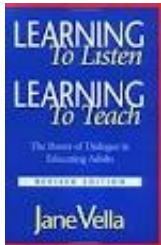


Adult Education Newsletter

For Teachers and Leaders —ITN-NTI

Who dares to teach must never cease to learn.

John Cotton Dana



Dr. Jane Vella, a noted adult educator, has taught in more than forty countries around the world. In her book, *Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach* (Jossey-Bass, 2002), she lists 12 Principles for Effective Adult Learning. Over the next year, the adult education newsletter will cover two per issue.

Principle One: Learning Needs and Resource Assessment

Vella writes: "Remember that needs assessment does not form the course; it informs it." (p. 7)

Can a course be taught exactly the same way in every setting with no regard to the students' needs and abilities? Of course the teacher could attempt that, but the resultant learning will not be the same. Teaching, like preaching, is listener specific. Different listeners require different teaching styles and techniques.

Are you teaching at the certificate or the diploma level? The certificate students will not be required to turn in written work, but the diploma level students should. Time must be allowed for oral responses at the certificate level. At the diploma level, some time may be taken for improvement of writing skills to better complete a lesson assignment. At the certificate level, you may need to translate some of the material into a local language to improve understanding. If you are teaching a mixed class, some activities may need to be divided into written or oral responses.

What the students are expected to learn from a particular course has already been decided. The NTI courses are written in handbook form. Teachers need to cover all the information included, yet the teacher can place an emphasis on the parts that fit closest with the students' current needs.

By reviewing the course topics and requirements with students at the beginning, you allow yourself time to do some extra thinking about "hot" topics that may arise when you are teaching. Remember, the director, academic deans, field and national education coordinators want to support your teaching. If you anticipate a tough question don't avoid it, ask for the collective wisdom of the leadership team even before the subject is raised in class.

If in this overview of the course with the students, you find one or two have experience or expertise in a subject covered by the course, allow time for them to share with the class. Explain before class how much time the student is allowed to speak and the parameters of the topic to be covered. This will help the class to stay on topic and within time frames for the course. Permitting other voices, especially well-informed voices, to lead the class helps test teaching gifts and to keep the class interested.

How do you get the students' input? Ask for it.

Even feedback after the class may help you better prepare for the next time you teach. If you find a problem in the course manual, please, write admin.itn-nti@gmail.com so that when the manual is revised problems can be fixed. Comments are needed from every level if excellence is the goal... and it is. We need to know *your* learning needs and resource assessment as well.

Principle Two: Safety

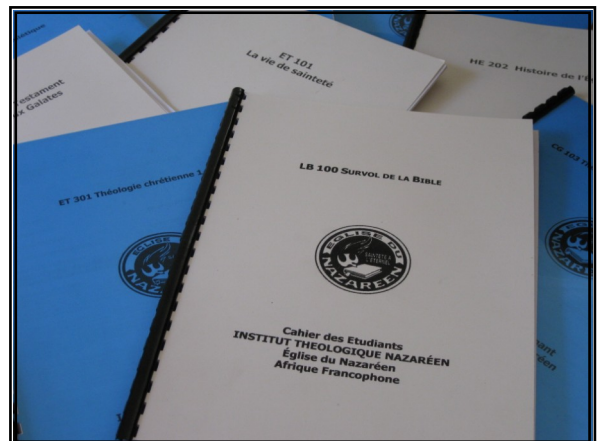
Vella says: "People have shown that they are not only willing but also ready and eager to learn when they feel safe in the learning environment." (p. 8)

Safety factors:

✓ The students need to trust the design of the course and the competency of the teacher.

The NTI courses have been written by those with Bachelor's degrees or above. Most have been written by those with Master's degrees or PhDs. These people also have experience with and a love of the African context where the courses are to be taught.

The courses have been evaluated by other schools which offer Bachelor's degrees. Those schools have been impressed by the level of the courses and generally offer the maximum credit towards a Bachelor's degree at their respective schools.



You as a teacher are a leader on your district or field. Others have affirmed your teaching gifts. Be confident and depend on the Holy Spirit to help you as you teach.

✓ The students need to understand why the course is relevant to them and their context.

All the NTI courses have been approved by the Africa Region Course of Study Advisory Committee as necessary for pastors and deacons in the Church of the Nazarene. They are a step to ordination.

Specific material may seem unrelated, but there is a connection. Help your students to find those connections. For example, church history shows how leaders in the past dealt with heresy, church dissension, and both slow and rapid growth. Much can be learned by their mistakes and successes.

✓ The students need to divide into small groups so they can vigorously dialogue.

Small groups allow the teacher to observe how well the students are mastering the material

covered. They also allow the teacher to assign smaller portions – maybe sensitive issues - to be discussed freely and openly.

Small groups allow those less experienced to ask questions and those more experienced to learn from those who may have a new approach to an old problem.

✓ Affirmation from the teacher and peers.

Sometimes children are shamed in front of their peers in an attempt to motivate them to do better. This is not an effective teaching method for adults. Your students are your brothers and sisters in ministry. They deserve respect.

Praise produces desire to be praised again. Harsh criticism creates a reluctance to participate. Find something your students do well and tell them publically.

Ezekiel 44:23

They are to teach my people
the difference between
the holy and the common
and *show* them
how to distinguish between
the unclean and the clean.

Practice: Using Visual Aids

What are visual aids? Visual aids are anything in addition to the text that help the reader learn. They may aid initial understanding or memory retention. Examples include: Charts, graphs, images, flash cards and everyday objects.



The course manual for LB 301 Pentateuch recommends:

“A timeline of the major events of Genesis through Deuteronomy can be placed on the wall for the students to study. As you study each of the events (below), write it on a paper and tape it on the wall, adding to the timeline along the wall, as you study each event.”

You may want to do a sketch of the stories to go along with the timeline. This would be especially helpful at the certificate level.

Creating visual aids:

Many of the courses have charts – copy the grid to your blackboard before the class and fill in the sections as they are discussed.

If a course has names and dates or people and quotes, you can create a variety of aids to help reinforce your students' mastery of the material.

Option 1: Write the name of the person on one card and the quote or other information on the back. The students could use these cards to quiz each other by giving the quote and asking for the name or the reverse.

Option 2: Write the name of the person on one card and the other information on separate cards. Have the students group the appropriate cards together. This could be a small group activity.

Option 3: Talk about each major topic while standing in a different part of the front of the classroom or while holding a different object. For example, you could stand by the door or hold a hammer and nail when discussing Martin Luther nailing the 95 theses on the door of the Castle church in Wittenberg, Germany.

Be creative.

If the course has a timeline of events or sequential knowledge (e.g. names of the books of the Bible), each event or bit of information can be written on a separate card and the students can practice putting them in order. You might divide into small groups and only give each group a portion of the cards. Sometimes sequencing can be more difficult when there are gaps.

For example – put these Bible books in order: James, Malachi, Galatians, Ezra, Leviticus, Lamentations, Jude, and Amos.

Although visual aids need not be complicated, some people are more gifted at graphic arts than others. Use what is available to you – and always cite your source.

Stéphane Tibi has created study maps to aid people in learning the Articles of Faith, The Books of the Bible, the Ten Commandments and more. These can be used in conjunction with both theology classes and Bible classes. The website is www.studymaps.org

Some visual aids cost nothing to make... or use...

Your students have a vast bank of mental images. You can creatively use those in your classroom as well. Storytelling and proverbs often enhance learning.

Can you think of one to illustrate a point in your lesson?



NEWS

On October 29th, nine students graduated from the ITN in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The next day, General Superintendent Stan Toler ordained them – 7 elders and 2 deaconesses.

Congratulations — to these students and their teachers.