TIPS FOR

TEACHING ADULT ESL/EFL

assumptions about adult learners

ANDRAGOGY — Malcolm S. Knowles'

- adults need to understand why they are learning something before they begin
- adults view themselves as generally responsible for their own lives & decisions
- adults have vast and varied life & learning experience from which to draw
- adults are ready to learn when they see a real-life need for it
- adults are oriented to learn through doing tasks or solving problems
- adults respond best to internal motivation to learn (personal desire, life improvement, etc.)

So, then...

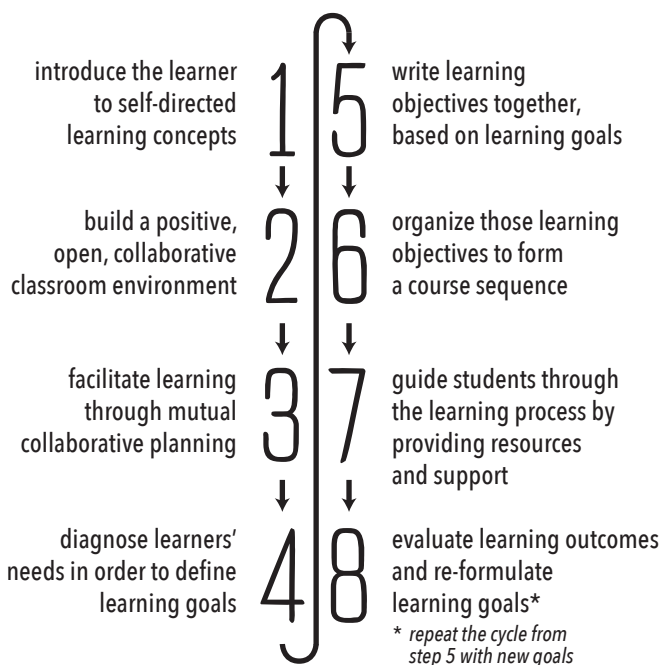| ADULT STUDENT	TEACHER
✓ self-directed learner	✓ facilitator
✗ ~~passive learner~~	✗ ~~absolute leader~~

TRENDING NOW: language learning & teaching

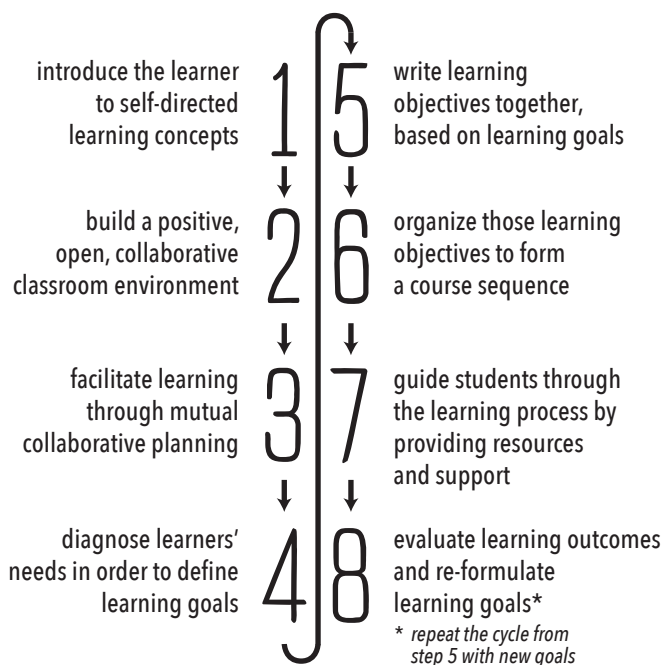## COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

seeks to build communicative competence by focusing on realistic, practical language use.

TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING creates real-life tasks that demand learners use English in context.

CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK gently corrects students' errors to help them realistically grasp their own learning progress.

State and/or national **PROFICIENCY STANDARDS** can help define learning goals for English language learners.

Promote cross-cultural understanding and openness toward communication across cultures to develop **INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE**.
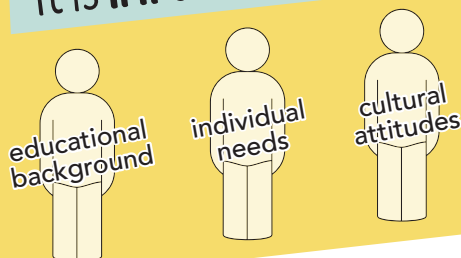
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HOW-TO : principles for practice based on the andragogical model

1 introduce the learner to self-directed learning concepts

2 build a positive, open, collaborative classroom environment

3 facilitate learning through mutual collaborative planning

4 diagnose learners' needs in order to define learning goals

5 write learning objectives together, based on learning goals

6 organize those learning objectives to form a course sequence

7 guide students through the learning process by providing resources and support

8 evaluate learning outcomes and re-formulate learning goals*

* repeat the cycle from step 5 with new goals

It is IMPORTANT to consider students'

- educational background
- individual needs
- cultural attitudes

Choose teaching methods that best fit your specific environment! Education should never be one-size-fits-all.

SoME of these teaching approaches may be new and/or uncomfortable at first.

Try to engage students in an **honest conversation** about classroom dynamics, roles, and expectations.

Keys to Success

- flexibility
- personal reflection
- evaluations from peers/students
- continued learning

- find a mentor
- read *Teaching Adult ESL: A Practical Introduction* by B. Parrish
- read *Teach Beginning ESL/EFL and Survive!* by E. Lockwood
- read *TESOL Quarterly* or *TESOL Journal*
- visit: *tesol.org*
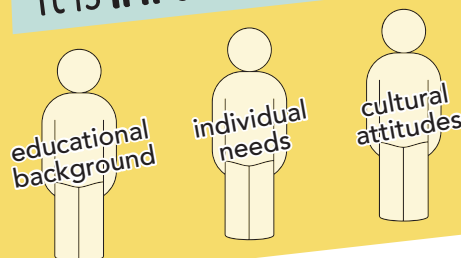- visit: *teaching-esl-to-adults.com*
- join an email listserv: *linguistic-funland.com/tesllist.html*

Sources:
Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton, D., & Snow, M. A. (Eds.). (2014). Teaching English as a second or foreign language (4th ed.). Boston: National Geographic Learning.

Knowles, M. S., Holton, E. F., & Swanson, R. A. (2005). The adult learner: The definitive classic in adult education and human resource development (6th ed.). Amsterdam: Elsevier.

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