

# NORTHERN NEVADA LITERACY COUNCIL

## PRONUNCIATION – LEVELS I & II

### Teaching Methods

Pronunciation – Levels I & II are 96-hour courses designed to teach adult students to hear and speak the sounds of the Roman alphabet correctly, as the sounds are used in American English, and broaden the students' basic English vocabulary. Each class period Lesson Plan is intended to be 90 minutes in length. The course employs teaching methods found in *Action Reading*, *Focus on Phonics*, and the *Oxford Picture Dictionary*.

As each session is designed to be 90 minutes in length, the amount of material covered in each session may vary based on the functional level of the students in attendance. If the instructor finds the lesson plan to be less than the prescribed time, the excess time should be used for review. It is important that students are given the full 90 minutes of instruction (less 5 minute break time option), in that their hours in class are a part of funding compliance standards. The quality of instruction provided during the 90-minute timeframe is directly related to student progress as determined by their assessment scores. Consequently, it is imperative that Instructors adhere to the Lesson Plan for a given period and pay particular attention to the students' daily progress.

#### **The Pronunciation Level I course is broken into three segments:**

1. Pronunciation – 14 90-minute periods – Lessons 1 through 14
2. Sound Combinations – 18 90-minute periods – Lessons 14 through 32
3. Basic Vocabulary – 26 90-minute periods – Lessons 33 through 58

The Pronunciation Level II course is also broken into three segments:

1. Pronunciation – 14 90-minute periods – Lessons 1 through 14
2. Sound Combinations – 18 90-minute periods – Lessons 14 through 32
3. Basic Vocabulary and Grammar – 26 90-minute periods – Lessons 33 through 58

**NOTE:** Students who are placed in Pronunciation II have higher entry assessment scores than those placed in Pronunciation I. Most likely Pronunciation II students will advance to Level 33 or 35 functional level classes. For them to be prepared to function at these levels it is imperative that they have basic grammar skills.

The Lesson Plan Calendar for a given year is based on an 8-week, 96-hour instructional cycle that includes assessment periods and holidays. In that the number of holidays varies in each 8-week cycle, Review Lessons are provided to fill class periods that are consumed by holidays in other cycles. Review Lesson Plans for these class periods can be found in the back of the Instructor's Manual under the Review Lesson Section.

The instruction to be presented in each lesson is written in a specific step-by-step manner proven to increase the students' ability to comprehend and retain the subject matter. In that the course focus is to teach listening and speaking skills, the primary teaching methodologies to be considered in presentation of the course material are as follows:

- **Individual student response is critical to the student's ability to learn both skills.**

⇒ Used effectively in a classroom teaching/learning environment, **individual student response** assists the class in improving their listening skills while their classmate masters his/her speaking skills. In addition, it allows the instructor the opportunity to assist each individual student in forming the correct verbal response.

⇒ Classroom tables at NNLC's Learning Center are intentionally arranged in a "u" shape so Instructors can walk up and down the "u" and view/listen to each individual student. Using this facility setup to monitor how each student pronounces the sound provides an Instructor the opportunity to watch, at close range, a student's mouth movement – where their tongue is placed or the shape of their lips – as they verbalize the sound. In turn, using this facility setup provides the student with a closer view of how the Instructor is modeling the sound during a correction.

- **NOTE: Group response** (the class responding verbally in unison) should **only** be used where noted in the Lesson Plans.

- **It is important that initially, the name of the letter of the alphabet is disregarded and only the sound is emphasized.** Experience has established the English Language Learner learns more quickly when the name of the letter is not introduced until later in the learning cycle.

⇒ Students will subliminally learn the alphabetic sequence as sounds are introduced. Too often, when students learn the name of the letter first, they carry the "name sound" forward as an additional sound in the word.

⇒ Furthering the development of the students' understanding of letters in relationship to alphabet sequence can be increased by printing the alphabet across the top of the board

and drawing a line from the letter you are introducing the sound of to the letter in its proper location in the alphabet.

- **Comprehension of the words used to demonstrate the sound is not included in instruction until after students have mastered the initial sounds in the first two lessons.**

⇒ It is natural for students to want to know the meaning of the words as the instructor presents the material. However, when teaching the initial sounds in Lessons 1 and 2, learning happens at a more rapid pace when students are kindly instructed that “now is not the time.” This can be done with a simple shake of the head and a “stop” motion of the hand. Word comprehension begins to take place from the third class period on, using pictures, sight, and repetition as teaching methods.

⇒ Students learn most quickly when taught the proper positioning of their tongue and/or lips when speaking certain sounds. Mirrors are provided as a teaching aide, so students can see the correct formation as they speak. Use of the mirrors is particularly helpful in teaching Lesson 2.

- **Comprehension of the words used to demonstrate the sounds in Lessons 3 through 14 is important to the students’ ability to develop a broader vocabulary; and, to develop the students’ fluency by using words in a simple sentence.**

⇒ The pictures in the Student Handouts and the Oxford Picture Dictionary are provided to develop the students’ comprehension of the meanings of the words used to demonstrate the sounds in Lesson 3-14.

⇒ Lessons 3-14 each contain a list of words used to further develop the students’ listening skills. Development of comprehension of these words should **not** be considered at this time. Again, in the event students are curious about the meaning of these words, use one of the following two methods – 1) tell them “not now” by hand signals or verbal; or 2) use time at the end of class after all the steps of the Lesson have been completed.

⇒ Underlining the letter(s) of the sound being taught in the sample sound word or sample sentence emphasizes its importance to the students.

- **Writing and reading re-enforce listening and speaking skills and are to be done in sequence following the listening and speaking of each sound.**

⇒ Language acquisition occurs when listening, speaking, writing and reading are taught in sequential order. Therefore, students are to be instructed to write each step in a lesson plan presentation in their student journal or on their student handout sheet and read both from what is written on the board by the instructor and what they have written in their journal.

- **Letter combinations are a confusing part of American English language usage. Therefore, it is imperative that students develop a thorough knowledge of the letter combinations in order to build a foundation for sounding out words and spelling them. Lessons 15 through 32 address common letter combination sounds, with emphasis on word endings.**

⇒ Many of the sentences used to illustrate the letter combination sounds in Lessons 15 through 32 seem elementary to students. Stress to the students that it is important for them to learn the sounds; and, it is particularly important that sounds be repeated in a sentence to help them learn the rhythm of the language.

⇒ Comprehension of all of the words used to illustrate sounds or all of the words used in a sentence is not important at this time. Again, inform the students that they will learn the meaning of the words as they advance through their classes.