

Internet-based Resources for Adult EAL Learners

Website 1: <http://immigrantsandcareers.mb.ca/>

By clicking on *Browse Short Stories* facilitators have access to several personal short stories from immigrants who have settled in Manitoba. There are many themes including: finding work, workplace culture and life in Manitoba. Some stories are read-only while others have a listening component.

Suggested Activity:

1. Read together with clients the 3 short stories under the section Life in Manitoba/Winter. Ask clients basic comprehension questions from each story. Explain unfamiliar vocabulary.
2. Put clients into small groups and provide them a short list of questions that deal with the topic of winter. For example:
 - a. What was your first winter in Winnipeg like?
 - b. How do you cope with winter in Winnipeg?
 - c. What activities do you do during winter to keep busy?
 - d. What clothing do you wear in winter to keep yourself warm?
 - e. What winter sports do participate in?
 - f. What was winter like in your country? Similar? Different?
3. Have groups report back. Brainstorm different ideas. Write some ideas on the board.

Website 2: <http://www.englishcentral.com/videos#>

English Central contains several short video clips on several important topics including: daily life, education, environment, getting around, health, socializing, etc. Some videos are for higher level students while others are more suited for intermediate and beginner level students. After watching a few videos the website asks the user to register, but don't worry it's free!

Suggested Activity:

1. Show clients the video "Social Etiquette: How to Introduce Yourself" under the Social English/socializing section.
2. After watching the short video clip, the facilitator could demonstrate some of the suggestions from the video (i.e. smiling, making eye contact, etc.). Discuss with clients the importance of proper body language in Canadian culture especially at work.
3. Then, clients can practice going around the class introducing themselves to other clients by telling their name, where they are from, how long they have been in Canada, family they have here, favourite hobby, etc.
4. For a follow-up activity clients could also practice introducing someone they have recently met to another client. (i.e. Bob, I'd like to introduce you to Mary. She's from Germany. She's been here for two years...)

Website 3: <http://www.eslfast.com/>

ESL Fast.com is a useful website to engage learners in a variety of everyday topics. The website contains 365 short stories for learners to read and discuss. Each story comes with a listening component and follow-up exercises such as yes/no questions, cloze exercises and vocabulary building. The website also contains several conversations for beginner and intermediate learners to practice. Common topics include daily life, transportation, entertainment, sports and jobs.

Suggested Activity:

1. Play for students the short story titled "Shopping for Bargains".
2. After playing the story, read the story together with students and discuss unfamiliar vocabulary (i.e. thrift, browse, donations, etc.) and complete related activities at the bottom of the page.
3. Develop a list of questions students could discuss with a partner or in a small group regarding the story, for example:
 - a. Where do you like to go shopping?
 - b. Do you like to shop at thrift stores? Why or why not?
 - c. Why do you think people sometimes like to shop at thrift stores?
 - d. What would you consider buying at a thrift store? What would you definitely not buy at a thrift store?
4. As a follow-up activity consider doing an activity on the benefits of shopping at thrift stores (i.e. Value Village, Goodwill) compared to shopping at larger chain stores (i.e. The Bay, Sears).

Website 4: <http://esl.bowvalleycollege.ca/listen/mp3/>

The Bow Valley College Listening Room is a listening website which contains several meaningful and everyday conversations students can listen to, practice and discuss. The conversations are categorized into 3 levels: Level 1 (beginner level), Level 2 (intermediate level) and Level 3 (advanced level).

Suggested Activity:

1. Play for students the conversation titled "Getting Fit".
2. After listening to the conversation provide students with the transcript. Review unfamiliar vocabulary, phrases and pronunciation.
3. Have students find a partner and give them time to practice the conversation dialogue together. Have a few selected partners practice in front of the whole class.
4. Develop some conversation questions around the theme of "Getting Fit" which students can practice discussing in small groups, for example:
 - a. Do you exercise? How often do you exercise?
 - b. Do you or your family belong to a gym?
 - c. Do you enjoy playing sports? Which ones?
5. As a follow-up activity students can brainstorm possible ways for an unhealthy person to become fit. Students can present their ideas to the rest of the class.

Website 5: <http://www.esl-lab.com/>

Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab contains an exhaustive list of conversation dialogues for EAL learners. Conversations are categorized into three sections: easy, medium and difficult. The website also contains basic listening quizzes, listening quizzes for academic purposes, vocabulary lessons, language learning tips and short videos.

Suggested Activity:

1. Play for students the conversation titled "Finding Friends on the Internet" from the Language Learning Life Tips section.
2. Review the conversation once it's finished and discuss unfamiliar vocabulary and unfamiliar phrases.
3. Put students into small groups and have them brainstorm possible ways to find friends. This could be a worthwhile activity as many learners may be here alone and looking for new friends.
4. Once finished put possible answers on the board. Discuss with learners the benefits and limitations of each one (i.e. finding a friend on the internet, at school, at a party, etc.)

Website 6: <http://www.eslcafe.com/>

Dave's ESL Café is a website designed as a meeting place for EAL teachers and students alike. The website has several and meaningful activities for students such as grammar lessons, idioms, pronunciation, phrasal verbs, etc. The website also contains a students' forum in which students can engage with other students around the world on a variety of topics such as family, food, hobbies, etc.

Suggested Activity:

1. Consider doing a few activities on idioms learners may possibly hear in English.
2. Go to the "Idioms" page under the "Stuff for Students" section.
3. Consider doing an "Idiom a day" with your group of learners by choosing common ones from the provided list on the website.
4. For a more advanced group of EAL learners consider coming up with a list of 6-10 idioms. Have students match the idioms to the correct meaning or example.
5. As a follow-up activity consider doing a similar activity with the slangs.