



# ESOL for the Home Health Aide (HHA) Career

First Literacy Lab Project

Mujeres Unidas Avanzando

Dorchester, MA

2017-2018



# Who We Are

- **Adult Basic Education Center for women in Dorchester**
- **Started in 1979**
- **Two main programs: ESOL (3 levels) and Hi-SET Exam Preparation (in Spanish)**
- **We also offer: Computer Training classes, Healthcare Trainings (HHA and Phlebotomy), social services, on-site child care, career coaching, workshops, etc.**



# Our Students

- Immigrant women
- Majority Hispanic
- Majority low-income
- Majority mothers (Many, single mothers)
- Most in the 20-50 year age range; Some younger, some older!



# HHA at MUA



- **In partnership with:**
- Since 2016
- Main intention: Help our students take the next steps after improving their English skills and/or receiving their high school equivalency
- Typically offer two fifteen-week cycles each year (Fall and Spring) and an intensive Summer session
- Requirements to enroll: \*At least\* high-intermediate level of English; U.S. work authorization; high school diploma or equivalency; at least 18 years old
- **Very popular:**
  - Many of our students already have healthcare education or work experience from home countries and want to get back into the field in the U.S.
  - Huge industry in MA, so many job prospects for students after finishing the training
  - Home Health Aide = flexible hours for working moms
- Most enrolled students from our other MUA programs;  
Some outside referrals



# Our Literacy Lab Intentions

## *Initially...*

- An ESOL course that would run in conjunction with the HHA class
- Target population: The students that met the requirements for the HHA class, but that would still benefit from additional English support for the dense language used in the class; e.g., Textbook reading, extensive vocabulary, lecture-based instruction (typically with a teacher that knows little to no Spanish)
- This “ESOL for HHA” class would be held twice a week, in the mornings before the HHA class in the afternoon for any currently-enrolled HHA students that needed or wanted this additional English instruction
- Intended for Level 2/3 students (SPL 3-6)



# The Original Curriculum

- Created in tandem with the textbook:  
**Hedman, S.A., Fuzy, J., & Rymer, S. (2018) *Hartman's Nursing Assistant Care: Long-Term Care and Home Care*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) Albuquerque, NM: Hartman Publishing, Inc.**
- Intentionally flexible, with the idea that the ESOL teacher (our AmeriCorps service member) would collaborate with the HHA teacher to keep both classes progressing at roughly the same pace
- One of the main focuses: **Field-Specific Vocabulary**, directly from the textbook
- Each class was to include: “warm-up” vocabulary drills, review quizzes, and a chance for students to ask about words from the reading that they were unsure of
- **Sample vocabulary list from Chapter 2:**  
allowed/not allowed; compassionate; empathy; sympathy; honest; tactful; conscientious; dependable; respectful; unprejudiced; tolerant; scope of practice; liability; grooming habits; delegation

# The Original Curriculum

- The rest of the class time: Focus on relevant grammar and language skills
- **Sample lesson ideas:**
  - Describe symptoms and health conditions using sense verbs (feels like, looks like, smells like...)
  - Role-playing 911 calls
  - “Simon Says” to practice vocabulary for parts of the body; common medical imperatives (bend your knee, touch your toes...)
  - Converting metric system measurements to U.S. symptoms and relevant vocabulary
  - Using transition words in speaking and writing to explain a procedure



# Set-Backs and Learning Opportunities

- Registration for the Fall 2017 HHA class: Many interested, qualified applicants; We filled the class quickly
- **But none were in need of additional language support!**
- All registered students: Either ELLs already at a high SPL, or native English speakers from the community
- No one expressed any need or interest in supplemental English instruction
- This semester's teacher was also only available on Saturdays, so the back-to-back scheduling was no longer an option



# Adjustments

- So, it was back to the drawing board. The changes we made included:
  - Class became a precursor rather than a supplement
  - Level of instruction was changed to accommodate our Level 1 students (SPL 0-3)
  - Class schedule changed to match the rest of our ESOL classes: Monday – Thursday, 10 hours per week
  - Intended population: Students that would like to take HHA later or work in healthcare in another capacity, but were not yet ready
  - New curriculum: No longer in accordance with the HHA textbook or HHA class timetable
  - Class scope: a “regular” Level 1 ESOL class (incorporating the grammar and language skills from our existing Level 1 ESOL Scope & Sequence), but with a healthcare focus
- Goal: Students who finished this course would then receive priority registration for future semesters of HHA (a good incentive, as this class typically has a waiting list)

# Lesson Sample #1

## Lesson: Treating Exterior Injuries

### Cloze Activity

hurt/hurts	cut	fell	stitches	cream	wash	rash	Band-Aid
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Doctor: Can you tell me what \_\_\_\_\_?

Woman: My head hurts.

Doctor: What happened?

Woman: I hit it on the table when I \_\_\_\_\_.

Doctor: Okay. I'm going to look at it.

Woman: Is there a \_\_\_\_\_?

Doctor: Yes, there is a cut.

Woman: Will I need \_\_\_\_\_?

Doctor: No, I do not think you will need \_\_\_\_\_.  
We will put some antibacterial \_\_\_\_\_ and some bandages on it.

Woman: Thank you, Doctor.

Child: Mommy, I have a boo-boo.

Mom: What happened?

Child: I was running and I scraped my knee.

Mom: Let me see. We'll \_\_\_\_\_ the dirt out with water and put on a \_\_\_\_\_.

Child: Mommy, it \_\_\_\_\_.

Mom: I know but it'll stop soon. Would you like a lollipop?

Child: Yes! 😊

# Lesson Sample #2

## Lesson: First Aid & Treatments Vocabulary

### First Aid Information Gap

#### Student A

Rachel has a rash. How should she treat it?

Will has a little burn on his finger. How should he treat it?

George has a splinter in his toe. How should he treat it?

Alice broke her foot. How should she treat it?

#### Student B

Rachel has a small cut on her hand. How should she treat it?

Will has a big cut on his arm. How should he treat it?

George has a bruise on his shoulder. How should he treat it?

Alice has a fever. How should she treat it?

First Aid Information Gap	Alice	George	Will	Rachel
Cast				
Stitches				
Band-Aid				
Ointment (Cream)				
Cold Water				
Ice				
Tweezers				
Pill(s)				

# Lesson Sample #3 (The Crowd Favorite)

## Lesson: Injuries and Past Tense

### Warm-Up: “Old MacDonald” Remix

In the past \_\_\_\_ had an injury / EIEIO

And on that day **she broke her toe** / EIEIO

With an “ouch ouch” here and an “ouch ouch” there

Here an “ouch” there an “ouch” / Everywhere an “ouch ouch”

On that day she broke her toe / EIEIO

In the past \_\_\_\_ had an injury / EIEIO

And on that day **I burned my hand**

And on that day **he scraped his knee**

And on that day **you bruised your hip**



# Results

- This “ESOL for HHA” class started in January with 14 students; 10 completed the class in May
- Our next HHA session started in March; **2 from this ESOL group registered and completed the HHA training** (They also expressed an interest in our new Phlebotomy training this fall)
- 2 other students felt more comfortable waiting for a later session this school year but do plan to take the training
- All enrolled students demonstrated improvements in English (re: pre-/post-BEST Plus testing; in-class assessments)
- 5 of these students have continued studying ESOL at MUA this year; 3 moved on to Level 2
- Of the students that did not express an interest in a healthcare career or training course: They were still satisfied with the course and its content due to its relevance to daily life, their parenting responsibilities, etc. (re: Student feedback surveys)

# Student Anecdotes

*From a student that enrolled in the Saturday Home Health Aide course in March (paraphrased):*

It was difficult because the teacher talked quickly and the majority of the other students were able to keep up. But we [the 2 from this ESOL group] could pick out some vocabulary from the weekly ESOL class during the HHA lectures, which helped us understand the teacher better and also increased our confidence.

# Looking Forward

- **HHA is still going strong!** 😊
- Through the same partnerships, we were able to also add a Phlebotomy training course which started this October
- Again, our applicant pool for both classes was a good mix of MUA graduates and other members of the community; all at varying English proficiency levels but mostly strong enough to go right into these classes
- A few needed another few months of English first, though, and while they're not in a class specifically designated as "ESOL for HHA" this year, all of our levels do include a health and wellness unit with the vocabulary and conversation skills necessary for this profession; We have assured them they will have a spot in the training programs once they are ready.



# For More Information

- The full curriculum from this project can be found at <https://firstliteracy.org/resources/for-educators/>.  
Scroll down to *First Literacy Lab 2018 Project Presentation Resources*, then select this project.
- I can be reached at: **617-282-8200** or [cjshalvey17@gmail.com](mailto:cjshalvey17@gmail.com).





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And, thank *you* for your attention!

THANK YOU!  
¡Y GRACIAS...

