



Supporting the
ABLE system to enhance
student achievement



ABLE Resource Center Network Quarterly Newsletter

Best Practices — Snapshots from the Field

Special points of interest:

- Best Practices in Writing, Reading, ESOL
- Practical Application
- Advocacy
- ABLE Programs Highlighted

You may recognize a change in the RCN newsletter this year. In fact, we have changed the focus of our publication. This year we will focus on Best Practice. Each Resource Center will contribute an article in its area of specialization (i.e. ESOL, writing, special needs etc.). We will be showcasing a particular ABLE program in Ohio that is using the strategy or method being described in the article. We feel this format gives practical information to other ABLE programs considering implementing these best practices and also gives

exposure to programs that have successfully done so.

We hope you find this new format useful and practical.



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Adult Basic Education: Making Career Connections

By Jody Angelone, NWRC

Transition: What does it mean? According to Merriam-Webster's dictionary, transition is:

*“passage from one state, stage, subject, or place to another: **CHANGE:** a movement, development, or evolution from one form, stage, or style to another.”*

We have heard a lot about transition in ABE over the past year. ABE will transition from the Ohio Department of Education to the Ohio Board of Regents.

Our governor's office recently transitioned from one governor and style of leadership to another. Our education and workforce development systems in Ohio are undergoing transition. Our students are transitioning from one stage in their lives to another.

So, how do we help our students transition? How do we help them make career connections?

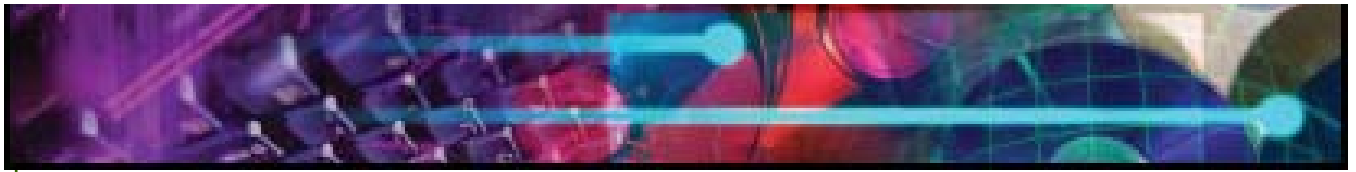
Since 2002, Kathy Hennessy, Lima City Schools ABE Coordinator, has been partnering to transition her ABE students by addressing

the following goals: to help prepare learners for all pathways leading to educational and employment opportunities, to help learners bridge the gap for successful transitions between secondary, post secondary and /or employment, to help learners succeed in using the pathway ladder for economic independence and long term successful transition to a high-skill, high-wage career, and to support economic development in the west central Ohio area.

Lima City ABE has three separate partnerships with Rhodes State College. The first, formed in 2002, is a transitions class which bridges the academic gap of students currently enrolled at Rhodes. The class consists of those needing remediation, along with ABE students who want to go to college, but still need to get their GED. Rhodes provides the classroom and computers while Lima ABE provides the instructor, books, and materials. During the past five years over 70 transition students have enrolled in college or remain in good standing in their current college pathway.

Lima City ABE has most recently partnered with Rhodes State College in a pilot program called Compass Prep, which provides remediation in both reading and math skills six weeks prior to the start of the next quarter, allowing students to enter college without being placed into developmental education classes.

Lima City ABE also formed a workforce partnership with the **WCOMC** (West Central Ohio Manufacturing Consortium). Lima City ABE has been collaborating with Rhodes State College since 2002-2003 on two planning grants awarded by Knowledge Works Foundation (the largest educational philanthropy in Ohio) to form a manufacturing pathway. This manufacturing project began with members of Rhodes State College conducting a needs assessment survey with the manufacturing communities of West Central Ohio to determine the expectations and future needs for potential employment opportunities for the economic region through the next five years.



From this survey assessment, manufacturers designated the skill sets required for their current and future employment opportunities. It was also determined that if they could create an employment pool of highly qualified workers for their area, it would help fill the future employment needs for approximately 1300 jobs projected to be available for the region's workforce in the next five years. The survey identified three major divisions of skill levels for future manufacturing positions: basic, intermediate, and advanced. The ABLÉ programs, along with Rhodes State College, the Career Centers, and Job and Family Services, were charged with developing the curriculum and assessments used for the 40 hour Basic Skills Manufacturing Certificate.

Rhodes State College engaged the regional workforce investment systems, economic development entities, the WCOMC, and other community and educational partners in developing a career ladder to be used in manufacturing pathways. In 2005, Knowledge Works funded the implementation of this career ladder. The collaboration continues with Rhodes State College,

WCOMC, regional public workforce agencies, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), social service agencies, economic development entities, and ABLÉ programs in implementing this program throughout West Central Ohio. At present, this consortium consists of 22 dues-paying manufacturers in West Central Ohio; Apollo Career Center; Allen County Job and Family Services; Rhodes State College; Lima City Schools ABLÉ; Mercer County ABLÉ; Putnam County ABLÉ; and Ohio Hi-Point Career Center and its ABLÉ component.

Rhodes State College Manufacturing Pathway classes are held on Saturdays from 10-2:00PM for ten consecutive Saturdays. Other Manufacturing Pathway sites hold classes as needed or as their schedules permit. At Rhodes State College, three summer sessions of Basic Manufacturing Pathway classes were held in segments of five hours daily for eight consecutive days. Putnam County also held two summer sessions this past year. Besides the Rhodes State College site, to date, students have completed the Basic Manufacturing course at Ohio

Hi-Point Career Center, Apollo Career Center, Putnam County ABLÉ, and several Lima ABLÉ sites.

How will you make the connection in your ABLÉ program?





ESOL at Work in the Community: Workplace Education

by Christina Theuerling, NERC

The community plays an important role in ABLE. Maintaining a relationship with the community and its agencies, businesses and employers helps provide many resources to ABLE programs and students. As we prepare our students to be self-sufficient members of the community it's helpful to collaborate with the community and the agencies that serve its needs.

This past summer Painesville ABLE began a Workplace Education class with Migrant Workers at Gilson Gardens in Lake County. Each year the nursery accepts men and women from Mexico to work at the Gardens from March through October. This year owner Mark Gilson decided his workers needed help with their English language skills in order to help his business and its customers. So, he went looking for help in the community. He contacted the organization *Rural Opportunities*, a social service agency, which referred him to Painesville ABLE Coordinator, Carol Darr. Carol connected ESOL Teacher Gayle Freeman with

Mr. Gilson who hired her to teach basic English language skills to his migrant workers every Friday afternoon at his nursery.

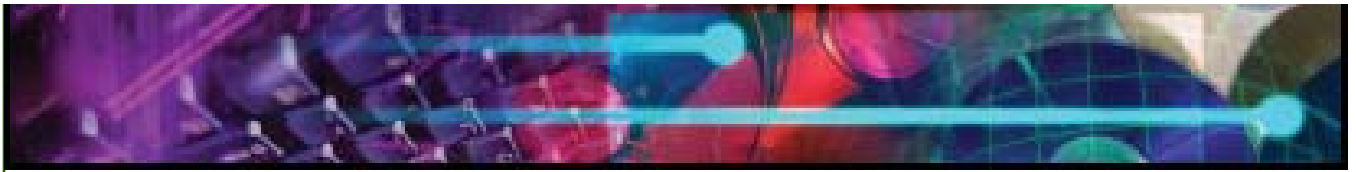
The class runs for one hour each Friday afternoon during work hours and the students are all paid to attend class. The class resides in a barn on the premises where picnic tables are brought in after lunch for seating. Student folders are kept in the barn so students may peruse them or take them home in between classes.

The students range in age from 18 to 50, are lower level and many are illiterate in their native language. Therefore, class curriculum is basic and involves nursery terminology, numbers, colors and key phrases. Gayle uses TPR (Total Physical Response) and Bingo games to practice. All teaching materials used in class are authentic, not from a text. Gayle is a big proponent of using the Internet to search for useful websites and resources. In order to catalogue all her findings, she is compiling a booklet of resources for teaching ESOL,

which will include many reproducible materials. One section is devoted solely to the nursery theme and she has offered to share it upon completion.

Stickers are given to students as a reward for class attendance and achievements. The students love stickers and avidly collect them. The students enjoy their classes and are happy to have the opportunity to attend. In fact, Mr. Gilson has made note of improved student confidence. He occasionally takes the students out to dinner and has noticed an increase in their confidence when ordering and speaking English. He also works in the field alongside the migrant workers and observes them practicing English while they work and during lunchtime as well.

Being a good business man, Mr. Gilson wants to please his clientele by providing outstanding product and customer service. He is willing to put forth the effort into training his employees for a return on investment later. The employees are building confidence and morale is up.



He trusts this will encourage them to return next March for another season.



Writing in the Classroom: From Modeling to Independence

By Kathy Knall, SW ABLEResource Center and
Dianna Baycich, Ohio Literacy Resource Center

Many ABLEResource students think that good writing “just happens” – that good writers sit down, take pen in hand and produce quality text effortlessly. To introduce students to the notion that writing is a process that even experts sometimes struggle with, teachers can model – they can show students the strategies they use when they write. The classroom scenario below is limited to describing instruction in the first phases of writing: brainstorming and initial organizing of ideas. The instructional approach can then be repeated for the remainder of the process of creating a piece of writing.

Teacher Does/Students Watch

Using an overhead projector or white board, “think out loud” as you brainstorm and write possible responses to a topic. Once your brainstormed list is done, you can show the steps you take towards organizing it. You may have a method you like, but one way to start organizing is to color code the list – circle items that “go together” in different colors. Again, share your thoughts out loud as you go through this process.

After color coding, look at the list with new eyes. Are there too many items to cover? Too few? Are there things that don’t be-



long?

Your thinking aloud at this point might sound something like this: “I think I have too many ideas here. I don’t have enough time to write about all of them. Which one sparks my interest most? I’m going to cross out the items that I don’t really want to write about.”



Students Do/Teacher Helps

When the process of initial idea-gathering and organizing becomes relatively clear to them, students can begin the process themselves individually or in small groups, and when ready, with your support as needed.

Remember that any time you introduce a strategy and students don't or can't use it, you must go back and do more modeling and provide more assistance. On the other hand, if students quickly take to the strategy, let them take more responsibility for it, and move on to teach something else with which they are having more difficulty.

Student Do Independently

Of course, the goal of any type of instruction is for the learner to be able to perform the skill or task in-

dependently. By modeling each step, then turning over the “doing” to students while you provide guidance, eventually you won't be needed any more!

Examples of Modeling from Ohio Classrooms

In the first classroom, modeling was done individually with a student who had good ideas for the paragraph he was writing but was having difficulty writing complete sentences and putting them into paragraph form. The teacher sat with this student and, using the student's ideas and words, showed and explained how to write complete sentences and arrange those sentences into a paragraph. The student not only was able to see the writing process in action, but also had a model of a paragraph to use for fu-

ture reference. With more support from the teacher, this student will be well on his way to independence in writing paragraphs.

In the second classroom, the teacher modeled the writing process for the students by writing with them. The writing activity was for the students to choose a picture book from the classroom library they would like to read to their children, select a picture from the book, and write a story about that picture. The teacher participated in the activity which gave her students an opportunity to observe a more skilled writer engaged in the writing process. After the students and teacher had finished writing, they read their stories aloud. When teachers write with their students, the students gain insight into the writing process, and teachers are

Structured Language Programs

By Mary Barbara Totten, C/SE ABLE Resource Center

Multisensory structured language programs are based on the Orton-Gillingham method of reading instruction developed by Dr. Samuel T. Orton and educator Anna Gillingham. The Orton-Gillingham methodology utilizes phonetics and emphasizes visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning styles. Instruction begins by focusing on the structure of language and gradually moves towards reading.

A structured language program provides students with immediate feedback and a predictable sequence that integrates reading, writing and spelling. The Orton-Gillingham method is language-based and success-oriented. The student is directly taught reading, handwriting and written expression as one logical body of knowledge. Learners move step by step from simple to

more complex material in a sequential, logical manner that enables students to master important literacy skills. This comprehensive approach to reading instruction benefits all students.

The Wilson Reading System (WRS) is a research-based reading and writing program. It is a complete curriculum for teaching decoding and encoding (spelling)



beginning with phoneme segmentation. WRS directly teaches the structure of words in the English language so that students master the coding system for reading and spelling. Unlike other programs that overwhelm the student with rules, the language system of English is presented in a systematic and cumulative manner so that it is manageable. It provides an organized, sequential system with extensive controlled text to help teachers implement a multisensory structured language program.

Charney Fitz, director of the ABLÉ program at the Mid-East Career & Technology Centers, has found the Wilson Reading System to be the “Cadillac” of reading interventions. When she first started as director she realized the program had no specific criteria for dealing with struggling readers. While visiting local elementary and high schools, she learned that when possible the curriculum included the Wilson Reading System. Charney and the ABLÉ staff attended Wilson training, had Wilson do on-site training at Mid-East and have been steadfast users ever since.

Understanding the necessity of resourcefulness, Charney employs Reading Specialists such as Carol Summers and Brad Carrel. Instructors may be trained in the Wilson Reading System but such a system is designed to be used with small groups or even better, one-on-one.

As typical classes may have upwards of 20 students, Reading Specialists travel from site to site to work with small groups or individual students. Although Wilson is the core format of the reading intervention program, Carol Summers explains that it is important to incorporate whatever methods may work. Students often read at different levels and may have other disabilities; incorporating elements of other systems (such as the STAR program) may meet their needs better. One method Carol employs is putting the lesson on audio tape so the student may take worksheets home and use the audio tape to complete the assignment.

Charney emphasizes that although reading intervention systems can be expensive due to training and material costs, the Central/Southeast ABLÉ Resource Center has enough materials for programs to create their own reading intervention programs. She is quick to point out that local libraries are also a great source of free materials and are often interested in providing support for local adult education programs.

Finally, funding can be found in community partners and literacy councils, especially when numbers indicate that Wilson has the ability to increase retention rates. Both Charney and Carol shared the fact that once students move past their

reading trouble spot, they are unstoppable. Wilson opens up a whole new world as their reading comprehension sky rockets and they are inspired to read more and even begin writing their own stories. Brad summarizes his thoughts about the Wilson Reading System, “Wilson provides structured, repetitive procedures for our lower-level reading students to retain information required to be a better reader.”



For more information on the Wilson Reading System:
www.wilsonlanguage.com
508.865.9644

Other examples of structured language programs include Stevenson Learning Skills (www.stevensonsemple.com), Lindamood-Bell Learning Process (www.lindamoodbell.com) and Slingerland Multisensory Approach (www.slingerland.org).



Advocacy Resources for Adult Basic and Literacy Education Programs

By Alan Toops, Executive Director, Ohio Literacy Network



Mark Twain once noted *“It usually takes more than three weeks to prepare an*

impromptu speech.” He could have been referring to developing advocacy and awareness tools as well.

The Ohio Literacy Network and the Ohio Association for Adult and Continuing Education have worked together over the last several years to create the Ohio Coalition for Adult Literacy. OCAL acts on behalf of its two member organizations and the individuals, programs, and agencies that we represent as its voice with state and federal legislators, elected officials, community groups, agencies and others.

In the past year, OCAL has created its own web site <http://www.literacyohio.org> where ABLE practitioners, instructional staff and individuals interested in advocacy can find links to Ohio’s governmental agencies, state legislators, federal legislators and a link to an on-line advocacy forum

These online resources consist of three different advocacy-training

courses. Beginning Advocacy 101, State Advocacy 210 and Federal Advocacy 301. Using these courses is almost as easy as falling off a log, but with out the scrapes and bruises!

Just click on the “On-line Advocacy Forum” and on the next page you will see a login button in the upper right corner. This button will take you to a login screen where you can create an account for your use, or just hit the “Login as a Guest” button. Once you pop up the Main menu you are in business.

There is an introduction and a list of the three courses as well as a series of Forums for you to post questions, make comments, and give feedback on advocacy issues to OCAL. Each course contains weekly lessons, activities, assignments, web resources and feedback. The courses don’t need to be taken in any sequence but OCAL recommends following the 101-201-301 sequences. The courses look something like the following.

Beginning Advocacy covers ten weeks and is designed to help local program directors, staff, and community groups develop an advocacy plan for their program. The topics include “What do We Want?,”

“Who is Our Audience?” and “What do We Want to Say?” among others.

State Advocacy 210 is a five-week program that links beginning advocacy efforts to state wide advocacy. Topics include “How a Bill becomes Law, Ohio’s Lobbying rules, and Political Action Committees, and two lessons around OCAL and Mentors.

Federal Advocacy 310 is a three-week program and includes such topics as how a bill becomes law at the federal level, How Ohio’s Alert system is organized and the role that OCAL mentors will play in the flow of information and action.

These courses are being offered for free to programs and staff throughout the ABLE and community literacy system in Ohio.

ProLiteracy America is also offering an online advocacy course designed to prepare attendees for a visit to “Capitol Hill” during the October ProLiteracy America conference in Alexandria Virginia this November as well as a post follow-up session. The link is: <http://www.proliteracy.org/> . Click on professional development.