies for continuing learning outside the classroom.
2.2 Memory and retention strategies – oral/aural

WORKSHEET 2.2A

Some ways to help remember language

I think:

My classmates think:

My teacher thinks:
2.2 Memory and retention strategies – oral/aural

WORKSHEET 2.2B

How I remember

I

REMEMBER:
• birthdays
• shopping items
• people's names
•
•
•
•
•
•

BY:
• tying knots in my handkerchief
• writing them on my arm
• saying them to myself
2.3 Memory and retention strategies: written

INTRODUCTION

Learners with low levels of literacy and limited formal education are unlikely to be skilled in the manipulation of written text.

The manipulation of written text involves not only text creation but also operating on text for specific purposes. One of these purposes is to retain the information contained in the text so that it can later be acted upon. Unlike most oral-aural material written text is often physically retained for later access, for example, by systematic filing for easy retrieval. Unit 1.4 focuses on developing materials organisation skills which are crucial to dealing with the large quantities of text encountered in language classrooms and learning institutions in general.

In addition to these skills, learners whose life goals include active community participation as well as further training and employment need to be able to operate critically on the vast amount of written text associated with those contexts. This is essential to reduce information overload and assist the process of storage and easy retrieval or, in other words, memory.

Operations to achieve this purpose with written texts include:

- selecting and highlighting crucial information
- grouping, classifying and categorising
- translating prose into other representational modes eg graphic, diagrammatic
- restating and summarising.

These learning strategies can be explicitly taught and learned.

Teaching memory and retention strategies to low level learners may necessitate some changes to individual teacher practice. Many low level learners write down everything which is on the whiteboard in roughly the same order, layout and spacing as it occurs. The teacher needs to adopt presentation practices which:

- select only those items of interest to be written down
- clearly group items which relate to one another in some specific way
- delete items written up for other purposes and so on

Otherwise learners may leave the classroom with large quantities of random and inaccessible written text. This is clearly counterproductive. It maximises memory failure and may deter learners from continuing with whatever steps they have taken towards self-directed learning. For these learners the routine classroom expectations of revision or independent study out of class constitute an impossible task. In the face of this task, such learners are likely to:

- do nothing because the task is overwhelming
- attempt to learn everything which will overburden memory
- attempt to learn by relying on rote learning rather than contextualising skills.
As with primarily oral - aural strategies, the learning of meaning in context is essential to the development of retention strategies for written text. Teachers need to:

- exemplify and encourage the development of strategies which link memory and contextualised use of written text
- focus on strategies which strongly emphasise the active involvement of learners in reshaping text
- highlight the links between succeeding in practice and remembering.
ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spoken language</th>
<th>Learning skills and knowledge</th>
<th>Written language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• personal identification</td>
<td>• classifying information</td>
<td>• filling in simple forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• family relationships</td>
<td>• discriminating relevant from irrelevant learning material</td>
<td>• flowcharts eg family tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• present and past events involving family members</td>
<td>• identifying material to be learned</td>
<td>• simple recount eg personal letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• using learning aids eg highlighter, coloured pen to assist the above processes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NB:** All the activities in this unit relate to the field of family relationships. Similar work with other fields would of course be possible.

**Activity 1 - Establishing the field**

• Prepare a short tape of 3 to 4 simple conversations where the speakers talk about their family members. These can be made quite quickly by asking friends, colleagues or learners in other classes to act as speakers.
• Make sure that a variety of types of relationship are represented in the conversations eg immediate family, family by marriage, older and younger family members.
• Use Worksheet 2.3A to enable learners to mark those relationships they hear in each conversation.

**Activity 2 - Re-inforcing the lexis**

• Organise learners into groups of 3 to 4. Common first language groups are a good way to stimulate discussion and allow learners to clarify meaning by reference to each other as first resort and the teacher as last resort.
• Using Worksheet 2.3A again, ask learners to use different coloured highlighters to mark which relationships denote females and which males.
• Encourage your learners to consult the dictionary only where they are not able to reach consensus about the meaning by interactive discussion.
• When the task is complete, ask the groups to exchange their final version of Worksheet 2.3A and check that there is agreement in the class on the correct classification of male and female relationships.
• Identify errors, discuss and give time to make changes to worksheet.
NB: It is not necessary for you to collect and correct the work your learners have done. Allowing learners to argue it out amongst themselves promotes self-reliance and confidence in tracking down meaning using the resources available to the individual and the group.

By working from worksheets and using an OHT of the worksheet for class correction and discussion, you are also decreasing the amount of material which ends up written on the board for learners to copy. Instead learners go away from the classroom with a minimum amount of written material operated on to maximum potential by themselves rather than the teacher. Classifying information is a form of recycling language. The more you do with your learners, the better they will control not only the skill of categorising but the language content of what is being classified, whether it be lexical items, structures, concepts, linguistic features or other elements.

- Make sure that learners take clear and correct copies of the activities away from the classroom. If there have been so many changes to the original that the result is indecipherable, allow time for second copies to be made and to be clearly marked as the working copy for independent study. To facilitate this you may need to keep additional copies of each worksheet in the room.

Activity 3 - Handing it over

- Looking at Worksheet 2.3A once more, ask your learners to suggest other ways in which family relationships might be classified. Using their suggestions, provide clean copies of Worksheet 2.3A and ask them to reclassify the information, for example by:
  - age (those who are usually younger or usually older than themselves)
  - proximity (those who are relatives by blood versus those who are relatives by marriage).

- Assist learners to develop the concept of a legend or key when they are using a highlighter or some other form of information selection eg circling, underlining, asterisking.

- Go back over the classifications so far and ensure that each receives a simple legend. For example:

  **KEY:**
  
  - blue = males
  - yellow = females

NB: This activity also assists learners to decipher graphic representations of categorised information they encounter in newspapers, magazines and further study contexts.
Activity 4 - Personalising the classifications

• Use Worksheet 2.3B to allow learners to re-classify relationships in terms of their personal meaning.

NB: This activity usually promotes a lot of discussion about the concept of the family and who belongs to it. Cultural differences will emerge in the way the family and the differing responsibilities of family members are conceptualised. There are many activities which can be used to explore the social roles of family members and to allow learners insight into the way these roles and relationships are constructed in Australia. All these activities permit further valuable language recycling and further development of skills in classifying concepts, social roles, duties, responsibilities and so on. They also foster increased understanding of Australian socio-cultural institutions and values.

Activity 5 - Reflecting on learning

• Ask learners to refer back to all worksheets used so far in this sample teaching sequence.
• Ask learners to identify any errors they made, particularly those made more than once. If you have done additional activities with your class, include these as well. Errors may have been in speaking, in understanding, in spelling etc.
• Assist learners to bring these errors together and to make them visible as things in need of further attention. This might be done in the form of a self-evaluation sheet with a box in bold at the bottom for writing problematic lexis or other linguistic features, for example:

```
MY PROBLEMS ARE:
•
•
•
•
•
```

NB: If you actively require your learners to identify and group their own errors or uncertainties, you are assisting them in two ways. Firstly, you are promoting the development of self-directed learning skills. Secondly, you are relieving them of the burden of attempting to learn or revise all of the considerable quantity of language input which accompanies attendance at classes. By focusing learners’ independent study efforts on a few manageable, identifiable tasks you are building confidence that things can be learned and mastered. Also, the processes of selection and discrimination involved in identifying knowledge gaps (and therefore learning needs) can be built upon to assist learners to isolate relevant from irrelevant learning information at much higher levels of study.

Self-monitoring activities which require active reflection on what is to be learned are themselves a type of memory and retention strategy.
Activity 6 - Identifying the contexts

• Ask your learners to help you construct a list of social situations in which family relationships might figure. Where is it important to be able to speak about and understand information about family relationships?
• You may need to prompt your learners and expand their list of suggestions to include listening activities eg TV soaps, reading biographies etc.
• From your completed list select 3 or 4 of the most common social contexts and relate these to the type of family member who might be being spoken about in each of these contexts.
• Worksheet 2.3C provides an example. You may need to vary it to suit your learners.

Activity 7 - Working with the contexts

This sample teaching sequence began with an oral recount from which particular lexical items to do with family relationships were abstracted for further language development. Recontextualising these items is essential if they are to be meaningfully retained by the learner.

   Working with one or more of the contexts in which talking or writing about family relationships occurs, and with the relevant oral and written genres, gives substance and social meaning to linguistic items. Learners learn not just the items themselves as individualised objects of memory training exercises, but the items as they function together with other items to create the particular discourses associated with particular social contexts.

   Reworking linguistic items and features by successive linguistic approximations of their functioning in the world of socialising, working and studying provides a more solid anchor for their retention than the learning of vocabulary lists or the rote learning of discrete and randomly imposed information.

Knowledge and learning skills: summary of outcomes

The activities in this unit will assist learners to:

• develop/practise techniques for highlighting important information
• develop/practise categorisation skills
• be aware of the relationship between materials organisation and retention
• be aware of the relationship between memory and practice
• be aware of the relationship between memory and context
• increasingly self-monitor retention using above awareness.
### WORKSHEET 2.3A

**Identifying family members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Conversation 1</th>
<th>Conversation 2</th>
<th>Conversation 3</th>
<th>Conversation 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>brother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>father</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>uncle</td>
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<tr>
<td>daughter</td>
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<tr>
<td>sister</td>
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<tr>
<td>aunt</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>nephew</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>son-in-law</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>grandmother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>mother-in-law</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>grandson</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>cousin</td>
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<tr>
<td>niece</td>
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<tr>
<td>sister-in-law</td>
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<tr>
<td>father-in-law</td>
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<tr>
<td>granddaughter</td>
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<tr>
<td>son</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>wife</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brother-in-law</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>husband</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grandmother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### WORKSHEET 2.3B

**My family**

1. I've got

   - By blood
   - By marriage

2. I've got

   - By blood
   - By marriage

   - in Australia
   - in (country of origin)
   - in (other countries)
### WORKSHEET 2.3C

**Where do I talk about my family?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. When I fill in forms</th>
<th>Usually I write about</th>
<th>And sometimes about</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. When I talk to friends and neighbours</th>
<th>Usually I talk about</th>
<th>And sometimes about</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. When I write a letter or something about myself</th>
<th>Usually I write about</th>
<th>And sometimes about</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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</tbody>
</table>
2.4 Conveying meaning

INTRODUCTION

Learning to convey meaning is a crucial strategy for learners who must function outside the instructional context in the second language in spite of the limitations on their language knowledge.

There are a wide variety of strategies learners can use to enhance the likelihood of being understood. Most learners will be aware of many of those strategies, but lack the confidence to deploy them. Teaching these strategies explicitly and making the classroom a safe environment in which to try them out encourages success. Success in one environment may encourage learners to transfer the successful strategies to another.

Not all strategies for conveying meaning are equally appropriate for furthering language development. Strategies such as:

- withdrawing from the exchange
- taking a friend or family member along to interpret
- returning with a friend or family member after a failed exchange, or
- using the Telephone Interpreter Service

will, in some sense, successfully conclude an exchange. It is unlikely, however, that these strategies will either improve the participant's level of language or encourage them to attempt a similar exchange unassisted. These strategies are, of course, valuable and will continue to be the primary strategies employed for complex transactions by low level learners. It is important that additional strategies which require the learner to function as active meaning makers are taught and practised.

These strategies are of two types

- paralinguistic strategies
- language strategies.

Paralinguistic strategies such as

- using movement and body language
- using facial expression
- sketching and drawing, and
- using intonation and stress

can supplement meaning. Strategies of this kind, though perhaps the most widely used and generally successful, have some limitations. For example:

- low level learners have insufficient control of pronunciation features
- many pronunciation features are not transferable across languages
- many body movements and facial expressions have culturally specific (and often unacceptable) meanings
- learners are not engaging directly with the manipulation of language if these strategies are used as language substitutes rather than language enhancers.
Explicit teaching of these strategies needs to involve explicit comment on these limitations. These strategies remain valuable, however, because they are interactive strategies which often generate a lot of shared language input and result in genuine exchanges of meaning. That is, they achieve a language purpose.

**Language strategies include**

- previewing the language encounter (where known) and predicting language content
- predicting key features/procedures related to the social context in which the language will be used and identifying relevant language
- learning appropriate linguistic means to:
  - paraphrase meaning in simple ways
  - check that meaning has been understood
  - correct misinterpretation of meaning.

These strategies rely heavily on the active participation of learners in the learning process.

Constant exposure to and practise of these techniques in a communicative language classroom will assist learners towards an appreciation of their value as language learning strategies.
Most teachers recognise that strategies for conveying meaning are an essential part of the development of speaking and listening skills. It is less common for these strategies to be classed as learning strategies.

What makes these strategies simultaneously oral-aural and learning strategies, is the fact that they are strategies which both promote and depend upon interaction.

Learning to negotiate successfully in spoken transactions (conveying meaning as an oral-aural skill) increases success rates in oral encounters and develops confidence in approaching them. Increased success and confidence in oral encounters increases the likelihood of interaction itself being perceived as an effective way of learning. Language learning becomes an interactive event rather than an individual mental process.

For learners whose personal or cultural learning preferences involve a heavy reliance on individual cognitive processes, the transition to more active and interactive forms of language learning may be acutely discomforting. Successful experiences in meaning negotiation provide support for and confirmation of the value of the strategy where pontificating about interactive learning will not.

Learners also learn to learn by exploiting their growing linguistic independence.

**Activity 1 - Predicting the content**

- Ask your learners to imagine that they are about to engage in a spoken transaction eg making an appointment with a doctor.
- Ask them to predict in general terms what will occur in the transaction.
  - Write their suggestions on the board in the order in which they are made.
You may need to act this out. You could also use a short video sequence, eg Speak Easy, as a prompt for this activity.

- Ask your learners as a group to re-arrange the suggestions on the board in the sequence in which they think they would occur. Grouping learners in L1 groups for this activity will quickly identify differences in the way in which this transaction would occur in different cultures. Encourage speculation about the usual sequence in Australia.

**Activity 2 - Matching the content**

- Play your learners a tape of a simple L2 appointment-making transaction. Ask learners to circle or otherwise indicate on the board any items which match their predictions. You will need to play the tape several times.
- Replay the tape listening for more detail. Ask your learners to tell you what is happening at each stage of the conversation eg opening, request, negotiation, closing.
- Get your learners to check what they hear against their original predictions about the structure of the conversation. Identify areas of apparent cultural difference and explicitly draw them to learners’ attention.
- Using a transcript of the L2 transaction, assist learners to mark out major steps or stages in its development. Encourage learners to use learning equipment eg highlighter, different colours to clearly mark off the stages. Label each stage clearly.

**NB:** Teachers are often reluctant to begin developing the metalanguage needed for talking about language and learning because they feel that low level learners cannot cope with it. There is nothing intrinsically more difficult about learning a word like “stage” or “sequence” than learning a word like “door”. If the concepts are heavily contextualised and deeply embedded in on-going classroom practice, learners will experience little difficulty with them.

Breaking down spoken (and written) transactions in this way allows learners a clearer view of the logic of what is happening in the transaction and provides them with a transportable scaffold for use in other transactions of a similar kind. Understanding the logic of translations enhances predicability and enhanced predicability increases the likelihood of success. Breaking down spoken text is therefore an effective learning strategy which may promote learner readiness to engage in more and more successfully spoken transactions outside the classroom.

**Activity 3 - Grouping the language**

- Assist your learners to group the language of the particular transaction according to some system or principle. For example, one way to group the language of making an appointment would be to identify those items which were specific to that transaction and those which would recur in other goods and services transactions. This would then be used as a springboard to brainstorm/predict language items from other fields eg buying a car or an electrical appliance.
Another advantage of breaking down spoken transactions into sequenced stages associated with particular language items is that learners can see the strong patterns of continuity that exist across, for example, goods and services transactions. This means that learners need not approach each individual instance of the transaction as if it were something new and unpredictably different. Feeling on top of the elements of commonality frees learners to grapple with what may not be common, that is, the language of the particular subject matter (cars, fruit and vegetables, other products and services).

If learners are equipped with the strategy of predicting the content of oral encounters in a focused and systematic way, they are more likely to do so because the task is more manageable.

**Activity 4 - Anticipating problems**

- After teaching and practising the language of the transaction, role play the transaction with one of your learners. If the transaction breaks down for any reason, allow it to do so. Wait for a couple of minutes after the transaction is completed, then ask the learner the time and date of his or her appointment and who it is with.
  
  Ask the rest of the class to tell you what went wrong. Assist learners to tease out what they mean by “she didn’t understand you” or “his English is no good”.

- Develop a list of potential problems and begin to list corresponding strategies for solving them.

To complete this activity sequence you could:

- compile with your learners a list (as extensive as possible and in simple English) of anticipated difficulties in negotiating oral transactions
- give different groups of learners one or two of the problems and ask them to contribute strategies or solutions to the difficulties
- compile a checklist for learners to use regularly in monitoring and assessing the performance of their peers or themselves in role play
- teach a limited range of language necessary for learners to operate the strategies on the checklist
- move across different types of oral transaction eg in casual conversation, exchanging familiar information, to show the consistency with which these strategies are applicable
- get learners to identify strategies they have not used to date and to commit themselves to trying out a particular strategy over a period of time. Learners could keep diary-like records of their out-of-class transactions.
2.4 Conveying meaning

WORKSHEET 2.4A

Reading diary

WEEK: ____________________  
(date)

THIS WEEK I am trying two new ways of reading:
1. ________________________________________________________________
2. ________________________________________________________________

I think I understood the article:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>No better</th>
<th>A bit better</th>
<th>A lot better</th>
<th>Quite well</th>
<th>Very well</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

YES  NO

NEXT WEEK I will continue these two new ways: [ ] [ ]

AND I will try a new way:
3. ________________________________________________________________
2.4 Conveying meaning

WORKSHEET 2.4B

Headline or Title:

I PREDICT WORDS

I PREDICT GROUPS OF WORDS

1  2  3
Section 2 Developing Learning Strategies

2.5 Extracting meaning from oral, aural and visual material

INTRODUCTION

A major difficulty for learners with low levels of literacy and limited formal education is the amount of linguistic input they are expected to cope with over sustained periods. In the average ESL classroom a period of instruction spanning 3 or 4 hours is quite normal. This is often far in excess of what even sophisticated learners could be expected to manage.

Learners need to be equipped with strategies for making meaning out of the complex aural and visual information they encounter in the classroom. These strategies will also be of use in the less controlled world of everyday encounters and exchanges.

Many teachers already teach strategies for extracting meaning from aural information and exchanges. These strategies include:

- using facial expression, body language and gesture to interpret meaning
- using intonation and stress to interpret meaning
- using context to enhance meaning
- identifying key words to guess essential meaning
- predicting and brainstorming to identify likely content of meaning exchanges, and
- implementing linguistic strategies for clarifying and confirming meaning.

Many of these can also be applied to extracting meaning from visual material such as pictures, photos, videos, film strips and so on.

Often, however, these strategies are so embedded in the listening or reading activities which surround them that learners remain unaware of the strategy being taught and its value to language learning.

In teaching strategies for extracting meaning, teachers need to:

- be explicit to learners about the strategy they are teaching
- be explicit about its value to language learning
- adopt teaching practices which require learners to implement these strategies to effectively participate in the classroom, and
- engage learners in activities which cause them to reflect on:
  - the types of strategies they already use for extracting meaning
  - the adequacy of the strategies for the second language learning context
  - the extent to which preferred strategies reflect cultural learning backgrounds, and
  - the degree of success in implementing these strategies.

Talking to learners about the value of these strategies usually achieves very little. Repeated experiences of success in using these strategies encourages learners to use them again, and builds confidence.

Teachers who are unsure about the full range of strategies available to learners for extracting meaning from aural and visual material will find valuable assistance in the reference texts listed on page 128, many of which offer detailed inventories of strategies and strategy types.
### ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spoken language</th>
<th>Learning skills and knowledge</th>
<th>Written language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• lexis of the particular field (subject matter of the article)</td>
<td>• using layout features to predict meaning</td>
<td>• reading short informational texts eg newspaper article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• using question forms</td>
<td>• using context to predict, check, reinforce meaning eg pictures, graphs, tables, charts</td>
<td>• interpreting simple diagrammatic or graphic co-text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• using cohesion in language eg conjunction, simple reference</td>
<td>• using knowledge of the field (subject matter) to predict content</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• lexis of talking about newspapers eg headline, paragraph, column, section</td>
<td>• developing knowledge of text structure and organisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• reading for gist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• using dictionary as secondary resource for extracting meaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• scanning for detail</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• using highlighters or some other means to discriminate essential information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• grouping and categorising language terms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Activity 1 - Talking About context

- Ask your learners to imagine they are about to read an article in their L1 newspaper about eg migration to Australia. In pairs or small groups, ask them to list the things that would help them to predict and interpret the content.
- Assist your learners to formulate their responses in simple English.
Section 2 Developing Learning Strategies

Responses might include:

- headlines; key words
- different fonts or print sizes
- where the article occurs in relation to other articles eg is it surrounded by other articles relating to world news, local news?
- the length of the article
- accompanying text eg graphs, photos, tables, charts – what they already know about the field (subject matter)
- whether the article is one of a series
- whether a similar article appeared the day before or recently
- whether they have heard a spoken version of the article eg on radio news
- whether they have seen a visual report of the same or a similar story on TV etc.

NB: The main aim of this activity is to focus learners’ attention on the fact that, as literate readers of their L1, they already use some or all of these strategies, although they may not be used to reflecting on them in this concrete way. Learners who understand that they are not being asked to do anything new quickly lose their fear of and reluctance to employ these same strategies to L2 texts. Making learners’ L1 strategies more visible to themselves also validates the considerable expertise learners bring to the L2 learning context and promotes pride and confidence in approaching similar learning tasks. Most essentially, it promotes an expectation of success and achievability rather than an infinite vista of repeated attempts and repeated disappointments.

As with other introductory or consciousness raising activities, it is worthwhile spending a significant amount of time helping your learners to objectify their own experiences and processes. The investment of time will pay off quickly in learners’ increased confidence in their own powers of interpretation.

Activity 2 - Planning to read

• Ask your learners to imagine they are opening an L2 newspaper. They see an article about eg migration to Australia, which they would like to read. In pairs or small groups, ask them to think of things they could have done before beginning to read the article to enhance their chances of success in reading it.

• Assist your learners to formulate their responses in simple English, and to make as full as possible a list of pre-reading strategies. These might include:

- reading an article in their L1 newspaper (where available) on a similar subject matter. This will acquaint them with key issues and facts
- reading a short or simpler version of the article or similar article first, if the article appears too extensive. This involves teaching learners cultural information about newspaper types eg how do the Telegraph Mirror or Sun-Herald differ from The Sydney Morning Herald or The Australian?
– looking for similar articles in preceding newspapers and scanning them for key concepts and lexical items. This involves suggesting that learners keep a stock of newspapers at home, say one week’s supply, for reference purposes
– listening to the radio news on the preceding evening or same morning
– watching TV news broadcasts close to the time of the newspaper’s appearance
– videoing, where possible, TV news or current affairs broadcasts for later reference
– watching SBS for news broadcasts in L1
– listening to ethnic radio news and current affairs in L1

• Refine and combine the strategy list from Activity 1 and Activity 2 to form a checklist for approaching reading activities. Learners can fill this in with their notes. Encourage learners to actively consult this checklist when reading outside the classroom.

Activity 3 - Critically reflecting on pre-reading strategies

• Use the above checklist. Ask your learners individually to mark those strategies which they already routinely employ.
• Ask learners to look at the checklist again. Get them to select two strategies which they do not already use but which are possible for them to use.
• Discuss with learners the personal viability of the strategies they select. For example, some language groups have no ethnic newspaper, radio or TV broadcasts in L1. Some learners have no video.
• Ask learners to foreground in some way their selected strategies eg by circling, underlining, highlighting etc.
• Distribute a self-assessment sheet such as Worksheet 2.4A and ask learners to fill in the sheet over a period of two weeks.
• Plan ahead. Set a time and date for reporting back and discussing the impact of strategy use on reading success.

Activity 4 - Predicting content

• Using an OHP, show learners the headline and introductory sentence from your newspaper text about eg migration to Australia.
• Using the top half of Worksheet 2.4B, brainstorm the kinds of words they would expect to find in an article about this subject matter. Write the words and phrases randomly on the board.

NB: To encourage the full participation of all learners, it is best to ensure that they are not trying to contribute and write at the same time. A “pens down” policy in brainstorming activities provides learners with an opportunity to grapple with concepts and meaning and the word as it is spoken. Learners are usually quite happy to accept this policy provided that they can be sure of having adequate follow-up time to write down the words.
Activity 5 - Categorising content to assist meaning and retention

- Explicitly draw learners’ attention to the difficulty of processing and remembering language items in this random form. Ask them to suggest ways of grouping the words to make them more manageable.
- Having decided on your word groups, ask for a volunteer to mark each word in accordance with a system. For example, if your word groups are nouns, verbs and numerical expressions, the volunteer marks all the nouns with an asterisk, all the verbs with a circle and all the numerical expressions with underlining. The class decides which word belongs in which category.

NB: Grouping, classifying and associating language items are invaluable tools for language learning which learners with limited formal education often do not control. These techniques are not just obscure mental processes whose invisibility makes them unteachable. Constant practice in breaking down the overwhelming and unachievable into the manageable and achievable by boxing, grouping, circling and mind mapping is a further way of increasing both learners’ learning skills and their confidence in approaching learning tasks.

- Ask learners to complete the bottom half of Worksheet 2.4B by extracting all the words belonging to the chosen word groups and putting them in the correct column. Provide a heading for each column.

Activity 6 - Using other learners as learning resources

- Divide the class into three groups. Assign each group one of the word group columns. Ask them to discuss the meaning of each of the words and be prepared to explain it simply to the rest of the class. In this initial phase of understanding meaning, do not allow the use of dictionaries.
- Get learners to report back to the class. Where a group has been unable to explain the meaning of the particular words, seek the assistance of the rest of the class.
- Ask a volunteer to keep a list on the board of those language items which nobody has correctly understood or explained. This list might be the focus of later dictionary activities.

NB: Many L2 learners are inclined to use the dictionary as a first resort. Often, the dictionaries they are using are completely inadequate to the task because they are too small to include the relevant words or because they include only one decontextualised meaning equivalent. Electronic dictionaries are particularly poor.

If you allow your learners to use their dictionaries as they please in class, you are actively working against the development of more context-dependent learning strategies. While many learners initially baulk at the idea of negotiating meaning without dictionaries, explicit discussion of the reasons for it combined with the explicit development of more effective strategies usually results in a lessening of dictionary dependence over quite a short period of time. Learners who are learning to succeed better using other ways are usually quite willing to forgo less effective strategies.
Activity 7 - Setting a time limit

- Using an OHT, show the article you intend to read.
- Ask learners to look quickly at it and predict how long they might spend reading it if it were in L1.
- Encourage them to set a formula for themselves, for example, the time it would take in L1 plus three minutes, and to use this formula in their out-of-class reading.

NB: The formula should be realistic but challenging. If you allow learners as much time as they might like, you may find that many will attempt to read the text word by word and will still be agonising over the first paragraph at the end of ten minutes. To encourage reading for overall meaning or reading for gist, learners need to be able to make informed guesses about meaning or to skip over words they do not know. Setting time limits and learning to live with uncertainty about the meanings of non-crucial language items is part of effective reading in L2.

- Other activities which could be used to complete this sequence are:
  - formulating likely questions which will be answered in the text
  - reading the text with a view to finding answers to predictable questions
  - identifying crucial concepts or language items
  - setting a limit on the number of words you look up in the dictionary eg only those which recur at crucial points
  - reinforcing language gains made by reading similar texts.
Section 3
Becoming a self-directed learner

OVERVIEW OF SECTION

This section focuses on the development of skills necessary to continue effective learning in contexts other than the classroom. Although work on the development of these skills takes place in the classroom and is equally important to classroom learning, the overall aim of the units in this section is to promote the transfer of these skills to less structured learning environments outside the classroom.

The units attempt, in so far as possible, to begin from a starting point within learners’ everyday experience of planning and organising their lives. Each unit proceeds by drawing parallels between the skills already activated by learners in these everyday activities and the skills needed for planning and organising learning activities.

Becoming a self-directed learner means developing all those skills which support the learning process and which ultimately allow learning to occur in a systematic way with minimal formal input from teacher and instructors. Central amongst these are planning and implementing skills. These include the abilities to:

- identify what needs to be learned
- make critical selections from amongst the information, materials, resources and delivery modes available for learning
- set learning targets
- systematically activate procedures for achieving those targets, and
- revise and modify both the targets and the means of achieving them.

Most adult learners, regardless of level of education or cultural background, bring the basis of these skills with them to the class or training room. This is because most adults routinely deploy these skills in other areas of everyday life. The act of migrating to Australia, for example, will have called upon all these skills. Domestic financial management and home management in general make considerable calls on these same skills.

Building on these skills and transferring them to the context of formal learning is an essential part of teaching learners with low literacy skills and limited exposure to formal learning. It may be equally important for learners returning to study after a long period of absence and for other groups whose contact with formal learning has, for whatever reason, been negative, unsatisfactory or disrupted.

Although self-direction in learning has traditionally been an expected outcome of the processes of higher education, it has only recently come to hold the high profile it now does. The explicitness of the current demand for self-motivating and self-regulating learners is closely connected with the demands of industrial reform and the development of the national vocational training system to support these reforms.
It is therefore the case that learners with high literacy levels and significant backgrounds of formal learning will not necessarily possess all the skills needed to be fully self-directed in learning. This applies to ESB as well as to NESB learners.

NESB learners, regardless of literacy levels and educational background, may experience considerable difficulty in coming to terms with expectations of learner responsibility and autonomy. This is often associated with the fact that:

- learners are unaware of current directions and changes in education and training and of the reasons underlying them. Such expectations may seem arbitrary and related solely to individual teaching preferences
- learners may come from cultures with substantially different educational frameworks which may encourage teacher dependency and discourage learner initiative
- the concept of on-going adult education is not equally familiar to all cultures. Many NESB learners have difficulty in coming to terms with themselves as adults and learners. This is often expressed in comments like *I’m too old to learn* or *I’ve had my turn - It’s my children’s’ turn now.*

Teaching self-directed learning skills thus involves more than the teaching of the tricks of the learning trade. For many learners it involves substantial challenges to deeply held cultural values and attitudes and a bewildering re-orientation to the demands of an alien agenda.

This needs to be recognised and explicit provision made for the incorporation of cultural perspectives into the learning to learn area.

The skills and understandings focused on in Sections 1 and 2 are as much a part of becoming a self-directed learner as are the skills in this section. However, whereas the preceding sections emphasise and develop the *tricks of the trade* aspect of learning, this section attempts to transfer current skills and to introduce concepts which may be unfamiliar in the context of formal learning.

*Understanding institutional entitlements* (3.6) has no activity sequence, reflecting the belief that providing learners with information about their learning entitlement is an institutional responsibility best communicated to learners by means of information leaflets, video or information sessions. It is specifically included however to highlight its importance to the overall process of learners taking direction for their own learning.
3.1 Identifying needs and goals

INTRODUCTION

The concepts and processes of explicit needs analysis and goal clarification are relatively new to Australian educational culture. Adult learners, whether ESB or NESB, highly educated or with limited education, often experience difficulties when dealing with those areas. Many adults are capable of operating with these concepts in areas of everyday life but may be at a loss when required to transfer them to the education and training context. Other adults may be unused to setting goals, except in the loosest sense of the word, in any context of daily life.

The ability and willingness to identify needs and set goals depends on a number of factors. These may include:

- prior experience in doing so
- cultural or religious beliefs about the efficacy of doing so
- cultural beliefs about the prerogative to do so. For example, being a woman, a child, an elderly person or an in-law may permit or restrain an individual from decision making in areas of life where family or group goals are set
- beliefs about the necessity to do so
- having managed without it
- mistaken perceptions about the results of doing so eg that it will get you a job
- the belief that it has nothing to do with education and learning and that it is a waste of valuable class time.

Furthermore, low levels of language and literacy and the absence of adequate bilingual support make participation in needs analysis and goal clarification problematic for both teachers and learners.

It is essential for teachers to be clear in their own minds about the purposes and value of both types of activity. The following tables summarise some of these advantages for both teachers and learners.
### Needs Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Needs analysis benefits the teacher by:</th>
<th>Needs analysis benefits the learner by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• permitting them to develop a clearer picture of their learners’ current abilities to operate in the community according to their needs</td>
<td>• promoting reflection on their immediate language and literacy needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• allowing teachers to select an appropriate teaching context within the framework of a general curriculum</td>
<td>• promoting the sense that English is not a block of material to be learned, but a system which can be learned through the contexts where learners need it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• allowing teachers to reap the benefits of increased interest, motivation, commitment and so on</td>
<td>• allowing learners real input into the content of what is taught</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• promoting a greater identification with that context, thereby promoting increased interest, motivation and commitment and so on</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Goal Clarification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal clarification benefits the teacher by:</th>
<th>Goal clarification benefits the learner by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• encouraging teachers to keep up to date and informed about education and training options offered by other providers</td>
<td>• promoting an awareness of available pathways within the immediate learning context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• assisting teachers to make more informed decisions when recommending learners for further placement</td>
<td>• providing a restatement of learner entitlement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• keeping teachers in tune with the current aspirations and expectations of their learners</td>
<td>• promoting an awareness of learning options beyond the immediate context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• identifying learners in need of more professional educational counselling</td>
<td>• promoting an awareness of the relationship between learning, learning options and access to the employment and training contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• increasing learners' understanding of aspects of classroom planning eg the setting of objectives, the framework of achievement of competencies</td>
<td>• promoting an awareness of the English language and literacy needs attached to the various education, training and employment options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• providing a basis from which independent learning outside the classroom can occur</td>
<td>• permitting the making of realistic, achievable goals on the basis of the above knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• permitting teachers to reap the benefits of learners' stronger sense of purpose and direction in learning, increased motivation and commitment to learning</td>
<td>• providing an opportunity for informed and assisted reflection on career and life directions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• familiarising learners with goal clarification techniques as applied to the area of learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• encouraging learners to transfer these techniques/skills to micro-learning contexts eg home study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• promoting a strong sense of purpose and direction in learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• strengthening learners’ commitment to learning in general and to learning in a self-directed way</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teachers who are themselves convinced of the value of these shifts and processes will probably experience less difficulty in securing their learners' full participation in them.

Both teachers and learners need to recognise that goal clarification in particular is a lengthy and gradual process involving continual modification of goals as new information and skills are assimilated. Regular time slots need to be programmed into classes for reflection on achievements so far and on new developments and changing perceptions. The opportunity needs to be provided for learners to share and support each other through the frustrations and achievements entailed in these processes.

Learners also need to be made aware that the same techniques and skills can be transferred to the setting of learning goals outside the classroom. These goals may be aimed at revising or supplementing work done in class or may be unrelated or only indirectly related to class work. The following activity sequence illustrates one possible way in which learners may be assisted in setting small, achievable home study goals to supplement their classroom learning and to identify areas which are in need of further work or are of emerging interest to the learner.
ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spoken language</th>
<th>Learning skills and knowledge</th>
<th>Written language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• expressing future needs</td>
<td>• understanding the concept of needs and goals in relation to the learning context</td>
<td>• reading and constructing simple timelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• expressing future wants</td>
<td>• understanding self as goal setter and goal achiever</td>
<td>• reading and constructing simple flow charts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• lexis of everyday and learning goals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: You may find it useful to read through all units in Section 3 before beginning a series of goal clarification exercises with your learners. Having an overview of the entire process before you begin will assist you to make appropriate activity selections for your learners.

Activity 1 - Understanding what goals are

• Prepare a cassette of 3 or 4 people talking about something they want to do in the future. Ensure that the following elements occur somewhere in the dialogues:
  – the lexical items want to, goal
  – an immediate domestic goal eg buying a heater for winter
  – a short-term learning goal eg enrolling in a class as a step in reaching a certain learning goal
  – a long-term life goal eg owning a house
  – indications of anticipated difficulties eg time, money, other resources.

• Prepare a simple worksheet on which students indicate:
  – the goal
  – the time by which the speaker wishes to achieve the goal
  – whether the goal is short or long-term, and
  – the main problem the speaker has in achieving the goal.

(Explicitly introduce the lexical item goal and equate it with the desire to do something within a given period of time.) Include a space on the worksheet for learners to record your goals and their own (Activities 2 and 6).
Activity 2 - Modelling

- Talk about some of your own short-term goals. Again include examples from the domestic, learning and life contexts. Talk about them in much the same way as the speakers on the cassette.
- Have learners record your goals on the worksheet used in Activity 1.

Activity 3 - Talking about who usually set goals

- Devise a simple worksheet like that below. In the first column, list a variety of goals your learners may have or have had in the past. Make sure the goals are within the range of most of your learners’ experience. For example, for learners with limited educational background do not include going to university as a goal but perhaps instead “continuing my education”. Include some goals many learners will have in common eg migrating to Australia, having children, buying a car.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Me</th>
<th>My parents</th>
<th>My husband/wife</th>
<th>My family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Ask learners to tick the person normally responsible for setting each of these goals and overseeing its implementation.
- When learners have completed the worksheet, select a number of goals from the sheet and orally compare learners’ responses. Draw learners’ attention to any trends in the responses. For example, women may set and carry out goals in the household context; parents may mainly decide educational matters; husbands or families may set major life agendas such as migration.
- Draw learners’ attention to interesting cultural similarities and differences. Encourage as much discussion as possible around the question of who sets goals for what.

NB: Many learners have difficulty coming to terms with the concept of goal-setting, because it appears to conflict with their religious beliefs. Such learners see the achievement or non-achievement of goals as being ultimately in the hands of God.

Finding a way into goal clarification via modest everyday activities is one way you can introduce the concept without making it problematic for such learners and without challenging these beliefs. Learners who perceive goal clarification activities as non-threatening from the outset are more likely to be able and willing to transfer the skills learned to other contexts when the need arises.

There is also clearly a great need for sensitivity in handling issues of power and control within the family. The aim of this activity is to make learners aware that they do set goals in their daily lives, no matter how modest these goals may be. Essentially the same steps are followed in setting goals of any type, so that learners who may have had little experience with goal-setting outside the domestic sphere can quickly transfer their skills to other contexts.
Activity 4 - Using the past as a model

- Select one of the areas of common experience to all learners in your group.
- The example chosen here is migrating to Australia. Using a simple linear format, assist your learners to place this goal at the endpoint. For example:

![Diagram of goal and steps]

- Get your learners to brainstorm all the things they had to do to achieve that goal. Include examples of smaller tasks eg cleaning the house before they left it, farewelling friends and deciding what to bring, as well as major tasks eg getting visas, arranging medical checks and buying tickets.
- Ask learners to highlight all the steps they were personally involved in carrying out.
- Perhaps group these on a separate page. Encourage learners to talk about and be proud of their contributions to the migration process.

Activity 5 - Using the past as a model (continued)

- Make clean copies of the list of pre-migration activities from Activity 4.
- Assist learners to number the items in the order in which they did them. The final list should include both things the learners personally did and things done by other family members. Items irrelevant to particular learners can simply be omitted or crossed out.


- Allow learners time to present the sequence of activities to the class. Explicitly introduce the lexical item steps.
- Using the format from Activity 4, assist learners to transfer these steps to the section leading up to the goal. Make sure that some of the steps in the sequence were personally performed by the learner.
- You may like to encourage learners to think about the time span over which the sequence was activated. Start from goal achievement and ask learners to specify the month and year in which each step towards it was taken.
- Encourage learners to use pencil and rubber for drafting. Ask learners to prepare a clean copy at home.
- Working with the clean copy get learners to use highlighter or underlining to emphasise important items eg the goal, the arrows.

Activity 6 - Setting personal goals

- Return to the worksheet developed in Activity 2. In the spaces left blank at the bottom, put in two domestic goals you hope to achieve over the next week or so. Talk about how you will set about achieving them.
- Encourage learners to fill in the blanks with two goals of their own. Try to get specific about when learners intend to achieve these goals.

Activity 7 - Making the links to the educational context

- Return to Activities 1 and 2. Point out to learners that the speakers/yourself had other goals as well as domestic goals. Select an educational goal mentioned by the speakers or yourself.
- Choose a sample educational goal which is small and immediate eg writing something to hand in by a particular date.
- Using the format developed in Activities 4 and 5 demonstrate the way in which the same procedure applies. Place the goal and the achievement date. Sketch in some of the steps and when you are going to do them.
- Repeat this with as many examples as you think necessary.

Activity 8 - Relating goal setting to the curriculum

- Using whichever curriculum document is most relevant, share with your learners the goal(s) you intend to pursue over the next week or so. For example, your goal might be filling in forms.
- Assist your learners to place these as goals in the format you have been using. Talk about the amount of time you anticipate spending on achieving these goals and when you expect to finish.
- Show your learners how you plan certain activities each day in pursuit of these goals. Hand out a fully articulated plan for a particular learning goal to each learner.
- As you work through this plan over the rest of the week, be explicit about what you are doing and involve learners in ticking off each activity as a step in reaching a certain learning goal.
Activity 9 - Setting learning goals

- As you progress through the week, working towards the achievement of a specified (and shared) learning goal, assist your learners to identify for themselves learning items about which they remain unsure.
- Assist them to turn a problem into a personal learning goal, which they can work towards achieving at home or outside the classroom.
- Allow regular time slots for learners to do this and to talk about their learning goals with others.

NB: Learners are often bewildered by the classroom activities in which they are asked to engage. Activities like those suggested offer learners the opportunity to look behind what you are doing and establish connections in their own heads between learning goals and learning steps.

Insights like these will be of great assistance to you as well. More informed learners tend to participate with both more vigour and more understanding if they are aware of the learning process involved.

Knowledge and learning skills: summary of outcomes

Activities in this unit will assist learners to:

- practise classification skills
- practise techniques for marking important information in written text
- develop a concept of themselves as goal setters and goal achievers
- develop the ability to set goals in other than the domestic context
- develop the ability to set educational goals for achievement outside the classroom
- develop increased responsibility for learning.

- Get your learners to brainstorm all the things they had to do to achieve that goal. Include examples of smaller tasks eg cleaning the house before they left it, farewelling friends and deciding what to bring, as well as major tasks eg getting visas, arranging medical checks and buying tickets.
3.2 Formulating a learning plan

INTRODUCTION

As with goal clarification, the ability to formulate learning plans which systematically address areas of identified need or interest is an important part of becoming a self-directed learner. Learning plans may be relatively formal (institution-wide plans) or informal (plans made in the context of home study and personal interest).

Plans differ from unstructured and vague ideas in that they usually have:

- a goal (an aim, an idea) which the plan is intended to realise
- a number of steps
- a sequence of those steps
- a time allocation
- a resources allocation, and
- a monitoring system.

Learners at all levels will have no difficulty in finding simple examples of planning in their everyday life. Translated into the learning context, formulating a learning plan may mean:

- identifying something which needs to be learned, revised, further investigated
- working out what needs to be done
- working out whether there is a best or most logical way to proceed
- allocating a realistic amount of time and a realistic time slot to doing it
- identifying anything needed to do it eg a cassette player, a partner for role play
- trying out what has been learned or revised in the same or a new context and seeing whether it works, or
- making decisions based on the above to do further work on the same material or to progress to another learning item.

A useful way into the formulation of learning plans is for teachers to share with their learners the structure of the day’s lesson plan. In this way learners become acquainted with the decisions and choices the teacher has made and the reasons for them. This sharing of objectives and procedures is also advantageous in that it makes visible and explicit to learners the connections between the discrete language learning activities in which they engage and the overall framework of curriculum competencies.
ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spoken language</th>
<th>Learning skills and knowledge</th>
<th>Written language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• adverbial time phrases eg next year, in 1995</td>
<td>• identifying the elements of planning</td>
<td>• reading simple timelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• talking about the future</td>
<td></td>
<td>• reading simple flow charts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• future sequence eg and then, after that</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 1 - Making plans: a first attempt

- Group learners. Select one or more activities from the domestic context. The activity selected here is buying a microwave. Make cue cards (pictorial or verbal) and distribute these to the groups.
- Give learners 5 minutes only to come up with a list (verbal or written) of what they think they will need and what they will need to do in order to accomplish the task.
- Allow a few minutes for reporting back from each group. Ask other learners to add things they think are missing from each group’s list.

NB: Almost any activity from baking a cake to buying a house will suffice to illustrate the planning steps involved. Try to build in an element of the slightly longer term so that learners are planning over a week or so at least. Also try to include an element of mishap so that learners are confronted with the need to modify their plan in some way.

What commonly happens is that learners nominate no more than one or two steps. For example, in buying a microwave, they may nominate:

- going to the shop
- buying the microwave
- bringing it home.

In fact, of course, they have to do a lot more. Making them aware of this is crucial to developing their confidence in their ability to formulate small and large scale learning plans.

Activity 2 - Getting closer ...

- Choose a domestic example from your own experience and model this verbally for learners. Include in your model things like:
  - the amount of time you allocated to planning and doing the task
  - how you planned it around your other activities
Section 3 Becoming a Self-Directed Learner

– what you needed to do it
– how you modified it when something unexpected happened.

• Draw attention to the small steps in the process as you proceed with your modelling.
• Take one of the group’s contributions from Activity 1. As a whole class activity, encourage learners to supplement the original list with new items based on what they learned from your modelling.
• Write the enlarged list on the board in the order that it comes out, and then get each learner group to reconsider their original list and add missing items to it.
• Work with each group to help make sure that the lists are relatively complete.
• Allow time for each group to report back quickly.

Activity 3 - ....and closer

• Ask a learner or a pair of learners to make sufficient photocopies of each group’s list for each member of that group.
• Return to the list on the board (from Activity 2). Categorise the items on the list (using underlining etc) into:
  – material resources needed (eg a car to get there, money or a cheque book to buy it)
  – human resources needed (eg a friend to help choose or carry it)
  – time needed (eg 15 minutes to go to the bank, 10 minutes to drive there, 30 minutes to decide which brand to buy).

• Involve your learners as much as you can in this process. Always be explicit about the classifications you are making.
• Get your learners to use similar classification methods to divide their own lists into the same categories. Work with your learners as much as possible.

Activity 4 - Creating an overview

• Using Worksheet 3.2A or a similar worksheet, assist your learners to transfer the information into the categories provided (Column 1 only). Make sure that learners retain these sheets in their folders for further use.

Activity 5 - Sequencing

• Prepare a worksheet along the lines of Worksheet 3.2B using an example of a domestic activity not already discussed in class. The activity chosen here is baking a cake.
• Using an OHT of this worksheet, quickly recapitulate the main classifications (time, people, things) and their elements. Ask learners to tell you what will happen if, for example, you have the eggs ready to mix but have forgotten the bowl.
• You might like to go through the same procedure with one or two more examples. Explicitly extract from the examples the notions of
order/sequence and of correct/best order.
• Point out to learners that they usually do follow an order of operations, whether they are aware of it or not, and that although there is usually more than one way of successfully carrying out any plan, not doing things in the best order can mean losing time, money and opportunity.

Activity 6 - Determining the sequence
• Get learners to return to their copy of Worksheet 3.2A (Activity 4) and complete Column 2 (steps). Learners will probably need more than one attempt to list the steps logically.
• Encourage your learners to use drafting techniques in completing this activity. For example:
  – provide a second copy to use for drafting
  – get learners to use pencil rather than pen
  – encourage the use of rubbers or white out.

Activity 7 - Introducing diagrams
NB: These activities are designed to familiarise learners with diagrammatic means to represent simple plans. The activities lead into the next section which attempts to transfer the planning skills learned so far to the learning context.

• Select a simple diagrammatic means of representation for use with your class. Make a pro-forma example for repeated use.
• Using your example from Activity 5, model the transfer of this information to the diagrammatic text of your choice on OHT.
• Be explicit about what you are doing. You may need to use more than one example.

NB: There are a number of ways of representing plans diagrammatically (eg a timetable, a timeline, a flow chart). Choose the one you think your learners can cope with given their current literacy levels and keep to it. Try to avoid confusing learners by offering too many alternatives.

• Distribute the pro-forma to your learners and assist them to transfer the information from their own group activity (Activity 4 and Activity 6) onto the pro-forma.
• Again, encourage learners to use drafting strategies so that they finish the activity with a legible clean copy.

Activity 8 - Making the links
• Explicitly raise the issue of home study or learning outside the classroom with your learners.
• Draw a parallel between this area of planning and other routine domestic activities. Try to emphasise to learners that the skills involved are essentially the same skills they already possess and constantly use.
Section 3 Becoming a Self-Directed Learner

- Referring to Worksheets 3.2A and B, take your learners through the steps involved in Activities 1 to 7 with reference to learning and learning plans. Make sure the process involves:
  - identifying things which are needed
  - identifying people who may be needed
  - identifying time needed, and
  - identifying a best way to proceed in relation to a goal.

NB: Because learners have already worked through the basic elements of a plan, you may find that this activity can be done orally and quite quickly. Furthermore, because certain aspects of formulating a learning plan are dealt with in more detail in the surrounding units it is best to deal only briefly with them here.

The endpoint of this activity sequence need therefore only be the identification of the major components of a learning plan in relation to a learning goal outside the classroom and an awareness in the learners that planning a learning activity is not substantially different from planning other domestic activities.

You are however now in a position to use the skills developed in the preceding activities in three ways:

- to assist learners to develop short-term learner pathways within their current institutional context
- to assist learners to develop longer term pathways beyond their current institutional context, including both educational and employment options
- to assist learners to use this method to plan systematically on a small scale for learning outside the classroom.

Knowledge and learning skills: summary of outcomes

Activities in this unit will assist learners to:

- practise classification skills
- practise techniques for marking relevant information in written text
- identify the elements of planning
- reflect on issues of sequencing and ordering
- transfer their existing planning skills from the domestic to the learning context
- develop confidence through recognition of the fact that the skills needed in the learning context are substantially the same as those already employed by learners in other contexts
- develop the ability to be self-directed in learning.
3.2 Formulating a learning plan

WORKSHEET 3.2A

PLANNING TO ...(name of activity)........................................................................
TO ...(name of activity)........................................................................ I NEED:

(a) TIME

________________________________
________________________________
________________________________
________________________________

(b) THINGS

________________________________
________________________________
________________________________
________________________________

(c) PEOPLE

________________________________
________________________________
________________________________
________________________________

HOW WILL I DO IT?

STEPS

1. ____________________________
2. ____________________________
3. ____________________________
4. ____________________________
5. ____________________________
6. ____________________________
7. ____________________________
8. ____________________________
9. ____________________________
10. ____________________________
11. ____________________________
12. ____________________________
13. ____________________________
14. ____________________________
15. ____________________________
3.2 Formulating a learning plan

WORKSHEET 3.2B

Baking a Cake: My Plan

- decide what kind of cake
- get cookbook
- check ingredients
- go shopping
- check everything is ready
- make sure I have enough time

Thursday morning
(Time 1)

- get out cooking spoons, knives, bowls etc
- heat oven
- open cookbook
- follow recipe
- bake cake
- let cake cool

Thursday afternoon
2-3pm
(Time 2)

- make icing
- put on decorations
- put in tin
- wash up
- take cake to friend's house for morning tea

Thursday evening
8-9pm
(Time 3)
3.3 Organising time

INTRODUCTION

Adult learners come to the learning and training context with all the pressures of family and daily commitments. Adult migrants come with additional pressures related to the migration and settlement process.

Finding time to accommodate the demands of learning can be extremely difficult. Cultural attitudes to the appropriacy of formal learning in adult life may impose further restrictions on the amount of time adult learners may devote to learning activities in the home, in libraries or Individual Learning Centres. The definition of women’s roles and responsibilities in some cultures can result in real and practical obstacles to home learning for many learners. In addition, learners with limited exposure to formal learning may have little concept of why or how learning should continue outside the classroom.

Teachers need to exercise considerable sensitivity when approaching this area. One of their main aims must be to avoid setting learners up for distress, disillusionment and failure.

It is very important that teachers:

• start from the reality of learners’ lives and daily commitments
• ensure that learners’ priorities are recognised and respected. Learning and studying should not be seen as things intended to supplant or subvert these priorities, but as something congruent with them
• encourage learners to make small achievable commitments to learning outside the classroom. This means commitments which minimise the risk of conflict and maximise the possibility of success.
• introduce learners to ways of learning outside the classroom which do not only or necessarily involve home study. Learners can learn and revise while going about many of their daily activities, by trying out something learned in an everyday context such as shopping or banking, and
• provide time for feedback and sharing of difficulties. Highlight strategies which seem to be working and encourage learners to support each other.
Section 3 Becoming a Self-Directed Learner

ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spoken language</th>
<th>Learning skills and knowledge</th>
<th>Written language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• everyday activities</td>
<td>• organising time</td>
<td>• reading simple timetables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• adverbs of time,</td>
<td>• developing self-directed learning skills</td>
<td>• reading appointment books, diaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adverbial phrases eg</td>
<td></td>
<td>• constructing single timetables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the morning after 3 o’clock,</td>
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<td>later</td>
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<tr>
<td>• telling the time</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Activity 1 - Looking at the daily routines

NB: Most teachers commonly use a wide range of classroom activities to teach the language of daily routines. The activities in this section build out from work already done and attempt to guide learners towards recognising learning time as a legitimate and necessary part of everyday life.

• As a stage in the development of the language of daily routines, learners look at their own routines and identify those activities which take up most of their time each day or week.
• Assist learners to compare results by constructing a grid on the board which shows the learners’ names and their most time-consuming activities.
• You may wish to use this grid further to assist learners to make other simple comparisons, for example, differences in the way men and women or older and younger people commonly spend their time.

Activity 2 - Identifying learning time as an issue

• Learners focus on their own everyday routines once more. This time, they actively focus on their allocation of time for learning. Some learners will have allocated time each day or each week and some will have allocated no time at all.
• Encourage those who have made some allocation of time to talk about how much they allocate, when they allocate it and perhaps why they choose that particular amount of time and/or that time slot. This can be done informally in a class discussion or more formally using a class survey (whiteboard or worksheet).

NB: Comparative activities like these can easily result in some learners being made to feel bad about their current study practices. Other learners may seek to parade their learning skills in a show of learning one-upmanship. If these activities are to be successful, teachers need to ensure that the focus remains off the learners and on the issues and strategies which promote learning.
**Activity 3 - Modelling a study timetable**

- Model your own daily or weekly routine of learning in the context of other life commitments. This could be done orally or by a combination of oral and written modes. For example, a simple weekly timetable could be shown and talked about using an OHT.
- Prepare a two-part semi-scripted dialogue of one or more speakers describing their daily routines and learning schedules. Part 1 is about:
  - why the speakers are studying
  - how many hours they attend classes, and
  - how much additional time they spend learning.

Part 2 is about why they choose certain time slots and amounts of time for study, that is, the problems they have fitting study into their daily lives.
- Learners listen to Part 1 only and fill in the relevant information from the cassette on a simple survey form.

**Activity 4 - Talking about problems**

- Learners share their own difficulties in learning at home or outside the classroom in general. Brainstorming is one good way of doing this because it allows real personal issues to surface without these issues being attached to any one learner in particular.
- List the problems on the board or on OHT as they emerge.
- Learners then listen to Part 2 of the dialogue.
- Using Worksheet 3.3A, learners tick the problems that the speakers on the cassette have with making time for learning.
- Learners write down any problems they had not previously thought of themselves but which were mentioned on the cassette (using spaces on the worksheet).
- Return to the model of your own routines. Learners listen to you talking about the reasons why you study at particular times and not others. They mark these reasons in the same way on the same worksheet.
- Learners then complete the final column of Worksheet 3.3A. This requires them to identify those difficulties with learning time which are personally relevant.

**Activity 5 - Thinking about strategies**

- Learners work in small groups. Each group selects or is allocated two or three of the problems checklisted on Worksheet 3.3A. Learners talk about simple ways of dealing with these problems.
- Each group contributes its problems and strategies. Collate and list these yourself, and prepare copies of the list for use in the next activity.
- Learners do a matching activity where strategies are matched to problems.

**Activity 6 - Thinking about strategies (continued)**

- Using Worksheet 3.3A as a prompt, learners focus again on their personal difficulties with learning time.
Section 3 Becoming a Self-Directed Learner

- Learners look at the suggested strategies on the collated list for dealing with their particular problems. Using highlighter, learners identify those strategies which are new to them.
- Learners complete Worksheet 3.3B.
- Using the same worksheet, learners highlight one or two strategies which they agree to try out in the immediate future.

Activity 7 - Timetabling it in

- Using their knowledge of their own daily routines, learners identify a period of time and a time slot for learning outside the classroom. For learners at very low levels, this may involve no more than writing down one or two periods of time on an adhesive label and sticking it into the front of their folders.
- For learners at slightly higher levels, you may wish to begin a new sequence of literacy activities surrounding the reading and construction of simple timetables.

NB: It is important to stress to learners that learning outside the classroom does not necessarily mean learning alone or learning at a desk. Learners need to be encouraged to pursue cooperative learning and learning which takes them away from their homes and into the community.

Activity 8 - Following it through

- Set aside regular class time for informal feedback on the success of learners’ time organisation strategies.

NB: Sharing the difficulties will make the process of initiating study routines outside the classroom easier and less threatening for learners. Tips and hints from other learners will provide valuable assistance and support for those who are finding it difficult. Informal discussion of this area will provide fertile ground for further extension activities as well as a point of entry for other areas of learning skills.

Knowledge and learning skills: summary of outcomes

Activities in this unit will assist learners to:

- identify problems with study time
- identify strategies for solving these problems
- raise awareness of cultural differences in attitudes to study
- take informal initiatives in respect of home study
- practise skills for the marking of important or relevant information in written text
- further develop self-directed learning skills
- assume greater individual responsibility for learning.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problems with study</th>
<th>Speaker 1</th>
<th>Speaker 2</th>
<th>Me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I haven't got any place to study.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My house is very small.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My children are very noisy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The TV is always on.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. The phone is always ringing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. My husband/wife doesn't understand.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. My children don't understand.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. I'm too tired.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Shopping, cooking and cleaning take all my time.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10. My children go to bed very late.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11. There is no-one to help me.</td>
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<td>14.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### WORKSHEET 3.3A

**My problems with home study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Speaker 1</th>
<th>Speaker 2</th>
<th>Me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I haven't got any place to study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>My house is very small</td>
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<tr>
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<td>My children are very noisy</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>The TV is always on</td>
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<td>5.</td>
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<td>Shopping, cooking and cleaning take all my time</td>
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<td>14.</td>
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</table>
3.4 Implementing a learning plan

INTRODUCTION

Implementing a learning plan potentially involves a great deal depending on the nature and breadth of the goals. It might, for example, involve telephone calls or letters to obtain information, texts, videos etc. It might involve the use of libraries, interviews with relevant persons and so on.

Small scale plans of the type under discussion in this book probably involve no more than:

- identifying any human or material resources needed to carry out the plan
- checking to see they are all present
- making sure the right conditions are present or actively creating them
- getting started
- seeing it through.

Teaching learners about implementing learning plans can be a lot of fun and need not be treated as a serious exercise. Teachers should draw on their own experiences as adult learners with busy life schedules as much as possible. This will assist learners to appreciate that many of the difficulties and fears they face are not solely related to limited educational background and poor literacy skills. Talking and laughing together about personal failings (procrastination, laziness, pretext seeking etc) helps learners feel comfortable about expressing these aspects of themselves and lays down the basis for constructive strategy work directed at dealing with them within the learning context.
ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spoken language</th>
<th>Learning skills and knowledge</th>
<th>Written language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• expressing needs</td>
<td>• identifying human and material resources for learning</td>
<td>• reading simple timetables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the lexis of everyday activities</td>
<td>• developing strategies for getting learning underway</td>
<td>• reading appointment books and diaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the lexis of personal characteristics</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Activity 1 - Remembering to study

- Ask your learners (working in groups or as a whole class) to pool all the strategies they use to remember things in everyday life. These should include written and non-written strategies.
- Make up a checklist on an OHT which can be quickly copied and distributed. Ask a learner to photocopy it for you while you remain with the class.

NB: The basics of photocopying can easily be included as one of the activities in 1.3 (Recognising and accessing a range of on-site resources). Getting your learners to do some of the work for you will lessen your burden and develop learners’ confidence in their own abilities. It will also prevent wasting valuable face-to-face class time standing by the copier.

- Using the photocopied checklists, ask learners to classify the list into, for example:
  - written and non-written strategies
  - long-term and short-term strategies
  - strategies they use to remember important and not so important things.

  This can be done using highlighter, underlining or circling, and need not involve rewriting.

Activity 2 - Reflecting on success

- Using the same checklist, ask your learners to give a rating out of ten to each of the strategies, according to how successful they think each strategy is.
- Allow time for learners to compare results. Certain learners usually defend certain types of strategies. This can lead to an entertaining discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of different strategies.
- Draw up a list of common advantages and disadvantages with strategies for remembering things. For example:
Activity 3 - Selecting a strategy

• On the basis of the preceding activities, ask learners to select a strategy or a range of strategies they think will assist them with remembering to slot in study time. They could also agree to try out a strategy which is new to them.

• Depending on the language and literacy competency of the learners, develop further activity sequences surrounding the construction and reading of timetables, appointment books, diaries and so on.

NB: Very low level learners with literacy problems may have difficulty with activities such as reading daily diaries or timetables. If they are literate in L1, there is no reason why their choice of strategies should not initially be recorded using L1. The aim of the activities is not to ensure L2 fluency when talking about strategies, but to encourage learners to think about remembering study in the same routine way as they remember anything else.

Activity 4 - Identifying what you need

• Select several everyday activities eg brushing your teeth, making tea, making a cake, playing soccer.

• Using pictorial or written cue cards, ask different groups of learners to identify what is needed to carry out these tasks successfully.

• Provide each learner group with an opportunity to show the class what they have listed.

• Encourage learners to add to and argue about what is necessary for each activity.

Activity 5 - Identifying what you need for learning

• Allow learners to work in groups. Ask each group to list things they think are needed to learn effectively outside the classroom.

• Compare the results and encourage debate about any interesting discrepancies in learners’ opinions.

• Actively suggest possibilities which learners may not have thought of. For example, learners rarely nominate other people as things needed for learning. Suggesting that language learning occurs, and perhaps occurs best, through interaction with others can create confidence in learners who actively seek to learn this way, but who may not have many of the facilities (desks, lamps, shelves etc) traditionally thought of as essential for learning.
Other resources which are rarely nominated include space, quiet time, family support. Though these may appear intangible, they are not difficult to understand and are often crucial to getting home study off the ground.

You can make this activity quite light-hearted by encouraging learners to include things which reflect their idiosyncrasies. For example, many people can’t sit down to study without a cup of coffee or tea or some other prop. If this is what some learners in fact need, there is little point in not recognising it.

**NB:** Not all learners have the same learning style or require the same material or human resources for learning. This needs to be recognised and allowance made for individual learning techniques. At the same time learners need to be encouraged to discard strategies and techniques which are not working and try out new ones. Maintaining a balance between validating learners’ current practices and engaging the learners in critical reflection about them is a difficult task. Humour and light-heartedness help considerably!

**Activity 6 - Individualising needs**

- Using the informal discussion from Activity 5 as a basis, ask learners to complete Worksheet 3.4A individually.
- Work with learners as much as possible to draw their attention to as wide a range of resources as possible. Try to ensure that learners actually have these resources available to them outside the classroom and are not simply engaging in a teacher-pleasing exercise.
- Encourage learners to place their list of things they need for study at the front of their folder as both a reminder to study and of what they require to study.

**Activity 7 - Getting started**

- Prepare a semi-scripted dialogue of one or two people talking about why they find it difficult to get started. Part 1 of the dialogue should concentrate on the things people do to avoid getting started. Part 2 should focus on what techniques they use to overcome this hurdle. The dialogue can be humourous.
- Learners listen to Part 1 of the dialogue and use Worksheet 3.4B to identify the procrastination techniques used by the speakers.
- Learners add their own techniques for putting things off in the spaces provided at the bottom of the worksheet.
- Allow learners time to volunteer this information about themselves. Learners usually find this activity fun. It also creates a real sense of solidarity and identification with other people's idiosyncrasies and problems.
Activity 8 - Identifying strategies

• Learners listen to Part 2 of the dialogue to identify the strategies used by the two speakers to overcome their problems settling down and to get started.
• Use the worksheet to note these strategies down.
• Learners can also contribute any strategies they may use for getting started on difficult tasks. These could include everyday tasks such as ironing, washing the windows, letter-writing and so on.

Activity 9 - Trying out something new

• Ask learners to highlight from the list of starting strategies identified in Activity 8 those which they have not or do not usually use. In particular, get learners to select one or two strategies which they feel are worth trying out and which appear realistic given their individual circumstances.
• Provide on-going class time for discussion of the successes and problems learners experience while implementing their new strategies. Encourage as much peer support and peer problem-solving as possible.

Knowledge and learning outcomes: summary of outcomes

Activities in this unit will assist learners to:

• practise classification skills
• practise skills in marking important information in written text
• reflect on the adequacy of their current learning practices
• identify human and material resources necessary for learning outside the classroom
• establish learning-related routines as part of their everyday routines
• accept greater responsibility for individual learning
• develop skills in self-directed learning.
## WORKSHEET 3.4A

### What I Need to Learn Outside Class Time

To learn outside the classroom:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I need</th>
<th>for</th>
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<tbody>
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Usually, I also need

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</table>

"To learn outside the classroom:"

"Usually, I also need"
### WORKSHEET 3.4B

#### What do you do?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Speaker 1</th>
<th>Speaker 2</th>
<th>Me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I start phoning friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I think of something else to do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. I start cleaning the house</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. I tidy up the desk</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. I lose my pen</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. I think I'll do it tomorrow</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. I can't find my glasses</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. I sit down and have a cup of coffee</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. I watch TV or a video</td>
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<td>10.</td>
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</table>
### WORKSHEET 3.4C

**Ways of getting started**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker 1</th>
<th>I will try</th>
<th>When</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1............................</td>
<td>1. ...........................................................................................................</td>
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<tr>
<td>2............................</td>
<td>............................................................................................................</td>
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<td>3............................</td>
<td>2. ...........................................................................................................</td>
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<tr>
<td>4............................</td>
<td>............................................................................................................</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker 2</td>
<td>1............................</td>
<td>1. ...........................................................................................................</td>
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<tr>
<td>2............................</td>
<td>............................................................................................................</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3............................</td>
<td>2. ...........................................................................................................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4............................</td>
<td>............................................................................................................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1............................</td>
<td>1. ...........................................................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2............................</td>
<td>............................................................................................................</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3............................</td>
<td>3. ...........................................................................................................</td>
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<td>4............................</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
3.5 Monitoring and assessing progress

INTRODUCTION

The ability to monitor and assess progress is central to the concept of self-direction, whether it be in the context of learning, work, personal life or any other.

The concept of self-monitoring and assessment in learning is a difficult one to come to terms with, even for highly skilled and educated ESB learners. For adult migrant learners who may come from cultural backgrounds where grading and assessing is the sole prerogative of the teacher, and where learner comment on learner progress is not encouraged, the sudden demand for self-assessment skills amounts to more than just an additional expectation of learners. Learners with limited educational backgrounds and poor literacy skills understandably exhibit high levels of teacher dependency. The combination of cultural and educational factors can mean that the demand for relative autonomy in the assessment area represents a major challenge to deeply held convictions about learning and the roles of teachers and learners.

Adult learners come to the classroom equipped with a range of everyday situations in which they self-monitor, assess and evaluate. Keeping tabs on a limited household budget, ensuring that bills are paid on time and running a car are all examples of domestic activities which call upon these skills. Assisting learners to break down such activities into their component skills allows learners to perceive themselves as skilled persons. Learners who recognise that they in fact already have all the necessary skills will find the task of transferring them to the learning context less conceptually difficult.

Self-assessment does not need to begin with written worksheets and formal assessment sessions. Almost every activity suggested in this book builds in the notion of self-assessment. Realising that you do not have a pencil and rubber for drafting written work (see 1.1) and making sure you have one next time is a simple form of self-assessment. Keeping track of your attendance and recognising that you are nearing the limits for permissible absence is as well, if it results in improved attendance (see 1.2). Every aspect of learning is capable of gradual and progressive transfer of responsibility to the learner. Every aspect of learning therefore invites the mobilisation of self-assessment practices.

Teaching self-assessment in this way makes it both routine and explicit, visible but totally ordinary as a part of classroom practice. It builds the skills and therefore the confidence needed to encourage learners to begin this process outside the classroom as well.
ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spoken language</th>
<th>Learning skills and knowledge</th>
<th>Written language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• expressing cause and effect (because, so)</td>
<td>• developing classification skills</td>
<td>• reading and constructing flowcharts and timelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• expressing temporal sequence</td>
<td>• developing ability to set personal learning goals and identify breakdowns in achievement of the goal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• lexis of learning (repeat, revise, check)</td>
<td>• developing the ability to modify plans and goals as necessary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: For these activities you may find it useful to return to the activities and worksheets you used in 3.2. The same examples of simple domestic plans such as baking a cake and buying a microwave can easily serve as the basis for talking about the importance of self-monitoring practices. As with other units, learners quickly appreciate that they already have and continually use self-monitoring practices in daily life.

Activity 1 - Problems and causes

- Using an example of a formulated plan for some area of domestic activity, ask learners to make a list of things which might go wrong (whole class or groups). The example chosen here is baking a cake in time to take it to a friend’s house for morning tea the following day. (See Worksheet 3.2B.)
- Get learners to quickly report back and encourage other learners to add to the list.
- Select 5 or 6 potential problems from the list and get your learners to transfer them to Column 1 of Worksheet 3.5A. A partially completed pro-forma example of Worksheet 3.5A is attached to assist you. White out all but one of the examples.
- Assign each learner group one of these problems and ask them to nominate two possible reasons why this problem may have arisen.
- Assist each group to formulate their responses simply and write them on the board.
- Get learners to transfer this information to Column 2 of Worksheet 3.5A.

Activity 2 - What would you do?

- Using Worksheet 3.5A as a basis, ask learners to volunteer what they would do in this situation, that is, how they would now modify their plans.
The focus here is not what they could have done to avoid the problem but on how they would cope with the problem once it has arisen. Strategies might include:

– getting up early and baking another cake
– ringing the friend to say they will be late for morning tea
– buying a cake
– cancelling the morning tea
– covering the burnt cake with icing
– taking the cake anyway.

**Activity 3 - Reflecting on the process so far**

- Together with learners, jointly construct some simple conceptual headings for the different phases learners have now gone through in attempting to achieve their goal. Possible headings might be:

  – I want to... (goal)
  – I needed .... (human, material, time resources)
  – I put the steps in order (sequencing)
  – I started ... (implementation)
  – But I had a problem (checking)
  – So I ... (modification)
  – And then it worked! (achievement).

- Assist learners to create a simple flow chart so that the relationship of the different phases to the achievement of the goal is very clear. Make sure that you begin each time with the goal and that learners can correctly place the goal at the end, not the beginning of the sequence. Use arrows to indicate causal and temporal links.

- Repeat the activity for a number of different domestic goals, so that learners become aware that essentially the same sequence of events is happening every time.

- Use the headings to create a simple pro-forma example for later use. Worksheet 3.5B offers an example of what a completed pro-forma example might look like. The pro-forma example you create will be further used in Activities 4, 5 and 6.

**Activity 4 - Making the links to the learning context**

- Explicitly draw learners’ attention to the area of learning outside the classroom as the focus of the next series of activities.

- With your learners, go back over a unit or block of work recently covered. Assist them to identify small personal learning goals within that material. These might relate to, for example:

  – a concept not clearly understood
  – spoken or written language items not clearly understood
  – re-inforcing something quite well understood
  – adding to or extending an understanding of something learned, or
  – transferring something learned to a personal context.
NB: Your learners will already be reasonably able to set goals of this type if you have worked through Section 3 in a systematic way. Identification of the resources needed to carry out the learning task and the steps by which the task is best carried out will also have been covered. At this stage, focus your learners on procedures for identifying problems, checking, modifying and continuing towards the goal.

- Place the learning goal on the pro-forma example you have constructed in Activity 3. The learning goal chosen as an example on Worksheet B is to practise asking directions.

**Activity 5 - Making the links (continued)**

- Assist learners to fill in on the pro-forma the three initial phases of the plan in relation to their personal learning goal.
- Ask learners to list the ways in which they could check to see whether their learning plan is succeeding. Get learners to pool all their strategies. While the strategies they may nominate will depend in part on the nature of the goal, certain strategies can be seen as all-purpose strategies for language learning.
- Compile a list of strategies for learners to use as a checklist from which they can select appropriate strategies for their out-of-class learning activities. A copy of this could be kept in the front of their folders. This checklist might include:
  - trying to remember something one hour later
  - trying to remember the same thing the next day
  - trying something out by responding on a cassette in the ILC
  - trying something out on a friend or family member
  - trying something out in the community
  - trying something out in a different context
  - trying something out on a variety of people at different times
  - using the learning plan as a checklist and checking off each item as it is achieved
  - checking the time taken against the time anticipated in the learning plan (if time is an important factor)
  - doing well on a piece of in-class assessment, or
  - being able to assist other learners in class.

**NB:** Learners often neglect the interactive dimension of language learning. In assisting learners to set goals and plan for learning outside the classroom offer some suggestions or models of your own of different ways of achieving the same goal. Home or private study is, for example, not always as effective as trying something out in a community context. Actively attempt to broaden your learners’ understanding of what learning outside the classroom can mean.
Activity 6 - Identifying problems and modifying plans

NB: In this activity, you can assist learners to identify things which may be causing problems in the learning plan and to modify their plan to take account of them. Quite often the goal itself is the source of the problem, either because it is too large or too long-term. Learners need to be encouraged not to see themselves as failures because they have not achieved the plan, but to recognise that it is the goal which needs changing. Practice in setting small goals and following through a plan will quickly alert learners to this fact.

- Develop language activities to take learners through the processes described in Activities 1 and 2 of this unit (ie likely problems, possible causes and solutions), but this time in relation to an identified language learning goal. Work towards compiling a chart such as the following, although perhaps in simpler language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Possible solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I can’t remember it well enough.</td>
<td>I will check back over ways the teacher taught us to memorise things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. People don’t understand me when I speak.</td>
<td>Practise my pronunciation again on cassette and with the teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I don’t practise it with people, so I forget it.</td>
<td>Practise it tomorrow when I go to the bank.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I was too busy to do anything outside class.</td>
<td>Organise some time in the next few days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I was tired, so I didn’t do anything.</td>
<td>Do it as part of my daily activities. I’ll use it tomorrow with my neighbour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I missed classes last week, so I don’t really understand what I’m learning.</td>
<td>Try not to miss any more classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I forgot to get copies of the work I missed.</td>
<td>Make sure my friend takes an extra copy of everything for me. I’ll ask her to explain it to me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I was too nervous to practise with Australians.</td>
<td>Take a friend with me. Next time I’ll practise it with my children first.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I am worried about using the machines in the ILC.</td>
<td>Ask the ILC teacher to show me again. I’ll make sure I’m doing it properly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. People don’t respond when I try to practise something with them.</td>
<td>Check to see that I’m being polite.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Point out to learners that modifications usually involve more work, more
time, or a change in goal.
• Assist your learners to complete Worksheet 3.5B (pro-forma example) for
the personal learning goal they selected in Activity 4. Ask a number of
them to show their learning plan to the group.
• Encourage learners to fulfil their learning plan and provide time each week
for learners to talk about their successes and difficulties.
• Allow time for learners to set a new learning goal for the week and think
about how they will achieve it. You will probably find that this process can
be done increasingly quickly and informally as learners become more adept
in identifying what they need to do and how to do it. The amount of class
time needed to carry out these activities will decrease as these activities
become just another routine aspect of language learning.

Knowledge and learning skills: summary of outcomes

Activities in this unit will assist learners to:

- practise conceptual/classification skills
- identify breakdowns in a learning plan
- identify reasons for these breakdowns
- modify their learning plans to accommodate the results of the self-
  assessment process
- identify interactive practices as a part of self-monitoring
- develop increased ability to set personal learning goals and self-monitor
- become more self-directed in learning.
### WORKSHEET 3.5A

**Problems! Problems!**

Activity: (Baking a Cake):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Why!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Cake burnt</td>
<td>Oven too hot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Too long in oven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Cake didn't rise</td>
<td>Wrong ingredients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opened oven door too long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cake not ready</td>
<td>Problem getting right ingredients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Had to do something else</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. _______________</td>
<td>_______________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>_______________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. _______________</td>
<td>_______________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>_______________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. _______________</td>
<td>_______________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>_______________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.5 Monitoring and assessing progress

WORKSHEET 3.4C

Ways of getting started

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I need</th>
<th>I think I will do it this way</th>
<th>I will start by</th>
<th>Then I will check</th>
<th>And I will change my plan like this</th>
<th>Then I will continue</th>
<th>And do what I want to do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THINGS: Nothing</td>
<td>1. Go to the shopping centre tomorrow</td>
<td>Asking 2 people in the shopping centre</td>
<td>– Did they understand me?</td>
<td>– I won’t ask any more people</td>
<td>I’ll try again on the weekend</td>
<td>Then I’ll start learning to practise something else</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEOPLE: 4 or 5</td>
<td>2. Ask people I think speak English well</td>
<td></td>
<td>– Did I understand enough of what they said?</td>
<td>– I’ll go home and check the words and grammar in my book</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIME: 1/2 hour</td>
<td>3. Ask 1 person the railway station</td>
<td></td>
<td>– Did they just keep walking?</td>
<td>– I’ll ask my teacher to check my pronunciation on Wednesday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONEY: No</td>
<td>4. Ask 2 people in shops</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– I’ll practice on my cousin. She speaks good English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– I’ll listen to the “directions” tape in the ILC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If there is a problem, I will find out what the problem is

– Did I ask the question well?
– Is my pronunciation a problem?
– Did I check with them what they told me?
– Did I forget to say “excuse me” and “please”?

And I will change my plan like this

– I won’t ask any more people
– I’ll go home and check the words and grammar in my book
– I’ll ask my teacher to check my pronunciation on Wednesday
– I’ll practice on my cousin. She speaks good English
– I’ll listen to the “directions” tape in the ILC

Then I will continue

I’ll try again on the weekend

And do what I want to do

Then I’ll start learning to practise something else

If there is no problem, I will

Continue

And do what I want to do

GOAL
3.6 Understanding institutional entitlement

Most learning institutions do not offer unlimited entitlement of hours or courses. This is particularly so where entitlement is either free or heavily subsidised.

Teachers need to be informed at all times of the current entitlement of their learner groups and to transmit that information to their learners. Teachers need to:

- be pro-active to ensure that they are in possession of all information relevant to their current learner group. This may include keeping up to date with changes in policy and funding arrangements and consulting documents related to their learner group
- make use of any available bilingual assistance in the form of personnel (teachers, counsellors, bilingual officers) or materials, and
- present this information in written form in English for learners to take away and have interpreted by friends or family members.

Understanding entitlement is a learner’s right. Being aware from the beginning of the limitations on entitlements and what this means in terms of the number of courses learners may access provides a stable perspective from which learners may make their choices.

These choices will affect such crucial aspects of the learning process as:

- decisions about attendance
- life decisions involving the re-orientation of personal and family life to accommodate learning
- willingness to commit themselves to full participation in unfamiliar learning activities and learner grouping
- willingness to undertake responsibility for learning outside the classroom
- willingness to engage actively in the process of goal clarification and to consider learning options beyond their current learning context
- willingness to engage with the concept of learner or language training plans.

All of these aspects are essential to the development of self-directed learning abilities.
3.6 Understanding institutional entitlement

**WORKSHEET 3.6A**

**Learning and Doing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To learn English I need to:</th>
<th>I can do this in class with my teacher:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ..........................................</td>
<td>.............................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ..........................................</td>
<td>.............................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. ..........................................</td>
<td>.............................................</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. ..........................................</td>
<td>.............................................</td>
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<td>5. ..........................................</td>
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<td>6. ..........................................</td>
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<td>7. ..........................................</td>
<td>.............................................</td>
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<td>8. ..........................................</td>
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<td>9. ..........................................</td>
<td>.............................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. .........................................</td>
<td>............................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. .........................................</td>
<td>............................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. .........................................</td>
<td>............................................</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I can do this at home:

- .............................................
- .............................................
- .............................................
- .............................................
- .............................................
- .............................................
- .............................................

I can do this in other places:

- .............................................
- .............................................
- .............................................
- .............................................
- .............................................
- .............................................
- .............................................
- .............................................

I can do this in class with my teacher:

- .............................................
- .............................................
- .............................................
- .............................................
- .............................................
- .............................................
- .............................................
### 3.6 Understanding institutional entitlement

**WORKSHEET 3.6B**

**In my centre**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Teacher can</th>
<th>BUT</th>
<th>My Teacher doesn’t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ..................................................................</td>
<td>1. ..................................................................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ..................................................................</td>
<td>2. ..................................................................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. ..................................................................</td>
<td>3. ..................................................................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. ..................................................................</td>
<td>4. ..................................................................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. ..................................................................</td>
<td>5. ..................................................................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learners can</th>
<th>BUT</th>
<th>Learners should not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ..................................................................</td>
<td>1. ..................................................................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ..................................................................</td>
<td>2. ..................................................................</td>
<td></td>
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<td>3. ..................................................................</td>
<td>3. ..................................................................</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. ..................................................................</td>
<td>4. ..................................................................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. ..................................................................</td>
<td>5. ..................................................................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bibliography

GENERAL REFERENCE TEXTS

Teachers may find it useful to consult the following texts in the area of learning strategies and the development of self-directed learning skills.

**Aiken, G. and Pearce, M. 1993.** *Learning Outside the Classroom.* Sydney: National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research, Macquarie University


**Norrish, D. 1991.** *Learning to Learn in Adult Basic Education. Guidelines for Teachers. What to Expect from your Program; Setting Goals.* TAFE New Initiatives Project (Drafts only)


**Rubin, J. and Thompson, I. 1982** *How to be a More Successful Language Learner* Boston: Heinle and Heinle

**Wenden, A. 1991.** *Learner Strategies for Learner Autonomy.* Language Teaching Methodology Series. UK: Prentice Hall International


**Willing, K. 1989.** *Teaching How to Learn: Learning Strategies in ESL. A Teachers' Guide* Sydney: National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research, Macquarie University

**Willing, K. 1985.** *Helping Adults Develop their Learning Strategies: a practical guide.* Sydney: Adult Migrant English Service

**Willing, K. 1985.** *Learning Styles in Adult Migrant Education.* Sydney: Adult Migrant English Service
TEACHING MATERIALS

The following texts are a selection of readily available course books which attempt to incorporate in a systematic way various aspects related to the non-language area, such as cultural knowledge and understanding and learning skills and strategies. They are included more as a suggested source of ideas rather than as recommended course books.


