

Dear Multilevel Teachers,

The community-based, multilevel ESOL program serves students in levels 1-3 (low beginning, beginning and high beginning). We have a total of six classes being offered at off-campus sites: Auburn Library, Algona-Pacific Library, Covington Library, Cedar Valley Elementary, Kent Phoenix Academy and Enumclaw campus (please note these classes may not run each quarter). The classes meet twice a week and are 4-5 credits each except Enumclaw, which meets 3 days a week and is 10 credits. Therefore, these classes are less intensive and have a different set of course outcomes and goals than our leveled classes do.

The students we serve in these classes are adult immigrants and refugees of the local communities. Many of these students had little academic experiences in their countries. These students are generally literate in their first language, but may have no English or limited English. They may have some verbal skills, but little or no reading/writing skills (or vice versa).

This letter should assist in answering some of your questions and serve as a guideline regarding available materials and curriculum, teaching methodologies, best practices, assessments, general policies, registration, CASAS testing and course outcomes. As you prepare to teach your multilevel class, please read this letter carefully and keep in mind the following information.

Multilevel Materials/Curriculum

General Information: The curriculum includes units, question and answer handouts, some supplemental handouts and activities, final exams, and assessment handouts and activities. Also, there are numerous documents which explain the purpose of and the directions how to administer a needs assessment, final exams, phonics readers and activities, as well as daily question and answer handouts.

Units: There are a total of eight thematic units (or topics) in the curriculum. They include: grocery shopping, parts of the body, health: doctor and dentist, maps and directions, jobs and work, forms, activities and hobbies, and family. With the ongoing implementation of the Washington State Standards into our ESOL program, the overall goal of the curriculum is to focus on teaching students learning strategies that are transferable across contexts. Therefore the units are comparable in structure and include similar types of activities, which encourage students to utilize similar learning strategies. The activities address all focal skills and various grammar points.

Question and Answer Handouts: The curriculum includes daily question and answer handouts. The directions how to administer this daily activity is included. These questions and answers are organized by topic and are an extension of each unit. Other supplemental material is also available to coincide with a number of the units. I encourage you to create and/or bring in more supplemental materials to your class for whatever unit you are working on.

Phonics: Since many students have more problems with reading and writing, phonics instruction is an integral part of the curriculum for the lower level students (or higher level students who may need it). Directions on how to administer these activities is included. I cover all short and long vowel sounds each quarter. I use “Sounds Easy” as a resource for materials and activities. We have four copies of this book and if you would like to borrow one for the quarter, please contact me.

Exams: Comprehensive final exams are part of the curriculum as well (see Assessments section).

Teaching Methodologies

- Create a learning environment which promotes a community of collaborative learning and supports spontaneous peer teaching.
- Continually remind students it is their class, and provide opportunities for students to take control of their education and language learning experience.
- Emphasize teaching language learning strategies which are transferable across contexts.
- Build on language components by scaffolding language instruction.
- Vary instruction between whole-class, mixed-level, level specific and if possible, return to whole-class instruction each lesson so all of the students' needs are being met.
- Listen to your students. If something isn't working, replace it with something else. Ask your students informally after each lesson what they learned and what they liked or didn't like. Keep a teaching journal as you progress through the quarter. Be flexible!
- 4-5 credit classes will only cover 1-2 units per quarter depending on the amount of supplemental material you provide. Enumclaw may cover 2 units depending on the amount of supplemental material you provide. Balance your lessons with predictable but engaging activities each night (e.g., question and answer handout, phonics/reading materials and activities from whatever unit you are working on). **DO NOT** hand out entire units to your students. Go through a couple of activities each class.

Best Practices

Transparent: When introducing students to new language, grammar points and activities, try to make it as transparent as possible. Whether it is to enhance the students' focal skills or because they need to review a specific component of the language, tell the students exactly why they are doing it and why it is beneficial for them to learn and practice it.

Purposeful: The units cover and introduce students to language associated with familiar topics which they can relate to and share personal experiences with. The needs assessment (see section below) also addresses the purposefulness of the curriculum, since the students are able to choose which units to study throughout the quarter. Constantly remind the students it is their class, and whatever they need and is most important to them, they will study and practice.

Contextual: Since the units are themed, the language, vocabulary and grammar are introduced in specific contexts. No segments of the language are introduced in isolation.

Assessments

Needs Assessment and Goal Setting: Education for empowerment begins with teachers creating opportunities for students to take control of their own learning. To **START** the quarter, it is imperative to conduct a needs assessment. The needs assessment has two parts. First, address

focal skill needs. Conduct the *four corners* activity to highlight the student's strengths and weaknesses. Then, pass out the *goal setting* handout. When they are finished, collect their papers and put them in their student folders (make sure you also fill in their goal setting information on their student profile sheet). Second, address the content of the class. Pass out the *possible topics to study* handout. Once the students are done filling out the page, tally up everybody's top two choices. The two topics that receive the most votes are the topics they will study throughout the quarter (in addition to the daily question and answer handouts, phonics/reading instruction and supplemental materials). The documents and directions how to administer these activities are included on the web.

On Going Assessments: Keep notes on students as they progress through the quarter, particularly if they have trouble with a specific area or focal skill. Try to compensate their needs by bringing in materials they can work on independently at home, before or after class. Also encourage students to write in their journals (see section below). This will help make their educational experience more personalized. Make yourself available to your students so their needs can be addressed and met successfully.

Final Assessments: There are a total of six comprehensive final exams. Be aware there are not final exams for all units. Since the instructional methodology focuses on teaching language learning strategies that are transferable across contexts, students will be able to take final assessments any of the themed units. However, it is best to use a final exam that matches up with the content that was taught in the class. Test what you teach if possible. The final exams are also themed to coincide with the curriculum. There are four separate tests (four for each level) in each comprehensive exam: speaking/listening test, C-test (reading cloze), reading test (with comprehension questions) and a writing test. A student must receive an 80% on the C and reading test, and a 3/4 on the speaking/listening and writing test to pass a level. The directions how to administer these tests are included.

Registration

Since the community-based program is less intensive, levels 1-3 on campus cover more material. Therefore, if a student passes a level in the community-based program and wants to transfer to a leveled class on campus, please register them laterally. In other words, if a student at Auburn Library passes level 2 and wants to go to GRCC in the evening, register him/her for level 2 (unless they are absolutely ready for level 3).

Policies

Homework: Since these classes are less intensive than our leveled classes are, homework is not mandatory. However, it may be worthwhile to give homework to the students to complete over the weekend. Our overall program's policy states: Successful completion of homework is an indicator of readiness for level completion. The assumption is that students will progress faster when they take responsibility to do their homework and prepare for class. Completed homework will be reviewed by instructors and students will be given meaningful feedback. Examples of homework include:

- *Journals:* Give all of your students a blue book at the beginning of the quarter and encourage them to write about anything. The amount of feedback you give a student will vary depending on the student's level and ability of writing/reading.

- *Incomplete assignments:* Go over these the following class session with the students if you weren't able to finish them the previous session.
- *Northwest News:* Give the students a copy of this newspaper each month as it comes out. Make copies of the activity sheet which comes with the paper too. Distribute them before the weekend and encourage the students to read level appropriate articles and to complete level appropriate activities. Check their work the following week and answer any questions they may have.

CASAS Testing

Since you are teaching a multilevel class, there will be at least three different listening tests to administer. This can be rather tricky depending where you are teaching. At the beginning of each quarter, look ahead at when the date for CASAS testing is at your site. The multilevel classes operate on a different schedule than the campus classes do. Therefore you will need to plan accordingly and strategically. If you need to check out CD players and headsets, place your order with media services a few days before your testing date. Heather has 10 CD players in the office you may use as well (if they are available). Be aware that the CD players have plug-ins for up to 5 headsets at each station. So, if you have 16 students and 3 separate listening tests, you will need 4 CD players or 2 rooms (1 group in the 1 room with no headsets and the other 3 groups in the other room with headsets). Also, if you are teaching at a library site, it is a good idea to reserve additional rooms on testing dates. Talk to the employees at your designated site.

Course Outcomes

As stated earlier, the multilevel classes range from 4-5 credits and only meet two evenings a week (except Enumclaw). These classes are less intensive and students will generally make fewer gains and perhaps repeat levels more frequently. Therefore, the classes have a different set of course outcomes compared to our leveled classes. Please keep in mind you will not be able to address all these outcomes each quarter. The following two pages contain tables to illustrate the course outcomes for all focal skills, grammar points and phonics for levels 1-3 in the community-based, multilevel program.

For a complete continuum of the program's outcomes, see the following two pages.

If you have any additional questions, concerns or want to share some ideas, please do not hesitate to contact me. My email address is aleavitt@greenriver.edu or you can call me at extension x4646. Thank you very much for your time and I wish you the best in your class, quarter and hope you thoroughly enjoy your multilevel teaching experience.

Sincerely,

Aaron Leavitt

Course Outcomes: Students will be able to...(in addition to the outcomes in the previous levels)

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Reading	<p>Recognize and read the alphabet.</p> <p>Differentiate between upper and lower case letters.</p> <p>Recognize, read and interpret common signs in the environment.</p> <p>Recognize, read and use lifeskill vocabulary.</p> <p>Read simple sentences conveying personal information or general information on familiar topics.</p> <p>Read simple dialogs on familiar topics.</p> <p>Read simple short stories on lifeskill topics.</p> <p>Recognize and read dates with numbers and words, and ordinals.</p>	<p>Read simple texts.</p> <p>Monitor comprehension by using a variety of strategies.</p> <p>Read high interest words, own writing and simplified sentences in an active voice aloud, slowly but accurately.</p> <p>Understand meanings of simple everyday words, symbols and of words related to personal interests.</p> <p>Read dialogs on lifeskill topics.</p>	<p>Read simple stories about everyday lifeskill topics.</p> <p>Demonstrate comprehension by using reading strategies to assist in comprehension (guess meaning of unfamiliar words using context, pictures, titles, etc.).</p> <p>Read and retell simple stories.</p> <p>Read dialogs on lifeskill topics.</p>
Writing	<p>Write the alphabet in upper and lower case accurately.</p> <p>Write dates with numbers and words, and ordinals.</p> <p>Fill in forms with basic personal information for self and others.</p> <p>Understand when to use a capital letter and a period or question mark.</p> <p>Write dictated simple sentences on familiar topics.</p> <p>Categorize words and write lists of common lifeskill vocabulary.</p> <p>Complete simple authentic forms.</p>	<p>Write 4-5 sentences with a controlling idea/purpose on familiar topics.</p> <p>Write simple dialogs on familiar topics.</p> <p>Edit sentences for accuracy, spelling, word order (s+v+o), grammar and punctuation.</p> <p>Revise writing with support and feedback from classmates, aides and/or teacher.</p> <p>Write simple sentences using “be” and simple present verbs (negatives, questions and statements).</p>	<p>Apply sound-symbol relationships to decode and spell simple words.</p> <p>Write several sentences on familiar topics in paragraph form.</p> <p>Write dialogs on familiar topics.</p> <p>Edit for accuracy, spelling, punctuation, verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, plurals and possessive adjectives.</p> <p>Write affirmative and negative sentences and questions using simple present tense.</p>

Speaking	<p>Say the alphabet accurately.</p> <p>Say dates with numbers and words, and ordinals.</p> <p>Answer and ask simple questions with prompts or assistance from teacher or peers.</p>	<p>Use simple phrases to communicate basic likes, needs and wants.</p> <p>Talk about familiar topics (daily activities, friends, family, work, school etc.).</p>	<p>Use and understand simple phrases in English to communicate basic everyday needs.</p> <p>Participate in small group conversations, express ideas, opinions, and agree or disagree with others.</p> <p>Use affirmative and negative sentences and questions using simple present tense.</p>
Listening	<p>Recognize and respond appropriately to basic formulaic speech (e.g., How are you? I am good).</p> <p>Follow basic classroom instructions.</p>	<p>Understand questions about everyday habits, needs and personal information.</p> <p>Follow 2-3 step directions.</p>	<p>Recognize important information in a conversation on a familiar topic.</p> <p>Demonstrate understanding of brief spoken messages on everyday topics.</p>
Phonics	<p>Recognize sounds of English language and identify sound-symbol correspondences.</p> <p>Recognize, read, write, say and begin to differentiate between short and long vowel sounds.</p>	<p>Recognize sounds of English language and identify sound-symbol correspondences.</p> <p>Recognize, read, write, say and differentiate between short and long vowel sounds with some difficulty.</p>	<p>Recognize sounds of English language and identify sound-symbol correspondences.</p> <p>Recognize, read, write, say and differentiate between short and long vowel sounds accurately.</p>
Grammar	<p>Use subject pronouns.</p> <p>Recognize and use plural words with “-s” and some common irregular plurals.</p> <p>Understand and use “be” verb conjugations and contractions.</p> <p>Recognize basic English syntax S+V</p>	<p>Use simple verb constructions with “be” in simple present, and a few common regular and irregular verbs in simple past.</p> <p>Use prepositions of locations and time.</p> <p>Use simple adjectives to describe self and others.</p> <p>Use adjectives correctly</p>	<p>Use simple present and present continuous tense in statements, negatives and questions.</p> <p>Use modals of ability (can, could)</p> <p>Introduce simple past tense in statements, negatives and questions for regular and common irregular verbs.</p> <p>Introduce future with “will” and some common irregular past tense verbs (get, have, be and go).</p>
Responsibility	<p>Students will learn organizational skills, how to function in a classroom, and work collaboratively with classmates, aides and teachers.</p>	<p>Students will learn organizational skills, how to function in a classroom, and work collaboratively with classmates, aides and teachers.</p>	<p>Students will learn organizational skills, how to function in a classroom, and work collaboratively with classmates, aides and teachers.</p>