

# SESSION PLANNING for ESL COMMUNITY TUTORING

Self-Paced  
Winter 2024



WASHTENAW  
LITERACY



# Training Guidelines



**Welcome to your self-paced module!**

The information in this training program is based on the same research found in degree programs. **Maximize your potential impact by actively participating, thinking, challenging, and learning!**

You owe it to yourself and your future learners to honor this time.

- Listen carefully.
- Read curiously.
- Think critically.
- Question fearlessly.
- Take notes actively.
- Reflect personally.
- Share respectfully.
- Review regularly.



## **Washtenaw Literacy's Mission:**

Believing that literacy is the foundation for a sustainable community, Washtenaw Literacy provides literacy support, free of charge, to adults through a network of trained tutors.

It is our **Vision** to eliminate illiteracy in Washtenaw County.



PASSION



DIVERSITY  
EQUITY  
INCLUSION



INTEGRITY

[www.washtenawliteracy.org](http://www.washtenawliteracy.org)

734-337-3338

# Tutor Objective



*The previous slide showed you the agency's mission, vision and values. The **Tutor Objective** is our tutor's mission:*

To partner with adults in pursuing their personal goals by improving their ability to understand, speak, read, and write basic English and do math through customized, research and evidence-based tutoring.

# Training Objectives



## 1. Develop skills needed for tutoring adults

- Use template to develop a session plan
- Ready to create a tutor bag
- Think outside the box regarding materials

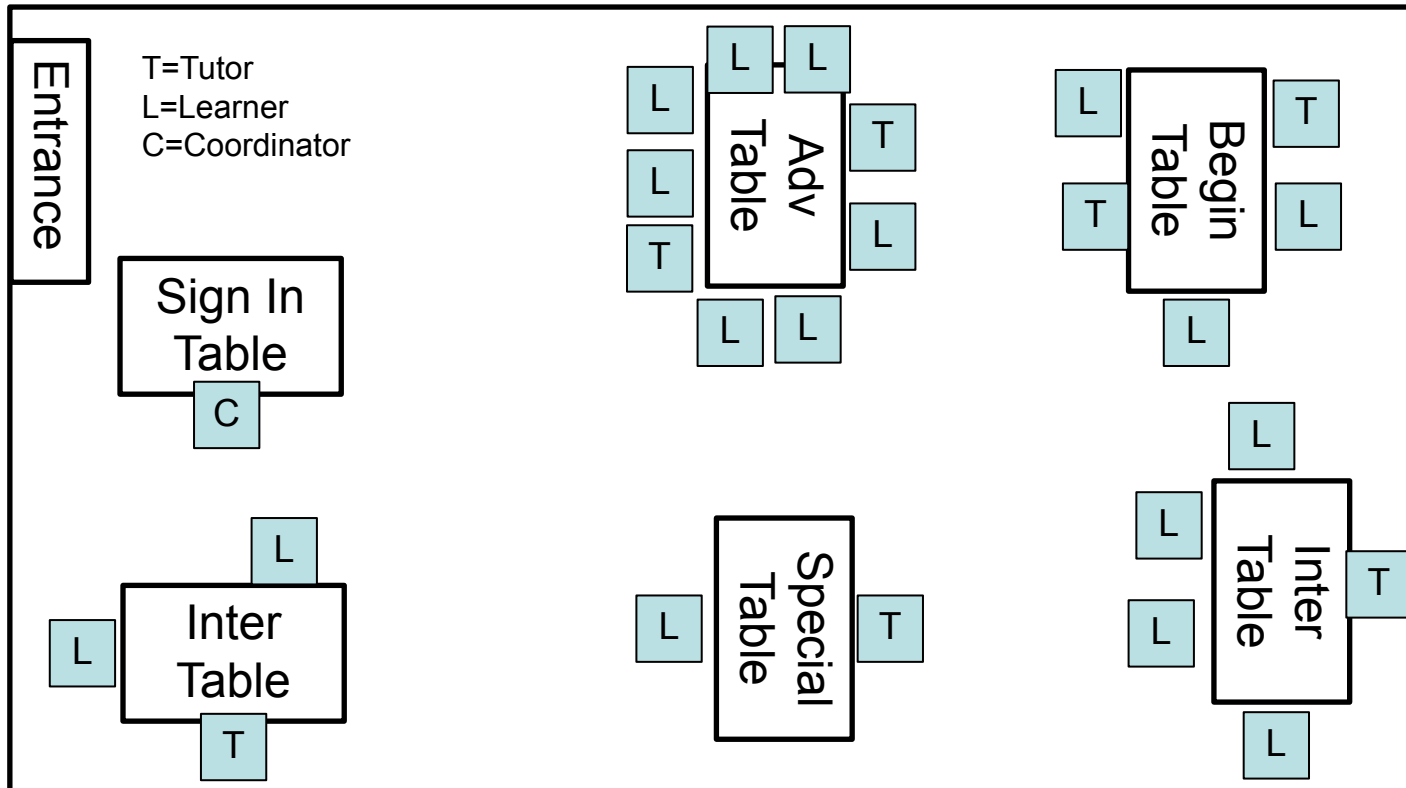
## 2. Build knowledge needed to engage with agency

- Know the expectation of welcoming, prepared, responsive and reflective
- Understand WashLit's learner levels

## 3. Align your perspective and expectations with the needs of adult learners

- Understand the importance of relationship in adult learning
- Brainstorm ways to be inclusive in your session planning

# What might it look like?



Learner-tutor ratio may change depending on the location and demand for tutors. Community Tutoring is drop-in for learners. There is at least one beginner, one intermediate and one advanced table at each site to accommodate the skills of individual learners.

# An example of a table of learners



**Mari (Japan), Lily (China) and Anita (Mexico)** are all young moms with children. They live on the Northside of A2 (husbands are UM students or Toyota employees). Mari is the most outspoken but also feel isolated at home all day. Lily is quiet but has PhD in Chemistry and feels “useless” here as a housewife. Anita is used to having lots of family around and really wants to meet people. They don’t know how long they will be in US, but want to work or go to University some day. For now, they are focused on being independent, raising their children and being helpful to their husbands. Mari likes to travel and wants to be a photographer. Anita is interested in cooking and gardening. Lily likes to watch movies, paint and read. They are all [low-intermediate learners](#).

## PRACTICE and SHARE

- **Brainstorm** on a piece of paper some everyday topics that you might use to frame a ESL CT session with Mari, Lily, and Anita (for example; grocery shopping, a breaking news story, weather in Michigan, etc.).

See if you can come up with 20 topics. Think everyday! Think of Mari, Lily, and Anita's interests and lives.



# A brainstorm of topics



- grocery shopping
- Trump's trial
- tornadoes in Ohio
- junk mail
- getting stopped by the police while driving
- maple syrup tapping
- garage sales
- spring flowers in Michigan
- congress voting on the Tiktok ban
- types of music
- places to travel (day-trip) in Michigan this summer
- the Crumbley verdict/guns in society
- introducing yourself to neighbors

## PRACTICE and SHARE

- **Next, pick one topic from your list.** Brainstorm 12-15 conversational questions about this topic.

Tips for creating questions:

- **Ask people to share stories or preferences**
- **Ask questions about the learners' home country**
- **Ask comparative questions (A or B and why?)**
- **Ask open-ended questions to get people talking**

# Example of 12-15 questions



My chosen topic is the Crumbley verdict and guns in society (brainstorm)

1. How common are guns in your home country? Who owns/uses guns?
2. What sayings (proverbs, idioms) do you know about guns in English or in your first language?
3. Before coming to the US, what did you know about guns in the US? What do you think now?
4. Have you ever handled or shot a gun? Where? What about a toy or water gun?
5. Would you ever want to own a gun?
6. Who do you think should be able to own/use a gun?
7. If someone uses a gun and kills someone, who is to blame? The person who pulled the trigger? The gun owner? The person who sold the gun?
8. Do you think there should be rules about who can own a gun? What rules would you suggest?
9. Do you think some guns should be legal (a hunting rifle, for instance) and some not (like a rapid fire machine gun)? Why or why not?
10. What do you know about the Crumbley trial? The Sandy Hook school shooting?
11. Should private citizens be able to carry a concealed handgun to protect themselves? Why or why not?

# NOTE about topic and questions



There are some serious considerations about this topic!

This topic could be very controversial. Be prepared to give learners a “cheat sheet” of phrases to use when politely disagreeing with other. Talk about how Americans view opposing opinions and how to express yourself without offending others. Learning these cultural skills is a fabulous outcome of a lesson like this!

This topic could also be triggering if someone comes from a wartorn country or has experienced a gun-related crime. When implementing the lesson, select questions from your list carefully if you don't know the learners at your table well. Give people the option to skip answering a question. Make it as conversational as possible so no one feels put on the spot or like they have to take a turn.

These considerations do not mean you avoid the topic! This is reality. This is life in America. It can be very empowering for learners to have an opportunity to practice expressing themselves about such important issues.

# Props and Other Materials



What props and materials can you bring? What will help with understanding, vocabulary and focus on your topic?

Stretch yourself to think of “realia” (objects from everyday life). In lieu of the objects, bring lots of pictures.

Think outside the box (not just articles or books). Imagine things you can touch and manipulate.

If Mari, Lily, and Anita are sitting at your table, what will make them lean in? What will they want to pick up? What will elicit conversation and interaction? What will be personally relevant to these women and their lives/goals?

# Example of Props/Materials



Remember my chosen topic is the Crumbley verdict and guns in society. So, I might bring;

- Pictures of types of guns, pictures from the Crumbley trial, pictures of the school, pictures of police or military with guns, an advertisement for the sale of guns
- list of gun-related idioms (I would Google or ask AI for “list the top 10 gun idioms”)
- an article about the Crumbley verdict
- copy of the Bill of Rights (focus on #2, #5, #6)
- an article from procon.org about gun ownership (I may have to rewrite this as the vocabulary is usually advanced, this is another job for AI!)
- my laptop to play a YouTube video about the second amendment or a clip of the Crumbley trial

## Food for thought

Thinking of “practicing English” with Mari, Lily and Anita

- What articles or other things could you read together?
- What vocabulary might they need?
- What role plays could you do?
- What commercial games might you play?
- What pictures might you bring and how would you use them?

# Planning vs. Implementation



Here is a [Session Planning Template](#) for you!

Planning and Implementation are different in many ways. Here are some considerations;

- What if all learners are new? Intro may take longer
- What if everyone is shy? Questions may fall flat
- What if they are a different level than you expected? Your materials may be too hard or too easy

While your planning starts with a topic and conversation questions, your implementation may start by reading an article (to get people warmed up and introduced to the topic). It never works the same way twice! You have to be adaptable.



Tutors are expected to be...



**Welcoming**  
**Prepared**  
**Responsive**  
**Reflective**

The next slide will help you imagine how to do these things!

# A Framework for Time



## 0-15 minutes

- Start with casual conversation and introductions (model socially expected behaviors). Smile, keep your head up, and say “hi!” *Be welcoming.*
- Ask learners if they have any questions about language or cultural experience from the previous week.

## At 15 minute mark

- Introduce the topic (casually by connecting it to a question that was asked, or directly by stating “I brought some material on X today”). *Be prepared.*

## Until 85 minute mark

- Proceed with activities, props and conversation questions
- Order them to keep learners engaged and actively practice *their* English
- Don’t worry about “finishing” the lesson! You can always save some items for next week or send them home with learners. *Be responsive.*

## At 85 minutes

- Ask learners for input and feedback (is there a topic they’d like you to prepare for next week? what did they like best this week?). *Be reflective.*
- Thank them for coming. (Model socially expected behaviors)
- Remind them to collect questions during the week to discuss at your next meeting

# Assessing Your Tutoring



The most important feedback is that of the learners. Ask them. Give them ownership. Build community through inclusivity!

[Click here](#) for a general self-assessment.

[Click here](#) for a self-assessment of your session planning and implementation.

Talk with your Site Coordinator, staff member, Mentors, or other tutors for insight and ideas.

Model grit and a growth mindset. We don't have to be perfect, we have to be learning. We're all learning together!

# Tutor Oaths



## As a Washtenaw Literacy Designer-Tutor\*, I will:

1. Keep in touch with Washtenaw Literacy
2. Tutor to my learner's goals
3. Prioritize time based on goals
4. Balance the skills areas
5. Activate prior knowledge
6. Respect differences
7. Dream small
8. Provide repetition without boredom
9. Create session plans for my learner

*You are on the path to becoming a design-tutor! Through training, you will learn how to design session plans and select materials specifically designed for the needs of learners with whom you partner. For more on how you can keep these oaths, engage in training!*

# Training Objectives (Review)



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- Know the expectation of welcoming, prepared, responsive and reflective
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- Brainstorm ways to be inclusive in your session planning

# Next Steps



## 1. Today

- **Complete the required Session Planning for ESL Community Tutoring form ([click here](#)).**
  - Once you submit this form, you will be marked as “completed” for this module.

## 2. As needed

- Contact a staff member to learn about continued training and the current openings.

Thank you!



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# General Agency Contact



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