

Guidelines for Fostering Student Engagement in ABE

Guideline	ELA Examples
1. Choose the appropriate level of difficulty	Select goals, texts, and tasks that are not too easy nor too difficult. (Challenge students, but don't frustrate them!)
2. Present material in a clear and organized format	Sequence activities and lessons carefully, so that students see the connections between them. Provide modeling, explanation, and guided practice before asking students to use an ELA skill independently.
3. Combine instruction in skills and processes with the learning of meaningful content	Teach reading comprehension strategies and text structure using texts related to the social studies, science, or "life" topic the class is studying (e.g., financial literacy, career exploration, etc.). Target writing skills and the writing process as students synthesize what they have learned about the topic.
4. Encourage learners to generate content	Involve students' in synthesizing what they have learned by creating written products (blogs, letters to the editor, infographics, reports) and class presentations on a regular basis.
5. Encourage learners to construct ideas from multiple points of view and different perspectives.	Explore a short story from the perspective of different characters or a controversial topic from the perspective of different stakeholders.
6. Cultivate adaptive, interactive learning environments	Offer finely-tuned feedback; provide prompts; practice skills for a real-life purpose.
7. Use and inspire learners' interests	Connect unit topics to students' long-standing personal interests; create interest in an immediate situation by making it relevant to students' lives or sense of curiosity.
8. Encourage collaboration and cooperation	Invite students to work in pairs or groups to practice reading strategies, create written products, and give presentations.
9. Provide (the right degree of) choice and autonomy	Offer options for such things as which text to read, how to adapt reading comprehension strategies, and/or what topic to write about.

Adapted from: National Research Council. 2012. *Improving Adult Literacy Instruction: Supporting Learning and Motivation*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

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