Literacy strategies useful in the adult education classroom were presented at a faculty professional development workshop. Literacy was described as a two-part process that included receptive (involving listening and reading) and expressive (involving speaking and writing). Content area was described as the focus of adult education literacy with an emphasis on reading to learn rather than on learning to read. The objective of content area literacy was outlined in the Into, Through, Beyond model, the goals of which are to inspire the student with the project at hand while activating prior knowledge. Ten strategies and worksheets were described and presented under the following categories: (1) prereading (for students unfamiliar with concepts or ideas in the text) and text preview (list of questions that engage students to fully explore the options of the text); (2) reading, including standard reading strategies such as read aloud, shared reading, guided reading, Quaker Read, and independent reading; and, nontraditional reading strategies like asking questions about what we read, KWLS, inquiry or I-Chart, and directed reading-thinking); (3) writing including model write, probable passages, and found poem; and, (4) vocabulary including test-organize-anchor-say-test (TOAST) and verbal-visual word association strategy (VVWA). (AJ)
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Literacy Strategies for the New Century
MANUAL

Literacy Strategies for the New Century

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Introduction

Literacy and content areas are the focus of our classrooms in continuing education and an integral component in facilitating student comprehension.

To begin, my name is Nathan Durdella, and I’m an instructor here at the Continuing Education-Orange Center in the High School Subjects Program. I’ve been with the program for a year and want to make this type of work my career, so I’m getting a head start on these workshops. Since this is my first professional faculty development workshop, I hope you understand if I’m a bit nervous. I promise you that I will only improve my skills for next year’s round of workshops, about which I’m already thinking.

The ideas and content of this workshop came from Jan Osborn, Professor of Education at Chapman University. The class on content area literacy, and a literacy mentoring partnership with Orange High School was a component.

What Are Literacy Strategies?

Literacy strategies are what hold together almost any lesson plan. Literacy is a two-part process. The first, receptive processes, involve listening and reading. The second, expressive processes, are speaking and writing. Literacy is the ability to perform these functions in order to comprehend a "daily newspaper" (Readance, et al 9).

How can literacy strategies work for you?

Literacy strategies are used throughout classrooms, but since we’re in the business of educating adults, we work mostly in content areas, that is in departmentalized subjects. Whether in ESL, HSS, ABE, computers, Older Adults, or Inmate...
LITERACY STRATEGIES

Education, we use specific disciplines to facilitate comprehension. We therefore need the tools of content area literacy strategies.

Content area literacy focuses on reading to learn and not on learning to read, although we invariably do the latter in our classrooms (Readance, et al. 6). The literacy strategies in this workshop can work in your classroom as they have in mine. Just pick one or two you like and try them with your students.

But I Already Know These Strategies

If you have already learned or used one, some, or all of these strategies, then sit back and relax. Teach the person next to you, if he or she doesn't know them. Also, you may want to testify to the effectiveness of the particular strategy.

- Try these strategies in your class.
- Use the strategies at home with your children, too!
- Refresh and invigorate your lesson plans with the strategies.

Into, Through, Beyond

The concept of "Into, Through, and Beyond" is really easy for classroom instruction and is the objective of content area literacy. The model is outlined below.

"Into" has two primary goals: 1. to inspire interest in the project at hand and 2. to activate prior knowledge.

"Through" is the center of the lesson and is made up of the activities and readings used to help students manipulate the concepts.

"Beyond" is the component where students can use their knowledge and apply it to their own lives outside the classroom.

The strategies in this section are designed to move students from the "into" to the "beyond" in a way that facilitates understanding and interest.
Prereading

Prereading challenges students to explore new material in a familiar format.

Prereading is an important part of any lesson. If students are unfamiliar with a concept, idea, passage, or message from a text, it’s instructive to use a prereading strategy.

Prereading as Part of a Lesson
Prereading is best used at the beginning of a lesson but can be used almost anywhere in the lesson. Prereading allows a teacher to explore a text with students before students begin the text, a chapter from the text, or a concept from the text. Often times, textbooks, books, and other material frighten students before beginning. Prereading allows students to “preview” the text in order to find some interest in the reading.

Note
Prereading strategies are best used at the beginning of a lesson. However, you can reference prereading strategies whenever you come across a difficult passage in a text.

Prereading Activity-Text Preview

A simple, effective prereading strategy is the Text Preview. The Text Preview consists of a list of questions that engage the students to fully explore the options of the text.

The Text Preview can be used as in individual, partner, small group, class, individual-partner, individual-small group, or individual-class formats. The Text Preview serves as a bridge between the unknown text and the students desire to learn more about what he or she is about to read and study for the next few weeks or months, so its important to include a
LITERACY STRATEGIES

variety of questions.

The ideal Text Preview should include questions about all aspects of the text. Topics should include the publication information, illustrations, text questions, and content information. Please see the following sample for more ideas.

Sample Text Preview

Please respond to the following questions after having examined your American Government text. Write your answers here or on a separate piece of paper.

1. Describe the front and back cover of the text. What images do you see? What words are printed?

2. Look at the first few pages of the text. What information is given on the pages in the text? Find the publication information and write it here. What is the Library of Congress Card Catalog Number?

3. Look at the Table of Contents. How are the chapters organized? Is there an index? What does the Table of Contents say about the book?

4. Skim through the chapters of the text. What illustrations do you see? Describe them. How do they help you understand the text?
   a. Draw one of the illustrations on the back of this sheet or on another piece of paper.

5. Skim through the text. Write some chapter headings and subheadings? What clues do they give you about what's to come?

6. Skim through the text. Are there chapter questions? If so, write some examples. If not, how does the text test your mastery of the material.

7. Check page 22. Write what first comes to mind when you open to that page.

8. Check page 185. If you could, how would you recreate this page?

9. Check the Glossary. What does a glossary do for you? How can a glossary help in your understanding of the text?

10. Check the Index. Find two items in the Index. Write their page numbers and what they are.


12. If you could talk with the author(s), what three questions would you ask him?
Reading

Reading is the essence of learning; it is the means by which teachers and students, authors and readers share, exchange, and understand ideas. Reading strategies are media through which this takes place.

Reading is at the center of our content area literacy strategies, and a lesson plan isn’t complete without including some reading strategies. Reading strategies allow the teacher the opportunity to facilitate student comprehension of material without taking away from the material.

In order to both teach the content area and encourage literacy in the content area, teachers need to give students opportunities to interact with the text and recreate the text in a variety of ways (Jan Osborne, class lecture, 2000).

Reading Strategies

In this workshop, we will try to cover the following:

1. We will review “standard” reading strategies, including a Read Aloud, Shared Reading, Guided Reading, Quaker Read, and Independent Reading.

2. We will learn some “newer” reading strategies, including Asking Questions about What We Read, KWLS, I-Chart, and Directed Reading-Thinking.

3. We will engage in active learning, participating in as many activities as we can during the workshop.
LITERACY STRATEGIES

"Standard Reading Strategies"

Have you ever learned about or used these strategies in your classroom? What I mean by "standard" reading strategies is that the strategies (1) have been used for some time in the classroom and in teacher preparation programs and (2) are part of a balanced approach to content area literacy programs.

**Read Aloud**

When the teacher models good reading, the Read Aloud is used. In this strategy students hear good reading from a variety of texts. When a pattern of good reading is understood, then other students, parents, and friends can continue the process.

**Quaker Read**

A version of the Read Aloud is the Quaker Read, where students select a portion of the text, know in advance what they'll read, and then practice the passage. When the teacher begins, all students will read in no specific order. In this exercise, all students are heard. Once all readers have finished, the teacher asks for feedback.

**Shared Reading**

Shared Reading incorporates oral reading to learn new words, key ideas, etc. While the teacher reads, students look at the print being read. There are three types of shared reading, which are preceded by the instruction: "Eyes over print with voice support" (Jan Osborne, class lecture, 2000).

1. **Chant**—Where the teacher reads a previously selected section, followed by the class chanting the words.

2. **Echo**—Where the teacher breaks a longer piece into sections and has the class echo each section before going on.

3. **Cloze**—Where the teacher emphasizes particular words. The teacher reads the selection out loud, pauses, and then the class read alone (silently or together) to the next punctuation point.

**Guided Reading**

Guided Reading fuses a number of strategies that allow for students to read silently and talk their way through a text. Guided Reading consists of the following:

Silent reading (short passage) ⇒ Freewrite ⇒ Group wonderings (questions) ⇒ Silent reading (reread and answer questions) ⇒ Small group discussion ⇒ Group thesis statement

**Independent Reading**

Like the name implies, Independent Reading is when students are reading books of their own choosing—pleasure reading!
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Asking Questions about What We Read

This strategy is a basic way to let students freely examine a text after having read a portion. Asking Question about What We Read requires, like the name implies, students to work individually or in groups to generate inquiries. The final questions can be used in numerous ways, for example, gathered for a written text, as a means to discuss different levels of questioning, and as focus for discussion.

Here is a rubric to help you get started on this strategy:

**Student**
1. Reads the passage
2. Writes three questions based on passage

**In Pairs**
1. Read each others’ questions
2. Discuss answers to each question
3. Determine three questions to share

**Two Groups of Partners**
1. Repeat the process under #2
2. Select the “best” question, which you’ll share with the class

**Whole Class**
1. Each group shares questions
2. Each student answers the questions from the class while citing the text to support answers

**Note**

Students can be paired or grouped diversely according to level of comprehension of the text material so that students fully benefit from the activity.
KWLS

The term "K-W-L-S" represents the comprehension strategy that leads students through a series of prereading, reading, and postreading activities in order to promote greater comprehension of text material. The following questions form the first letters of the strategy: What do you already Know? What do Want to know? What did you Learn? What do you Still want to know?

The rubric for this strategy involves the incorporation of four different categories of information. The strategy works well with expository texts and can be used in individual and small-group settings.

**KWLS Process**

1. Students form small groups of two, three, or four members.


3. Teacher presents topic. Students take a moment to skim article, getting a feel for its content and style.

4. Teacher asks students to think about, discuss, and record What they already know about the topic.

5. Teacher asks students to share their recorded answers from the Lesson Framework with the class and records the information on the board.

6. Students then move to the second category of information, discussing in their groups What they want to know about the topic.

7. Repeat step 5 for second category.

8. For the third category of information, student read the article in their groups, recording What they learned about the topic in the corresponding column.

9. Repeat step 5 for third category.

10. Students finally discuss and record in their groups What they still want to know about the topic after reading the text and covering the other three categories of information.

11. Repeat step 5 for fourth category.
# Literacy Strategies

**KWLS Worksheet**

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<th>L</th>
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In this reading strategy, students create a data chart to record what they know about, what they want to know about, and what they found out about a text, idea, or topic. The strategy allows students to collect information from multiple sources and organize it for summarization, comparison, and evaluation. (Most of the information for this strategy came from Jan Osborn's class projects, 2000)

The Inquiry Chart is a good way to incorporate technology and instruction, as students can use software to create their charts.

I-Chart Process

The following is the “go-by” for the I-Chart:

1. Planning-The teacher decides what topic students will explore, what questions will drive the inquiry process, and what sources will be used for data collection.

2. Interacting-The teacher leads a class discussion about what they already know, including interesting facts, or any new questions. Students then respond to the guiding questions by the teacher in the row labeled “What we know.”

   a. Students then look to their sources to fill in answers to the questions, matching the rows and columns for questions and sources.

3. Interacting and Evaluating-The I-Chart is completed in this step, and students are asked to share and evaluate their answers.

   a. Students then fill in the bottom row labeled “Summary.” They summarize the information from all the sources for each question.

   b. Finally, students compare their summaries with each other.

I-Chart Worksheet

The I-Chart, as already stated, is a good way for students to use computer technology and classroom instruction. On the next page, you’ll find the I-Chart Worksheet, which can be modified to fit any lesson or text.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Question One</th>
<th>Question Two</th>
<th>Question Three</th>
<th>Question Four</th>
<th>Interesting Facts</th>
<th>New Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What we know</td>
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<tr>
<td>Source One</td>
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<td>Source Two</td>
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<td>Source Three</td>
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<td>Source Four</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
LITERACY STRATEGIES

Directed Reading-Thinking

This reading strategy encourages students to predict what is to come next in their text. It helps students to set a purpose for reading that is personally interesting. The questions that are not answered can be answered by exploring the subject further by checking other texts, class discussion or bringing in an expert on the subject. (This strategy was taken from Jan Osborn’s class, 2000)

Directed Reading-Thinking Process

1. Survey-First have students go through the chapter looking at the title and the subtitles contained in the chapter. The students should also consider all of the pictures and diagrams within the chapter. Students will create their prereading questions from the survey. The longer chapters can be broken down into smaller, more manageable parts. Alternatively, the chapters can be divided into sections and give each sections to different groups.

2. Write-Students now write down the questions that they came up with while doing their survey. If students are keeping a journal they can write the questions down in the journal.

3. Discuss-Now the class can discuss all the student questions as a class while emphasizing the value of personal purpose—setting.

4. Read and Discuss-Students now read the text. While students are reading, they should be considering what they have come up with. When they are done, they can discuss their answers with the class.

5. Beyond-With the entire class, have students talk about questions that they did not answer. When they are done, they can discuss their answers.

Note

Students can also work in small groups instead of the whole class, which allows students more time for individual participation but less diversity in input and answers.

Directed Reading-Thinking Development

For this reading strategy, no worksheet is needed. Rather, students will use any paper to write down and discuss their questions.

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Writing

Writing is another integral component in any lesson plan in the classroom. Writing strategies in the content area allow students to express their ideas in a way that becomes theirs.

Writing is the essence of empowerment. The writing process allows students to take ownership of their thoughts, ideas, and experiences in their lives and in the classroom. Writing is the other major expressive form of literacy, and without the process there would be little reason to read, speak, or listen.

Writing in the adult education classroom takes many forms. In ESL, students learn to write perhaps for the first time in English. In ABE and HSS, we use writing in the form of a departmentalized classes and in almost every other course we offer. Having creative strategies for writing is important so that students feel a connection to the process. For that reason, I included three of the most creative writing strategies.

Writing Strategies

We're going to cover the following writing strategies in part or whole during the workshop:

1. Model Write-This is a creative strategy within which students learn how to adapt texts, critically think about the meaning of an author's words, and write creatively on their own.

2. Probable Passages-This strategy allows students to rewrite a text in their own words, further demonstrating their abilities as real, empowered writers.

3. Found Poem-This strategy challenges students to go beyond the face value of words in a text, and is particularly effective in nonfiction texts like science and even math texts.
LITERACY STRATEGIES

Model Write

The strategy of the model write helps students model the writing style of the author they are reading. It helps them become more aware of “how” writers communicate their ideas. Once you have shown students how to do a model write, they can choose their own passages to model write. The Sandra Cisneros piece, “Those Who Don’t,” from the House of Mango Street works well as a first model. (From Jan Osborn’s class)

Model Write Strategy

The following is the process for a Model Write:

1. The teacher selects a piece of text that has a definite structure.
2. The teacher designates words or phrases that must remain in the model write (Underline or bold).
3. The teacher reads the piece to/with the class (An Echo Read works well here, echoing the bolded words).
4. The teacher has students write their own piece, keeping the designated words or phrases.
5. The teacher has students share their own writing in pairs or in group read alouds.
6. The teacher should encourage students to try a model write of other authors.

Sandra Cisneros Example

Those who don’t know any better come into our neighborhood scared. They think we’re dangerous. They think we will attack them with shiny knives. They are stupid people who are lost and got here by mistake.

But we aren’t afraid. We know the guy with the crooked eye is Davey the Baby’s brother, and the tall one next to him in the straw brim, that’s Rosa’s Eddie V., and the big one that looks like a dumb grown man, he’s fat boy, though he’s not fat anymore nor a boy.

All brown, all around, we are safe. But watch us drive into a neighborhood of another color and our knees go shakity-shake and our car windows get rolled up tight and our eyes look straight. Yeah. That is how it goes and goes.
Read the following poems and try a model write of your own.

Math Makes Me Feel Safe  
By Betsy Franco

Math isn’t just adding
And subtracting.
Not for me.
Math makes me feel safe
Knowing that my brother will always be
Three years younger than I am,
And every day of the year will have twenty-four hours.
That a snowflake landing on my mitten
Will have exactly six points,
And that I can make new shapes
From my Tangram pieces
Whenever I feel lonely.
Math isn’t just adding
And subtracting,
Not for me.
Math makes me feel safe.

(from Marvelous Math: A Book of Poems, edited by Lee Bennett Hopkins)
Math Make Me Feel
By You

Math isn't just

Not for me.
Math makes me feel
Knowing that

And
That a
Will have
And that I can

Whenever I feel
Math isn't

Not for me.
Math makes me feel

(from Marvelous Math: A Book of Poems, edited by Lee Bennett Hopkins)

Now how do you feel? Let's share with the class.
**Literacy Strategies**

**Probable Passages**

For this strategy, students will be creating the ending of their own design to a Fairy Tale, “The Golden Key,” that currently may not have an ending. In addition to creating an ending for the text, the students will also be identifying key pieces of grammar (nouns, pronouns and adjectives) and removing them from the existing text. The words that are removed will be replaced with new words of the students’ choosing (i.e., remove he and replace with she). (From Jan Osborn’s Class, 2000)

**Probable Passages Process**

Follow the steps below for a successful lesson using this writing strategy.

1. The teacher gives a brief grammar lesson, unless this has already been done. What is a noun, pronoun, adjective, etc.?

2. The teacher then reads the text aloud to the students. While the teacher is reading the text, have the students identifying the nouns, pronouns and adjectives. Once the text has been read, have students orally compile the information as a class. Write the words that they identify on the board in the three categories.

3. The teacher now hands out the copy of the text that has the key words omitted. The students must fill in the blank spaces with words of their own choosing, replacing a noun for a noun, etc.

4. After students have finished adding their new words they should continue the story until they reach their desired conclusion. (For the purpose of this exercise five minutes should be plenty of time.)

5. Students can now share their stories in groups or with the class. If you chose groups, you can combine stories or chose one from the entire group.

**Probable Passages Sample**

On the following page, you'll find a sample probable passages model. We'll go through the steps and practice the strategy.
Probable Passages Sample

In the Main hall, decorated for the wedding, the Count wanders alone, puzzling over all the strange events. Susanna and the Countess enter unnoticed in the background: the Countess tells her maid to make an assignation with the Count for that evening. Susanna steps forward and—when the Count reminds her that Figaro may still have to marry Marcellina—say she will pay off Marcellina with the dowry the Count promised her. He replies that his promise was contingent on her responding to his affections. She goes along with his renewed invitation to meet that evening.

In the , decorated for the , the wanders alone, puzzling over all the strange events. and the enter unnoticed in the background: the tells her to make an with the for that evening. steps forward and—when the reminds her that may still have to marry —say she will pay off with the dowry the promised her. He replies that his promise was contingent on her responding to his . She goes along with his renewed to meet that evening.

"Le Nozze di Figaro" from Stories of the Great Operas, John Freeman

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LITERACY STRATEGIES

Found Poem

The Found Poem is both a reading and writing strategy, although we'll focus here on the writing aspects. The strategy works as a way for students to re-present the text, changing prose to poetry. It is an excellent way for all students to clarify and use language in the original text. (From Jan Osborn's class, 2000) (Also adapted from Towards Equity: A Guide for Teaching and Learning in a Multicultural Society. McGInty, Mednoza, Reis, 1998)

Found Poem Process

These are the steps for the Found Poem model:

1. After reading the selection, students (working individually, in pairs, or in triads) use the following instructions to “find” a poem in the text.

2. Students select several short phrases from the passage you just read.
   a. The phrases should be important, integral parts of the passage. They should hold key ideas or words.
   b. Students should select phrases rather than sentences.

3. Students copy the selected phrases onto a piece of paper.

4. Students then arrange the phrases in a poem format.
   a. Students should make the lines relatively short, breaking the phrases wherever it is meaningful to the student.
   b. Students then write a poem with at least 15 lines, following the format directions below:
      1. Words or phrases may be repeated (You could create a refrain, like a song, using a word or phrase more than once.).
      2. Words not in the original text may not be added.
      3. Words in any individual phrase must be kept in the order they were found, but...
      4. Phrases may not be used in any order that sounds good.

5. Students now read their poems aloud to the class.

6. The teacher “publishes” a word-processed version of the poems in the classroom publishing area.
Vocabulary

Vocabulary is the building block of literacy, especially in the content area.

Vocabulary is the foundation of our literacy. Before we learned how to run, we were crawling and walking. Well, the same is true with vocabulary. The stepping-stone from learning to read to reading is made by way of words. From ESL to HSS, we focus on vocabulary to begin the process of reading, speaking, listening, and writing.

Even though we may deal with vocabulary in a modified way in adult education, we still need to employ some basic strategies for new words we come across in texts and instruction.

TOAST

Before covering strategy on the following page, we need to cover (or review for some of you) the TOAST model for learning and studying vocabulary.

Test-Students pretest themselves to determine which words they need to study and which ones they already know.

Organize-Students organize the words into some framework that will help them learn the words: for example, categorize by concepts or by structural similarities or even by degree of familiarity.

Anchor-Students commit the words to long-term memory. They might 1) work with a partner to teach and test each other, 2) use a tape recorder to tape, listen, and recite definitions, 3) or try using the words in context.

Say-Students continue the review stage and periodically rehearse and review the words and definitions; if there are problems with specific words, students need to anchor again.

Test-Students posttest to check how well they have learned the words.
LITERACY STRATEGIES

VVWA

The VVWA stands for Verbal-Visual Word Association Strategy. It is an instructional and study strategy designed to help students learn and retain general and technical vocabulary. (Taken from Readance, Bean, and Baldwin Content Area Learning, 1998)

**VVWA Strategy**

Follow these steps for the VVWA:

1. Students create a grid using a notecard or piece of paper, draw four boxes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORD</th>
<th>VISUAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PERSONAL ASSOCIATION</td>
<td>OPPOSITE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Students work with the word in the following steps:

   a. In the top left-hand square, students write the word.

   b. In the top right-hand square, students illustrate the word. It is important that this is visual.

   c. In the lower right-hand square, students write the opposite, or as close to the opposite as they can get.

   d. In the lower left-hand square, students write a personal association for the word or use the word in context.

   e. On the back of the card, students write a working definition. This step can occur after working with the word or before; students can look up the word in a dictionary or the teacher can offer definitions, etc.

**VVWA and TOAST**

Now let's try VVWA and TOAST together with our sample vocabulary words.

**Note**

When VVWA and TOAST are used as an integrated vocabulary strategy, they are highly effective.
Concluding Remarks

When preparing a lesson plan or working with students, use literacy strategies to facilitate comprehension.

We have just learned a number of content area literacy strategies for your classroom. These are just a sample of the strategies that are in use in schools and colleges everywhere. Perhaps you have some that you know and would like to share with us. Or maybe you learned some new ways to teach reading or writing that you never thought possible. Whatever the case, I'm glad you participated in this workshop.

Application
Using these strategies in your classroom can be the most rewarding experience for you and your students. Remember what we covered: Content area literacy differs from primary literacy. For this reason, these strategies work best in our classrooms in adult education. We work with adult students, many of whom already have primary literacy skills and need improvement in areas like English, science, math, and history. Still, there are many students who lack even primary literacy skills, and these strategies may serve well for those purposes as well.

Students and the Classroom
Some students will react differently to a particular strategy than others. Given the tremendous diversity of learning styles, each strategy will be successful under different circumstances and with different students.

Our classrooms also differ. Depending on your program, you could be in a jail setting, in a large, self-paced program like High School Subjects, or in a traditional classroom like in ESL. No matter the class environment, you can always pull out a small group, or work individually with students in class or for homework, with these strategies.

If you ever have any questions regarding these strategies or any other academic concern, please contact me. I thank you for your participation in this workshop and wish you a successful school year!
LITERACY STRATEGIES

Workshop Agenda

I. Greeting/Introduction
   a. Brief introductions

II. Content Area Literacy Strategies/Chapter 1

III. Prereading Strategies/Chapter 2
   a. Text Preview exercise

IV. Reading Strategies/Chapter 3
   a. Asking Questions About What We Read activity
   b. KWLS activity
   c. I-Chart exercise
   d. Directed Reading-Thinking activity

V. Writing Strategies/Chapter 4
   a. Model Write activity
   b. Probable Passages exercise
   c. Found Poem activity

V. Vocabulary Strategies/Chapter 5
   a. VVWA activity

VI. Concluding Remarks/Chapter 6

VII. Questions/Comments/Closed

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