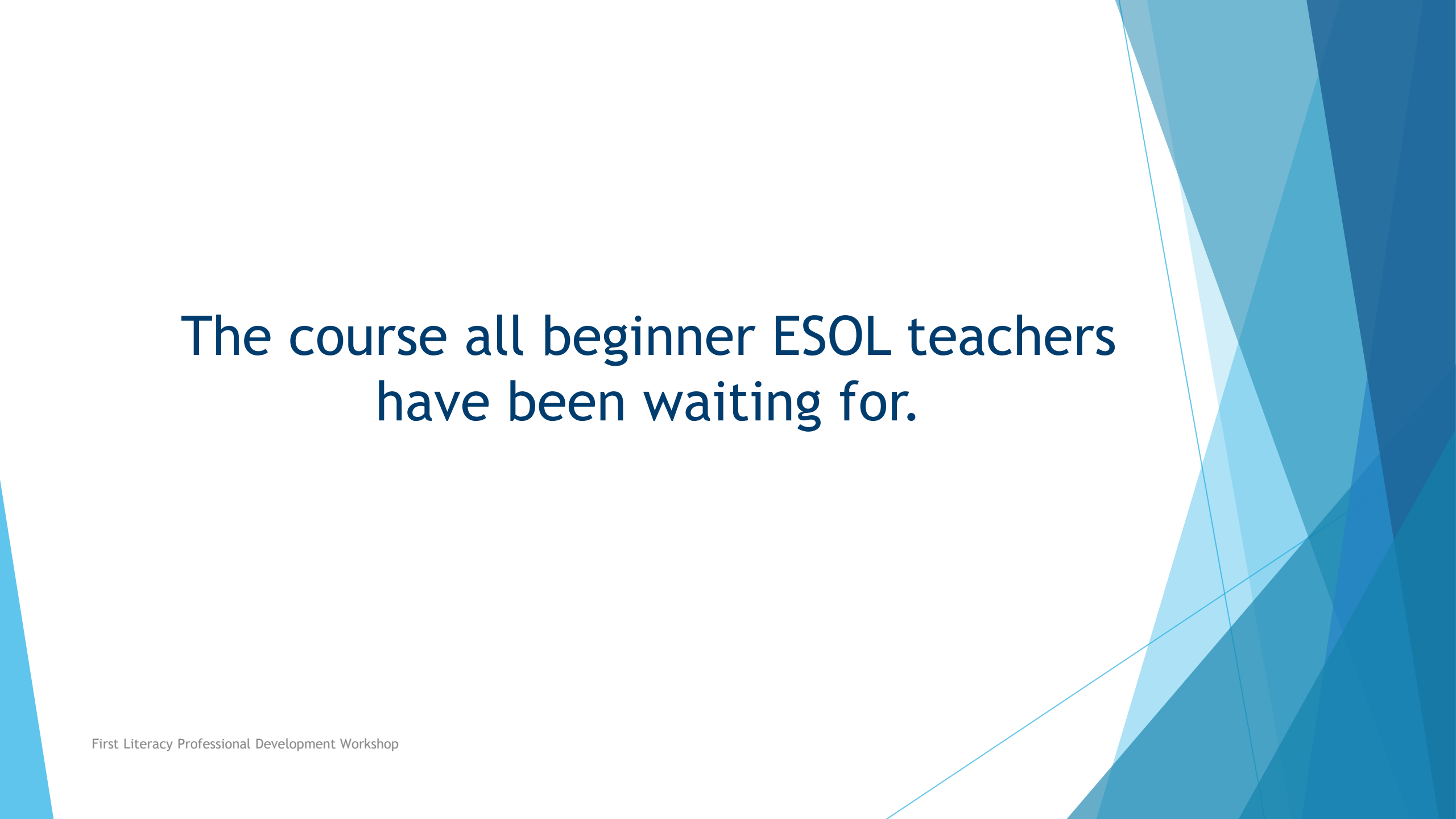




Unlock Digital Confidence for Your Beginner ESOL Students

October 31, 2025, Francine Anderson, ESOL Teacher

The background of the slide features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, ranging from light sky blue to deep navy blue. These shapes are primarily located on the right side and bottom, creating a modern, dynamic feel.

The course all beginner ESOL teachers
have been waiting for.

Your Strategist for Integrating Digital Skills into A0-A1 ESOL

My Background	My Expertise for You
MA in New Media Journalism & Editing: 5 years teaching ESOL, SEO Expert, and digital publishing.	A Strategic Approach: I'll show you how to embed digital skills authentically into existing language lessons—no extra work, just smarter teaching.
Beginner ESOL Focus: Experience with diverse adult learners (South American, Haitian, Asian, and more).	Accessibility First: Strategies to overcome common digital barriers and build your confidence so your students can mimic your success.

The Current Challenge

- ▶ We have brilliant students—some who are former **accountants, lawyers, and nurses**—stuck learning "survival English" because a digital pathway is missing.
- ▶ Digital literacy is often seen as a **separate subject**, not a tool for **expanding** language growth and career redevelopment.
- ▶ **Teacher confidence in digital literacy** is our biggest barrier to student accessibility and dignity.



**Ready to unlock the
future for your
students? Let's start
the transformation!**





Let's Talk About Confidence

- ▶ **You asked (The Practical Question):** "How do I use Zoom, manage email, teach Google Docs, and incorporate technology into lessons effectively for beginners?"
 - ▶ *The Real Question:* "How can I integrate digital literacy, so it builds student dignity and uses transferable skills, not just tech skills?"



Let's Talk About Confidence

- ▶ **The Hard Truth:** Our students mirror our digital hesitation. The biggest block to accessible digital literacy is often **our confidence**, not their language level.



Let's Talk About Confidence

- ▶ **Your Power:** You are already excellent teachers. This isn't about learning new tech; it's about **shifting your mindset** from teaching tools to **teaching strategy**.

□ Beyond the A-Level: Knowing Our Students

- ▶ "As mentors, we need to move past simply seeing a beginner ESOL student.'
- ▶ We need to see the **whole person**—the professional, the parent, the ambitious individual who deserves to have their dignity maintained.
- ▶ To do that, I use **Student Personas and Student Journeys**.
 - ▶ This is an *optional* practice, but I promise you, it's the fastest way to become an expert in differentiation."

Think of your students as stakeholders in their education.



I'm Creating Lessons For

MingHui Zhao - Resilient/Persistent



Age: 53
From: China
Speaks: Cantonese
Status: Married w adult children
Job: House Keeper
Education: High School

Goals:

- Achieve professional status of previous work, maybe as a hotel housekeeping manager
- Learn English rapidly

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Pain Points:

- Takes a 1 month vacation every Lunar New Years which sets back her learning.
- Does not use English at home.

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Needs and Opportunities:

- Limited time due to job
- Frustrated it's taking longer to learn than younger students
- Struggles with language retention

frankl.anderson

Tech Comfort Level:

- Low
- No matter how many times you show her how to do something on the computer, she needs help.

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Quote: "Teacher, I don't know English. I can't go level 2. I'm trying."

Pierre St. Germain - Social Student



Age: 35
From: Haiti
Speaks: Haitian Creole
Status: Single
Job: maintenance worker
Education: College/was a teacher

Goals:

- Engage in social & community activities
- feel less isolated
- Get a better job, maybe become a teacher again

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Pain Points:

- Always texting during class.
- Language level is well above other classmates
- Fear of deportation

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Needs and Opportunities:

- Class is a safe space
- Community-focused content
- Group activities
- Makes friends fast and leads the conversation

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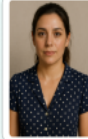
Tech Comfort Level:

- Moderate
- Good with phone tech, but struggles with his Chromebook
- Can type fast and corrects errors

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Quotes: "I need to get a better job." "I like people. I want to make friends."

Maria Lopez - Driven to Achieve



Age: 30
From: Columbia
Speaks: Spanish
Status: Married w 2 children
Job: House Keeper
Education: High School

Goals:

- Advance career
- Attend college
- Integrate into American society
- Make mom friends

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Pain Points:

- Hard to find time between family and job
- Slow with grammar
- Pronunciation of certain vowel sounds
- Understanding nuance

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Needs and Opportunities:

- Academic English
- Conversation practice
- Clear grammar instruction
- Build phonetic skills

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Tech Comfort Level:

- Moderate to high
- Understands and retains learned skills.
- Comfortable on multiple platforms/apps

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Quote: "I want to be a Spanish teacher. I need to go to college. Can I have a tutor?"

FangFei Lin - Family Supporter



Age: 25
From: China
Speaks: Mandarin
Status: Married w 1 child
Job: Restaurant Cashier
Education: Middle School

Goals:

- Better job to support family
- Be more independent
- Do important paperwork, i.e. apply for apartment & SNAP

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Pain Points:

- Didn't go to high school
- little prior tech experience
- financial issues
- Not enough time

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Needs and Opportunities:

- practical real-world English
- Simple intuitive Tech instructions
- short lessons w visual aids and repetition

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Tech Comfort Level:

- Low
- Mostly uses smartphone
- Struggles w laptop
- Thought she had a virus, it was an ad.

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Quote: "What is a respectable job in America?"

Student Personas

Student Personas SEL integration

MingHui Zhao - Resilient/Persistent



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- Does not use English at home.

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Needs and Opportunities:

- Limited time due to job
- Frustrated it's taking longer to learn than younger students
- Struggles with language retention

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Tech Comfort Level:

- Low
- No matter how many times you show her how to do something on the computer, she needs help.

frankLanderson

Quote: "Teacher, I don't know English. I can't go level 2. I'm trying."

1. Who are you teaching?

A persona name that represents a group of students in your classroom.

Give them a name

Give them a group title

2. Demographics

3. Goals

4. Their pain points (struggles)

5. Their needs and our opportunities to help them.

6. Their tech comfort level.

7. A quote from a student in your class that fits that group.

nt and Persis...

Pain Points:

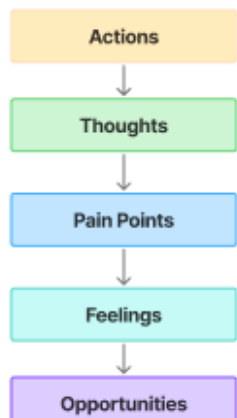
- Takes a 1 month vacation every Lunar New Years which sets back her learning.
- Does not use English at home.

Tech Comfort Level:

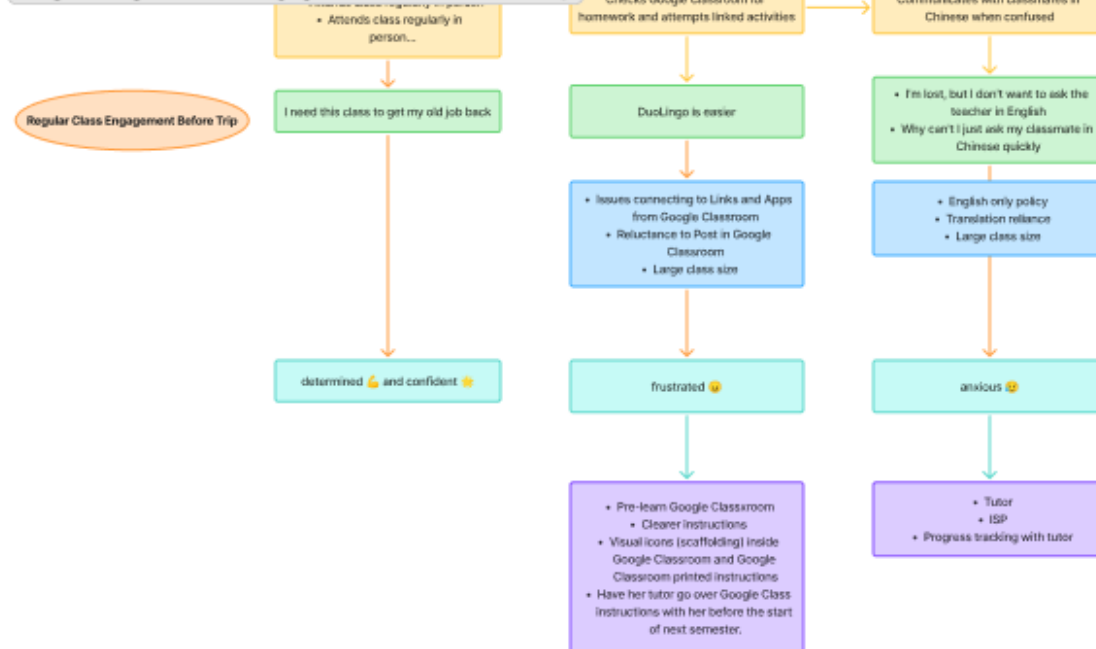
- Low
- No matter how many times you show her how to do something on the computer, she needs help.

Goal level 2: "I'm trying"

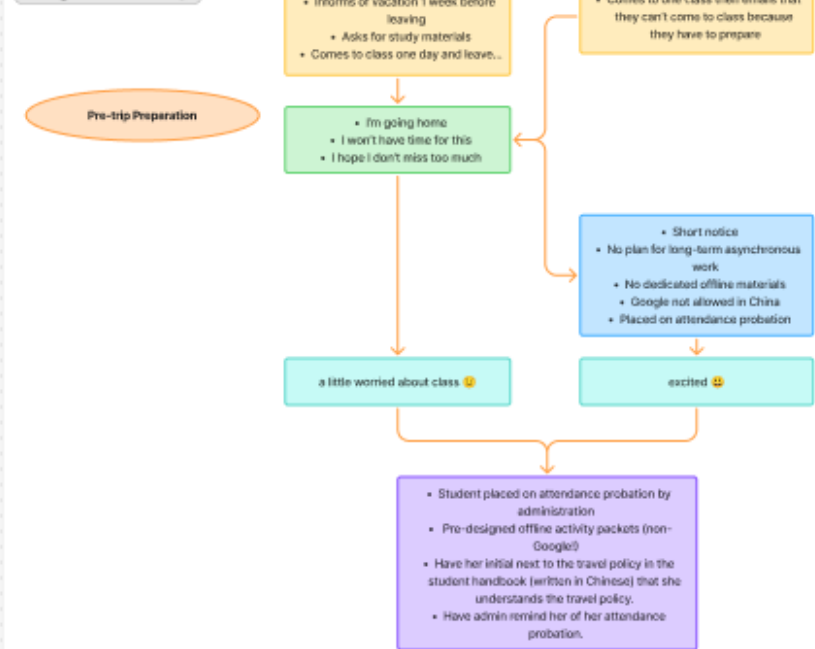
Persona 1: Resilient and Persistent



Stage 1: Regular Class Engagement Before Annual Trip



Stage 2: Pre-trip



Problem Statement

her 50s and former regional manager of a retail chain, struggles to advance in her beginner ESOL classes. After being in the same level for over 2 years, she risks being removed from the program, which threatens her goal of improving her English skills to better her job opportunities.

Hypothesis Statement

or, which she can't, then she should meet with the teacher for 15 minutes at the start of each week to be shown how to find, complete, and track extra assignments on the LMS system to give her extra help and understanding for the weekly lessons. She can then track her progress on the LMS system.

Value Proposition

in her ESOL learning journey, a structured system is proposed where she meets with her teacher for 15 minutes per week. During these sessions, she will learn to effective digital literacy skills she can transfer to work experience, and how to efficiently use the LMS system to find and complete additional assignments, enhancing her understanding of the materials and how they can help her career minded language goals. By tracking her progress on the LMS, she will gain the confidence and skills necessary to advance in her classes and achieve her career goals.

Student Journeys

5 Minutes for Questions



Core Strategy: Authentic Digital Integration

Pictures to Stories

- ▶ Start with a projected or vibe board image. The teacher writes
 - ▶ The teacher writes the words first.
 - ▶ Then the teacher asks for questions and writes them.
 - ▶ Then the teacher asks for sentences and the teacher writes them.
- ▶ Students can only give one word, sentence, or question until everyone in the class has given one. Then they can free for all.
- ▶ You can do this with every topic in class.

First Literacy Professional Development Workshop

Write sentences about this picture.



Put your sentences here:

1. The supermarket is next to the theatre.
2. The fire station is across from police station.
3. The bank is near the post office.
4. The bus station is across from school.
5. The theatre is between the supermarket and the stadium.
6. The cafe is next to the pharmacy.
7. The fire station is next to the school.
8. The school is between the fire station and the museum.
9. The hotel is across from cafe.
10. The park is near the hotel.

Core Strategy: Authentic Digital Integration

Pictures to Stories

- ▶ The goal comes much later in the year.
 - ▶ They do their own work in Google Slides.
 - ▶ They write a story.
 - ▶ I found that paragraphs were to complicated for beginners, who are trying to master sentences, but telling a story that they could relate to helps them create a complete thought in English.

Tell me a story about this picture.



Write your story here.

The boy and the girl were going to play in the park today, but the boy didn't know where the park was. Then the girl told him that the park was straight across Hill Street and then on the right, so they went to the park happily.

Core Strategy: Authentic Digital Integration

Email: The Professional Gatekeeper

- ▶ [NorthStar](#) has a great adaptable lesson.
- ▶ We start this after they learn to talk about themselves.
- ▶ They've learned reasons to not come to class.
- ▶ The next step is to send an email stating who they are and why they can't come to class.
- ▶ We start on [paper](#) before going to email.
- ▶ There's not much Tech teaching because your students email in their language. Just make sure they can find the commands, like send, in English.

First Literacy Professional Development Workshop



Illustration of an email form with fields for Email, Subject, and a large body text area.

Core Strategy: Authentic Digital Integration

Best Practices for Google Suite Instruction

- ▶ Be a visual guide.
- ▶ **Project your screen.**
- ▶ **Count with them:** Right one, down two.
- ▶ Use your mouse pointer, circle the action
- ▶ Walk the room and check.
- ▶ And please, **let them choose the picture, GIF, or meme!** This small bit of control is huge SEL; it lets their personality shine and builds pride in the final, beautiful product."

What I like

I like fruits.

I like singing.

I like walking.

I like dogs.



Core Strategy: Authentic Digital Integration

Google Slides for Journals

- ▶ It's the perfect scaffold.
- ▶ It's visual, easy to navigate, and lets them talk about their **daily lives, jobs, and homes**—topics *they* find important.

Dream Job

1. My dream job is a nurse.
2. I work in a hospital.
3. I work from 10:00 a.m to 4:00 p.m.
4. I like to help people.
5. My dream job is full-time.
6. I have health insurance, vacation time, sick time.
7. I want \$35/hr for work.



Core Strategy: Authentic Digital Integration

Google Sheets (Excel): Data-Driven Dignity

- ▶ **Pie Charts:** Used to compare personal life metrics (What is your job?)
 - ▶ Helps them find people in class who have similar work experience and make friends.
 - ▶ elevates a simple comparison task into a **business skill**—data visualization

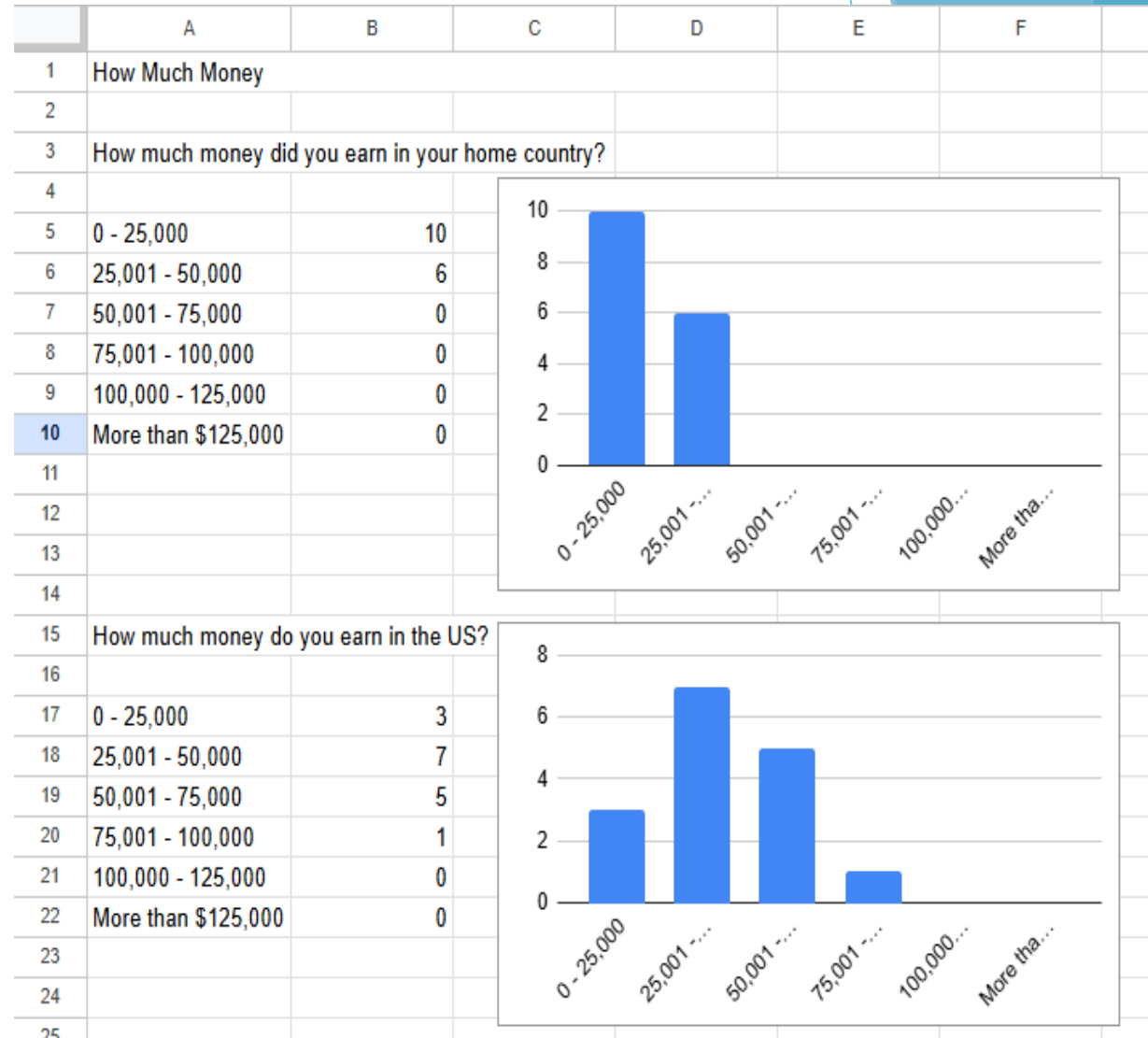
B1 AM Class Pie Chart



Core Strategy: Authentic Digital Integration

Google Sheets (Excel): Data-Driven Dignity

- ▶ **Graphs:** Used for practical comparisons like pay rates or medication costs.
 - ▶ This is empowerment through financial/health literacy.



Nervous Still? Looking for Ideas That Suit Your Class Better???

- ▶ [Digital Promise Learning Variability Navigator](#)
- ▶ You asked for resources, and this is a great one for ideas.

vigator Take the Tour Models

About Factors Strategies

Adult Learner > Strategies

Adult Learner

Select one or more factors to see the strategies that support your chosen factor(s). For each strategy, we provide ideas for how to use it in your learning environment and further resources.

FACTORS (0)	STRATEGIES (74)		
Learner Background	Accessible Vocabulary & Syntax Using language that is accessible and appropriately leveled for each student allows all learners to feel successful and...	Annotating When annotating, learners engage deeply with a text and make their thinking visible while reading, which supports...	Ask Expert Experts can provide vocabulary and scaffold...
☐ Adverse Experiences	☐	☐	☐
☐ Hearing	☐	☐	☐
☐ Literacy Environment	☐	☐	☐
☐ Physical Well-being	☐	☐	☐
	Audiobooks	Authentic Audiences & Purposes	Building E

10 Minutes for Questions



It's your turn - Can I Get A Volunteer



- ▶ Think of a current lesson you are teaching or one you will teach soon that you want to integrate with digital literacy.
- ▶ What is an idea you can think of to authentically integrate

It's your turn - Breakout Rooms

- ▶ Think of a current lesson you are teaching or one you will teach soon that you want to integrate with digital literacy.
- ▶ What is an idea you can think of to authentically integrate.
- ▶ Support each other. Share more possibilities and less insecurities. You can do this.

**Don't forget, your confidence
sets the tone for your students' success.**

Your Digital Literacy Action Plan

Due on 11/14/2025



Print these slides including the notes.



Think of a lesson you will teach soon that you want to add authentic digital literacy to.

You can use the one you talked about in the breakout room.



Create a lesson plan to include your authentic digital literacy.



On 11/14 the focus is on you. We will discuss your lesson plans and help you iron out any wrinkles and find the best solutions to add dignity and confidence to your authentic digital instruction.

If you need ideas visit the Digital Navigator site and find something that meets your students needs/learning factors.

Next Steps to Digital Empowerment

- ▶ **EdTech Swap Meet** 🌐
 - ▶ I'll share my favorite online **EdTech Sites** for **scaffolding low-level digital skills**.
 - ▶ **You'll share yours!** We'll crowdsource the best tools that bring **dignity and accessibility** to beginner students.
- ▶ **Lesson Plan Pain Point Clinic** 🩹
 - ▶ Bring the **digital integration lesson plan** you created.
 - ▶ We will collectively **troubleshoot and redesign** it using the **Persona and Authentic Integration** strategies we covered today.
- ▶ **Celebrating Confidence** 🎉
 - ▶ We will talk about your **successes!** It's not just important to acknowledge them—it's **vital to your students' success** that you recognize and build upon your growing **Digital Mentor** confidence.
- ▶ **Finally, will Have Designed an Authentic Digital Dignity Lesson!** 🎯
 - ▶ The goal is that everyone walks away with a high-impact **ready-to-use** lesson that applies a core digital skill **authentically** that is **differentiated** to ensure student **dignity is maintained**.



Thank you!

We want your feedback. Please be sure to complete the evaluation.

Learn more about upcoming First Literacy Professional Development Workshops at www.firstliteracy.org/professional-development-workshops/

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