



ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

ESL

Adapted from His Heart, Our Hands



ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

English as a second language is frequently referred to as conversational English. Ability to converse in English is the focus of ESL. Although the shape of the ministry can differ widely, the basic idea of an ESL ministry is native English speakers (in this context that means no or little accent) conversing with immigrants. The Bible is used in the teaching situation.

Other aspects of an ESL ministry can be relationship-building, such as hosting internationals in Christian homes, having parties and fellowships, mentoring, and teaching skills such as shopping and driving. These aspects will depend on what type of immigrants attend your ministry. Refugees who have just arrived in the country will have different needs from a doctoral student who wants to make American friends.

HOW DO WE PLAN AN ESL MINISTRY?

- 1. PRAY.** Enlist prayer support from concerned Christians. Ask them to pray for teachers and other volunteers, as well as potential students.
- 2. FIND YOUR AUDIENCE.** Determine where immigrants and/or internationals live and work in your community.
- 3. ENGAGE CHURCH LEADERS.** Share the need for conversational English classes with the pastor and get their support.
- 4. DECIDE ON FUNDING.** Determine with the staff person how much money the ministry will need to get started. You will need money for books, teacher training, and classroom materials.
- 5. OBTAIN APPROVAL.** Seek church or associational approval or support so that they will view the ministry as part of their work. (On Mission Team, education ministry, WMU, missions committee, or other appropriate group)
- 6. CHOOSE A DIRECTOR.** This person, with the help of other workers, is responsible for enlisting and securing training for teachers, enrolling students, and organizing the ministry.
- 7. ENLIST WORKERS.** Enlistment includes teachers and other volunteers, such as hostesses or child care workers. Usually, the only qualifications to teach in a volunteer ESL ministry include the following: a sense of Christian calling to help in the ministry; ability to read, write, and speak English well (no or little accent); and completion of the 16-hour Conversational English Workshop.
- 8. PLAN WORKSHOP.** Contact a Louisiana Baptists Compassion Ministry office for information on scheduling a basic teacher training workshop.
- 9. TRAIN TEACHERS.** Use the 16-hour workshop for training. Volunteers who do not receive a minimum of 16 hours of training are usually the first to drop out of the ministry.

HOW DO WE BEGIN OUR MINISTRY?

Within a week of the workshop, the director and other workers will need to meet and decide the following:

- Location of classrooms
- Day or days of the week to offer classes
- Books and other materials to order
- Promotion to enlist students
- Child care needs
- Other details

After these details have been worked out, enlist students using the ideas given in the workshop. Nurture the ministry with ongoing support and recognition for teachers and students. Keep the sponsoring church or association informed about the needs and successes of the ministry.

HOW DO WE EVALUATE OUR MINISTRY?

Talk with teachers, students, and other volunteers. How does each group feel about the ministry? What parts of the ministry are going well? What could be done to improve things? Are there widely differing view- points? This could show some misunderstandings you will want to remedy. Communication is key for the ministry to go smoothly.

Another way to evaluate the ministry is through numbers of students, numbers of teachers, professions of faith, baptisms, and new church members.

WHAT SOURCES OF HELP ARE AVAILABLE?

Literacy Missions Conversational English Workshop (Lifeway)

This manual is used in the 16-hour Conversational English Workshop.

English Bible Lessons from the Bible: Book of Mark (Lifeway)