

PART 4: A Closer Look at ESL Activities

The material in this folder was designed especially for use with beginning and low-intermediate level ESL students. By no means does this imply that the rest of the material on the website is *not* intended for ESL students. ESL instructors should peruse and plan to incorporate material from the **Basic Skills and Vocabulary, Reading and Comprehension, and Supplemental Activities** folders in their lessons, as they deem appropriate. Much of the material found there is appropriate for *both* ABE *and* ESL instruction.

Vocabulary Lists and Graphics

Before taking a closer look at the ESL Activities Folder, we want to draw particular attention to the following files in the **Basic Skills and Vocabulary** Folder:

- **Vocabulary Lists (Core Vocabulary only)**
- **Graphics:**
 - ✓ **Class Picture Set**
 - ✓ **Flashcards – Label**
 - ✓ **Flashcards – No Label**

For beginning level ESL students, the most important aspect of the Health Literacy Materials is learning the Core Vocabulary. The first thing ESL instructors should do in any of the 18 Sections is view the Core Vocabulary list. This list gives a good idea of the content of the Section. (The vocabulary words come from the core **Reading Passage**, which is the next thing instructors should look at to understand what the basic health literacy concepts are in each Section.)

Graphics files are provided to help instructors introduce health literacy vocabulary and concepts to students. Each Section provides a **Classroom Picture Set**. The set contains large graphics (8.5” x 11”) for every Core Vocabulary term from that Section. Corresponding **Flashcards** (one set with a label and one set without a label) are also provided for student practice. Graphics files can be printed, and, if possible, laminated on card stock. They can also be used to make overhead transparencies or PowerPoint slides.

One graphic may be used to represent several vocabulary terms. For example, “physician,” “doctor,” “patient,” “treat you,” “diagnose your problem,” and “prescribe medication” are all taught using the same picture, with arrows pointing to different aspects of it.

PLEASE NOTE: In some Sections more graphics than just those from the Core Vocabulary list are provided. For example, the graphic for “examine you” appears in Section 1 where it is a Core Vocabulary term. It also appears in Section 5 – Preventive Care: Regular Checkups, where clearly it is also relevant. This was simply done as a matter of convenience and as an aid for instructors who may not be following the material in sequential order or teaching each Section.

Vocabulary Learning

Instructors should present the new vocabulary items orally using graphics and demonstrations first, and then introduce the written form of the new words, as detailed below.

1. Introduce New Oral Vocabulary Using Pictures Only (No Text)

Tape 5-7 pictures from the Classroom Picture Set to the blackboard or a wall. Introduce each picture by pointing to it and saying the corresponding word(s) or phrase(s) one by one, repeating each several times. Students should only listen at this point. Next, have the class repeat each vocabulary term.

2. Check Auditory Comprehension

Ask comprehension questions in the following sequence to ensure that students understand the meaning of the words or phrases.

a) Yes/No Questions

Point to each picture in random order and pose yes/no questions, such as “Is this a doctor?” “Is this a paramedic?” Students respond chorally with yes or no.

Students can also answer by holding up different colored slips of paper or showing thumbs up/thumbs down for ‘yes’ or ‘no.’ In this way, students are more likely to answer for themselves rather than relying on the strongest students in the class to answer first.

b) Choice Questions

Pose questions in which the correct answer is offered as a choice, such as “Is this a doctor or a nurse?” Have students respond together or individually in complete sentences.

c) Open Questions

Ask questions that force students to supply the target word(s) without hearing them, such as “What’s this?” (pointing to an item). Students can supply the word(s) chorally or individually.

3. Listening Comprehension Practice Using Flashcards - No Label

Give each student a set of flashcards without the label for the words being taught. Say the new words/phrases one by one as students point to the corresponding pictures on their papers. When students demonstrate good comprehension, have them practice saying the new words/phrases aloud.

4. TPR Activities Using the Blackboard

Tape the large pictures from the *Classroom Picture Set* to the board or wall. Have students walk to the board and point to the pictures you name. For additional oral practice, have various students take the role of teacher by naming the pictures for their classmates to identify.

Once students have clear understanding of the new Core Vocabulary terms and can identify them by listening and speaking, instructors can follow the activity sequence below to develop students' reading and writing skills:

1. Introduce Core Vocabulary Using Pictures and Text

a) Label, Point and Say

Make large printed vocabulary labels for each of the large pictures (use lower-case print, not cursive writing). Tape each label under or next to the corresponding picture. Note that some pictures are used to illustrate more than one vocabulary word. Introduce the written words by saying each word, pointing to it, and then pointing to the picture or to a specific item in the picture. Students should listen only.

After pointing and saying each word several times, have the class repeat the words, repeating the cycle of vocabulary several times and then in random order.

b) Word – Word Match

Students who do not have strong literacy skills in their native language will need extra practice recognizing English words in print. Pass out large copies of the picture labels to students. Print the same words on the board. Call out words one at a time and have students tape their labels next to or under the matching printed word on the board. Students can exchange labels and do the activity multiple times.

c) Picture – Word Match

Remove the large labels from under the pictures on the board and distribute them among the students. Call out words one at a time and have students tape their labels under the corresponding pictures. Students can exchange labels and do the activity multiple times.

2. Word Recognition Practice Using Flashcards with Pictures and Text

a) Picture – Word Match

Use the Flashcards with labels and cut apart the words/phrases from their pictures. Distribute the word/picture sets and have students match pictures with words. Weaker students can be paired to work with stronger students if necessary.

b) Pair “Quizzes”

Have students paperclip the flashcard words to the backs of the flashcard pictures so that one side shows the picture and the other the word. Pairs of students can then work to quiz each other using the flashcards. For this activity, pair students who have stronger reading skills with students who have weaker reading skills.

c) Games *(optional)*

For extra practice, small groups or pairs of students can play “Concentration” with the flashcards. In this matching game, the flashcards are separated from their corresponding words/phrases, and both are placed face down on a table. Students take turns turning over two cards, looking for a match of a picture and its label. If a student finds a match, he or she keeps those cards and takes another turn. The game is over when all the cards have been matched up, and the student with the most cards is the winner.

3. Whole Class Match-Up

Using the Flashcards with labels, cut apart the words/phrases from their pictures. Pass out either a label or a picture to each student. Have the students circulate, using oral language to find their match. The type of question and answer practiced would be, in complete sentences, “Do you have ‘hospital?’” “No, I don’t have ‘hospital.’” or “Yes, I have ‘hospital.’” Do not allow students to show their pictures or words to each other. (In classes with multiple literacy abilities, give nonliterate students pictures and literate students words.) Students can exchange cards and repeat as needed.

4. Word Web

This activity helps students link the Core Vocabulary to their pre-existing vocabulary in a visual manner.

Begin by posing a question that will enable the class to generate a cluster of vocabulary words around a concept. For example, in Section 1, several of the vocabulary items have to do with different kinds of health professionals. Asking “What are some different health jobs you know?” would prompt students to say the names of different health professionals, some of which are likely to be the health professionals included in the Core Vocabulary list for Section 1. As the students generate vocabulary, write the word web on the board and ask the class where to place the words on the web (e.g., connected to another word, by itself, etc.). If the class generates words that are not part of the Core Vocabulary set, add these to the web. If the students do not generate Core Vocabulary words from the Section, instructors should add them to the web.

Prompt: What are some different health jobs you know?



* not Reading Passage section vocabulary words

5. Supplemental Activities

Some Sections have Supplemental Activity worksheets denoted with a (V) for vocabulary practice. These activities vary, from a crossword puzzle to multiple choice questions to labeling a graphic. They should be used after students have learned the applicable vocabulary. Instructors may choose to complete these pages orally with students, or to use an overhead projector to model writing the correct answers, or they may ask students to work in pairs or independently. The approach should match the ability levels and needs of the students.

STEPS FOR BUILDING VOCABULARY – AT A GLANCE

Listening and Speaking – NO TEXT

1. Post pictures. Point and say word/phrase. Students listen only. Repeat several times.
2. Students repeat after instructor.
3. Ask auditory comprehension questions:
 - Yes/No – Is this a _____?
 - Choice – Is this a _____ or a _____?
 - Open – What is this?
4. Students point to flashcard pictures as instructor says words.
5. Students come to board and point to large pictures as instructor says words.

Reading and Writing

1. Post labels under pictures. Point and say word/phrase. Students listen only. Repeat several times.
2. Students repeat after instructor.
3. Pass out copies of labels. Students come to board to match labels. Mix and repeat.
4. Remove labels from board and give to students. Students come to board and label pictures as instructor calls out words/phrases.
5. Use flashcards with words, cut apart. Students match pictures and words.
6. Attach words to backs of flashcards. Pairs quiz each other.
7. Concentration Game
8. Pass out either a picture or its matching word to each person. Class mingles to match words and pictures.
9. Word Web
10. Vocabulary activity worksheets. Do as whole class, pair, or individual activities.

Now, let's take a closer look at the material in the **ESL Activities Folder**.

ESL Activities Folder

The ESL Activities Folder in each of the 18 Sections contains one or more of the following activities:

- **Word Focus**
- **Grammar Focus**
- **Sentence Focus**
- **Conversation Focus**

Word Focus

As ESL students acquire new vocabulary they often need extra listening practice aimed at noticing how words sound, and also aimed at recognizing or picking out target words in the oral language stream. Likewise, these students often need extra practice pronouncing words so that they may be understood by native speakers. The **Word Focus** activities are designed for this purpose.

Word Focus activities zero in on selected multi-syllable words from the Core Vocabulary list. Students listen to the instructor pronounce a vocabulary word aloud three times while pairing the word with its picture. Instructors should slightly exaggerate the stressed beat (syllable). For example: “**pharmacy, pharmacy, pharmacy,**” or “**prescription, prescription, prescription.**” Help students to orally identify the “beat” (syllable) that is the LOUDEST (stressed). Students then repeat the word aloud, putting extra emphasis on the stressed beat. If students are working with printed text, they then look at the page where the words are printed out in syllables, and circle the stressed beat. This is not an activity aimed at learning syllable division rules, but simply at identifying which syllable in a word has the emphasis. For example, at this stage it is not important whether you divide the word ‘clinic’ as **cli** – nic or **clin** – ic. Either way, the point is for students to notice that the first beat is stressed, and to practice saying it that way.

The same multi-syllable vocabulary words are then embedded in sentences, short passages and dialogs that instructors read aloud with natural speed and intonation. Students must listen and try to pick out the vocabulary words being studied from the language stream. When a target word is repeated multiple times, ask students to raise a finger to count each time they hear it. Afterwards, if appropriate, give students copies of the text. Read it again and ask them to circle all the Core Vocabulary words.

Instructors are encouraged to create similar exercises of their own for other vocabulary words.

Grammar Focus

Grammar Focus activities give students practice using common grammatical conventions or patterns. The exercises incorporate Core Vocabulary, graphics, and health literacy concepts from the Section. These exercises are intended to be done orally, but if instructors wish, they can also use them to give students practice writing. Students are always asked to formulate their answers in complete sentences.

Below is a chart showing which Sections have grammar focus activities, and the type of grammar point or convention being practiced. (Core Vocabulary words are shown in **bold**.)

Section	Grammar Point(s)	Examples
1	Answering questions in the affirmative and negative using the verb “to be”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the doctor giving the patient a shot? <i>“Yes, the doctor is giving the patient a shot.”</i> Is this a clinic? <i>“No, this is not a clinic.”</i>
2	Answering “where” questions using prepositions and prepositional phrases such as <i>in, at, in front of, behind</i> Replacing nouns with pronouns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where is the pharmacist? <i>“She is in the pharmacy.” Or “She is behind the counter.”</i> Where is the ambulance? <i>“It is in front of the hospital.”</i>
3	Using verbs in the present continuous tense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is happening? <i>“The girl is swallowing poison.”</i> What is happening? <i>“The woman is bleeding.”</i>
4	Using the verb “to have” + medical condition Replacing proper nouns with pronouns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is Raisa? <i>“She has a stomachache.”</i> How is Mike? <i>“He has a toothache.”</i>
5	Using verbs in the present continuous tense Replacing proper nouns with pronouns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the nurse doing? <i>“She is taking the man’s blood pressure.”</i>
6	Forming questions with “know how to” and “like to” + verb Answering questions in the affirmative and negative Using the contraction “don’t”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you know how to ride a bike? <i>“Yes, I know how to ride a bike.”</i> Do you like to swim? <i>“No, I don’t like to swim.”</i>
7	Asking and answering “when” and “who” questions about appointments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When is your appointment? <i>“My appointment is on December 17 at 9 o’clock in the morning.”</i> Who is your appointment with? <i>“My appointment is with Dr. Shaw.”</i>
8	Describing a health condition using either “to have” or “to be” Replacing proper nouns with pronouns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is Gia? <i>“She has a cough.”</i> How is Sylvia? <i>“She is dizzy.”</i>

Section	Grammar Point(s)	Examples
10	Using pronouns and possessive adjectives Using contractions Describing family relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is her relationship to Beth? <i>“She’s Beth’s mother.” Or “She’s her mother.”</i>
11	Answering “What do you need to do?” questions with “need to” + verb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you need to do? <i>“I need to have an x-ray.”</i> <i>“I need to fill a prescription.”</i>
12	Using adjectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of drug is heroin? <i>“Heroin is an illegal drug.”</i> • What kind of drug is aspirin? <i>“Aspirin is an over-the-counter drug.”</i>
16	Answering “about how much” questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About how much does Sam drink a day? <i>“He drinks about two beers a day.”</i> • About how much does Leah smoke a week? <i>“She smokes about three packs of cigarettes a week.”</i>

Sentence Focus

Most of the 18 sections contain Sentence Focus activities. As with all the activities in the ESL folder, these reinforce the Core Vocabulary and the health literacy concepts of the Section. Many provide additional practice with points of grammar, too, but the main purpose of them is to have students concentrate on extracting meaning at the sentence level. Many of the Sentence Focus activities are simplified extensions of the **Beginner Story**, found in the Reading and Comprehension Folder. Most require students to use simple text, so they are intended for beginning level readers and writers. However, some can be done orally (without text) for as yet nonliterate students.

The following chart gives an overview of the Sentence Focus activities:

Section	Student Task	Health Literacy Context	Based on Beginner Story	Can be done Orally Only
1	Unscramble word order in sentences	Going for a medical checkup	X	
2	Match first and last parts of sentences	Going for a dental checkup	X	
3	Select connecting words: <i>so, because, even though, and</i>	A heart attack emergency	X	X
4	Select correct verb form (present tense) based on subject-verb agreement	Self-help care in non-emergency	X	X
5	Select correct verb form (present tense) of verb "to be"	A well-child checkup	X	X
6	Complete sentences with endings that make sense	Physical activity and nutrition	X	X
8	Match the patient answer to the doctor's question	Talking to health professionals		
9	Unscramble word order in sentences	Understanding the doctor's orders	X	
10	Complete sentences with endings that make sense	Medical history forms		X
14	Select the correct verbs to complete sentences	Drug side effects and expiry dates		X
15	Put random sentences in logical order	Child medication dosages		
16	Choose between <i>should/shouldn't, can/can't, do/don't</i> etc. to complete sentences	Classes of drugs		X
17	Match the first and last parts of sentences	Health insurance for children	X	
18	Complete sentences with endings that make sense	Making healthy choices		X

Conversation Focus

Most of the 18 sections contain Conversation Focus activities. These dialogues are intended to help students develop functional listening and speaking skills in specific, real-life, health-related contexts. Follow these steps when working with the dialogues:

1. Set the Scene

It is helpful to use pictures and/or to draw stick figures on the board to convey to the students who the speakers are and what the situation is. In many cases pictures from the *Classroom Picture Set* can be used to help establish the context. It may also be helpful to use props and gestures to ensure you are providing comprehensible input to students. Whenever possible make connections to students' own experiences.

2. Model the Dialogue

Read both parts of the dialogue aloud expressively, and slightly slower than natural speech, while students listen. Point to the picture of each speaker on the board as you read his or her part. Re-read the dialogue several times. Ask comprehension questions to make sure that students understand the context.

3. Practice the Dialogue Orally (NO TEXT)

a) Students Repeat After Instructor

Say each line of the dialogue, (pointing to the picture of each speaker on the board as you do), and have the students repeat, line by line.

b) Teacher-Class Practice

Say one part of the dialogue and have the whole class take the other part. Prompt students with pictures and props. Practice several times and then reverse roles.

c) Substitution Activities

Several of the dialogues are followed by substitution activities. After students are comfortable with the dialogue, have them substitute key words with alternatives. Supply students with the alternatives orally, and demonstrate one or two examples before students practice in pairs.

4. Read Dialogue (WITH TEXT)

(Note: If the class consists entirely of non-literate learners, omit this step. If the class has mixed literacy levels, i.e. some students can read and some cannot, do not omit this step. Those students who can read will use the written word to help them while those who cannot read will rely on listening skills only.)

a) Students Listen and Follow Along

Pass out copies of the dialogue, project it on an overhead, or print it on the board. Read the dialogue aloud while the students read along silently.

b) Teacher-Class Practice

Read one part of the dialogue and have the whole class take the other part. Practice several times and then reverse roles.

c) Pair Practice

While the students practice the dialogue in pairs, circulate around the room to monitor and give help as needed. Have the students reverse roles or switch partners and continue to practice in pairs.

d) Substitution Activities

Several of the dialogues are followed by substitution activities. After students are comfortable with the dialogue, have them substitute key words with alternatives. Provide one or two examples before students practice in pairs.

5. Perform the Dialogue

Ask for pairs of volunteers to perform the dialogue for the class.

Below is a chart showing which Sections have Conversation Focus activities, and the context of each dialog.

Section	Dialog Context
1	Helping a friend call a community health clinic
2	Matching health care providers with health situations
3	Calling 911 to report a medical emergency
4	“Show me where it hurts.” (naming and pointing to parts of the body)
6	“You look great! What’s new?” (I quit smoking; I started exercising etc.)
7	Making an appointment over the phone
8	Answering the doctor’s questions
9	Asking questions when you don’t fully understand what a doctor said
10	Asking for help with a medical form
11	The doctor asks the patient to have a test done
12	Getting a prescription filled
13	Asking the pharmacist about prescription warning labels
14	Asking the pharmacist about a drug’s side effects
15	Asking the pharmacist about a dosage
17	Paying for health care services; working out a payment plan
18	Asking and answering questions about foods/food groups

Looking Beyond the “ESL Activities” Folder:

Reading and Comprehension

The **Reading Passages** (found in the Reading and Comprehension Folders) represent the core health literacy content for each Section. The passages generally incorporate all of the Core Vocabulary terms for that Section. Core Vocabulary words appear in the passage in bold typeface. The Reading Passages are brief, (typically one-page), didactic, expository articles.

For beginning level ESL classes, it is recommended that instructors read the Reading Passages aloud while students listen. Use an overhead projector if possible to enlarge the Reading Passage, and run a finger or pen under the words on the overhead as they are read. Students simply watch the overhead and listen for the Core Vocabulary. Don’t introduce the Reading Passage until students have become quite familiar with that vocabulary.

The **Beginner Stories** are ideally suited to beginning and intermediate level ABE students, but they can also be very useful for ESL students. They provide more entertaining, “readable” texts for beginning level readers which illustrate the key concepts from the Reading Passage (the core health literacy lesson) in a short story format. These stories will very likely be too difficult for many beginning ESL students to read, but instructors are encouraged to **paraphrase them and recount them orally to students**, (accompanied by lots of gestures, vocal and facial expressions, and drawings or pictures), thus communicating the gist of the story. It is through this type of comprehensible input that students expand not only their English language knowledge but their health literacy knowledge as well.

Supplemental Activities

The material in the Supplemental Activities Folders covers a wide range of activities designed to reinforce and give more “hands-on” application of the Core Lesson content. The type of activity is denoted by the following codes:

- **(W)** – indicates a writing activity
- **(O)** – indicates an oral activity
- **(C)** – indicates a comprehension/reading activity
- **(V)** – indicates a vocabulary activity

Supplemental activities vary considerably. Instructors should take a look at the activities for each Section and decide which ones are appropriate for their students. Many involve much more challenging medical terminology which has not been altered or made simpler, in an attempt to simulate “real world” experiences. Instructors and students may find that the Supplemental Activities provide some of the most engaging and worthwhile experiences in the Health Literacy Materials.

PLEASE NOTE: All of the Vocabulary Activities (V) found in this folder are intended for use with ESL students. Some of the Writing (W) and Comprehension (C) activities are appropriate for ESL classes. However, the Oral Activities (O) were primarily intended for ABE students. They will likely be too difficult for beginning ESL students.

Instructions for how to conduct each Supplemental Activity appear in the activity documents themselves.