



# Learn to Earn

TOOLKIT

CREATED BY



National Center for  
Families Learning

FUNDED BY

**TOYOTA**

# Learn to Earn TOOLKIT

Learn to Earn Toolkit is a free online resource created to guide adult learners in building employability skills. Created in response to the report *Are They Really Ready to Work?*<sup>1</sup>, the Learn to Earn Toolkit addresses 10 in-demand employability skills. Skills included in the toolkit were rated by reported survey respondents as both very important and deficient in new employees entering the workforce with a high school education. Website content is presented at intermediate and advanced ELL levels, which correspond to intermediate and advanced basic skills for adult basic education. Learners can choose their learning level as they access content.

## Skills to Master

Critical Thinking	Diversity
English Language	Information Technology Application
Oral Communication	Professionalism
Reading Comprehension	Social Responsibility
Teamwork	Written Communication

## Online toolkit topics are introduced with an overview that includes:

- Introduction to the topic
- Specific mention of a job that uses the skill
- Links to three related lesson articles

## Each article features:

- Informational text about the featured skill
- Specific mention of a job that uses the skill
- Highlighted vocabulary and one featured idiom with definitions
- Mastery quiz for comprehension and vocabulary
- Extension activity ideas to continue learning

## These offline instructor resources provide ideas for using the toolkit:

- Summary of the topic and related articles
- Adult education ideas for speaking (**S**), listening (**L**), reading (**R**), and writing (**W**)
- Parent and Child Together (PACT) Time® and Family Service Learning connections
- Vocabulary word wheel and idiom lists for advanced and intermediate levels for each article

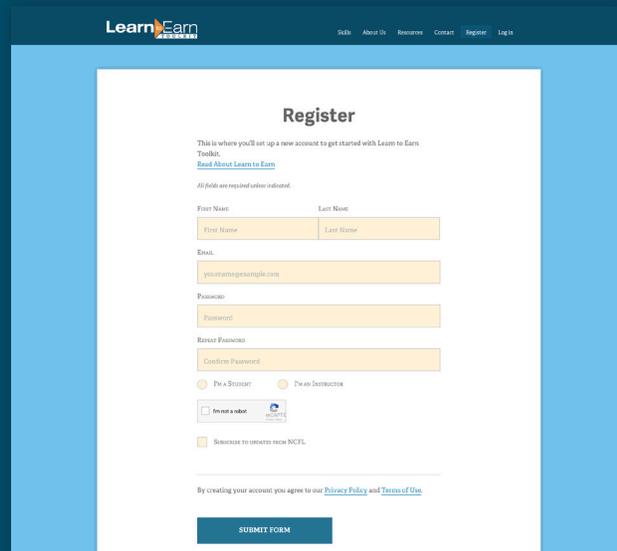
<sup>1</sup>The Conference Board, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, Corporate Voices for Working Families, and the Society for Human Resource Management, 2006.

# Instructor and Facilitator Features



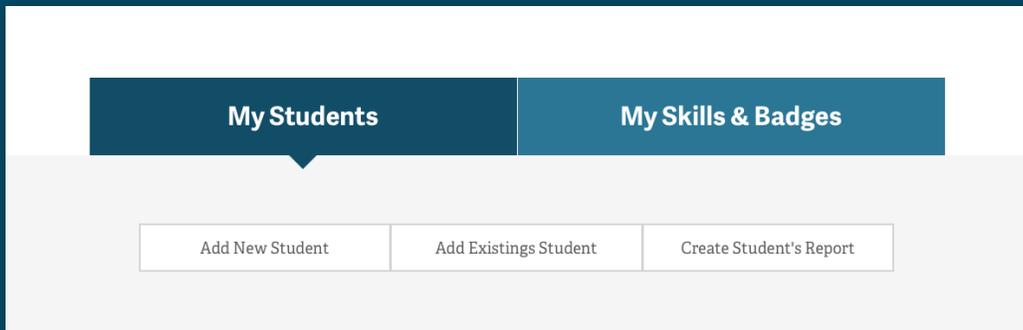
## Instructor Account

Create an Instructor account and connect with your students' accounts.



## Dashboard

Monitor your students' skill and vocabulary mastery.



## Resources

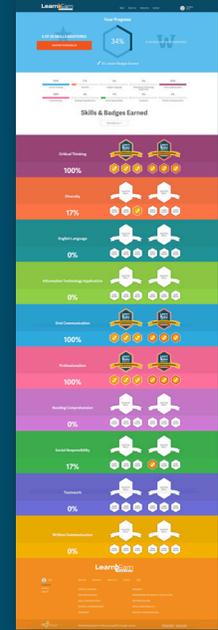
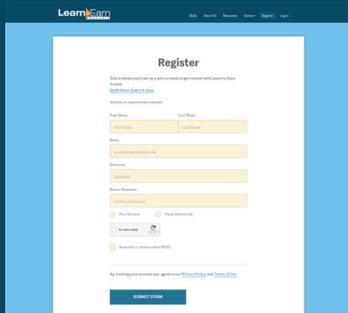
Integrate offline instructional support materials in adult education and family literacy programming.



# Student Features

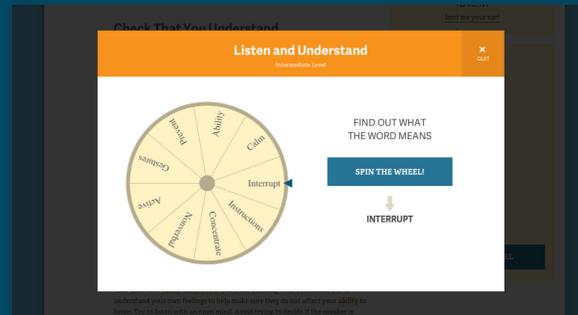
## Student Account

Create a student account to access the site. You can learn new skills and vocabulary. You'll earn badges on your dashboard.



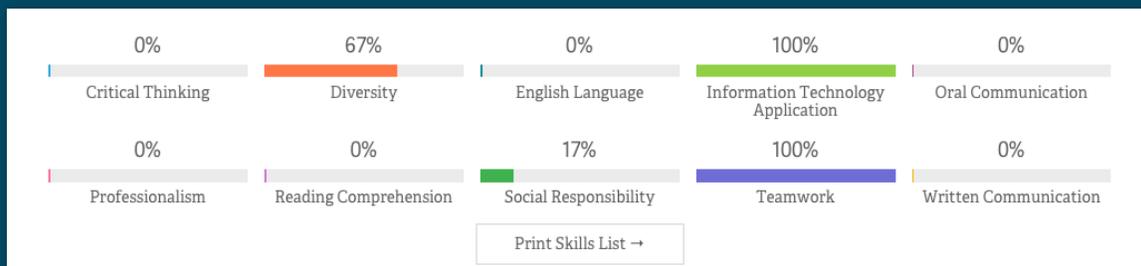
## Word Wheel

Spin the word wheel in each lesson to learn and practice nine new vocabulary words.



## Printable Skills List

Print your skills dashboard to include when you apply for work. You add skills to your list when you pass quizzes.



# PROFESSIONALISM



## Topic Introduction:

In this topic students gain an understanding of the importance of professionalism in any work setting and identify specific desirable traits and qualities that support job attainment and career advancement.

## Articles Included:

- **Cultivate Work Habits:** Employers seek strong work habits when filling positions and advancing employees. This article discusses how employees can practice skills including punctuality, focus, responsibility, and professional development to form lasting habits that will result in career growth.
- **Dress for Work:** Dress codes will vary from job to job, but correct and appropriate dress demonstrates professionalism. This article provides tips about what to wear to work, addressing both clothing and accessories. There is also a focus on good personal hygiene.
- **Make Positive Work Choices:** Choices made every day have an impact on our work and lives. This article focuses on anger management techniques that support good decision making. Special attention is given to the ways in which social media posts can negatively affect job status as well as to appropriate use of company resources, facilities, and leave time.

## Making Connections:

### Adult Education:

**L/S:** Have students cut pictures from magazines and catalogs depicting people dressed in various types of attire. In pairs, have students discuss which pictures demonstrate appropriate attire for varying positions (e.g., cashier, secretary, stock clerk) as well as which clothing and accessories may not be appropriate in any work setting. Students can paste the sorted pictures on posters demonstrating what to wear and what not to wear.

**R/W/L/S:** Employee manuals or handbooks provide guidance on appropriate behaviors in the workplace. Many of these behaviors are relevant to a classroom setting. Have students work together to write a student handbook outlining expectations of the class around topics such as attendance and timeliness, how to handle conflict in the classroom, roles and responsibilities, and other topics they think are important. Following a group discussion to reach consensus on expectations, students can form groups. Each group writes and edits a section. Then the class can compile the sections into a finalized handbook for each member of the class.

# PROFESSIONALISM



**Parent Time:** Invite a guest speaker, such as a school nurse or health professional, to talk with parents about how to teach their children good hygiene habits to support their health.

**PACT Time®:** Teach children good hygiene habits through games and activities in your PACT Time setting.

- **Hygiene charades:** guess what hygiene habit is being acted out
- **Homemade toothpaste:** make your own toothpaste with baking soda, salt, and flavorings
- **Flossing fun:** let children use yarn to floss and remove Play Doh from egg carton models of teeth
- **Glitter germs:** demonstrate how quickly and easily germs spread (for example, after a sneeze) by putting glitter on children’s hands and letting them see how it is spread throughout the classroom as they work and play

**Family Service Learning:** Have families investigate resources for donated clothing specific to acquiring a job (such as Dress for Success). Families may consider how they could create a clothes closet in their school or community to support professional dress.

## Related Vocabulary and Idiomatic Expressions:

Cultivate Work Habits:		Dress for Work:		Make Positive Work Choices:	
INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
benefits	concentrate	advice	accessories	affect	decision
distract	criticism	appropriately	attire	angry	dispute
explain	distractions	consider	competent	communicate	impact
focus	focus	customer	efficiently	decisions	limit
habits	performance	hygiene	hygiene	honest	offensive
patient	punctual	manual	impression	limit	potential
responsible	responsible	modest	interfere	offensive	profile
specific	situation	policies	manual	resources	promotion
valuable	timeliness	professional	policies	situations	resources
IDIOMS					
The early bird catches the worm.		A picture is worth a thousand words.		Keep your cool.	

# CRITICAL THINKING



## Topic Introduction:

In this topic students will gain an understanding of how the development of critical thinking skills supports problem solving in the workplace. By thinking creatively, organizing ideas, and analyzing information, critical thinkers are able to make good decisions.

## Articles Included:

- **Focus on Fact and Opinion:** It is important to be able to distinguish between fact and opinion in order to avoid miscommunications and misunderstandings on the job. Through a series of scenarios and tips, this article explores how to recognize the difference between fact and opinion and how to share opinions in a positive way.
- **Solve Problems:** This article explains that problems have two parts: goals and barriers. The article guides students through a four-step problem solving process using a relevant example.
- **Think Creatively:** Employers seek workers who are able to think about things in innovative ways from a variety of perspectives. This article provides tips and strategies that can be practiced in daily life to develop creative thinking skills.

## Making Connections:

### Adult Education:

**R/W/L/S:** Divide students into small groups and provide each group with a topic as well as a graphic organizer that contains columns for fact and opinion. Have students work together to generate and discuss facts and opinions that relate to the given topic. Guide students to ensure their facts are based in truth without any bias of values. Students may want to use books or technology to identify facts for their topic. Have groups share their lists with the whole group.

**L/S:** Have students practice their problem solving skills by analyzing an issue of local importance. Through class discussion, ask the group to identify a problem that is relevant to their lives and interests (e.g., pollution, safety, lack of resources in the school, chronic absenteeism in schools). Divide the class into small groups and have them list what they feel are root causes to the problem. Select a couple of root causes and ask students to “think outside the box” to generate concrete steps that could address the given problem.

**Parent Time:** Key reading and comprehension skills include making inferences and predictions, understanding cause and effect, and forming opinions. Model reading aloud for parents using questions that support critical thinking and have parents work in pairs to practice. Focus on questions such as: How else could the story have ended? How did you feel when \_\_\_?, What do you think would have happened if the main character had (or hadn't) \_\_\_?, What do you think is happening in this picture? Is this story real or pretend? Why do you think so?

**PACT Time®:** Let parents put their read aloud skills into practice with children! Provide a variety of books for parents to share individually with their children or set up stations (perhaps based on age group) where children can choose to listen to books in small groups. Parents should use questioning techniques that support critical thinking skills and should debrief about the experience together, sharing how they were able to expand children's learning.

**Family Service Learning:** Critical thinking is an essential part of the investigation and planning steps of the Family Service Learning process. As students complete a community investigation to identify areas of need, help them to identify the critical thinking skills that they are using. This may including distinguishing between fact and opinion, analysis of pros and cons, drawing conclusions, and prioritizing. As students plan and implement their project they will have the opportunity to categorize, classify, construct arguments, and test hypotheses. Reflect with families to discuss the types of critical thinking skills they are using in service to their community.

**Related Vocabulary and Idiomatic Expressions:**

Focus on Fact and Opinion:		Think Creatively:		Solve Problems:	
INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
disagree	factual	brainstorm	approach	barriers	barrier
fact	gossip	complex	aspects	complicated	complex
gossip	identifying	efficient	display	cons	cons
identify	initiate	increase	efficient	consequence	consequence
lazy	issue	lose	engaging	excuse	dilemma
openly	judgements	perfect	generate	pros	outcome
opinion	miscommuni- cation	risks	informal	result	pros
prove	original	simple	innovative	solve	resolve
understand	scenario	skills	routine	trust	solution
IDIOMS					
Don't spread the dirt!		Look at a problem from different angles		In someone's place	

# DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE



## Topic Introduction:

In today's global economy, a culturally competent workforce is essential. This topic explores types of differences among people and helps students understand how their own values and cultural traditions impact their behavior and thoughts. Students will gain an understanding of the importance of respecting others and celebrating differences.

## Articles Included:

- **Interpret Body Language:** Body language sends messages that are as clear as our spoken words. While many gestures or expressions are universal, others are interpreted very differently throughout the world. In this article students will gain an understanding of how to present a positive work image by focusing on their own body language.
- **Recognize Cultural Bias:** When we judge others by our own culture and values, we often stereotype them. This article supports continued development of critical thinking skills as a way to avoid stereotypes. Students will gain an understanding of how to recognize their own cultural biases and build stronger workplace relationships by focusing on commonalities and having empathy for others.
- **Respect Differences:** Diversity in the workplace supports innovation, creativity, and productivity. However, without awareness of cultural bias and respect for others, getting along on the job can be a challenge. This article provides tips for effectively communicating, managing emotions, and dealing with conflict in order to support positive relationships in the workplace.

## Making Connections:

### Adult Education:

**L/S:** Divide the class into small groups and have them create a role play that involves only body language to communicate a story with no talking. Allow students to create their own scenarios to act out or provide them with cards with scenes such as "It is New Year's Eve and the clock is about to strike midnight," "You are friends at a funeral," "You are driving on a long trip with your family and a few minutes ago there was a big argument," "You are in a big, unfamiliar city – you are late for an appointment and you are lost." After devising the role play and practicing, have each group perform for the class. They can provide an oral introduction of their scenario or leave it to the class to guess what they have seen.

**R/W/L/S:** Divide students into groups of four where each member of the group has a letter that is common to the others names (ex., each person has the letter E in his/her name). Have students use chart paper to each write an "alphabiography" where they choose a word for each letter in their name that is representative of them as a person. Using the letter that they have in common, have each group come up with a characteristic starting with that letter. Have students work together to write a summary statement of how they are alike and how they are different. Have students present their name "alphabiographies" to the class and have each group share what they learned about their similarities and differences.

**Parent Time:** Divide parents into groups. Ask groups to use chart paper to outline a flower head with a large center and one large petal for each adult in the group. Students will discuss the ways they are similar and different and reflect each person’s uniqueness in his/her petal. The flower center will be used to record similarities. Students should be encouraged to think about the variety of ways people can be the same or different (e.g., appearance, background, thoughts, interests, and behaviors).

**PACT Time®:** Music is often said to be the universal language. Plan a parent and child session that allows families to listen and dance to different types of music from around the world. Talk about the music using words like fast, slow, loud, and soft. Use a map or globe to identify countries represented by the types of music shared. If possible, have musical instruments available for children to explore. Allow children to make homemade instruments, such as coffee can drums, tissue box harps, or paper plate maracas.

**Family Service Learning:** Parents and children can work together to plan a World Cultures Celebration that may reflect the art, music, and food of different countries from around the world. Each family or pair of families can select a country to learn about using technology and books. Families can work together to prepare representations of the country for the school community to enjoy.

**Related Vocabulary and Idiomatic Expressions:**

Recognize Cultural Bias:		Interpret Body Language:		Respect Differences:	
INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
appropriate	assume	appearance	appearance	address	comfort
behave	bias	emphasize	approachable	biases	conflict
discrimination	characteristics	greet	awkward	brief	disciplinary
equipment	complain	interpret	chronic	compare	encounter
judge	cultural	misunderstandings	cues	conflicts	ethnicities
offend	discrimination	offer	firm	discuss	gender
similarities	exterior	pleasant	interpret	diversity	hostility
stereotypes	generalize	productive	pleasant	ethnicities	stress
unique	unique	stare	sloppy	values	termination
IDIOMS					
Walk in someone else’s shoes		Speak volumes		Clear the air	

# ORAL COMMUNICATION



## Topic Introduction:

Strong oral communication skills are essential when working with teams, clients, and customers. In this topic, students will gain an understanding of the importance of speaking skills as well as learn tips to support improved communication with others.

## Articles Included:

- **Listen and Understand:** Good listening skills are important for following directions and providing good customer service. This article provides tips for practicing active listening skills that help workers tune out distractions, be attuned to verbal and nonverbal cues, check for understanding, and remain calm when dealing with difficult customers.
- **Speak Clearly and Effectively:** Conversation is a two-way street, and speaking clearly is important for understanding. This article provides tips for improving oral communication with a focus on the importance of body language and the appropriate use of formal versus informal language.
- **Speak in Public:** Many jobs involve speaking to groups of varying sizes, and effective public speaking skills are valued by employers. This article provides students with strategies for effective public speaking from preparation to delivery.

## Making Connections:

### Adult Education:

**R/W/L/S:** Effective oral communication is not only important on the job, but also to secure a job. Provide students with an opportunity to practice their speaking and listening skills for an interview. Begin by assigning students different jobs for which to write interview questions. Then divide students into groups of three. Have students take turns serving in the role of interviewer, interviewee, and a coach who provides feedback to both participants following the interview. Provide an opportunity for each student to play all three roles.

**L/S:** Provide students with regular improvisational speaking opportunities to fine tune their public speaking skills. You might try having a basket of general topics from which students can draw a card and, with just a moment to prepare, speak to the class on that subject for one or two minutes. Members of the class can then provide feedback to help one another develop effective presentation skills. General topics could include things like breakfast, homework, school attendance, a current event, stress, and family.

**Parent Time:** Invite a guest speaker to share information about language development in children. A speech and language pathologist or linguist can provide information on the stages of oral language development, the connection between oral language and academic success, and tips for supporting children. Parents may also be interested in learning about the positive impact of dual language learning on children’s learning and thinking.

**PACT Time®:** In order to provide practice with speaking before a group, host a family open mic night. Give parents and children the opportunity to take turns reading poems or stories that they have written or learned.

**Family Service Learning:** Extend your open mic night activities by working with families to practice their public speaking skills to present poems or stories at a senior center or drop-in center for the homeless. These are appreciative audiences who will enjoy the family entertainment!

**Related Vocabulary and Idiomatic Expressions:**

Listen and Understand:		Speak Clearly and Effectively:		Speak in Public:	
INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
ability	aware	aloud	advantage	audience	audience
active	clarifying	avoid	appropriate	convince	consider
calm	concentration	awkward	exchange	nervous	convince
concentrate	context	confusion	gestures	occasion	formal
gestures	directions	effective	misunderstandings	organize	key
instructions	fidgiting	fluent	nervous	pause	minimize
interrupt	indicates	often	pausing	prepare	posture
nonverbal	interrupt	polite	reactions	purpose	purpose
prevent	nonverbal	sign	strategies	strategies	script
IDIOMS					
Two-way street		Lend me your ear!		Speak up.	

# SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



## Topic Introduction:

This topic focuses on how individuals can become more connected to their communities by practicing social responsibility. Emphasis is placed on individual responsibility through positive choices as well as the ways companies serve to improve their employees' lives and the communities in which they work.

## Articles Included:

- **Help Your Community:** Social responsibility benefits companies, employees, and the community at large. This article explores how volunteerism can help individuals gain experience, identify their strengths and interests, build their social networks, and increase self-confidence—all of which support employability.
- **Make Positive Health and Wellness Choices:** This article focuses on healthy habits related to sleep, exercise, and eating that support well-being and performance on the job. Knowing when to ask for help is also key to maintaining positive health. Workers are encouraged to seek assistance with mental or physical health issues from employers who are able to confidentially provide assistance or referrals for supports.
- **Take Individual Responsibility:** Everyone makes mistakes, but by taking responsibility for our actions, we can provide better service and earn respect on the job. This article highlights how employees can learn from their mistakes for better future performance. The focus of individual responsibility for workplace safety is also highlighted with an emphasis on reporting hazards and other concerns.

## Making Connections:

### Adult Education:

**R/W/L/S:** Companies like Google, Disney, LEGO, Apple, and L'Oreal are known for being socially responsible and having a positive social influence. Have students research these companies and others to learn about their specific efforts to promote employee well-being and support social causes. Students can write about these companies and present the information to small groups or the whole class for discussion. Students may also be interested in researching companies with the worst track records for social responsibility and comparing the actions and reputations of the two groups.

**W:** Based on the research of large companies in the previous activity, ask students to write letters to companies whose policies they admire to commend them for their social consciousness. Students may also be aware of smaller, local businesses that they would like to recognize for their efforts. This activity also supports the lessons on written communication, providing an opportunity to write a formal letter to a professional audience.

**Parent Time:** Share the documentary “A Place at the Table” (rated PG, recommended for ages 9 and up) and discuss with students the issues around hunger in the United States and the food relief efforts taking place around the country. This may serve as the beginning of an investigation into the topic of hunger and ultimately a Family Service Learning project as parents and children begin to brainstorm how they can address the problem in their own community.

For groups with younger children, consider inviting a medical or early childhood professional to talk about the importance of sleep for children and recommended amounts of sleep as well as tips for bedtime routines.

**PACT Time®:** Help families form healthy habits by planning a family fitness event to get families moving together. Consider enlisting the help of the physical education teacher at the local elementary school. Set up activity stations to meet the needs of children of varying ages such as an obstacle course, basketball shoot out, Zumba, jump rope contests, and a tricycle course. In addition to the physical activities, involve the community by inviting businesses and organizations to share their resources and services, such as health screenings, bike helmet fittings, body mass index readings, and local sports organizations. Be sure to include a healthy snack and water to encourage good nutrition!

**Family Service Learning:** Following the viewing and discussion of “A Place at the Table,” families may organize a service-learning project to address hunger in their community, potentially collecting or preparing food for distribution or creating a campaign to bring more awareness to the issue of hunger.

**Related Vocabulary and Idiomatic Expressions:**

Help your Community:		Make Positive Health and Wellness Choices:		Take Individual Responsibility:	
INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
donating	civic	addictions	balanced	aware	blame
income	donation	enough	exercise	blame	courage
interviews	foundation	experts	flexible	dangerous	environment
network	goods	include	mental	quality	hazards
opportunities	morale	moderate	moderate	repeat	mistakes
organization	network	rest	necessary	report	procedures
public	profit	routine	productive	responsibility	reflection
socially	valuable	stress	reenergize	serious	repeat
volunteer	volunteer	wellness	treatment	suspicious	responsibility
<b>IDIOMS</b>					
Lend a hand		Charge your batteries		Go the extra mile	

# TEAMWORK



## Topic Introduction:

In this topic students will explore the qualities and behaviors of a good team member and gain an understanding of the role that teamwork plays in the workplace. Special emphasis is given to the leadership skills that can be demonstrated by employees at any level to support teamwork.

## Articles Included:

- **Be a Leader:** Anyone can be a leader, regardless of her job title. This article describes the skills and characteristics that employers look for in strong leaders. These skills can be practiced and developed to support career growth and advancement.
- **Cooperate with Others:** The ability to work effectively on a team is crucial to success in the workplace. Teamwork involves contributing to the team as well as accepting ideas from coworkers. When everyone on a team pulls his weight, takes turns, and helps out, the job gets done better, faster, and more easily.
- **Give and Receive Feedback:** Giving and receiving negative feedback is difficult and requires clear, open communication. This article provides students with tips on how to give specific, timely, well-intentioned feedback and how to receive constructive feedback to improve their performance.

## Making Connections:

### Adult Education:

**R/W/L/S:** There are many famous quotes and proverbs related to teamwork. For example:

“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.”  
Henry Ford

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” Helen Keller

“The strength of the team is each member. The strength of each member is the team.” Phil Jackson

“None of us is as smart as all of us.” Ken Blanchard

“No individual can win a game by himself.” Pele

“TEAM: Together Everyone Achieves More”

“There’s no I in team.”

Share a variety of quotes with students and discuss the meanings and vocabulary. Ask students to identify a quote that resonates most with them. Have students write and share their own quotes about teamwork and why it is important to success in the workplace and life. Allow students to research and share additional quotes related to teamwork.

## TEAMWORK



**W/L/S:** Divide students into groups and give them a scenario to work together to solve (e.g., creating a class logo). Allow groups to brainstorm 10 items they would have available to them. Groups should use teamwork to come up with a solution to the problem on which everyone agrees and in which everyone has a role.

**Parent Time:** Being part of a team has many benefits for children, such as increased confidence, strong peer relationships, and higher academic achievement. In addition to sharing with parents the research supporting children’s team involvement, explore the opportunities for children in your school’s community to participate in team sports. Invite directors of area leagues to come in and talk with parents about their programs and provide registration information.

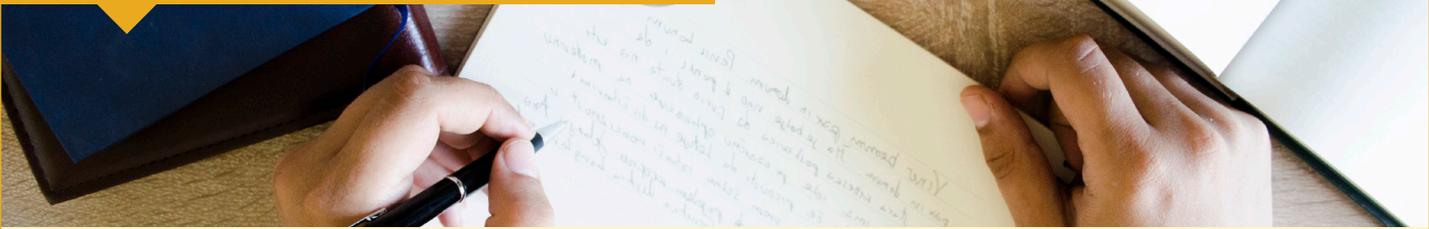
**PACT Time®:** Divide families into pairs or threes to use both team building and critical thinking skills to build a structure. Provide each group with an identical set of materials including things such as pipe cleaners, paper towel rolls, pieces of aluminum foil, marshmallows, foam blocks, and paperclips. Provide the groups with a challenge such as building a structure using all materials that can support the weight of an object (e.g., a magic marker) or building a structure that is at least a certain height in a given amount of time. Encourage groups to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate.

**Family Service Learning:** Parents may find that opportunities for young children to participate in team sports in their communities are limited. Help parents consider how they might work together to form an intramural soccer or baseball league for children with the support of parent and teen sibling coaches. Families can work together to market the opportunity, register children, and schedule a series of matches or games.

### Related Vocabulary and Idiomatic Expressions:

Be a Leader:		Cooperating with others:		Give and receive feedback:	
INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
confident	confidence	accept	achieve	accept	belittle
creative	delegate	assistant	clear	behavior	brainstorm
delegate	fair	complete	contribute	criticism	communicating
fair	monitor	cooperate	cooperate	feedback	feedback
guide	motivate	create	initiative	improve	indicates
leadership	prioritize	goal	manager	mistake	personality
motivate	project	require	process	personality	praised
record	realistic	solutions	success	positive	specific
support	strives	task	task	supervisor	timely
IDIOMS					
On the other hand		Pull your weight		In the heat of the moment	

# WRITTEN COMMUNICATION



## Topic Introduction:

In this topic students learn how to communicate through email, letters, memos, and other types of written correspondence in the workplace. Students will gain an understanding of how writing style is dependent upon the audience and the importance of structure and mechanics to the meaning of a message.

## Articles Included:

- **Determine Writing Style:** In order to communicate effectively, it is important to know one's audience. This article discusses the use of formal and informal tone to get one's point across, providing examples that allow students to understand how the intended audience changes the tone of a message.
- **Follow a Logical Structure:** This article breaks down the writing process to support students in organizing ideas clearly. Students will learn to write paragraphs that include topic sentences and concluding statements. Emphasis is placed on writing rough drafts and editing. Additionally, students will learn how to use transition words and bulleting in their writing.
- **Use Correct Spelling, Grammar, and Sentence Structure:** Written communication needs to be clear and easily understood, which means messages should use proper spelling and punctuation. This article presents electronic tools for proofreading work and provides basics to help students avoid some common grammatical mistakes.

## Making Connections:

### Adult Education:

**R/W/L/S:** Use journaling to give students an opportunity to practice their writing skills on a regular basis. Provide opportunities for free writing as well as prompts that might require a formal tone for a given audience. Provide responses to student entries as models. Consider asking students to edit one another's entries for proper spelling and grammar. On a regular basis, have students finalize an edited entry to share aloud with a table group or with the class. Listeners should be encouraged to ask questions and provide feedback.

**R/W:** Communication of any kind requires a logical order of information. Ask students to take a basic task such as washing dishes, making a sandwich, or changing a diaper and write out the steps clearly and in a logical order. Grouped in pairs, students can then review one another's directions to check for clarity.

**Parent Time:** It is important for children to develop solid fine motor skills in order to be able to write fluently with a focus on content rather than the mechanics of writing as they move through the elementary grades. Invite an occupational therapist to speak to parents about the importance of fine motor skills, signs of problems, and how to help children improve their hand and finger strength, hand-eye coordination, and ability to manipulate objects.

**PACT Time®:** Family book making is a great way to support children’s literacy development. Provide families with a variety of types of paper and writing materials to write and illustrate their own book. Families may choose to write about a family theme, a special day, or create a book of songs and poems. Alphabet and counting books are nice options for younger children to make. Books can be folded in an accordion style and bound with masking tape, a binding machine, staples, or for older children, by using a needle and thread.

**Family Service Learning:** Families may want to consider extending their PACT Time activity to create additional books to share with those in need. Through a community investigation, families may identify groups who would benefit from the gift of a book—heartwarming stories for the homeless or hospitalized children, an in-home childcare center or even a shelf at the library for community-made books.

**Related Vocabulary and Idiomatic Expressions:**

Determine Writing Style for the Intended Audience:		Follow a Logical Structure:		Use Correct Spelling, Grammar and Sentence Structure:	
INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
attitude	academic	cause	compare	abbreviations	abbreviation
balance	assignment	clear	connections	action	acceptable
cafeteria	attitude	complete	contrast	alert	alternative
coworkers	emotional	connection	details	application	application
formal	expressions	effect	highlight	capital	features
informal	harsh	errors	logical	match	résumé
persuade	opinions	link	parallel	message	summary
respectful	options	suggestions	relationships	subject	tips
shipment	persuade	transition	transition	tense	variety
IDIOMS					
Point of view		Two heads are better than one!		Tip of the iceberg	

# INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



## Topic Introduction:

In this topic students will gain an understanding of technology's role in the workplace. From mobile devices and computers to heavy machinery, technology is key to 21st century business. While many positions provide specific, on-the-job technology training, this lesson will support foundational technology skills, such as email etiquette, safe uses of the Internet, and types of technology.

## Articles Included:

- **Email Etiquette:** With the average employee spending nearly 25% of his time on email, it is essential for today's workers to use proper email etiquette. This article provides tips related to the appropriateness of email addresses, writing of subject lines, use of formal greetings and appropriate tones as well as recommendations regarding content and style.
- **Internet Safety:** Safe and appropriate use of the Internet protects both the employer and employee. This article provides guidelines to follow that help to protect users against identity theft. Attention is also given to the use of social media and best practices for presenting oneself appropriately online.
- **Types of Technology:** By 2020, almost every job will require use of technology in some way. While most people are familiar with older forms of basic technology, such as phones, copy machines, and calculators, newer technologies are making work more efficient. This article provides an overview of newer technologies essential in today's workplace including computer hardware and software and online applications.

## Making Connections:

### Adult Education:

**R/W:** Partner with students at another school or program to set up email pen pals. Provide students with regular opportunities for practice to write and respond to emails from their pen pals, discussing and reviewing appropriateness of content and style.

**L/S:** Have students interview a partner to learn about his views on technology, his comfort levels with technology, and how he uses it. Students may share pros and cons as well as applications for use. Specific technology topics to discuss could include online shopping, social media, downloading books or music, using touchscreens, viewing videos/movies on a laptop or smart phone, banking/bill paying, taking pictures, and accessing parent portals through their child's school. Have students share a summary of their partner's views and technology use with the whole class or in a small group.

**Parent Time:** Invite a guest speaker, perhaps someone from the local library or police department to discuss cyber safety with students. They may provide tips for avoiding identity theft and using social media appropriately. Discussion should also address how parents can talk with their children about safe use of the Internet. Another guest speaker option is an information technology specialist who could provide a lesson or series of lessons on the use of common software applications.

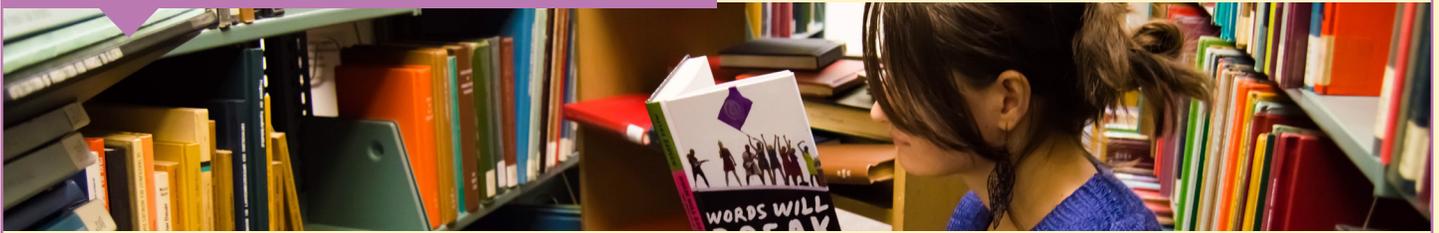
**PACT Time®:** Show the video “Cyberbullying” at [www.learninglab.org](http://www.learninglab.org) to the families. The video features the cartoon character Garfield and a cyberbullying situation in an online contest. Use the video as a basis for a group discussion with parents and children about the definition of cyberbullying as well as how to prevent and address it. The site also includes an animated test and game which could be completed in parent-child pairs.

**Family Service Learning:** Using information gained through the lessons, Parent Time, and PACT Time, families may consider preparing a campaign to inform the broader community about the importance of Internet safety. This could include preparing presentations to share with others, signage, and other announcements.

**Related Vocabulary and Idiomatic Expressions:**

Internet Safety:		Email Etiquette:		Types of Technology:	
INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
identity	code	capable	communication	basic	equipment
install	enhanced	etiquette	concise	interact	hardware
Internet	financial	greeting	confidential	involve	occupation
link	password	prefer	emoticons	latest	online
permanent	protect	proofread	etiquette	online	robot
protect	secure	respond	proofread	print	software
recommends	security	seem	references	specialized	sophisticated
request	suspicious	slang	slang	technology	specialized
secure	thief	tone	tone	willing	technology
IDIOMS					
Surfing the Internet		Put your best foot forward		Behind the times	

# READING COMPREHENSION



## Topic Introduction:

In this topic students gain an understanding of the importance of reading in their everyday lives. Attention is given to learning to recognize important details, following a sequence of steps, using context clues to understand new words, and reading materials presented in a variety of ways, including charts and graphs.

## Articles Included:

- **Interpret Charts and Graphs:** Charts and graphs are an important way to represent data and are commonly used in most fields. This article presents various types of charts and graphs and provides tips on how each is best used in different situations.
- **Recognize Sequence and Follow Instructions:** The ability to follow directions is as key to getting a job as to keeping a job. Having good sequencing skills supports the ability to organize information and follow instructions. This article provides information about signal words to help readers/listeners recognize sequence and tips for following directions in the workplace.
- **Use Context Clues to Figure out Key Vocabulary:** Context clues help readers to understand words that are new to them. This article explores types of context clues and strategies to use when encountering new vocabulary.

## Making Connections:

### Adult Education:

**R/W/L/S:** Create a treasure hunt! Let students practice their comprehension skills by providing them with a map and a series of clues that will lead them step by step to a treasure, such as new books for their children. Divide students into small groups with each group receiving directions to a different final destination. Following the activity, discuss how their ability to read the map and follow instructions supported their success in achieving the goal. Then have students create their own maps and instructions to be followed either by other students in the program or by their children at home. This also supports effective written communication skills because students need to learn to write clear instructions that are able to be followed.

**R:** To help students practice their sequencing skills, cut passages into strips that can be mixed up and then reordered by students in a way that makes sense. Use passages that contain sequencing clues, such as “first,” “next,” and “finally” to aid students.

**Parent Time:** Reading is key to success in school. Talk with parents about strategies that they can use to foster a love of reading and reading skills development. These may include establishing a daily reading time and being a good role model. Ask a librarian to share information with parents about how to select books for children that are age appropriate and support their interests.

**PACT Time®:** Take a field trip to the local library. Provide families with an opportunity to meet the library staff, learn about programming, and sign up for library cards. Schedule your visit during a storytelling session or arrange one for your families. Conclude the visit with a time for families to select books to take home.

**Family Service Learning:** Many families have limited home libraries, which often reduces the amount of time children and adults spend reading in the home. Your families may choose to develop a Family Service Learning project to address this community need. Possible solutions could involve installation of a Little Free Library, hosting a book swap, and partnering with area businesses and organizations to host a book drive and distribution.

**Related Vocabulary and Idiomatic Expressions:**

Recognize Sequence and Follow Instructions:		Use Context Clues to Figure out Key Vocabulary:		Interpret Charts and Graphs:	
INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
correct	arise	clue	antonym	charts	chart
effect	candidate	commas	convenient	data	exceeding
event	comprehend	definition	decipher	figures	format
managers	sample	difficult	hints	graphs	glance
miscommunication	sequence	hints	implied	horizontal	graphics
repair	signal	inference	inference	interpret	numerous
sequence	summarize	jargon	strategic	trends	qualitative
signal	timeline	special	subtle	value	trends
summarize	verbal	synonym	synonym	vertical	visual
IDIOMS					
Red flag		Read between the lines		Bottom line	



## Topic Introduction:

Effective English language skills are important to the workplace as workers seek to understand their roles and interact with their coworkers. This topic focuses on how an increased understanding of English supports better job performance and stronger on-the-job relationships.

## Articles Included:

- **Organize Information:** Organization is key to efficiency and professionalism in the work environment. There are tools that can help workers organize both electronic and paper files. This article provides information on the various ways to organize information and how to recognize the best way for various situations.
- **Understand General Work-Related Vocabulary:** All jobs have a set of vocabulary that is specific to the work being done, and it is important for employees to understand and use these terms correctly. This article provides vocabulary strategies to meet the needs of different learners as well as resources for practice.
- **Use English at Work:** Using correct English on the job is important for both native and non-native speakers. Employees need to learn to focus on communicating directly and in a positive manner. This article also addresses barriers to communicating on the job and the benefits of being able to communicate effectively in English at work.

## Making Connections:

### Adult Education:

**R/W:** Have students select a career that is of interest to them and use the Internet to compile a list of terms related to that profession. Students can then create their own mini-dictionary of words to learn and practice. Students interested in the same type of work may want to consider working together.

**R/W/L/S:** Building relationships with coworkers supports better job performance and job satisfaction. Have students work in pairs or small groups to create short role plays focusing on conversations that may happen between coworkers in the break room or before or after work. Students should write and practice their scenes to perform for the class.

**Parent Time:** Your program may be a first step for parents in their efforts to achieve English fluency. Share resources with parents regarding other programs which may serve as a next step. This may include information about other community programs, conversation groups, book clubs for non-native speakers, citizenship classes, and college programs including TOEFL information. Invite representatives to speak about their programs and answer students’ questions.

**PACT Time®:** For parents participating in PACT Time activities with their elementary-age children, have parents practice the strategies for learning new words with their children. For example, provide a variety of books for families to read together with computers, tablets or dictionaries available for looking up new words. Support parents in making word games for their children to help learn the new vocabulary they encounter.

**Family Service Learning:** A school is a workplace as well as a place of learning, and how well organized and tidy it is impacts the impression it makes on visitors. Examine the environment with families to see if there are ways the school can be better organized. For example, find different bins to organize playground equipment or ways to easily display materials and resources available to parents. Work with the administration and staff to support changes that will benefit everyone.

**Related Vocabulary and Idiomatic Expressions:**

Organize Information		Use English at Work		Understand General Work-Related Vocabulary	
INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
alphabet	alphabetical	appreciate	appear	comfortable	confuse
arrive	avoid	briefly	brief	contexts	diverse
category	categories	business	casual	correctly	general
common	common	casual	effectively	diverse	impress
neat	confusing	likely	form	machines	interact
order	inventory	personal	interest	observe	jargon
quickly	labels	posture	personal	puzzles	observing
records	organize	restate	reputation	training	precise
waste	tidy	successful	restate	variety	recall
IDIOMS					
Makes sense		Brush up on		Get ahead	