Incorporating Workplace Skills & CCRS in Adult Education

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Immigrant and Refugee Center of Northern Colorado
Greeley/Evans, Colorado
WELCOME!

TOPIC FOR THIS SESSION:

I will explain how I adapted a communication practice activity and incorporated workplace skills and College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS).

This presentation will encourage ESOL instructors in adult education to become more familiar with the CCRS and workplace readiness goals and inspire them to create similar lessons of their own.
Who am I and where do I teach?

- M.A. Curriculum and Instruction for TESL, University of Colorado at Denver, 1995
- I began my career teaching EFL in the People’s Republic of China in 1990 and have taught in many contexts since then, including teacher training
- I am currently teaching ESOL at the Immigrant and Refugee Center of Northern Colorado in Greeley/Evans, CO
What we do at IRCNOCO

IRCNOCO is a 501c3 non-profit organization.

Location: serving Greeley/Evans and surrounding communities in N. Colorado

Mission: **Empowering** refugees and immigrants, **connecting** communities, and **advocating** for successful integration.

- **Community Advocacy**: informing the community about immigrants & refugees
- **Women’s Empowerment**: gathering women to build networks & increase social visibility
- **Community Navigation**: translation and community navigation services
- **Education**: ESOL, GED & Citizenship prep classes from Levels 0-6
My Roles at IRCNOCO

Curriculum Coordinator & Classroom Instructor

- **Communicating information to teachers about**
  - WIOA / AEFLA requirements that impact curriculum
  - CASAS and CASAS prep for students
  - How to use our textbooks & extra materials and classroom components
  - In addition: other needs as they come up such as peer observations

- **Providing instruction for ELLs (Spring and Fall Semesters 2019):**
  - NRS/CASAS Level 1 (low-beginning) primarily refugee adult learners (a CRSP-funded class)
  - NRS/CASAS Level 5 / 6 (high-intermediate & advanced) combination class of predominately Spanish-speaking immigrants (an AEFLA-funded class)
  - NRS/CASAS Level 6 Bridge (advanced) - pre-GED and college and career prep (an AEFLA-funded class)
Essential Question

How do I incorporate things like CCRS, CASAS Competencies and Reading Standards, ELPS, Workplace Skills, Colorado Essential Skills, and Webb’s DoK framework into lessons?

There is so much to keep track of and there are so many goals/standards to fulfill, it’s hard to know how to best incorporate these things into all the lessons the students and I work on in classes.
A HUGE thank you to National Geographic Learning and the webinar “Effective ESL Instruction using the 4 C's” by Rob Jenkins and Staci Johnson, authors of *Stand Out: Evidence-based learning for College and Career Readiness*.

25 October 2019

While I came up with my presentation topic long before seeing this webinar, participating in it helped me “gel together” the ideas that had been percolating in my head. I highly recommend checking this webinar out. It’s free at the following link:

We are not just “English Teachers” anymore: we are “Preparers of learners to enter college and careers.”
Essential Background Information: What & Why

Here’s a hierarchical diagram to understand the organization of what the standards are and why we have to teach them in programs funded by grants from the Colorado Department of Education:

WIOA
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

AEFLA
Title II of WIOA — Adult Education and Family Literacy Act

Colorado Department of Education — Adult Education Initiatives
Grantee Program Oversight

CLASSROOM
Descriptors and Reporting
Workplace & Soft Skills
Content
“The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law on July 22, 2014. WIOA is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.”

Source: [https://www.doleta.gov/wioa/about/overview/](https://www.doleta.gov/wioa/about/overview/)

“WIOA Title II seeks to ensure that state and local service providers offer adult education and skills development programs that accelerate achievement of diplomas and credentials among American workers, including immigrants and individuals with limited English language skills. The Title II funds can be used for activities assisting eligible adults (16 years and older) with obtaining postsecondary education, training, or employment. Specifically, the funds serve people with barriers to employment, including English language learners, low-income individuals, and immigrants.”
WIOA Colorado State Plan  https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/rsa/wioa/state-plans/co.pdf

pages 149-150 A. ALIGNING OF CONTENT STANDARDS

“The AEI office officially adopted the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) as a framework to prepare Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA)-funded programs for the new demands of high school equivalency exams. This adoption also signifies alignment with Colorado Academic Standards.”
WIOA Colorado State Plan  https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/rsa/wioa/state-plans/co.pdf

page 156, F. ASSESSING QUALITY

Programs must provide student progress measures obtained from all students who have attended at least 12 hours of instruction. Documented progress of student performance measures must include at a minimum:

- **Literacy skill level improvements** in reading, writing, and speaking the English language, problem solving, numeracy, and other literacy skills
- Placement in, retention in, or transition into postsecondary education, training, unsubsidized employment, or career advancement
- Attainment of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent.
CDE AEFLA Grantees Handbook
http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeadult/grantees/handbook
2019-20 State Assessment Policy
http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeadult/grantees/handbook/assessment-policy

“Approved Assessments”
(page 6, Assessment Policy):
CASAS (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems) https://www.casas.org/
What does all of this mean for the classroom?

*It means we have to be integrating workplace and soft skills, in addition to English language proficiency, competency, and content skills, into instruction.*
In the National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS), the Educational Functioning Level (EFL) descriptors are intended to guide teaching and assessment for adult learners. The descriptors for English as a second language (ESL) are divided into six educational functioning levels:

- Beginning ESL Literacy
- Low Beginning ESL
- High Beginning ESL
- Low Intermediate ESL
- High Intermediate ESL
- Advanced ESL

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<td></td>
<td>• Basic Skills</td>
<td>• Communication</td>
<td>• Life and Career</td>
<td>• Applied Academic Skills</td>
<td>• Creativity and Innovation Skills</td>
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<td>• Thinking Skills</td>
<td>• Decision Making</td>
<td>• Critical Thinking</td>
<td>• Critical Thinking Skills</td>
<td>• Critical-thinking and Problem-solving Skills</td>
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<td>• Personal Qualities</td>
<td>• Interpersonal</td>
<td>• Collaboration</td>
<td>• Interpersonal Skills</td>
<td>• Communication and Collaboration Skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Resources</td>
<td>• Lifelong Learning</td>
<td>• Creativity</td>
<td>• Personal Qualities</td>
<td>• Social and Cultural Awareness</td>
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<td>• Interpersonal</td>
<td>• Information</td>
<td>• Communication</td>
<td>• Resource Management</td>
<td>• Civic Engagement</td>
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<td>Skills</td>
<td>• Information</td>
<td>• Information</td>
<td>• Information Use (Information Retrieval)</td>
<td>• Initiative and Self-direction</td>
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<td>• Systems</td>
<td>• Media</td>
<td>• Media</td>
<td>• Communication Skills</td>
<td>• Flexibility</td>
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<td>• Technology</td>
<td>• Technology</td>
<td>• System Thinking</td>
<td>• Systems Thinking</td>
<td>• Productivity and Accountability</td>
</tr>
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SCANS

EFF
https://eff.clee.utk.edu/fundamentals/eff_standards.htm

21st Century
https://www.aeseducation.com/career-readiness/what-are-21st-century-skills

Employability Skills Framework
https://cte.ed.gov/initiatives/employability-skills-framework

Colorado Essential Skills
https://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/essentialskills
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCRS</th>
<th>ELPS</th>
<th>CASAS: Competencies</th>
<th>CASAS: Standards (Reading, 2e, 2016)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCR Anchor 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.</td>
<td>1. <strong>Construct meaning</strong> from oral presentations and literacy and informational text through level-appropriate listening, reading, and viewing.</td>
<td><strong>Basic Communication</strong></td>
<td>(p. 5) There are 52 CASAS reading standards in five categories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCR Anchor 2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.</td>
<td>2. <strong>Participate</strong> in level-appropriate oral and written exchanges of information, ideas, and analyses, in various social and academic contexts, responding to peers, audience, or reader comments and questions.</td>
<td><strong>Health</strong></td>
<td>1 – Foundational Literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCR Anchor 3: Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.</td>
<td>3. <strong>Speak and write about</strong> level-appropriate complex literary and informational texts and topics.</td>
<td><strong>Math</strong></td>
<td>2 – Language and Vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCR Anchor 4: Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.</td>
<td>4. <strong>Construct</strong> level-appropriate oral and written claims and support them with reasoning and evidence.</td>
<td><strong>Community Resources</strong></td>
<td>3 – Reading Comprehension Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCR Anchor 5: Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.</td>
<td>5. <strong>Conduct research and evaluate and communicate findings</strong> to answer questions or solve problems.</td>
<td><strong>Employment</strong></td>
<td><strong>Literal Comprehension</strong> (DOK 1 [Weeb's Depth of Knowledge])</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCR Anchor 6: Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.</td>
<td>6. <strong>Analyze and critique the arguments</strong> of others orally and in writing.</td>
<td><strong>Learning and Thinking Skills</strong></td>
<td><strong>Informational and Literary Text</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCR Anchor 7: Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.</td>
<td>7. <strong>Adapt language choices</strong> to purpose, task, and audience when speaking and writing.</td>
<td><strong>Consumer Economics</strong></td>
<td><strong>4 – Higher Order Reading Skills</strong> (DOK 2 and higher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCR Anchor 8: Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.</td>
<td>8. <strong>Determine the meaning of words and phrases</strong> in oral presentations and literary and informational text.</td>
<td><strong>Government and Law</strong></td>
<td><strong>5 – Higher Order Reading Skills</strong> (DOK 2 and higher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCR Anchor 9: Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.</td>
<td>9. <strong>Create clear and coherent level-appropriate speech and text.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Independent Living</strong></td>
<td><strong>Literary Text Only</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCR Anchor 10: Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.</td>
<td>10. <strong>Demonstrate command of the conventions</strong> of standard English to communicate in level-appropriate speech and writing.</td>
<td><strong>CASAS: Competencies</strong></td>
<td><strong>CASAS: Standards (Reading, 2e, 2016)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Webb’s Depth of Knowledge

Level 1. Recall and Reproduction
Level 2. Skills and Concepts
Level 3. Strategic Thinking
Level 4. Extended Thinking

Sources: https://www.edutopia.org/blog/webbs-depth-knowledge-increase-rigor-gerald-aungst http://static.pdesas.org/content/documents/M1-Slide_19_DOK_Wheel_Slide.pdf
Adapting Material: Level 6 Bridge (advanced)

CASAS Level C, Scale Score 221-235

**CASAS Descriptor:**

**Listening/Speaking:** Can satisfy most survival needs and social demands. Has some ability to understand and communicate on the telephone on familiar topics. Can participate in conversations on a variety of topics.

**Reading/Writing:** Can read and interpret simplified and some non-simplified materials on familiar topics. Can interpret simple charts, graphs, and labels; interpret a payroll stub; and complete a simple order form; fill out medical information forms and job applications. Can write short personal notes and letters and make simple log entries.

**Employability:** Can handle jobs and job training situations that involve following oral and simple written instructions and multi-step diagrams and limited public contact. Can read a simple employee handbook.

Persons at the upper end of this score range are able to begin HSE preparation. (SPL 6)

NRS Descriptor (in part...) Level 6 Advanced ESL

It’s the descriptor in part. The New Educational Functioning Level Descriptors for English as a Second Language have three modalities: Interpretive, Productive, and Interactive.


Productive: The ability to produce level-appropriate written and spoken text such that it meaningfully transmits meaning (3, 4, 7, 9, 10)

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to deliver oral presentations and compose written informational texts about a variety of texts, topics or events. They can fully develop the topic with relevant details, concepts, examples, and information, and integrate graphics or multimedia when appropriate.
Demographics

- There were 7 females and 3 males who participated in the project.
- All 7 women are native Spanish speakers; the men are Arabic, French, and Kiswahili speakers.
- At least 4 of the students have higher education degrees from their home country; the other six have at least the equivalent of an 8th grade education in their home country.
What We Did in Class - The Lesson

We use the *Pathways 3, Second Edition: Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking* textbook in this class (2018, Vargo, M., Blass, L., National Geographic Learning).

We were covering Unit 4: *Danger Zones* and got to the part of the unit where we were exploring written English and using parallel structure in sentences.

There was only one exercise in the book about this...
When you join two ideas in one sentence, both ideas have to be in the same grammatical form and tense. In addition, the two parallel ideas should come immediately before and after *and*. Look at these examples.

**Parallel nouns:**

- Idea 1: *Property gets damaged in earthquakes.*
- Idea 2: *Earthquakes damage buildings.*

*Property and buildings* get damaged in earthquakes.

**Parallel verbs:**

- Idea 1: *Learn about earthquake safety online.*
- Idea 2: *Phone numbers for local shelters can be found online.*

You can *learn* about earthquake safety and *find* phone numbers for local shelters online.

**Parallel adjectives:**

- Idea 1: *The people were hungry.*
- Idea 2: *They also needed to sleep.*

*The people were* hungry and tired.
B Complete the sentences (1–5) by combining the two ideas with parallel structures.

1. Idea 1: When it starts to rain, streets will be slippery.
   Idea 2: Slippery streets can be a danger.
   When it starts to rain, streets will be ________________________ and ________________________.

2. Idea 1: People can prepare for a hurricane by buying extra food.
   Idea 2: They also need extra water.
   To prepare for a hurricane, people can ________________________ and ________________________.

3. Idea 1: People need to be cautious.
   Idea 2: People aren’t aware of dangers.
   People should ________________________ and ________________________ of dangers.

4. Idea 1: People are frightened of hurricanes.
   Idea 2: Hurricanes cause damage to property.
   Hurricanes ________________________ people and ________________________ property.

5. Idea 1: Houses were crushed by the tornado.
   Idea 2: The tornado carried cars away.
   The tornado was so strong that it ________________________ and ________________________.
There was much outcry...

“MORE PRACTICE! MORE GRAMMAR!”

So I accommodated.

I pulled a grammar activity from an old copy of *Focus on Grammar 5 (3rd Edition)* that we had in our teacher resource room. I knew this text had a similar exercise on parallel structure from having taught it many years ago.

pages 287-288 *Focus on Grammar 5, 3/e*
But there was a problem... more protests.

“TEACHER, WHAT’S A GERUND? WHAT’S AN INFINITIVE?”
I accommodated some more.

I copied off the entire chapter (Unit 15) and went through the entire unit, which they loved. I find my students really crave grammar practice and reinforcement of structures. It’s in their “comfort zone” and I like teaching it, and I feel we can “afford” to sometimes step away to focus on grammar in spite of all the CCRS/ELPS standards to be covered. (Grammar is a part of English language proficiency, too.)

We came to the end of the unit.
Exercise 9 on page 270 is as follows:

**GROUP DISCUSSION**

What do you value in friendships? Add your own item to the chart. Then complete the chart for yourself by ranking each item:

- 3: Very Important in a Friendship
- 2: Somewhat Important in a Friendship
- 1: Not Important in a Friendship

Discuss your answers with three classmates. Report your overall results to the class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Giving each other presents</strong></th>
<th><strong>Rank</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Always being honest with one another</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Not hurting each other's feelings</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Giving help whenever it is asked for</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lending money if it is asked for</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
How I Integrated Workplace Skills and Content Standards

I realized I could modify this grammar activity to include workplace and CCRS/ELPS/CASAS (content) standards and ask students to do the following:

- Students would **create** their own survey from a model Likert Scale survey I created
- Students could give the survey to their friends and family (or share on Facebook via a survey they created in Google Forms) *(communication/collaboration)*
- They could **collect** the data and log it into Google Sheets *(information/technology)*
- From Google Sheets, they could **create charts and graphs** *(graph, organize, display)*
- After creating graphs, students would assemble a poster of their results *(compare, construct, design)*
- We would have a poster session of all the data students collected and look for patterns and trends amongst the survey results. *(communicate/analyze/synthesize)*
Here’s what happened:

Students created surveys. Here are some of the surveys that students made:
Data Collection and Logging in to Google Sheets

Example #1

Example #2
Creating Posters and Having a Poster Session
Creating Posters and Having a Poster Session
Assessment

As we don’t give grades or marks at IRCNOICO, the product was the assessment:

- Did the student create a survey?
- Did they interpret the data through using Google Sheets?
- Did they create a poster?
- Did they communicate about the trends they noticed?

Here is the NRS description once more:

**Productive: The ability to produce level-appropriate written and spoken text such that it meaningfully transmits meaning (3, 4, 7, 9, 10)**

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to deliver oral presentations and compose written informational texts about a variety of texts, topics or events. They can fully develop the topic with relevant details, concepts, examples, and information, and integrate graphics or multimedia when appropriate.

Discussion

On the back of the handout are some excerpts from various ESL textbooks for adults.

What could you do with these textbook activities to further incorporate workplace skills, the content standards, and/or Webb’s DoK criteria?
Excerpt (1)

Unit 3: Community Life

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4 PRACTICE

A PAIRS. Practice the conversation.

B MAKE IT PERSONAL. GROUPS. Discuss.

1. What kind of neighborhood do you live in? Is it a neighborhood like Thai Town where people share a common language and culture, or is it a diverse neighborhood?
2. Which is better—a neighborhood where people share a common language and culture, or a diverse neighborhood?
3. Make two charts: one for neighborhoods where people share a common culture and one for diverse neighborhoods. List advantages and disadvantages for each.
Excerpt (2)

Ventures 2, 3rd Ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
p. 63.
Unit 5: Around Town
(Transportation)
Lesson C, Grammar Focus:
Adverbs of Frequency

3 Communicate

A Write. Complete the sentences about yourself.
1. I am usually _____ around 11:00. I always _____ after class.
2. I am often ________ on Saturday.
3. I usually ________ during the summer.
4. I am never ________ in the afternoon.
5. I sometimes ________ late at night.
6. I always ________ on the weekend.
7. I rarely ________ in the morning.
8. I never ________ during the week.

B Talk with a partner. Use your answers from Exercise 3A.
I always eat lunch after class. What about you? I always go to work after class.

**Excerpt (3)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>MAYBE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I'm going to live in a different town or city.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I'm going to have a job.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I'm going to have a lot of money.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>I'm going to have the same friends.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>My parents are going to live near me.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I'm going to speak English very well.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I'm going to travel a lot.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>My personality is going to change.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>My appearance is going to change.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>My life is going to be more fun.</td>
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**Talk about It** Compare your answers above as a class.
Final Thoughts?

- What thoughts do you have about this all?
- Will you be able to create some lessons utilizing more workplace and content standards now that you understand them better?

My Contact Information

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