

Action resource worksheet 2



The learner's goals and interests¹

This worksheet is based on implementing a wealth model approach to adult literacy and numeracy tuition as set out in the **Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work** (NALA, 2012).

The wealth model approach

The wealth model is the simple idea that adult learners bring many different experiences and strengths into the class with them. A good tutor will use these experiences and strengths as a resource. They will respect the learner for what they have already done and achieved in their lives to date and regard their experience as a very good starting point for meeting new challenges.

Learning about a learner's experiences and knowledge helps to show where their strengths, goals and interests lie. Knowing their goals and interests means that the tutor can make tasks relevant and useful. This moves adult education away from 'merely useful knowledge' to giving and getting 'really useful knowledge' – the knowledge that learners need to change their lives for the better.

The wealth model in practice

Transformative learning is a way of making it possible for learners to take action and develop new perspectives on themselves, their families and wider society. Slowly, the tutors build evidence of the learner's ability. This ability is evident in the learner's portfolios and their increasing confidence. These contradict negative self-belief, and replace it with a positive and realistic one.

1 To accompany the report 'The wealth model in adult literacy: transformative learning in action'

Guidelines for good adult literacy work: Guideline 2

Adult literacy learning is an active and expressive process. Students have the right to explore their own needs and interests, set their own goals and decide how, where and when they wish to learn.

This guideline shows the importance of facilitating the learner to set their own learning goals and make their own decisions with regard to how, when and where they wish to learn.

Top tips

- **Build the relationship with the learner and the group.**
Dialogue enables the tutor to find out the learner's strengths and gaps, their goals, their life circumstances, their learning styles, what is relevant to them, and what interests them. It is the type of relationship that enables learners negotiate what would interest them.
- **Actively involve the learner as much as possible.**
A learner may have become so accustomed to being a passive learner that they expect the tutor to supply them with the knowledge and skills and decide on topics. Overturning this and transforming the learner into an active learner can start with asking what they want to do.
- **Adapt to suit different needs, goals and learning styles.**
Adults can and will identify their learning goals. The learner and tutor then decide on lesson plans. The tutor will spend time with the learners outlining how the class will help them achieve their goals. The more the tutor gets to know the learner, the more relevant the material, topic or process will be. Learners may initially be puzzled about the general questions asked by their tutor, for example 'can you tell me something about your name?' However, such questions are intended to both relax the learner and give the tutor more information.
- **Develop material for the learner and group.**
Initial tutor training always advises tutors to develop their own materials. This avoids the use of materials that are not age, culture or gender-relevant. Adapting materials enables the learner to relate the topics and activities to their own lives which is part of social practice.

My three top tips on how I work with learners to set their own learning goals and make their own learning decisions:

1.

2.

3.

The 'Not Like School' checklist

Ways my classroom is 'Not Like School'	Check
It is an informal, relaxed learning environment	
We agree ground rules and everyone understands the reason for a ground rule	
There is peer teaching and learning	
There is mutual respect	
I see learners as adults with prior experience, knowledge and skills to draw on	
The prior skills and experience of the learner can be relevant	
I learn from the group	
The advantages of going for certification are identified	
I see myself as a facilitator of learning	
I create collaborative classrooms	
I know how the curriculum is negotiated	
I provide critical literacy and numeracy skills so people can read the word to read the world	



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National Adult Literacy Agency
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