

# BACK TO BASICS

## FOR FLORIDA ADULT BASIC EDUCATION PRACTITIONERS

### Students or Customers?

Sue Kraul - Leon County Schools Adult & Community Education

Most of us do not equate “student” with “customer” but we should. The term customer comes with a whole variety of issues including customer service, customer satisfaction, and customer friendly. From the moment we walk into a business, there is a certain expectation that all these “customer-isms” will be evident or our business will be taken elsewhere.

The same is true for our students. We do not have the luxury of mandatory attendance or even sole providership of services. If needs are not being met or if the student does not feel he is getting the best bang for his buck, he simply does not return or goes across the street to any number of other agencies who would be glad to have his enrollment.

As students enter our doors, we must be prepared to welcome them with all the enthusiasm any consumer would expect. From the first contact with any staff person, the customer/student needs to be treated with respect and dignity. Whether this is an intake session or an informal orientation or a seat next to the teacher’s desk, the student must be sure that he has made the right choice in just walking through the door.

Usually, registration forms and lots of paperwork need to be completed to get a student started, but this is also an excellent time to do an informal survey of student goals and interests. This provides a personal tone to the relationship between teacher and student and serves as an easy conversation starter in the days and weeks ahead. It also provides a basis of discussion when

the student exhibits signs of absenteeism or lack of motivation. It is much easier to ask if his plans have changed if you know what they were in the first place.

How many of us remember the TV series **Cheers** when all Norm had to do was walk in the door and “everyone knew his name?” The same should be true for our classrooms. Through collaborative learning activities and small group instruction, every customer/student should know everyone else’s name. When someone is missing, it should be immediately evident not only to those in attendance, but to the person who is not there as well. Given a choice to be somewhere else, the student should want to be in class because he knows others are just waiting for him to arrive.

A rule of business is that it is ten times harder to get a new customer than to keep an existing customer. Can we say the same for our classes? Just think how many Literacy Completion Points would be earned, as well as diplomas, if we were able to keep every single student who walked through the door. Treating students as customers may just be the answer!



LANGUAGE LEARNING ACTIVITY:

## Learning Plurals

*BENCHMARK 12.2*

*Source: ABE Florida 2001 Language Learning Activities Resource Guide*

*Contributor: Margaret Wright-Cleveland, Leon County*

This lesson helps students identify nouns and learn the rules of making singular nouns plural.

First, tell students the definition of a noun: a noun is a word naming a person, place or thing. To solidify this idea, have students brainstorm examples in each category and keep the lists on the board so that everyone can keep track of the examples.

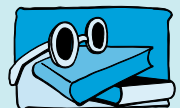
Second, give students the following rules about plurals:

1. Most nouns become plural by adding an “s”.
2. Nouns ending in ch, sh, s, x, or z become plural by adding “es”.
3. Nouns ending in y become plural by changing the y to i and adding “es”.

Finally, give students a newspaper or magazine and ask them to find nouns and make the nouns plural. This may also be completed as a group activity from the chalkboard.

*A worksheet for this activity is available on the web site [www.ABEFlorida.org](http://www.ABEFlorida.org) in the Resource Guide Language Learning Activities page*

*41 or in the ABE Florida 2001 Language Learning Activities Resource Guide page 36.*



## WORKPLACE READINESS SKILLS IN A CORRECTIONAL SETTING

*Ted Bricker, Corrections Education Adult and Community Education Center  
School Board of Sarasota County, Florida*



Correctional facilities are great places for education programs. Most inmates have an abundance of time and welcome scheduled activity that will provide meaningful outcomes. Such is the Workplace Readiness Skills course that is offered by the Adult and Community Education Center in the Sarasota County Jail.

In Sarasota County, the Adult and Community Education Center corrections education staff believed Workplace Readiness Skills course would be a great offering for the inmate students in the jail. We teachers agreed and worked to put together the content of the course based on the benchmarks for each standard. We prepared a resource guide using a variety of materials from several publishers and included typical forms prospective employees might be asked to fill out, forms and information employees would be asked to read and act on, classified ads, and workplace correspondence.

Once classes started in the jail, many of our students requested homework assignments to complete back in their housing units. In order to make this user friendly for them we retrofitted the content into consumable packets that could be given them to complete on their own. In this fashion, writing portions of the course could be completed at their leisure in the housing units and returned to class for credit.

Most of our students feel a real sense of accomplishment upon completion of the workplace course. When they leave the jail, in addition to taking the course material with them for future reference, a certificate of completion is available that they may use as a part of their resume when seeking employment. A convict who cannot find meaningful employment is at much greater risk of returning to jail than one who can. The Workplace Readiness Skills course gives inmates some tools for avoiding more jail time.

### MATHEMATICS LEARNING ACTIVITY:

## Following the Number Trail

### BENCHMARK 3.5

*Source: ABE Florida 2001 Mathematics Learning Activities Resource Guide  
Contributor: Leon County ACE Math Team*

Learning the relationship between numbers involves understanding both the symbols for operations and the operations themselves. By exploring how different operations change the relationships between numbers, students can learn to follow a number trail in deciding which operation to use.

First, the teacher will give examples to show how different operations yield different results. Below are some examples:

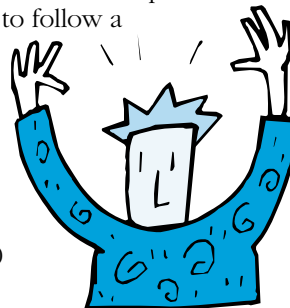
$$3+2=5 \quad 3-2=1 \quad 10+2=12 \quad 10-2=8$$

Second, the teacher will show more variety of results by using 3 whole numbers. Some examples are:

$$\begin{array}{cccc} 3+2-1=4 & 3-2+1=2 & 25+5-10=20 & 25-5+10=30 \\ 3+2+1=6 & 3-2-1=0 & 25+5+10=40 & 25-5-10=10 \end{array}$$

Have each student make a set to share with the class. Optionally, the work may be completed from the board with teacher direction. Finally, the teacher may prepare the "Number Trail" handout for students to complete individually or in small groups.

The Number Trail Handout is available on the web site [www.ABEFlorida.org](http://www.ABEFlorida.org) in the Resource Guide Mathematics Learning Activities page 22 or in the ABE Florida 2001 Mathematics Learning Activities Resource Guide page 17.



## Who Does the Most Effective Marketing?

*SOURCE: Get Your Message Out...Gaining Recognition for Your Adult & Community Education Program*

**The most effective marketing comes from everyone in the organization being aware that each person represents the group. The actions for all involved speak for the group. For example, the friendliness and helpfulness of the receptionist, the custodian who directs campus guests to the front office or the teacher who warmly welcomes a new student can each make the difference in whether or not a new student can't make it the second day or returns with his neighbor excited about joining. The personal contact of volunteers, staff and students talking to others about the organization – even in social situations – is invaluable. Word of mouth from staff, volunteers or students is the most effective marketing. So get talking!**

## WORKPLACE READINESS ACTIVITY:

## Do I Want a Job or a Career?



**BENCHMARK 1.2**  
 Source:  
 ABE Florida  
 2001  
 Workplace  
 Readiness  
 Learning  
 Activities  
 Resource Guide

- Distribute discussion questions listed below and divide students into small groups.
- Select a recorder and reporter for each group.
- Give students time to discuss the questions and record a composite of all the group members' answers.
- Have each group orally report to the class what their group discussed.
- Engage class as a whole by noting similarities and/or discrepancies in responses.

### Career, Life and Leisure Discussion Questions

1. Define the following terms: job, career, and leisure.
2. Would you rather have a job or a career? Why?
3. How can a job help you develop a career?
4. What leisure activities do you enjoy?
5. What activities do you enjoy with your family?
6. What leisure activities do you enjoy that may help you find a job?
7. What difference will a job make in your family life?
8. How will a job affect your leisure activities?

The worksheet for this activity is available on the website [www.ABEFlorida.org](http://www.ABEFlorida.org) in the Resource Guide Workplace Readiness Learning Activities page 9 or in the ABE Florida 2001 Workplace Readiness Learning Activities Resource Guide page 4.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Where can I get official information on adult basic education?

The Florida Department of Education Technical Assistance Paper for Adult Basic Education is intended to provide local adult education administrators and teachers with information to more effectively implement Adult Basic Education and Workplace Readiness Skills programs. The following are addressed:

- Courses for ABE students, related definitions, and course progression
- Student eligibility, assessment, and accountability
- Student services including initial intake, orientation, retention, and follow-up
- Classroom instruction – curriculum frameworks and alternative assessments
- Staff development
- Suggested materials and resources for implementing ABE and Workplace Readiness Skills

The Technical Assistance Paper is available from the Florida Department of Education at 1-800-342-9271 (Florida only) or online at [www.ABEFlorida.org](http://www.ABEFlorida.org)

### What is the Practitioners Committee for Adult Basic Education?

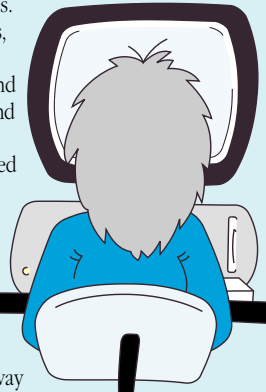
The Practitioners Committee is an avenue for qualified adult education practitioners in Florida to review program issues and recommend appropriate plans to the Florida Department of Education. Objectives for the Committee include facilitating a program improvement process that involves local teachers and administrators, collaboratively identifying and reviewing with the Department of Education critical issues that impact local programs and services, and facilitating the identification and delivery of staff development/training activities for practitioners. Representation on the Committee includes community colleges, small, medium and large school districts, volunteer organizations and businesses. Barbara Van Camp, Principal, Leon County Schools Adult & Community Education is the facilitator for the Committee. A list of committee members is available on the web page [www.ABEFlorida.org](http://www.ABEFlorida.org).

## Net Catches for Adult Ed

### Check out the following Adult Ed friendly sites.

#### [www.50states.com](http://www.50states.com)

50 States contains all kinds of "listable" information about the 50 states. Birds, flags, songs, newspapers, sporting events and teams, colleges and universities and people are all listed with their appropriate state. Though there is no in-depth information presented here, this site does provide a quick way to collect interesting facts about states. The search engine allows you to search by state or by person, bird, newspaper, etc. A Tools section provides worksheets, blank maps, and games for learning states and capitals.



#### [www.biography.com](http://www.biography.com)

Presented by *bio magazine*, this site provides over 25,000 brief biographies of famous lives, past and present. A search for Mary Cassatt presented a 13-paragraph biography as well as links to Edgar Degas, Impressionism and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, which was hosting a Cassatt exhibit. Other features include a Born on This Day headline, which can be searched by date so that students can look up famous people who share their birthdays, a list of Hollywood Birthdays, Best Selling Biographies, Bio-Trivia and a Bio-feedback section that allows viewers to give their opinions on a current event involving a famous person. The current Featured Exhibits section provides links to the Women's History Museum and the Biography of the Millennium project.

#### [www.puzzlemaker.com](http://www.puzzlemaker.com)

Puzzlemaker provides teachers a quick and easy way to make a puzzle appropriate for a specific classroom study. Math, word and maze puzzles can be made in a variety of formats using the information the teacher wishes to use. Puzzles can be saved on-line for later use or revision.

#### [www.teachersfirst.com/ushistory/women.html](http://www.teachersfirst.com/ushistory/women.html)

Teachers First has listed and reviewed 31 websites concerning the achievements of women. Each site listed provides a link, a short one-paragraph review and a grade-level designation. Most of the sites listed are appropriate for grades 6 – 12.

# ABE Practitioners Training

The ABE Practitioners Committee is sponsoring two teacher institutes this year as part of the on-going staff development component of the ABE Florida project. The institutes are designed for ABE practitioners interested in resources and activities for use in their classroom. ABE practitioners will present the sessions and all the activities will be classroom focused so participants will be equipped to return to their classes with new ideas and resources ready for application. The content for the institutes includes assessment issues, cooperative learning and group activities for the ABE classroom, math activities, reading activities and classroom management/organization.

The ABE Florida grant has limited funds available to pay expenses for teachers and volunteers to attend the institutes. The first 50 participants returning registration forms will be eligible to receive reimbursement up to \$300.00 for mileage, meals and hotel expenses.

The first institute will be in Tallahassee on April 11 at the Ramada Inn North. The registration deadline is April 5. The second institute will be in Melbourne on April 23 at the Imperial's Hotel and Conference Center. The registration deadline is April 15.

For more information visit the web site [www.ABEFlorida.org](http://www.ABEFlorida.org) or contact Lynn Cunill at [cunill@ACE-Leon.org](mailto:cunill@ACE-Leon.org) or phone 850-922-5343.

*Your  
Comments  
Are  
Important*

We hope you enjoyed this issue of **Back To Basics**. If you have any comments or questions, please contact:  
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## Calendar of Training Opportunities

<b>April 11</b>	ABE Florida Teacher Training Institute – Tallahassee, FL Contact: Lynn Cunill 850-922-5343 <a href="mailto:cunill@ACE-Leon.org">cunill@ACE-Leon.org</a>
<b>April 23</b>	ABE Florida Teacher Training Institute – Melbourne, FL Contact: Lynn Cunill 850-922-5343 <a href="mailto:cunill@ACE-Leon.org">cunill@ACE-Leon.org</a>
<b>May 1 &amp; 2</b>	Panhandle Adult Literacy Center Teacher Training – Panama City, FL Contact: Jack Newell 850-922-5343 <a href="mailto:newellj@ACE-Leon.org">newellj@ACE-Leon.org</a>
<b>May 6 &amp; 9</b>	An Up-Close Look: Computers for Instructional Purposes – School District of Hillsborough County, Adult & Community Education Center in Tampa, Florida Contact: Region IV Resource Center 813-974-2904
<b>June 5-7</b>	Adult Secondary/GED/VPI Symposium: ER! Essential Resources for Adult Educators — Radisson Resort at the Port in Cape Canaveral, FL Contact: Christalee Burkett 407-622-8951 <a href="mailto:aimcsb@aol.com">aimcsb@aol.com</a>

Leon County Schools

**ACE** Adult & Community Education

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[www.ACE-Leon.org](http://www.ACE-Leon.org)



Florida Department of Education

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