

5.13 ESOL and ABE Health Literacy Teaching Materials

See also [Section 3: Teaching ESOL Health Literacy](#) in this toolkit.

The materials described in this section *may* be suitable for your learners as some were designed for ESOL classes, and some may be easily adapted to learner levels and needs. Quality and appropriateness of curricula for learner needs and life situations varies. The inclusion of any curriculum on this list is not an endorsement of its value to your learners. When you consider using any of the materials listed here, **be sure to assess whether each:**

- 1. Is suitable for your learners' English and literacy levels.**
- 2. Covers topics that are relevant to your learners' life situations.**
- 3. Is culturally appropriate for your learners.**
- 4. Addresses crucial topics for ELLs, such as how to access and pay for care, and realistic communication with health care providers.**
- 5. Has up-to-date content.**
- 6. Has links that still work.**
- 7. Fits well within the time you have available to cover health topics.**

Quick Link: [Picture Stories for Adult ESL Health Literacy](#)

Suitable for all ESOL levels, these stories can be covered in one class session and cover high relevance topics: accessing affordable care, preventive care, cost of care, health care communication, using an interpreter, medication safety, depression, domestic violence, managing stress, dietary changes that come with immigration, and preventing obesity.

Health Literacy Collections

These web collections link to a variety of teaching materials, background information, and curricula designed to address health literacy issues with adult learners. Some materials included in collections are ESOL-specific.

- [LINCS Health Literacy Resource Collection](#)
This federal education database includes expert-reviewed adult education health literacy curricula that meet LINCS selection criteria. Search for "Health Literacy" under "Topic Areas" to find adult education curricula and resources.



- **[World Education: Health and Literacy Special Collection](#)**
This resource contains links to adult literacy and ESOL health literacy teaching materials and curricula.

ESOL Health Literacy Complete Online Curricula

The following curricula include lessons/materials on traditionally under-covered topics of high importance and relevance to many LEP populations.

- **[Adults Learn: EL/Civics Health Curriculum](#)**
Topics include healthy living, stress and cultural adjustment, self-medication (home/natural remedies and over-the-counter medicine), health care facilities, and health care self-advocacy. This curriculum was developed for the Charlottesville Adult Learning Center.
- **[AMSSA \(Association of Multicultural Social Service Agencies of British Columbia\): ESL Resources](#)**
Topics include nutrition, diabetes prevention and treatment, healthy lifestyles, healthy communities, healthy minds, and heart disease and stroke prevention. This curriculum has reproducible handouts, including picture stories and card sets suitable for lower levels, as well as simple videos of clinic scenarios.
- **[Expecting the Best: An English as a Second Language Health and Wellness Curriculum](#)**
Topics include what to expect at a health visit, understanding medical instructions, healthy food choices, grocery shopping, and cooking. A complete PDF [Instructor's Guide](#) is available from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville's Center for Literacy, Education and Employment.
- **[Fairfax County Family Literacy Curriculum: Health Module: Navigating the Healthcare System](#)**
Topics include communicating with the doctor, requesting an interpreter, medication safety, accessing affordable care, understanding different levels of care, and managing stress. This curriculum, written by Virginia ESOL educator Betsy Wong, includes parent/child activities.
- **[Florida Literacy Coalition: Staying Healthy: An English Learner's Guide to Health Care and Healthy Living](#)**
Topics include accessing care, check-ups, patient rights and responsibilities, finding your way in health care facilities, understanding medical terms, paying for care, what medical



appointments are like, asking doctors questions/getting clarification, health history, taking medications, nutrition, chronic diseases, and health-promoting behaviors.

- **[Language 911: A Health Literacy Curriculum for ESOL Students](#)**
Topics in this intermediate/advanced curriculum include nutrition, how immigration can impact health, impact of neighborhood and other socioeconomic factors on health, health inequality, addictions, stress, and medications. See this curriculum's [teacher resources](#), including clips from the documentary *Unnatural Causes*.
- **[MedEdPORTAL: Health Literacy & ESL Curriculum](#)**
This theory-based curriculum, developed by an interdisciplinary team from education and health care led by principal investigator Francisco Soto Mas, uses bilingual instruction (Spanish and English) to convey health education and English language instruction. Health topics include medication management, heart disease risk factors and prevention, diabetes prevention, nutrition, healthy weight and exercise, and smoking's negative effects. Users must create a free account and sign in to download the curriculum.
- **[Network for a Healthy California: Eating Well, Living Well: Nutrition Education for Adult ESL Programs](#)**
Topics include preparing quick and nutritious meals, children's nutrition, food preparation safety, and accessing low-cost, healthy foods in the U.S.
- **[Queens Library: English for Your Health](#)**
Topics include health goals, nutrition, maintaining healthy weight, accessing care, paying for care, risk assessment for various health conditions, finding health information on the Internet, giving medical history, and patients' rights.

ESOL Health Literacy Teaching Materials

- **[Breaking News English: ESL/EFL Lesson Plan on Alcohol and Marijuana](#)**
- **[Breaking News English: ESL/EFL Lesson Plans on Health](#)**
This page collects lesson plans on health-related topics.



- **[Christina Lorimer: Day Laborer ESL Health Literacy Lesson Plan](#)**
Per the webpage, "This 14-page lesson plan is based on one day laborer's health experience working in the United States. Included in this lesson plan are several activities exploring language development, navigation skills and self and group advocacy."
- **[ESOL Health and Humour](#)**
This website is included as an example of how adult educators in the UK are addressing health literacy needs of learners with ESOL health packs.
- **[Hospital English](#)**
This website was designed by a pharmacist-turned-EFL-instructor to help medical workers whose native language is not English. Reproducible picture cards and vocabulary lists on the site may be helpful for other ELLs as well.
- **[Interesting Things for ESL Students: About Health for English Language Learners](#)**
This webpage features audio (MP3) files and text transcripts of Voice of America Special English programs related to health.
- **[Interesting Things for ESL Students: ESL Videos: Health](#)**
This webpage collects Voice of America and other videos on health topics.
- **[The Internet TESL Journal: Conversation Questions for the ESL Classroom: Drugs](#)**
- **[Marshall Adult Education: Reading Skills for Today's Adults](#)**
This collection of stories for adult learners in Minnesota is rich with health topics of high interest to learners. To find the stories, click on the link, then scroll down to Group 1 and Group 2 under "Read the Stories." When you click on the groups, you will see a long list of stories, many of which are health-related. Click on individual stories to read and, on the second read-through, to listen to an audio recording of the story.
- **[NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs: We Are New York Practice English](#)**
These very entertaining, soap-opera-style videos designed for ELLs focus on a variety of relevant health topics, such as accessing care, using interpreters, stressors in lives of immigrants, diabetes, smoking, asthma, domestic violence, and using the hospital. Per the website,



"We Are New York (WANY) is an Emmy Award-winning television series created to help immigrant New Yorkers practice English while informing them of the city's services. Each episode highlights important and realistic situations."

- **[Picture Stories for Adult ESL Health Literacy](#)**
Topics include accessing affordable care, preventive care, cost of care, health care communication, using an interpreter, medication safety, depression, domestic violence, managing stress, dietary changes that come with immigration, and preventing obesity.
- **[REEPWorld: Health English](#)**
Learners can work independently online using this site, which provides simple practice of basic health vocabulary.

ESOL Health Textbook Series

- **[New Readers Press: Health Stories](#)**
This ESOL series offers multi-skill language practice within the context of enjoyable health-related stories. The texts, designed for literacy to high beginner ELLs, help increase students' understanding of common health issues and convey basic language to handle health issues and communicate in U.S. health care. Topics discussed include nutrition, allergies, injuries, medication, first aid, food safety, and more. While these texts address many health topics in more depth than earlier ESOL texts, they are traditional in the sense that linguistic and cultural challenges ELLs face in accessing U.S. health care are not explored.

Diabetes Prevention Curricula in Plain English

Diabetes educational information was requested by educators in the [Virginia Adult Education Health Literacy Survey](#).

- **[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Diabetes Public Health Resource: Diabetes at Work: What's Depression Got to Do with It?](#)**
Designed to educate employers about the impact of diabetes on mental health and consequently the workplace, this website provides interesting information and scenarios that could be useful in designing an ESOL lesson or learner project on diabetes.

- **[National Diabetes Education Program: 4 Steps to Manage Your Diabetes for Life](#)**
This plain English resource explains how to manage diabetes and what conditions might develop if it is not managed.
- **[National Diabetes Education Program: The Road to Health Toolkit](#)**
This toolkit includes plain English teaching information, posters, and lesson activities for diabetes prevention education.

HIV/AIDS Prevention

HIV/AIDS educational information was requested by educators in the [Virginia Adult Education Health Literacy Survey](#).

- **[AIDS.gov: HIV/AIDS Basics](#)**
This site provides extensive information on HIV/AIDS in plain English with illustrations. Learners may be able to use small, pre-selected portions of the information effectively.
 - **[AIDSinfo: HIV](#)**
This publication from the National Institutes of Health includes fact sheets with HIV/AIDS information in Q and A format.
 - **[BBC: CBBC Newsround: What is Aids?](#)**
This brief, plain language, illustrated online reading activity may be suitable for intermediate and advanced ELLs.
 - **[Health Literacy Consulting: Health Literacy Lessons from a HIV/AIDS Prevention Project in Zambia, Africa](#)**
This article was contributed by Elisheba Muturi.
 - **[Japan AIDS Prevention Awareness Network: What is AIDS?](#)**
This is a simple, illustrated reading for high beginner/intermediate ELLs. It contains Japanese cultural references.
- [One Stop English: ESOL: HIV and AIDS Awareness](#)**
This simple, brief lesson from the UK is designed specifically for ELLs. It was contributed by Laura Porter.



Additional ABE Health Literacy Resources (which may be appropriate for some ESOL learners)

- [**Florida Literacy Council: Coping with Stress**](#)
- [**Florida Literacy Council: Women's Health**](#)
- [**Grass Roots Press: Health**](#)
This literacy-focused Canadian publisher offers readers on topics including stress, healthy relationships, children's social and emotional development, living with grief and loss, pregnancy, self-esteem, the importance of sleep, nutrition, and more.
- [**Literacy Coalition of Central Texas: Health Literacy Forward**](#)
Per Peter Morrison, the coalition's Director of Health Literacy, "*Health Literacy Forward: Empowering Your Learners as Healthcare Consumers* is a 166-page guide developed by The Literacy Coalition of Central Texas to support educators who wish to infuse health literacy and patient empowerment into existing lessons or create learner-centered health lessons around identified learner needs. The guide includes 1) introduction to health literacy, 2) instruction on how to create health-related lessons, 3) sample lesson plans, 4) sample activities for navigation and access, disease prevention, and chronic disease management, and 5) a resource list for instructors and students." For users outside of central Texas, there is a fee to download this resource.

