New Opportunities to Incorporate Workplace Essential Skills

By: Vicki Bauer, State Adult Education Director

All Nebraska Adult Education programs have the Workplace Essential Skills (WES) program to assist students in preparing for the workplace. It was developed by KET (Kentucky Educational TV), a leader in adult learning products. It includes 24 30-minute programs (7 DVD’s) that have a variety of scenarios with people as they search for and start new jobs. (When WES was introduced to Nebraska Adult Education a few years ago, each program received a DVD player to use with WES.)

The materials include instruction in all steps required to look for a job, including Finding a Job, New to the Job, Communication, Writing, Reading, and Math. These materials are excellent to incorporate into the students’ existing educational plans. Each program includes a Learning Focus, Key Concepts, Story Synopsis, and Real-Life Interviews sections.

There are 4 student workbooks on Employment, Communication and Writing, Reading, and Math that are used along with the video programs and are in a workplace context. A teacher’s guide is an excellent resource for teachers incorporating WES into their classrooms.

Soon, Nebraska Adult Education teachers will be able to access the FastForward feature that allows the documentary-style videos to be viewed on the internet through streaming video hosted on a KET server. This allows instant access to WES, with no downloading required. Students are able to repeat segments, if necessary. Students or teachers will just enter their Nebraska zip code on the KET website and they will have instant access to the Fast Forward feature. This can be used by individuals or in a computer lab or in classroom instruction. It is available 24/7 for Nebraskans to access. Specific directions will be sent to program directors within the next few weeks.

The WES program is available for FREE to local cable companies to broadcast the 30 minute lessons on their public access channels. If your area's cable station is willing to do so, at no charge to them or to adult education, contact NDE Adult Education and we will give you the information on how to get that accomplished.

We also have available an Online Management System that allows teachers to create virtual classrooms. Instructors will be able to give feedback to students as they work through the WES materials via the LiteracyLink’s email network. A teacher submits their name, title, email address, and phone number and the virtual classroom is a reality!

Check out the LiteracyLink website for free activities and lessons for students working in WES. The website is pbs.org/literacy. This website allows students the opportunity to work on WES lessons, practice tests and activities while strengthening their computer and internet skills. Also available on Literacy Link are GED practice tests that will assist students as they prepare for the GED tests.

NOTE: This is one of the many initiatives that Jeanette Evans has spearheaded during her tenure at NDE. Her work benefitted staff and students in our Nebraska AE programs. We at NDE thank her for the many contributions she made to Nebraska AE. We’ll miss her and wish her well as she goes home to Iowa!
Good-Bye is Bittersweet

By: Jeanette Evans, Nebraska AE Consultant jeanette.evans@nebraska.gov

Bittersweet defined:

1. Both bitter and sweet to the taste and
2. Both pleasant and painful or regretful.

Since the subject definitely does not have anything to do with food, I will rely heavily on the pleasant and painful/regretful.

My last day with NDE is officially November 11. This is about as bittersweet as it can be. As you all know, I have my permanent home and family in Iowa and have been spending my weekdays in an apartment (with my two little dogs) here in Lincoln to work at the Nebraska Department of Education.

It is simply time for me to reorganize my life in one spot. My Iowa home and family have always and will always be my first and primary consideration.

Health issues, distance between Shelby, Iowa and Lincoln, Nebraska, as well as a personal desire to not miss any more school programs, dance recitals and opportunities with the little folks in my life are key factors in the decision.

My husband of 31 years asked for me to come home to spend more time with him—how could I say no to that request???

BEST Plus adoption, BEST Literacy pilots, TEAL, conferences, workshops and committees filled a great deal of my time here.

It has been a pleasure to work with many fine administrators and teachers to provide solid opportunities for training and professional development. I especially enjoyed visiting with you, answering questions, offering suggestions, and providing training at your locations. Nebraska has a great deal of talent and many knowledgeable people who are a wonderful benefit to the state’s Adult Education programs. Thank you for the privilege of working with you.

Nebraska Adult Education is also very, very fortunate to have professional, talented and caring support from the state office.

Vicki, as director, is tasked to handle a vast amount of responsibility in a wide variety of areas. Without the support and great talents of both Jan and Shirley, ongoing projects and special considerations simply would not be possible.

Nebraska AE staff and students will always hold a special place for me. The future is full of great challenges and opportunities for Nebraska’s adult education program.

I wish only good things for all of you. Take good care of yourselves, your students and your programs.

—Jeanette

COABE Winners Announced

Congratulations to the 2012 COABE Trip Winners!

COABE Conference Trip Winners for the 2012 conference in Norfolk, Virginia are: Nancy Schultz, Northeast Community College; Kelly McGowan, Central Community College and Kay Nyffeler Nebraska Corrections Education.

Alternates: Debbie Flower, Metro Community College and Patti McQueen, Metro Community College

Special thanks to Michael Pool for co-sponsoring one of the trips.
The 30th annual AE Conference is now history! From the feedback, it seems it was greatly successful where most feel they have gone back to classrooms with a fresh perspective and new ideas to try. That’s what it’s all about!

NDE has received excellent session suggestions from you for next year. Thank you. It is great when sessions can be designed around needs and requests.

The need for more information about GED 2014, teaching strategies/best practices, and technology are among the topics that were repeated often in the conference evaluations. Expect to see them in the program in 2012!

The conference was not without a few small glitches and is always a learning experience. Providing for more and better access to technology so that sessions can be hands-on instead of pure demonstration-based is a wish, a desire and DEFINITELY a need. Be assured that issue will receive careful thought and planning for another year.

It seems important to address some concerns and problems surrounding conference meals. Feeding 200 people on a budget, at a conference venue is a rather interesting adventure!

There are only so many menu choices, only so much money and only so much that is possible. As more and more of our Nebraska people opt for vegetarian and gluten-free foods, desire more healthy alternatives and express concerns about food allergies, the NDE staff reads and listens and makes the best choices possible.

If you are among those with special needs, please remember that the Holiday Inn has refrigerators in the rooms for your use. You can plan to address your needs by taking your special requirements with you to workshops and conferences. Another option is to simply eat the things that work for you and leave the rest. We hear that food allergies are not considered. If you indicate special dietary needs on the registration, we do our very best to accommodate.

Thanks to all of you who enthusiastically participated, enjoyed networking, learned new things and practiced patience and acceptance when and where needed!

Put October 11-12, 2012 on your calendar now.

Save the dates for Adult Education Conference 31!!!!
Special Accommodations Are Available For GED Candidates With Disabilities

GED Testing Service is committed to ensuring access to the GED test for all individuals with disabilities and supports the intention of the Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended (ADAAA). The purpose of accommodations is to provide candidates with an opportunity to have full access to the GED test. GED Testing Service provides reasonable and appropriate accommodations to individuals with documented disabilities who demonstrate a need for accommodations.

For example, GED test accommodations may include but are not limited to:

- An audio version of the test
- Braille
- Vision-enhancing technologies
- Use of video equipment
- Use of talking calculator or abacus
- Use of sign-language interpreter
- Use of a scribe
- A separate testing room/one-on-one testing
- Extra testing time
- Extra breaks
- Presentation of the material in large print

Test accommodations are individualized and considered on a case-by-case basis. Consequently, no single type of accommodation (i.e., extra time) would necessarily be appropriate for all individuals with disabilities. In addition, simply demonstrating that an individual meets diagnostic criteria for a particular disorder does not mean that the person is automatically entitled to accommodations.

Specific accommodations should be related to the identified functional limitations. For example, a functional limitation might be impaired vision which prevents the individual from viewing the test in the standard font size. An appropriate accommodation might be a large-print test booklet. See page 8 for accommodations that do not require permission from the State Office to use.

All GED candidates who are requesting accommodations because of a disability must provide appropriate documentation of their condition and how it is expected to affect their ability to take the GED test under standard conditions. Documentation must provide sufficient rationale for any disability-related accommodations. Accommodations for taking the GED Tests must be tied to the functional limitations of the disability. If the documented disability that limits the ability to process information, extra time on the GED Tests may be a reasonable accommodation, however, a reader for the tests or audiocassette version may not be.

For information on the steps to take to request special accommodations:

www.acenet.edu/Content/NavigationMenu/ged/test/take/Accommodations_Disab.htm
November is American Indian Heritage Month

One of the first proponents of an American Indian Day was Dr. Arthur C. Parker, a Seneca Indian, who was the director of the Museum of Arts and Science in Rochester, N.Y. He persuaded the Boy Scouts of America to set aside a day for the "First Americans."

In 1915, the annual Congress of the American Indian Association met in Lawrence, Kansas and formally approved a plan concerning American Indian Day. It directed its president, Reverand Sherman Coolidge, an Arapahoe, to call upon the country to observe such a day. Coolidge issued a proclamation on September 28, 1915, which declared the second Saturday of each May as American Indian Day and contained the first formal appeal for recognition of Indians as citizens.

In 1990 President George H. W. Bush approved a joint resolution designating November 1990 National American Indian Heritage Month. Similar proclamations have been issued each year since 1994.

http://www.infoplease.com/american-indian-heritage-month
U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Take this quiz. Test your knowledge about famous American Indians and history!
Correct answers can be found on page 7

1. This Shoshone woman acted as an interpreter and guide for Lewis and Clark.
   ___ Sacajawea
   ___ Pocahontas
   ___ Maria Tallchief

2. This musician led Bob Dylan's backup band and wrote music for the films Raging Bull and The Color of Money.
   ___ Jay Silverheels
   ___ Robbie Robertson
   ___ Delaware Prophet

3. This Shawnee chief fought with the British during the War of 1812 and was made a brigadier general.
   ___ Tecumseh
   ___ Shawnee Prophet
   ___ Victorio

4. This writer is famous for her tetralogy, which began with Love Medicine.
   ___ Catherine Tekakwitha
   ___ Leslie Marmon Silko
   ___ Louise Erdrich

5. She is the first woman to be elected principal chief of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma.
   ___ Maria Martinez
   ___ Wilma Mankiller
   ___ Edmonia Lewis

6. This writer self-identifies as a poet and was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for fiction.
   ___ Michael Dorris
   ___ N. Scott Momaday
   ___ Alexander McGillivray

7. This Pawtuxet man befriended the Plymouth colonists and acted as guide and interpreter for William Bradford.
   ___ Squanto
   ___ Popé
   ___ Miantonomo

8. This Northern Cheyenne chief and U.S. senator switched political parties in the mid-1990s, from Democratic to Republican.
   ___ Mangas Coloradas
   ___ William McIntosh
   ___ Ben Nighthorse Campbell

9. This Sioux leader won the battle of the Little Big Horn, where Custer and his men were defeated and killed on June 25, 1876.
   ___ Quanah Parker
   ___ Uncas
   ___ Sitting Bull

10. He was the 31st vice president of the United States.
    ___ Charles Curtis
    ___ Graham Greene
    ___ Joseph Brant
Here are a few examples of warm-ups that could be used for your reading class. Tell students to picture themselves in the situation. They have to read beyond the basic comprehension questions to figure these out. They are allowed to discuss it with the other students and to ask you yes/no questions.

They’ll be proud of themselves when they get the hang of these and can figure one out on their own! I’ve also use a few very short stories I’ve collected over the years. The answers can be found on page 7.

Death Comes To the Squire
In a small English town a long time ago, this story was told: It was a hot summer Sunday. The squire and his wife were in church when the squire fell asleep. He dreamed he was a French nobleman at the time of the Revolution. He had been condemned to death, and he was waiting on the scaffold for the guillotine to fall. Just then his wife, noticing that he was asleep, tapped him sharply on the back of his neck with her fan. The shock was so great – in view of what he was dreaming – that the squire immediately slumped over, dead. Do you believe this story? Why or why not?

Wash Your Face
Two workmen were repairing a roof. They fell through a large chimney and landed in a fireplace on the floor below. Both men arose unhurt. They looked at each other, walked around, stretched their arms and realized that they had sustained no injuries. Without speaking a word or discussing their fall, both men started back to work. Now it happened that one man’s face was well smeared with soot from his passage through the chimney.

The other man’s face, however, was absolutely clean. Yet the man with the clean face went and washed his face; the man with the dirty face went back to work without washing his face! Can you explain, logically, why they did this?

What’s My Name?
Mr. Jones one day got off the train in Chicago and while passing through the station, met a friend he had not seen in years. With his friend was a little girl. “Well, I certainly am glad to see you,” said Mr. Jones. “Same here,” said his friend. “Since I last saw you I’ve married – to someone you never knew. This is my little girl.”

“I’m glad to meet you,” said Mr. Jones. “What’s your name?” “It’s the same as my mother’s,” answered the little girl. “Oh! Nice to meet you Anne!” said Mr. Jones. How did Mr. Jones know the little girl’s name?

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From Connie Ward on LINCS listserv on Read/Write

Reading Class Warm-Ups

By: Jeanette Evans, Nebraska AE Consultant  jeanette.evans@nebraska.gov

With the current distance education pilots winding down in the state and many more programs interested in incorporating the tool for students, as well as the state need to come up to speed to assist students to take GED tests via the computer, the training needs, wants and demands for Nebraska staff members is HUGE! This necessary training has been cause for much concern, conversation and consternation in the NDE office! After considerable thought and initial suggestions, there is a plan!!!!!!!!!

On Friday, October 21, the first official meeting of a committee, tasked with providing technology training for local program staff across the state, was held here in Lincoln. This fearless group of people include: Donna Stevens, OPS; Ryan Hinz, Crete; and Stefanie Emrich, NECC. My personal and professional hat is off to them!!!!!

In a daylong session, these three folks developed a skills assessment to be completed by each adult education staff member in the state. Once they polished that off, they moved on to a training plan that is differentiated, sound and well thought out. The plan calls for some face-to-face training, some webinar-based training and some self help tutorials for independent use and future reference. This training will be available as early as late November so watch your email, the newsletter and see where and when it will be available to you!!!!
How do I deal with student apathy? Make it relevant and with purpose. Be animated. They aren't actually apathetic or they wouldn't be there.

How do I keep students on task? I bring something concrete with me to EVERY class. An old pocketbook filled with objects to start a writing activity.

Use the "Who's On First?" DVD to remind them not to use so many pronouns and words like "things," peanut butter and jelly ingredients to talk about transitions (First, Next, Then), etc.

How do I get students to take risks? Be open and willing to participate in the risk yourself. Don't trap them into a risk or put them on the spot, but give them opportunities to step up as they are comfortable.

How do I manage a multi-level classroom? Collaborative activities taken from life rather than a workbook.

How do I get students to take risks? Be open and willing to participate in the risk yourself.

Don't trap them into a risk or put them on the spot, but give them opportunities to step up as they are comfortable.

How do I deal with students who are consistently late or absent? Be ready for students to arrive at different times. It is what it is (could be cultural, could be life getting in the way). I start each class with a short activity that everyone can start when they arrive.

Answers to American Indian Heritage Quiz on Page 5

1. Sacajawea was the only woman to accompany Lewis and Clark in their search for a land route to the Pacific. Her image graces the golden dollar, which was released in 2000.

2. Robbie Robertson, the son of a Mohawk mother, led the famed group, The Band. Their last performance together was immortalized in the Scorsese-directed film The Last Waltz. More recently, Robertson has produced a number of albums that explore traditional American Indian music.

3. Tecumseh, along with his brother Shawnee Prophet, attempted to form a confederacy of various Indian tribes in order to reach their ultimate goal of a unified Indian nation.

4. Erdrich's 1984 novel Love Medicine, winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award, was followed by The Beet Queen (1986), Tracks (1989), and The Bingo Palace (1994). As chief of the Cheyenne-Missouri Nation, U.S. Congress (1893). He was a diplomat and worked to negotiate the Treaty of Fort Laramie in 1868, which ended the Black Hills War and established the reservations.

5. As chief of the Cherokee, Mankiller was responsible for a nation of over 300,000 people and an annual budget of over $75 million.

6. N. Scott Momaday won the Pulitzer Prize for his novel House of Earth in 1969. He has published plays, essays, literary history, and a memoir. Professor Momaday is sometimes believed to have written in English and Cree after being raised in Oklahoma, but in reality he wrote in English and an Indian language.

7. Squanto is sometimes believed to have been taken to England from the Maine coast by George Weymouth (1605) and returned by John Smith in 1615, but it is clear that he was kidnapped by Capt. Thomas Hunt in 1615, lived in England, and returned to Virginia in 1616.

8. Senator Campbell was captain of the U.S. Olympic judo team in 1982 and is a three-time U.S. judo champion. After the battle, Singing Eagle and some of his followers escaped to Canada, but they returned in 1820. Capt. Thomas Denny and Seneca Canfield were members of the U.S. Olympic judo team in 1994 and 1996.

9. After the battle, Sitting Bull and some of his followers escaped to Canada, but they returned in 1820. Capt. Thomas Denny and Seneca Canfield were members of the U.S. Olympic judo team in 1994 and 1996.

10. Charles Curtis, part Kansa, was admitted to the bar in 1881. He served in the U.S. Congress (1893). He was a diplomat and worked to negotiate the Treaty of Fort Laramie in 1868, which ended the Black Hills War and established the reservations.

Answers to Reading Warm-ups on Page 6

1. Answers to American Indian Heritage Quiz on Page 5

2. The State AE Office of NDE has a lending library of materials for both AE and ESL. Some are for instructors and others are resources containing practical ideas and exercises to be used with students. www.education.ne.gov/ADED/pdfs/Nebraska_Adult_Education_Lending_Resource.Library.pdf
Poll Everywhere
Click on “Create Your First Poll.” You can create a free account, but it is not required. Enter your question. Press “ENTER.” You have the option to do open ended or multiple choice questions. Click continue to save your poll. Responses are recorded and visible to viewers but are anonymous (without paid membership). If you are using Poll Everywhere with 30 or less people, it is free and the number of polls is unlimited.

National Academies Press
nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=13242
Look for the “free” download Improving Adult Literacy Instruction synthesizes the research on literacy and learning to improve literacy instruction in the United States and to recommend a more systemic approach to research, practice, and policy.

The report focuses on individuals age 16 years and older who are not in K-12 education. It identifies factors that affect literacy development in adolescence and adulthood in general, and examines their implications for strengthening literacy instruction for this population. It also discusses technologies for learning.

National Adult Literacy Database
The NALD Library is made up of two main collections, Research Materials and Learning Materials. You can use this search box to search all of the collections at once or you can view Recent Additions, do an Advanced search or Browse.

New American Horizons
A very good site for reflection, commentary and discussion. Adult ESL training videos: Classroom approaches in action from New American Horizons, can be viewed online, downloaded, or you can order DVD’s.

Could your student benefit from Special Testing Accommodations?

Your student may benefit from colored transparent overlays if you observe squinting eyes and/or eyes watering while reading, complaining of letters moving on the page, inability to read for long periods of time, eyes becoming bloodshot while reading, complaining of headaches while reading and/or holding text close to face to read. Your student may benefit from earplugs if you observe your student leaning on a hand or plugging their ears with their fingers while reading. If you observe tracking text with a finger or your student having difficulty keeping the place on the page, offer a straightedge.

If you notice your student making notes while reading or forgetting directions while completing assignments/tasks, a clear transparent overlay with a highlighter may be helpful. Does your student have trouble concentrating for extended periods of time? Consider administering only one test per day. A visor can help a student who squints, shades their eyes or complains of headaches while reading. If your student holds text close to their face to read, offer large print text and/or a magnifying glass. Does your student makes notes while reading or appear to be lost on the page? Do they have trouble with multi-step problems? Try post-its for spatial notes.
October 2011 was State Employee Recognition month. State AE office personnel, Shirley Gruntorad and Jan Drbal received awards during a ceremony held in Lincoln at the Capitol on October 20th.

Shirley Gruntorad (center) is pictured with Governor Dave Heineman (L) and Deputy Commissioner of Education Dr. Scott Swisher (R). Shirley has been the Nebraska GED Professional Assistant since May of 1997. She began her career with the State of Nebraska in January 1981 with the CETA/JTPA Program. She has also served as support staff in the Work Study, Guidance, Vocational Education, Financial Services, Administration, Cooperative Education, Vocational Special Needs, Curriculum, and Marketing Education/DECA programs.

Jan Drbal (center) is pictured with Lieutenant Governor Rick Sheehy (L) and Deputy Commissioner of Education Dr. Scott Swisher (R). Jan has been the Adult Education Professional Assistant since August 1986. Along with her job, Jan has a husband, 3 children, 2 step-children, and 13 grandchildren from the ages of 18 months to 22 years old. Her hobbies include walking, reading, enjoying family and friends, canning, and knitting.