

Education

Understanding the School

55 minutes

Objectives



Participants will be able to:

- ✓ identify expectations in U.S. schools
- match activities, rules, or expectations with the associated part of the school building
- describe common school rules and expectations

Materials

- "School Room Cards" (included)
- "School Expectations Cards" (included)
- "School Room and Expectation Cards Answer Key" (included)



Key English Vocabulary

grade elementary school middle school junior high school high school rules

expectations/ to expect

Facilitator's Introduction of Session to Participants

Each country in the world has a different education system. Even within the United States, schools can look very different. There are schools for different age groups. There are public, private, magnet, and charter schools. Some schools have a theme, such as science and technology or fine arts. Although U.S. schools are all different, there are some common features and expectations.

Introductory Exercise

Conduct a "think-pair-share" exercise by asking participants to think about what they already know about American schools, including customs, rules, and expectations. Participants pair with a partner and share their ideas.

Briefly review the Key English Vocabulary for this plan. Highlight the words as they come up throughout the session. [If 8-10 minutes can be added, utilize the Teaching English Vocabulary section found at the end of this activity plan to enhance participant understanding of the key vocabulary words.]

Activity

Distribute a "School Room Card or School Expectation Card" to each participant. If participants are unfamiliar with the contents of their card, they can switch with another participant.

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Participants with "School Room Cards" stand on the outside of the training space walls with their pictures facing towards the middle of the training space. All other participants walk around the training space to view the "School Room Cards."

Participants with "School Expectation Cards" find the "School Room Card" associated with that activity, rule, or expectation, and stand with that "School Room Card." In their "School Rooms," participants discuss what happens there.

Bring the full group together and ask small groups to describe their "School Rooms" to the full group. Refer to the "School Room and Expectation Cards Answer Key." Address any misconceptions or variations.

Debriefing Questions to Ask Participants

- U If you were telling your child about the school rules and expectations you just learned, what would you say?
- U How does the U.S. educational system compare with your previous educational experiences?

Variations or Considerations

Depending on the literacy level of participants, use fewer picture cards and more sentence strips, or vice versa.

If there are not enough "School Room Cards" or "School Expectation Cards" for all participants, create more or put participants into pairs.

When working with an individual or a small group, hang the "School Rooms" around the training space prior to the session. The full group moves from "School Room" to "School Room" and discusses where "School Expectations" belong.



8-10 minutes

The following list begins with the words most easily understood and goes through more complex terms. Use the terms most accessible to your participants.

Introduce the words with the definition and contextual sentence. Omit words if participants already know them. Partner talks are meant to be a brief two minutes and do not have to include all the words. Encourage conversation and interaction, and focus on what participants already know about the word based on your introduction.

Vocabulary Term	Definition	Context	Partner Talk
grade	A grade is how students are grouped in school. Grades are from kindergarten to 12 th grade. A grade can also be a number or letter that shows the quality of schoolwork.	Isabel is in third <i>grade</i> . She gets good <i>grades</i> in all her subjects. The third <i>grade</i> class is going on a field trip to the zoo next week.	Are students grouped into <i>grades</i> in your home country or country of asylum?
elementary school	Elementary school is primary education in the lower grades. It may be kindergarten to grade 5 or 6.	Saw is in elementary school.	Do you know any students in elementary school?
middle school	Middle school is grades 6, 7, and 8.	Next year Bikash will be in <i>middle school</i> .	Do you know any students in <i>middle</i> school?
junior high school	Junior high school is grades 7 and 8.	Some towns have <i>middle</i> schools. Other towns have <i>junior high schools</i> .	
high school	High school is grades 9-12.	Namina wants to go to college after high school.	Do you know any students in <i>high school</i> ?
rules	Rules are laws or directions that guide behavior.	One of the <i>rules</i> at school is that you cannot run in the hall.	What <i>rules</i> do you have in your house?
expectations/ to expect	Expectations are like rules, but they are not always written down. It is how we hope that people will act.	One of the classroom expectations is to be ready to learn at all times. Ebrahim's teacher expects that students have their pencils and notebooks ready.	What are other expectations that a teacher might have?

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Education

School Room Cards



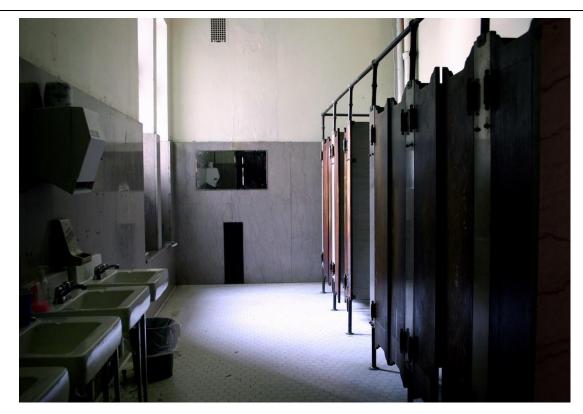
After-School Activities



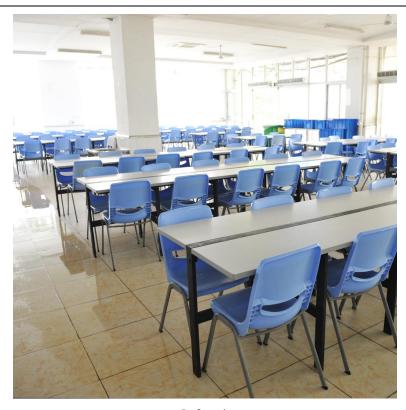
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Bathrooms



Cafeteria



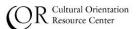
Education



Computer Lab

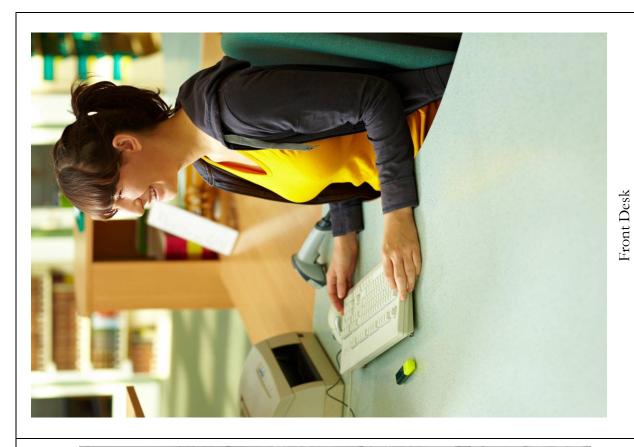


Elementary Classroom



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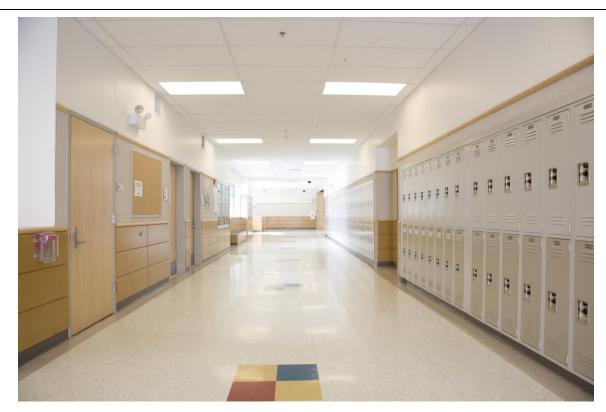




Gymnasium



Education



Hallway



Library



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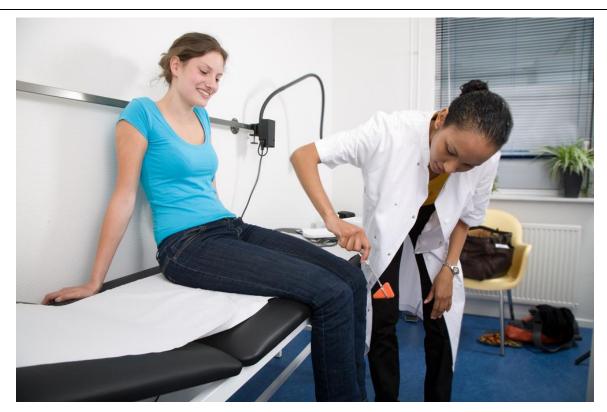
Middle and High School Classrooms



Music Room



Education



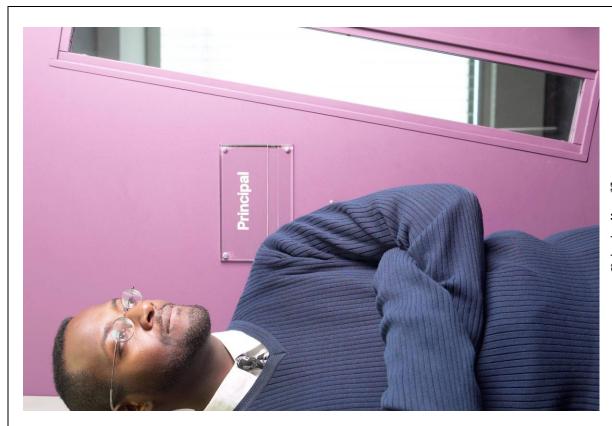
Nurse's office



Playground



Education







Public school



Education

School Expectations Cards



Some schools offer after-school care or homework clubs.



Some schools have extra-curricular activities, such as debate teams, dance clubs, basketball teams, or school newspaper.



Students may have an art class each week.



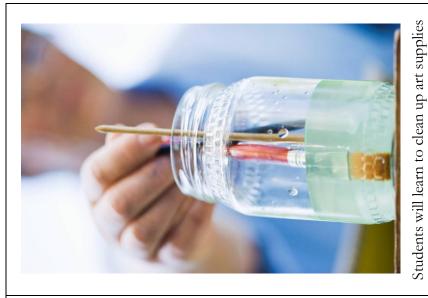
Students will be creative with art materials.

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and to stay clean.



Younger students may line up to use the bathroom.



Older students ask to use the bathroom and will be given a pass to show that they have the teacher's permission.



Depending on your family income, students may get lunch for free or a lower price.

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Students may have many different choices about what to eat.



Students can bring lunch from home, or get lunch at the school cafeteria.



Students may learn computer skills.



Students may be expected to complete assignments on computers.



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Students in lower grades may work at tables with other students.



Students in lower grades may or may not have homework, but they should read with an adult or older sibling every night.



As a parent, you may need to sign in for safety reasons.



If your child is sick or will be absent, you need to call the school and let them know.



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Students may have physical education class one or more times per week.



Students may have to wear or change into a physical education uniform or other appropriate attire on the days when they have physical education class.



Some schools have lockers where students can keep their belongings between classes.



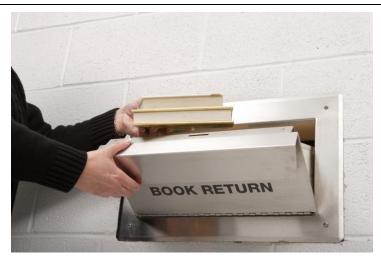
Students should only be in the hallway with permission.



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Students can borrow books, but they must return them by a particular date.



Students may have a library class each week.



In middle or high school, students may switch classrooms for each subject area, such as science, math, or English.



Students may try science experiments during their science class in a science lab.



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Students may learn math skills during their mathematics classes.



English as a Second Language (ESL) classes prepare student for the language they will need in subjects like math, science, and social studies.



Students may have the opportunity to join a school band or take music lessons.

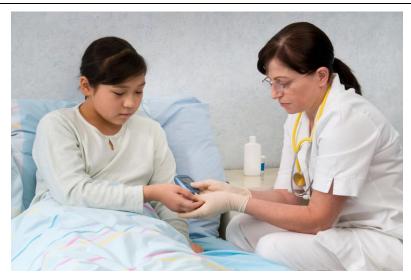


Students may borrow an instrument from the school to practice at home, but will have to return it.



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If a student is not feeling well, s/he can rest at the nurse's office.



The school nurse will call you if your child is sick.



The school nurse might test students' vision or hearing.



Parents should tell the school nurse if their child has an allergy, asthma, or other medical conditions.



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In elementary school, students have recess one or two times a day for physical activity and games.



When students need some time outside of class for behavior issues or other reasons, they might spend time in the principal's



The school principal will notify you if your child is sent to the principal's office for behavioral reasons.



School may be cancelled if there are extreme weather conditions. You can check by calling the school, going to their website, watching the local news on television, or listening to local radio stations.



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Students may take the school bus to school for free.



In the U.S., students attend public school for free from kindergarten through grade 12.



U.S. law states that students must go to school from the ages of 7 through 16. This may be different in your state.



Students are grouped into different schools depending on their age and abilities. They may go to elementary school, middle or junior high school, or high school.



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School Room and Expectation Cards Answer Key

School Room Cards	Corresponding School Expectation Cards		
After-School	Some schools offer after-school care or homework clubs.		
Activities	Some schools have extra-curricular activities, such as debate teams, dance clubs, basketball teams, or school newspaper.		
Art Room	Students may have an art class each week.		
	Students will be creative with art materials.		
	Students will learn to clean up art supplies and to stay clean.		
Bathrooms	Younger students may line up to use the bathroom.		
	Older students ask to use the bathroom and will be given a pass to show that they have the teacher's permission.		
Cafeteria	Depending on your family income, students may get lunch for free or a lower price		
	Students may have many different choices about what to eat.		
	Students can bring lunch from home, or get lunch at the school cafeteria.		
Computer Lab	Students may learn computer skills.		
	Students may be expected to complete assignments on computers.		
Elementary	Students in lower grades may work at tables with other students.		
Classroom	Students in lower grades may or may not have homework, but they should read with an adult or older sibling every night.		
Front Desk	As a parent, you may need to sign in for safety reasons.		
	If your child is sick or will be absent, you need to call the school and let them know.		
Gymnasium	Students may have physical education class one or more times per week.		
	Students may have to wear or change into a physical education uniform or other appropriate attire on the days when they have physical education class.		

Some schools have lockers where students can keep their belongings between classes.		
Students should only be in the hallway with permission.		
Students can borrow books, but they must return them by a particular date.		
Students may have a library class each week.		
In middle or high school, students may switch classrooms for each subject area, such as science, math, or English.		
Students may try science experiments during their science class in a science lab.		
Students may learn math skills during their mathematics classes.		
English as a Second Language (ESL) classes prepare student for the language they will need in subjects like math, science, and social studies.		
Students may have the opportunity to join a school band or take music lessons.		
Students may borrow an instrument from the school to practice at home, but will have to return it.		
If a student is not feeling well, s/he can rest at the nurse's office.		
The school nurse will call you if your child is sick.		
The school nurse might test students' vision or hearing.		
Parents should tell the school nurse if their child has an allergy, asthma, or other medical conditions.		
In elementary school, students have recess one or two times a day for physical activity and games.		
When students need some time outside of class for behavior issues or other reasons, they might spend time in the principal's office.		
The school principal will notify you if your child is sent to the principal's office for behavioral reasons.		

Public school School may be cancelled if there are extreme weather conditions. You can check by calling the school, going to their website, watching the local news on television, or listening to local radio stations. Students may take the school bus to school for free. In the U.S., students attend public school for free from kindergarten through grade 12. U.S. law states that students must go to school from the ages of 7 through 16. This may be different in your state. Students are grouped into different schools depending on their age and

high school.

abilities. They may go to elementary school, middle or junior high school, or



Education

Parental Involvement

40 minutes

Objectives



Participants will be able to:

- ✓ describe ways to get involved in their child's education
- ✓ consider reasons to get involved in their child's education
- ✓ identify one or two ways that they intend to get involved in their child's education

Materials

- Tipchart or board
- Writing implements to go with flipchart or board
- "List of Ideas for Parental Involvement in Education" (included)
- 🗓 Index cards, 1 per participant
- Writing implements, 1 per participant



Key English Vocabulary

to get involved attend conference translation interpreter orientation

chaperone



Facilitator's Introduction of Session to Participants

Parents in the United States are expected to be involved in their child's education. Many believe that this helps children excel in school. As children progress from pre-school through grade 12 and higher education, the support they need from their parents often changes. There are many different ways to get involved, and this session will help us identify some of those ways.

Introductory Exercise

Briefly review the Key English Vocabulary for this plan. Highlight the words as they come up throughout the session. [If 8-10 minutes can be added, utilize the Teaching English Vocabulary section found at the end of this activity plan to enhance participant understanding of the key vocabulary words.]

Conduct a "think-pair-share" exercise by asking participants think about ways they have been involved in their child's education, or ways that they have heard of people getting involved in schools and with teachers. Participants share some of these ideas with a partner.

Bring the full group together. Participants share some ways to get involved in a child's education and how or why that is helpful to the child. List these on a flipchart or board. Reference the "List of Ideas for Parental Involvement in Education" for additional ideas.

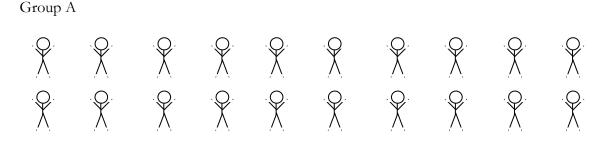
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Activity

Distribute index cards and writing implements to participants. Participants write or draw two or ideas for parental involvement they would like to try and how that could be helpful for their child. Encourage participants to reference the list already discussed.

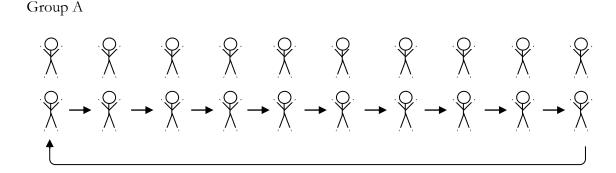
Divide participants into two groups, A and B. Participants stand with their index card. Group A stands in a line on one side of the training space. Group B stands in a line facing group A. Each participant should have a partner, as shown in the diagram below. If there is an uneven number of participants, the trainer can be a part of one group, or two participants can travel together.



Group B

Participants in group A share with the new partner standing across from them what they have written or drawn about ways they will try getting involved in their child's education. Participants in group B listen and comment. Then participants in group B share their responses. Participants in group A listen and comment.

When finished, participants in group B take one step to the right, so they have a new partner. The group B participant at the far right moves all the way to the left and pairs with the first group A participant on the right, as shown in the diagram below.



Group B

Participants then share with their new partner ways they will try getting involved in their child's education.

Continue as much as time permits; ideally, each member of Group A and Group B will speak with at least three people, before the full group is called back together to debrief.

Debriefing Questions to Ask Participants

- U Why is getting involved in your child's education important?
- U If you do not speak English well, what are some things you can do to become involved in your child's education?
- What is a way to become more involved in your child's school that you will try in the next 2 months? [Base these time frames on the time of year it is; e.g., if May, 2 months away is not the school year and ask about 4 or 6 months.]
- U What is one way to become more involved in your child's school that you will try in the next 6 months?
- U What are you going to do to stay involved?

Variations or Considerations

Assign participants with lower English proficiency to group B so they talk second and have a more English proficient model to follow.

When working with an individual or a small group, brainstorm ways a parent can get involved in their child's education and list these on flipchart or a board. Participants can "pair-and-share" with a partner to describe ways they will try to get involved, or the trainer can ask each participant individually.

Have participants practice asking for interpretation and translated documents in pairs with sample sentences such as:

- "I don't understand this. May I please have a translation?"
- "I would like a translated copy of this document please."
- "Can I please have an interpreter at the meeting?"
- "I would like an interpreter. Will one be available?"

Parents can ask their child to summarize their day at school or homework assignments in their home language. This is good practice for their child to maintain their home language.



8-10 minutes

The following list begins with the words most easily understood and goes through more complex terms. Use the terms most accessible to your participants.

Introduce the words with the definition and contextual sentence. Omit words if participants already know them. Partner talks are meant to be a brief two minutes and do not have to include all the words. Encourage conversation and interaction, and focus on what participants already know about the word based on your introduction.

Vocabulary Term	Definition	Context	Partner Talk
to get involved	To get involved is to become connected with a person, an idea, or organization.	Subin <i>gets involved</i> in her child's education by reading with her at night. Okot <i>is involved</i> with the leadership at his mosque.	What are two activities that you <i>get involved</i> in?
attend	To attend is to be present somewhere.	Pha attends ESL classes once a week at his son's school.	Do you <i>attend</i> events at your child's school?
conference	A conference is a meeting. Most schools have parent-teacher conferences.	Adolof's parents go to school for a parent-teacher <i>conference</i> . They learn about how Adolof is doing in class.	What topics will be talked about at the parent-teacher conference?
translation	A translation is a written document changed from one language to another language.	Kerieme asks for a <i>translation</i> of the school paperwork in Arabic.	What documents need translation at a school?
interpreter	An <i>interpreter</i> is a person who changes speech from one language into another.	Bola asks for an <i>interpreter</i> to come to the meeting so that she can understand in Somali.	What is the difference between an <i>interpreter</i> and a translation?
orientation	An <i>orientation</i> is an event that helps introduce people to a new place or situation.	Joseph goes to the school <i>orientation</i> before his daughter starts school. At the <i>orientation</i> , parents learn about the school schedule.	What other topics might be covered at the school <i>orientation?</i>

chaperone	A chaperone is an adult	Priya volunteers to be a	Do you have time to
	who goes to a school	chaperone for her son's class	chaperone for class
	event or trip to make	trip to the zoo.	trips?
	sure the students are	_	
	safe.		



List of Ideas for Parental Involvement in Education

- Ask your child what they have for homework or check their assignment book or homework folder
- Ask your child's teacher what the homework expectations are
- Attend ESL classes if offered at your child's school
- Attend parent night or back-to-school night at school
- Attend parent-teacher conferences
- Attend school board meetings
- Attend special events or activities, such as a school art fair or science fair
- Chaperone a field trip for your child
- Find out if the school offers school tours or an orientation in the summer before school begins
- Have your child read to you
- Have your child's transcript or other school records from your home country translated
- Help with an extracurricular activity such as a school sports team or an art club
- Interpret or translate documents for other parents in need
- Join the parent-teacher association (PTA)
- Listen to your child talk about school and ask questions
- Mentor or tutor students in an area you are skilled at
- Participate in school fundraisers
- Present on your home country to your child's class
- Read your child's classroom blog for news
- Set up an email account if your child's teacher uses email to receive messages and updates about what is happening at school
- Talk to teacher or administrator at school about any concerns or questions you have
- Volunteer in a specialized classroom such as music, physical education, or the school library
- Volunteer in your child's classroom
- Volunteer to help at lunch or recess
- Walk child to bus or school
- Work with your child on their homework



Education

Opportunities for Adults

35 minutes

Objectives



Participants will be able to:

- explain some of the educational opportunities which may be available
- determine optimal educational opportunities based on the needs of a variety of individuals
- consider some educational opportunities for themselves



- (Adult Educational Opportunity Puzzles" (included), 4 puzzle sets per group
- "Adult Educational Opportunity Puzzle Answer Key" (included)



Key English Vocabulary

goals literacy enroll options prior schooling



Note to Trainer

This activity plan is ideal for groups with an average knowledge of English and an average understanding of life in the United States. Some groups may find this activity too easy or too difficult. Please consider your target group carefully in order to ensure that this activity will meet their needs.

Pre-Session Preparation

Cut up "Adult Educational Opportunity Puzzle" pieces. Keep puzzle pieces together in a set to distribute to groups.

Facilitator's Introduction of Session to Participants

There are many educational opportunities available to adults in the United States. Those available to individuals depend on their prior level of schooling, job experience, English language ability, and goals. Depending on these things, a different type and level of education is right for each person.

Introductory Exercise

Briefly review the Key English Vocabulary for this plan. Highlight the words as they come up throughout the session. [If 8-10 minutes can be added, utilize the Teaching English Vocabulary section found at the end of this activity plan to enhance participant understanding of the key vocabulary words.]

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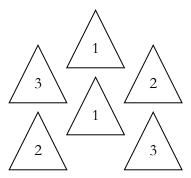
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Activity

Tell participants that they will pretend to be educational advisors during this session. Advisors will complete a puzzle to give advice to refugees about their best educational options, given their previous experience and their goals.

Explain educational opportunities using pictures shown on the "Adult Educational Opportunity Puzzle" pieces, such as a GED, recertification, or ESL classes. Divide participants into groups of 6 and assign each group to a table or area of the training space.

Assign each individual in the group a number from 1 through 3. For example, if each participant were one of the triangles below, one group might look like this:



Try to assign participants with lower level English skills with the same number of those with higher level English skills.

Explain the "stay and stray" activity part of this session (directions below).

Distribute "Adult Educational Opportunity Puzzle" pieces to each group.

Groups work on the puzzle by matching the profiles with the corresponding educational opportunities required to make 4 square puzzles. For example:

- Khaled: ESL class for medical English; translate previous certification; recertification requirements
- Htoo Aung Kyaw: ESL class; GED class; vocational school
- Samara: ESL class; family literacy classes; community classes
- Namina: ESL class for native accent; community college; translation of certificates from home country

Reference the "Adult Educational Opportunity Puzzle Answer Key."

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OR Cultural Orientation Resource Center After a couple minutes of groups working, implement the "stay and stray" activity:

- Call a number, 1 through 3, to "stray" from each group.
- Participants with the assigned number called rotate clockwise to the next group.
- Those who "strayed" share what their group has done with the puzzle and their reasoning. Other participants explain their own group's thinking to those who "strayed."
- Groups continue to work on their puzzle.
- After a couple minutes, ask those who "strayed" to return to their original group. They share their findings, and groups continue to work on their puzzle with the new knowledge.

Continue with the "stay and stray" activity until groups have completed their puzzles, calling a different number each time. "Strayers" rotate clockwise or counterclockwise to gain different information to complete their puzzles.

When groups have completed their 4 puzzles, bring the full group together to debrief the activity using the questions below.

Debriefing Questions to Ask Participants

- U What are some of your professional and educational goals?
- U Based on today's session, what do you think are some educational options for you? Why?
- U What are some steps you will take to achieve these goals?

Variations or Considerations

Change the Adult Educational Opportunity Puzzle pieces to reflect the options realistically available to clients in your community.

When working with a group having a higher level of education, create smaller groups to work on the puzzle. That way, participants will be responsible for more information.

When working with an individual or a small group, complete the "Adult Educational Opportunity Puzzle" together as a full group.

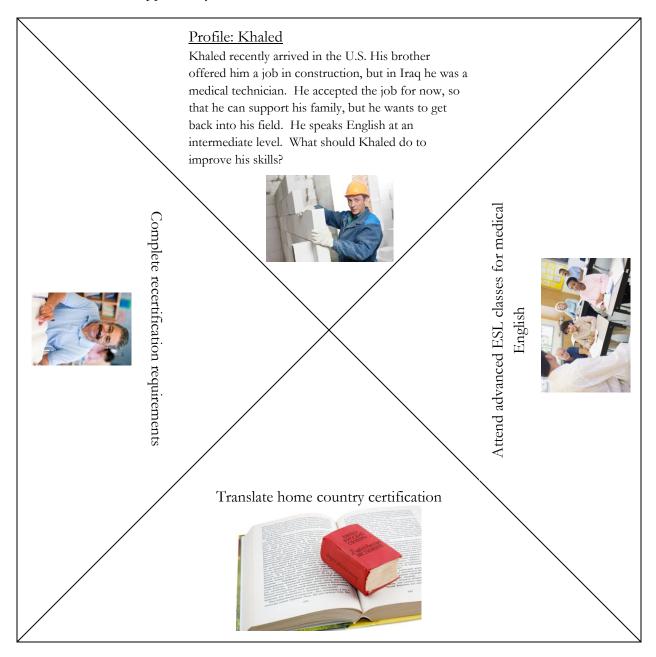


8-10 minutes

The following list begins with the words most easily understood and goes through more complex terms. Use the terms most accessible to your participants.

Introduce the words with the definition and contextual sentence. Omit words if participants already know them. Partner talks are meant to be a brief two minutes and do not have to include all the words. Encourage conversation and interaction, and focus on what participants already know about the word based on your introduction.

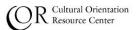
Vocabulary Term	Definition	Context	Partner Talk
goals	Goals are results that a person wants and works for. They can be educational goals, financial goals, or other personal goals.	Mathieu's <i>goal</i> is to become a doctor. Anna's <i>goal</i> is to learn how to play the piano.	What are some of your <i>goals</i> ?
options	Options are choices.	Dara has many <i>options</i> for what she wants to study.	What are the <i>options</i> for adult education in your community?
literacy	Literacy is being able to read or write.	Ebi teaches <i>literacy</i> in Farsi to children. He is <i>literate</i> in Farsi.	What languages are you <i>literate</i> in?
prior schooling	Prior schooling is the education that someone had in the past.	Kumar's <i>prior schooling</i> was in India. He finished high school there.	Have you had <i>prior</i> schooling?
enroll	To enroll is to sign up or register for a class.	Kyi <i>enrolls</i> in an ESL class. Ali <i>enrolls</i> in a college program.	Do you know how to enroll for a class?













Adult Educational Opportunity Puzzle Answer Key

Dro	file.	Kh	aled
FIO	HIC.	1/11/2	41CU

Khaled recently arrived in the U.S. His brother offered him a job in construction, but in Iraq he was a medical technician. He accepted the job for now, so that he can support his family, but he wants to get back into his field. He speaks English at an intermediate level. What should Khaled do to improve his skills?

Steps to complete:

- Attend advanced ESL classes for medical English
- Translate home country certification
- Complete recertification requirements

Profile: Htoo Aung Kyaw

Htoo Aung Kyaw arrived four years ago from Burma. He attended school through 8th grade, but does not have a high school diploma. He has a job as a janitor at the elementary school his children attend, but Htoo Aung Kyaw would like to advance his career in the U.S. by learning a trade.

Steps to complete:

- Enroll in ESL classes
- Enroll in a GED program
- Enroll in a vocational school

Profile: Samara

Samara did not go to school in Somalia, but she is looking forward to learning how to read and write. Now she speaks a beginner level of English. Samara has never worked outside of the home, but she has young children and is accustomed to basic household chores such as cleaning and laundry. Samara would like to find a job at a local hotel to support her family.

Steps to complete:

- Enroll in an ESL class
- Attend family literacy classes to learn to read and write
- Enroll in basic hospitality classes offered at a local service provider

Profile: Namina

Namina completed high school at a refugee camp in Nepal. She speaks Nepali and some English, but has found that many people in the U.S. cannot understand her English due to her accent. She would like to improve her speech and continue her studies in education.

Steps to complete:

- Enroll in an ESL class to practice an American accent
- Translate home country certification
- Enroll in a community college program

Domestic Community Orientation Curriculum

