

Nebraska Adult Education
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**Mark Your
Calendar!**

**AE Directors' Meeting
Northeast Community College
April 19-20, 2012**

Distance Education — You've Got Questions? We've Got Answers!

By: Kathy Olesen-Tracey—Center for the Application of Information Technologies

Is it advantageous to set deadlines for students?

Setting deadlines is critical for the retention of the students. Deadlines can be readjusted if the need arises, but it is really hard to retain students if they don't see an end in sight. Set a goal date for completion when they start. Otherwise, thoughts about this being very open ended are completely accurate.

Real life situation: One student is getting ready to test in March (per original plan). Another was set to test (as a goal date) in April, but plans have been re-adjusted because she has had a couple of barriers. If they are starting in the Pre-Math, goal dates have been set for them to transition into the GED Math.

The module tracking forms that are included in the GED content give students a tool to set goal dates for completing modules and for taking the actual GED tests.

Now, as a specific strategy for this concern: Have an expectation that students complete a minimum of 4 lessons per week. That is a global expectation.

However, much like we would never give a student a 5 subject text book and say, "Pick 4 lessons a week and get them done for my review." I would never give my students the expectation that they complete lessons with no guidance. Try sending an e-mail to each student on Monday with specific expectations.

Example: Curtis, I see you have worked on the Consumer Education Module. This week, I would like you to continue on this module - and complete Unit 2.



Harley, You have been working diligently on the PreMath and the Social Studies module. Keep up the great work. I would like you to wrap up the next three lessons in the PreMath and then try to complete at least one more lesson in Social Studies. You will finish Social Studies soon and then we will begin on the Science module.

Melissa, Wow! Your progress is amazing. We are getting close to your goal date for taking the GED Test. This week, I would like you to focus on the Math and Writing. I would like you to complete the next 2 lessons in each area.

These are examples of how you can send information to students. They have set goal dates, they have defined expectations, and they have specific guidance each week. Spending more time up front on sending e-mails to the students is a more productive way to engage them and you'll spend less time 'reacting' to students who are not meeting their expectations.

Do you use *i-pathways* or *USA Learns* in your classroom and do you have questions or concerns about either on-line program? E-mail Vicki Bauer: vicki.l.bauer@nebraska.gov

Health Literacy in the AE Classroom

By: Jim Lukesh, State AE Consultant jim.lukesh@nebraska.gov

One in three American Women suffers from heart disease, yet only one in five believes she is personally at risk (from the American Heart Association). The following three-minute film by Elizabeth Banks educates women about the reality of heart disease and encourages them to put their health first. It was sent from healthliteracy-bounces@lincs.ed.gov on Behalf of Arina Boldt and Go Red for Women. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t7wmPWTnDbE>

The suggested use of the brief video is to begin a conversation on health among clients, in this particular case among hospital employees, but in practicality, health literacy is a prime concern to all persons.

Health Literacy can be critically important to our clients. A patient who does not understand a doctor's instructions, has a medical prescription error or does not understand the warning signs of medical problems as seen in public service announcements or television commercials, does not get a "do-over" because they happen to be an ESL student and do not yet fully comprehend the

language. This is where one of the many resources of the Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS) comes into play. I am sure that many of you use the LINCS system quite often. For those who do not, log on to <http://lincs.ed.gov/>.



You will find a website with almost unlimited resources for use with your clients. Once you get on the website, you will want to navigate around on various "journeys of discovery" of your own.

For resources related to the above-mentioned icebreaker activity, open the LINCS system and go to Programs & Projects in the red navigation bar. A drop down menu will appear and you can simply click on Health Literacy Materials.

The Health Literacy Materials section contains research-based health literacy materials and instruction guides. On the left side of the page are links to material at the Beginning ABE/ESL level and the Intermediate ABE/ESL level. The beginning level is divided into eighteen units and the intermediate level has seven units. The units cover various health literacy topics that are important to our clients such as Health Professionals; Emergency Care; Self and Non-Emergency Care, Preventative Care and a lot of other good things to know.

Each of the units is divided into four folders: A Closer Look at Basic Skills (Alphabetic) and Vocabulary; A Closer Look at Reading and Comprehension; A Closer Look at Supplement Activities; and A Closer Look at ESL Activities. Thus students can not only continue on their path to language literacy, but they can do it while also learning some real important things about their health.

Discover LINCS! You will find resources for just about anything you want to cover in class!

Health Literacy Materials and Instruction Guide

The *National Institute for Literacy Health Literacy Materials and Instruction Guide* was developed between the years 2002 and 2008 as a result of federal funding for Adult Literacy Programs.

"These health literacy materials meet both the need of adults to enhance their literacy skills as well as their need to navigate the health care system and begin to achieve better health care for themselves and their families. The materials integrate literacy skills and practice with pertinent health information. In a scientifically-based research environment, use of these materials led to an increase in participants' literacy scores on standardized tests used to validate literacy gains. And equally as important for these adult learners, they significantly increased health literacy and knowledge." (From: Introduction to the Health Literacy Materials and Instruction Guide, Dr. Susan Levy)

The Health Guide is organized into 18 sequential sections and are appropriate for Beginning ABE and ESL learners. Each unit is divided into four folders: A Closer Look at Basic Skills and Vocabulary; A Closer Look at Reading and Comprehension; A Closer Look at Supplemental Activities; and A Closer Look at ESL Activities. With the added emphasis on health literacy, these materials can be of great use to instructors and clients. Each program has been provided a paper copy of this material which is available for duplication. It is hard to miss the materials in the program office as they come in a large white binder with red and blue printing and the binder is at least six inches thick. The binder is easy to navigate and for those who are not into weight-lifting, the materials are also available on-line at <http://healthliteracynetwork.org/materials>

ESL Class Visit

By: *Jim Lukesh, State AE Consultant jim.lukesh@nebraska.gov*

I recently had the opportunity to visit two ESL classes at the F Street Recreation Center in Lincoln.

I visited the English for Community Living Part C class for BEST Plus scores (473-540). The instructor of the course was Michel DeCicco.

I arrived early and, not having previously met Mr. DeCicco, I asked the people as they entered the class if they were Michel. This let me know that each student was not Mr. DeCicco and also gave me an idea of the level of language literacy being dealt with in the class.

Since the next day was Valentine's Day, the class read stories and poems about the meaning and background of Valentine's Day. Each of the 10 students took turns reading with emphasis on pronunciation. The class discussed the meaning of various words and concepts and then had a spell-down.

It was interesting to observe the dynamics of the class. I would estimate there were probably eight different native languages among the ten students and each student had different strong points and areas that needed work. However, the students seemed to empathize with each other and pulled together.

Mr. DeCicco told the students that

the following day, February 15, was also a holiday and that the class would learn about Susan B. Anthony and women's suffrage. The class then discussed the concept of suffrage as a voting right and nothing to do with pain.

Later in the morning, I visited The Beginning Literacy (BEST Plus scores 88-389) class taught by Ester Ortiz. There were 12 students and a volunteer.



The emphasis in the class that day was in counting money, particularly pertaining to what is a greater or lesser amount and counting change to make sure of the proper remuneration.

The students had a worksheet and also practiced counting change from a money drawer. Most of the students were quite good at counting back money though I noticed that they sometimes used what might be a different combination to equal an

amount than a native might use. (ie – 35 cents is two dimes, two nickels, and five pennies instead of a quarter and a dime.)

The class then moved on to an exercise where they had to decide which was greater or lesser. One of the first students was asked which was more, twenty dimes or twenty nickels. He knew that twenty dimes was \$2 and that twenty nickels was \$1 and that together the coins equaled \$3 but he could not get the concept of "more." Several of the students took turns trying to explain which impressed me although I am not sure any of them actually succeeded.

The class did another worksheet to reinforce the concept and seemed to complete the project successfully. Overall, I was impressed by the way the students tried to work together. I was also impressed by the fact that everyone showed up even though there had been snow and the weather was not good.

I inquired about attendance and was told that the class met four days each week for two hours each day and that attendance is always good. I was also impressed by the warm greeting I got from the students. They were not at all taken aback by my presence and seemed to want to show what they had learned.



Remember!

If you attend an NDE AE-sponsored staff development activity, you **MUST** sign a letter contract **BEFORE** the activity. You will not receive a stipend or travel expenses without the letter contract being signed and returned to a staff member of the Nebraska Department of Education, Adult Education section. **No exceptions!** State regulations require these procedures. Two letter contracts for recent AE staff development activities were not signed and returned. Consequently, these individuals **will not receive their stipends or travel expenses.**

Technology in the Literacy Field, Continued

By: Jim Lukesh, State AE Consultant jim.lukesh@nebraska.gov
Continued from February 2012 AE News

For the last 25 years it has been said that for technology to be valuable to education it had to be efficient, that it had to allow the educator to do more things in the same time frame or to do the same things faster in promoting student achievement. This has never been more true than today.

In the Literacy field there are common threads among technology projects. One commonality is that technology drives the learning. Technology is no longer used as a supplement to the knowledge base, but can be the principal means of learning.

Increased use of webinars, video-conferencing, learning systems and moodle systems are the result of increasing sophisticated hardware and software which make such learning possible.

Technology enables the educator to engage participants in real time at their convenience and allows for distance learning. These two facets are key to reaching a constituency that may have a day job and be unable to meet during traditional educational hours.

This requires an increased technology capacity not only among the learners, but especially among the instructors. In other words, professional development.

A while back a commercial ran on television showing the extreme dismay of customers who had just purchased an electronic device of some kind only to find out that a newer version had made their equipment obsolete before they could even get it completely out of the packaging.

This was obviously using exaggeration to prove a point, but the situation is not too much better today.

We can never assume that we know how to use the latest in educational technology because it keeps changing. This can be likened to running a race that does not end. One can give up or take pleasure from the challenges and accomplishments along the way.

As educators, we must know how to use the technology to help our students. The fact that students may come to us knowing how to use a smart phone or play the latest video games or rip every cd and dvd in existence, does not mean that they automatically sit down behind a computer and know how to use the program to enhance their educational achievement. It just does not happen that way.

Since the student does not just “take off,” the instructor must function as the facilitator in helping the students to build their skills.

Technology is never going to replace the teacher, but it may change the role just a bit.

In today’s education, we do not have a teacher at the front of the room dispensing knowledge and a student in the desks soaking it all in (and in truth we never did have that), but the same person can be both a teacher and a learner at the same time. There are several ways for the teacher to also be a learner.

One way to build up teacher skills in the use of technology is to use an individualized approach. We know that all students learn differently; so why should this change for the teachers?

In pursuing professional development, we must identify the practitioner’s strengths and build on them. Find the instructor’s natural ability



and build on it. After figuring out a path to the professional development, the key is to practice.

We have all heard the tired old joke about “How do I get to Carnegie Hall?” But the key is the same in getting to efficient use of technology in literacy education – practice, practice, practice.

How many of us have been to day-long seminars in use of a technology program only to go back to the office and have work intervene and by the time we get a chance to try what we have learned it is a long-forgotten concept?

Again, practice and practice often and celebrate the small steps and minor victories on the way to the major ones. Regular practice not only helps to build skill but helps to build confidence.

In learning to use technology in education, we must be prepared for a few setbacks. We must remember that those of us from the dark ages learned differently than the students of today. We learned in a linear fashion. Today students learn in a more non-traditional approach, scattering or dabbling, so to speak.

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Technology in the Literacy Field, Continued

Continued from page 4

The easy way to understand this is to challenge a student to a video game. I once got to the second level of Super Mario, but I was too busy looking straight ahead to the next challenge while getting clobbered from all sides by things that my education said shouldn't be there.

The students of today are used to looking all directions, as it were, and are not taken by surprise by the trolls and dragons of the game.

There is always going to be someone who is better at using the technology than you are. Do not fail to use this resource. Many successful train-the-trainer programs and mentoring systems have helped instructors to become users of technology. I have done trainings and at one

such training the high school principal brought a student along. The student understood what we were doing and was able to translate it to the principal. I have not kept track, but I remember thinking that student had a good future as a teacher, if he so desired.

Not only are mentors needed, but everyone needs to take it upon themselves to increase their digital knowledge. There is simply too much technology available for everyone to sit back and let one person handle all the new learning. In this learning, it is important to interact with the new technology.

Most people, especially when using technology, learn by doing, not by listening. The collaborative learning

(when teachers and learners develop skills together) allows for a participatory learning environment. Lastly, we must look at the equipment, popularly called the infrastructure. It is not a secret that our programs are not the highest on the funding pole. It is frustrating to try to do new things with old equipment but strategizing with management may help, especially if you can point to success stories as a result.

In conclusion, technology is no longer used to enhance education, it is used to deliver education and is a key part of the learning process. In the literacy programs, we must continue to build our technology capacity to help bring our clients into digital space to benefit their achievement over the long term.

Conference Call For i-Pathways Training Completers

Attention: Program Directors and instructors who have completed i-Pathways training



Join Crystal Hack and Kathy Tracey from the i-Pathways team as they facilitate a conference call to answer your questions about implementing i-Pathways. They will be prepared to answer questions related to general planning, setting benchmarks, creating marketing plans, recruiting and retaining students, and any other questions you may have.

The calls are scheduled for either **Friday March 9th** - 3:00 pm CST OR **Tuesday, March 13th** at 10:00 am CST.

To register for either call, e-mail Lin Malachowski at lmalachowski@cait.org. Please let her know which date you would prefer and list any staff members that will be joining in the call.

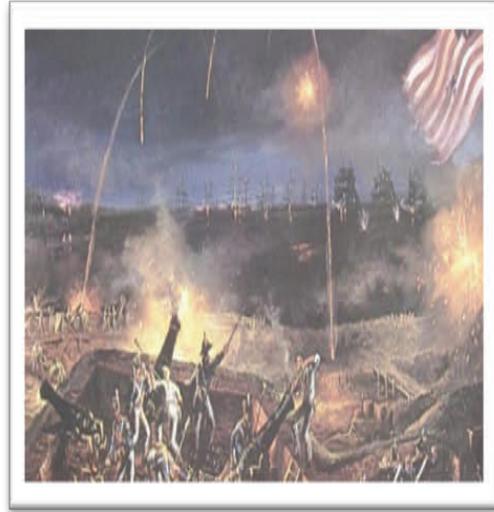
“USA Learns” Webinars Available

USA Learns webinars are available for ESL, EL/Civics, and Distance Learning instructors. Are you interested in participating in a webinar presented by local Nebraska instructors experienced in using USA Learns with their students? NDE will pay a stipend of \$10 per hour (up to 3 hours) after the two webinars are completed plus mileage if traveling to another community.

Contact your local program director for information on viewing the orientation webcast (#1) right away. After you've viewed the first webcast, sign up for Webinar #2 (choose a date: March 9, 16, 17, or 24). Contact your local program director or Jan Drbal at jan.drbal@nebraska.gov for registration information, more details and your letter contract (which needs to be signed *before* the staff development activity).



March 3 is National Anthem Day



The *Star-Spangled Banner* is the national anthem of the United States of America. It was written by Francis Scott Key. National Anthem Day celebrates this song, and the rich history behind its creation. The song officially became our national anthem on March 3, 1931. Many people think the *Star Spangled Banner* was written during the Revolutionary War. It was actually written during the war of 1812 (1812-1814).

In August 1814, the British army detained Dr. William Beanes as a prisoner of war. He was a friend of Francis Scott Key. On September 13, 1814, Francis Scott Key and a U.S. negotiator boarded a British vessel where Beanes was being held. He negotiated his friends' release. But then, Francis Scott Key was detained that day along with the negotiator. They were held until after the attack on Fort McHenry, which guarded the harbor and city of Baltimore. He watched the bombardment of the fort from the ship. The next morning, he was ecstatic to see that the American flag was still flying over Fort McHenry. This historic event inspired him to write "The Star-Spangled Banner" the following day.

The Star Spangled Banner

By: Francis Scott Key

Oh, say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
 What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming?
 Whose broad stripes and bright stars, thro' the perilous fight,
 O'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming?
 And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
 Gave proof thro' the night that our flag was still there.
 O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore dimly seen thro' the mists of the deep,
 Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
 What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
 As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
 Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
 In full glory reflected, now shines on the stream:
 'Tis the star-spangled banner: O, long may it wave
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
 That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
 A home and a country should leave us no more?
 Their blood has wash'd out their foul footsteps' pollution.
 No refuge could save the hireling and slave
 From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave:
 And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

O, thus be it ever when freemen shall stand,
 Between their lov'd homes and the war's desolation;
 Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the heav'n-rescued land
 Praise the Pow'r that hath made and preserv'd us a nation!
 Then conquer we must, when our cause is just,
 And this be our motto: "In God is our trust"
 And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

Word Search Puzzle

Can you find these 20 words from our nation's anthem in the puzzle below?

- | | |
|------------|------------|
| BANNER | HAVOC |
| BRAVE | HIRELING |
| CONQUER | MISTS |
| DESOLATION | MOTTO |
| DISCLOSES | PERILOUS |
| FITFULLY | POLLUTION |
| FOUL | RAMPARTS |
| GLEAMING | STREAM |
| GLORY | TRIUMPH |
| HAUGHTY | VAUNTINGLY |

W Y E K D Z X G S Y P N G S C Z T Q G S
 W M L F S M X E M T E O J N J O Z H B C
 O I W G G Q S A K H R I V O I K V W D R
 C T G T N O A Y E G I T U N R L N A E M
 Q E O T L I X F G U L A N I A X E U H S
 P U X C Y P T J X A O L C Y B A Q R P C
 T N S M O L P N Y H U O E T M N E A I V
 T I I F N V S G U G S S U Z O N J I G H
 D I E J X I U Z L A V E L C Y J P Y K K
 P O L L U T I O N E V D I D S V E N E B
 B U U A U H R R S U A Y R O L G N C K M
 A F N O Z Z A Y H T F M Y L L U F T I F
 N D D D M M G M F E R L I E B F D S C Z
 N A L G P P M J U H O E V N V M T O H Q
 E O Q A T R I U M P H A A W G S A T J N
 R Q R X O Q G I W P R H N M E X N T P F
 J T Y G Q G W V C B J L V D P B G O K M
 S O O H L Y U Q O I T T N F O U L M Y S
 Q U Q F O D N B U G T T R U B V L S T
 Q P X U C T W O V U O N F X M B C H O J