

Introduction to ESOL Lessons: The Importance of Cultural Sensitivity

Lesson plans labeled “ESOL” are included in Community, Worker, and Family sections. These lesson plans have been developed by ESOL teachers, using the NH Standards for Adult Education Programs. These lessons can be used for native adult learners, but they are geared for adult ESOL learners with different language skills and, of course, different cultural traditions.

To make these ESOL lesson plans work, teachers need to be culturally aware and sensitive. Adult learning about how we raise children, how men and women divide the child-care and work responsibilities, how to find work, how to shop, eat well and stay healthy, etc., should also be encouraged to talk about how they do things in their own countries. Talking about similarities and differences often stimulates conversation and a sense of commonality. Finally, teachers should remember that our students are adults. We should be careful not to patronize or talk down to these ESOL learners.

Olga Skow