Education at a YouthBuild Program

Written by YouthBuild USA under contract with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
“I dropped out because I didn’t want to learn. I thought I was above the teachers, I thought I was above the law. School was boring, it didn’t make sense to me—we didn’t connect, I was not interested. I went to school for the women, gym, and lunch. I was not there for the books or learning, I didn’t have time for that. Before Youthbuild I was gang-bangin’, drinkin’ heavy, living day to day, not looking into the future, being out there, being destructive. I looked at my life like Jesse James, and I didn’t think I would make it to 21.

Youthbuild taught you how to express yourself, look up words in the dictionary. They taught you to be a leader. They taught me how to take care of my family. They taught me a lot. In the school part they didn’t do the same old book thing, they used one-on-one learning, pick your brain, they go over it with you until you get it right—it wasn’t a boring process—it was more like a friend helping you get up on a horse and learning how to ride it.

If there wasn’t a program like Youthbuild, I’d probably be in the penitentiary serving life or something. If I didn’t have my GED, I’d probably be going from job to job. I probably wouldn’t have my family with me—it would look pretty gloomy.

Once you’ve been part of Youthbuild it stays with you the rest of your life. It’s the best thing I’ve ever come upon. I hope they keep Youthbuild going and spread it all across the United States.

Youthbuild was the only one that prepared me for life.”

—Eric Clark, graduate, YouthBuild McLean County
Preface

_Education at a Youthbuild Program_ is one of a series of handbooks developed by YouthBuild USA under contract with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to assist individuals and organizations in operating Youthbuild programs in their communities. These handbooks, covering education, counseling, construction, leadership development, and graduate resources are thematically linked, so that, taken together, they provide a detailed and comprehensive guide to implementing an effective Youthbuild program. The handbooks supplement the _Youthbuild Program Manual_ which provides an overview of the Youthbuild program and its components.

_Education at a Youthbuild Program_ represents the compilation and distillation of over 15 years of Youthbuild experience in the field. Additional publications and materials are also available from YouthBuild USA. We encourage you to contact YouthBuild USA or HUD for more information and assistance or to get additional copies of this handbook.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a useful guide to both new and experienced programs, derived from actual experience in Youthbuild programs. In order to complete it, it has been necessary to contact many directors, teachers, and program advisors for advice, feedback, and resource materials. Each has generously shared his or her time to assist in the process of developing the handbook.

The following programs and people have offered invaluable assistance in the development of the Youthbuild education component and _Education at a Youthbuild Program_:

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Introduction to Education at a Youthbuild Program

Emerging Significance of the Youthbuild School

The HUD Youthbuild program is the only national program for out-of-school young adults that places equal emphasis on community development, job training, and education.

Youthbuild is the only program that provides young adults an immediately productive role in the community while also providing equal measures of basic education toward a diploma, skills training toward a decent paying job, leadership development toward civic engagement, adult mentorship toward overcoming personal problems, and participation in a supportive mini-community with a positive set of values.

Youthbuild programs are not only housing development and job training programs, but they are also alternative schools dedicated to educating their students in secondary level academic skills, vocational skills, and leadership skills.

The requirement in the Youthbuild authorizing legislation that Youthbuild participants spend 50% of their time in education-related activities and 50% in housing construction creates a uniquely appropriate program design for young people who lack jobs, marketable skills, and education.

To date, according to statistics from Youthbuild programs for which YouthBuild USA has data, Youthbuild students are obtaining their GED and high school diplomas in much higher percentages than students in comparable second chance programs that have publicly reported outcomes. In 40 Youthbuild sites during 1997, an average of 40% of those students who needed a GED or diploma attained one, despite entering the program with an average reading level of 7.1. In addition, Youthbuild graduates are going on to community colleges and other postsecondary education and are earning AmeriCorps education awards to assist them in paying tuition.

Youthbuild students from many different sites across the nation have repeatedly reported that the Youthbuild school is entirely different from the high school they attended previously. Because of the small size and the community-oriented philosophy of the program, they report feeling safe and respected. Because of the high teacher to student ratio, they report that teachers show that they care about their learning and give them the individual attention they need. Because small group work is encouraged and positive values promoted, they report an attitude of mutual assistance and respect among the students.
Due to this success as a special type of alternative school reaching the out-of-school youth who are considered hardest to reach, Youthbuild has attracted the attention of the national School-to-Work system. Local Youthbuild programs have obtained demonstration grants as School-to-Work programs. Local Youthbuild programs have obtained state charters in Texas and Pennsylvania. Superintendents in several cities and counties have identified the local Youthbuild program as an alternative school to which average daily attendance funds may flow and which can grant a high school diploma.

Because of the special position Youthbuild holds, it is crucial that each program take the development of its education component extremely seriously. Youthbuild programs have an opportunity to make a decisive difference not only in the lives of their own students, but also in the nation's understanding about what is needed by out-of-school unemployed youth in general, and what a strong positive contribution they can make to our national life if they are invited to resume their education and participate in community development.

**Essential Elements of the Youthbuild School**

Running an effective, exciting, and attractive alternative school for students who have left their previous school and been “on the street” is a hard job. Most Youthbuild students carry with them a history of failure and disappointment in school. Their apprehension toward re-entering school can make operating an effective classroom extremely challenging for the Youthbuild staff.

The broadly stated goals of the education component are as follows:

1. To assist unemployed youth in becoming economically self-sufficient.
2. To enable them to continue their formal education toward whatever goals they set.
3. To encourage them to embrace the idea that learning extends beyond the classroom as a life-long process of self-transformation and renewal.
4. To prepare them with leadership skills and commitment to become permanently engaged in community development.

For the education component to be successful in these ways, several critical elements are required:

- The Youthbuild classroom must be prepared to address the diverse educational needs of the trainees who may enter the program at widely varying academic levels.
- The education component must be organized, managed, staffed, and equipped to offer the best possible environment for learning.
- The Youthbuild classroom must respond to the cultural and experiential backgrounds of the trainees by addressing issues related to poverty, ethnicity, race, gender, parenting, sexual orientation, violence, and substance abuse.
• The program must be capable of actually delivering on the promise of academic advancement made to trainees by offering the GED or a high school diploma, certificates of mastery, and resources for continuing study in other training programs or higher education.

• The program must create a mini-community in which members are committed to each other's success and everyone is supported to reach their goals.

While this handbook addresses the “education component,” in order to separate it out for in-depth attention, the reader should understand that it is the comprehensive and integrated nature of the Youthbuild experience that makes it succeed as a school, as a job training program, as a leadership development program, and as a community development and community service program.

**Introduction to this Handbook**

*Education at a Youthbuild Program* is for new programs as well as for old programs wishing to reevaluate and re-design their education components. It is designed to be used either as a step-by-step guide to planning and implementing the education component or as a reference tool for teachers who are searching for new ideas. The handbook can be used systematically or like an encyclopedia. Teachers, program directors, and other staff members can refer to it when brainstorming for new ways to do things.

Developing the education component requires time, planning, and forethought. Each chapter in this handbook addresses an issue that must be considered carefully during the course of planning.

**Audience**

This handbook has been written primarily for academic instructors and directors, but vocational and worksite instructors will benefit from it as well, especially in those areas that relate to vocational integration and classroom management.

Construction managers and program managers should also use this handbook to assist them in designing and supervising the education and training components.

**How the Handbook is Organized**

The handbook provides both a narrative description of the process of establishing the education component and practical documents that can be used the way they are presented or as models. The practical documents can be found in the Appendix at the end of the book. The title and item number for each item included in the Appendix are listed at the end of each chapter.
These materials were developed by YouthBuild USA, under a contract with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The materials contain suggested resource centers, organizations, resource materials, and bibliographies that the authors believe participants may find useful in conducting Youthbuild programs and activities. However, the suggested sources are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all sources, and their inclusion in the materials does not imply their endorsement by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
This handbook is supported by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The opinions expressed are solely those of the authors. In designing your academic and instructional program, please note Section 456(c) of the Youthbuild legislation, below.

(c) Authority Restriction.—No provision of this subtitle may be construed to authorize any agency, officer, or employee of the United States to exercise any direction, supervision, or control over the curriculum, program of instruction, administration, or personnel of any educational institution, school, or school system, or over the selection of library resources, textbooks, or other printed or published instructional materials by any educational institution or school system.
Part I: Planning the Education Component

This first part of the handbook describes the key issues to be considered in the planning stage. These include the type of role the Youthbuild organization will play in the education process, the selection of the education curricula and the certificate model, hiring of staff, helping teachers succeed in the classroom, and academic considerations in selection and orientation of trainees.
Chapter 1: Designing the Education Component

Overview

The education component of a Youthbuild program can take several forms depending on the needs of the trainees, on whether they earn a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) or standard high school diploma from Youthbuild, on what types of organizations are collaborating in the project, and on what type of curriculum is taught. The process of designing the education component involves a complex set of decisions that requires program staff to carefully consider the goals, strategies, and available resources for the education component.

Broadly speaking, the goals of the Youthbuild education component are to create opportunities for measurable achievement in the classroom culminating in either the GED, a high school diploma, or significant advancement in grade level to make young people more employable, and to foster a life-long appreciation for learning.

This chapter describes the factors involved in designing the education component, including the two primary certificate options—the GED and the high school diploma—along with various delivery systems and instructional approaches that should be considered. The chapter also examines the types of collaborations with other organizations in the community that might support the Youthbuild education component.

In designing the education component, program staff must address four basic questions:

- Who is the target population for the Youthbuild program?
- Will a Youthbuild education lead to a GED or a standard high school diploma?
- What organizations are available to help provide instruction to the target population?
- What will comprise the curriculum and how will it be taught?

Identifying the Youthbuild Student Target Population

The HUD legislation defines Youthbuild students as follows:

- They must be between 16 and 24 years old
- 75% of them must have dropped out of high school
• 75% must be individuals who are very low income or a member of a very low income family
• 100% must have “educational needs”

“Low income family” is defined in section 3(b) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 as those families whose incomes do not exceed 80% of the median income for the area.

“Educational needs” are not defined in the legislation, but have been interpreted to mean that the applicant has a demonstrated need and willingness to spend 50% of the full-time Youthbuild program in the academic component, either to improve basic skills or to prepare for college if he or she already has a high school diploma. Enrolling in the program only for the construction training is not an option.

With these requirements as a starting point, eligible applicants to Youthbuild programs can include individuals with an extremely wide range of academic preparation. Typically, applicants have reading levels that can range from illiterate to 12th grade level, but they tend to cluster between 5th and 8th grade levels. Applicants include many individuals with learning disabilities, with a need for English as a second language, or with a need for substantial remediation. There will also be applicants who already have their diploma or GED and who want access to the construction industry or want to prepare for college. It should be noted, however, that having a high school diploma does not guarantee that an individual does not need basic skills training; on the contrary, Youthbuild programs have found that many high school graduates have roughly the same academic skills as those who have dropped out.

The academic level of the chosen target group influences the planning of the educational component. For example, if a program accepts high school graduates who do not need basic skills training, then the program must provide college preparation and links to local community colleges. Similarly, for programs that enroll students with less than a 6th grade reading level, basic skills training and extensive remediation will be required. For programs that accept students with reading levels below the fourth grade or with learning disabilities, special provisions are required, including teachers with relevant training and extra tutorial resources.

“Because our students come to us with little or no experience with regular work, citizenship, or stable family life, we start with the experience of work, from which we draw out the academic lessons.”

- John Briscoe, Visions Youthworks, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
**Academic Preparation of Youthbuild Students**

After the target population has been clearly identified, it is necessary to assess the academic preparedness of the trainees. This assessment—which should collect information on reading levels, skill range, and past experience in school—will be useful in both outlining individual learning plans for trainees and in designing the education component itself.

**Reading Level**

Programs that recruit students with 9th grade reading levels and above can provide a GED or high school diploma program and may also provide community college instruction that could earn trainees credit toward a post-secondary degree.

Educators estimate that students require roughly an 8th grade reading level in order to pass the GED within a 12-month training cycle. The GED test is written at approximately 10th grade level. Most students who read at or below the 7th level on a standardized reading test find it difficult to pass the GED exam within a year. Therefore, if a program accepts such students, it should develop plans for continuing with GED study beyond the 12-month training cycle.

If programs enroll students with reading scores below the 5th grade level, the teachers should be trained in teaching basic skills and the program should provide individual tutoring.

While incoming skills will influence achievement, many other factors affect success. For example, students who have been out of school may initially test low, but with a little practice, students may recover skills quickly. Also, teachers who believe in their students’ ability to achieve tend to communicate that belief and students rise to the challenge. Alternatively, if teachers believe that a certain incoming reading level mitigates against success within the time available, students will tend to sink to the level of expectation. Skillful and dedicated teachers, coupled with motivated students, make all the difference, forming a partnership in the joint venture of earning a certificate of graduation.

**Number of High School Credits**

If the program is a credit-based high school diploma program, decide in advance if entering students should have a minimum number of high school credits. If a program is committed to graduating all or most of the students from high school, staff must determine how many credits students can reasonably earn within the program and how long the program needs to be. If students are able to return to the school system after completing the program, are able to work in the coming years for a GED, or are able to graduate based on competency-based performance rather than credits earned, the program has more options and can accept students with fewer credits.
Programs that accept students with very few high school credits risk disappointing students who do not succeed within the program cycle if it is not made clear at the outset that these students may not earn enough credits for a diploma. Be clear to them about what is realistic for them to accomplish in the course of the program cycle.

**Skill Range**

Programs also must consider how broad a skill range can be accommodated by the staff. Programs that enroll students with a very wide range of skills—between the 5th grade and 12th grade levels, for example—often have a great deal of difficulty meeting every student’s needs. All programs should include a significant amount of individualization to meet students’ particular learning needs, but a too-broad skill range among students may make it difficult to do any large group or small group instruction unless the teacher is very skilled in setting up situations that permit students to help teach each other.

**Proportion Who Have GED or Diploma**

Many students who already have diplomas still need support in developing their reading, writing, and math skills to the level required for jobs, to pass union apprenticeship examinations, or to apply to college programs. Programs should assess these students’ skills in detail and develop contingency plans for meeting their academic needs outside of the mainstream GED or diploma-preparation structure.

**Program Goals in Relation to Target Population**

Youthbuild programs have made various decisions regarding academic preparation based on broad program goals. For example:

- Programs with a priority on getting graduates into the trade unions have tended to select students with a minimum of an 8th or 9th grade reading level so they could be sure to complete their GED or diploma and move into apprenticeships reasonably quickly.
- YouthBuild AmeriCorps programs that offer a college scholarship have sometimes tried to select students most likely to go to college so students can benefit from the scholarship they will have earned through AmeriCorps.
- Programs with an emphasis on developing young leaders for the community have sought to include the maximum 25% of high school graduates and may also select other students likely to succeed academically.
- Programs wanting to create a welcoming community for all highly motivated students have accepted a wide range of academic levels and worked to develop flexible, individualized curricula.
• Programs aiming to include the most-in-need students, who often have nowhere else to turn, have established pre-Youthbuild tutorial programs for students reading below 5th grade level and then let the students move into the full Youthbuild program when they reached 6th to 8th grade reading and math levels.

It is important to make sure that the academic needs of the students selected are matched by the program design and the resources available for them. It is a mistake to take in students whose skills are either too advanced or too undeveloped for the particular academic program offered, unless the Youthbuild program has the flexibility to provide additional resources.

Selecting an Appropriate Youthbuild Graduation Certificate: The GED or the High School Diploma

Young people who have not completed high school have two options by which to complete their secondary education. One option is a standard high school diploma which may still be available to them if they can earn the required credits through a state-approved academic program. The second option is the GED, which can be obtained by passing the standardized GED tests. Academic preparation for the GED tests, including classroom instruction, tutoring, pre-testing, and individual study does not require state approval and can occur formally in a study program or informally through self study.

The chance to gain a certificate, whether it is a GED or a diploma, for completing one's secondary education can be a powerful motivating force for young people. For Youthbuild students in particular, many of whom carry a history of failure in traditional classrooms, working toward and receiving these certificates can be a life-changing experience.

The General Equivalency Diploma (GED)

The academic goal for most Youthbuild programs is for students to attain the GED. Designing the education component with GED attainment as the goal gives programs more independence and more flexibility in the operation of the program, but less flexibility in choosing the curriculum material. The delivery system, the amount of time students spend in the classroom, and the qualifications of the teachers all are less rigidly regulated in GED programs than in high schools. With this approach, success can be defined simply by the students passing the GED standardized tests.

Advantages of the GED Program:

Autonomy: Typically, programs are not bound to fulfill requirements of any other agency or the local school district, although this depends upon funding sources.
Creativity: Programs that choose this option often have more flexibility in instructional design and can prepare students for the GED in many different ways.

Flexibility and individualization: There may be more flexibility with student selection criteria. Programs can offer an individualized approach which provides beginning students with appropriate Adult Basic Education (pre-GED basic skills) instruction and channel GED-ready students into a GED-oriented curriculum. Students can progress at their own speed and are not bound to any external requirements.

Educational value: While the high school diploma may have greater social value, there is some argument that passing the GED exam signifies greater knowledge. For example, passing the GED may require higher reading skills than earning credits or passing state graduation competency exams.

Disadvantages of the GED Program:

Low marketability: Some studies indicate that students with GEDs are less likely to be hired than students with traditional high school diplomas. Also, students with only GEDs are not eligible for the military.

Tendency to “teach to the test”: Teachers may focus solely on the skills needed to pass the test, rather than the competencies and skills required for broader intellectual development. This can diminish the quality of the education.

Does not integrate construction training: Much of what is taught on the construction site does not directly apply to the taking of the GED tests, whereas in many diploma programs, credit can be earned for construction site learning.

Delivery Systems for the GED

Youthbuild programs can deliver GED instruction either by developing an in-house instructional component or by collaborating with another organization such as an Adult Basic Education (ABE) program, a community college, or a public school. In developing an appropriate delivery system for GED instruction, there are several important factors to consider early:

- Investigate the state guidelines related to the attainment of the GED
- Be prepared to teach the skills necessary to pass the test
- The program design must include an academic plan for trainees who complete their GED before the end of the Youthbuild program

In considering whether to keep the education component in-house or to collaborate with an outside agency, weigh your program’s need for resources with its need for control over the management of the education component. Usually, in
keeping the academic program in-house, a high degree of control is maintained over the staff, the schedule, and other key elements of a successful education component. On the other hand, by collaborating with other organizations, the Youthbuild program can greatly increase the resources—both financial and otherwise—available to the education component while forfeiting some degree of control over management of the academic component.

**In-house Programs**

Youthbuild programs that operate their own GED or Adult Basic Education (ABE) GED programs make their own decisions regarding program design, scheduling, staffing, and student assessment. The advantages to this approach include:

- Control over the quality of the teaching staff and instructional program
- Ability to change or shape the pace and program design to meet the needs of the students
- Flexibility with program start and end dates
- Loyalty of the teachers to the Youthbuild vision and inclusion of them in the staff team

The disadvantages include:

- More intensive planning and program development required
- Teaching staff must be capable of managing the entire education component
- Additional expertise and time required

**Collaboration with Adult Basic Education Programs**

Some Youthbuild programs have developed partnerships with other non-profit adult educational, adult basic education (ABE) programs, literacy programs, centers that operate GED programs, or skills training centers with ABE/GED classes. The advantages of this kind of partnership include:

- Having an existing program with pre-established systems and materials
- Ability to offer students a wide range of educational options, and in some instances, skills training courses
- Use of existing community resources
- No duplication of efforts
- Possible revenue stream to fund instructional staff

The disadvantages include:

- Limited or no control over issues affecting program quality such as selection of teaching staff, curriculum and educational design, program organization and structure, philosophy, and tone
• Youthbuild students may be integrated into classes with other students diminishing the important cohesion of the Youthbuild peer group

A new Youthbuild program that is not part of an agency with adult education experience may consider collaborating with an established ABE program. Many communities have existing ABE, GED, and adult literacy programs that have experience in working with the population served by Youthbuild. A number of Youthbuild programs have effectively collaborated with existing ABE and GED programs within the local public school system, the local community college system, or a community-based education program. These types of collaborative relationships can be an efficient way to provide the Youthbuild education component.

The following steps may be helpful when collaborating with existing adult education programs:

1. Investigate the program's track records. What is the average reading level of its students at the outset and what percentage of its program participants pass the GED? Ask about the program's student profile and then talk to alumni of the program. Pay special attention to the experiences of individuals who fit the profile expected to enroll in the Youthbuild program. Find out about the stability, consistency, and quality of the teaching staff.

2. Determine the willingness to collaborate. Find out if a program has worked with other agencies, and then talk to staff in those agencies to find out how the collaboration worked. Ask if the program would be comfortable allowing Youthbuild to select its own classroom teacher, perhaps from a pool of its choosing, or if the program would agree to interviewing and selecting the teaching staff together. Most Youthbuild directors would not recommend a collaboration in which control over hiring and firing is lost.

3. Discuss details. Be clear about the need to allocate some of the teachers’ time for coordination between the academic and on-site components, both during the initial planning and on a regular (at least weekly) basis once the program is underway. Discuss supervision, support for staff development and training, funding, what costs each organization can cover and from what sources, participation in staff meetings and program retreats, and payment procedures.

Collaboration with the Local Public School System for GED Instruction

Collaboration with the school system for the GED may be an option if individuals can be identified within the system who are willing to be innovative, flexible, and supportive of alternative approaches to education. The advantages of this type of collaboration include:

Existing infrastructure. The local school system may have the staff, materials, and facilities already in place.
**On-site testing.** Part of the existing structure at a local school might be the capacity to administer the standardized GED tests.

**School affiliation.** Trainees may welcome the opportunity to be associated with the local high school and the program may gain credibility with funders and other partners by being affiliated with the school.

The disadvantages of this type of partnership include:

**Incompatibility with Youthbuild.** The structure and goals of the local high school may conflict with Youthbuild.

**Schedule conflicts.** The school schedule may not align well with the funding cycles or construction schedules of the Youthbuild program. Similarly school vacation shutdowns may not coincide with the Youthbuild program shutdowns.

**Lack of management control.** To enter into a partnership with a local school, the Youthbuild staff may be forced to give up control over significant elements of the program.

In choosing this option, the following process may be helpful.

1. Determine the school’s capabilities. Research the school system’s attempts to bring back young adults who have dropped out. Are they seeking out alternative programs to remedy their dropout problem? If the school cannot handle the problem, Youthbuild may have a role to play in the system.

2. Highlight the benefits of the program to a school administrator. Seek out the person responsible for alternative education, and convince him or her of the benefits of establishing an off-site alternative program, with the possibility of pooling funds from several sources to address the special needs of Youthbuild students. Find out if the system is already sponsoring programs that demonstrate the administrative capability to handle alternative education programs. If the local school system does not have anyone responsible for alternative education, find a senior administrator who is willing to explore alternatives for students the system has failed.

3. Find a good match in a local school. In some school systems Youthbuild may be required to establish a collaboration with a particular local high school. If this is the route suggested by school administrators, several factors should be considered when deciding on a school:
   - A strong faculty or teaching pool that may include an individual who could work with Youthbuild
   - An innovative and creative principal who is enthusiastic about the Youthbuild model
• Someone with a sense of urgency who would consider and push for policy alternatives if roadblocks arose related to the implementation of Youthbuild within the system

4. Investigate other factors. Can the school system help with funding? Is it willing to let the program hire, train, supervise, and fire its own teachers? Experience has shown that a Youthbuild director’s ability to select, supervise, and dismiss teachers is key to successfully working with the public school system.

**Collaboration with Community Colleges and Technical Colleges**

Community colleges and technical colleges can be excellent collaborating partners in the delivery of GED instruction to Youthbuild students. Increasingly, Youthbuild programs are establishing links with local community colleges that support the goals of both programs simultaneously. Community colleges can bring significant resources to a partnership with Youthbuild and Youthbuild can help the college to fulfill its own instructional mandate. Establishing a working partnership with a community college or a technical college can require a significant amount of planning and negotiating, and a formal agreement must be established.

Briefly, the advantages of this type of partnership include:

- **Post-graduate opportunities.** Immediately upon graduating from Youthbuild, trainees can enroll in the college to further their education.

- **Financial aid.** Youthbuild trainees may be eligible for local, state, or federal financial aid from the college while they attend Youthbuild.

- **Access to services and facilities.** Youthbuild trainees may gain access to career services, a library, athletic facilities, computer labs, and other common college facilities.

Some disadvantages include:

- **Not available in all areas.** Not all community colleges or technical colleges provide GED instruction, and many do not administer the GED tests.

- **Institution incompatible with Youthbuild.** The rigid structure and close community atmosphere of a Youthbuild program may clash with the institutional bureaucracy of the college.

- **Inappropriate staff.** The college staff may not be prepared or inclined to work with Youthbuild trainees, which may result in conflict in the classroom or between the administrators.
In designing an agreement with a community college or technical college, the following issues should be addressed:

1. Credit. Ask for an agreement that gives trainees credit for the instructional component of the partnership. Community college credit motivates young people to continue their education after they graduate.

2. Selection of Instructors. The Youthbuild director should have input in the selection of the instructor. Effective instructors are those who know the subject matter, have a clear understanding of the Youthbuild model, are familiar with a variety of teaching methodologies (e.g. individualized instruction, small groups, and classroom projects), have the skills to work with an at-risk population, and have the willingness to support the overall philosophy and community of the Youthbuild program.

3. Funding. The community college will usually pay for the instructor. If the Youthbuild program provides 20-25 students, it constitutes a class, and the community college receives state reimbursements called full-time equivalents or full-time student equivalents.

4. Location. A program can request that the class be taught at the Youthbuild program. There are advantages to having the instruction on campus (e.g. familiarizing trainees with college life); however, if the college is too far from the program or there are problems with scheduling or transportation, then holding the class at the Youthbuild program may be the best option.

5. Integration. The community college instructor must be willing to integrate his or her instructional program with the other elements of the Youthbuild program. This is especially important for integrating vocational instruction with the construction site work and social studies with leadership development.

6. Attending staff meetings. The community college instructor or staff participating in the partnership must be willing to attend Youthbuild staff meetings. This will ensure that there is effective coordination of the partnership and that any problems that arise can be addressed in a consistent manner.

Standard High School Diploma and Its Delivery Systems

Some Youthbuild programs have established a high school diploma program and many others have started to explore this option. In most states, the local school system has a legislative mandate to educate young people up to the age of 21. Many school districts appreciate that a collaboration with Youthbuild allows them to offer an alternative for students who have left school without graduating. Often school districts will provide teachers or funds for this purpose, from state average-daily-attendance funds or from district alternative school funds.
The advantages and disadvantages of diploma programs are detailed in the following brief descriptions of the three different forms of high school diploma programs:

- Credit-based programs
- Competency-based programs
- Charter schools

Credit-based Diploma Programs

The credit-based diploma program is the most common diploma program in public schools. It requires students to earn a set number of credits to receive a diploma. Many credit-based programs measure “seat time,” that is, the time the student spends attending a required course to earn credit for that course. This type of program is familiar to many educators and is widely practiced by public schools. Tracking attendance is an important tool in managing a credit-based program so that students’ earned time is accurately recorded.

The advantages of the credit-based high school diploma model include the following:

Credibility and availability. The local school district has legitimacy as the institution responsible for providing education within the community. Districts have the public mandate and resources to carry out comprehensive educational programs. Thus, a diploma granted by the school district may be more respected than a GED awarded by an independent agency. In addition, this approach may be best for students who are close to finishing their diplomas. It will be relatively easy for them to acquire the few credits they need to graduate.

Marketability. In some geographic areas, employers have a marked preference for standard high school diplomas over GEDs.

Motivation. Many programs have found that students are sometimes more motivated to seek a high school diploma than a GED.

Systemic support. Local school districts have financial resources, teaching staffs, libraries, computers, and other equipment and resources that a program might access.

The disadvantages of the credit-based diploma program include the following:

Less Flexibility. Many schools have specific credit requirements for graduation. Young people who have dropped out of school with few credits will have a more difficult time making up the necessary credits to receive a high school diploma. Some Youthbuild programs that have adopted this model have had to extend the length of program to two years of full-time participation, and even then some students have not been able to complete the diploma.
**Bureaucratic constraints.** The hiring process for teachers, administrative paperwork required, and programmatic decision making may be cumbersome and time consuming. The school system may retain control over hiring and firing of teachers, and the teachers may report to a school system principal rather than the Youthbuild program’s director.

**Age constraints.** Public school funding may limit the age of the students to 16-21 instead of 16-24.

**Competency-based Diploma Programs**

A competency-based high school diploma program is one in which students progress toward the diploma by demonstrating mastery over a predetermined set of competencies rather than completing credits. Students demonstrate knowledge and skill achievement using a combination of test and portfolio assessments.

Advantages of this approach include:

**Diploma can be earned in one year.** Competency-based diploma programs are particularly well suited to youth who have been out of school for several years and who cannot, in only one Youthbuild cycle, earn the credits required to complete a diploma. If a diploma can be earned by meeting competency requirements instead of through “seat time,” many of these students can earn a diploma in one year.

**Measures understanding.** Competency-based programs measure understanding and mastery, so students and teachers can verify that learning has occurred.

**Individualized study.** These programs allow students to work at their own pace on a pre-determined set of competencies in the order at which they choose to learn. Also, students can quickly assess their own progress.

Disadvantages include:

**Learning is not self-directed.** The curriculum is entirely planned in advance and students focus on meeting the requirements to master the competencies, allowing for fewer opportunities for the exploration of new ideas or approaches.

**Inflexible curriculum.** Typically, a competency-based program will include a clearly established, and therefore somewhat inflexible, curriculum that does not allow for experimentation or inclusion of new material.

**May lack relevance for student.** Competency-based programs can become outdated or may lack relevance for the students.

YouthBuild Philadelphia and the City of Philadelphia School Department designed a competency-based curriculum that matched the public schools’
requirements of 53 learning outcomes. This curriculum covers eight areas: communication; critical thinking and problem-solving; citizenship; cross-cultural understanding and service; workplace and higher education readiness; academic skills; wellness and fitness; and vocational skills. Academic skills include math, English, social studies, science and health, and current affairs.

**Charter School Diploma Programs**

As of March, 1997, 28 states had passed charter school legislation, making it possible for alternative school programs to grant high school diplomas and gain access to public education funds. As of 1998, several Youthbuild programs were operating under state charters in Texas and Pennsylvania. However, operating a charter school should not be undertaken lightly. It can be an extremely complex and expensive effort to expand an existing Youthbuild program to full charter school status and not all attempts have been successful. To find out more about the possibility of forming a charter school, contact your State Department of Education.

Running a Youthbuild program as a charter school offers several advantages:

- **Marketability.** The ability to offer students a high school diploma and increase their ability to compete in the job market.

- **Relevant curriculum.** The ability to develop relevant, integrated, project-based curricula, and learning environments for out-of-school youth.

- **Available funding.** A revenue stream to pay for instructors and other educational staff and program expenses.

- **Credit for construction training.** Work on the construction site can contribute toward earning a diploma.

There are challenges presented by creating a Youthbuild charter school. These include the following:

- **Conflicting needs.** Developing an educational model that is innovative and relevant to the needs of multi-level learners while meeting state performance standards and testing requirements.

- **Demands on staff.** Training staff in new curriculum and educational approaches and in meeting the more comprehensive demands of a high school diploma program.

- **Qualified teachers.** Selecting staff that have the experience, skills, qualifications, and openness to work with a charter school.

- **Recruitment and selection.** HUD-funded Youthbuild programs are required to serve low-income students, but charter schools must not screen applicants based on income level.

If the Youthbuild program has sufficient expertise, staffing, and funding to
administer the charter school, the benefits will probably be shown to outweigh the challenges. The three factors below are critical elements to running an effective charter school:

**Expertise.** Youthbuild programs need to have a curriculum developer who is well versed in classroom and individualized learning. This person should be able to train teachers to implement an integrated curriculum that addresses the basic skills, vocational education, social sciences, fine arts, mathematics, and science curriculum required to graduate students with a diploma. This person must also be trained in traditional and non-traditional assessment, use of counseling in a school setting, and career development programs.

**Staffing.** The program must have a school administrator who understands how to schedule classes, supervise the teaching staff, and oversee student discipline. Teachers need to be trained to teach at-risk young adults and must be able to teach the full range of subjects from math to English and science. The teachers must also know how to facilitate the learning process and use teaching methodologies other than lecture, such as small group learning, individualized instruction, audio-visual aids, and home study.

**Funding.** The Youthbuild program must ensure that it has sufficient funding to support the numbers of students involved in the charter school. Some states will allocate funds before the school year starts based on projected enrollments. If the charter school does not meet the projected enrollments, it will be required to reimburse the state. Other states do not fund the charter school until students have attended. In such cases, the states reimburse the charter school for average daily attendance. Either of the above funding approaches requires that the program obtain start-up funding for materials, supplies, pre-training sessions, and assessments. The cost of educating at-risk out-of-school youth is likely to be higher than the per pupil cost in most states.

### Deciding Which Certificate Program is Most Appropriate

In deciding which certificate program is most appropriate, proceed as follows:

1. Consider carefully who is the Youthbuild target population. Then, conceptualize the design of the entire Youthbuild program and consider how best to incorporate the education component into this overall design. An in-house program will afford the Youthbuild director and staff a high degree of control over the academic environment and a high level of integration with other program components. Many programs find this approach most effective. By contrast, partnerships with outside organizations such as schools and adult education programs can afford access to existing resources (e.g. teachers, funds,
equipment) and structures that can benefit the Youthbuild program. Most importantly, design the education component so that it comple-ments the overall program design and provides the best experience for the trainees.

2. If your program will operate the education component in-house, recruit teachers, and determine both the specific design of the com-ponent and the curriculum. Be sure the teachers hired are comfort-able with the program design and curriculum.

3. Hire the teachers and support them in setting up the classroom with curriculum materials and equipment, and work to integrate them into the rest of the staff team.

4. If operating a program in-house is not possible or not desirable, explore existing opportunities to create partnerships with other orga-nizations to either deliver instruction for the GED or a diploma. If it is possible for Youthbuild trainees to earn a high school diploma through the local high school, initiate a partnership with the high school, find out if it uses a credit-based or competency-based approach and determine if the curriculum is compatible with the structure and goals of Youthbuild.

5. If the high school diploma is not feasible, then assess what other orga-nizations in the community, including community colleges, could become a partner with Youthbuild in delivering the GED. Again, determine whether or not the partner has a program that is compatible with Youthbuild. At the same time, it is extremely important to develop an academic plan for trainees who earn the GED prior to the end of the Youthbuild program.

6. If there is a good organization with which to collaborate, negotiate a formal agreement, discuss instructional approaches and curriculum and the integration of construction into the overall academic design.

7. If no appropriate partner is available, then the only option is to design an in-house education component to deliver GED instruction. Again, plan an academic program for any trainees who complete the GED prior to the end of the Youthbuild program.

8. Recruit, screen and enroll trainees based on the certificate Youthbuild will award its graduates, on the program design, and on the curriculum.

Managing the Education Component

As with all other aspects of the Youthbuild program, the education component requires effective management. It is critical that adequate planning, coordination, and control be maintained within the academic component to assure success for the young people and for the success of the program as a whole. Achieving this
success rests largely with the education staff—the teachers, trainers, counselors, tutors and managers—who must be able to create an environment that supports learning. Such an environment must be safe from the violence, chaos, and distractions of the street life so familiar to Youthbuild trainees. Also, it must be an environment that does not replicate the past experiences of classroom failure that many Youthbuild students carry with them. To cultivate such an environment resources clearly are needed for books, materials, equipment, and furniture, but the single most important element of the education component is the quality of the teachers. It is the effectiveness of the relationship between the teachers and the students that will determine the academic success of the Youthbuild trainees. It is the job of program planners and managers to plan and organize the program’s academic component and then to actively support the work of the teachers so that the best possible learning environment can be created and maintained. The next chapter addresses these issues.

“I expected that because I was a woman, and already had my high school diploma, people would say, ‘You shouldn’t be here,’ and they didn’t. I went out there and worked hard like everybody else. I needed the program as much as anybody, because as a young person who wants to do something in my community and really learn how to organize, there was no other place for me to go. I needed YouthBuild to do the things I wanted to do in my life, but maybe not in the traditional sense of how Youthbuild is used.”

—Heather Rebeiro, graduate, YouthBuild New Bedford
Chapter 2: Hiring and Training the Education Staff

Overview

In Youthbuild programs, all staff are teachers, just as all staff are counselors and leadership developers to varying degrees. Whether or not their responsibilities include planning lessons, assessing skills or giving direct instruction, their interactions with young people can demonstrate respect, model appropriate behavior, and reinforce positive change and development. In addition to their particular skills, all staff must have the ability to relate effectively to young people and to work closely with each other to plan the curriculum, evaluate student progress, and assess program achievements.

This chapter outlines the roles and responsibilities of staff who work closely with students. It also outlines the roles of staff who develop the academic program and describes the process of finding qualified staff. It is important—even though not always easy—to find staff who have excellent educational credentials and practical experience and who also have a natural affinity to the Youthbuild philosophy. Program directors should make staff recruitment a priority from the outset. Take time to thoroughly interview candidates, preferably involving Youthbuild students (or young people from the community if the program is new).

In order to develop a cohesive education program, it is important that the program manager or education director participate in ongoing curriculum development, planning, and staff collaboration. Programs should establish regular methods of supervising and assisting education and training staff. Programs should also plan to involve an outside educational agency to help supervise and train instructors, if necessary. Specific suggestions for supervising and evaluating staff are included in this chapter. This chapter also discusses factors to consider in developing partnerships with school districts that provide teaching staff.

Roles of the Non-Academic Staff

Since all staff are teachers and certain staff positions have a key role in the education component, it is useful to consider the roles of the non-academic staff in relation to the education component.
Role of the Youthbuild Director

The director is the key manager of the education program. He or she must have a clear understanding of the goals, outcomes, and expectations of staff involved in the education program. The director is responsible for implementing the vision for the education program. In addition, the director:

- Has a working knowledge of the components of an effective education program
- Assists in the development of educational partnerships
- Participates in the design of the education component
- Hires high quality staff
- Identifies strong training programs to prepare and support education staff and promotes ongoing professional development
- Holds staff accountable to the goals of the education program and evaluates whether they meet these goals
- Ensures coordination between academic and construction and leadership components
- Stays accessible and develops methods to receive feedback and input from students
- Identifies resources and funding to support and expand the education program

Role of Program Manager

The program manager’s role is to facilitate the development of the educational and counseling components. Ideally, the program manager has experience in teaching or educational management as well as experience in counseling. The program manager should be creative, energetic, and sensitive to staff concerns. He or she must have team-building skills and must be able to coordinate diverse educational and counseling activities. The program manager facilitates communication between the counseling and academic staff and also assists the construction manager in facilitating communication between the academic and construction staffs. He or she coordinates in-service training for teachers and counselors. The program manager is responsible for contract management, the supervision of teachers and counselors, and the coordination of regular student performance reviews.

Role of Construction Manager

The construction manager’s role is to coordinate and supervise the training component. The construction manager should have experience training young adults in construction-related skills and, ideally, should also have experience in supervising such training. The construction manager assists the program manager in facilitating communication between the academic and construction staffs.
The facilitation of communication between the academic and construction staff requires that the construction manager have a clear idea about how to integrate classroom learning into what is learned at the construction site. The construction manager must communicate with the academic staff about the sequence of learning that will take place at the construction site. Once informed, the education staff can develop an academic schedule that coincides with the construction schedule. For example, if the foundation is being laid, then the academic instructors can teach measurement, volume, and quantity of material necessary to lay the foundation. If construction is at a historical site, then the education staff can provide lessons on the historical significance of the site and its importance to the community.

**Role of the Worksite Instructors**

The worksite instructors, also called site supervisors or construction trainers, are teachers. The worksite instructors need to communicate with the academic instructors about the specific lessons that are being taught in the classroom and how worksite instruction can complement these lessons and vice versa. After the construction managers develop the learning schedule, the worksite instructors should work directly with the academic teachers on how to deliver the lessons identified in the schedule. In the optimal situation, the worksite and academic instructors share lesson plans, learning modules, assessments, and materials so that each lesson is reinforced in the classroom and at the worksite.

Their job includes demonstrating skills, supervising the students as they practice, reviewing and reinforcing lessons, coordinating and assessing the ongoing learning on the site, and testing students’ mastery of specific construction competencies.

**Role of Counselors**

Counselors may play a teaching role, and should be considered part of the educational team. Counselors teach life skills, job readiness skills, and leadership skills and may give presentations on topics within their areas of expertise. In addition, they may coordinate with the teachers to supplement academic classroom teaching with special classes and presentations. Counselors arrange for guest speakers to talk to the students on relevant personal, health, and counseling issues.

**Roles of the Academic Staff**

**Role of Academic and Vocational Instructors**

Generally, Youthbuild programs follow a two week cycle. One week, half of the
trainees are at the construction site while the other half are in the classroom. The following week, the groups switch. In this cycle, the trainees receive classroom instruction every other week. It is advised that the teacher to student ratio be no more than 1 to 14. This will ensure that the students get quality time from the teacher and that the teacher will be able to supervise individualized instruction, group learning, project-based activities, and volunteers (e.g. tutors and mentors).

It is recommended that Youthbuild programs have a minimum of two teachers. One is needed to teach basic skills (reading, writing, and mathematics) if the students are primarily at a pre-GED level, or to teach the five subjects tested in the GED (reading, writing, math, science, and social studies) if the students are working toward the GED. A second teacher, who may be part-time, can teach construction theory and practice coinciding with the building schedule. Ideally, the second teacher can offer not only the vocational instruction, but also other subjects that complement the strengths of the primary teacher. As programs expand or work with outside agencies in collaboration, they are likely to increase the teaching staff and the specialization of teachers in particular subjects.

Both the academic instructor and the vocational education instructor assess student needs and progress, develop individual learning plans with each student, and work together to select, design, and implement a relevant interdisciplinary curriculum. Both should have experience teaching their subjects to adults or young adults and experience in creative curriculum planning and implementation. A sample of job descriptions for education and training staff is included in the Appendix as Item 1.

**Finding, Interviewing, and Hiring Staff**

Finding qualified staff to run the education component is not an easy task. Staff need to have a combination of knowledge of their role, experience with young people and a deep respect for their intelligence and capacity for learning. All staff need the ability to work as part of a team in a way that is creative, energetic, responsible, and open to supervision.

The following guidelines will assist program directors in finding and keeping staff who are an asset to the program.

Program directors must take time to recruit and thoroughly interview candidates. Educate candidates about the Youthbuild educational model and ask them to respond to it point by point. Look for flexibility, creativity, respect for young people, and skill in their area of expertise.

Ask candidates about their experiences with young people and give them scenarios to help determine their ability to deal with typical problems. A sample of interview scenarios for teachers and worksite instructors is included in the Appendix as Item 2.
Program directors should ask experts in the community to assist in the interview process if needed. For example, if a program needs to hire qualified vocational instructors but has not yet hired staff with construction or teaching experience, ask an instructor of the local trade school or a member of a carpentry apprenticeship program to help. Such community experts might help to identify candidates, develop questions, and conduct interviews (with other staff and students) in order to assess candidate qualifications.

The qualifications of an effective vocational or academic teacher must be clearly articulated before they are hired. This will ensure that they understand the characteristics necessary to be effective in a Youthbuild setting. The key qualifications are:

- A commitment to helping all students develop their highest potential
- A mastery of the subject matter they are teaching
- An understanding how to use effective teaching methodologies for young adults
- A willingness to learn new techniques and approaches
- The knowledge of how to facilitate learning and not just provide lectures
- An understanding of different learning styles and what type of teaching methodologies are effective with different styles
- A basic understanding of different assessment instruments and how to use these instruments for instruction
- A willingness to work as a team with other members of the Youthbuild staff
- An interest in the integration of what they are teaching with other Youthbuild components
- An understanding of the community, the cultural backgrounds of the students, and a sense of the positive role that young leaders could play

By using these qualities as a guide, staff can initiate an interview process that will identify teachers who will be effective in the classroom. It is recommended that program directors recruit teachers using traditional and non-traditional sources. The traditional sources include the following:

- School districts
- Community colleges
- Non-profit agencies
- Newspaper ads

Non-traditional sources would be recruiting teachers from volunteer organizations such as AmeriCorps, VISTA, and retired executive loan programs. However, if
a program decides it wants students to receive high school credit or community college credit, it will need to recruit teachers who possess a teaching certificate.

**Interview Process**

Many programs have found that inclusion of young people in the process of hiring teachers results in the selection of a stronger teaching staff and greater engagement of the students in the education component. After the director has selected acceptable candidates through a rigorous process of interviews and reference checks, the final interview and selection includes Youthbuild students or a youth advisory committee if the program has not yet begun.

Initial interviews or final interviews may include the following questions, along with others that can be developed to address the key qualities listed above:

- What is your education philosophy?
- How best can you teach young adults who have been out of school and unemployed?
- Name different learning styles and how best to teach these styles.
- How do you facilitate the learning process?
- Do you have experience in individual learning plans?
- What type of assessments do you use for young adults?
- How do you manage tutors and other volunteers?
- How would you integrate your classroom instruction with other Youthbuild components?

In addition to questions, when students participate it can be very effective to include role plays in the interviews, with students presenting one or two typical scenarios for the candidate to handle. Often the greatest insight about the prospective teacher comes through these role plays.

**Collaborating to Hire Teachers**

As described in the previous chapter, many Youthbuild programs develop a collaborative relationship with the local public school district or other educational entity in order to find, hire, and pay the salaries of teachers. Such arrangements can work to the benefit of both the Youthbuild program and the collaborating agency, but certain key factors must be considered. Youthbuild programs should enter into collaborations with school districts only after they have planned to negotiate for the following conditions:

- **Right of refusal**
  
  In agreeing to hire existing district employees, it is essential that programs have the right of refusal. In this way, they can interview
employees recommended by the school district, but do not have to accept each candidate who is sent. Programs should ensure that they have the authority to conduct thorough interviews in which potential teachers are introduced to Youthbuild’s design and purpose, and expectations are clearly outlined. Hold district employees to the same standards set for other staff members.

- **Right to transfer**

  Negotiate for the right to transfer teachers who do not meet performance expectations. Even though district teachers will undergo the same evaluation process as any other Youthbuild employee, if the program does not have the right to transfer those teachers out of Youthbuild the evaluation process has no meaning.

- **Ability to hold district teachers to the expectations of the Youthbuild program**

  Make clear the expectations of district teachers in regard to their responsibilities to Youthbuild. Prepare teachers in advance for the meetings they must attend, the vacation schedule, and their participation in trainings. The teacher who agrees to work with Youthbuild should do so knowing these conditions. There are advantages for public school teachers to participating in Youthbuild, including smaller class size, assistance from counselors, the opportunity to be part of a staff team, and the opportunity to do curriculum development and thematic teaching. A program should also plan to contribute to the staff development of district teachers by budgeting money for their involvement in HUD trainings and other staff development options.

**Orientation and Training**

An overall staff training that includes all staff is essential before the program begins. This will include, at minimum, an overview of Youthbuild’s national and local history and philosophy; an overview of the local organization’s history, goals and objectives, philosophy, and institutional relationships; the program’s approach and overall plan; and the respective roles of all staff. In addition, classroom instructors will need a specific training that will include the following:

- A discussion of the academic goals of the program and their relationship to the teachers’ role. Review expectations concerning students’ performance, competencies, and graduation requirements.

- An overview of the curriculum development and program planning process. Review the structure for team meetings, the role of teachers in the planning process, and issues regarding scheduling.

- A review of the mechanics of program operation, including documentation and paperwork.
In-service Training

Provide opportunities for in-service training for instructors, both to enhance successful performance and to remediate minor problems. Provide monthly in-service trainings on such issues as conflict resolution, classroom management techniques, critical thinking skills, and topics concerning multiculturalism, stereotypes, prejudice, respect, and diversity.

Research resources in the community that can be helpful to the Youthbuild staff. It may be useful to contract with a teacher trainer from the local board of education or union apprenticeship council or from the education department at a local university to meet with staff to discuss issues on a regular basis.

Develop a mailing list and resource file to avail yourself of information about institutes, seminars, and training workshops for instructors offered by universities, educational organizations, HUD, and unions.

“For people who have dropped out and have nothing else to do, Youthbuild is something they should get into instead of getting into trouble. It’s a learning experience for everybody. It helps you with everything from getting your GED to job training. Youthbuild helps out the community around it—with what the community wants and needs and nobody else wants to do.”

—Brent Harris, graduate, YouthBuild New Bedford
Chapter 2 Items in Appendix

Item 1 - Generic Job Descriptions for Education and Training Staff

Item 2 - Interview Scenarios for Academic and Vocational Instructors
Chapter 3: What Teachers Need to Succeed

Overview

Directors of Youthbuild programs need to have a clear idea of what teachers need to succeed. Youthbuild directors should view the education component not just as a teaching module, where one teacher is assigned to instruct students on the GED, but as an education system. This system should include several teachers, adequate materials, volunteer tutors, computers, and integration of construction, leadership development, job readiness, life skills, and community service with the other goals of the education program.

Education is central to the Youthbuild program. The education program changes the way young people think about learning, since it is different from traditional schooling. They find that the teachers care that they actually learn the material and stick with them until they master it. The students develop a cooperative culture of assisting each other, encouraged by the teacher. It teaches them the importance of self discipline, time management, study skills, and other behaviors and attitudes for successful learning. Finally, it is the building block to their continuing education and provides avenues for certification, credentials, and other “pieces of paper” important to their future.

Youthbuild teachers do not work alone. They are an integral part of the multifaceted program serving students on multiple levels. Teachers are part of the education component team. It is very important to guard against the temptation to leave the education component only in the hands of the teachers. Such an exclusive assignment inevitably creates a sense of frustration and isolation and renders teachers less effective. By planning ahead and thinking about the support teachers need, directors can assist teachers in the process of developing a superb education component.

The following items, if thought through carefully and implemented in advance, can forestall problems and make teachers feel supported and respected. These practices enhance professional development and promote team-building.
Planning

Adequate Advance Planning Time

Before students are enrolled, it is essential that teachers have time to plan the education program structure and curriculum. Hire staff at least a month before start-up so they can become fully acquainted with the Youthbuild model and the program’s goals, and do adequate planning.

Provide time in advance to plan the structure of the classroom, create a positive and pleasant learning environment, conduct research and order materials, develop curriculum guidelines and, with the involvement of other staff, develop a weekly schedule. If teachers have assessment tools prepared, learning contracts ready to use, a general plan for the year and a specific plan for the first month, they will be able to concentrate on developing relationships and providing instruction as the students arrive.

Ongoing Planning and Meeting Time

In addition to advance planning, teachers must have time to schedule daily planning and evaluation time after the program begins. Time must also be scheduled for teachers and trainers to meet weekly to share experiences, offer feedback, plan collaborations, and review student progress. The education director or program manager can serve as supervisor and facilitator of this meeting process.

The need for planning time cannot be overstated. Teachers who do not have adequate time to plan instruction do one of two things: they either develop mediocre activities that do not require planning, research, or interesting materials, or they work on their own time to do this planning and “burn out.” Either scenario is a loss and cheats students of the full benefit of a teacher’s expertise.

Many programs suffer from not having provided time in the weekly routine for teachers to meet with other staff. Teachers feel frustrated, eking out time after work, or worse, not communicating at all. Students suffer if teachers do not have time to collaborate, inform each other of students’ progress or assist each other with suggestions.

Budget and Other Resources

The education program should have a budget that is viewed in the same way as the budget for the construction training component. In order for construction training to take place, it must have tools, materials, and transportation resources. Likewise, the education component must have a budget for materials, tools (computers), and transportation for educational field trips. These budget items are in addition to staff resources for teachers and teacher aids.
Adequate Materials and Resources

Teachers should have a role in deciding what materials they will use. Give teachers the opportunity to order materials before students are enrolled, and during the course of the year as needed. Provide adequate resources for a rich and diversified classroom to enable creative curriculum development. Include resources in the budget for field trips (including transportation and admission costs) as well as for occasional “perks,” like party supplies, prizes, rewards, or certificates.

Classroom Environment and Space

Adequate space is needed to make sure the young people have an optimum learning experience. Quiet classroom space and rooms for small group activities and study are recommended. Classroom space that has good lighting and outlets for audio visual equipment is a requirement for a good learning environment.

Networking with Other Education Programs and Staff

It is important for teachers and the education staff to meet with other educators and assess their progress. Educators need to talk to each other about teaching strategies and methodologies, especially for at-risk young people. Directors and program managers must provide resources for teachers to network with other program staff involved in high schools, adult schools, non-profit agencies, and community colleges engaging the same population. Providing networking opportunities for teachers will enrich the teaching resources available to the education staff.
It will provide them with additional curricula, lesson plans, assessment models, and other educational materials.

“All students don’t learn the same. Learning should be tailored around students so that it doesn’t force them to learn one way. Learning should not be limited to the classroom. The whole world is a classroom. Take them out in the world and teach them. Strategies? I use everything around me to make it work. Newspapers, videos, guest speakers, ‘regular people,’ families, the elderly, the young, the entire community.”

-Robert Bell, YouthBuild Philadelphia

Professional Development Opportunities

Resources are necessary for teacher participation in professional development associations, workshops, and other opportunities. Teachers and education staff should be encouraged to attend professional development activities related to school-to-work for out-of-school youth and other types of alternative education training. YouthBuild USA and HUD have various training opportunities offered for teachers, tutors, and construction trainers.

In addition, community colleges and universities offer professional development training programs for teachers. Many of these programs provide continuing education units, which are embraced by teachers wanting to increase their merit salary pay in local school districts.

Adult education teachers typically have low prestige, low pay, and high turnover. The most important part of developing a good Youthbuild school is ensuring that good teachers want to stay. This is facilitated through staff development, good working conditions, teacher visibility, and community-building in national and regional networks of Youthbuild teachers.

A Cohesive Team and Positive Tone

Regardless of how expert and well intentioned a teacher is, he or she will not be able to function well unless the staff team as a whole is cohesive and cooperative and has succeeded in setting a positive tone and good general relationships with the students. If the rest of the program is chaotic, unfair, inconsistent, or poorly managed, or if other members of the staff are incompetent, uncooperative, or divi-
sive, it will be difficult for the teachers to do their jobs. Thus, the overall responsibility of the director is to ensure accountability and adherence to program philosophy among all staff. When the positive mini-community that the students tend to call a “family” is being created, the teachers will be able to work well within this context.

**Student Assessment Strategies**

Effective staffing of the education program requires someone to be well versed in student assessment. Student assessment is very important to building an Individual Learning Plan, identifying resources to meet the needs of the particular Youthbuild young people in the program, and providing an evaluation tool to assess progress.

Student assessments should be administered at the beginning, middle, and end of the program cycle. Student assessments should include academic, vocational, and career assessments. It can also include traditional and non-traditional assessments discussed earlier in this handbook.

**Familiarity with Different Teaching Models**

Teachers should be encouraged to become familiar with different teaching models. Staff training in effective teaching methodologies should be offered or identified. The following teaching models hold promise for at-risk young adults:

- Classroom instruction
- Independent study
- Small groups
- Computer
- Service learning (e.g. young person provides community service and writes a paper about it)
- Project-based learning (e.g. young person conceives and implements a project that will culminate into a report, demonstration, or some other event)
- Theme-based integrated curricula

**Student Evaluation Techniques**

Finally, having an effective education staff requires that they evaluate student progress and that they share these evaluations with students in ways that help the students manage their own progress. Teachers must have a system to evaluate how much students are learning and to identify barriers to learning. It is recommended that teachers develop individual portfolios that will include the following:
• Assessment results
• Awards, certificates, and honors received
• Samples of students’ written work, presentations, and math projects
• Competencies gained over the program cycle
• Letters or commendations and reports from other Youthbuild staff

These student portfolios can be used as an evaluation tool to assess the progress of each student. They can also be aggregated to give the program an idea about the progress of all the students in reading, writing, mathematics, and other subject areas.

**Supervision and Evaluation of Performance**

In order to develop a cohesive education program, a staff member, usually the program manager or education director, should oversee and coordinate the education and training components. He or she should also participate in, and advise on, continual curriculum development, planning, staff collaboration and establishing regular methods of supervising and assisting education and training staff. Education staff need effective supervision, observation, and feedback. Teachers want to know if they are communicating with the students. Directors and program managers need to develop a list of expectations, student outcomes, and job descriptions that promote accountability with the teachers and education staff. Feedback from students should be included.

Following are some of the major expectations:

• Students will receive the best instruction possible
• Students will be assessed and individual learning plans will be developed for each student
• Teachers will use other educational resources to help meet the needs of students
• Teachers will recognize the different learning styles of students
• Teachers will utilize different instructional methodologies
• Teachers will be held accountable for GED, high school diploma, and literacy objectives set between the student and teacher

The manager responsible for supervising staff may not have adequate experience in all areas of supervision. In this case, plan to involve an outside educational agency to help supervise and train teachers. Hire a consultant for advice and assistance. Solicit help from the local college or university, and recruit experts from the community to provide in-service training workshops on a regular basis.
Ongoing Supervision

Adopt a method of ongoing evaluation and acquaint teachers with the method from the very beginning. This will create trust and open communication. Teachers should be made aware that the approaches adopted will be used to help them and to work through problems with them, in the interest of building a better program together.

Begin during the hiring process, preferably during the initial interview, by informing potential teachers of the specific duties they will be asked to perform and the philosophy of teaching and teamwork they will be expected to comply with. Discuss the program’s plan for teacher supervision and evaluation. A sample of instructor performance criteria is included in the Appendix as Item 3. Review and modify it to suit the program’s needs. Introduce and discuss these criteria during the interview and orientation.

Directors and program managers should use a teacher evaluation system to help give feedback to teachers. The evaluation system should include the following questions:

- Have all students developed an individual learning plan?
- Are the students engaged in the instructional program?
- Is the teacher feeling a sense of accomplishment?
- What are the obstacles to successful teaching identified by the teacher?
- What are the students’ opinions about the teacher’s knowledge of the subject matter, teaching methods, and areas for improvement?

Probation

Plan to have a probationary period that is long enough to give teachers a chance to work out the kinks and feel comfortable, but short enough to avoid disruption of the program if the teacher must be let go. Three months is usually the commonly chosen time period. During the course of the probationary period, meet regularly (perhaps weekly) with the teacher and give him or her an honest appraisal of his or her performance and suggestions for improvement. Document the meetings. Use the instructor performance criteria checklist as a tool, discussing with the teacher his or her areas of strength and weakness. If at the end of three months a program director believes that the teacher is not suitable for the program, there will have been enough communication about the problems that the teacher will not be surprised.

Regular Quarterly Evaluation

Let teachers know that there will be a formal evaluation of their work after the
probationary period is over. Continue to use the instructor performance criteria checklist to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. Offer concrete recommendations for change. Keep records of the discussions at these meetings for reference at subsequent meetings and evaluations. A sample evaluation for academic teachers form is included in the Appendix as Item 4.

**Weekly or Bi-weekly Meetings**

Mandatory regular teachers’ meetings (at least two hours in length) are a way to supervise and assess teachers. Structure the meetings so that teachers provide specific information about their work. For example, have a different topic for each week of the month and ask teachers to be prepared to discuss them during the weekly meetings. Consider the following ideas:

**Week One: Monthly Plans**
Teachers discuss in detail their goals for the month in terms of specific learning objectives, specific activities they plan to engage in, methods they will use to assess student improvement, and ways they can coordinate efforts or team-teach.

**Week Two: Methodology**
Teachers discuss specific methods they have used and what has and hasn’t worked for them. Use this time to ask teachers to do brief presentations on alternative approaches they’ve used, to discuss articles that were given to them on non-traditional strategies, or for invited speakers to conduct workshops on new methodologies. Teachers can give supportive and constructive critical feedback to each other to foster their cohesion as a team.

**Week Three: Student Progress**
Teachers share their student folders and Individual Learning Plans, daily site plans or evaluations and discuss with program directors and each other how individual students are progressing, obstacles to overcome, and methods for enhancing student involvement.

**Week Four: Evaluation of the Month**
Refer back to the specific learning goals and objectives outlined in Week One’s Monthly Plans and discuss as a group what worked, what didn’t, and how best to proceed in the future.

The above subjects for discussion at each meeting will naturally be supplemented by immediate issues demanding the teachers’ attention, such as classroom management, relationships with students and among students, setting a tone in the classroom, motivating and gaining the trust of students, and handling specific difficult situations and students. However, part of the discipline of super-
vision is to maintain attention on the overall learning program even while responding to daily events.

**Lesson Planning and Record Keeping**

Program directors should ensure that teachers are doing adequate planning and recording their lesson plans for future reference. Whether the teachers use a standard lesson plan format or a variation of their own, consistency of planning and reporting will enable directors to both gather documentation of the curriculum as it develops and have reference information about teacher performance. Collect the lesson plans in a designated place and review them regularly. When the time comes for formal evaluations, the program director will be well acquainted with the strengths and weaknesses of the teachers’ lesson planning.

**Documentation of Teacher Performance**

Program directors should keep records of positive and negative teacher behaviors for reference during evaluations or personnel actions. If a teacher is frequently late, for example, it will be helpful to have a detailed listing of dates and times to refer to when discussing it with him or her. If a teacher has been consistently reprimanded for not cooperating with the team, there will be documentation of each discussion and suggestions that were made.

**Regular Observation**

Program directors should take time to observe teachers formally and informally on a regular basis. Drop in and “help out” for a few minutes on a frequent basis, so that teachers are comfortable and familiar with the procedure. Sit and observe a full lesson occasionally (perhaps once a week during the probationary period, then once a month after that). Follow up the observation with discussion (immediately after if possible), giving as much honest positive feedback as possible and whatever recommendations for improvement that might be necessary. Ask questions to clarify aspects of the lesson or strategy that were not understood, and brainstorm together what things the teacher might do differently in the future. If teachers are made aware of the regular observations from the beginning and see them as a way to facilitate overall program improvement, the observations will feel less threatening and may even be welcome.

**Immediate Intervention**

When problems arise or it becomes clear that a teacher is not fulfilling his or her duties or working cooperatively with others or relating well with students, the program director should call an immediate meeting to discuss it. Address the issue head-on and recommend changes. Put together a remediation plan that includes outside training or work with a consultant if it is believed that the prob-
lem relates to lack of experience and training. If necessary, review the philosophy outlined in the beginning and the notes from previous meetings and evaluations. It is important to respond to problems immediately so that the teacher does not get the idea that his or her performance is acceptable just because it has never been challenged. Document the meeting and the discussion.

**Regular Student Feedback**

Use a survey for collecting students’ opinions about teacher performance and methodology. Student evaluations should address specific questions about what activities they like and what new skills they are learning, as well as demonstrating skill in their subject matter, caring for the students, learning, and an ability to keep the students working toward their goals. Student evaluations can be administered fairly regularly, roughly every three months, and should be anonymous. While student feedback can be influenced by general feelings about school and should not be used as a sole criterion for evaluating a teacher, it can be used as a springboard to discuss classroom approaches and sensitivity to student concerns. A sample student evaluation form is included in the Appendix as Item 5.

“I never knew I had leadership abilities in me. I was always a follower, but now I can walk my own path and be a leader. I want to get my associates degree in biology, in environmental life science. I want to work in environmental education. I just finished a 30-day internship with YMCA, teaching environmental education. I got paid for that.”

—Chris Smith, graduate, YouthBuild Rockford
Chapter 3 Items in Appendix

Item 3 - Suggestions for Instructor Performance Criteria ............... A-9

Item 4 - Sample Evaluation Forms: Academic Teachers ............... A-11

Item 5 - Student Evaluation of Teachers ................................. A-15
Chapter 4: Academic Factors in Selection, Orientation, and Graduation of Trainees

Overview

If the Youthbuild program is successful in giving young people a transformative experience and placing them in decent-paying jobs, by the second year there may be as many as 10 times more applicants than can be accepted. Word travels fast among friends and relatives about real opportunities.

Once there is a surplus of applicants, decisions about whom to accept are central to the management of the program. Academic preparation is one of the elements to be considered.

Once the student group is accepted, the program's success will be influenced by its effectiveness in getting to know the individual student's needs very well, and making sure the students have an effective initial orientation as well as ongoing clarity about expectations for their progress.

This chapter addresses academic selection criteria, initial education-related contacts with students, student orientation to the education program, and academic performance criteria for completion and graduation.

Initial Screening

The initial screening of potential students for the program should be thorough and informative. Depending on each program's enrollment criteria, it is important to determine who fits the criteria and is therefore most appropriate for the program before the second screening in the orientation. Decide how to best determine who meets the criteria described below.

Reading Level

During screening and during pre-selection information sessions, do initial testing to determine “rough” reading levels. A more in-depth and accurate assessment of reading, writing, and math skills should be done during the very first weeks of the program, preferably during orientation. Determining grade level equivalency using standardized tests leads to a very simplistic interpretation of what students can do. Be careful about telling students (and believing) that they “read at the
sixth-grade level.” Adult readers bring a myriad of understandings and strengths to the reading process that the average “sixth grader” does not bring. Grade level equivalency is only a starting point for in-depth assessment.

The initial screening during recruitment may take a variety of forms depending on the program’s criteria. If the program staff has decided to select a certain minimum and/or maximum reading level, it should select an appropriate test that can be given quickly but provides adequate information. (See the assessment tools in Chapter 10: Resources.) The most commonly used test is the TABE test.

The Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) is adequate to provide a roughly accurate assessment. TABE is a battery of tests that assess reading comprehension and mathematics abilities of students. It is a good measure because it compares the students to a national norm and provides a grade level in reading and mathematics.

Assessing students’ capacity before they enter the program is a prerequisite to building an effective education program. Students and teachers alike must know the starting point in order to plan for success. Furthermore, if the program has set incoming minimum or maximum academic standards based on its resources, program design, and priorities, initial assessments will enable the program to redirect some applicants to other programs better suited to their needs and goals.

The starting point may also be used in setting rough benchmarks for measuring the program’s success. It will definitely be relevant to reflection on what outcomes were achieved and whether incoming skill levels correlated with outcomes. Percentages of students admitted into college, percentages achieving a secondary certificate, percentages demonstrating two years of progress in grade level, percentages getting into the unions that require a secondary school certificate, percentages placed in jobs with good wages: all of these are likely to be influenced to some extent by the incoming skills of students, notwithstanding what has been said about the limitations of making rigid or self-defeating predictions. Assessing what seems possible based on past experience, and then striving to surpass the projections and all past experience, is the balancing act of running a Youthbuild program.

**High School Credits**

If the program is working with a school system that awards diplomas based on credits, the program will need documentation of students’ past academic achievements. In order to determine how many high school credits they have, ask potential participants to bring in copies of high school transcripts. If they are not able to do this by the time of the information session, make it a requirement of the interview session. This information is essential to the selection process. Most schools will give students a copy of their transcripts at their request. Find out in advance where students should go to get their transcripts and inform them of this before the interview.
Skill Range

The program may choose to set rough guidelines for what proportion of students should test at which levels. Staff will need to collect and review this information after the students are tested. Let students know immediately if they do not meet the program’s selection criteria, but be well prepared to refer them to alternative programs in the community which can better meet their needs, if such programs exist.

Proportion Who Have GED or Diploma

In order to ascertain who has completed their GED or received their diploma, ask potential participants to bring documentation to the information session or the interview.

Interviewing Potential Enrollees

After selecting candidates who meet the program’s entry criteria, interview each candidate individually. To ensure success for enrollees, interview them thoroughly before they are accepted. Take time during the interview process to ask specific questions about their experiences in school and interest in academics. Students do not have to be “good” students to demonstrate enthusiasm for learning. Ask questions that help assess student motivation and interest. The most fundamental criterion for acceptance to Youthbuild is the seriousness of the applicants’ desire to make use of the opportunities.

Ask students to write their answers to questions on an application first. This gives them time to think about their answers, and it helps to structure the interview so that staff ask the same questions of every interviewee. Review the application with each student during the interview and take notes about any additional comments that are made during the discussion. Plan to spend at least a half hour per student. Questions the staff might ask to help assess student interest in academics include:

- What did you like about school?
- What did you dislike about school?
- What would have made your school experience better?
- Why did you leave school?
- How are you different as a student now than you were when you were in school?
- What are your study habits like?
- How do you feel about homework?
- Why do you want to return to school?
Chapter Four: Academic Factors in Selection, Orientation, and Graduation of Trainees

- What impact do you think education will have on your future?
- What subjects do you look forward to studying?
- Do you read books? Newspapers? Magazines?
- What would you want teachers to know about you as a student?
- What advice would you give someone who had dropped out of school?
- How do you feel about coming on time and coming every day?
- Did you ever have a really good teacher? What was he or she like?
- What is your proudest or happiest memory of school?
- What is your worst memory of school?

Explain the nature of the academic environment and ask candidates what they think they might dislike and like about it and what might be easy or hard. Assess student readiness not based on the number of “correct” answers—students might be working hard to impress and tell the staff what they think staff wants to hear—but on the sincerity of the responses and the genuineness of their motivation. A sample interview questionnaire for students is included in the Appendix as Item 6.

**Orientation**

Youthbuild programs have found that a well organized, intensive orientation period is critical to program success. In fact, Youthbuild programs are almost always designed not to be open-entry-open-exit programs, precisely because the peer group solidarity that is created in the orientation is so important and because having a graduation class to belong to also has value to the students. Programs are encouraged to over-enroll at the outset so that if they lose 25 to 30% of their students in the course of the year, they will still end up with a fully enrolled student body. This way, all students will have the benefit of starting with their peers rather than coming in later as individuals. When programs have had attrition that forced them to bring in new students, they have found the best practice is to bring in new students as a group and provide them with an orientation very much like the start-up orientation.

An effective orientation usually lasts at least two weeks and incorporates the following elements:

- Introduction to Youthbuild history, vision, and philosophy
- Goal-setting and team-building presentations and exercises
- Introduction and overview of program goals and expectations
• Introduction of staff—their roles and expectations
• Trainee expectations of program, staff, and themselves
• Awareness of factors of contributing to trainees' past success and failures, and analysis of barriers to success
• Conflict resolution skills
• Examination of issues related to gender and sexual harassment
• Explanation of issues related to substance abuse
• Building appreciation of different cultural and racial groups
• Listening and communication skill building
• Review of trainee contract, if the program has one
• Election of an interim youth policy committee

During the orientation, students are familiarized with the academic component. Students are introduced to the following:

• Goals of the education program
• Curriculum
• Each of the program staff and their responsibilities
• Classroom rules and consequences
• Classroom schedule
• Expectations for student participation
• Classroom recognition system
• Graduation requirements
• Commitments of program staff to students

The teachers and counselors spend time during orientation in thorough individual assessment of student strengths and abilities to help students gain a clearer understanding of their strengths, abilities, and educational needs; reconnect with dreams and set realistic steps toward achieving them; gain a sense of control over their own futures; and understand the relationship between past, present, and future events and decisions. Students will also realize that the adults in Youthbuild may care about and respect their goals. They will be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.

A comprehensive orientation program that introduces trainees to the education component should include at least the following ideas:

1. The difference between past schooling and Youthbuild education

This portion of the orientation introduces the trainees to the importance of edu-
cation for their futures. It builds on other orientation activities that focus on life changes and the need to develop skills that will make them successful on the job. Education is important because it prepares them to enter a career-oriented field; provides them with the credentials, degrees, or certificates to enter careers; and helps them obtain the skills to be life-long learners. In addition, education provides trainees with skills to pass on to their family members and children.

Youthbuild education is different from past schooling experiences, because Youthbuild education will work with each trainee individually to help meet his or her career and academic goals. Youthbuild uses a “hands-on” approach by integrating what is learned in the classroom with what is being taught at the job site. A goal for Youthbuild education to create a classroom learning environment in which students feel assured that the teacher will persist until the students all learn the material, and students are comfortable asking questions, knowing that nobody will make fun of them. Students are encouraged to help each other, so that a cooperative atmosphere is established.

2. How the education component complements other Youthbuild activities

   The education component is designed to support and build on the experiences of other Youthbuild activities. The classroom activity will prepare trainees for doing the work at the construction site. Academic instruction related to measurement, mathematics, reading instructions, and writing or communicating job assignments is critical to success on the job. Vocational instruction that focuses on job safety, estimating, team work, and other skill areas will also be crucial to doing the work at the construction site.

   In addition, the education program will integrate the content of lessons with skills development that relate to other Youthbuild components. For example, classroom study of social studies in preparation for the GED might dovetail with attendance at public hearings held by elected officials discussing issues that affect youth in the community. Students might prepare position papers to present at such hearings as part of their preparation for the essay section of the GED. Practice in public speaking in class will precede public presentations on issues of importance.

   “We’ve created a safe environment here, a place where students feel safe asking questions. They won’t get ridiculed. No question is out of line.”

   - Mike Cross, YouthBuild Fort Berthold
3. The key components of the education program

A review of the key components of the education program is helpful for the trainees to understand what is expected of them. The key components in a typical Youthbuild program include the following:

a. **Assessment**: All students will participate in academic, vocational, and career assessments to determine their knowledge, skills, abilities, and goals. These assessments will help guide the type of educational activities they will be expected to complete.

b. **Individual Learning Plan**: The students will develop an individual learning plan that will identify their academic, career, and personal goals.

c. **Classroom Instruction**: Generally, students will go to class every other week. They will get instruction in large groups, small groups, individual sessions with computers, and other types of instructional approaches.

d. **Periodic Assessments**: Many programs structure the education component in two-month intervals during which defined units are taught, and at the end of which a regular progress assessment is done. In addition, award ceremonies and merit raises usually coincide with these unit endings. However, if the program is not structured this way, at least halfway through the program the teaching staff should assess the students’ progress and meet with each one individually to review progress and plan the next goals. Some programs administer the TABE test again mid-cycle to show progress against the start point. These regular assessments should be explained to students in advance.

e. **Career Planning**: Students will develop career goals that will include short term objectives (e.g. getting a certain kind of job after graduation) and long term objectives (e.g. entering a post secondary education technical institute, community college, or university to become an architect). Usually during orientation students make their first statement of these goals.

f. **Completion and Graduation**: Students will complete their education objectives (e.g. GED, diploma, or mastery of competencies) and graduate, or they may need to continue their studies after Youthbuild.

4. Expectations of Youthbuild and the Students

This part of the orientation addresses the expectations of Youthbuild and the trainees in the education program. These expectations need to be clearly articulated and discussed so that the trainees will remember and understand the rules governing their participation.
Youthbuild expects trainees to do the following:

- Be on time and attend the classroom activities
- Complete all homework assignments
- Respect the need of others to study in a positive learning environment
- Ask questions when they do not understand a lesson or assignment
- Contribute to helping others master the work
- Learn and use effective study habits
- Treat the classroom experience as seriously as the construction activity

Trainees can expect Youthbuild to do the following:

- Have caring and competent teachers
- Utilize the most effective teaching techniques
- Have up-to-date educational material
- Explain the goals of each lesson
- Allow for creativity and student directed learning
- Discipline fairly and without bias

**Establishing Expectations for Graduation and Completion**

Most Youthbuild programs establish overall graduation and completion requirements that include a variety of factors such as attendance, construction, academic, job readiness, and leadership competencies. Many require graduates to be drug-free as shown by a random drug test.

It is important to establish graduation and completion requirements before the program begins. Once established, they can be used as a tool to guide curriculum planning. These requirements provide a clear set of measures for reference throughout the course of the program, help both instructors and students to stay on track, and provide a sense of accomplishment as students gradually complete them during the course of the year.

In some cases, programs have set graduation requirements, but not explicitly set completion or participation requirements. Then, if students did not achieve the graduation requirements, but did stay for the entire program, they got a completion or participation certificate at graduation to honor their perseverance.

A fairly thorough discussion among Youthbuild programs regarding criteria for graduation and completion went on between 1996 and 1998. Many Youthbuild
students had recommended that the term “graduation” be reserved for young people who did achieve their GED or diploma, as well as numerous other program objectives, and that students who did not complete this be considered “completers” but not “graduates.” The students preferred a Youthbuild graduation certificate that would mean the same thing in different states. Their recommendation included the provision that individuals with learning disabilities be exempt from having to attain their GED and that programs be obliged to allow all serious students to continue in the program until they could complete the GED or diploma. In consultation with both directors and students, YouthBuild USA developed a draft policy for graduation standards reflecting these and other recommendations.

Other elements of the draft policy for standards for graduation include construction and life skills competencies, academic competencies, job skills competencies, leadership competencies, required attendance levels, and the ability to pass a random drug test.

It is not HUD's policy to impose graduation standards on any site, but it is useful to know that this concern has been discussed widely in an effort to reach a good policy that would meet the request of the students for high standards and that sites could voluntarily choose to embrace.

As it stands in 1998, most sites do make a distinction between graduates and completers, and they have very specific criteria regarding what constitutes a graduate. However, there is no unifying national standard. Some sites reserve the term graduate for those who obtain the academic certificate, and some make demonstrated academic progress their measure, in order to insure that all students who participate seriously can gain the satisfaction of graduating.

Whatever the program decides, it is important to be firm about the requirements. The program's credibility will be undermined if staff is inconsistent about insisting that graduates meet program requirements. Find ways to help all students meet the requirements, but be prepared to graduate only students who have met the graduation requirements. The following are a reasonable set of education completion requirements:

- Demonstrated academic improvement in reading, writing, and math. The teachers and students can jointly set reasonable goals for each student based on all the known factors for that student, and these may change in the course of the program. For students who already have their diploma, improvement criteria might relate to writing skills, which are virtually always under-developed among low-income students from public high schools.

- Mastery of monthly or bimonthly academic competency requirements.

- Mastery of monthly or bimonthly vocational/construction competency requirements.
• Successful completion of job and/or college readiness competencies.
• Successful completion of leadership development competencies.
• Successful completion of individual educational objectives. Objectives will vary depending on student skills and program goals but might include: high school credits earned, high school diploma, sections of the GED test passed, GED, and/or apprenticeship examination passed.
• Demonstration of good work habits, attitude and leadership skills in classroom and at the worksite, as indicated by positive evaluations.
• Completion of exit examinations, if any are required.

**Contingency Planning**

After all of the expectations have been established, guidelines are needed for students who achieve program objectives ahead of schedule and students who do not complete them in time for the end of the program. Advance planning is needed to ensure that all students’ needs are addressed, so that all can receive the maximum benefit from the Youthbuild experience.

The more advance planning there is for contingencies, the easier it is to put alternative plans in place should the need arise. Programs should be prepared to adapt individual student schedules. For example, students who receive their GEDs early should be provided with appropriate advanced study during the GED preparation time, while still participating in regular program events.

Provide for adequate staff to offer extra assistance to students in need of greater remediation, students in need of assistance after the cycle is over, students who are interested in college after they receive their diplomas, and students who need concentrated time to prepare for apprenticeship entrance exams.

Ensure that all students, but especially those who complete early and those who do not graduate during the cycle, have a way to stay connected to the program. After they have left the program, provide opportunities for them to participate in alumni meetings, support groups, job preparation classes, GED completion classes, and entrepreneurship classes.

**Students Who Complete Early**

Students with either high school diplomas or GEDs may make up as many as 25% of the students in a Youthbuild program. Furthermore, many students come into the program without a diploma or a GED, but earn one early in the program cycle. It is necessary to plan in advance for the educational development of young people who have met some academic requirements. This will ensure that they continue to participate in a meaningful way and benefit from the services of the Youthbuild program.
Educational Development Options

Plan in advance the options to be made available to students who complete their certificate early. Program options which facilitate academic learning include the following:

- Individual learning contracts relevant to the students’ personal career and education interests. These could include researching educational opportunities or sharpening skills necessary for college.
- Relationships with community colleges and trade schools that allow students to enter a college program while still attending Youthbuild classes in job readiness, leadership development, or vocational education.
- A “transition class” or “college preparation class” geared to students who have earned diplomas or GEDs. This could involve researching financial aid options, doing in-depth goal setting, exploring interests, and creating a college plan.
- Classes that prepare students for the SAT or ACT tests, along with other skills necessary for admission to college courses.
- Opportunities for students to reinforce their own learning by tutoring Youthbuild students or assisting teachers in an elementary school.

Career Development Options

In order for students to continue with their career development even after they have received diplomas or GEDs, consider some of the following program options:

- Allow students who have earned a diploma or GED to concentrate on further developing vocational skills by working full-time on the job-site. Such students would continue with classes in job readiness, life skills, vocational education, and leadership development. Some programs enable students to work full-time on the site and receive higher pay after earning a high school diploma or GED.
- Place students in jobs, but make arrangements with employers to let students come to Youthbuild part-time to attend classes, counseling, and vocational education.
- Develop relationships with unions in order to prepare students who have received their diploma or GED for apprenticeship exams, and screening interviews.
- Offer or find outside courses in specialized job-related skills like
computer training or courses in more specialized construction skills, like contract writing, record keeping, drafting, and entrepreneurship.

- Develop internship and job shadowing opportunities which allow students, after they have received their diplomas or GEDs, to work in specified job placements for a designated period of time, with clear expectations of both employers and students and other performance criteria related to attendance, punctuality, and attitudes.

**Students Who Do Not Receive GEDs or Diplomas**

Consider the following options for students who complete the program cycle without the requisite credits for a diploma or without the skills to pass the GED exam:

- Re-enrollment option: programs allow students to re-enroll in Youthbuild in order to complete the requirements needed or do extra learning and review. In credit-earning high school diploma programs, for example, as in some GED-based programs, students simply continue until they have completed their requirements.

- Developing relationships with community agencies which can provide GED or credit-based preparation after students complete Youthbuild, so that students can attend classes to continue studying for the GED or diploma.

- Providing night or weekend classes at the Youthbuild program so that students can continue to upgrade their skills and work toward a degree as well as stay involved with Youthbuild. Some programs recommend providing transportation and childcare to enable students to attend classes, even though they may be working.

- Providing one-on-one tutoring with the instructor or community volunteers.

- Planning to stay in contact through calls, visits, support groups. It is very important for many students that they receive encouragement and support to continue.

Part of what makes Youthbuild work is belonging to a community in which all members are striving to improve themselves. Leaving daily participation in this community can make it hard to sustain one's efforts. For this reason, effective Youthbuild programs have developed strong graduate programs and alumni clubs. Continued academic development is a key part of this for those students who, for whatever reason, may not have completed the degree during the full-
time program cycle. Still, whenever it makes sense for the individual student, remaining in the program full-time until the degree is obtained is the surest path to success.

“With Youthbuild, life started changing in a lot of ways because I started getting my educational years back that I didn’t get. It had been 12 years since I was in school. School work was hard, trying to get back on track with different subjects like mathematics and reading. Youthbuild helped me in a lot of ways. I’m very proud to be in a program like this. I work very hard and am very committed. I have a lot of responsibility here: I am site captain, I have very good attendance, I have 100% attendance for two years.”

—William Comacho, graduate, YouthBuild New Bedford
Chapter 4 Items in Appendix

Item 6 - Sample Interview Questionnaire .......................... A-17
Part II: Organizing the Education Component

This part of the handbook describes the tasks in organizing the education component. It provides suggestions for creating the classroom environment, establishing expectations for student performance, and developing curriculum.
Chapter 5: The Classroom Environment

Overview

After teachers have been hired, goals and requirements have been established, and educational collaborations arranged, there is still a considerable amount of work in preparation for students. This includes organization of the classroom and organization of curriculum materials. The type and amount of preparation needed will vary depending on the educational model and delivery system selected and the prior experience working with at-risk youth.

Organization of the classroom is a critical step. Even in educational collaboration, it is desirable to have the teaching space at the location of the Youthbuild program or, if that is not feasible, a separate space for exclusive use of the program. However, organization of the classroom does not just involve the physical space. It includes the classroom schedule and guidelines for student behavior. These basic items should be determined and established by the teaching staff before young people are recruited and selected. Additional or amended guidelines can be established with input from the students once they are enrolled.

Take time before students arrive to create an ordered, accessible, disciplined learning environment. The classroom can communicate very powerful messages about the program’s respect for students and expectations about their abilities.

The Quality of the Learning Environment

The quality of the classroom environment sets the tone for the educational component from the beginning. The way that staff organize the space, utilize the materials, and plan the schedule all contribute to the investment of teachers and students in the program. The classroom environment must be designed to generate enthusiasm and to facilitate learning, responsibility, and respect.

The classroom learning environment should provide the following:

- A low student-to-teacher ratio (one to fourteen is typical)
- Engaging, hands-on materials and tools
- Adequate teaching staff including, as resources allow, full-time teachers, teaching assistants, tutoring support, interns, and even volunteers
- Quiet, comfortable work spaces with few distractions, so that students and teachers can concentrate
The classroom schedule should include time each week for the following:

- Silent individual reading
- Journal writing
- Specific GED preparation, including science and social studies
- Construction-related math
- Leadership skills
- Cultural history
- Individual study time
- Community service
- Flexible time
- Teacher planning and meeting to share experiences, give and receive feedback, and plan collaboration
- General staff meeting

The classroom structure should provide:

- An in-depth assessment of reading, writing, and math skills to plan for each student’s individual needs
- A manageable, simple daily plan
- Clear expectations of student performance
- Individualized learning plans
- Opportunity for multi-level and same-level cooperative groupings and peer tutoring
- Opportunities for student self-assessment
- Regular recognition of achievement
- A clear understanding of how education is related to leadership development, construction, job readiness, and community service aspects of the Youthbuild program
- Clear expectations for graduation

**Teacher-to-Student Ratio**

A low teacher-to-student ratio is essential. It facilitates each student feeling respected, supported, and “heard” by the staff, and it allows teachers to give adequate individual instruction. The students must feel that the staff is committed, caring, and competent, and that they can be counted on for ongoing support.

**Location**

The location of the classroom will be determined by a number of factors. When exploring possible locations, consider the accessibility of the classroom to the
organization’s headquarters. Consider the ease with which teachers and other staff can intermingle during the course of the day and the ease with which students can visit counseling staff or meet with the director or program manager. Directors will want to have opportunities to get to know the students individually and in groups, to enhance the sense of community and their own ability to handle both the structuring of leadership development opportunities and to respond to situations requiring discipline. Proximity to the worksite can be invaluable for convenience and staff team work.

In order for the physical space to promote effective learning, the following characteristics should be in place:

- A large enough space to accommodate individual chairs and work areas
- Walls covered with learning material such as maps, inspirational quotations, science projects, leadership skills lists, community service stories, and photographs
- Adequate electrical outlets and screens for VCRs, projectors, and other audio visual equipment
- Space for a computer learning center, preferably with a separate computer laboratory in addition to 2-3 computers in the classroom
- Plenty of chalkboard or marker board space
- Enough room to work in small groups
- Individual desks or table space to store trainee educational material
- Adequate heating, lighting, ventilation, and cooling systems
- Good acoustics to hear conversations and lessons directed by the teacher
- Space that meets all fire and safety codes
- Sufficient separation from other space to ensure quiet

A sample of recommended classroom materials is included in the Appendix as Item 7.

**The Weekly Classroom Schedule**

Prior to the start of the program, teachers should plan a weekly classroom schedule that takes into consideration other activities that students need to engage in when they are not on the construction site.

A clear daily plan will facilitate discipline and order in the classroom and will provide security for students and teachers. Weekly schedules should incorporate those activities that are most significant for the program and those that facilitate the development of program’s educational objectives.
It is recommended that the following components be incorporated into the weekly routine.

**Silent Individual Reading**

Many programs plan a brief period of time each day for students to read silently from books of their choice. They have found that students learn to appreciate and enjoy reading when they read novels or non-fiction that they have chosen. Setting aside a special time for silent reading makes a strong statement about the value of incorporating reading into daily life.

Have available a variety of high-interest multi-level books from which students may choose. If this is not possible, set aside a regular time each week for students to visit the local library and choose books of interest. Consult a librarian to learn about books especially appealing to young adults. Students may write a few lines each day about the book they are reading or may eventually present an oral or written report. Teachers may plan a “book talk” on a regular basis, in which students discuss with each other the themes, plots, and characters of their books or the historical and social significance of what they are learning. Thirty minutes of silent reading a day is recommended.

**Journal Writing**

Many programs have found that establishing a set time for journal writing helps develop writing skills, encourages reflection and introspection, and engenders communication if students elect to share their journal entries with teachers who read them and respond. Journals can be used for writing personal feelings, but they can also be used to focus thinking on classroom and site issues. Journal writing for at least 15 minutes per day is recommended.

**GED Preparation Time**

If students are working toward the GED, establish a set time each day for students to practice the specific skills needed to pass the GED Test. Students can be assigned appropriate GED workbook activities. Students who have taken the practice test can hone their skills in the subject areas while beginners can learn test-taking skills by working in appropriate Pre-GED workbooks. One to two hours daily is recommended. This allows teachers to help students individually.

**Construction-related Math**

Set aside regular blocks of time to practice math skills in a construction-related context. Do large group, small group, and individual activities which help students achieve the required mathematics competencies in a relaxed environment. The environment should encourage hands-on involvement and sufficient practice of skills. Six hours per week is a reasonable amount of time.
Cultural History

Set aside time each week in which reading and writing skills are taught in the context of cultural history. Use relevant materials that help students develop an understanding of their own and each other’s culture and history, but use these to reinforce reading and writing competencies. In order to explore issues in depth and do hands-on projects and activities, set aside large blocks of time for this exploration. Two-hour blocks of time are recommended, totaling four hours per week.

Individual Study Time

Time must be devoted to quiet study so that students can complete the specific activities outlined in their Individual Learning Plans and receive individual teacher, tutor, or peer attention. Students develop independent learning habits if they are expected to work seriously and alone for a portion of each day. This also provides time to catch up on unit completion requirements and time to work on final projects and portfolios. At least one hour daily is recommended.

Flexible Time

Programs frequently set aside one block of time a week for speakers, field trips, recreation activities, parties, and recognition ceremonies. It helps to have a specific time set aside and to plan for it carefully on a weekly basis so that other blocks of time are not interrupted. The amount of time allocated depends on the time available after other program components have been scheduled. If the alert reader adds up all the time periods recommended above and below for all the academic subjects and program components, one will find there is no time whatsoever left over for flexible time. Herein lies the challenge and the art of scheduling; there is never enough time for everything. The teachers and students will have to make choices about their priorities and interests.
Vocational Education

The important skill learning which takes place on the worksite is greatly reinforced by classroom vocational instruction. In the classroom setting, students are given the opportunity to practice skills in a relaxed setting, to learn theory, to discuss and analyze construction-related issues, and to integrate reading, writing, and math skills with construction.

It is good to have a large block of uninterrupted time for vocational education, so that students can get fully involved in projects and activities. Two to three hour blocks are recommended, totaling six hours per week. A sample of vocational education tools and materials is included in the Appendix as Item 8.

Job and College Readiness Skills

From the beginning of the program year, time should be set aside to incorporate job and college readiness skills into the weekly schedule. Adequate time should be regularly provided for in-depth exploration of work-related issues and sufficient practice of work-related reading, writing, and speaking skills. One to two hour blocks are recommended, totaling two hours per week. The counselor may participate in planning and implementing this aspect of the curriculum.

Leadership Skills

Leadership skill building should be incorporated into the weekly schedule from the beginning of the program year. Time is needed to develop specific reading, writing, and speaking skills necessary for making decisions, working in groups, and contributing to policy discussions. Time is necessary for discussing and analyzing complex social issues. One to two hour blocks are recommended, totaling three to four hours a week.

Other classroom assignments that require speaking, listening, problem-solving, and writing skills should highlight how these skills make better leaders. The vocational teacher should emphasize that the team work on the job is also an important skill in leadership development.

The Relationship of the Classroom Schedule to Other Program Activities

There are a number of additional program activities that normally take place during the same time that academic work is scheduled. To avoid disruptions, teachers and other staff should determine an overall schedule for these activities that allows for continuity of teaching. The following are some of the key other activities that teachers need to be aware of and coordinate scheduling with other staff.
Life Skills/Counseling Groups

Some programs integrate life skills activities with job readiness, support group, or leadership skills activities. The program must decide how to allow time for important life skills discussions and activities.

Support Groups

Some programs set aside time each week for support groups. This should be a time that is comfortable and accessible to all. Fridays may be best if all of the students are together (perhaps following the community meeting). Plan at least one hour per week for support groups.

Counseling

Counselors should meet with students on a regular basis. Individual meetings usually occur during school time. Establish a schedule in advance that respects the needs of both the academic and counseling components. If possible, counselors should schedule all appointments for the same time each week, so that both students and teachers can plan for the interruption. It is equally helpful if appointments can all be set for a time that is convenient for the classroom teacher and that does not interrupt important group work. For example, all appointments might be scheduled during individual work time when there is more flexibility and work can be more easily made up.

Community Meeting

Most programs provide time each week for all students and staff to come together and share concerns, discuss upcoming events, and hear reports from various student leadership committees. A well-organized community meeting works well to establish a solid sense of camaraderie among students and staff. It allows staff to hear students’ concern, and vice versa. A community meeting gives students opportunities to practice leadership and listening skills. At least one hour weekly is recommended.

Community Service

The basic community service performed by Youthbuild students is the building of affordable housing. In addition to this, some programs, especially the YouthBuild AmeriCorps programs, have added various forms of human service to the program to give the students an additional experience of “giving back” to the community and to increase the community’s respect for the students. One afternoon a week, students fan out to their community service assignments and tutor children, give presentations to middle school students about the importance of staying in school, help senior citizens, serve food to homeless people, and per-
form various other good works. This provides opportunities for studying community issues and becoming aware of additional career possibilities beyond construction. Allow time for transportation, about two hours of service work, and classroom reflection on the experience.

**Motivating Students**

Motivating Youthbuild students to learn in the classroom is a significant task for every Youthbuild teacher. Teachers must create a learning environment that is safe, challenging, and fun.

The learning environment is safe when young people can ask and answer questions without being afraid of saying the wrong thing. Trainees need to be able to participate in the classroom experience without the fear of being put down.

The learning environment is challenging when Youthbuild trainees learn new ways to approach mathematics, reading, and writing. When instruction is given in the context of applied learning (e.g. construction site) or within a project where several academic skills are being used (e.g. researching a community development project by examining speeches, housing construction proposals, and interviewing community residents), learning becomes exciting.

Learning is fun when students learn together in groups without constant guidance from the teacher. Learner-directed studies, where students design their learning goals and processes, is an effective strategy for engaging young adults in the learning environment.

There are six basic principles that help teachers to motivate students. These principles are discussed below.

1. **Believe in the Students**

   The instructor's expectations of student capabilities greatly influence student learning. Teachers teach according to what they believe their students are capable of learning, and young people will perform to the teachers' levels of expectations.

   It is especially important that the teachers in Youthbuild programs set their sights high, while understanding the students' past school experiences and their feelings of academic failure. The instructor can help the students develop faith in their abilities to learn so that they can begin to confront, rather than avoid, difficulties and problems. The teacher can also help students develop realistic ideas about academic progress by not pressuring them to succeed so quickly that they become frustrated and disappointed by yet another failure.

2. **Maintain an Atmosphere of Respect**

   It is not enough for staff to be respectful of students. Staff must also be firm in
not allowing students to disrespect each other or other staff. Cursing, name-calling, put-downs, and sexist, racist, or homophobic comments should not be permitted. Students should be told that such behavior is unacceptable because it is disrespectful. Students who persist in disrespectful behavior should be counseled and disciplined according to program policies.

If the teacher models the approach of praising and appreciating students and giving them opportunities to do that for each other, the tone of mutual respect and appreciation can deliberately be set, and students will reinforce it with great relief. The teacher may be explicit about how invalidations inhibit learning and make it more difficult for people to achieve, bringing the students into the process of creating an atmosphere collectively that enhances each of their ability to succeed.

3. Encourage Responsibility

No matter what the objective—GED, diploma, job—the most important goal is the students’ ability to take responsibility for their own learning. If students can do this, they will eventually achieve the goals of the program and will continue to learn and broaden their horizons after they leave.

Self-discipline is learned behavior. Teach this vital life skill to students by establishing systems in which they have to exhibit responsibility. Have students participate in decision-making; establish protocol in which they are responsible for finishing their own work, correcting their work, and attending meetings on time. Give students real responsibilities such as planning and organizing events, assisting with purchasing, making phone calls, and acting as team leaders.

4. Encourage Interdependence

Students depend on each other to establish discipline and trust. Help them to realize that they can assist each other in quieting down, paying attention, and listening. Show them, through exercises and planned activities, that they can actually rely on each other for help in their academic work. This fosters less teacher dependence and they become invested in the work for its own sake.

They’ve been through so much. We have to respect that. We also have to help them learn that they can take responsibility for themselves. But they’ve got to exhale. It’s a slow process. Don’t rush them; don’t push them. Work with it.”

- Pearl Lewis, Jefferson Parish YouthBuild

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Students depend on each other to establish discipline and trust. Help them to realize that they can assist each other in quieting down, paying attention, and listening. Show them, through exercises and planned activities, that they can actually rely on each other for help in their academic work. This fosters less teacher dependence and they become invested in the work for its own sake.
5. Establish Routines and Structure

Students and instructors both benefit from regular routines because there is less possibility of chaos, confusion and idleness (all of which can foster disruptive behavior). Routines that are followed also help to establish trust and a sense of security.

Routines also establish independence. If students do not have to wait for instructors to tell them what is going to happen next, they can begin to develop patterns of responsibility. If, for example, worksite meetings are always at 8:00 a.m., and team assignments are always given at the meeting, students begin to internalize these routines and develop positive habits.

6. Respond to Students’ Needs

Students with a wide range of experiences and abilities will be in the same classroom together. It is essential to address these differences in order to create a respectful environment that is conducive to learning. Use a combination of strategies to supplement the training of the lower-level students and give additional training to the more advanced students. Incorporate opportunities for students of different abilities to work together and benefit from each other’s strengths. However, also allow time for all students to work individually, focusing on areas that need improvement.

Incorporate a variety of the following methods into the lessons:

- Small (mixed-level) group learning. On occasion, have students work in groups of three or four on common problems, capitalizing on everyone’s strengths.
- Small (same-level) group learning. At times it is good to have students work with peers who are at the same skill level.
- Large group learning. Occasionally, teaching to the whole group is the most expedient and sensible method. Large groups work well when reading aloud to students, doing demonstrations, having guest speakers, or presenting new material.
- Individual learning. While students work as a group on the skills that were outlined as benchmarks, they also will need to work individually on skills that are particular to their personal assessments. An individual learning plan allows teachers to assign specific activities for study and tutoring time.

Other things that can be done to address the needs of a mixed-level group include the following:

- Arrange peer tutoring — advanced students can reinforce their knowledge while teaching beginners.
• Provide tutoring by staff or volunteers, either during the class day or in an after-school program.
• Give individualized homework.
• Modify worksheets to be used by a variety of reading levels.
• Have a variety of high-interest texts available for low and high-level readers.
• Provide packages of readings that include high and low-level material. This provides success for low-level readers and an opportunity to view, hear, and aspire to higher-level material.
• Provide additional assistance to students who have reading difficulties. Explore literacy programs that offer tutoring on evenings and weekends.
• Encourage expression of various abilities including the artistic, verbal, physical, and musical.

Establishing Discipline in the Classroom

To be conducive to learning, an environment must be created that fosters self-discipline, minimizes the need for punitive action, and encourages mature, responsible behavior. What structures need to be put in place so that disruptions are minimized and all students can maximize learning?

Clear Rules, Consistency, and Follow Through

Youthbuild is engaged in teaching habits that will enable students to obtain and keep a job. Foster those habits while the students are in the program by being firm and consistent with the rules.

Begin establishing clear expectations and rules of conduct. With student input, decide what the consequences will be for each infraction. Plan to follow through immediately and appropriately for every infraction. Students learn right away whether the program staff can be trusted to enforce rules and whether or not they can be manipulated. Erratic, uneven, or unjustified enforcement of rules can undermine the best program. If the rules are appropriately enforced, students—even if they protest—will learn to take the staff at their word and make decisions accordingly.

Following through on consequences for rule violation is respectful of students. It tells them that the staff believe students are making choices, and since they are adults, they must take the consequences of those choices. Following through on consequences for rule violation also teaches responsibility. It tells students that there are certain behaviors which are unacceptable and will undermine their ability to achieve their goals. The staff believe that students are capable of acting responsibly.
Design a backup system. No staff member should act alone in following through on rules and consequences. Have a system in place so that other staff can immediately assist with disruptive students without interrupting the flow of the work in progress or interrupting other students. Be careful not to encourage disruptive behavior or rule violations by focusing the whole group’s attention on that behavior. Develop a plan for swiftly and quietly removing that student from the center of attention. Students who are acting responsibly should be rewarded with positive attention.

The concept of “Clear Rules and Consistency,” however, is not meant to give license for staff members to behave in authoritarian, rigid, or humiliating ways in response to student misbehavior. Young people will test the caring and competence of the adults in many ways. The challenge for the staff is to show respect and caring at the same time as they insist on the best from every student.

**Avoid Discipline Pitfalls**

Staff can sometimes engage in behavior that serves—often unwittingly—to undermine the development of respect, responsibility and self-discipline. Here are some suggestions on how to avoid undermining the program’s intent to promote the development of mature habits.

*Don't ever stop being a role model.* Staff often develop real friendships with students. There is often a temptation to “hang out” with students and treat them as peers, socializing after program hours, talking to them in confidence, telling jokes, etc. This is especially tempting if staff and students are close in age.

Remember, however, that students continue to look to staff for guidance. A staff member should act as a strong and caring parent figure rather than a “hangin’ buddy.” Always be a mentor and a guide. Be yourself, but always show mature, adult behavior and help students learn how to do the same by watching you. Under no circumstances should any staff member ever drink alcohol with students.

*Don't loan money to students.* Many staff have made the mistake of loaning money to students because they clearly need it at certain times, and the staff feel it will help the student and deepen trust. As a matter of fact, it tends to undermine relationships, because the student is almost never in a position to pay back the loan and feels guilty, sometimes even resentful, and the staff member becomes resentful also. It is better for a program to have a policy of making small grants to students whose circumstances warrant it and for staff never to make personal loans.

*Don't vent frustrations with students.* It is tempting to see students as friends or confidantes and to share with them frustrations with the program, staff or stu-
students. However, this creates a negative atmosphere and undermines other staff. Be honest with students, but be diplomatic, professional and respectful of everyone at all times.

*Don’t violate confidentiality.* Always respect students’ right to confidentiality in regard to peers, community members, and parents. If students feel staff cannot be trusted with their personal concerns, it will profoundly undermine the program’s credibility. If students confide concerns which the staff member is required to discuss with his or her supervisor, let the student in question know it will happen and why it is essential. The program should have a general confidentiality policy that is known to the students and that it abides by.

*Don’t give up.* Disappointments are inevitable. Many hardworking and well-intentioned staff members occasionally feel disillusioned with students’ attempts to disrupt routines and break rules or with students’ self-destructive behavior just when they start to succeed. Remember that students are testing the staff’s commitment and belief in them and are also struggling with their own fears. Don’t lose the “Battle of Belief.” Continue to work with them, to trust in them, to encourage them, to be consistent, and to believe they can do it.

*Do go beyond what students expect.* Every indication that the adults truly care and are not just there because it happens to be their paying job, will have a positive effect on the students’ trust and personal motivation, and, incidentally, on discipline.

**Leadership Development in the Classroom Environment**

Youthbuild defines good leadership as “taking responsibility to make things go right for your life, your family, your program, and your community.” Leadership development should be pervasive throughout the entire Youthbuild program, guided by an overall concept of leadership development and a plan for implementation of leadership development skills and opportunities in all components of the program. Academic teachers should participate in the development of the leadership development plan and should include specific opportunities for developing leadership in the classroom structure.

**Personal Leadership Skills**

Many Youthbuild students are strikingly intelligent and articulate and capable of influencing other people. Many have had leadership roles “on the street.” However, many have made very poor decisions about their own lives and have sometimes led in a negative direction. Some of them are eager to step into leadership roles in the program without having corrected their own self-defeating patterns of behavior. It is for this reason that most Youthbuild programs have adopted a definition of leadership that puts taking responsibility for making things go right in one’s own life as part of the continuum of leadership.
Since there is a real attraction and a real value to becoming a leader who can improve conditions affecting people the students care about, addressing personal behavior in the context of leadership development can increase students’ motivation to address these issues.

To become a successful leader with integrity, Youthbuild students will have to confront issues in their personal lives, which often means changing self-destructive behaviors, becoming free of drug or alcohol addictions, and making the transition from the street to a positive lifestyle. This frequently means developing such skills as:

- Resisting negative peer pressure
- Building intimate friendships and romantic relationships on a sound basis
- Managing conflict
- Handling parenting roles responsibly
- Managing time, budgeting money, and setting personal goals
- Dealing with anger and grief in a positive way
- Communicating effectively
- Developing good work and learning habits

Simultaneous with helping students master the obstacles to a responsible personal life, Youthbuild programs provide opportunities for students to experience the rewards of helping other people and improving every situation through contributing to good group process, helping to make good policy decisions, and taking responsibility to get things done that benefit the group and achieve the group’s goals.

In addition, programs study the goals, strategies, and biographies of good leaders in history, in the immediate community, or in current events.

A successful Youthbuild program will produce a large number of positive role models and a certain number of young people who are permanently committed to playing a leadership role to improve the community and society.

The classroom environment supports this goal through the implicit attitude of the teachers and by structuring life in the classroom in such a way that individuals frequently have specific responsibilities for facilitating and participating in small group projects and study, implementing classroom management tasks, discussing how to get something done.

**Staff Attitudes**

Staff will facilitate achievement of the leadership development goals of the program if they view young people as potential leaders and resources for the com-
munity, not as clients or problems. How students are viewed will affect how stu-
dents see themselves. Staff must offer profound respect for the intelligence of the
students by consulting them whenever possible in making decisions that will affect
them or the program. Staff should express appreciation for all kinds and levels of
leadership, including people who are responsible for their own lives and take care
of their families, people who quietly contribute, and people who inspire and orga-
nize whole communities.

**Curriculum Choices**

Knowing that the development of leaders is a goal of the program influences
curriculum choices. A sample leadership development curriculum developed by
one Youthbuild program is in the Appendix as Item 13.

**Project-based Learning Activities**

This is an approach that integrates academic skills with leadership activities. In
this approach, the teacher assigns the students to participate in a leadership exer-
cise. Youthbuild students break up into small groups of five to seven students.
Each group addresses a portion of the task assigned. For instance, the task can be
to analyze a proposed community development project in a community nearby
and provide the rest of the group with a report on who is involved, what are the
historical issues, what do community residents think about the proposed develop-
ment plan, the economics behind the plan, and how the community development
project will impact the environment.

Once each group has completed its research, analyzed its findings, developed a
report, and presented it to the entire group, the next step could be for the group to
present its comprehensive findings to the city planning department or city council.

In this way, the students have engaged in a leadership development activity
and used several important academic, group dynamic, personal, and institutional
dynamic skills necessary to become effective leaders.

“There does come a time when you want to change, but you don’t know
how and there is no one to help you. Youthbuild staff become like gods to you
because they want you to become the best person you could ever be.”

—Isabel Izquierdo, graduate, PACE/SIPA YouthBuild
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Chapter 6: Curriculum Development

Overview

Programs may opt for one of several curriculum models, or mixtures of more than one. The model chosen will greatly influence the decisions made about staff involvement, resources needed, and assessment tools.

For the education component to be successful, the curriculum must provide the opportunity for students to learn concrete skills for employment. It must also be engaging and relevant to the students who enter Youthbuild programs and significantly different from the educational approach in which they have previously experienced failure. Four types of instructional approaches, each described below, have proven most successful in meeting these objectives, all of which can be used with either the GED or high school diploma certificate models. These are:

- Theme-based interdisciplinary model/project-based/service learning
- Academic/vocational integration model(school-to-work, work learning)
- Competency-based model
- Computer-based model

This chapter assumes that teachers will be doing a lot of their own curriculum development, because there is a lack of good existing curriculum appropriate for and exciting to the students who come to Youthbuild. However, teachers should continue to search and share with each other what they find, because new curriculum is constantly being developed by various colleges and educational firms. HUD-sponsored teacher conferences provide staff of Youthbuild grantees a context for this sharing.

Theme-based Interdisciplinary/Project-based Learning/Service Learning

In traditional school, students learn the disciplines in separate and discrete (usually 50-minute long) blocks: social studies is not linked with science; geometry and language arts are not mixed. But in the workplace and in the home, people draw on the underlying concepts of the disciplines in interrelated ways to address real problems.

Students have important questions about their lives, their societies, their neighborhoods, and their futures. These questions can inform all classroom learning. When teachers plan the curriculum, they can choose themes of study that focus discrete skill learning on topics that are interesting to students and relevant to their
life experiences. Topics should be broad enough to encompass information related to all of the components and accessible enough to make it possible to find a wide variety of multi-level learning materials. The underlying skills students are to achieve can be taught in a number of ways that cut across the subject areas. Sample materials for a creating a theme-based interdisciplinary curriculum, including three two-month study units, are included in the appendix to this chapter.

To decide upon themes, take time, involving students whenever possible, to brainstorm themes that motivate and fascinate students and serve program goals. Possible themes to consider include:

- The local community
- The history and culture of the people who live in the community
- Housing
- Work and working
- Careers
- Who I am: finding personal identity
- Male-female relationships
- Wealth and power
- Expressing yourself: the arts
- Health and safety
- Family and parenting

“I teach the material in class and then we go out and see how it applies on the worksite. I get a set of plans in advance from the construction staff, so I know what they’re going to be working on. We discuss how many sheets of plywood they’re going to need on the job and how many gallons of paint they’re going to use.

We practice using tools in class, where students have some time. Every two weeks, I ask students to read a chapter from the local carpenters union’s text on residential print reading. The important thing is actually going to the site. We can talk about stair stringers in class, but when student see it, they really understand why you need certain dimensions, etc.

Students need to learn about something and then practice doing it—if they make a mistake they learn it a lot faster than if they never try it out. Site trainers feel that the practical work that I do is an asset, because what participants learn with me reinforces what they’re learning in the field. This moves them along on the site a lot more quickly.”

-Tommy Bryant, YouthBuild St. Louis
Working Collaboratively on the Interdisciplinary Theme-based Curriculum

Program staff members can create or adopt an interdisciplinary theme-based curriculum, which integrates academic, construction, leadership, and job readiness skills with themes which are of importance to students. Plan to develop a curriculum that will be used by a team of teachers—academic teachers, vocational education instructors and site staff—working together to coordinate their skills. It is necessary to provide adequate planning time for brainstorming, gathering materials, planning collaborative activities, evaluating lessons, and documenting the curriculum development process.

Each program may choose to make its own decisions about what skills will be taught, who will teach what aspects of each unit, and what aspects will be taught as a team. In order for this structure to work, instructors must meet regularly to plan the content of the unit and to decide who will be responsible for what lessons. Use the following questions as a guideline:

- What overall themes are most important to our students?
- What overall themes best integrate all of the disciplines?
- How will the connection be made between the site, the classroom, the job readiness competencies, and the leadership components?
- When will academic teachers meet with construction site staff, vocational education teachers, and counselors to collaborate?
- Who will teach what?
- How much time will be spent team teaching?

Some Youthbuild teachers have taken the challenge of developing new curriculum especially suited to their students so seriously that they have spent years developing curriculum guides and compilations. Sample curricula are available for review through YouthBuild USA. A leadership development curriculum that was developed at a YouthBuild program is included in the Appendix as Item 13.

Project-based learning and service learning allow the students to direct their own learning in ways that can make the experience particularly relevant to each individual. As with theme-base learning, issues are examined from a variety of perspectives, but a tangible product is created as a direct result of the student’s inquiry and effort. An example might be an interdisciplinary study of neighborhood architecture. The project-based approach would lead students to develop products from their studies such as neighborhood maps, photo exhibits, models, historical performances, or video interviews with residents.

In taking a service learning approach, the focus would be on neighborhood improvement and involvement. Trainees would direct their own learning by becoming involved with the life of the neighborhood through projects that bring them into contact with the people, property, history, and issues of the neighbor-
hood. Service learning uses the concept of “giving of one’s self” as a pedagogical tool to build leadership skills, self awareness, critical thinking, team skills, mentoring skills, and communication skills while also providing opportunities to build academic skills in math, language arts, social sciences, and the trades. A typical project might involve Youthbuild trainees constructing wheelchair ramps for a local elementary school. The trainees would be required to work with the staff and students of the school on the project. The project would also provide opportunities to learn and practice construction design, budgeting, report writing, negotiation, and landscaping.

**Academic/Vocational Integration (School-to-Work, Work-learning)**

The School-to-Work Opportunity Act of 1994 has as its goal, among other things, “to improve the knowledge and skills of youths by integrating academic and occupational learning, school-based and work-based learning.” This legislation was passed in recognition of several findings. One of these findings is that a substantial number of youths, especially disadvantaged students, do not complete high school. Also, unemployment among youths is intolerably high. In addition, the workplace is changing in response to new technologies and heightened international competition, which is shrinking the demand for and undermining the earning power of unskilled labor. Furthermore, many people learn best in context, rather than in the abstract. The legislation was passed because it recognizes that the work-based learning approach, which is modeled after the traditional apprenticeship concept, integrates theoretical instruction with structured on-the-job training. This approach, combined with school-based learning, can be very effective in engaging student interest, enhancing skill acquisition, developing positive work attitudes, and preparing youths for high wage, high skill careers.

The academic/vocational integration (School-to-Work) model is based on the assumption that the academic and vocational components are linked in real, relevant, and concrete ways. Academic skills taught in the classroom reinforce and expand skills taught on the site. Construction-related content makes up much of the material in social studies, math, and English. Likewise, on the worksite, academic skills are reinforced through their application to site work.

**Working Collaboratively on the Integrated Academic/Vocational Curriculum**

Many Youthbuild programs choose to develop curriculum aligned with the School-to-Work model. Consider the following questions while planning the curriculum:

- Where will instruction take place?
- Who will teach what?
- How will the program maximize the connection between worksite construction training and classroom academic instruction?
• When will worksite instructors, academic instructors, and vocational instructors meet to plan, coordinate instruction, and debrief?

• How much time will be spent team teaching and how much will be separate?

Staff may choose one of three approaches to working together to integrate academic and vocational learning.

**Support**

In this configuration, academic teachers, worksite instructors and vocational instructors work and teach separately, but strive to ensure that they are supporting each other. Instructors learn about each other’s areas of expertise through regular meetings designed to update each other and coordinate their efforts.

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“We do vocational education on the site two mornings a week. We are in a room in a garage that is set up like a classroom. It has a desk, tables and a blackboard. We focus on what they are doing on the site that week. It is also a time for me to touch base with the crew chiefs and see how they are doing.

I also teach vocational education in the classroom two sessions a week. We have a good blackboard, textbooks, and a VCR. We combine reading and writing, vocabulary development, demonstration, and hands-on practice. The modules in class include safety, tool identification, electrical, and blueprints.

I’m also planning to deal with the history of construction careers, barriers to employment for women, real estate, financing and community development, because these topics make construction come alive, students can see the relevance of it.”

-Rebecca Etchison, Youthbuild Dayton

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**Content Exchange**

In this configuration, academic teachers use vocationally relevant materials to teach their subject, and vocational education and worksite instructors reinforce the academic skills content of the trades. For example, when students learn dictionary skills, they use words related to construction or after learning how to frame a wall on the construction site, students describe the process in writing. Vocational instructors make suggestions for reading and writing subjects; academic teachers suggest mate-
rials and methods for teaching measurement skills on the worksite. The academic and vocational instructors assess the work together.

**Teaming**

When “teaming,” worksite instructors, academic teachers, and vocational instructors work together to choose lessons, develop additional instructional materials, present material, and assess student progress.

In this most highly cooperative approach, instructors demonstrate to students the ways in which their respective fields are related. The academic teacher might go to the worksite to teach the math skills needed to do the next phase of the project or the reading skills needed to understand the directions for operating a power saw. Likewise, worksite and vocational instructors might go into the classroom to review the terms associated with framing a wall or the names of tools used, after a worksite skill demonstration. Academic and vocational instructors might also team teach, or assist each other in their respective settings.

**Competency-based Curriculum Model**

One option for the Youthbuild academic component is a competency-based curriculum. A competency-based curriculum can foster teacher creativity, boost student motivation, and improve program accountability.

The competency-based instructional approach uses specific, measurable, and pre-determined learning benchmarks that clearly gauge a student’s learning of skills and knowledge. This approach allows for a highly individualized learning environment as trainees work at their own pace toward the completion of the competencies, for this reason it can benefit students who are working on a variety of levels and have a wide range of academic needs.

The competency-based curriculum fosters teacher creativity because it is structured around a core of measurable learning objectives that define the outcomes of instruction, but not the means, the instruction method, or the materials. It therefore offers teachers unlimited opportunities for innovative approaches to instruction while holding them to a concrete set of expectations defined in terms of student outcomes.

A competency-based curriculum motivates students by giving them clear and frequent measures of their progress. Short-term, easily attained benchmarks show them they are making progress on either a daily or a weekly basis. Benchmarks can be outlined on competency checklists that may include academic skills, job readiness skills, life skills, and leadership skills. Students always know which objectives they are working to achieve.

In a competency-based curriculum, each student progresses at his or her own rate, so the curriculum will take less time for some students than for others.
Because students can have all the time necessary to master each objective, they will not fail to reach an objective. Some competency-based GED curricula allow students to test out of competencies they have already acquired before instruction is offered.

A competency-based curriculum also helps programs measure their success. For example, a program can document every student's progress through a curriculum, and the data can yield, for an established time period, the total number of competencies achieved, the average number of competencies achieved per student, and the average length of time a student takes to achieve a given competency. For programs that also need to document the progress of students who do not complete the program, a competency-based curriculum can be especially valuable.

There is a sample set of construction competencies available in the Appendix to *Construction Training at a Youthbuild Program* and a sample set of leadership development competencies in the Appendix to *Leadership Development at a Youthbuild Program*. Both are companion volumes to this handbook. There are, additionally, many subsets and drafts of competencies in different areas that have been developed by local programs, many of which can be obtained through YouthBuild USA. Programs may want to use one of these competencies or may decide to develop their own.

There is a set of competencies developed by the Department of Labor, called SCANS (Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills). These are frequently used by job training professionals. The purpose of the SCANS initiative was to involve private industry in the identification of the necessary skills for success in the job market. Representatives from private industry met over a two-year period and selected those essential skills that would help young people be successful on the job. Five core competencies were selected, as follows:

The ability to:

1. Allocate resources
2. Work with others
3. Use information
4. Understand systems
5. Use technology

The SCANS initiative continues as SCANS 2000, an interdisciplinary group at John Hopkins University's Institute for Policy Studies. They are developing project-based curricula on CD-ROMs to teach the workplace skills embedded in the core competencies as well as teacher training materials.

There is no national set of academic competencies agreed upon as the goal of secondary education beyond those tested by the national General Education Diploma examination. Graduation and completion competencies may be devel-
oped at each local program. Competencies to be completed through each unit of study may be determined and communicated to students at the outset. When planning these competencies, it will help to answer the following questions:

1. Short-term skill objectives:
   • What specific skills will students have at the end of a one to two-month learning unit?
   • What will students be able to do?
   • How will these skills be assessed?

2. Teaching strategies:
   • What strategies and methods will be used to both teach and reinforce these educational objectives?

3. Evaluation and documentation:
   • How will teachers determine whether educational objectives have been achieved?
   • How will teachers document this ongoing evaluation?

**Computer-based Curriculum Model**

The computer-based curriculum model has been adopted by a number of Youthbuild programs because it is interactive and efficient and helps students develop important computer skills. It allows programs to use advanced technology to provide competency-based instruction.

Planning for student placement in a competency-based computer program is directly related to initial assessment. Skills cultivated by the computer-based curriculum should correspond to those determined to be objectives for the program.

In this model, instruction, review, and assessment are provided by a computer program and managed by a computer-literate administrator or teacher.
Instruction is individually paced, so teachers can ensure that all students in a multi-level group are working at an appropriate level.

The computer-based curriculum model is most successful when it is integrated with other essential teaching strategies, including large and small group teaching, tutoring, hands-on skill practice, and theme-based projects. A portion of the day or week is set aside for individually-paced computer practice, but this time is supplemented with teacher assistance and peer tutoring.

Youthbuild programs may elect to use the computer-based curriculum model because they have access to extensive technology or plan to work closely with a collaborating agency that uses this approach. During the planning stage, it is important for Youthbuild programs to ensure that the computer-based curriculum approach will be but one element of a multi-dimensional instructional approach. Careful scheduling and curriculum planning are key to insuring that computer instruction has its appropriate place, but is not the sole source of instruction. Computer curricula can be found in Chapter 10: Resources.

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“Don’t rely on computers too much. Be careful to balance the use of technology and personal interaction and traditional group teaching. Computers are a good resource, but it is possible to become too dependent on them.”

-Joyce Howard, YouthBuild Tallahassee

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**Be Flexible and Document Progress**

The curriculum model that programs adopt will need to be evaluated on an ongoing basis. While it is useful to develop and attempt to retain a consistent structure, it is also essential that programs remain flexible. As the staff curriculum team proceeds with its lessons, they will know whether or not students are grasping the content. It may be necessary to expand curriculum goals, speed up or slow down the pace, or modify the materials depending on students’ needs.

It is recommended that programs keep records of what has been developed and what changes have been made so that they can learn from mistakes and successes. As they choose assessment tools and develop specific lessons, programs can record what they are doing for future reference. This documentation can then be evaluated and refined in the coming years, and used by other programs.

**Curricula Available**

Once the Youthbuild program has determined which curriculum model to follow, the curriculum will need to be selected within that model. There are five
criteria in the selection of curriculum that help motivate students to engage the curriculum with enthusiasm.

1. **Culturally relevant curriculum.** When selecting effective educational curriculum, it is important that the staff analyze its relevance to the cultural experiences of the students. Does the curriculum address real life issues important to the African-American, Latino, Native American, or low-income white students who are in the program?

If the curriculum is not directly relevant, then the important question is whether it lends itself to examples and companion lessons that are directly related to the cultural experiences of the students. In many cases, teachers will need to adapt curriculum to be relevant to the cultural experiences of the students. Having the expertise, interest, and willingness to adapt current curriculum to the students’ interests are essential qualities of Youthbuild teachers.

2. **Integration with Youthbuild components.** Curriculum that can be adapted to assist the lessons learned in other Youthbuild components should be selected. Look for curriculum that can reinforce what is learned at the construction site, and in community service and leadership components of the program. Curricula that support the reading, writing, and mathematics necessary to be an effective construction worker should be identified, adapted, and taught.

3. **Curriculum materials that are accessible and targeted.** Find curriculum that provides materials for the teacher and students. The materials should be accessible in a local school district, bookstore, or library. Curriculum accessible through an on-line database should also be identified.

Curriculum that does not have companion student materials is difficult to work with, particularly if the curriculum does not break down the specific units of instruction that should be taught in sequence. Finally, the material should be easy to use. It should be self-contained and have relevance without having to rely on previous or future units to explain its meaning.

4. **Curriculum with Pre and Post Assessments.** Good curriculum provides a way of measuring if students are learning the material being presented. Pre and post assessments that measure the knowledge of students in the subject area being taught should be included in the curriculum package.
5. Curriculum supports facilitation, not just directed learning. Good curriculum provides instructional methodologies that help teachers facilitate the learning process. Facilitating the learning process includes the use of tutors, audiovisual equipment, and alternative instructional methodologies such as small groups, individual learning, and project-based learning. Curriculum that only promotes directed learning (e.g. lecture) is not effective with Youthbuild students.

“I learned how to use computers. They even had a section on how to go look for a job, how to interview, how to put together a resume, how to dress, and how to speak. At the beginning people were like, ‘why should I work for my money when I could just sell drugs,’ but by the end everyone had their resume together and were looking for jobs. I was so proud of everyone; their whole attitude changed. You noticed that people who were saying it was boring at first stayed to the very end.”

—Nzinga Mahon, graduate, Youth Action YouthBuild
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  Format and Description

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Part III: Implementing the Education Component

The focus of implementation of the education component is the actual teaching of academic and vocational skills to trainees. This section provides teaching strategies, how to prepare students for the GED, and assessment and evaluation of the trainees and the education component as a whole.
Chapter 7: Teaching Strategies

Overview

How subjects are taught is as important as what is taught. The methods and strategies used in the Youthbuild classroom send powerful messages to the students about respect for learning and respect for others. This chapter makes general suggestions for setting a good tone in the classroom and specific suggestions for teaching each subject.

Validating Students’ Experience and Knowledge

The curriculum should be designed to engage students of varying reading levels, varying life experiences and uneven, limited academic backgrounds. The curriculum and the classroom environment can involve students in learning on a primary level, drawing from and validating the students’ own experiences in order to be rich, meaningful, and relevant. Classroom activities can elucidate those things that the students already know in order to better introduce them to the literacy and trade-related skills they need to know. In addition, such exercises help the students to become aware of the tools already at their disposal.

Many activities incorporate brainstorming which is spontaneous, uncensored sharing of information from the students’ own life experiences, knowledge and observations. Exercises in journal writing encourage student reflection on personal and classroom experiences. Allowing students time for telling stories from their own lives builds confidence and reminds students that what they have done or seen is relevant and valuable.

Before teaching, ask students to describe experiences they’ve had with tools, topics and materials. Ask them to give examples or demonstrate something they know. Draw on student experience by doing the following:

- Have students write personal histories to use as class text
- Have students write instructions or descriptions to use as class text
- Have students brainstorm possible solutions to problems
- Encourage and praise guessing
- Encourage and praise questions
- Praise students for the knowledge they bring with them
- Recognize sharing of information
• Pool information from the students as a way of introducing new material—drawing out the information they already possess as a method of presenting the topic

**Provide Success Experiences and Promote Self-esteem**

The classroom environment should recognize student achievement and reward progress. Teachers should offer frequent praise: recognize small accomplishments and insights to help students feel proud that they have mastered a particular concept. Student effort is valued and publicly acknowledged through individual contracts, wall charts, award ceremonies, and unit completion certificates. When the daily program is rewarding for the students, there is less need for disciplinary measures.

Adult learners often fear making mistakes in front of their peers. Acknowledge these fears. Help students get over the fear of new learning and help them feel successful by highlighting their strengths. Be careful not to put students on the spot. When asking questions, it is helpful to begin by asking questions that a majority of people can answer; this creates a positive atmosphere and an environment where answering questions is not risky. “Open questions” that have more than one right answer also help students feel more comfortable responding.

**Suggestions for Providing an Experience of Success**

• Make tasks clear and simple
• Have students practice before doing a demonstration or taking a test
• Reward perseverance
• Make completion requirements clear
• Use individual learning plans
• Show measurable progress
• Use charts or lists to check off skills attained
• Have recognition ceremonies for successful performance
• Organize games and fun activities as rewards for completing tasks
• Provide opportunities for students to attend special events such as conferences and workshops
• Give bonuses for perfect attendance

**Suggestions for Promoting Self-Esteem**

• Demonstrate belief in students’ abilities
• Recognize change and growth, however small
• Recognize new learning
• Recognize creative thinking
• Give praise and positive reinforcement for making the repeated decision every day to continue on this new path of self-development
• Give praise and positive reinforcement for following program rules
• Provide inspirational and motivating speakers
• Provide community and business mentors
• Give students increasing responsibility
• Encourage students to teach others
• Solicit advice and recommendations from students on program policies, classroom activities, subject matter, and materials

Suggestions for Reviewing Skills

The need to continually review and reinforce previous learning cannot be overstated. Students will benefit from daily review at the beginning of each session of the material learned in the session before, and at the end of each session of what was learned that day.

• Review at the beginning of each session what was learned the day before
• Review at the end of each session what was learned that day
• Devise lessons which incorporate known skills
• Devise lessons which incorporate known skills in new ways
• Divide students into “study groups” and teach them review strategies
• Have students teach others
• Have students demonstrate skills to each other
• Have students write and give review quizzes
• Have students write directions for manual skill work

Teaching Reading

In-class reading should provide the students with the opportunity to get personal attention from the teacher as well as highly motivating, satisfying learning experiences alone and with the group. If the students spend the majority of their classroom time working in workbooks, they often feel little incentive to attend class; but if they are engaged in personal relationships that are fun and challenging, they are more likely to participate regularly. Teachers may want and need to allocate some classroom time for students to work through specific texts and
workbook assignments, but it is recommended that they supplement this with a range of additional enjoyable reading activities.

Set aside a time each day to read a portion of a high-interest book to the class. Or read brief, complete stories. Reading aloud to the class encourages development of listening comprehension with material that may still be too difficult for students to read independently.

While others are working silently, ask pairs or small groups of students to choose a text of which you have multiple copies. Ask them to read portions of the text silently, while you also read, then discuss their feelings and opinions about the characters, the plot, the main idea, etc. In this informal and less pressured setting, you can introduce comprehension strategies. For high and low-level readers alike, reading a high-interest book is a new and exciting experience. (See Chapter 10: Resources for suggested books.)

Have on hand a variety of practical reading materials for students. They may have a specific desire to improve their reading in a specific area and will be more motivated if they are working on something they feel strongly about. Examples of high-motivation life-skills reading include driver's manual, religious texts, recipes, directions to make or fix something real (make a model or construct something as you read the instructions), job applications, want ads, newspapers, health brochures, first aid books, and books on parenting.

“The reading levels in my class range from the very low to the especially high. I like to have a lot of books in the room, and I buy as many kinds of interesting books with cool covers as I can.

We read a couple of short stories as a group every day. I find the best literature is anything short and intriguing, or long but engaging enough that you can read it every day. Or anything that requires you to read to do something else.”

-Robbie Fransden, PACE/SIPA Youthbuild

**Reading Activities for Learners at All Levels**

*Library Corner*

Partition off a part of the classroom and fill it with shelves with a variety of books, magazines and newspapers. Provide students with time to use the library
corner in class and check books out to take home. Provide a comfortable reading chair and lamp, if possible.

**Writing About Reading**

Have students write personal histories about their own experiences with reading. Ask them to reflect on learning to read, their memories of special books or teachers, what has been easy, and what has been hard. Students can produce a finished project which includes their reflections along with photographs of themselves as children or copies of work they did in school as a child. Reflecting on their own experiences can set the stage for honest dialogue about the process of continuing to learn as adults.

**Other Student Texts**

Reading the writing of other students can be an important learning and team-building tool. Use poems, plays, stories and essays by students in your program, and newsletters and journals written in other adult education programs.

**Construction-related Reading**

Reading skills can be reinforced, and the relationship between construction and academics can be demonstrated, by using construction-related materials and tasks to teach reading skills.

**Teacher-made Texts**

If the students are interested in a particular topic, the teacher may want to write a story for the students to read. The students will probably feel flattered and motivated to read the text. The teacher can write an open-ended story, encouraging the students to finish it in writing, or compile assorted readings and activities on topics of interest to the students.

**Writing Children's Books and Reading to Children**

Students who have children may enjoy occasionally bringing them to class (with the teacher’s permission) with the sole purpose of reading to them. Students may also write or dictate stories for their children. Also, if a student is studying a particular subject (i.e., for the GED), one of the best ways to reinforce that learning is to write about it in simple language in the form of a children's book.

**Comic Books**

Many comic books are available which deal with adult concepts in an entertaining, non-threatening format. Health departments often write brochures about AIDS and drugs in a comic book format; Golden Legacy Comics are biographies of important African-Americans. Students can both read and write comic books about topics they are studying.
Plays and Poems

Use a variety of high interest plays and poems in order to teach about these genres for the GED. Have students work in pairs or small groups and practice performing aloud. Have students write alternative endings to plays or write poems modeled on the styles of those they read.

Teaching Writing

Traditionally, writing has been taught as a set of exercises that are eventually integrated into a final product. The product was often unrelated to subjects the students found meaningful. Errors were circled in red pen and corrected; papers were graded, returned and forgotten. Writing is now more often taught as a process for expressing ideas and opinions. All writing in real life is done for a purpose. People write to communicate, to explain, to persuade, to instruct, to describe, and people write best when they write about things they know and care about.

There is such a wide variety of interesting writing experiences possible in the Youthbuild classroom and on the worksite that instructors should never lack for opportunities to teach essential writing skills in purposeful ways. Writing can be incorporated into the program day in ways that teach and reinforce basic skills as well as encourage expression of ideas and feelings. GED practice activities can be supplemented with a myriad of “real life” writing activities that demonstrate the value of writing in daily experience.

Teach the Writing Process

The writing process involves three essential stages: pre-writing, writing, and revising. Each stage is as important as the others and time must be spent cultivating each. Encourage pre-writing, writing, and revision in order to develop excellent writing habits.

Pre-writing

Often students feel they have “nothing to say.” Pre-writing is a tool for stimulating thoughts about a topic and for generating ideas before committing them to a formal structure. Pre-writing exercises can be freeing to students, allowing them to explore their thoughts without worrying about the final product. Pre-writing can involve discussing, brainstorming, listing, outlining, jotting notes, reacting to stimuli, “stream of consciousness” writing, journal writing, and writing to music. Teachers can model the pre-writing process by inviting students to try these techniques in large and small groups, then individually, before using a structured format.

Writing

The writing stage involves the bringing together of thoughts, facts and ideas, along with the basic writing skills, into a form. There are many structured forms of
writing and each has its own purpose. The formats of essays, articles, letters, short stories, poems and reports are all different. Students need to be acquainted with each of the forms and determine which are appropriate for what audiences and which purpose.

**Revising and Proofreading**

After students have generated information and ideas in a specific form, they need to appraise and improve it. They need to learn to develop a critical distance from their writing in order to evaluate content, proofread for specific errors, then reorganize and edit into a final draft.

Students are aided in the revision stage if they are asked to write on every other line using lined paper, so that they can go back and make corrections easily. If they are word processing on a computer, it will be even easier.

Students can learn to improve their own writing by reading each others’ work. Encourage cooperative reading early on and give suggestions for things to look for when reading another’s work. After teaching a specific skill (e.g., capitalization), encourage students to edit their own and others’ papers with a focus on that skill. Offer guidelines for students to give constructive criticism to each other, which can then be incorporated into revisions.

Proofreading is a very valuable skill that students should practice frequently. It is effective to use resumes and fundraising proposals as examples of the importance of getting the writing and grammar perfect if the writer wants the reader to give him or her the job or the money requested.

**Teach a Variety of Writing Formats**

There are a number of writing formats that students should learn.

**Essays**

Have students learn the GED essay format in order to write a number of essays. Begin with topics of interest and relevance to students before assigning arbitrary GED practice topics. Tie essays to cultural history activities, to books they have read, and to leadership topics.

**Descriptive Essays:** Description involves expressing an impression or composing a “word picture” using adjectives and creative images. Students can be asked to describe themselves, a day doing demolition, a walk in a park after rain, the street they live on, etc.

**Narrative Essays:** Narration involves telling a story and relating events in sequence. Students can write their autobiographies, tell the events that occurred on a particular day or narrate the events of an important day in history.
Expository Essays: This kind of writing involves teaching or giving information. Encourage students to write about tasks, procedures, and topics they know and understand in order to teach others, to educate public officials, or to define important concepts or values for their children. Expository writing can involve first-hand knowledge or information the student has researched.

Persuasive Essays: Persuasive essays involve developing an argument that expresses the writer’s point of view, giving reasons, and drawing conclusions in an attempt to convince the reader. Most GED essays are in the persuasive format, and practicing persuasive essays for a variety of purposes can be an excellent stimulus for critical thinking, as well as practice in organizing one’s ideas, and avoiding generalizations and stereotyped responses. Persuasive essays can be used to write letters to the editor in response to a public event or an editorial or to write a personal letter to convince someone to make a positive change.

Other writing formats:

Autobiography: Encourage students to tell the stories of their lives using an autobiography format.

Biography: Encourage students to research the life stories of people they are interested in and write biographies. The students can write books and include photos or illustrations. These books can be used as texts for other students to read.

Poetry: Show students examples of limericks, ballads, acrostics, free verse, and haiku. Encourage them to write about feelings and ideas using poetic language.

Song Lyrics: Students can write new lyrics to familiar tunes or write original tunes. Encourage rhyming and creative expression.

Rap Songs: Use rap lyrics to teach internal rhyming and the creative use of language. Have students write about topics that are important to them using the rap format.

Children’s Books: Encourage students to write and illustrate books for their
children or children in a local day care center. Have students read the books aloud to children.

**Fables and Myths:** Read fables and myths from a variety of cultures to illustrate how people use stories to explain the world and pass on values. Encourage students to tell their own stories to explain their own truths.

**Short Stories:** Read a variety of short stories and discuss the use of plot, theme, and characterization. Encourage students to finish open-ended stories and to write stories of their own. Use photographs, newspaper headlines or first lines of dialogue to stimulate ideas.

**Plays:** Read a variety of plays in class with students, teaching about setting, scene, and characters. Have students write short plays about topics of their own choosing. The plays can then be performed for the whole group.

**Scripts:** Have students write scripts for video productions in which they teach a skill, demonstrate a task, and interview people. The script can then be acted on video.

**Dialogues:** Have students write conversations in order to practice conversational language and explore relationships.

**Journals:** Encourage students to keep daily journals about private thoughts and feelings, what they are learning on the worksite, their community service experiences, and about the books they are reading.

**Letters:** Have students write letters requesting information, letters to the editor, cover letters, friendly letters, thank you letters, and letters of complaint.

**Resumes:** Students should each compose a resume describing their work and education experiences.

**Fundraising proposals:** Since a key part of leadership development is knowing how leaders obtain resources to achieve their group's goals, giving students practice reading the proposals written for the program and writing mock or real proposals for projects of their own design is an excellent writing assignment.

**Reports:** Encourage students to teach others about experiences they have had or information they have researched by writing and then reading reports.

**Announcements and Posters:** Encourage students to design posters about health, safety, parenting or community issues, upcoming events, safety rules, the proper use of tools and the right way to do a job.

**Instructions:** The worksite provides opportunities for students to write instructions on how to do a task. Have students write a step-by-step description of how to frame a wall, how to install sheetrock, how to paint baseboards, or other construction tasks. Compile the instructions in a guidebook to be used by other students.
**Recipes:** Students can write recipes for foods they make, and then class members can prepare. They can also write imaginary recipes for more esoteric meals: “What would be the ingredients for success? A half a cup of courage, a quart of patience, etc.

**Directions:** Have students research how to get to a location that other students will be visiting, and then write a set of directions. The directions can be used to get to the location.

**Articles:** Read newspaper articles in class with the students. Explain the component parts of a newspaper article. Have students write articles on a variety of program and community topics using a standard newspaper article format. Publish them in a newsletter for distribution.

**Editorials:** The GED persuasive essay format is an excellent model for writing editorial opinions with a clearly stated point of view on controversial topics. Publish editorials in a newsletter for distribution.

**Position Papers:** A variation on this is to write papers on controversial topics for presentation to people who have the power to influence decisions.

**Reviews:** Encourage students to write reviews of books, films, and videos, including a summary of the story and a critical appraisal of the content.

**Interviews:** Have students interview family members, community members, local officials, and each other on topics of interest. They may ask leading questions on a controversial topic or conduct in-depth interviews designed to get to know a person’s history or experience in a particular area. Students may tape the interviews, then transcribe them, or write longhand answers to already printed questions. Interviews can then be rewritten and summarized, and conclusions drawn, for publication, often in the program’s own newsletter.

**Dictionaries and Glossaries of Terms:** Have students write their own dictionaries defining terms that are important to them in their own words. They might write a tool dictionary, in which they describe tools and their uses. They might write a “Youth Slang Dictionary” in which they define, in standard English, contemporary slang expressions. They might create a dictionary about a topic they are interested in, e.g., “Plumbing Dictionary,” “Parenting Dictionary,” or “AIDS and Health Dictionary.”

**Publish Student Writing**

Student writing publications are one of the best ways of encouraging students to write for a purpose. Students can be involved in all aspects of publication, including writing, collecting, typing, editing, illustrating, printing, collating, and distributing.

Students can create a variety of publications, including newsletters, literary mag-
azines, training manuals, information handbooks, and yearbooks. Youthbuild programs have produced all of these, and they are highly appreciated by the students.

Leadership skills can be developed through the involvement of students on the publication committee. Help the committees determine goals, responsibilities, and deadlines. Helping students complete assignments and stay on task fosters valuable work-related skills.

Integrate computer skill development with the publication of student writing. If students type and save all of the writing they do during the course of the program, they have a myriad of passages to choose from when they are ready to edit and compile a newsletter, manual, or yearbook.

**Teaching Math**

Many students come into the Youthbuild classroom with fears and memories of failure related to mathematics. They are often reluctant to do math or believe that they “can’t.” Teachers should help them see how often they already use math in their daily lives, and give them experiences of success so that they can continue to develop their skills. In the Youthbuild classroom, students can learn that math is more than a series of meaningless abstractions, that math is a useful and usable tool for managing everyday life.

Begin the lessons in math by acknowledging that math is often difficult and uncomfortable for students. Give students time to discuss their memories of math and the experiences they have had. Create an environment in which students are comfortable expressing their doubts. The teacher should express confidence that the students can learn math, and suggest that they use a signal, like raising a hand, lifting a pencil, or simply saying so, if they find a particular math problem to be confusing or unclear.

Consider having students write a brief essay in which they describe their experiences with math. Have them tell of their earliest memories of learning math, teachers they remember, and what they liked and didn't like. Ask them to describe what has been hard and what has been easy about math, also discuss the ways they have used math in daily life.

Early on, ask students to discuss the many ways they use math in everyday life including the math they used in the last week or last month. Examples might include doubling a recipe, mixing baby formula, making a purchase and receiving change, planning a budget, figuring tax and tip in a restaurant, grocery shopping, examining a paycheck for correctness, reading timetables for catching a bus, and figuring distance between two places. Use the examples the students give you and build future lessons around them. When teaching a math operation (e.g., adding decimals) use practical examples to reinforce the meaningfulness of the skill.

Teachers should be aware of reading levels when teaching math. It is important
that students’ math skills not be measured by their ability to read. Be aware that a student who can perform operations may not be able to do it if it is in the form of a word problem. Use word problems that are appropriate for the students’ vocabulary and comprehension level.

**Discuss the Ways Math is Used in Construction**

In the beginning of the program year, have students discuss the ways math is used on the construction site. Have them reflect on what they imagine to be the uses of math on the site, then refer back to these lists as the year progresses and they see the various construction-related math applications used practically. Use examples of construction-related issues involving math when teaching. In this way, students see the connection between the learning they do in class and the job skills they are gaining on the site. Examples of brainstormed lists might include measuring and cutting wood, figuring how much plywood is needed to cover a floor, figuring how many tiles are needed to cover a floor, estimating the cost of a job, estimating the time it will take to do a job, mixing concrete, checking for right angles, and ordering materials for a job.

Because reading a tape measure is such an essential skill on the building site, teach it from the beginning. Review and reinforce this skill until students have mastered it. Build opportunities for practice into the worksite schedule, so that students will again be reminded of the construction application of the skill. It is important to help students master this skill early on, so there will be no delay in production at the worksite.

Teach measurement intensively and systematically. Use hands-on practice whenever possible. Have students measure everything in sight: themselves, the windows, the doors, tables. Have students cut wood to size, build scale models, and do scale drawings. Have advanced students help beginners and provide tutoring if necessary.

> “Mathematics has often been presented as a bunch of complicated rules and procedures that only a few “math types” can do well. I would like to be instrumental in breaking down this misconception, because it presents a rather impoverished view of the subject. As a nontraditional math educator, I aspire to provide access to careers in the mathematical sciences to groups of students who have historically been “turned off” to math.”

- Patricia McCarl Steele, YouthBuild Philadelphia
Build from the Concrete to the Abstract

For many students, performing math operations is difficult because they do not understand the underlying concepts. They have not learned the connection between the abstract symbols of math and demonstrable concrete experience. By having hands-on experience with the practical realities of math, the concept is more easily understood when the lesson moves to the symbolic level.

For example, when teaching the concept of area, a teacher might ask students to estimate the length and width of a room. In pairs, students can actually get up and measure the floor. Students can then cut square foot tiles out of cardboard or use floor tiles to lay out a section of the floor to find area. In this way, students can “see” area. Build on this hands-on experience by asking students to draw a picture of the section of the floor, using one-inch scale squares. (If students have mastered measurement, use fractions of an inch to represent a foot.) Have students draw a number of pictures of floors of different areas until they are comfortable with the concept. Then when you are ready to teach students the formula \(L \times W = A\) they will be grounded in concrete physical reality and will understand the significance of the symbols.

The ability to “figure it out in your head” and make an educated guess about a math problem is as important as solving complex algebra problems or finding common denominators. There are many ways to arrive at solutions to math problems, and estimating a reasonable approximation of an answer is as valuable in many cases as an exact answer. Give students the opportunity to estimate their answers before solving problems on paper. This helps them become familiar with math relationships and concepts and teaches them to check their “exact” answers for reasonableness.

Examples of estimation activities include estimating how much of your paycheck is spent on groceries, how long it will take to do a job, how much money will be needed to take a trip, how much carpet is needed to cover a floor, and how much money will be left over after making a purchase.

Introduce Complex Skills Early

One of the reasons math is often so tedious and frustrating for adult learners is because they have never moved beyond basic skills. They have only been taught using the “linear” approach, in which one simple skill is built upon another and only after these are mastered do they become gradually more complex.

Introduce complex skills early in order to enhance student interest, build confidence and show the interrelatedness of math concepts. For example, you can introduce a lesson on purchasing materials on the site by asking students how to figure sales tax. Break down the notion of percent to simple terms, explaining that they pay seven cents on every dollar. Show how this relationship can be written as
a fraction (7/100), a decimal (.07) or a percent, (seven per every hundred: “cent” meaning “hundred”) and that these are all various forms of saying the same thing. Show students how to figure percents using simple problems. Students who have been stuck reviewing multiplication tables for years will be impressed to see that they can understand concepts that they once thought were insurmountable.

The use of calculators is often perceived as a “crutch” or considered “cheating”, when in fact it can give beginning students access to complex math experiences they never thought possible. Calculators free students from the arduousness of doing long or routine figuring and enable them to work with the underlying concepts. Combine practice with basic skills like memorizing multiplication tables with opportunities to work out real problems using tools that enhance speed and accuracy.

In order to stimulate math thinking, design real-life problems in which students first estimate their answers, then figure with a calculator, then check with pencil and paper figuring. In this way, they develop important conceptual understanding and reinforce basic skills.

Real-life Math Problems

As often as possible, involve students in the real-life math problems that come up on the construction site. Ask students to help place an order for tiles or plywood or studs. In pairs or small groups, they can figure the materials needed or the cost. They can help figure additional materials needed to fix a mistake, or help figure out how to alter formulas. When problems arise on the worksite, they are “teachable moments”—opportunities to demonstrate how classroom learning relates pragmatically to the day-to-day operations of the worksite.

Simulate construction-math situations in the classroom. Set up scenarios with a number of variables in which students have to use a variety of math skills to arrive at estimations and exact answers. Play “You Are the Contractor”: give students problems in which they have to estimate the materials, costs and time needed to do specific jobs. Have them work in small groups and suggest alternative solutions.

In addition to construction problems, students can work on other problems that are an integral part of the program. For example, students can do the following:

- Assist the teachers in doing math-related tasks: calculate the percentage scores on tests, calculate percentage attendance, make graphs and charts depicting percentage or ratios in attendance or lateness.
- Plan a meal together: figure costs of materials, purchase food and calculate change, and use recipes. Cut a recipe in half and increase a recipe two and a half times.
• Go to a restaurant together. In both real and fictional situations, calculate the cost of a meal within a budget, including tax and tip.
• Plan a trip together. Students can figure time, schedules, costs, and the most efficient routes.
• Plan strategies for earning money as a group in order to buy something at the end of the program, put on a graduation party, or go on a trip. Students can investigate things to sell or services to perform in order to make money.

**Play Math Games**

Make math fun. Reinforce skill learning with cooperative games and games of team competition. Students can learn division facts just as well by playing a bingo game or through a team competition with division embedded in it, as they can by doing repetitious worksheets. Students often get caught up in the spirit of games and do not realize they are practicing important skills. The activity is livelier, more engaging, and less frustrating. Examples of math games include the following:

• Multiplication Bingo
• Construction-math problem Jeopardy
• Matching games: matching fractions to their equivalents, fractions to decimals, symbols to words
• Team competition of mental math
• Team competition of drawing a picture involving measurement directions
• Estimating the number of jelly beans in a jar

**Teaching Vocational Skills**

Teachers can plan classroom vocational skills training so that it teaches construction skills while reinforcing academic instruction.

Before teaching, find out what students already know. Ask them questions about the material to be covered. Also ask them to describe experiences they’ve had with the tools and materials and ask them to give examples or to demonstrate something they know how to do. Encourage students to share their prior knowledge by brainstorming possible solutions to problems, encouraging guessing and questions, praising students for the knowledge they bring with them, and recognizing sharing of information.

Always tell students what will be taught and why it is important that they know this information. Give a variety of examples from real work situations. Ask students to describe situations in which they have seen these skills used and invite speakers in to discuss the relevance of skills to the workplace.
**Pre-assess Student Skills**

In order to guide instruction in class and on the site, develop tools that assess the skills students already have. Design assessment tools that correspond directly to skills to be taught and measure only those skills. Be careful to measure skill knowledge and not reading ability by using various strategies depending on student needs, e.g., manual demonstration, verbal description, and problem-solving simulations.

Explain that the purpose of the initial skill assessment is not to pass or fail students or to judge their knowledge, but to determine what students already know and what they need to know so they can be taught accordingly. Then tell students the results of the assessment. Praise any knowledge demonstrated. Praise effort. Downplay poor results and assure students that they will learn the material. Tell them the information will be taught in a way that will allow them to improve their performance.

**Clear Achievement Objectives**

In the classroom and on the worksite, it is helpful to establish measurable competencies in advance. Establish as benchmark skills only those that will be taught thoroughly. Acquaint students with achievement benchmark expectations in the beginning of the unit. Explain expectations for student progress in clear, specific language, and establish a specific timeframe and prepare students for the deadline. Demonstrate achievement to students during the course of the unit: mark or chart progress in folders, on wall charts, and in regular evaluation sessions.

**Hands-on Skill Practice**

The classroom setting allows for practice with tools and materials in an environment that is safe, comfortable, and potentially more supportive than the worksite. Hands-on practice in class allows time to focus on accuracy rather than speed, allows for mistakes, and for more focused concentration.

The student who has difficulty reading or comprehending written directions may have well-developed visual acuity or good eye-hand coordination. Providing for hands-on experiences in the classroom allows for the expression of a wide variety of learning strengths, and does not cater to or single out the better readers or the more academically experienced.

Reinforce the current learning on the worksite by practicing, discussing, and reading about it in class. Make repeated references to the site work when it applies to in-class instruction.

When explaining how to do a new task to trainees, remember to use clear language. Divide content into manageable parts, so as not to overload beginners. Give specific step-by-step instructions when telling students to perform a task,
and repeat these instructions frequently and ask students to repeat them.

Whenever possible, have students work in teams on the site and in the classroom. Give teams problems to solve together; give “team scores;” have team (not individual) competitions. By having students work in small groups, they will learn the importance of communication and it will foster both leadership and mutual responsibility.

Instructors often find that demonstration is a powerful teaching tool. It is used to ensure that students have seen how to do a task, heard explanations of how to do it, and practiced what they have learned.

If integrated with academic skill building (especially reading, writing and math) and reinforced with hands-on practice, students are more likely to perform tasks well and remember how to do them.

**Integrating Academics, Demonstration, and Hands-on Practice**

Present students with a problem. For example: “We have to nail this vertical stud to this horizontal stud. The horizontal stud is already nailed to the floor. How can we do it?”

Ask students for suggestions to solve the problem. Students may try to do it and may or may not succeed. Discuss what worked and what didn’t and why.

Have students read instructions for performing the task. Ask them to explain the instructions in their own words and practice following them either individually, in small groups or as a class.

Demonstrate by performing the task correctly and describing what is being done. (“In order to adequately support the vertical stud, we need to toe-nail it to the horizontal stud, like this. To ‘toe-nail’ means to hammer it at an angle through both the vertical and the horizontal stud.”) Show how to do it. Draw a picture on the blackboard if it is helpful. Explain when to use this technique and why it works best in this situation.

Review what has been taught by asking trainees to describe the technique in their own words, and explain the situations in which it would be used. (“What is this technique called? When would it be used? How is it done?”)
Next the students should practice the skill until they perform it correctly. Work with individuals who are doing it incorrectly until they can do it independently. Ask students who have mastered the skill to help others. The amount of time spent allowing students to practice will pay off in the long run. Costly mistakes can be avoided and student confidence will build, resulting in more efficient and effective work.

Lastly, have students write about the task. Writing reinforces and deepens learning. They may write instructions on how to do the task, reflect upon their learning in a journal, or raise questions about additional information they would like to have.

**Regularly Assess Student Progress**

Assess student progress on a regular basis. Do it informally each day by observing and making mental notes of who needs assistance and with which skills. Do it daily by asking students to demonstrate skills they learned that day after they have had time to practice. When formally assessing student skills, remember to give students adequate notice of assessment and adequate time for review, and assess only those skills that have been taught. Test for skill knowledge, not reading ability. When testing student acquisition of construction skills, use a combination of demonstration and written tests. In addition, use the results of the assessments to plan future teaching. Use results not to grade students, but to guide further instruction. Use assessments to inform both the teacher and the students of what skills need continued practice. Continue to work with students who have not mastered the skill or the information until they learn it. The program should also provide opportunities for students’ self-assessment. Students can evaluate their participation, attendance, and skill attainment. Students can set goals for future participation and future learning. It is important to recognize even small achievements.

**Teaching Leadership Skills**

There are many opportunities in the classroom to develop leadership skills. All students, not just students in selected leadership positions, can be involved in practicing leadership skills in the course of daily classroom activities.

Students can take ownership of committees charged with specific tasks, while practicing the group listening and decision-making skills necessary for getting things done. Teachers can help committees determine goals, responsibilities, and deadlines. Committees can take responsibility for arranging speakers, planning trips, and other events, and organizing meetings related to classroom topics. Because leadership skills are so multi-faceted, leadership development lessons can be taught in all components of the program.
Many of the leadership development competencies are relevant to the goals of the academic classroom. In particular, the following skills will be taught constantly in class:

- Listening skills
- Group facilitation and discussion skills
- Presentations to the group
- Note-taking

**Learning from the Community**

Key to leadership development is getting to know the community. Begin by assessing the local situation. Generate questions that help students determine what the needs of the community are in the areas of education, housing, healthcare, transportation, employment, the environment, crime, the elderly, and the young. Begin with student concerns and expand into the community to gather statistics, research key problems and solutions, and talk to community organizers and local representatives.

Help students become familiar with the history of the local community by reading information from the local library or historical archives and by inviting speakers who can discuss historical transitions that have occurred in the local area. Analyze the changes that have occurred over time and the ways neighborhood people participated in the changes. Discuss the role ordinary people can play in creating positive change. See the appendix to this chapter for additional community education activities.

**Teach Key Concepts and Principles**

It is important in studying the local community that students be acquainted with key principles and essential underlying concepts. Introduce students to the study of community economics and government and political systems. Use the local community to generate discussion of how decisions are made which impact people's lives, how ordinary people can influence decisions, how the city is structured, who local representatives are and what power they have. Study current issues: by reading the newspaper and talking to local people, have students determine what the key local concerns are and what options exist for dealing with these issues.

**Community Service**

Involvement in community service activities can be one of the most important aspects of students’ learning at Youthbuild. By working on meaningful volunteer projects in the local community, students broaden their understanding of community needs, meet people they otherwise would not have met, provide valuable services to the community, develop a sense of their own importance to others, learn valuable
communication and work-related skills, and strengthen their sense of responsibility. Community service experiences can serve to break through stereotypes and prejudices about unfamiliar populations and expose students to new career options.

Set aside one afternoon weekly or bi-weekly for students to leave the program and go to their respective agencies or centers. Help students plan their timing and bus routes in order to help foster the habit of arriving on time and ready to work.

The more organized the community service component of the program is, the more smoothly and effectively it will run, and the more educational it will be. Begin by researching which community agencies are looking for volunteers. Prepare by meeting the groups and presenting what Youthbuild is, who the students are, and what kinds of learning experiences the program is seeking for Youthbuild students. Explain that the program’s goal is for students to provide meaningful service, not do “cleanup work” or provide unpaid menial labor.

Find agencies and programs in the local community that represent a wide range of needs. If possible, give students the opportunity to choose placements that interest them, but also encourage them to challenge themselves. Placement opportunities might include the following:

- Answering phones for AIDS or counseling hotlines
- Assisting at a daycare center, Head Start program, or nursing home
- Tutoring in afterschool programs or elementary schools
- Tutoring in jails
- Coaching children’s sports
- Assisting in Girl Scouts or Boy Scouts
- Doing environmental cleanup
- Working with Parks and Recreation Departments
- Volunteering with disabled people
- Assisting at a local library
- Assisting at a local homeless shelter
- Assisting at a local food bank or local health food cooperative
- Volunteering at the local zoo or animal hospital
- Volunteering at a hospital or health center
- Providing construction skills to a local homesteading or housing program or building ramps for accessibility

Ask agencies to provide student volunteers with a thorough orientation to the agency, the population they’ll be serving, and the service they’ll be performing. Explain also that community service is a required part of the student’s participa-
tion in Youthbuild, so agencies will be asked to account for the student’s time and evaluate his or her work. Explain that agencies may be asked to write recommendations or act as references for students when they apply for jobs.

Keep in contact with agencies. Communicate with them about any issues related to changes in hours, attendance, or duties and ask them to contact you if they are having any problems or questions.

**Integrate Community Service with Academic Skill Development**

There are a variety of ways that student academic skills can be developed through participation in community service activities. Have students keep journal accounts of their experiences and give them questions to guide their reflection. Have students do research about the agency, the problem or the population with whom they are working. They can write their research in article format, publish it in the program newsletter, and give presentations on their experiences and their research to the class. Compile and publish a Community Service Resource Book, in which they describe their experiences and inform the community about available services. A certification form for community service hours performed by students is included in the appendix to this chapter.

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“We do community service projects. Our latest projects involved painting over the graffiti on a landmark lighthouse as part of National Lights Out Night. We also helped the local Boys’ and Girls’ Club by painting their gym. For the Martin Wilson Art Center, we constructed easels and jewelry boxes and renovated their work space. We’ve gotten a lot of support from the community as a result of these efforts to reach out.”

-Kashif Muhammad, Atlantic City YouthBuild

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**Organizing Field Trips**

To enrich the education component organize field trips in the community. Take the students to construction sites in the neighborhood. Seeing a foundation being built or brick being laid will make the classroom reading material and discussion more relevant. Take the trainees to trade shows, lumber yards, mills and manufacturers. Visit the offices of architects, drafters and other construction professionals. Meeting tradespeople and seeing workers performing their jobs gives students insight into the variety of opportunities and work environments available to them. Visit museums, art exhibits, science centers, and government office buildings in order to expand student awareness of the cultural and job opportunities available to them in their community. Tie the visits to in-class reading and writing activities.
The process of organizing the field trip can be as educational for students as the field trip itself. From the initial discussion about what trip to take, to the writing of follow-up thank you letters, student input can be central to the organizing. Involve students in the organization of field trips by having students:

- Brainstorm places to visit
- Evaluate the educational advantages of the places listed
- Research the places by using the phone book and making the calls
- Report information to the class
- Make pre-trip preparations, including planning routes, planning transportation, making a budget
- Prepare questions and observation guides
- Write follow-up evaluations
- Write thank you letters
- Prepare a bulletin board or scrapbook about the trip
- Write about the trip and publish the report in a class or community newspaper

A field trip information form that students can use when organizing field trips is included in the appendix to this chapter.

**Arranging Guest Speakers**

As in organizing field trips, the process of inviting guest speakers can teach leadership, organizing, and planning skills. Ask the students to help decide who appropriate speakers would be, and to be involved at every stage of the planning and follow-up.

Suggest that students bring in people to speak on a variety of appropriate topics. A representative from OSHA can speak about site safety, or a Red Cross worker train students in the fundamentals of first aid. Invite contractors and tradespeople to describe what is involved in their fields. Union representatives can talk about the requirements for application to their unions. Tool and equipment vendors are often willing to come in and demonstrate their wares.

Invite representatives of the arts to talk about their fields and to provide students with suggestions for creative outlets and alternative career options. Invite local artists, poets, and musicians to do workshops. Invite well-known athletes who can discuss the work, self-discipline, and skill involved in their careers.

Invite speakers who can provide insight into issues that are of interest to the students. Generate suggestions from the students on topics they want to learn more about, i.e., parenting, sexuality, AIDS/HIV, drug abuse and treatment, banking, credit unions, buying a house, starting a business, or buying a car.
Speakers of color can discuss issues of race, and women working in non-traditional fields can discuss gender in the workplace from a personal perspective and advise students on strategies for coping with the realities of the work world.

Students can be involved in arranging speakers and following up in a variety of ways. Students can do the following:

- Plan questions
- Choose dates
- Research possible speakers
- Greet the speaker at the door and guide him or her to the classroom
- Introduce the speaker
- Moderate the discussion
- Write answers to their questions as the speaker responds
- Evaluate the speaker
- Write an article about the content of the presentation for a class or community newspaper
- Write follow-up thank you letters

**The Study of Cultural History and Identity**

Giving significant time to the study of cultures enhances self-respect and respect for others. The Youthbuild classroom can celebrate the richness of the cultural backgrounds that students bring with them. A wide range of learning materials are available to support the effort to describe our collective past in a way that is historically accurate. “Telling the whole story” provides young people with an opportunity to see the roots of their present experience, to find role models in history, and to enhance self-esteem.

In the Youthbuild classroom, teachers and students can discuss the nature of discrimination and how to eliminate it. They can discuss prejudice and stereotypes and how they serve to limit the fullness of the human experience. Teachers can create an environment where students feel comfortable talking about their encounters with prejudice. How did it make them feel? Where did the prejudice come from? What can be, and has been, done to create positive change?

Students can also learn about the variety of cultural expression which exists in the United States. They can meet people whose habits and traditions are very different from their own, and in this way learn more about themselves and begin to overcome their own stereotypes and prejudices. One rich source of information and reflection can be exchange programs with other Youthbuild programs located nearby that have students of a different background. For example, cross-cultural communication between the white Youthbuild students of West Virginia and the
Washington DC African-American and Latino students is an excellent learning experience; the predominantly white students of Portland Maine are located within a couple of hours from the African-American and Latino Youthbuild students of Roxbury, Massachusetts. Being in Youthbuild gives them something important in common that provides a basis for studying the differences in their experiences and perspectives as well as the similarities. One-day cross-cultural workshops have enormous appeal to the students.

The handbook entitled *Leadership Development at a Youthbuild Program* includes a number of exercises that help students develop respect for their own cultural identities as well as the identities of others. Biographies of important people can be integrated into all of the subject areas. Highlight the contributions that diverse ethnic groups have made to the subject areas that will be taught. Use resources and learning materials that are diverse and represent the ethnicity of the student population.

“My classwork involves students in writing their own personal stories, through which we are able to discover and reflect on how they are connected to such larger social forces as racism and economic oppression, particularly as these affected their own educations. Students also discover their connections to the traditions through which their communities have withstood and acted to change these historical challenges.”

-Peneil Joseph, YouthBuild Philadelphia

**Discuss the Role of Women**

It is essential that Youthbuild programs actively deal with both the role of women in the larger society and the role of women in the program. Youthbuild must prepare students for the inclusion of women in what has traditionally been a male-dominated trade.

Male-female relationships are particularly important and should be dealt with through reading and writing activities in the academic classroom and through discussions in rap groups, and support groups. Most of this will happen in the counseling component, but in the classroom it is also possible to discuss issues of sexuality, pregnancy, and childcare; power dynamics between men and women; rape and domestic violence and how they can be prevented; sexual harassment in the workplace, how to prevent it, and what to do about it; male and female attitudes about women’s roles and opportunities. Studying the history of women in the construction industry can best be done in the classroom.
If the program does not have female site workers or vocational instructors, it is important to provide role models for the young women in the program so they do not feel alienated. It is also important that young men meet women in the trades to help them overcome any prejudices they might have about women's abilities and roles.

**Fostering Awareness and Respect in the Classroom**

The curriculum that is infused with the study of culture and change is by its very nature dynamic. It requires active research on the part of the teachers. It demands that teachers seek out materials that accurately reflect the history and interests of the group, that are free of cultural and historical bias, and that promote deeper understanding of complex historical and economic forces. Choose books, films, posters, speakers, and computer programs wisely. In Section Four, Recommended Resources, teachers will find a variety of useful materials.

**Moving Toward Unity**

The Youthbuild curriculum can be a springboard for recognition of our common humanity. We can help young people understand that they often have more in common with people of different races, religions, cultures, genders and sexual orientations than they realize. The Youthbuild curriculum can be used to work toward the goal of a truly democratic society where every citizen is a participating member and all people's rights and freedoms are respected.

**Computer Skills**

In an age of quickly advancing technology, most YouthBuild programs are incorporating computers into the daily life of the classroom. By learning computer skills, students gain access to a variety of job opportunities and learn to overcome fear of technology.

There is a wide variety of educational software available which gives students experience in typing, reading blueprints, doing a budget, doing individually-paced
academic skill practice, and writing their own resumes. Some programs are designed to prepare students to take the SAT exam; others help students develop drafting skills and learn more about architecture and blueprints by using Computer Activated Drafting (CAD) programs.

Computers can be used to teach word processing, enabling students to edit and revise their work more. They can help validate student writing and provide immediate feelings of success. Many students are encouraged when work is printed free of erasures and misspellings. Students feel encouraged to write more and see their work in print.

The best way to give students access to computer technology is to have a large number of computers on site for individual use. But program staff should not be discouraged if they are not able to purchase an expensive array of hardware and software. Many programs have been successful in soliciting donations from computer companies eager to give away samples or corporations upgrading their existing machines and willing to contribute their old ones. One classroom computer is better than none. Students can take turns using the computer during individual time. Many programs have successfully contracted with nearby high schools or community colleges to use their computer labs on a regular basis. Some have arranged for a computer teacher to volunteer his or her time to provide instruction.

Access to the Internet is very valuable for both teachers and students. Teachers can download lesson plans, course outlines, and information about available curricula. Students can do research on topics of interest, gather data, and get up-to-date information.

“Unless education programs move to incorporate technology, we’re doing students a disservice. Computer skills are essential for students to be competitive in the job market. All of the construction trades use computers, and students who are comfortable with them have access to more jobs.”

-Lea Campolo, YouthBuild Boston

**Fostering Cooperation and Interdependence**

An important goal of the classroom and the worksite is to create a “family-like environment,” a supportive framework that can help the trainee through periods of discouragement. This involves helping students to see that it is in their own best interest to cooperate with the group and feel the mutual protection and support of the group.
Working in groups can help students to develop problem-solving skills by actively analyzing and solving the problems they face in class or in a work environment. By solving problems together, by tutoring each other, by learning in teams, students can learn to think logically, listen carefully, discriminate, analyze, and evaluate.

On the worksite, students will often be expected to work as a team and will come to learn that cooperative interchange is more expedient, safe and productive. They will begin to see that construction production is a cooperative process and that there is an interrelationship of all the trades. They should learn the ways in which tradespeople respect each other and complement one another (and the many mishaps that can occur when they don't). In-class and on-site, experiences with teamwork can help to prepare them to work comfortably in a cooperative work environment.

Encourage peer teaching. Students are an excellent source of knowledge and experience and a valuable instructional resource. Teachers can use students to assist in helping others who need extra assistance. By so doing, the learner receives extra attention and the student teacher reinforces his or her skills through demonstration and explanation. The following are some suggestions for encouraging cooperative learning and peer teaching. Have students:

- Demonstrate skills to each other for review
- Write instructions for each other to follow
- Make videotaped demonstrations for other students to study
- Tutor other students
- Research topics of interest and present information to the group
- Write tests for the group
- Review with each other
- Write dialogue journals, in response to each other’s thoughts
- Write plays together
- Respond to and help revise each other’s work
- Read in small groups and discuss what they have read

“What surprised me the most of what I learned through Youthbuild was that love children, and I just want to help a lot of people. Growing up I never really had that opportunity to give back or volunteer. Once you’ve seen that smile or thank you from a child what it can do to your heart is rewarding—it’s so fulfilling—you end up needing it like a drug or something. I like seeing people succeed.”

-Jahi Davis, graduate, YouthBuild Philadelphia
Chapter 7 Items in Appendix

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Chapter 8: Issues in Preparing Students for the GED

Overview

When teachers begin to discuss the role of High School General Equivalency Diploma (GED) instruction in the Youthbuild classroom, they are often confronted with dilemmas. On the one hand, they acknowledge that passing the GED test provides students with entry into many jobs or college. It also provides a sense of satisfaction and mastery. On the other hand, teachers recognize the limitations of the GED test as both a teaching and assessment tool.

In addition, because of the wide range of skill levels in Youthbuild classrooms, only some students may be ready to study for the GED. With these issues in mind, teachers must ask the following questions:

- To whom should GED instruction be geared?
- How can GED preparation be taught so that students are prepared for the test but not restrained by its limitations?
- When and how is it best to prepare students for the test?

Integration of the GED into the Larger Curriculum

Teaching the GED can be an integral part of a curriculum that interests students in learning and provides them with many essential skills. As students become better readers, writers, and thinkers in the context of rigorous and varied classroom instruction, they become better prepared for the GED. Teaching that relies solely on GED workbooks is not enough. Students should be acquainted with full-length works of literature, short stories, poetry, drama, newspapers, driver’s manuals, informational brochures, dictionaries, reference books, and application forms. By using real life reading and writing materials, they can develop concepts essential to the exam.

Students often gravitate toward the GED workbooks because the books are familiar. Workbooks validate the misconception that there is a right and a wrong answer to every question, and that all learning is quantifiable and objectively measurable.

Instruction for the GED should be an integral part of broader instruction that takes into account students’ individual learning needs, exposes students to the
conceptual groundwork of the disciplines, and helps them develop various thinking skills.

Preparation for the GED can be incorporated into a theme-based curriculum. If instruction is planned to include the concepts measured by the GED, students can explore a topic area in depth and simultaneously develop the reading, writing, and thinking skills needed to pass the test. The skills measured by the GED are limited, but passing the GED may give students the misperception that they are finished learning. Students must be taught that it is possible to study and pass the GED and still have not learned broader life-skills. Teachers can engage students in ongoing evaluation and self-assessment using alternative methods, so that they gain an understanding of what they do know. Teachers should also inform students of the forms of advanced learning that are available to them.

Preparing for the GED in a Critical Context

Despite inadequacies of the test, it is important to prepare students for the examination. Students must be given sufficient practice with the testing materials and familiarity with the kinds of questions asked so that they are prepared for the test.

Teachers should help prepare students for the exam in a critical context. Students need to be “informed consumers” and critical evaluators of their own learning. Teachers should be explicit with students about the content of the GED and how all other classroom learning relates to it. In addition to specific skill learning, teaching the GED critically can involve realistic self-assessment and goal-planning as well as critical evaluation of the nature and limitations of testing.

This chapter provides a concise overview of the test’s contents and purpose, to clarify the ways this content can be taught using a variety of materials and approaches. This chapter also discusses the limitations of standardized tests in general and the GED in particular. How to integrate GED instruction into the classroom in a manner that engenders critical thinking and respects the diversity of the student population is discussed.

Recommendations for Using the GED Practice Test

Frequently, adult education programs, including Youthbuild, use standardized tests like the TABE or the ABLE to arrive at a grade level equivalency for each student. This rough data is useful in deciding whether or not students should be preparing for the GED.

Another readiness assessment method is to give all students the GED practice test, regardless of reading comprehension, ability, or experience. The risk of this readiness assessment tool is that it might pressure students into taking a test that will be frustrating and demoralizing and will contribute to feelings of failure.
Student readiness to take the practice test and study for the GED exam should be determined on an individual basis. Programs should do a combination of individualized assessment and standardized testing. Make a judgment based on grade level equivalency from a standardized test, the ability to handle difficult reading material, the ability to think critically, concentrate for long periods of time, and show math and writing competency. Use the following assessments as a guide:

**Beginner**

A beginner student has a grade equivalent reading score of 0 - 4.0 on a standardized reading test. This student also displays difficulty with basic reading, writing, and math skills in individual assessments.

This student is a beginning reader who needs substantial practice with reading and writing. The GED practice test is much too difficult for this student and taking it could lead to considerable frustration and possibly an unwillingness to continue to work. This student needs to be given opportunities for making progress and should be involved in developing the reading and thinking skills that are tested on the GED by using appropriate reading materials or a mix of materials.

**Advanced Beginner**

An advanced beginner has a grade equivalent reading score of 4.0 - 6.0 on a standardized test, and also displays some difficulty with reading comprehension, writing, and math skills in individual assessments.

This student needs skill-building practice and should concentrate on developing thinking skills at an appropriate level. This student would probably be discouraged by the GED practice test. The student might, however, take one section of the test in order to make a realistic appraisal of what it involves. This student should work in pre-GED work texts if the work texts are not too frustrating and the student can achieve some measure of success.

**Intermediate**

An intermediate student has a grade equivalent reading score of 6.0 - 8.0 on a standardized test. This student demonstrates an intermediate level of reading comprehension, math, and writing ability in individual assessments. In addition, an intermediate student shows a reasonable amount of self-discipline and an ability to concentrate.

This student has greater mastery of the skills tested on the GED than an advanced beginner, but this student needs more practice. Teachers should carefully use the GED practice test with this individual. The students at the higher levels may be motivated by the chance to study for the GED, but a low score may be discouraging enough to keep students from persisting.
Ready to Study for the GED

This student has a grade equivalent reading score of 8.0 or above on a standardized test, and displays skill in all areas on individual assessments. A student ready to study for the GED also is highly motivated.

This student is ready to take the GED practice test to determine areas that need further study. This student can begin using GED study materials, along with a wide variety of other high-interest, comprehension-building materials.

Recommendations for the GED Preparation Process

Before the students begin any actual studying, carefully examine the test with them. Young people come into the classroom with fears, misconceptions, ideas, and false expectations about the GED test. It is important to actively engage students in discussion, reflective writing, debates, and research projects that address some of the following questions, in order to begin a critical appraisal of the test:

- What are your expectations of the test?
- What have others told you about the test?
- What skills does the GED test measure and not measure?
- What kinds of reading skills are needed to pass the test?
- What kinds of conceptual knowledge are needed to pass the test?
- Who decides what content knowledge is considered most important?
- What kinds of skills can be demonstrated in a multiple-choice format?
- Which skills cannot be demonstrated in this way?
- How much are the passages on the GED like real reading, writing, and math that we do in daily life? in college? on the job?
- What “grade level” is the test written on?
- What does “grade level” mean?
- What does “norm” mean and who is the test norm’ed against?
- What does “standardized” mean, and what are the limitations of standardized testing?
- How much of the test do you have to get right in order to pass?
- What factors might affect the scores people get on the test?
- What problem-solving skills does the test measure? What research skills?
- What access is afforded by passing the GED?
- What is the symbolic value of passing the GED? Of not passing the GED?
Teach the Skills on the Test

Low-skill students can benefit from GED instruction if the focus is on the concepts, not on high level comprehension. Use materials that are appropriate for each student based on initial assessment. Make a connection between GED skills and the materials used. Otherwise, students will not necessarily be convinced of the connection and may continue to want to work from GED books even if they are too difficult. It is important to be explicit and explain that GED thinking skills are being developed along with reading comprehension.

Students need opportunities to become familiar with the multiple choice format. On a daily basis, they should be given the opportunity to work with GED or Pre-GED workbooks.

Foster Respect

Explain that everyone in the class will be reading on different levels and that students can learn from each other. If the GED is the only and ultimate goal in the class, it can be very discouraging to students who need a great deal of initial reading skill work, and it can also give a false impression of “superiority” to high level readers.

Demonstrate to students that there are valid measures of skill other than standardized tests. For example, asking students to record, document, and write about what they read can be a powerful way to demonstrate reading growth. It can also provide a sense of achievement for students whose comprehension skills are still too low to take the GED. Other achievement markers might include successfully completing a unit, completing a pre-GED workbook section, completing a project, or completing a set number of books.

Assessing Student Readiness

In addition to using TABE or other standardized scores, decide how to determine that students have the necessary reading, writing, and math skills to handle the comprehension level of the test. For example, the ability to independently read, summarize, and evaluate a full-length adult novel indicates the level of both literal comprehension and conceptual skill needed to handle the GED study materials. A student who can produce a thorough research paper based on three sources also demonstrates GED-level comprehension and thinking skills.

When students demonstrate sufficient reading, writing, and math skills, give them the opportunity to take the GED Practice Test. This test includes the five sections of the GED and takes a total of four hours and 10 minutes. The practice test can be a fairly good predictor of actual test scores, if it is treated seriously. It is very important to replicate the testing environment as closely as possible so that students are prepared for taking a seven-hour exam. They should be required to take the entire test all in one four-hour setting with no interruptions.
Students should be informed that their scores should be well above the required passing score to feel confident about passing the test. Students should be shown how tests are scored, the difference one point can make, the differences between forms of the test, the time period involved, and the importance of paying close attention to time.

Teachers can follow up the practice test by discussing feelings, fears, and expectations that the students might have. They can review individual tests with individual students, discussing the problems they had and noting specific types of questions they need to work on. Based on this, teachers may develop a specific plan for each student after they have taken the test, allowing a certain period of each day to practice those concepts and skills. After students’ skills have been evaluated and teachers determine students are ready, they can then take another practice test.

Recommend that students take the full-length test only after they get the “minimum average” on each section of the practice test. The real test is longer and requires more patience, and these factors alone may affect their scores. The GED test is 7 hours and 35 minutes long. It can be a frustrating experience for students.

**Key Components of the GED Examination**

Teachers should be well-acquainted with the test before they begin to assist students in preparation for it. Students also need to understand what is involved in the test. Share the following information with them as part of a larger discussion of the benefits and limitations of the test.

The GED test is often described as a “reading test.” The test calls for particular kinds of reading skills and requires prior knowledge of various concepts. The test includes questions that can be classified according to Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives; they involve the measurement of the skills described below.

**Comprehension Skills**

All questions in the test require comprehension as a basic foundation. Comprehension includes the ability to restate information, summarize ideas, and identify implications.

**Application Skills**

These include the ability to use given or remembered ideas in a context different from the one provided.

**Analysis Skills**

These involve the ability to distinguish facts from hypotheses and opinions;
recognize unstated assumptions; distinguish a conclusion from supporting statements; and identify cause and effect relationships.

**Synthesis Skills**

These include the ability to produce information in the form of hypotheses, theories, stories, or compositions. The essay test is classified at the synthesis level. One of the criticisms of the GED test is that no other section asks students to demonstrate synthesis skills.

**Evaluation Skills**

These involve the ability to assess the adequacy or appropriateness of data to substantiate hypotheses, conclusions, or generalizations; recognize the role that values play in beliefs and decision-making; assess the accuracy of facts as determined by documentation or proof; and indicate logical fallacies in arguments.

**Subject Area Components of the GED Test**

**Interpreting Literature and the Arts**

This section of the test includes the following reading passages:

- Popular literature, including contemporary fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and drama—50% of test
- Classical literature, including 19th and 20th century classics in fiction, prose, prose non-fiction, poetry, and drama—25%
- Commentary on the arts (literary criticism and reviews)—25%

Multiple-choice questions measure literal comprehension, inferential comprehension, application, and analysis. This section of the test is 65 minutes long and consists of 45 questions.

**Science**

This section includes questions related to biology, earth science, physics, and chemistry. It measures integrated concepts and science principles rather than isolated facts. It draws on conceptual themes that run through all the science disciplines. All items require students to use information provided in questions or acquired through life experience. This part of the test is 95 minutes long and consists of 66 questions.

**Social Studies**

This section includes questions related to U.S. history (25%), geography (15%),
economics (20%), political science (20%), and behavioral science (20%). It measures integrated concepts and social studies principles rather than isolated facts. It draws on conceptual themes that run through all the social studies disciplines. All items require students to use information provided in questions or acquired through life experience. This part of the test is 85 minutes long and consists of 64 questions.

**Writing Skills Test**

*Part One*—This is the multiple-choice part of the test. It measures the ability to edit sentences and use proofreading skills (50% sentence corrections, 35% sentence revision, and 15% construction shift). The students must choose between a set of answers about how to find errors and select the corrected version or choose the version which has been rewritten for clarity. This test section involves knowledge of sentence structure, word usage, and mechanics. It also requires the ability to apply this knowledge to editing situations. This section of the test is 75 minutes long and consists of 55 questions.

*Part Two*—In this section of the test, students are asked to write a 200-word essay responding to an opinion question. The GED essay section tests the ability to express one's opinion in writing, but it does not measure the knowledge of concepts or the ability to support a thesis with facts. This essay does not require formal argumentation skills. Instead it requires the ability to express an opinion clearly and support it with sound reasons. This part of the test is 45 minutes long.

Much care must be taken to evaluate the GED essay practice tests using the GED essay scoring guidelines.

**Mathematics**

This section includes questions related to arithmetic (including measurement [30%], number relationships [10%], data analysis [10%]), algebra (30%) and geometry (20%). In all the mathematics content areas, students are asked to use ratio and proportion, information organization, and appropriate formula selection. Items in this section are classified as set-up/solution, arithmetic operation, or concepts. This part of the test is 90 minutes long and consists of 56 questions.

**Discuss Results**

After students have taken the actual GED test, discuss the feelings, fears, and expectations that students have. Teachers can review individual scores with individual students, discussing the problems they had and noting specific types of questions they need to work on. If students fail, they need to be shown that simply taking the test over and over again is not enough; teachers need to help them interpret the results of the test so that they can study to improve in whatever areas are indicated. If students pass, be prepared with a post-GED study plan, which
might include college-career track research and investigation, tutoring others, continuing their subject area studies, or taking a specially designed course to develop their skills, such as “College Writing” or “Career Math.”

**Persist Until Success Is Achieved**

Students who have invested this much work in trying to pass the GED exam need to be supported until they succeed. There are three clear options:

1. Plan for students to remain full-time in the program until they succeed, even if this is full-time unpaid classroom time.
2. Plan for a part-time evening or weekend GED tutorial, best given by one of the teachers the students already know, for those who are placed in jobs but will return for study.
3. Place students in an outside program for continuation of GED preparation after graduation. This last approach is least likely to work unless the GED teacher in the other program is truly outstanding. It is very difficult to start over with a new teacher at this stage.

**Recognize Success**

Of course, graduation and award ceremonies provide the opportunity to celebrate and reward students for having obtained the coveted degree. This will happen preferably in front of their parents, children, friends, and loved ones. This is a moment to be treasured. We also suggest that a wall in the classroom be reserved for the photos of graduates, or for framed copies of the GEDs received by former students. This way students know that when they succeed they will receive a permanent place on the classroom wall of students who persisted to victory.

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“I entered Youthbuild with 7th grade reading skills. It was harder to get a GED. I wasn’t used to timed questions, trying to do grammar, and that sort of thing. Getting my GED has definitely made a difference. With my two girls—one of them is finishing fifth grade now—I felt like I couldn’t ask her to do something I hadn’t done—finish school. But now she can do it because mommy’s done it. My mom is my mentor because she is going to school too. She lives in a senior building, and she is going to school attending computer classes. I believe we help each other.”

—Sandell Johnson, graduate, YouthBuild Philadelphia
Chapter 9: Evaluation

Overview

Periodic assessments and systematic evaluations of both the education component and individual trainee’s academic progress is crucial to the success of a Youthbuild program. This chapter provides assessment tools primarily for use with trainees but also offers tips on conducting evaluations of the teaching component for the entire Youthbuild program. Materials for evaluating both students and staff are included in the Appendix. Most programs use two types of evaluation:

- Formative evaluation—ongoing, built-in assessments to monitor progress
- Summative evaluation—documenting and analyzing final outcomes or impact

Ongoing progress assessment gives trainees the regular feedback necessary to guide and motivate them to complete their educational goals. At the same time, progress assessment gives teachers and program directors important information in managing a Youthbuild program. For staff and trainees alike, effective assessment and evaluation can facilitate planning and decision-making, improve performance, identify priorities for resources, increase self-awareness, and document accomplishments. Likewise, comprehensive summative program evaluations can provide valuable data for program planners, funders, and other partners.

The benefits of evaluation can be gained from many different approaches. Some Youthbuild programs hire evaluators from outside the program to conduct formal assessments. This type of evaluation can provide objective feedback and may carry a degree of credibility important to funders and other program partners. Some programs use their own staff to conduct formal internal evaluations, and many programs incorporate ongoing informal assessments into regular program activity as a way of monitoring the progress of both the trainees and the program. These two types of internal evaluations can provide excellent information for managing the program and motivating young people.

Useful and fair evaluation requires only a few basic elements:

- Good planning
- Effective systems to gather data
- Appropriate indicators to measure progress or outcomes
• Appropriate methods of conveying evaluation findings
• A clear purpose

Everyone involved in an evaluation must understand what is being evaluated and how the information will be used. A failure to clearly identify the purpose of the evaluation can cause resistance among participants to both the process and its findings. Formal evaluations can be extremely stressful for trainees, especially those who associate the term “assessment” and “evaluation” with psychological evaluations or substance abuse assessments. Even informal assessments of a trainee’s performance can be threatening to a young person who is not well prepared to receive feedback. In addition, staff members may require preparation and training in how to plan, conduct, and respond to an evaluation. In preparing young people for performance assessments, it is important to relate their willingness to participate in evaluations to the process of becoming a life-long learner. Trainees need to understand that effective learners use performance assessment as an important source of information. When everyone participating in the evaluation is comfortable with its purpose and processes, evaluation can become a valuable tool.

Fundamentally, the purpose of evaluation is to improve performance of individuals, teams, or entire organizations. Any kind of assessment or evaluation, whether it is of an individual or an organization, should highlight assets and strengths, while offering recommendations to improve deficiencies. Documenting and spotlighting success is one of the most important reasons to evaluate performance.

**Planning for Evaluation**

A well-planned evaluation process will answer these basic questions:

• What is the purpose? Who needs the evaluation information? What decisions will be made based on the findings?

• What questions must the evaluation answer to be meaningful and useful?

• What data will be collected? How will data be collected?

• Who will participate in collecting, analyzing, and reporting data?

• How will data be compiled and analyzed?

• How will the findings be appropriately documented and communicated?

• What are the lessons learned from the evaluation?

• What will be done differently based on these lessons?

The groundwork for effective evaluation is laid in the planning phase of the Youthbuild program. When program planners first sit down to outline the pro-
gram's goals and objectives, they are establishing the criteria by which the program will later be evaluated. The common questions that arise during this planning phase are many of the same questions that frame the evaluation process:

- What students are being targeted for the Youthbuild program?
- How will these students be recruited, screened, and selected?
- What should these students learn?
- How will their academic needs be assessed?
- How will their learning be assessed?
- What will be the curriculum and how will it be taught?
- How will the classroom be organized and managed?
- Will the classroom design be conducive to discipline and learning?
- Will the work site design be conducive to discipline and learning?

**Install Evaluation Systems Early**

Once these framing questions have been identified, systems for collecting data to respond to the questions need to be developed and put into place. In order to develop appropriate data collection systems, indicators must be identified that measure progress or success related to the framing questions. For example, to respond to the question “How will learning be assessed,” the evaluator must determine what type of measurable change would occur in a student that would reflect learning in that student. Change can be recorded using both quantitative and qualitative measures. For example, a 15% improvement in numerical test scores can be a quantitative measure of change. Similarly, an improvement in public speaking skills could be a qualitative measure of a trainee’s progress. The objectives established for the education component can be measured in similar ways.

Once the indicators of progress have been established, efficient systems to collect data such as questionnaires, assessment tests, attendance logs, progress reports, an MIS database, and interview procedures must be put into place well before data starts being generated. If systems are not implemented before program activity, important data can be lost at the outset which might compromise the evaluation.

**Determine the Purpose of the Evaluation**

To determine the purpose of an evaluation, first decide who or what will be evaluated and how that information will be used. Is the data needed to satisfy a funder? Will the data be used to improve program operation? Has the board of directors requested the information to make organizational decisions? Is the evaluation data needed for instructional purposes for use with trainees? Can an evaluation procedure be used that will satisfy the needs of these various stakeholders?
The purpose of the evaluation will determine whether a formative approach will be used to generate ongoing feedback or whether a summative approach will be used to gather final outcome or impact data. Typically, the most useful assessment data in a Youthbuild education component is gathered with formative methods to provide teachers and trainees with ongoing information to improve academic performance and to monitor the effectiveness of the instruction and the curriculum. Consider using a wide variety of assessment tools to gather as much information as possible on the performance of both students and the entire education component.

**Who Evaluates/Who is Evaluated**

Determining who will be evaluated and by what means is a critical step in effective evaluation. Equally important is deciding who will conduct the evaluation and analyze the findings. Early in the program, it is crucial to instill in both staff and trainees a willingness to participate in formal and informal assessments, with the goal being to cultivate a program-wide atmosphere which is open and supportive of evaluation, reflection, and change. Staff and trainees can learn how to play the role of evaluator responsibly and can learn to welcome feedback on their own performance.

**Involve Staff**

The teachers can assess their own performance informally in weekly meetings with their colleagues and with their supervisor in formal performance evaluations. Teachers can be encouraged to incorporate systematic, ongoing assessments of students’ performance, the effectiveness of the curriculum, and other education component functions into their classroom operation. Program directors might ask the staff to review the program from the perspective of each staff person’s own component or from a program-wide perspective. Similarly, staff should be involved in evaluating the program at the end of the year. A checklist for ongoing evaluation of the Youthbuild education component and a form for assessment of Youthbuild performance on enrollment, attendance, retention, and high school diploma or certificate are included in the Appendix as Items 17 and 18 and will help in the evaluation of the program as a whole and in the evaluation of the education component. A sample bi-weekly student performance evaluation is also included as Item 19 to help teachers evaluate students’ performance.

**Involve Students**

A good way to begin familiarizing trainees with the evaluation process is to teach self-assessment techniques, such as personal journals, that prompt students to reflect on their own experiences. Use student self-evaluations as a tool to track progress and outcomes. Students can contribute both written and oral evaluations of the program on a regular basis. For example, alternate representatives of the
student body to attend bi-monthly evaluation sessions, or have all students complete end-of-the-year questionnaires.

Consider using an evaluation tool that involves students in the evaluation process while teaching academic and leadership skills. The National Center for Service Learning in Early Adolescence has developed such a tool called Student Evaluators: A Guide to Implementation. It involves a “process by which students, with the help of a facilitator, develop a research design, collect data, tabulate results, and offer recommendations for the future of the program.” Student Evaluators is available from:

The National Center for Service Learning in Early Adolescence
Center for Advanced Study in Education
Graduate School and University Center
of the City University of New York
25 West 43rd Street, Suite 612
New York, NY 10036-8099
(212) 642-2946

Preparing Young People for Evaluation

The following guidelines will help the regular evaluation process go smoothly:

Make Expectations Explicit. Determine what skills and behaviors must be demonstrated. Determine how often students will be evaluated, how well they will be expected to perform tasks, and within what time frame.

Make Outcomes Explicit. Determine expectations. Determine what the reward will be for fulfilling the expectations. Decide how recognition for completion will be demonstrated, and determine what approach will be taken if expectations are not met.

Follow-through on Final Evaluations and Recognition. Decide who will follow through on recognition, consequences, and commitments to make change based on the evaluation findings. Plan carefully and be consistent.

Classroom Tools for Assessing Trainees

Fairly assessing human performance demands that information be collected using both qualitative and quantitative means. Keep accurate records and statistical information, but also support the numerical data with narrative, qualitative explanations and samples of students’ work.

The “Cycle of Assessment”

Evaluation of student learning can be self-referenced (understood on the indi-
individual’s own terms), and designed to measure students’ growth in relation to their goals for themselves. Self-referenced evaluation focuses on what students are trying to do and their reflection on their own learning.

Student learning can also be student-referenced. In this case, student work is evaluated in relation to a pre-determined set of norms. To be effective, standards need to be clear and reasonable, and students need to have a good understanding of what the standards are.

**Initial Assessment**

After a rough grade equivalent score has been obtained for each student during the selection process, a more detailed individualized assessment will need to be conducted. Standardized tests may give a general indication of reading or math level, but they do not delineate the specific concentration of strengths and weaknesses each student brings to the test. To gain a more thorough sense of a trainee’s strengths and limitations, schedule a time when teachers can spend approximately a half hour with each student, preferably during orientation or during the first week of class.

As much as possible, do a thorough assessment of the learning strengths of the students before beginning the educational program. Determine their ages, high school backgrounds, skill levels, experience with special education or advanced classes, work history, and interests.

Useful assessment tools can be crafted from routine classroom activity. Below are examples of assessment tools that can be a part of daily classroom activity that will help to identify the strengths and the learning needs of the trainees. These tools are described on the following page:

- Academic history interview questionnaire
- Individual reading assessment
- Measurement skills assessment
- Math skills assessment
- Writing sample

Once an assessment of the needs and learning styles of the students has been completed, determine what specific academic and work-related skills should be cultivated in these particular students along with the general program goals. Once these skills have been determined, instruction can be tailored to teach individually but in the group context. Beginning readers, for example, can be assigned to books that aid development reading, supplemented by small group practice and tutoring. Advanced readers can be given the opportunity to take the GED practice test and work in GED workbooks.

In addition, the teachers should spend time early in the program getting to know
the students’ interests, desires, and dreams. Then tailor the curriculum and the classroom to some of the particularities of the student group. Know their cultural backgrounds, what their neighborhoods are like, and what their families are like.

**Interviews**

An initial interview will give the program information about how each student sees himself or herself and what is understood of his or her history. Interviews can also be used as ongoing assessment tools to gain insight into how the student understands learning. Interviews can be informal. After a reading, the teacher might initiate an impromptu discussion about what happened in the text. After a task is completed on the site, site instructors might engage in an exchange about what a student learned and what tools were used. The interview can also be pre-arranged and used as a formal assessment tool. The teacher might meet with a student at an appointed time to discuss what the student felt happened in a story, or how he or she evaluated a play, as part of the assessment process.

**Student Education Files**

Following the initial assessment, the next step in developing ongoing classroom evaluation is to establish an education file for each student. Gather assessment data that help students in planning their learning goals for the program year and to guide the teacher and student in evaluating progress during the course of the program. It is important that all student records be kept confidential, and be kept in a centralized location where only authorized staff will have access to them. The appendix to this chapter includes a student education files checklist of contents that can be used help organize the contents of each file. Student education files might include:

- **Standardized Test Scores.** Keep a record of each student’s initial TABE or ABLE test scores. If the program’s plan is to evaluate student progress according to increase in grade equivalency level, then give the complete version of the standardized test during the orientation or during the first week of class. Give a follow-up version of the same test near the end of the year, in order to gauge progress.

- **GED Test Scores/GED Practice Test Scores.** Document student scores on the GED test they took before entering the program, as well as scores on GED predictor tests and the official test they take during the course of the program.

- **Academic History Interview Questionnaire.** This tool helps teachers develop rapport and honest communication with the student from the beginning. It also serves as an excellent guide to student self-evaluation and teacher planning for student needs. See the Appendix for a sample academic history questionnaire included as Item 21.

- **High School Transcript.** If relevant, have this document on file to refer to as the student plans her or his academic program for the year.
Individual Reading Assessment. Teachers may already have a tool for assessing reading strengths and needs or may use the assessment tools listed in Chapter Ten: Resources. It is recommended that sufficient time be set aside to listen to students read. This time upfront will be helpful to the teacher in preparing activities, grouping students, choosing materials and determining overall goals for students. The teacher should take advantage of this time to talk honestly and respectfully with students about what they observed when students read. See the Appendix for forms to use when assessing reading strengths: guidelines for assessing individual reading skills, the individual reading assessment summary, and a checklist of reading strengths and weaknesses.

Math Skills Assessment. Use the a math skills assessment that adequately measures a range of student skills, in order to plan activities, place students in groups, and choose materials. Plan to do the same test again with the students after much of the material has been taught to determine student progress and plan follow-up teaching. See assessment tools in Chapter Ten: Resources.

Measurement Skills Assessment. Use the measurement skills assessment in the appendix to this chapter in order to plan activities, place students in groups, and choose materials. Classroom teachers, vocational instructors, and site instructors should all be made aware of student skill level in this area, so that they might plan complementary instruction. Plan to do the same test again with the students later in the program in order to determine student progress and plan follow-up teaching.

Writing Sample. Collect samples of students’ writing early in the program. These provide valuable information about student writing skills, student concerns, and feelings. They can be used to plan instruction in specific skill areas, determine essay writing readiness, and for comparative analysis after months of teaching writing. A sample form to use when obtaining writing samples from students is included in the Appendix as Item 26.

Skills/Competencies. Develop competency checklists based on what students already know and what they need to learn. The reading, writing, and math assessments will provide useful information that will help “place” students on competency charts.

Ongoing, Individualized Assessment of Trainees

Ongoing, informal assessment of students is an important evaluation tool in the classroom. A participant’s academic level can be determined in a variety of ways throughout the program cycle. Some standardized testing is useful initially,
but all of a student’s knowledge will not be discernible from these tests. Participants should be given opportunities to demonstrate their skills in a variety of ways: to write about things they are interested in, to speak about their interests informally with a teacher and in groups, and to assess themselves, which will help them understand and think critically about who they are and what they know. The more the teacher is aware of the students’ skills, knowledge, and feelings, the better he or she can target teaching to the precise needs of each student. A sample biweekly student performance evaluation form is included in the Appendix as Item 19.

**Individual Learning Plans**

An individual learning plan, also known as an individual education plan (IEP), is used by the teacher to provide the following for each student:

- A record of present academic level in reading and mathematics
- Short-term classroom objectives needed by the student to achieve proficiency in reading and academics
- Academic assessment to determine if the student has mastered these objectives
- Documentation of assessment results

In the learning plan, both individual and group learning expectations can be outlined, so that both students and teachers are aware of what needs to be accomplished in a predetermined period of time. Learning plans are an excellent way to document student achievement, assess student progress, and help students feel a sense of completion and mastery. A sample form for creating an individual learning plan is included in the Appendix as Item 27.

After conducting a combination of standardized and individual testing in reading, writing, and math, there will be a fairly detailed picture of each student’s skills and areas of need. Using the competency checklist as a guide, identify the specific skills that individuals need to improve. The individual learning plan should outline the specific activities for each student to work on. Integrate time into the daily schedule for students to work alone, or with assistance from teachers and tutors, on the assignments related to this plan.

**Involve Students in Development of Learning Plans**

Students can be involved in the development of their individual learning plans. Students should know the results of the various initial assessments that were done and should speak with the teacher about the skills they need to develop. Students should be very aware of both the skills on the competency checklists and the requirements for successful program completion, including the skills tested on certificate exams.
Give students the opportunity to choose materials and activities that interest them. Have a selection of books to choose from that are appropriate to each level and have a variety of project choices ready so students can demonstrate their skills in a manner that interests them and employs their talents. Have students assist in assessment of their own skills. Review with them the results of quizzes, have them check their own work against checklists, and ask them for recommendations for activities for the next unit.

**Plan Individual Learning in a Group Context**

Individual learning activities can correspond to the overall goals of the group, but at a level appropriate for each individual student. For example: if the whole group has been introduced to a reading concept by reading a short story together, then during individual study time, students can supplement this learning at their own pace.

**Plan Culminating Projects**

Include a culminating project at the end of each unit as a means of drawing together the learning from an entire unit and as a way to assess students’ progress. Students can learn to plan their time so that they work on the project throughout the unit, incorporating skills learned into a presentation, display, or research paper that represents their learning. Students can also opt to do an independent study project during the unit. This is especially appropriate for students who have obtained GEDs or diplomas and need to be engaged in in-depth research projects. These culminating projects can then become important performance indicators in assessments of both students and of the entire education component. A sample form to use when planning culminating projects is included in the Appendix as Item 28.

**Student Self-Evaluations**

Students can be involved in evaluating their own performance on a regular basis. In this way, they learn self-reflection which helps students to both initiate changes and appreciate their own positive behaviors and improvements. This process of honest self-reflection can improve a student’s confidence as a learner and boost his or her self-esteem.

In self-evaluations, students are given the opportunity to write about and discuss their own performance. By using the same evaluation forms as instructors, they are able to compare notes with staff. A sample biweekly performance self-evaluation form is included in the Appendix as Item 29.

**Observation**

Observation is one of the most informative methods used for assessing stu-
Much is learned about how students learn, think, and interact by carefully watching them in a variety of settings. On the worksite, for example, instructors can observe how well the students work in a group, ask questions, listen to others, use tools, follow directions, make estimations, draw conclusions, solve problems, and deal with frustrations.

Teachers benefit from periodically concentrating on individual students and keeping informal records of these observations. Notes taken during these observations can be brief and informal—interpretations and comments can be added later. These observations can then be shared with other staff and used to plan follow-up activities to address student needs.

Structured observation can also be a valuable assessment tool. Paper and pencil tests do not necessarily give students the opportunity to show all they know. Manual skills, especially, lend themselves to observation. Ask students to illustrate how to hammer a nail or cut a piece of sheet rock. Ask them how to read a passage or construct a scale model. Use structured observation as an integral part of the overall assessment.

**Work Samples**

A great deal of information about a student’s learning can be obtained from samples of student work. Work samples are an excellent way to assess whether students are assimilating information to create a product. Multiple choice tests can give some information, but they are often limited and do not test the ability to produce, create, and integrate information.

Below is a list of suggestions for a number of activities for students to demonstrate understanding. To assess skill acquisition, ask students to incorporate the information into a product that meets specific criteria. Students can:

- Write a paragraph analyzing a reading passage
- Make a poster that includes key facts and concepts
- Make an audio tape of instructions on how to do a task
- Write a short story based on historical facts
- Write a test or quiz
- Write and perform a play about a particular topic
- Draw a cartoon
- Draw a picture, map or diagram
- Compile a dictionary of terms

Students may explain how to do a task or outline key information by:

- Making a videotape
• Writing a children's book
• Writing a poem
• Writing a rap song
• Demonstrating to the class
• Making an oral presentation
• Making a wall mural
• Writing a newspaper story
• Writing a letter to the editor
• Planning a TV news report
• Making a comic book

Students may demonstrate understanding of character and plot in books they have read by:
• Writing a book review for a class newsletter
• Writing a book report, including other references
• Designing a mural
• Designing a book jacket
• Designing a movie poster

Projects

Projects give students the opportunity to demonstrate acquisition of skills learned over time, while focusing on the students’ areas of interest related to the themes studied.

Projects enable students to learn more about subjects that are important to them, while developing their particular talents, thoughts, and ideas. Projects give students the opportunity to make choices, depending on the goal of assessment. If a program wants to test understanding of concepts, students can choose related topics. If a program wants to test knowledge of a specific topic, students can choose methods for demonstrating that knowledge. A sample independent study contract for use in developing student projects is included in the Appendix as Item 30.

When using projects as an assessment tool, develop clear and specific project guidelines, such as:
• The final product must include math, reading, and writing skills related to the content
• The student must use more than one source of information – e.g., interviews, research, observation, experience
• The final product must include a detailed outline of the product plan
• The project must have a title page, including the name of the project, the student's name, and date
• The project must be completely and correctly finished
• The project must be neatly finished (all writing, drawing, and gluing must be neatly and carefully presented)
• The final product must be presented in a pocket folder or plastic binder

Presentations

Presentations are an opportunity for trainees to demonstrate their learning using a variety of media simultaneously. When students are given the chance to share their knowledge and accomplishments in a public setting, staff demonstrate to them their ability to be teachers and speakers. Having students do presentations enables teachers to assess not only the student’s knowledge of the material being presented, but also the student’s ability to communicate that knowledge to others. Practicing presentations helps create organization of ideas, clarity of thoughts, and confidence.

Portfolios

Portfolios are records of learning that include samples of the student’s work as well as his or her thoughts and reflections of the work. They can be an engaging and graphic way of helping students evaluate their own progress and evaluate their accomplishments. Students can demonstrate learning by selecting their best work and presenting it in a manner that verifies their accomplishments. Portfolios might include:

Writing collections including brainstorms, outlines, rough drafts, and revisions of essays, fictional pieces and letters, as well as essays about how the student thinks he or she has evolved as a writer.

Career portfolios in which all of the student work on job readiness skills is gathered to document progress: cover letters, want ads, notes, a final resume, and evaluations of mock interviews. These career portfolios might also include student essays about how his or her job readiness skills have changed and developed, and what the student has learned about himself or herself in the process.

Vocational skill portfolios including instructions on how to do a task, a list of tools and their descriptions needed to do that task, an interview with a tradesperson, research on the apprenticeship needed to do that task professionally, photos of the student performing that task, as well as written evaluations by instructors and the student on the student’s ability to perform that task.
Journals

Journals can provide an excellent opportunity to assess not only what students are learning in a particular subject area, but also how they feel about and understand their learning process. Journals can also give teachers rare insight into the personal and inner lives of students and the ways in which they view their experiences.

Build time into the schedule for the students to reflect, in writing, on their lives, their experiences and their work. Journal writing has proved to be a very powerful tool for understanding and working through problems. If used skillfully, journal writing can guide the teacher in assessment of student writing and provide insight into student needs.

Also in a regular basis (daily is best) students can write in “learning journals” about what they have learned in the classroom, on the worksite, in their leadership roles, or during their community service. Students should be encouraged to write as a way to summarize, think about, and evaluate their learning. The teacher can read the journal and comment on the students’ questions or comments as a way to encourage dialogue and to learn more about the students. Students can read each other’s journals and write back comments to each other.

Learning Records

Learning records are forms for recording, summarizing, and reflecting on information gathered about individual students. Learning records might include competency checklists (inventories of performance objectives that students aim to achieve during the year), written summaries of a student’s work and evidence of learning in various subject areas. Learning records might also include reflections by both the teacher and student on the quality of the work and the ways in which the student has demonstrated growth. Learning records can take the place of “report cards,” providing a place for students and teachers to pull all of their assessment materials together into a readable, meaningful form.

Grades

Letter and number grades have many limitations. They usually don’t explain why the student received the grade, and they can be arbitrary. If teachers do have to use grades, it is helpful to accompany these grades with narrative explanations or scoring rubrics, which give information that can guide student improvement.

Scoring Rubrics

Scoring rubrics are guides to scoring that are based on a set of standards or criteria. Student work is evaluated based on how well the work meets the established criteria. A rubric usually consists of a score scale (the number of points
that can be awarded, and a description of the characteristics that make up each score point).

Scoring rubrics can be analytical or holistic; that is, they can take into account either the overall quality of a piece of work or can focus on the details. Both can be useful, depending on the goals of the evaluation. But in either case, specific criteria for receiving a score need to be delineated clearly in advance.

A scoring rubric is used to evaluate the writing test of the GED exam. A group of readers judge the essay based on specific criteria and determine where it “fits” on the rating scale. Teachers and students can study this criteria beforehand, when doing practice essays, and can use it to work on specific areas of weakness.

**Tools for Evaluating the Education Component**

**Self-Assessment.** A candid self-assessment by the teachers is a good place to begin a broad component evaluation. Using the program objectives and the framing questions identified in the planning of the program, staff members can determine to what extent objectives have been met. A form for staff evaluation of education program quality is included in the Appendix as Item 31.

**Trainee Surveys.** Students can be asked to formally assess the performance of the teachers, the education component, and the entire program. In conducting a survey of the trainees, it is wise to include individual or group interviews since some trainees will not provide detailed responses to surveys. Forms for student assessments of both program and education program quality are included in the Appendix as Items 32 and 33.

**Using An Outside Evaluator.** Using an evaluator from outside the Youthbuild program is usually the best way to generate objective assessments. Outside evaluators also can bring a level of expertise to the evaluation that the Youthbuild staff may not possess. For example, testing for learning disabilities or conducting a final program evaluation might require an outside evaluator. Also, an outside evaluator might provide, as part of an assessment, comparative data from other programs or might serve as a facilitator between participants in an evaluation. Outside evaluators can offer authority or credibility to a situation in which a program's integrity is in question.

If an outside evaluator is to be used, seek one appropriate to the needs of the Youthbuild program, its staff, and students. The following are some considerations:

**Expertise.** What skills, knowledge, training, and experience does the evaluator bring and how does this expertise loan credibility and authority to the evaluation?

**Technical/Theoretical Approach.** What is the consultant’s approach to evaluation, and is this approach appropriate for the program? For example, the extent to which an evaluator seeks participation from
program staff and students can vary depending on the evaluator's theoretical approach. Also, an evaluator's choice of assessment tools and analytical approaches will affect both the nature and interpretation of the data collected.

**Compatibility.** There are many different approaches and styles of evaluation. Seek an evaluator who understands the Youthbuild program and its goal, who can work comfortably with the program staff and students, and who can report the evaluation findings in a way that is both useful and fair to the program and understandable to people outside the program.

**Information.** An outside evaluator must have the appropriate information to conduct a fair and accurate assessment. Prepare for the evaluation by providing the evaluator with the goals and objectives of the program, and with a clear understanding of the factors that support or hinder program performance.

**Cost.** Outside evaluators can be costly and their effectiveness can be mixed. Consider looking for an evaluator who will donate time. Some universities and colleges can offer evaluation services at little or no cost, but often the evaluation also serves as a learning project for college students who may lack expertise. If money is available, a well-executed evaluation conducted by highly skilled evaluators who are responsive to the program needs can be invaluable.

“*My long term goal is to go to school for journalism and start interning at different media organizations. I’m in a writer’s group. Some of my writing has even been published. I’d like to graduate with honors, as a leader in the school doing extracurricular activities. Then graduate, get a job in broadcasting, or in print, and build from there.*”

—Christina Head, graduate, Youth Action YouthBuild
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Overview

This chapter lists available resources for educators including: curricula, textbooks, literature, magazines, videos, computer software packages, GED preparation materials, assessment tools, and resources about teaching. Materials in this resource section have been included because they are excellent for teaching diverse groups of learners with beginning to intermediate level reading, writing, and math skills. Many have been used with great success in Youthbuild classrooms. Materials relate to the teaching of academic skills, life skills, vocational education, and job readiness and career exploration. To determine whether a resource is appropriate, and to check prices and availability, call the publisher and request a catalogue, or ask about obtaining free samples of materials. It is often possible to obtain a preview copy before making a selection.

Assessment tools included are those most useful for evaluating the academic skills of young people enrolled in Youthbuild programs. Curricula, textbooks, and literature are a selection of the many that are available. Since it is not possible to include every useful resource for teaching reading, writing, history, and math, and all works of literature that could be taught in the Youthbuild classroom, materials included in this resource section are those most likely to be culturally relevant to Youthbuild students.

Resources are organized by subject area (see the table of contents for this section), and within subject areas, they are listed in order by title. Videos are listed separately at the end of each subject area. Books, articles, and videos for educators about teaching are in the section, “Resources for Educators.”
Assessment Tools

ABLE/ABLE Screening Battery: (Adult Basic Literacy Examination)
The Psychological Corporation, Order Service Center, P.O. Box 839954, San Antonio, TX 78283-3954, (512) 299-1061.

There are two levels of testing using the ABLE test. The more involved version takes about two hours and forty minutes to administer, but it is untimed. It is written for adults and can be scored by the student. It can be scored either by hand or by computer. A screening battery test, called “SelectABLE,” takes fifteen minutes to administer and is used as a locator test to place students in the correct test battery level of the full-length test. The ABLE test provides grade equivalent scores. Items are also classified by objectives so a rough picture of students’ strengths and weaknesses can be determined.

The ABLE Screening Battery is an alternative to the full-length battery. It is more appropriate for initial screening when time is limited. It takes about an hour to administer (but is untimed) and provides a measure of adult functional reading and math ability.

The key benefit of both ABLE Tests is that they are untimed, and therefore student scores are not influenced by time pressure or the inability to complete the test.

GED Official Practice Test
Steck-Vaughn, P.O. Box 26015, Austin, TX 78755, (800) 531-5015.

The GED Official Practice Test is an excellent simulation of the real test, giving students an opportunity to determine their areas of strength and weakness before sitting for the full-length test. It takes about two and a half hours to administer, and includes the same kinds of questions the student will find on the test. Test results are easily tabulated with a Scoreze template and accurately foretell what scores the student would probably get on each section of the test. Plans can then be made to work on those sections in which the student does not get a passing score.

Implementing Performance Assessments: A Guide to Classroom, School and System Reform. Teaching for Change, P.O. Box 73038, Washington, DC 20056-3038, (202) 238-2379; Fax (202) 238-2378; email necadc@aol.com.

Provides descriptions, examples and practical advice on projects, exhibitions, observations, interviews, performance exams and portfolios, with tips for getting started with assessment reform and an extensive resource section.
McCarthy Individualized Diagnostic Reading Inventory
Educators Publishing Services, 75 Moulton Street, Cambridge, MA 02238-9101, (800) 225-5750.

This is an individual reading assessment tool that helps teachers determine reading skill level, fluency of reading, and comprehension and thinking skills. It also assesses ability in phonics, word recognition, and study skills. The assessment takes approximately 35 minutes to an hour to administer; it includes individual record forms and suggestions for activities to help students develop skills and work at independent and instructional levels. The first four levels of reading are juvenile and not appropriate for adults, but levels five through twelve could be used without embarrassment with young adults.

The Portfolio Assessment Guidebook
Steck-Vaughn, P.O. Box 690789, Orlando, FL 32319-9998, (800) 531-5015.

This is a resource for teachers who want to either build or improve their portfolio assessment system. Designed to help educators learn how to plan and implement an assessment program and create customized assessment materials. The teacher-friendly format includes step-by-step instructions.

R/EAL: Reading/Everyday Activities in Life

This is a test of functional literacy, designed to determine if students have the basic reading skills needed to cope with daily living. Students listen to a tape and fill out answers in a test booklet, related to reading real-life information found in road signs, TV schedules, directions on a pizza box, food ads, health brochures, apartment leases, job applications, and want ads. This can also be used to determine whether students have gained these skills after you have taught them.

TABE: Test of Adult Basic Education
Publishers Test Service, CTB / McGraw Hill, 2500 Garden Road, Monterey, CA 93940, (800) 538-9547.

The TABE Test is the most widely used test of adult basic education skills. There are two versions: the full-length version and the Survey Edition. The full-length test includes sections on reading vocabulary and comprehension, mathematics computation, concepts and applications, and language mechanics and expressions. A fourteen-minute locator test must be used to determine which of the four TABE levels is appropriate for each student. The reading test alone takes fifty-four minutes and the entire test takes three hours and ten minutes. The test is written for adults and scoring options are: hand-scoring with a stencil, scoring with SCOREZE Answer Sheets, or machine scoring with or without a scanner. The TABE Test provides grade equivalent scores as well as a rough profile of each student’s
instructional strengths and needs.

The Survey Edition can be used when time is limited. The reading section takes twenty-two minutes to administer, the mathematics section takes twenty eight minutes and the language section takes twenty minutes. As a screening test, the reading test is probably sufficient; its key benefit is that is can be administered in a short time.

**Integrated Curricula**

*Working Hands, Working Minds: An Integrated Construction Training Curriculum*
*Anne Meisenzahl and David Greene.*

A series of integrated units designed to introduce students to fundamental aspects of the building trades while reinforcing academic and problem-solving skills. Draft units currently available include: “Working Together,” “Workplace Exploration,” “Safety,” Architecture,” “Rough Carpentry,” and “Housing and Community.”

For information on piloting this curriculum contact YouthBuild USA, 58 Day St., Somerville, MA 02144, (617) 623-9900.

**GED Resources**

*GED Software, Computer Software 2000*
*Steck-Vaughn, P.O. Box 26015, Austin, TX 78755, (800) 531-5015.*

Completely self-contained GED preparation computer program which includes automated instruction, testing, diagnosis, and prescription. Provides practice, explanations, and skill development in each of the GED testing areas, as well as GED testing simulation, immediate feedback, and analysis.

*Invest Computer Learning Program*
*Jostens Learning Corporation, Adult Education Division, 6170 Cornerstone Court East, San Diego, CA, 92121-3710, (800) 422-4339.*

This is a computer-assisted tutorial program that allows students to be assessed for their current level of mastery of the GED subject areas. Then, starting at the assessed level, the program provides individual lessons so that progress can be achieved at the student’s pace. The tutorial program’s design presents instruction in small accessible steps supported by immediate feedback, providing the learner with reinforcement for success in a motivating, self-esteem building, learning experience.
Pre-GED Software 2000
Steck-Vaughn, P.O. Box 26015, Austin, TX 78755, (800) 531-5015.

Provides step-by-step instruction, examples and practice in a developmental program. Provides reports which track learner enrollment and progress within the program. Builds reading, writing and math skills for learners at reading levels 5-8. This self-contained computer software can also be used as a companion to the Steck-Vaughn Pre-GED Workbook Series.

Reading Skills

Adult Learner Series
Judith Andrews Green, Jamestown Publishers, (800) USA-READ; Fax (401) 331-7257.

Written for levels 2-3, this series of novels is designed to engage adult beginning readers with high-level content while improving comprehension, building vocabulary, and advancing language and life skills. Each high-interest mystery or suspense novel is accompanied by a set of vocabulary, comprehension, language, and practical life skills activities.

Best Short Stories
Edited by Raymond Harris, Jamestown Publishers, (800) USA-READ; Fax (401) 331-7257.

This is a volume of classic and contemporary stories that would stand on its own as a literary collection, but combined with comprehension, writing, and literature exercises, it is a highly effective tool for reading skill development. Skills covered in the middle book (levels 6-8) include: remembering facts; understanding word choices; understanding levels of meaning; understanding character, setting and feelings. Skills covered in the advanced level book (levels 9-college) include: organizing facts; making judgments and inferences; understanding main ideas; and recognizing tone. Authors include: Ray Bradbury, Toni Cade Bambara, Flannery O’Connor, Alice Walker, Woody Allen, Edgar Allen Poe.

College Reading Skills
Edited by Edward Spargo, Jamestown Publishers, (800) USA-READ; Fax (401) 331-7257.

This eight-book series is designed to help students entering college to enhance their reading and study skills. Provocative reading selections by important authors form the basis for lessons that develop comprehension, vocabulary, and study skills. Four reading levels (6/7, 8/9, 10/11, 12/college) allow precise placement.

There are four volumes on each of two themes: “Selections from the Black,” with engaging selections by exceptional black writers; and “Topics for the Restless,” including articles and essays on controversial issues. Comprehension
questions develop the ability to recall facts, retain concepts, organize facts, draw conclusions, make judgments and more. Selections are followed by lessons in developing study skills. Writers include: Toni Morrison, Frederick Douglass, Richard Wright, Gustavas Vassa, Bill Cosby, Marcus Garvey, Shirley Jackson, Betty Friedan, B.F. Skinner, Arthur Miller, Elizabeth Kubler-Ross and many others.

**Fastback Series**
Globe Fearon Publishers, 4350 Equity Drive,  
P.O. Box 2649, Columbus, OH 43216, (800) 848-9500.

This is a series of pocket-sized books written at a very beginning level. The series includes “Horror,” “Mystery,” “Crime and Detection,” “Romance,” “Sports,” “Science Fiction,” and “Spy”—all of which are of high interest to adult students. Excellent for individual reading.

**Jamestown Handbooks**
Jamestown Publishers, P.O. Box 9168,  
Providence, RI 02940, (800) USA-READ.

This is a series of high-interest books about sports that helps develop reading comprehension while providing tips on how to play the game. Illustrated and written at the fifth-grade level, each handbook concentrates on a single skill, i.e., “Basketball: Shooting,” “Baseball: Pitching,” “Gymnastics: Balance Beam” etc. (Fourteen books in the series)

**Laubach Way to Reading**  
New Readers Press, Department 75,  
P.O. Box 888, Syracuse, NY 13210-0888, (800) 448-8878.

This reading skills series is designed to take students from non-reader levels to fifth-grade levels. Reading, writing, and listening skills are taught together for a complete learning approach. Lessons follow a structured format easy for both student and instructor to follow. Includes skill book, teacher’s manual, read-along tapes, crossword puzzles, software.

**Learning to Read and Think**  
Thomas Gunning, Jamestown Publishers,  
(800) USA-READ; Fax (401) 331-7257.

This six-book series provides students with lessons and activities for developing critical reading and thinking skills. Individual skills are introduced at appropriate levels and reinforced and developed in subsequent levels. “Learning to Read and Think” helps students develop critical reading and thinking skills in the following areas: facts and opinions; how words are used; slanted writing; author’s purpose; conclusions; related and unrelated details; judging sources; propaganda. Six books, one on each level, 2/3 - 8.
**PACE Learning Systems**  
**Guidebooks, worksheets, tests, computer software.**  
PACE Learning Systems, 3710 Resource Dr., Tuscaloosa, AL 35401, (800) 826-7223.

This learning system consists of a self-paced system in three components. Students take a pre-test and are assigned remediation work specific to their individual needs. Progress is measured through self-testing. The first component called the Individually Prescribed Instruction System (IPIS), is a set of books and worksheets covering all subjects with a special focus on reading, math, language, and spelling. The second component is Competency Cabinets, which focuses on specific subject areas. Subject areas most relevant to Youthbuild programs may be “Employability Skills” and “Life Skills.” This component can be adapted to large group teaching. The third component consists of the learning systems on computer software.

**Reading for Today**  
Steck-Vaughn, P.O. Box 690789, Orlando, FL 32319-9998, (800) 531-5015.

This is a series of workbooks for beginning and intermediate level readers, designed to strengthen comprehension skills and vocabulary. This series uses adult-level content to build basic skills; each book contains relevant stories, photos, word lists, writing practice, practical life-skill activities and critical thinking activities. Teacher’s Guide includes lesson plans and suggestions for supplementary activities.

**Reading Strategies Software**  
Steck-Vaughn, P.O. Box 690789, Orlando, FL 32319-9998, (800) 531-5015.

“Reading Strategies Software” helps students to build reading skills at their own pace, at the appropriate reading level. It provides constant encouragement and feedback as students progress, helps students build vocabulary, fluency, and speed, using relevant stories and engaging exercises. Comprehension skills are reinforced and applied. Designed for reading levels 1.0-10.5.

**Reading the Content Fields**  
Edward Spargo and Raymond Harris.  
Jamestown Publishers, (800) USA-READ; Fax (401) 331-7257.

A good supplement to pre-GED instruction, this series of slim books introduces students to the specialized vocabulary and subject matter of five major study areas: science, social studies, mathematics, English, and the practical arts. Each book includes an introduction to the subject; a complete lesson in how to read textbooks about the subject; a sample exercise, and 25 practice exercises. Each exercise consists of a short reading passage followed by four questions that concentrate on literal, interpretive, applied and vocabulary comprehension. Cassettes are available for each subject book.
Construction-Related Reading

Pacemaker Career Readers

Ten career exploration books written at the 2.0 level for beginning readers. Each book includes a photo-illustrated story, a job description including duties, typical working conditions, training required, and a dictionary of related terms.

Reading in the Workplace: Building and Construction Trades, Educational Activities
Computer software. P.O. Box 392, Freeport, NY, 11520 (800) 645-3739.

This is a job-based computer reading program using real-life problems and solutions to capture student attention and improve their vocabulary and comprehension skills. The passages in the program are short and informative. Students read the vocabulary-rich selections on how-to topics that are applicable to the building trades. Reading strategies actively involve students in understanding the passage's main idea, understanding directions (reading for detail), sequencing, recognizing problems, making inferences, determining cause and effect, and determining word meaning (vocabulary).

Three progressive levels of difficulty include:
- Reading level 3.0 - 5.0 Program 1 - (DK 21061) - Insulation, patching plaster, roofing a house, hanging kitchen cabinets, electric circular saws
- Reading level 5.0 - 7.0 Program 2 - (DK-21062) - Pouring concrete, door construction, care of hand tools, classified ads for carpenters, job safety
- Reading level 7.0 - 9.0 Program 3 - (DK 21063) - Wiring, general contractors, plastic piping, log cabins, becoming a plumber, built in shelves

A built-in dictionary is available to help identify the meanings of unfamiliar words in context. Students work at their own pace. Each lesson provides immediate feedback and reinforcement. Student errors are automatically flagged and the student is branched to hints that explain where the correct answer can be found. Reproducible activity masters provide skill reinforcement away from the computer. Each program includes two diskettes, two back-ups, management, documentation, and reproducible activity masters.
Literature

Anthologies

**African-American Literature**
Globe Fearon Publishers, 4350 Equity Drive,
P.O. Box 2649, Columbus, OH 43216, (800) 848-9500.

An anthology of short literature selections organized by genre, including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and drama. Related activities for exploring cultural values and thinking critically are included. Teacher’s Resource Manuals provide vocabulary activities and writing assignments.

**Afro-American Folktales: Stories from Black Traditions in the New World**

This is a wonderful, attractive collection of humorous tales, “just-so stories,” and moral fables from the United States and the Caribbean. A very rich collection of African-inspired tales.

**Afro-American Women Writers, 1746-1933**

This collection of writing by African-American women is extensive and historically illuminating. It includes poetry, biography, autobiography, essays, short stories, novels, diaries and journals, as well as biographical sketches of each writer and critical introductions to each of the historical periods covered by the anthology.

**Best New Chicano Literature**
Edited by Julian Palley. Bilingual Press, Hispanic Research Center,
Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ 85287, (602) 965-3867.

A collection of poems and fiction by Mexican-American winners of the Chicano Literary Contest at the University of California, Irvine.

**Caribbean Connections Series: Overview, Puerto Rico, Jamaica and Haiti**
Edited by Catherine Sunshine. NECA/EPICA, Network of Educators on the Americas (NECA), 118 22nd Street, NW, Washington DC 20032, (202) 429-0137.

Highly acclaimed collections of fiction, non-fiction, oral histories, interviews, poetry, drama, and songs. Each book contains a teacher’s guide. Ideal for social studies, English, and Spanish classes. Purchase individually or buy the set of all four titles.
Chinese American Literature  
Globe Fearon Publishers, 4350 Equity Drive,  
P.O. Box 2649, Columbus, OH 43216, (800) 848-9500.

An anthology of short literature selections organized by genre, including fiction, non-fiction, poetry and drama. Includes related activities for exploring cultural values and thinking critically. The Teacher's Resource Manuals provide vocabulary activities and writing assignments.

Hear My Voice: A Multicultural Anthology of Literature from the United States.  
Edited by Laurie King. Addison-Wesley, 1994; Teaching for Change, P.O. Box 73038, Washington, DC 20056-3038, (202) 238-2379; Fax (202) 238-2378; email necadc@aol.com.

This is a diverse collection of poems, essays, stories and speeches, divided into six units: Borders; Love; Family; Society—Conflict, Struggle and Change; Personal Identity; and Celebrations. Includes a book of readings and a teaching guide with activities designed to link social studies and language arts.


This is a collection of short stories and novel excerpts by African-American women including Harriet Jacobs, Zora Neale Hurston, Gwendolyn Brooks, and others.

Jamestown Classics  
Adapted by Walter Pauk and Raymond Harris.  
Jamestown Publishers, P.O. Box 9168, Providence, RI 02940, (800) USA-READ.

This is a series of adapted short stories, written at the fifth grade level, by Edgar Allen Poe, Robert Louis Stevenson, Jack London, Bret Harte, O. Henry and Arthur Conan Doyle. Each book is a separate short story accompanied by activities and comprehension questions. (Four stories by each author.)

Jamestown Literature Program  
Jamestown Publishers, P.O. Box 9168,  
Providence, RI 02940, (800) USA-READ.

This is a series of literature anthologies in four genres: short stories, plays, poems, and non-fiction. Each is written at Level I (grade levels 9-10) and Level II (grade levels 11-12), and passages are accompanied by critical thinking and critical writing activities.
Latino Caribbean Literature
Globe Fearon Publishers, 4350 Equity Drive,  
P.O. Box 2649, Columbus, OH 43216, (800) 848-9500.

An anthology of short literature selections organized by genre, including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and drama. Related activities for exploring cultural values and thinking critically are included. The Teacher's Resource Manuals provide vocabulary activities and writing assignments.

Mexican American Literature
Globe Fearon Publishers, 4350 Equity Drive,  
P.O. Box 2649, Columbus, OH 43216, (800) 848-9500.

An anthology of short literature selections organized by genre, including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and drama. Related activities for exploring cultural values and thinking critically are included. The Teacher's Resource Manuals provide vocabulary activities and writing assignments.

Plains Native American Literature
Globe Fearon Publishers, 4350 Equity Drive,  
P.O. Box 2649, Columbus, OH 43216, (800) 848-9500.

An anthology of short literature selections organized by genre, including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and drama. Includes related activities for exploring cultural values and thinking critically. The Teacher's Resource Manuals provide vocabulary activities and writing assignments.

Short Classics
Steck-Vaughn, P.O. Box 690789,  
Orlando, FL, 32319-9998, (800) 531-5015.

This is a series of short presentations of classic literature, adapted for adult beginning and intermediate level readers. Titles include: Call of the Wild, Frankenstein, Hamlet, Huckleberry Finn, Hunchback of Notre Dame, Macbeth, Red Badge of Courage, Treasure Island, Wuthering Heights, and many more. For levels 4-6.

Poetry Anthologies

African-American Poetry
Globe Fearon Publishers, 4350 Equity Drive,  
P.O. Box 2649, Columbus, OH 43216, (800) 848-9500.

An anthology of classic and contemporary poetry, including work by Lucille Clifton, Amiri Baraka, Langston Hughes, and Maya Angelou. Divided into six thematic units, this anthology includes biographical sketches of each of the poets and discussion questions for each poem. Illustrated with photographs by high school students.
**Latino Poetry**  
Globe Fearon Publishers, 4350 Equity Drive,  
P.O. Box 2649, Columbus, OH 43216, (800) 848-9500.

An anthology of poetry by poets of Mexican, Caribbean, and South American descent, including Pat Mora, Martin Espada, Gary Soto, and Victor Hernandez Cruz. Divided into six thematic units. Each unit includes biographical sketches of poets and discussion questions for each poem. Illustrated with photographs by high school students.

Edited by Langston Hughes and Arna Bontemps.  

This is a vast collection of poetry written by and inspired by African-Americans. It is an essential resource for teaching the role of African-Americans in American literature.

**Where Angels Glide at Dawn**  
Network of Educators on the Americas (NECA), 118 22nd Street, NW,  

Short stories by modern Latin American writers. Introduction by Isabel Allende.

**While Standing on One Foot: Puzzle Stories and Wisdom Tales from the Jewish Tradition.**  
Nina Jaffe and Steve Zeitlin. City Lore, 72 East 1st Street, New York, NY 10003, (800) 333-5982; Fax (212) 529-5062.

This collection of folk tales invites children to match wits with heroes and heroines. At a point in each tale, readers are asked to think about how they might have escaped from the protagonist’s predicament. Arranged chronologically, the stories also tell a history of Jewish life with tales of Biblical times, Eastern Europe, the Lower East Side of New York and Germany during the Holocaust.
**Biography**

*African-American*

*The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

This work, written in collaboration with Alex Haley, is an essential addition to any collection. It is inspiring and illuminating and may change students’ minds about reading forever.


A collection of short autobiographical passages by a range of writers, including Zora Neale Hurston, Richard Wright, W.E.B. DuBois, Angela Davis, John Edgar Wideman, Claude Brown, and Malcolm X, among others. The writing is sophisticated but accessible, and is highly recommended either as silent reading for advanced readers or as class material to be read aloud by the teacher.

*Black Achievers in Science*
270 North O'Keefe St., Cassapolis, MI, 49031, (606) 445-2369.

This is a series of activity books which introduce students to the many discoveries, inventions, and accomplishments of African-American scientists. Large drawings accompany games, activities, and short paragraphs describing the contributions of the scientists.

*Black Americans of Achievement*
Chelsea House Publishers, Dept. CB5, P.O. Box 914, 1974 Sproul Road, Suite 400, Broomall, PA 19008-0914, (800) 848-BOOK.


*Black Science Activity Books*

This is a series of paperback books in magazine format focusing on the contributions of African-American inventors. Topics include: Black women inventors,
safety, electricity, and more. Large drawings accompany games, activities, and short paragraphs describing the contributions of the inventors.

**Black Women Makers of History**  
*George Jackson. National Women's History Project, 7738 Bell Road, Windsor, CA 95492-8518.*

One hundred twenty women who made important contributions in a variety of fields are chronicled in this large-format book. Freedom fighters, pioneers, musicians and artists, entertainers, scientists, and business women are presented. Excellent chapters on slavery and the conditions under which African-Americans lived then.

**Champions of Change: Biographies of Famous Black Americans**  
*Steck-Vaughn Company, 1989.*

This book is designed for use by beginning readers; it includes biographical sketches of famous African-Americans, followed by reading comprehension activities. The subjects of the sketches are Coretta Scott King, Bill Cosby, Jesse Owens, Tom Bradley, Martin Luther King, Wilma Rudolph, Herbie Hancock, Jackie Robinson, Maya Angelou, and Ray Charles.

**Fearon's Freedom Fighters**  
*Globe Fearon Publishers, 4350 Equity Drive, P.O. Box 2649, Columbus, OH 43216, (800) 848-9500.*

This is a series of softcover biographies of Malcolm X, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, and Fannie Lou Hamer, written at the 3.5-4.0 grade level. Illustrated with photographs. The teacher’s edition includes teaching suggestions and comprehension activities.

**Golden Legacy Comics**  

This is a series of 16 highly informative, illustrated history magazines which, in comic book format, tell the stories of famous African-Americans such as Toussaint L’Overture, Matthew Henson, Frederick Douglass, Alexander Dumas, and Harriet Tubman. Other topics include Black cowboys, ancient African kingdoms, and Black inventors. This is a very popular series which makes African-American history accessible to all readers.

**I Dream a World: Portraits of Black Women Who Changed America**  
*Brian Lanker. National Women’s History Project, 7738 Bell Road, Windsor, CA 95492-8518.*

A set of photographic portraits of and narratives by 75 powerful, contemporary Black women. Many are well-known public officials, performing artists, educators,
writers, civil rights activists, and athletes. The accompanying interview excerpts are as powerful as the pictures.

*Malcolm X*

**Arnold Adoff. Harper and Row, 1970.**

This is an attractive easy-to-read biography of Malcolm X, accessible to beginning readers who may be interested in the subject but not yet able to handle the Haley autobiography. This has been very well received by students and is highly recommended.

*Malcolm X: The Great Photographs*

**Text by Thulani Davis. New York: Stewart, Tabori and Chang, 1992.**

This is a stunning collection of photographs depicting the life and times of Malcolm X. It is accompanied by an informative narrative by Thulani Davis, who includes the voices of activists whose lives were changed by contact with the Muslim leader.

*Malcolm X in Context: A Study Guide to the Man and His Times*

**Edited by D. Murphy and J. Radtke. School Voices Press, 1992.**

Network of Educators on the Americas (NECA), 118 22nd Street, NW, Washington, DC 20032 (202) 429-0137.

Readings, study questions and exercises, historical chronology, and a resource guide.

*Martin Luther King, Jr.: An Ebony Picture Biography*

**Johnson Publishing, 820 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60605.**

This is a beautiful picture biography of Martin Luther King, including 82 pages of photographs and text from his speeches. It includes the full text of the “I Have A Dream” Speech, as well as photos of his early life, his acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize, and his funeral in Atlanta.

*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*


Frederick Douglass was a former slave, impassioned abolitionist, brilliant writer, newspaper editor, and eloquent orator. His astounding life and ability to overcome alarming odds are recounted in his famous “Narrative,” originally published in 1845 to quell doubts about his origins, and to strengthen the anti-slavery cause. Excellent for the classroom, as a model of passionate writing and sensitive and vivid descriptions.
Gay and Lesbian

Lives of Notable Gay Men and Women
Chelsea House Publishers, Dept. CB5, P.O. Box 914, 1974 Sproul Road, Suite 400, Broomall, PA 19008-0914, (800) 848-BOOK.

This is a series of biographies telling the life stories of individuals of accomplishment and historical interest from the worlds of politics, arts, sciences and sports. The personal histories of these individuals—all of them models of achievement—tell of conflict, growth and courage, revealing the purpose and meaning of each person’s gay and lesbian experience. The biographies reflect a commitment to racial and ethnic diversity.

Latino

Always Running—La Vida Loca: Gang Days in L.A.
Network of Educators on the Americas (NECA), 118 22nd Street, NW, Washington, DC 20032, (202) 429-0137.

The dramatic account of Rodriguez’s life as a gang member in the 1960s and 1970s, his encounters with racism in schools and on the streets, and his political activism. Excerpts would be very appropriate for classroom discussion.

Cesar Chavez
Globe Fearon Publishers, 4350 Equity Drive, P.O. Box 2649, Columbus, OH 43216, (800) 848-9500.

This is a softcover biography of Cesar Chavez, Mexican-American founder of the United Farm Workers, written at the 3.5-4.0 grade level. Illustrated with photographs. The teacher’s edition includes teaching suggestions and comprehension activities. Part of the Fearon’s Freedom Fighters series.

Down These Mean Streets

This is a powerful autobiography of a young man of Puerto Rican descent growing up in Spanish Harlem in the 1940s. It is poetically written and very engaging to young adults.

Escalante: The Best Teacher in America

A biography of Jaime Escalante, the calculus teacher from East Los Angeles who inspired the film “Stand and Deliver.”
**Hispanics of Achievement**  
Chelsea House Publishers, Dept. CB5, P.O. Box 914,  
1974 Sproul Road, Suite 400, Broomall, PA 19008-0914, (800) 848-BOOK.

Focusing on the lives and achievements of prominent men and women of Spanish heritage throughout history, this series underscores the important role Latinos and Spaniards have played in shaping world culture. Written at an accessible level and fully illustrated. Titles include: Henry Cisneros, Gloria Estefan, Rita Moreno, Julio Iglesias, Pablo Picasso, Jose Marti, Pablo Neruda, and more.

**Hispanic Biographies**  
Globe Fearon Publishers, 4350 Equity Drive,  
P.O. Box 2649, Columbus, OH 43216, (800) 848-9500.

Short biographies of notable Latino men and women, including Diego Rivera, Jose Marti, Nancy Lopez, Ruben Blades, and Cesar Chavez. Reading comprehension and writing activities follow each selection. Written at the sixth grade level.

**Hunger of Memory**  

Autobiography of a Mexican-American and his experiences with assimilation.

**I, Rigoberta Menchu': An Indian Woman in Guatemala**  
Network of Educators on the Americas (NECA), 118 22nd Street, NW,  

Nobel Peace Prize recipient Rigoberta Menchu’ describes the indigenous traditions of child-raising, farming, health care, and spirituality. She documents her people’s fight for justice and violent government repression.

**Latinos: A Biography of the People**  

Although written at an advanced level, this book is full of oral histories of Latinos who discuss issues of race, class, and immigration.

**Of Secret Wars and Roses**  
D. Sandoval. 1987. Network of Educators on the Americas (NECA),  
118 22nd Street, NW, Washington DC 20032, (202) 429-0137.

A moving story of a Salvadoran high school student in Los Angeles who struggles with memories of home as she adjusts to life in the United States. Includes teaching ideas. (Bilingual.) Spiral-bound.
**Native American**

*Black Indians: A Hidden Heritage*

This is a fascinating history of the relationship between Africans and Native Americans in American history. It tells the stories of runaway slaves seeking refuge in Native American villages, and of the African-Seminole alliance which developed in Florida. It is full of photos and prints and is written at an accessible intermediate level.

*Native American Biographies*
Globe Fearon Publishers, 4350 Equity Drive, P.O. Box 2649, Columbus, OH 43216, (800) 848-9500.

Short biographies of notable Native American men and women, including N. Scott Momaday, Joy Harjo, Ben Nighthorse Campbell, Rodney Grant and Juane Quick-to-See Smith. Reading comprehension and writing activities follow each selection. Written at the sixth grade level.

*North American Indians of Achievement*
Chelsea House Publishers, Dept. CB5, P.O. Box 914, 1974 Sproul Road, Suite 400, Broomall, PA 19008-0914, (800) 848-BOOK.

The books in this series recount the life stories of notable Native American men and women of achievement. Books are full of historical photographs and artwork and are written at an accessible level. Titles include: Crazy Horse, Wilma Mankiller, Tecumseh, Sitting Bull, Jim Thorpe, and more.

**Asian American**

*Asian American Biographies*
Globe Fearon Publishers, 4350 Equity Drive, P.O. Box 2649, Columbus, OH 43216, (800) 848-9500.

Short biographies of notable Asian American men and women, including Amy Tan, Kristi Yamaguchi, Ved Mehta, Maya Lin and Haing Ngor. Reading comprehension and writing activities follow each selection. Written at the sixth grade level.

**Women**

*Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery*

This is a Newberry Honor Book which details the life and contributions of Eleanor Roosevelt. It tells the story of her evolution from an awkward wealthy child into one of the most influential women in America. A good companion biography to the study of history.
**Hard Hatted Women**  
Edited by Molly Martin. Seal Press, P.O. Box 13, Seattle, WA 98111, 1988.

This book contains 26 narratives by women in non-traditional trades. They are informative and inspirational stories of the challenges facing women who seek to do what has been called “men’s work” and the approaches they’ve used to overcome obstacles. The two narratives that deal with carpentry, “Pat Cull: Carpenter,” and “Nina Saltman: Carpenter Foreman,” could be read and discussed in class, and accompanied by exercises in which students write similar narratives about their own experiences doing challenging work.

**Helen Keller: The Story of My Life**  

When she was 19 months old, Helen Keller (1880-1968) suffered a severe illness that left her blind and deaf. Not long after, she also became mute. In this classic autobiography, first published in 1903, Keller recounts the first 22 years of her life, including her first realization that objects had names, her joy at eventually learning to speak, her friendships with well-known people, her education and her relationship with her teacher, Annie Sullivan. Presented in clear, straightforward prose, this is a moving memoir that offers a portrait of one of the most inspiring women in American history.

**Her Heritage: A Biographical Encyclopedia of Famous American Women**  
Cambridge Education, P.O. Box 2153, Dept. CD, Charleston, WV, 25328-2153, (800) 468-4227.

This CD-rom invites users into the lives of over 1,000 famous women who helped shape U.S. history. It introduces learners to women’s accomplishments in fields as diverse and demanding as athletics, arts, business, science, design and philosophy. From Margaret Chase Smith, the first woman to run for President, to Lucille Ball, the queen of comedy, they are all included in this comprehensive CD-rom multimedia learning guide. The stories of their lives, drawn from rich biographical profiles, are complimented with photos and videos. Easy-to-operate interface allows users to explore hundreds of videos, audio clips, portraits, and photographs.

**Troll Series Biographies of Women**  
Teaching for Change, P.O. Box 73038, Washington, DC 20056-3038, (202) 238-2379; Fax (202) 238-2378; email necadc@aol.com.

Ten biographies, written for levels 3-6, describe the life, times and early influences on ten inspiring and important women. Biographies include: Louisa May Alcott, Young Writer; Clara Barton, Angel of the Battlefield; Elizabeth Blackwell, First Woman Doctor; Marie Curie, Brave Scientist; Amelia Earhart, Adventure in the Sky; The Courage of Helen Keller; Sacajawea, Wilderness Guide; Harriet Tubman, The Road to Freedom; Young Eleanor Roosevelt; Rosa Parks: Fight for Freedom.
Videos

“The Real Malcolm X”
CBS News Documentary, (800) 776-8400.

This hour-long documentary explores the life and philosophy of Malcolm X and the effect of his teachings on those around him. Excellent resource, full of fascinating footage. Interviews with Maya Angelou, Dick Gregory, Betty Shabazz and Public Enemy.

Video Series, Johnson Publishing Co.

Three videos feature successful celebrities in entertainment, business and government. “The Entertainers” features Bill Cosby, Maya Angelou and Charles Dutton; “Leadership” features Gov. L. Douglas Wilder, Marian Wright and Dr. James Comer; “Entrepreneurship” features Publisher Johnson, Oprah Winfrey, and Joshua Smith, CEO of Maxima Corp. In each of the videos, the speakers describe how they overcame enormous obstacles in order to achieve their goals. The video tapes are accompanied by guidebooks.

Math Skills

Fractions as a Tool
John Blackwood and Elizabeth Alden. Educational Activities, P.O. Box 392, Freeport, NY, 11520 (800) 645-3739.

This developmental program uses the ruler to help students to visualize, conceptualize and work with fractions in real-life situations. Each lesson immediately involves students in working with a different tool. The lessons move sequentially; building, reviewing and reinforcing as the program progresses. Individual pacing allows students to work at their own speeds. Further reinforcement is provided by a self-test placed at the end of each lesson. Skills include: using the ruler, converting inches and feet, using halves, quarters, eighths, and sixteenths of an inch; adding and subtracting with like and unlike denominators; multiplying and dividing fractions and mixed numbers; working with common multiples and least common multiples; and solving problems involving fractions, decimals, percentages, and mixed numbers in real-life situations.

Math Ace
Computer software. Magic Quest, 125 University Ave., Palo Alto, CA, 94301.

Computer software program that provides a good review of basic skills in game format. Addition, subtraction, fractions, decimals, beginning algebra and geometry are all covered.
Math for the Carpenter

This course focuses on four complex areas of planning (reading plans, ordering materials, laying out and cutting materials, and cost estimating) that carpenters must master to work effectively in their trade. Subjects covered include: lumber sizes, framing a wall, reading a plan, preparing an order, board feet, graph paper layout, molding, preparing a cutting list, sheathing, siding, surface area, laying out and cutting, figuring door clearance, rafters, determining line length, prices, figuring labor costs, preparing a materials estimate, and estimating the complete job.

Measure Up

This is a workbook of fun measurement puzzles that give students lots of practice and challenge.

Reading A Ruler

Tutorial software which helps students understand the different types of rules and how to read them. Covers measurement in inches, feet, yards, quarters, eights, sixteenths, and the steps for calculating simple and compound fractions while reading the ruler. Concludes with practice drills for reading the ruler.

Related Mathematics for Carpenters

Basic mathematics, volume and area measurements, and everyday problems in the building trades. It is clearly written, with word problems and relevant examples.

Writing Skills

The 1-2-3 Method: The Writing Process for Bidialectical Students

The goal of this writing workbook is to teach the writing process to African-American students, whose dialects have been either disregarded or viewed as inferior to Standard English. Using a step-by-step approach which is respectful of the logic of dialect, issues in the African-American experience and the concerns of young adults, this workbook teaches organizing skills, parts of speech, sentence structure, planning and writing essays and research papers.
The Art of Science Writing
Dale Worsley and Bernadette Mayer. Teachers and Writers Collaborative, 5 Union Square West, New York, NY 10003.

Excellent suggestions for writing about science topics, and practical advice for writing in many forms: essays, notes, personal memoirs, poetry, fiction, and others. This book also includes an anthology of brief and accessible science writing by Darwin, Freud, Carl Sagan, Einstein, and others.

Blazing Pencils: A Guide to Writing Fiction and Essays
Meredith Sue Willis. Teachers and Writers Collaborative, 5 Union Square West, New York, NY, 10003-3306, (212) 691-6590.

“Blazing Pencils” includes more than 150 writing ideas to help students every step of the way as they write essays or fiction. The book is structured to show that fiction and nonfiction writing aren't always that different. Using text, exercises and examples, it can be used alone by students or as a class textbook. Includes a free 48-page “Writing Notebook,” with lined pages ready for student use.

The Conversation Piece

A book of provocative questions to stimulate discussion, journal writing, and essay writing. The book's 320 questions are designed to facilitate creative and original thinking. For example: “What daring feat would you like to witness in person?”; “If you were given twenty acres of land and money to develop it however you chose, what would you do with it?”; "If you could add any course to our nation's school curriculum, what would it be?"

Language Skills Books
Steck-Vaughn, P.O. Box 690789, Orlando, FL, 32319-9998, (800) 531-5015.

These are skill-specific practice books full of exercises in grammar, usage or mechanics. Books address vocabulary, capitalization, punctuation, parts of speech, paragraphs, spelling. For levels 4-8.

The Poetry Connection: An Anthology of Contemporary Poems to Stimulate Creative Writing. Edited by Kinereth Gensler and Nina Nyhart. Teachers and Writers, 84 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

An excellent resource for teaching poetry writing that uses modern poetry as models. Includes creative suggestions for teaching acrostics, sense poems, fantasy poems, and persona poems.
Rites of Passage
Network of Educators on the Americas (NECA),
118 22nd Street, NW, Washington DC 20032, (202) 429-0137.

An award-winning book of student poetry, essay, fiction, and artwork produced by Linda Christensen’s students in Portland, Oregon. In an introduction, Christensen describes a number of assignments she uses to generate writing and suggests ways to use this book in the classroom.


Stephen O’Connor is a poet and short story writer who ran a writing program at a New York City junior high school where “hope runs a distant second to despair.” In this book, based on diaries he kept over two years, he describes the difficulty he had reaching young people whose lives were overwhelmed by violence and poverty. But he does get them to write and to tell their personal stories, with some success: he tells about how some individual lives were profoundly changed by their exposure to writing, and describes how students turned heart-wrenching narratives and poems into a play which they then performed for the school.

The Writing Workshop: How to Teach Creative Writing
Alan Ziegler. Teachers and Writers Collaborative,
5 Union Square West, New York, NY, 10003-3306, (212) 691-6590.

“Writing Workshop: Volume One,” backs up numerous practical suggestions for teaching creative writing with discussions of the writing process and theory. The author proposes that the classroom becomes a “writing workshop” where students are given direction to keep them going, but where individual growth and personal interests are respected and encouraged. “Writing Workshop: Volume Two,” tells how to design and adapt writing assignments and how to present writing ideas so they work. The book presents ten assignments that are particularly good as Openers, followed by 60 more writing ideas, with examples and advice on how to present each idea.
History and Social Studies

American and European-American

*A People's History of the United States*
Network of Educators on the Americas (NECA), 118 22nd Street, NW, Washington, DC 20032, (202) 429-0137.

This book describes the lives and facts that are rarely included in textbooks. An indispensable teacher resource, written on a high school level.

*A Real American Girl*
Rosalyn Bresnick Perry. City Lore, 72 East 1st Street, New York, NY 10003, (800) 333-5982; Fax (212) 529-5062.

This is a tape to use in a unit on immigration. On it, one of the country’s finest storytellers recounts her experiences getting ready to come to the United States from a town in Eastern Europe, her experiences on the boat, and her first days as a school child in a public school. Here, she tries out for the Thanksgiving pageant, convinced she would get the lead role; but when she auditioned, the entire classroom erupted into laughter at her foreign accent. Although rooted in the Jewish immigrant experience, her tales comprise a classic migration story.

*America’s Story*
Steck-Vaughn, P.O. Box 690789, Orlando, FL, 32319-9998, (800) 531-5015.

This is a full-color history text designed for beginning readers (levels 2-3.) Introduces key topics in American history, including exploration, settlement, growth of the nation, the Civil War, Reconstruction, westward expansion, the Industrial Revolution, the World Wars, the space race, Civil Rights.

Units begin with motivating readings, a timeline and vocabulary; units conclude with map, graph or timeline activities and comprehension-building exercises.

*Carry It On: The Story of America’s Working People in Song and Picture*

“Carry It On” tells the story of working people in America and how they lived, loved, worshiped and fought for their rights. Built around 85 songs which capture vividly the experiences and struggles of American working people, including “Bread and Roses,” “Solidarity Forever,” and “De Colores.” The songs combine with text, photographs, and illustrations to create a moving and vivid history of the American labor force.
Let Us Now Praise Famous Men

This classic documentary work describes the six weeks spent by the author and photographer living with white tenant farmers in Alabama in 1936. In it, author Agee details the plight of the families and describes his subjective reaction to it. Accompanied by well-known, evocative photographs of poverty and despair. Excellent for reading aloud and class discussion, or for independent reading by advanced readers.

The Story in History: Writing Your Way into the American Experience
City Lore, 72 East 1st Street, New York, NY 10003, (800) 333-5982; Fax (212) 529-5062.

This book offers teachers and students an entirely new way of learning about history—through the process of imaginative writing. Writing a ballad about Martin Luther King, or a dramatic monologue spoken by George Washington, students explore American history by imagining details of historic conversations.

“Straight Talk”
Video by Robbie Leppzer, 31 minutes,
Turning Tide Productions, P.O. Box 864, Wendell, MA, 01379, (508) 544-8313; Fax: (508) 544-7989.

This documentary about the Vietnam War features five Vietnam veterans speaking to high-school students about their first-hand experiences in the war. The veterans talk about their decisions to enter the military and share stories of combat and non-combat situations in Vietnam. The video interweaves clips of the veterans’ own home-movie footage and photographs taken during their military tours. The documentary also offers glimpses of current high school military recruitment practices, which contrast with the poignant and revealing testimonies of the veterans.

“We Must Never Forget: The Story of the Holocaust”
Knowledge Unlimited, P.O. Box 52, Madison, WI, 53701
(800) 356-2303; Fax (800) 618-1570.

This video program makes the tragic events of the 1930s and ’40s relevant to young people today. The first part of the program reviews the historical content of the Holocaust, including the long tradition of anti-Semitism in Central Europe, the aftermath of World War I in Germany, the Great Depression, and the rise of Adolf Hitler. Most affecting of all is the on-screen presence of Holocaust survivor Rosa Katz telling her chilling and dramatic personal story.
“Who Built America? From the Centennial Celebration of 1876 to the Great War of 1914.” American Social History Project, Teaching for Change, P.O. Box 73038, Washington, DC 20056-3038, (202) 238-2379; Fax (202) 238-2378; email necadc@aol.com.

In this CD-ROM, students move back in time into the lives of the ordinary men and women who built this country. History comes to life with photos, oral history interviews, music, speeches, poetry, charts, graphs and early motion pictures. (MAC version requires color-capable Mac, System 7, 5 MB RAM, 13” monitor, CD-ROM Drive. Windows requires 486 DX, 66+ processor, 8MB RAM, Microsoft 3.1 or Windows 95, CD-ROM Drive.)

African-American

Black History Activity and Enrichment Handbook
Just Us Books, Inc., 1990 301 Main Street, Orange, NJ, 07050.

This is an easy-to-use collection of ideas, activities, and games designed to help explore African-American history and culture. It includes suggestions for such activities as reading African folktales, organizing classroom debates, writing family histories, making a heritage quilt, and organizing a protest.

Black People Who Made the Old West

This book describes the contributions of pioneers of African heritage who contributed to the settling of the West. Featuring figures like DuSable and Dred Scott, the book devotes two or three pages to each. It is clearly written at a basic level and illustrated.

March Toward Freedom: A History of Black Americans

This is a superb textbook designed for adult education classes. It is clearly written, well-organized, and informative. It is divided into chapters dealing with key issues in African-American history: Africa as homeland, slavery, the abolitionist movement, the Civil War and Reconstruction, white supremacy in the South, exodus from the South, the Depression and World War II, the civil rights movement in the 1950s, the “Black Revolt,” and outstanding Black Americans. Each chapter ends with review questions and activity ideas.
Chapter Ten: Resources

Black History Month: Toward a Global Perspective in Education

This curriculum includes a number of noteworthy features: a chronology of notable African-Americans and a variety of facts and activities related to general history and the contributions of African-Americans to education, math, and science.

Blues in America: A Social History
Jackdaw Publications/Golden Owl Publishing, P.O. Box 503, Amawalk, NY 10501 (914) 962-6911.

This portfolio of historical documents and audio traces the blues art form from the Mississippi Delta to the West Coast and industrial cities of the North, following the post-war migrations of African-Americans in search of a more equitable life. Includes eleven historical documents, four essays, comprehensive notes on the documents and critical thinking questions. Also includes a cassette tape with songs by Lightnin' Hopkins, Elizabeth Cotten, Ma Rainey, Muddy Waters, prison work songs, and more.

Eyes on the Prize Civil Rights Reader

An excellent resource, including documents, speeches and first hand accounts from the civil rights struggles of 1954-1990.

From the Browder File: Twenty-two Essays on the African American Experience

This is a collection of provocative, short (two-page) essays on a variety of topics, ranging from “Television and its Influence on African-American Children,” “Sports and African Americans,” “Diet,” and “The Politics of Hair.” Good as discussion starters and as examples of persuasive essays.

Lessons from History

This is a basic text designed to teach the history of African-Americans, beginning with roots in Africa. It is highly readable and accessible to intermediate-level readers.

Reconstruction
Jackdaw Publications/Golden Owl Publishing, P.O. Box 503, Amawalk, NY 10501 (914) 962-6911.

This collection of documents provides the background to Reconstruction and describes the intense political battles which shaped it. It examines the struggles of Blacks for jobs, schools, land reform, and political power. The new governments’ tur-
moil is recreated through prints, photographs, cartoons, broadsheets, newspapers, and other documents of the times. Includes ten historical documents, five essays, notes on the documents, and critical thinking questions.

**Slavery in the United States**
*Jackdaw Publications/Golden Owl Publishing, P.O. Box 503, Amawalk, NY 10501 (914) 962-6911.*

This portfolio attempts to provide some understanding of the origins of American slavery, how it developed and expanded, what the life of slaves was like, and the ways in which slaves responded to their oppression. Also included are the events leading up to Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation. Includes nine historical documents, six essays, notes on the documents, and critical thinking questions.

**Caribbean**


Highly acclaimed collections of fiction, non-fiction, oral histories, interviews, poetry, drama, and songs. Each book contains a teacher guide. Ideal for social studies, English, and Spanish classes. Purchase individually or buy the set of all four titles.

**Caribbean History in Maps**
*Peter Ashdown. Longman, 1979.*

This is a very vivid historical survey of the impact of conquest, colonialism, and slavery in the Caribbean, using graphs, charts, and maps. It is an excellent resource for teaching map reading skills and important historical concepts and facts.

**International**

*Apartheid is Wrong: A Curriculum for Young People*
*Paula Rogovin Bower. Educators Against Racism and Apartheid, 164-04 Goethals Ave., Jamaica, NY 11432.*

This is an extremely detailed and comprehensive educational tool, focusing on the history and culture of South Africa and the struggle against apartheid. It is full of background material for teachers and worksheets for students. It teaches reading, writing and maps and charts through the subject. It is appropriate for all levels because it is easily adaptable.
**The Slave Trade and Its Abolition**  
Jackdaw Publications/Golden Owl Publishing,  
P.O. Box 503, Amawalk, NY 10501 (914) 962-6911.

This collection of documents outlines the development of the slave trade from 1503, when the first slaves were taken to the Caribbean, to its abolition throughout the British Empire in 1833. The story is told through documents, cartoons, photographs, engravings and pages from the journal of a slave trader which record the purchase of slaves and life on a slave ship. Includes historical documents, essays, notes, and critical thinking questions.

**Latino**

**Across the Wire: Life and Hard Times on the Mexican Border**  

Depicts the life of poor refugees on the Mexican side of the border with a focus on their struggle to survive. Many photos. Written at an intermediate level.

**Exploring Latin America**  
Globe Fearon Publishers, 4350 Equity Drive,  
P.O. Box 2649, Columbus, OH 43216, (800) 848-9500.

This is a textbook which introduces students to the cultures and geography of Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean and South America.

**The Latino Experience in U.S. History**  
Globe Fearon Publishers, 4350 Equity Drive,  
P.O. Box 2649, Columbus, OH 43216, (800) 848-9500.

This is a textbook for young adults which looks at U.S. history through the eyes of Latino people. Chapters include “Spain in the Americas,” “Toward Independence,” “Changes in a New Century,” “A Changing Postwar World,” and “Latinos Today.” Features literature, artwork, and biographies of noteworthy Latinos.

**Hispanic America to 1776**  
Globe Fearon Publishers, 4350 Equity Drive,  
P.O. Box 2649, Columbus, OH 43216, (800) 848-9500.

A textbook which tells the story of early Spanish conquerors and the indigenous people they encountered in the Caribbean, Mexico, and the lands that became Florida, California and the southwestern United States. Uses primary sources from books, letters, journals, newspaper accounts, and speeches. It also includes maps and timelines.
**A Puerto Rican in New York and Other Sketches**  

This is a collection of very short essays by Jesus Colon, who left Puerto Rico for New York City in 1918. The essays describe the experiences and hopes of the working people he met throughout his life, especially the tabaqueros, young apprentice cigarmakers who worked in small cigar factories in New York. A very engaging and insightful history.

**Rediscovering America/Redescubriendo America**  
Network of Educators on the Americas (NECA), 118 22nd Street, NW, Washington, DC 20032, (202) 429-0137.

Excellent collection of bilingual folktales, short stories, essays, poetry, and songs from Latin America and the Caribbean. Readings and lessons on the history of the conquest and resistance, the environment, race, the Maya, and more.

**Rethinking Columbus**  
Edited by B. Bigelow, B. Miner and B. Peterson.  

Lessons, essays, short stories, interviews, and poetry critique the traditional versions of the encounter and offer teachers creative approaches for engaging young people in an evaluation of the hidden assumptions within the discovery myth.

**Native American**

**Indian Resistance: The Patriot Chiefs**  
Jackdaw Publications/Golden Owl Publishing,  
P.O. Box 503, Amawalk, NY 10501 (914) 962-6911.

A portfolio chronicling the intolerance and mistreatment of Indians by European colonists and the relationships between European settlers and Indian leaders. Includes 12 historical documents, six essays, comprehensive notes on the documents, and critical thinking questions.

**Native Americans: The Struggle for the Plains**  
Globe Fearon Publishers, 4350 Equity Drive,  
P.O. Box 2649, Columbus, OH 43216, (800) 848-9500.

This textbook details the struggle of Native Americans of the Great Plains to hold onto their lands and cultures during the 1800s. Uses primary sources from books, letters, journals, newspaper accounts, and speeches. It includes maps and timelines.
Asian-American

*The Chinese and the Building of the U.S. West*
Globe Fearon Publishers, 4350 Equity Drive,
P.O. Box 2649, Columbus, OH 43216, (800) 848-9500.

This textbook details the immigration and contributions of the Chinese people from the time of the California Gold Rush through the growth of policies to limit that immigration in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Uses primary sources from books, letters, journals, newspaper accounts, and speeches. It also includes maps and timelines.

**Games**

*The Black Explorers*
Identity Toys, 2821 N. 4th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53212.

This board game is attractive and engaging because it helps students review math operations while they learn about the lives and accomplishments of famous explorers: Jean DuSable, Matthew Henson, James Beckworth, Guion Bluford. Beautifully designed and easy to follow.

*Harriet Tubman Game and Study Set*
National Women’s History Project, 7738 Bell Road, Windsor, CA 95492-8518.

This game is designed to help students understand the daring life of Harriet Tubman, who led slaves north to freedom along the underground railroad. The set includes a black-line game board, short biography, discussion questions, song sheet, suggested activities, and a bibliography of related sources. May be most appropriate for lower-level readers.

*In Search of Identity*
Identity Toys, 2821 N. 4th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53212.

This board game is very popular and very instructive. Players try to discover the identity of famous Black Americans from a set of clues. The game is attractive, fun, and challenging and can be played successfully both by students who do and do not know a lot of information about famous people. The only drawback of the game is that in the twenty or so biographical sketches included, there are no women.

**Social Change**

*Black Voting Rights: The Fight for Equality*
Jackdaw Publications/Golden Owl Publishing, P.O. Box 503, Amawalk, NY 10501 (914) 962-6911.

This collection of documents tells the story of how African-Americans acquired
the ballot after the Civil War and then how, in the South, it was taken away. Documents also depict the struggles of the Civil Rights Movement begun in the 1950’s and the ultimate victory in gaining the ballot. Includes 19 historical documents (cartoons, articles by W.E.B. Du Bois from the magazine “Crisis,” posters, articles by the NAACP, Supreme Court reports, and more), four essays, comprehensive notes and critical thinking questions.

“BUILD” Magazine
Do Something, Inc., 423 W. 55th Street, 8th Floor, New York, NY, 10019, Phone: (212) 523-1175; Fax: (212) 582-1307, email: daramay@aol.com.

The purpose of this new quarterly publication for young people is to foster leadership development and positive social change. Can be used as a tool for developing reading skills while encouraging classroom discussions about the positive contributions young people can make.

A recent issue included articles on topics such as: interviews with community leaders from the 60s and young leaders from the 90s; information about grants and awards for young people doing community work; a new program which takes city kids outdoors to develop academic and life skills, conflict resolution, and management training.

The magazine will add groups to its mailing list at no charge. To receive multiple copies for free send a letter, fax, or email describing how the magazine will be used and how many copies are needed.

Chronicles of Black Protest

A comprehensive collection of important historical documents from the history of African-American protest. Gathered in this volume are the narratives of the first slaves of the Americas to the Black Panthers of Los Angeles as well as the words of such Black leaders as Nat Turner, David Walker, Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X. Also included are the voices of Henry David Thoreau, William Lloyd Garrison, and Thomas Jefferson.

Making the Peace: A Violence Prevention Curriculum
Paul Kivel and Allen Creighton, Hunter House, 1997; Teaching for Change, P.O. Box 73038, Washington, DC 20056-3038, (202) 238-2379; Fax (202) 238-2378; email necadc@aol.com.

This is a comprehensive teaching handbook with all the information needed to implement a 15-session violence prevention curriculum. It offers step-by-step instructions for the sessions, anticipates difficult issues that may arise, and suggests ideas for followup both within the classroom and within the larger educational program.
“Mississippi Freedom Schools”
Network of Educators on the Americas (NECA), 118 22nd Street, NW, Washington, DC 20032, (202) 429-0137.

Background on Civil Rights Movement Freedom Schools. Rather than provide students with a set of “multicultural texts,” the freedom school curriculum involves students in a critical examination of how culture can either perpetuate inequality or foster social change. Applicable today.

The Power of the People: Active Non-Violence in the United States
Robert Cooney and Helen Michalowski. Peace Press, Inc., 3828 Willat Avenue, Culver City, CA 90230.

This is a comprehensive guide to the history of non-violent social change organizing in the United States. Full of photographs, drawings, and documents, this book is readable and informative. Covers topics such as the roots of American non-violence, woman’s suffrage, the labor movement, the anti-war movement, the civil rights movement and the farmworkers movement.

Strangers in Their Own Country: A Curriculum Guide on South Africa

Introduces students and teachers to the lives and struggles of the people of South Africa with stories, poems, role plays, news articles, and historical readings.

Film and Video

“Metropolitan Avenue”
Directed by Christine Noschese. 60 minutes, color. New Day Films, 121 West 27th, Suite 902, New York, NY 10001, (212) 477-4604.

“Metropolitan Avenue” is an inspiring film about community, about the changing role of women, and about how powerful ordinary people can be when they join together to fight for something they believe in. Viewers are introduced to a lively Brooklyn neighborhood which faces problems caused by racial tensions and cutbacks in municipal services. But in this case, homemakers from varied ethnic backgrounds unite, rise to the challenge, and become leaders in the effort to save their community.

“A Time for Justice: Video and Curriculum Guide”
Charles Guggenheim. Teaching Tolerance, 400 Washington Avenue, Montgomery, AL, 36104, (205) 264-0286.

This 38-minute documentary chronicles the history of the Civil Rights movement. It recalls through archival footage the crises in Montgomery, Little Rock, Birmingham and Selma, but it also tells the stories of individuals who risked their lives for the cause of freedom and equality.
**Multicultural Education**

*Actions Speak Louder: A Skills Based Curriculum For Building Inclusion*

The National Conference, 71 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10003, (800) 352-6225.

The curriculum is designed to improve intergroup relations and teach students to value inclusion. Actions Speak Louder helps young people accept themselves and their peers through six modules dealing with different themes. In the first module, “Civility,” rights and responsibilities for how we interact are discussed; “Self-Esteem” encourages students to explore their sources of strength and self-worth. In “Identity,” students learn about each other’s backgrounds and the values important to themselves and families. Other modules address stereotypes, name-calling, skills for interrupting prejudice, and skills for resolving conflicts.

*African American Holidays*


Includes suggestions on how to celebrate the following holidays: Martin Luther King’s Birthday, Black History Month, Malcolm X Day, African Liberation Day, Juneteenth National Freedom Day, Kwanzaa, Slave Holidays, and Umoja Karamu.

*Celebration of Afro-American Heritage*

Joanna Featherstone. Open City Schools Curriculum, New York, NY.

This curriculum is full of a wide range of activities for young people from the primary grades to young adulthood. Poetry, music, art, biographies, history, games, plays, rituals, and crafts are all designed to help students celebrate various aspects of the African-American experience.

*Communities Around the World*

Albany, NY 12234: Education Department, SUNY/Albany.

This curriculum introduces concepts of culture, family, and tradition by focusing on the lives of people in a variety of cultures, notably Lagos, Nigeria; Jerusalem, Israel; San Juan, Puerto Rico; Johannesburg and Soweto, South Africa; and St. Vincent, West Indies. It includes background information for teachers, activities, readings, worksheets, plays, and games that are instructive, well-written and interesting.
Indians of North America
Chelsea House Publishers, 1974. Dept. CB5, P.O. Box 914, Suite 400, Sproul Road, Broomall, PA 19008-0914, (800) 848-BOOK.

This is a series of books about a wide variety of Native American cultures. Each book supplies information about the significant role Native Americans have played in history and provides a better understanding of the issues and conflicts involving these groups today. Each title offers a comprehensive profile of a particular Native American group and is filled with photographs, paintings, and maps.

Kwanzaa: An African-American Celebration of Culture and Cooking

The author assembles folktales, proverbs, and menus in an engaging book about Kwanzaa, the week-long midwinter festival that celebrates African-American life. The book is divided into seven sections to correspond to the seven principles of Kwanzaa, with anecdotes to illustrate the virtues of unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. Recipes are interspersed with biographies and stories.

The Native People of the Northeast Woodlands
National Museum of the American Indian. Smithsonian Institution, Broadway at 155th Street, New York, NY 10032, (212) 283-2420.

This comprehensive curriculum includes 47 interdisciplinary activities which teach about the history and culture of Native people from the Northeastern United States. The curriculum is full of ready-to-use activities that are informative, attractive and respectful, as well as a comprehensive list of resources, tribal government locations, powwow locations, museums, trips in local areas, and activity kits.


A guidebook for teachers. Lessons address building trust, communication and cooperation; stereotypes; the impact of discrimination; and creating change. For grades 3-12.

Skywalkers
Rick Hill. City Lore, 72 East 1st Street, New York, NY 10003, (800) 333-5982; Fax (212) 529-5062.

Written by a former ironworker from the Mohawk nation, “Skywalkers” is about how the Mohawk Indians became involved in the construction trades, working on bridges at the turn of the century. It chronicles the danger of the work and offers first hand accounts of workers who came to New York City to work in “high steel,” and in so doing helped shape the famous skyline.
Voices from the Fields: Children of Migrant Farmworkers Tell Their Stories
City Lore, 72 East 1st Street, New York, NY 10003, (800) 333-5982; Fax (212) 529-5062.

This book is full of the words of young people enrolled in California's Yo Puedo migrant program. They speak about all of things of importance to them: separation from their parents, school, hard work, gang life, love for their families, their hopes for the future, learning English, and more. This is a unique book of photos, oral histories, and poems in English and Spanish.

Voices from the Mountains
Collected and recorded by Guy and Candie Carawan.

The history, the life and the people of the Appalachian South are captured and revealed in this beautiful book. Includes personal stories told by the people themselves, over fifty songs that encompass every aspect of their lives, and over 150 photographs that show the faces of the people, the beauty of the landscape, and the struggles they have survived. Includes descriptions of early mining days, the fight to unionize, the poverty and pride of the families, the success of grassroots organizing and the effects of Black Lung Disease. This is an excellent introduction to the culture of the Appalachian South, but also a useful addition to a study of key events in American history, and to any discussion of social change movements.

Videos

“The Color of Fear”
Videotape and training seminar, Lee Mun Wah, Stir Fry Productions, 1222 Preservation Park Way, Oakland, CA 94612, (800) 370-STIR.

This film is about the pain and anguish that racism has caused in the lives of eight North American men of Asian, European, Latino, and African descent. “The Color of Fear” allows us to witness a level of authentic dialogue that is very rare—these adult men face each other directly and with vulnerability and express their various prejudices and fears; they talk about childhood traumas, about growing up without role models, and about giving up their ethnicity to become Americans.

“Out of their intimate and intense confrontations emerges a deeper sense of understanding and trust for their uniqueness and common desire to be understood and acknowledged,” says Director Lee Mun Wah. The participants ultimately arrive at a place from which to begin healing.

The videotape is designed to be used with groups, and purchase of the tape includes a facilitator's training. The vision of Stir-Fry Seminars and Consulting is to help create environments where diversity can be valued, acknowledged, and practiced. The focus of the training is on empowerment, dialogue, and the development of conflict facilitation and communication skills. Training center around
the belief that individuals can best learn how to value diversity by first learning about themselves and others around them. From there, they can better articulate what they need from others to feel supported and understood.

“My Brown Eyes”
Directed by Jay Koh. Teaching for Change, P.O. Box 73038, Washington, DC 20056-3038, (202) 238-2379; Fax (202) 238-2378; email necadc@aol.com.

This video depicts the daily life of a ten-year-old Korean boy as he rises early and prepares for his first day of school. Since his immigrant parents work late into the night, he makes their breakfast and his own school lunch. Once he arrives at school, he becomes withdrawn and later get into a fight. The video provides a powerful forum for examining the conditions in school which can serve to silence and alienate students. Appropriate for young adults and staff development.

**Vocational Education**

Wheels of Learning: Craft Training Manuals
National Center for Construction Education and Research, Prentice-Hall, One Lake Street, Upper Saddle River, NJ, 07458, (800) 922-0579.

This is an extensive collection of training manuals which provide a common introduction to basic construction skills and knowledge. The Core Curriculum consists of six modules: Basic Safety, Basic Math, Hand Tools, Power Tools, Introduction to Blueprints, and Rigging. Level One Manuals are also available for a variety of trade areas, including: carpentry, electrical, painting, plumbing, roofing and many more.

The National Center’s Craft Training Manuals are available in three formats: paperback textbooks, three-ring binders, and individual modules.

Architecture and Scale Drawing

Blueprint Reading

This tutorial style software uses graphics, sound, and text to teach students how to read blueprints. Each lesson is followed by a quiz. Scores are automatically stored to disk and can be printed or reviewed on the computer.

Building Trades Printreading, Part One: Residential Construction
American Technical Publishers, Inc., 1155 West 175th Street, Homewood, IL 60430, (800) 323-3471.

This text/workbook presents the essentials of printreading for the building trades. Extensive coverage of printreading information from working drawings.
and printmaking techniques to reading and interpreting finished plans. Extensive
sketching, review, and test activities at the end of each chapter. Instructors guide
available.

**Building Trades Printreading, Part Two: Residential and Light Commercial
Construction.** American Technical Publishers, Inc.,
1155 West 175th Street, Homewood, IL 60430, (800) 323-3471.

This text/workbook reflects current materials and code standards. Plans pro-
vide printreading experience based on actual jobs. Heavily illustrated and clearly
written. Topics include types of plans, specifications, abbreviations and symbols,
specific building materials and trade coordination, including five sets of residen-
tial and commercial prints and four trade plans. Instructors guide available.

**House Design, Part I and II**
Computer software.
Shopware, Department SE2, P.O. Box 1787,
Aberdeen, WA 98520-0292, (800) 487-3392.

These software packages introduce students to key terminology and skills used
by architects and designers. Lessons and quizzes in Part I include: Using an
Architect Scale, Architectural Symbols, Good House Design. Lessons and quizzes
in Part II include: Types and Symbols, Building Materials, and Energy Efficient
House Design.

**Sim City**
Computer Software. Maxis.
2121 N. California Blvd., Walnut Creek, CA 94596-3572, (800) 99-MAXIS.

This simulated city planning software allows students to gain insight into the
responsibilities involved in running a metropolis: managing municipal budgets,
maintaining services, fighting crime, pollution and traffic jams. The package
includes eight different city scenarios. Students can build cities from scratch, cus-
tomize landscapes, and print their creations.

**Sim City 2000**
Maxis, 2121 N. California Blvd.,
Walnut Creek, CA 94596-3572, (800) 99-MAXIS.

Sim City 2000 continues the urban planning simulation of Sim City (see
above), with new art and sounds and added realism. In this more advanced soft-
ware, students plan the placement of subways, stadiums, museums, and more.
They face the challenge of managing growth while pleasing the populace and han-
dling economic and natural disasters.
Three Dimensional Home Architect
Computer Software. Broderbund,
P.O Box 6125, Novato, CA 94948-6125, (800) 521-6263.

This computer software allows users to create basic home designs, elevations and sections. It also produces supply lists for making purchases. User-friendly introduction to the basics of computer-aided design. For use with Windows 3.1 or Windows 95 only.

Understanding Construction Drawings
2 Computer Drive West, Box 15-015, Albany, NY 12212.

This is a book of mock architectural drawings and assignments related to them. It includes a math section that is short and clear. The chapters have a good overview of architectural principles. The book uses clear, basic language and pictures. This is a good supplement to math classes, vocational education activities and on-site training. Use in correlation with the study of site drawings.

Carpentry


Building a House

This large book describes the building of a new house in simple, direct language accompanied by black and white photographs. A good addition to the classroom library for both reference or pleasure reading.

Carpentry for Children

The Carpenter’s Manifesto

This is a very large, comprehensive reference book. It is well-organized and full of excellent illustrations.
Carpentry: Practicing Occupational Reading Skills. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company P.O. Box 26015, Austin, TX, 78731, 1990.


Housebuilding for Children

These are workbooks designed to help young people build simple shelters and woodworking projects (including how to build sawhorses, toolboxes and workbenches). Don't be misled by the title: the explanations of tools, instructions and illustrations are clear and simple but appropriate for adults; the plans are written in step-by-step format that would be very usable in Youthbuild vocational classes.


Stanley Tools. Stanley Hardware. Division of Stanley Works, 195 Lake Street, New Britain, CT, 06050, (800) 648-7654.


Unbuilding

This fictional account of the dismantling and removal of the Empire State Building describes the structure of a skyscraper and explains how such a dismantling would be accomplished.

Underground

The text and drawings in this book describe the subways, sewers, building foundations, telephone and power systems, columns, cables, pipes, tunnels and other underground elements of a large modern city.


Electrical

**Electrical Blueprint Reading**  
American Technical Publishers, Inc.,  
1155 West 175th Street, Homewood, IL 60430, (800) 323-3471.

A clearly-written text explains how to read and interpret electrical drawing, wiring diagrams, and specifications for construction of electrical systems in buildings.

**Safe and Simple Electrical Experiments**  

In 101 entertaining experiments and projects, students learn the basic principles of electricity. Three major categories, static electricity, magnetism, and current electricity and electromagnetism are treated separately. Each experiment, beginning with a list of the safe and inexpensive materials required, has step-by-step instructions and illustrations, and a discussion of the expected results. From cleaning phonograph records with plastic wrap and telling time with a compass to making a transformer or a telegraph sounder, students learn where to get electricity and how to store and use it.

Safety

**Power Tool Safety**  
Computer Software. Hearlihy and Co.,  
714 W. Columbia Street, Dept. C293, Springfield, OH, (800) 622-1000.

This is a safety curriculum designed to help students learn about how to handle and use a variety of portable and bench power tools. Includes power tool operation manual, instructor’s packet, and tool safety software, which incorporates 500 safety questions about stationary and portable tools. Teachers can edit, delete, and add to make their own customized tests.

**Safety Pamphlets. Scriptographic Booklets by Channing L. Bete Co.**  
South Deerfield, MA 01373, (800) 628-7733.

“You and Safety”  
“How Do You Rate as an Accident Risk?”  
“You and Your Back”  
“The ABCs of Moving and Lifting Things Safely”  
“About Ladder and Scaffold Safety”  
“On-the-Job Safety”  
“About Electrical Safety”  
“What You Should Know About Workplace Emergencies”

This series of illustrated pamphlets is an excellent way to introduce students to
safety concepts in a readable, accessible format. Short, eight-page pamphlets provide clear introductions to safety issues, appropriate for multi-level groups.

**You Can Give First Aid**  
**Kim Bowman. New Reader's Press, Box 131, Syracuse, NY 13210.**

This workbook on basic first aid covers the following topics in a readable, clear format accessible to basic and intermediate readers: The First Steps; The Emergency Phone Call; Mouth-to-Mouth Breathing; Choking; Bleeding; Poisoning; Shock; Burns; Broken Bones; Exposure; Minor Wounds and Bites; Eye, Ear and Nose; Moving the Injured; First Aid Box. This workbook would serve as an excellent supplement to the safety unit, as well as an introduction to first aid, to precede a course in first aid certification.

**Videos**

**“Blueprints: Planning A Building”**  
**Shopware, Department SE2, P.O. Box 1787, Aberdeen, WA 98520-0292, (800) 487-3392.**

This video takes students to the jobsite and covers plot plan, including length and bearing of each property line, landscaping and location of utilities. Also covers scale of drawing, including foundation plan, floor plan and climate plan. Students also learn the important roles played by support technicians.

**“Carpentry”**  
**Work-a-Day America, Vocational Video Library, Educational Activities, P.O. Box 392, Freeport, NY 11520 (800) 645-3739.**

This 15 minute video explores a range of jobs in the field of carpentry, from entry-level to management. In on-the-job interviews, real workers describe both positive and negative aspects of their work, the education necessary, the career path a person could follow, and general safety information. The primary goal of the video is to assist students in vocational preparation.

**“Ceilings”**  
**Hometime Video, 6213 Bury Drive, Eden Prairie, MN, 55346.**

**“Electricity All About Us.”**  
**Coronet MTI Film and Video, 108 Wilmot Road, Deerfield IL 60015 (800) 621-2131 (12 min.).**

People use electricity to produce light and heat and move things. But how does electricity work? Viewers discover the role of circuit breakers and fuses, the difference between current electricity and how electrons are responsible for electrical activity.
“Electrical Safety”
Coronet MTI Film and Video,
108 Wilmot Road, Deerfield IL 60015 (800) 621-2131 (13 min.).

Provides student with specific information on how to avoid potential electrical disasters. Topics covered include using appliances correctly and avoiding using them near water; the dangers of flying kites near power lines; and what to do when encountering a broken power wire on the ground. Viewers learn the dangers signs which indicate faulty house wiring, and they are cautioned against overloading circuits.

“Finish Carpentry”
Hometime Video, 6213 Bury Drive, Eden Prairie, MN, 55346.

“Hand and Power Tools”
Hometime Video, 6213 Bury Drive, Eden Prairie, MN, 55346.

“The Mystery of the Master Builders”
Booklist, produced by WGBH Boston (58 minutes) Item # 76-75-1-087.9,
Coronet/MTI Film and Video, Distributors of Learning Corporation of America,
108 Wilmot Road, Deerfield, IL 60015, (800) 621-2131.

What features did master builders incorporate into their designs to allow many historical structures to remain solid, engineering models? In this intriguing presentation, Princeton professor Robert Mark analyzes the structural design of such venerated landmarks as the Pantheon, St. Paul’s Cathedral and the Eiffel tower, as well as modern architectural ‘disasters,’ including Sydney’s Opera House and Boston’s John Hancock Building. On-site visits, animated drawings, state of the art computer aides visuals, and vintage illustrations highlight engineer Mark’s discussion and explanatory introduction to step rings, buttresses, pinnacles, and cross-bracings. This detailed, though lucid, examination, with almost reverential footage of various edifices, is an informative, enlightening choice for classroom and public library viewers.

“Windows and Doors”
Hometime Video, 6213 Bury Drive, Eden Prairie, MN, 55346.

“Wood Flooring”
Hometime Video, 6213 Bury Drive, Eden Prairie, MN, 55346.

Study Skills

The College Student
Jamestown Publishers, (800) USA-READ; Fax 401-331-7257.

This college study skills text gives students opportunities to read material
about the learning process and then to apply what they have learned. Designed for students with reading levels 11-13, lessons develop the following reading techniques: previewing, vocabulary building, using context clues, highlighting texts, using the library, using the dictionary, skimming and more. Study techniques include: training your memory, concentrating, listening, taking notes, writing effectively, reviewing for exams, managing your time.

**Complete Preparation for the SAT I**  
**Steck-Vaughn, P.O. Box 690789, Orlando, FL, 32319-9998, (800) 531-5015.**

This is a thorough instructional program which prepares learners for SAT success with the latest SAT information, review material, test-taking strategies, and five full-length practice tests.

**Getting into the ACT: Official Guide to the ACT Assessment**  
**Steck-Vaughn, P.O. Box 690789, Orlando, FL, 32319-9998, (800) 531-5015.**

This workbook is targets test-taking skills most important to achieving good scores on the ACT exam. Includes two actual ACT assessments for authentic practice experience.

**Learning to Study**  
**Charles Mangrum. Jamestown Publishers,**  
**(800) USA-READ; Fax (401) 331-7257.**

The “Learning to Study” series uses a step-by-step approach to help students develop study skills in each of the following categories: locating information; organization; interpretation; retention; test-taking; skimming and scanning; study strategies.

Six books for levels 2/3 - 8.

**Life Skills/Counseling Resources**

**The Book of Questions**  
**Gregory Stock. Workman Publishing Company, Inc.,**  
**1 West 39th Street, New York, NY 10018, 1987.**

Many of the questions in this collection would serve as provocative discussion starters or stimuli for writing. Questions deal with topics related to values and beliefs related to love, money, sex, integrity, generosity, pride, and death. They expose issues that warrant introspection, but also are particularly stimulating when discussed with others.
Career Choices
Academic Innovations, 3463 State Street, Suite 219, Santa Barbara, CA 93105, (805) 967-8015, Fax: (805) 967-4357.

This is a workbook for teenagers and young adults, full of exercises and resources related to making career decisions and planning for the future. Sections include: “Who Am I?,” “What Do I Want?,” “How Do I Get It?”


This curriculum is designed to help students bridge the gap between the adult education classroom and further training.

Through a series of exercises designed to help students set long and short term goals, explore their interests, skills and talents, and investigate career paths of interest, students learn the options available to them in various careers and the kinds of planning required to pursue those options. Students visit career centers, interview workplaces and observe a workplace in action. They learn budgeting skills and investigate sources for financial aid. In the final module, students develop a Personal Plan Portfolio designed to be used as a tool for future concrete action.

Job World
Northwest Media, Inc., 326 West 12th Avenue, Eugene, Oregon 97401, (800) 777-6636.

This video, designed for teenagers and young adults, provides valuable information about how to present oneself to employers on paper and in person. Both the video and the accompanying curricular activities teach young people to:

- Go beyond the “help wanted” ads and uncover the hidden job market
- Identify practical skills and personal qualities they already have
- Effectively contact employers and set up interviews
- Make a good first impression
- Follow up after the interview
- Use a resume and cover letter
- Keep increasing their chance for employment

Self-image


This book includes ideas for making life joyful, including quick and easy ways to
reduce stress, increase brain power, improve family life, and take control of one’s destiny. It also offers practical tips on a range of subjects and recreational activities.

**Building a Positive Self-Concept: 113 Activities for Adolescents**  
The Bureau for At-Risk Youth, 79 Carley Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743, (800) 99-YOUTH; Fax (516) 673-4544.

This workbook is designed to teach assertiveness techniques and problem-solving strategies to young adults. Activities encourage self-expression through drawings, poems, short stories, role plays.

**Countering the Conspiracy to Destroy Black Boys**  

This book provides a succinct overview of some of the greatest forces impacting the lives of African-American male children. The author discusses institutionalized racism, internalized racism “the science of indoctrinating you against yourself,” the “fourth grade failure system,” irrelevancy of curriculum, lack of adequate male role models, and stereotyped male roles. He suggests a number of strategies for addressing the crisis and enhancing Black male self-image and provides a sense of vision and hope. This book is clearly-written and accessible enough to be used as a classroom text.

**Fast Forward: A Self-Esteem Program. Teacher Guide and Student Workbook**  
The Bureau for At-Risk Youth, 79 Carley Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743, (800) 99-YOUTH; Fax (516) 673-4544.

This program is geared to building up students’ positive sense of self. Activities include group discussions, writing and application lessons, and a journal page for expressing feelings. Topics deal with self-awareness, defense-mechanisms and more.

**Fighting Invisible Tigers: A Stress Management Guide for Teens**  

This is an enlightening and sensitive look at the stresses felt by teens today. The book shows young people how to develop the strategies needed for surviving and thriving on their journey through the difficulties of life. Multi-cultural illustrations; also available in Spanish.

Makeda Silvera. Sister Vision Press, 1989. P.O. Box 217, Station E, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M6H 4E.

This book is an excellent workbook and resource manual for young African-American people to help explore, understand, discuss, and share issues that affect youths as individuals or collectively. It provides a forum for discussing and sharing
stories about the experience of African-American youths as they relate to the school system, the community, the police, jobs, college, career planning, and sexuality. The chapters are interspersed with photographs, illustrations, and quotations from youth, and provide space for answering thought-provoking questions on a variety of topics.

**One-Minute Thoughts That Bring Wisdom, Harmony and Fulfillment**

This is a collection of quick, inspirational thoughts, time-tested golden rules and perceptive advice, designed to help readers gain success in their life experiences and develop tools for positive thinking.

**Peer Helping: A Training Guide**
The Bureau for At-Risk Youth, 79 Carley Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743, (800) 99-YOUTH; Fax (516) 673-4544.

This guide is designed to develop leadership skills through teaching students how to tutor others. Gives practical procedures, descriptions of training sessions, and directions for implementing peer helping programs.

**Positive Thinking**

This practical guide is full of down-to-earth advice, as well as visualizations and exercises, for helping people take control of their lives. Readers learn how to deal with stress, communication issues, worrying and remorse, loneliness, illness, jealousy, and envy.


This book offers a powerful tool for achieving and maintaining a confident and optimistic outlook. It suggests ten steps to build self-esteem and find greater fulfillment in everyday living. Can be used either as an individual study guide or as an accompanying workbook to the leader’s manual.

**Thirty-three Things Every Girl Should Know: Stories, Songs, Poems and Smart Talk**

This book collects 33 different experiences from 33 different women who have picked up some clues along the way, in order to share them with young women. “33 Things” is a “celebration of ways to enjoy life when you’re up, and comforting words to help you get through bad times when you’re down.” Full of comic strips, short stories, lists and photos on topics ranging from standing proud, why science
is cool and being dumb is not, and having fun. Contributors include Bernice Johnson Reagon, Faith Ringgold, Sandra Cisneros, Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe, Lauren Hutton and many more.

**To Be Popular or Smart: The Black Peer Group**  

Examines profiles of low-achieving and high-achieving students, emphasizes the positive role of cooperative learning combined with high expectations. Chapters include: “The Psychology of Being Black,” “Students: Confront the Fear,” “Parents,” “Teachers,” and “Community.”

**Valuing Yourself: Twenty-two Ways to Develop Self-Esteem**  

This is a small booklet for students designed to help them develop feelings of competence, optimism, and perseverance, with sensitive multi-cultural illustrations.

**Winning!: Great Coaches and Athletes Share their Secrets of Success**  

An inspiring collection of over 300 quotations from legendary figures in the world of sports. “Winning!” offers wisdom on teamwork, leadership, competitiveness, mental toughness, and a host of other concepts essential to success not only on the playing field, but also in the workplace and in life in general.

**HIV/AIDS**

**About Protecting Yourself From AIDS**  
*Scriptographic Booklets by Channing L. Bete Co., South Deerfield, MA 01373, (800) 628-7733.*

This illustrated pamphlet is an excellent way to introduce students to facts about HIV/AIDS and protection in a very readable, accessible format. Short, eight-page pamphlets provide a clear introduction to the topic. Appropriate for multi-level groups.


The authors of this pocketbook provide a solid, factual introduction to AIDS issues that concern young adults, including safer sex, drug abuse, and AIDS testing. The book uses photographs and illustrations and is very informative and readable.
**You Can Do Something About AIDS**  
*Edited by Sasha Alyson. The Stop AIDS Project, 40 Plympton Street, Boston, MA 02118.*

This pocket handbook is a good resource for programs wishing to teach about AIDS and do community organizing related to the issue. A series of short readings by well-known people offer suggestions of things that can be done in school, church, and community; it is accompanied by a comprehensive listing of AIDS-related organizations.

**What You Must Know About AIDS**  

A workbook about HIV/AIDS designed for young adult beginning readers; short stories about teenage and adult experiences illuminating the issues related to the virus are accompanied by comprehension, vocabulary and true/false questions.

**Sexuality, Pregnancy, and Parenting**

**Black Fatherhood: A Guide to Male Parenting**  
*Hutchinson, Earl Ofari. Impact Publications, Inglewood, CA 90305.*

A brief book about the positive role African-American men can play in developing positive self-esteem in their children.


This book touches on the broad range of issues that affect parents (and their children) everyday. Topics include role models, attention, self-image, affection, independence, stress, enemies, and hundreds more. The quotes that begin each day’s entry from African proverbs to wisdom from contemporary African Americans.

**Coping with an Unplanned Pregnancy**  
*The Bureau for At-Risk Youth, 79 Carley Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743, (800) 999-6884.*

Hardcover textbook written at the 7-12th grade reading level designed to help young people deal with the issues related to unplanned pregnancies.

**Coping with Your Sexual Orientation**  
*The Bureau for At-Risk Youth, 79 Carley Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743, (800) 999-6884.*

Hardcover textbook written at the 7-12th grade reading level designed to help young people deal with the sometimes difficult question of sexual orientation.
**Issues in Gay and Lesbian Life**  
*Chelsea House Publishers, Dept. CB5, P.O. Box 914, 1974 Sproul Road, Suite 400, Broomall, PA 19008-0914, (800) 848-BOOK.*

This is a series on gay and lesbian topics for young people and the adults who care about them. Provides readers with up-to-date, scholarly, and informative introductions to key issue areas, including: “African-American Gay and Lesbian Culture,” “Latin American Gay and Lesbian Culture,” “Race and Class in the Gay and Lesbian World,” “Homophobia,” “Coming Out,” “Growing Up Gay or Lesbian,” and more.

**The Measure of Our Success: A Letter to My Children and Yours**  

This is a clearly written, inspiring book by the well-known activist head of the Children's Defense Fund. It is a moving series of essays about family, community responsibility, and fighting injustice, including the following chapters: “A Family Legacy,” “Passing on the Legacy of Service,” “A Letter to My Sons,” and “Twenty Five Lessons for Life.” Suggested for use in the classroom as a good springboard for discussion.

**The Miracle of Life**  
*Chelsea House Publishers, Dept. CB5, P.O. Box 914, 1974 Sproul Road, Suite 400, Broomall, PA 19008-0914, (800) 848-BOOK.*

Hardcover, fully illustrated book describing human reproduction and the development of the growing fetus. Easy-to-understand explanations of the reproductive process, written at an accessible level.

**The New Our Bodies, Ourselves**  

A highly accessible and comprehensive sourcebook dealing with women's health issues, including reproductive health, body image, alcohol, drugs, smoking, sexuality, violence against women, and birth control.

**Raising Black Children**  
*James P. Comer. MD and Alvin F. Poussaint, MD, Plume Books, 1992.*

Offers comprehensive advice on 1,000 common child rearing questions, with particular attention to problems of black self-esteem and coping with racism.

Shows how to teach the nature of twenty virtues, and how to use “teachable moments” to instill a respect for doing the right thing, so children learn that acting virtuously is its own reward. Includes chapters on: empathy, helpfulness, fairness, tolerance, caring, courage, humor, respect, loyalty, courtesy, patience, resourcefulness, self-motivation, responsibility, self-discipline and cooperation; and more.

Drugs and Alcohol

Drug and Alcohol Abuse

A workbook about drug use and abuse for young adult beginning readers. Short stories about teenage and adult experiences illuminate drug-related issues are accompanied by comprehension, vocabulary and true/false questions.

The Encyclopedia of Psychoactive Drugs: Series One
Chelsea House Publishers, Dept. CB5, P.O. Box 914, 1974 Sproul Road, Suite 400, Broomall, PA 19008-0914, (800) 848-BOOK.


The Encyclopedia of Psychoactive Drugs: Series Two
Chelsea House Publishers, Dept. CB5, P.O. Box 914, 1974 Sproul Road, Suite 400, Broomall, PA 19008-0914, (800) 848-BOOK.

This is a series which explores the impact of drug use on our culture, the workplace, the family, and the individual. Topics include: “Case Histories,” “Driving, Drinking and Drugs,” “Drugs and Crime,” “Drugs and Emotion,” “Drugs and Pregnancy,” “Drugs and the Law,” “Substance Abuse: Prevention and Treatment,” and many more.
Videos

“Better Parenting Videos”
The Bureau for At-Risk Youth, 79 Carley Avenue, Huntington, NY, 11743, (800) 999-6884.

Eight helpful 30-minute videos on parenting skills, dealing with topics such as “You’re Going to Be a Parent,” “Teenage Pregnancy,” “Child Management,” and “The Art of Communication.”

“Birth of a Candy Bar”
Young People’s Resource Center, I-Eye-I Workshop Productions, Henry Street Settlement, 265 Henry Street, New York, NY (212) 766-9200.

Video written and produced by teen members of the Henry Street Settlement workshop in the Lower East side of New York City. Using rap songs, dance, interviews with parents, the teens tell the story of the difficulties of adolescent parenting.

“Seriously Fresh: AIDS Video”
(21min.) AIDSFilms, 50 West 34th Street, Suite 6B6, New York, NY 10001, (212) 629-6288.

This video depicts four young men who play basketball together coming to terms with the knowledge that a good friend and hero of theirs has the HIV virus. Using humor and direct language, the film deals honestly with feelings, myths, and facts about intravenous drug use, homosexuality, and safe sex practices.

Career Development and Exploration


Through stories, questions, statistics, exercises and activities, teens and young adults can discover their unique abilities and ambitions. This guide also provides information about the skills needed to build successful careers.


This workbook helps readers choose a career that fits them and what they want out of life. It assesses preferred work style and occupational environment, offers insight and advice about keeping one’s life in balance, promotes skills and attitudes necessary to survive change.
Discover
ACT, Educational Technology Center,

A comprehensive, computer-assisted career guidance and information system designed to assess interests, rate abilities, evaluate experiences, and prioritize values in order to identify compatible occupations. Comprised of nine modules, it includes titles such as “Beginning the Career Journey,” “Learning About Occupations,” “Planning Your Career,” and “Making Educational Choices.”


Developed for easy understanding and use, this book helps job seekers identify the skills they most enjoy using and find the kind of job that makes the best use of those skills in a satisfying setting.

Interest-Based Career Series

This is a seventeen-book series designed to help students choose careers based on interests and personality. Titles include: Careers for Animal Lovers, Good Samaritans, Travel Buffs, Crafty People, Kids at Heart, Night Owls, Sports Nuts, and many other original categories. Books are available individually or as a set.

SDS: The Self-Directed Search
Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc., P.O. Box 998, Odessa, FL 33556, (800) 331-8378.

The Self-Directed Search is an inventory of interest and abilities based on the vocational choice theory of Dr. John Holland. The SDS is answered, scored and profiled by the students. Students identify a three-letter code (called a Holland Occupational Code), then use the Occupations Finder to generate a list of occupations that are deemed appropriate for them. The SDS is available in both workbook and software program format.

Sigi Plus

Sigi Plus is an interactive, computer-assisted career guidance program designed to assist users in making career choices. Sigi Plus combines personal and occupational characteristics to identify appropriate potential career options. The program introduces users to a systematic decision-making process and provides strategies for obtaining a job of choice.
Sigi Plus includes a section on self-assessment, a personalized list of occupations related to the self-assessment, information on occupations and related skills, training and education, suggestions for coping with practical issues related to career decisions; and activities to help users determine if career choices are appropriate and set short-term goals.

**Program Evaluation**

*Student Evaluators: A Guide to Implementation*
The National Center for Service Learning in Early Adolescence Center for Advanced Study in Education. Graduate School and University Center of the City University of New York 25 West 43rd Street, Suite 612 New York, NY 10036-8099, (212) 642-2946.

*Student Evaluators* involves a process by which students, with the help of a facilitator, develop a research design, collect data, tabulate results, and offer recommendations for the future of the program.

**Job and College Readiness Skills**

*Adkins Life Skills Program*
Institute for Life Coping Skills, Inc., Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 West 120th Street, Box 138, New York, NY 10027, (212) 678-3181.

A comprehensive career development series made up of ten multi-media units which use video, audio, and print materials. The units employ a range of learning modalities and include lesson plans for each learning activity. Each unit integrates group counseling and instructional techniques in a real-life context, but also deals with individual needs. Units include: “Exploring Who I Am and Where I Want to Go,” “Exploring the World of Work,” “Making Good Career Decisions,” “Findings Job Information,” “Using Time Effectively,” “Application Forms and Resumes,” “Developing Effective Interviewing Skills,” and others.

*City Roots Program Job Readiness Curriculum*
Boston City Roots, Boston Community Schools and Recreation Centers, 1010 Massachusetts Avenue, Boston, MA 02118.

An excellent curriculum of job readiness exercises, readings, and activities designed to prepare students for the work world. Numerous well-written and immediately usable exercises related to self-assessment, job applications, interview preparation, using the want ads, responsibility, etc.
More than a Job: A Curriculum on Work and Society

This is a text and workbook designed to encourage students to examine the nature of work and its place in their lives. The curriculum helps them develop analytical skills as they read, talk, and write in the context of the world of work. “More Than a Job” uses oral histories, poems, and short stories by Langston Hughes, Nicholasa Mohr, Tracy Chapman, Studs Terkel, and others. Each reading is accompanied by excellent comprehension, skill-building, and thinking activities. It builds on the life experiences and skills students already have, as they look at themselves, society, and their personal goals.

PACE Learning Systems (See Reading Skills)
Workkeys. Information system that includes tests, guidebooks and videos. Workkeys National Office, (800) 067-5539; Fax (319) 337-1725.

An information system designed to meet the needs of job applicants, educators, and employers, by illustrating skills that are transferable to any job and assessing them in a standardized manner. These skills include: applied mathematics, applied technology, using forms, observation, reading for information, teamwork, listening and writing.

Workkeys is made up of several “building blocks,” or tools, including:
- A tool which profiles the skills needed for a particular job or occupation.
- Assessment tests which assess levels of proficiency for each job-related skills.
- Instructional support for instructors, consisting of a series of guides for designing curricula and training materials tailored to the needs of students.
- A Teamwork Assessment Video which presents 30 workplace scenarios involving team problems, asks students “how would you respond?” and gives them a choice between four main types of behaviors.
- An observation video which presents scenarios designed to help instructors assess students’ ability to observe, follow directions, and follow proper procedure.

Workkeys also offers reports that can help job applicants document their current skill level for career planning, and job or school application; reports which can help educators evaluate their curriculum and improve instruction; and reports that help employers screen prospective employees and strategically plan their training program.
**Workplace Dynamics**  
McVey and Associates, Inc., New Readers Press,  
Publishing Division of Laubach International, Syracuse, NY, (800) 448-8878.

This is a series of 16 role plays and simulations for workplace education. It provides scenarios related to the workplace, including a roleplay on the importance of wearing safety glasses, a roleplay in which experienced employees teach trainees a new skill, roleplays on benefits, tardiness, absenteeism, and job safety. With each scenario, there are roles for at least two acts and tasks for observers. Questions, vocabulary, and follow-up activities follow each roleplay.

**Resources for Educators**

**The Learning Environment**

**The Caring Classroom**  
Dewey Carducci and Judith Carducci. Bull Publishing Company,  

This book describes a process of helping students to gain control of themselves and to become active participants in the learning process. It details a method in which students considered “difficult” can learn to read, write, and acquire the academic skills necessary for social survival. The authors describe a method for creating a caring environment which engenders order, kindness, and mutual respect.

**Developing Positive Self-Images and Discipline in Black Children**  

Kunjufu outlines strategies for designing learning environments which foster self-esteem and self-discipline. Kunjufu discusses the roles that peer groups, television, families, and schools play in affecting students’ self-images, and the relationship between self-image and the ability to learn well. Drawing on various well-known psychological theories, he outlines strategies for developing discipline in the classroom.

**Educating for Character: How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility**  

This book makes a strong case for values education as an integral part of a discipline model. It discusses the important role of the teacher as caregiver, model, and mentor, describes approaches to creating a moral community in the classroom, and teaches how to create a democratic classroom environment. The book provides valuable ideas for running class meetings, using cooperative learning strategies, teaching students to solve conflicts, and how teachers can encourage students to do moral reflection.
The Quality School: Managing Students Without Coercion  

The author of Schools Without Failure claims that we must stop settling for minimal goals, such as reducing dropout rates or discipline problems and instead, start to convince students to work hard because there is quality both in what they are asked to do and how they are asked to do it.

Glasser argues that traditional coercive management in schools is the root of the problem, he and suggests that we replace the “bossing” that turns students and staff into adversaries with a system of management that brings them together. He claims that when we stop pushing students to increase their scores on state assessment tests and start teaching in a way that satisfies their needs, discipline problems will disappear and students will find satisfaction in doing well in school.

Releasing the Imagination  

The author discusses the necessity of balancing vocational training with education that cultivates the imagination, claiming that imagination allows students to consider possibilities outside their immediate sphere of knowledge, which in turn helps them care for others and overcome their own sense of futility.


This book offers guidance for teachers who want to set firm, clear limits, end classroom power struggles, encourage cooperation, teach problem-solving skills, and establish a peaceful environment where learning can take place.

The author describes the ways in which instructors who “operate with unclear or ineffective limits develop their own special dance of miscommunication, which they perform over and over again when their rules are tested.” The author describes how teachers can free themselves from either the overly permissive or the overly punitive dance of discipline through the use of “natural” and “logical consequences,” and through the use of a democratic approach which is both firm and respectful.

Job and College Readiness

Motivating and Preparing Black Youth to Work  

In this book, Kunjufu examines the nature of the American economy, explores channels for the development of African-American economic self-reliance, discusses tools for motivating young adults and channeling their talents.
Multi-Cultural Education

**Dumbing Us Down: The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling**  

Gato looks at school structures which stamp out self-knowledge, curiosity, concentration and solitude essential for learning. Between schooling and television, students have little time to learn for themselves about the communities in which they live and the lives they lead. They are schooled to obey orders and function in the economic structure. Gato describes his attempts to re-engage students and families in actively controlling their culture, economy, and society.

**Empowerment Through Multicultural Education**  

A book of essays for teachers. Chapters include: Classroom Use of African-American Language: Educational Tool or Social Weapon?; Disempowering of White Working-Class Females; Empowerment Through Media Literacy; Cooperative Learning as Empowering Pedagogy; and more.

**"I Won't Learn from You" and Other Thoughts on Creative Maladjustment**  

In the title essay in this book, Herbert Kohl outlines his belief that students who are failing or “acting out” in the classroom may be exercising what he calls “creative maladjustment.” They may be refusing to learn, or “not-learning,” in response to environments in which their dignity, intelligence, or integrity are compromised by teachers, institutions, or a larger social mind-set.

Kohl describes his experiences as a white teacher working with students affected by institutional racism. He tells of the ways he has been challenged by students and what he has learned from them. In this series of essays, Kohl addresses many of the educational issues that Youthbuild teachers confront in their classrooms. He questions the motivation behind labeling students as “emotionally handicapped” or “at-risk;” he critically appraises the notion of a “core curriculum” prescribed for all students and questions the elite assumptions in the notion of “cultural literacy.” He finds that Euro-centered curricula still predominate, even though lip-service is given to multiculturalism.

This book is highly recommended for teachers wishing to engage in a serious dialogue about the role of race and racism in the classroom.

**Naming Silenced Lives**  

This book calls attention to the experiences of people who traditionally have been left out of the educational mainstream. Autobiographical profiles demon-
strate how educational organizations often marginalize and silence different groups. This collection contains stories of inner-city youth, Athapaskan elders, African-American teachers, Navajo teachers, and gay and lesbian teachers. It attempts to show how the use of autobiography and narrative methods can alter students’ circumstances and affect change within the schools.

Other People’s Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom

Ms. Delpit’s essays are concerned with who gets to tell the story—or control or silence the dialogue—within the classroom. She explores the way some teaching methods (like the “writing process approach” to literacy) are designed for use with white, middle class children and therefore do not adequately meet the needs of poor, black students. She describes how easy it is to fall into cultural misinterpretations and how devastated young people can be by their teachers’ negative judgments.

The Power of Their Ideas: Lessons for America from a Small School in Harlem

In this book, Deborah Meier tells the history of New York’s Central Park East Schools, schools based on the belief that our collective expectations of poor and nonwhite students are too “low and trivial” and that it is possible to establish caring and respectful relationships with all students and make all students capable of participating in and sustaining a democracy.

“Taking Multicultural, Anti-Racist Education Seriously”

Interview and speech by Enid Lee, Canadian consultant in anti-racist education. Reprinted from “Rethinking Schools.”

“Teaching for Change”
Network of Educators on the Americas (NECA), 118 22nd Street, NW, Washington, DC 20032, (202) 429-0137.

Quarterly collection of teaching ideas, book reviews, classroom hand-outs, and news. Upcoming themes include teaching about: Songs of Social Justice; The North American Free Trade Agreement; Neo-Liberal Economic Policies; and Race and Racism. Teaching ideas and experiences on any of these themes are welcome.
“Teaching Tolerance” Magazine  
A Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, 400 Washington Ave.,  
Montgomery, AL, 36104, (334) 264-0286; Fax (334) 264-3121.

“Teaching Tolerance” magazine is dedicated to helping teachers promote inter-racial and intercultural understanding in the classroom. Through lively editorials and award-winning graphics, it provides educators with practical ideas, strategies and resources for helping young people learn to respect and accept diversity. The semi-annual journal is sent free upon written request to teachers nationwide.

Also available are two curriculum packages. “The Shadow of Hate” video-and-text kit, which examines the history of intolerance in America, is free upon written request by school principals. The award-winning “America’s Civil Rights Movement” video-and-text kit is available for $25. Both are suitable for young adults, grades six and up.

Videos

“Changing the Rules: Teaching Math to Adult Learners”  

This video illustrates the ways in which math can be taught in a hands-on, relevant way to adult students. A teacher interacts with the class to demonstrate the teaching of percents, fractions, and area. Excellent training resource for teachers.

“Children and Math”  
(27min.) Salvadori Center on the Built Environment, City College of New York,  
Harris Hall, Room 202, Convent Avenue at 138th Street, New York, NY 10031.

A video of a panel discussion on teaching math, using innovative, and hands-on activities.
Appendix

photo: Martin Dixon
Item 1: Generic Job Descriptions for Education and Training Staff

Youthbuild Academic Instructor
(To be adapted to local circumstances)

Program Summary

The Youthbuild program involves unemployed young adults in building affordable housing in their communities. It gives youth, aged 16-24 years, skills in the construction trades and academic training leading to a GED. The program also includes counseling, peer support groups, driver’s license education, cultural and recreational events and activities, and job placement. Central to all aspects of the program is the building of youth leadership skills through leadership training, program decision-making, and involvement in community issues.

Central Role of Academic Instructor

To teach basic skills (reading, writing, and math) and GED or diploma preparation, modifying the curriculum and materials as required to meet individual and program needs. To coordinate, develop, or adapt a vocational-oriented curriculum in cooperation with the staff team.

Particular Responsibilities

- Teach basic skills to students at varied academic levels integrating information from these areas: construction work, the racial/cultural heritages of trainees, and community history or issues. Academic levels can range from fourth grade to eighth grade reading levels.
- Develop learning contracts and individualized lesson plans for each trainee, assess trainee academic progress, and review and update plans regularly.
- Adapt curriculum and develop additional materials according to the needs of the program and trainees.
- Make curriculum modifications and develop materials in conjunction with construction and counseling staff.
- Team-teach if appropriate.
- Participate in special projects as required.
- Attend staff meetings and trainings.
- Maintain up-to-date files according to program requirements.

Qualifications

- Bachelor’s degree in education or related field.
• Two years of experience teaching basic skills and GED preparation or high school to adults or young adults.
• Experience in creative curriculum planning and development.
• A respect for the ideas and intelligence of young adults.
• Strong commitment to helping young people succeed in an innovative training program to reorient their lives, nurture their leadership skills, and enable them to make a difference in their community.
• Ability to relate sensitively to multiracial and multicultural groups of young people.
• Excellent oral and written communication skills.
• Excellent interpersonal skills, including the ability to team teach and work as part of a team.

Salary
(varies per program)

Youthbuild Vocational Education Instructor
(To be adapted to local circumstances)

Program Summary

The Youthbuild program involves unemployed young adults in building affordable housing in their communities. It gives youth, aged 16-24 years, skills in the construction trades and academic training leading to a GED. The comprehensive program also includes counseling, peer support groups, driver’s license education, cultural and recreational events and activities, and job placement. Central to all aspects of the program is the building of youth leadership skills through leadership training, program decision making, and involvement in community issues.

Central Responsibility of Vocational Education Instructor

Teach basic vocational education (primarily carpentry), while modifying the curriculum and materials as required to meet individual and program needs. To coordinate the planning and integration into the curriculum training in basic skills and in construction. To encourage the development of the trainees’ personal and leadership skills.

Particular Responsibilities

• Develop and coordinate a vocational (construction) curriculum and plans for implementation.
• In collaboration with the academic instructor and worksite instructors, pro-
vide vocational education classes that teach construction-related skills, including but not limited to demolition, framing, interior work, blueprint reading, safe procedures for use and handling of tools, and appropriate ways to handle technical construction problems that arise at the building site.

- Observe and evaluate trainees at the worksite and provide hands-on assistance in training at the worksite.
- Coordinate testing and evaluation of student skills with the site trainers, and provide regular assessment of student performance. Document student skill attainment, in coordination with the academic instructor and worksite instructors.
- Keep counselor and other staff informed about issues and needs of the trainees and participate in regular team reviews of student progress.
- Assist in informal personal and vocational counseling and development of trainee's leadership skills in conjunction with other Youthbuild staff.

**Qualifications**

- Bachelor’s degree in education or related field.
- Two years of experience teaching vocational education to adults or young adults.
- Experience in creative curriculum planning and development.
- A respect for the ideas and intelligence of young adults.
- Strong commitment to helping young people succeed in an innovative training program to reorient their lives, nurture their leadership skills, and enable them to make a difference in their community.
- Ability to relate sensitively to multiracial and multicultural groups of young people.
- Excellent oral and written communications skills.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, including the ability to team teach and work as part of team.
Item 2: Interview Scenarios for Academic and Vocational Instructors

To prepare for assessing candidates’ answers to these questions, interviewers should:

- Fully acquaint themselves with the information in designated chapters of this handbook (See the notes after each scenario section)

  and

- Bring a broad range of adult education, vocational education, and curriculum development experience to the interview

  or

- Enlist the assistance of an adult education or vocational education expert in the community

Questions on Methodology

You and another instructor plan to teach a group of 15 students how to hold an interview of a community member for a project they will be doing. They have never done it before and express some reluctance and shyness. Explain:

- How you would organize the lesson(s)?
- What methods you would use to teach and demonstrate the process to the students?
- How you would assess the students and measure success in this assignment?

You have tested all of the students in reading skills and find that most of them read at the same level, but three students have particular difficulty with comprehension. You want to use an article with the whole group that you feel will be too difficult for these three students to understand on their own. Explain how you would organize the class to fully involve all the students.

Two of the students who have come into the program already have their GEDs. They learn new skills quickly and perform their assignments well, then begin to play around when they are done. When you ask why they are not working, they say they are bored. Explain what you would do.

Give examples of when and how you might use each of the following teaching methods or tools in the classroom:

- Large group learning
- Small group learning
- Individual learning
- Peer tutoring
• Newspapers
• Computers
• Journals
• Community service
• Silent reading
• Career exploration
• Speakers
• Field trips

Background in Chapter Five (“The Classroom Environment”) and Chapter Seven (“Teaching Strategies”).

Assessment

You have been asked to assess whether students are learning the mathematics competencies you have taught. You know by observing that six students have mastered the competencies you have taught this week, but you are not certain about the other nine. Explain how you would determine who has mastered the competencies and what you would do if some students had not yet mastered them.

You have been doing a variety of writing assignments in class over a period of months, and you decide it is time to determine who is ready to take the writing skills section of the GED Practice Test. Explain how you would assess students’ writing skills and how you would make students aware of their strengths and weaknesses.

Background in Chapter Nine (“Assessment and Evaluation”).

Discipline and Classroom Management

You gather students together to explain the purpose of the upcoming lesson and to give group and individual assignments. Most of the students are attentive and listening, but five of them are joking around, talking or sleeping. When you call on one of them, he says something sarcastic and continues to talk to his friend. Explain what you would do to get all of the students’ attention.

You have given assignments to all of the students. For the first half of the morning, everyone is working well, but after the break some of the students do not get right to their assignments. They talk to each other, leaf through magazines and generally fool around. You encourage them to return to work. Two of them do so, but the others refuse. What do you do to get all of the students on task?

Background in Chapter Five (“The Classroom Environment”).
Curriculum Development/Integrated Theme

You want to engage students in the process of assisting in the development of a unit on health and safety. You want to have their input into the topics that should be covered as well as the materials and techniques you should use to teach the lessons. What strategies would you use to determine students' interests and to gather their ideas?

You have been asked to develop a unit with the unifying theme of “Working in the World.” Skills learning should take place, related to this theme, in the following areas:

- Mathematics
- Reading and writing
- Leadership skills
- Job/college readiness skills
- History
- GED preparation

Choose one of these and explain what skills you might focus on developing related to the overriding theme of working in the world.

You have been asked to work with construction site trainers and the construction manager to develop a unit related to construction. The regular academic disciplines would be taught in the service of a construction-related theme, such as safety or carpentry. Explain what process you think would be needed to make such a collaboration possible, and what roles the various participants would play.

Background in Chapter Four (“Academic Consideration in Selection and Orientation of Trainees”) and Chapter Six (“Curriculum Development”).
Item 3: Suggestions for Instructor Performance Criteria

The academic/vocational instructor performs the following functions well:

**Relationships with Staff**
- Comes consistently on time to meetings and events
- Participates fully in staff meetings
- Follows through on agreements made by the staff team
- Seeks out critical feedback and assistance from other teachers and directors
- Takes on additional responsibilities
- Works well on a team
- Plans and carries out appropriate team teaching activities
- Is flexible
- Meets deadlines

**Classroom Management and Quality of Teaching**
- Demonstrates understanding of and respect for student capabilities
- Demonstrates knowledge of appropriate level activities and materials for use with students at different levels
- Demonstrates good communication skills
- Demonstrates good rapport with students
- Maintains a disciplined and serious work environment
- Deals effectively and responsibly with disruptive behavior
- Engenders student respect
- Engenders student trust
- Is Prepared for lessons
- Is Flexible
- Is Innovative
- Uses a variety of methods and approaches
- Researches alternative methods and approaches
- Runs a Neat, well-organized class
- Includes problem solving in lessons
- Includes critical thinking in lessons
• Engages students in activities
• Attentive to student counseling needs and seeks counseling support when necessary

**Assessment and Documentation**

• Develops appropriate individual learning plans for each student
• Regularly assesses student performance
• Gives timely, clear, helpful feedback to students on assessment results
• Responds to student work in a timely fashion
• Accurately and carefully documents trainees’:
  • reading progress
  • writing progress
  • mathematics progress
  • job readiness progress
  • leadership growth
  • vocational skills progress
  • progress in overall learning
• Completes lesson plans in a timely fashion
**Item 4: Sample Evaluation Form: Academic Teachers**

Staff name: ____________________________________________________________

Position: __________________________________________ Date: _______________

Supervisor: ____________________________________________________________

Circle one:  3 month evaluation  6 month evaluation  annual

1 = Excellent  2 = Good  3 = Fair  4 = Poor  5 = Inconsistent

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<td>Arranges for coverage and leaves lesson plans when absent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Follows procedures without being reminded (injury report, attendance sheets, sign-in)</td>
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Comments
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**Curriculum Planning**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develops new curriculum plans for courses as needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrates construction or community themes into academic material</td>
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<tr>
<td>Takes initiative and uses creativity in curriculum development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creates a logical sequence for student learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Breaks down material into learnable units</td>
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Comments
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### Teaching Methods and Style

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uses varied teaching methods to suit diverse learning styles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develops critical thinking and problem-solving skills</td>
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<td>Conveys enthusiasm for subject</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is thorough in explanations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shows patience in communicating material</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adapts material for multi-level learning</td>
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Comments

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### Knowledge of Subject Matter

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Subject: _______________________________</th>
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<tr>
<td>Subject: _______________________________</td>
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Comments

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### Relationships with Trainees

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicates effectively</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listens and shows respect</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sets an example through behavior and attitude</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sets high standards for trainee performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uses good judgment in handling problem situations</td>
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Comments

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Ability to Work as Part of a Team</strong></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaborates effectively with co-workers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributes ideas to team efforts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcomes and encourages ideas of co-workers</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship with Co-Workers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooperates to help others succeed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treats all staff with respect</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makes the necessary effort to work out problems in communication</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationships with Supervisors</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepts suggestions and direction</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shares information and thinking toward a positive relationship</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledges weaknesses and seeks help</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contributes to the Overall Program</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Offers creative suggestions for improving the program</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offers constructive resolution of conflicts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takes initiative beyond the limits of the job</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</table>
Comments

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Performance Evaluation Summary

Summarize overall assessment of employee's strengths and ability to meet the challenges of the position:

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

Questions and areas needing improvement:

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

Employee comments:

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

Recommendations

For permanent employees
(Circle one—If “Terminate,” give cause or reason under “Comments”)
Exemplary  Satisfactory  Needs Improvement  Terminate

For Probationary employees
(Check one)
__ Dismiss prior to completion of probationary period
__ Extend probationary status until date:______________________
__ Satisfactory completion of probationary period

Supervisor Comments
(Write comments on back or attach an additional page)
Employee signature: ___________________________ Date: __________________
Supervisor signature: __________________________ Date: __________________

Source: Youthbuild Boston
**Item 5: Student Evaluation of Teachers**

Name of teacher: ___________________________     Date: ______________

Note: Please feel free to write additional comments after the ratings.

1. Teacher is organized and keeps the classroom/worksite running smoothly.
   
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Inconsistent</td>
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</table>

2. Teacher knows how to organize things in way that is clear and helps the trainees.
   
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Inconsistent</td>
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</table>

3. Teacher addresses problems quickly and effectively.
   
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Inconsistent</td>
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</table>

4. Teacher knows how to share knowledge and skills in way that is clear and helpful.
   
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<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Inconsistent</td>
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5. Teacher creates a positive atmosphere where people feel encouraged, respected, and confident, and trust is built among the trainees.
   
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Inconsistent</td>
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</table>

6. Teacher gives students clear and helpful feedback on their skills and need for improvement.
   
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Inconsistent</td>
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</table>

7. Teacher speaks and treats trainees with respect, tact, honesty, and in a culturally sensitive manner.
   
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Inconsistent</td>
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8. Teacher helps trainees handle conflict in way that eases tensions and helps to resolve problems.
   
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<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
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9. Teacher helps trainees, individually and as a group, become more skilled in academic or construction knowledge.
   
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<td>Excellent</td>
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<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Inconsistent</td>
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</table>
10. Teacher responds to requests or expressed concerns or needs quickly and fairly.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Inconsistent |

11. Teacher is open to suggestions and constructive criticism.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Inconsistent |

12. Teacher is able to make changes once hearing constructive criticism.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Inconsistent |

13. Teacher is willing to consider the ideas and thoughts of the trainees to improve instruction or deal with a problem and puts them into action.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Inconsistent |

14. Teacher knows how to break down ideas so trainees can understand.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Inconsistent |

15. Teacher praises people when they do something well.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Inconsistent |

16. Teacher is honest with trainees when they need to improve.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Inconsistent |

17. Teacher knows how to get close to trainees and make them feel important.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Inconsistent |

18. Teacher plans interesting activities and lessons.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Inconsistent |

19. Teacher keeps trainees active and involved.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Inconsistent |

*Adapted from Youthbuild USA: Student Evaluation of Teachers*
**Item 6: Sample Interview Questionnaire for Students**

Full name: __________________________________________________________

Address: _______________________________________ Zip Code: ___________

Phone number: ____________ Birthdate: ____________ Soc.Sec.# __________

Male or Female? ________ Race: ____________ Number of Children: _______

**GENERAL INFORMATION:**

1. How did you hear about Youthbuild?
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   
   ________________________________________________________________

2. Why are you interested in attending a construction training and high school education program?
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   
   ________________________________________________________________

3. If you have children, what arrangement will you make for childcare while you are in the program?
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   
   ________________________________________________________________

4. Are you aware of the stipend amount? __yes __no
   
   How will you support yourself during the program year?
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   
   ________________________________________________________________

5. What obligations do you currently have that might make it difficult for you to make a commitment for a year?
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   
   ________________________________________________________________

6. What transportation will you use to get to the program? ____________
   
   Do you have access to a car? ______________________________
   
   Are you familiar with bus routes? ______________________________
   
   Do you have a driver’s license?___________________________________
7. What are your goals for the future?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Note: Answers to the next two questions, #8 and 9, will not interfere with your acceptance in the program.

Are you involved with the criminal justice system? __yes __no

8. Name of parole officer ________________________________________________

9. Name of probation officer ____________________________________________

10. Are you involved in a drug or alcohol treatment program? __yes __no
    Will this interfere with your participation in the program? __yes __no

11. Do you have any chronic medical problems? __yes __no
    What are they? ________________________________________________________
    Do you take medication? __yes __no
    Do you have asthma or allergies? __yes __no
    Do you have back problems? __yes __no
    Do you need glasses? __yes __no

**EDUCATION HISTORY AND GOALS:**

12. Name of the last school you attended: _____________________________
    Last grade completed _______
    Date you left school ________
    Why did you leave school? ____________________________________________
    What did you like about school? ______________________________________
    What did you dislike about school? ____________________________________
    What was your attendance like? _______________________________________
    What were your relationships with teachers like? ________________________

13. Why do you want to return to school? ________________________________
EMPLOYMENT HISTORY AND GOALS:

14. List the last two jobs you have had:
   Company ________________________  Company __________________
   Type of Job _______________________ Type of Job _________________
   Salary _________________________      Salary ______________________
   How long did you work? ________________________________
   How were your work habits? ____________________________
   Attendance and punctuality? __________________________
   Evaluations by supervisors? __________________________

15. How many other jobs have you had? __________________________
   What kinds of jobs were they? __________________________
   Why did you leave these jobs? __________________________

16. When you were unemployed, did you look for work? __yes __no
   Did you apply to any other training programs? __yes __no
   Were you ever in another training program? __yes __no
   Which programs? _______________________________________

   What do you like most about working? ____________________
   What do you dislike most about working? __________________

17. Describe the characteristics you think make a good reliable worker.
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

18. Why are you interested in the construction trades?
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

19. What construction job would you like to have in the future?
   ______________________________________________________
20. What jobs do you think are available in construction?

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

21. What construction-related work have you done (either paid or unpaid?)

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

22. Do you know anyone who does construction work?

_________________________________________________________________

What have they told you about it? ________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

THOUGHTS RELATED TO LEADERSHIP

23. Have you ever thought of yourself as a leader? __yes __no
   If so, in what way have you been a leader?

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

24. What would you like to change about the community? The world?

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

25. Are there any leaders, living or dead, whom you admire? Who are they?

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

26. What makes a good leader?

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

27. If you become a leader, what would you like to accomplish?

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________
28. In order to participate in Youthbuild, students must agree to comply with the following regulations and policies. Sign your name if you would be willing, once accepted, to do the following:

- Treat all co-workers and staff with respect
- Do heavy lifting
- Get dirty
- Occasionally work in high places
- Do clean-up daily
- Follow directions from instructors
- Come on time and work hard every day in class and on worksite
- Remain drug-free
- Remain crime-free

Signature ______________________________ Date: ___________
**Item 7: Recommended Classroom Materials**

- Tables for group work, group discussions and projects
- File cabinets for storing and organizing student work
- File folders
- Multiple computers or access to computers
- A variety of high quality computer software for word processing, education games, reference, GED skill practice
- Typewriters
- Globes, maps of city, state, United States, and world
- Colored paper, glue, scissors, tape, poster board, magazines for clipping
- Lined paper, blank paper, graph paper, notebooks
- Colored pens, colored pencils
- Library of high quality reference books (atlases, dictionaries, thesauruses, carpentry/construction manuals, and career references)
- Library of books for silent individual reading (novels, biographies, self-help books, histories, sports books, mysteries, “classic comics,” student and writing collections)
- Library of high quality skill workbooks, GED and pre-GED textbooks
- Picture file to stimulate writing
- Writing box of ideas to stimulate writing
- Subscriptions to local newspapers
- Bulletin boards
- Inspirational quotes
- Video camera and TV/VCR
- Cassette tape recorder
- Assorted educational board games and card games
Item 8: Vocational Education Tools and Materials

Personal Tools Supplied to Participants
• Carpenter apron
• Claw hammer
• 25 ft. measuring tape
• Hard hat
• Phillips screwdriver
• Chalk box
• Safety goggles
• Straight slot screwdriver
• Utility knife
• Gloves
• Combination square
• Work shoes
• Wood handsaw
• 2 ft. level
• Work uniform

Shop Tools: Woodworking
• Wheel barrow
• Push broom
• Hand broom
• Trim brush
• Shovels
• Sledge hammer
• Crow bar
• Cat’s paw
• Chop saw
• Garbage bags
• Screw guns
• Circular saw
• Saber saw
• Sawsall
• Wood chisels
• Electric drill motors and 3/8” wood drill bit
• Steel drill bits
• Hole saws
• Drywall “T” square

• Drywall saws
• Keyhole
• Rasp

Shop Tools: Painting
• Long nap roller
• Medium nap roller
• Short nap roller
• 4” taping knife
• 6” taping knife
• 8” taping knife
• 10” taping knife
• Paint roller
• 12” taping pan
• Paint brushes for latex paint
• Paint brushes for oil-based paint
• Sand pole
• Drop cloths
• Texture brushes
• Roller pan
• Pry bar
• 5 gallon roller
• Hacksaw
• Scrapers
• Paint mixer
• Screen
• Airlines paint
• Texture spray gun
• Masking tape
• Sprayer
**Item 9: Sample Theme-based Interdisciplinary Curriculum Format and Description**

**Unit**

Consider dividing the curriculum into one or two month units, depending on the goals and the extent of the program year. Working with units is advisable because they offer a sense of completion and achievement if the objectives are met in a relatively short period of time.

**Theme**

Choose an integrating theme for each unit. Choose topics that are interesting to students and relevant to their life experiences. The topic should be broad enough to encompass information related to all of the components and accessible enough to make it possible to find a wide variety of multi-level learning materials. Take time with the whole group (involving students whenever possible) to brainstorm interesting and workable themes.

**Unit Objectives**

After choosing an integrating theme, determine what skills you would like students to attain related to that topic. What knowledge should they possess after studying this topic in some depth, across the disciplines, and how should they demonstrate this knowledge? Remember, in order to be measurable, objectives should be written as statements of what students will be able to do after they have completed the learning activities in the unit. Achieving the unit objectives involves learning identifiable skills. Based on the competencies the program has identified as essential, determine what skills will enable students to achieve the unit objectives.

**Suggested Activities**

Brainstorm a number of key activities that will be fun, innovative and relevant to the theme. Think of projects students can do to engage them as they work to achieve the objectives outlined above. Determine which skills will need to be taught in order to perform the activities.

**Skills**

Determine which skills will be taught and how they relate to the theme, the unit objectives, the suggested activities, and the key components. By outlining the skills to be taught in each program component, it ensures that a particular instructor is responsible for teaching each set of skills. Also, skills taught in discrete component areas are more easily completed and measured.
**Silent Individual Reading**

Identify which skills can be taught and related to the theme as students read books of their choice, individually and in small groups.

**GED Preparation**

Identify which skills will prepare students for the GED Exam (or high school competencies) that are also related to the topic of the Unit. Skills on the GED Exam can be taught in a variety of ways; plan to teach discrete skills as they relate to the learning activities and theme-related projects students will be doing in the unit. See the sections “Teaching Reading, Writing and Math” in Chapter Seven and “Recommendations for the GED Preparation Process” in Chapter Eight for suggestions.

**Construction-related Math**

Identify those math skills that are either related to the unit theme or related to the skills that will be needed to complete whatever stage the building project will be when the unit is taught.

**Vocational Education and Worksite**

Similarly, attempt to integrate academic skills into the vocational class as they relate to the theme, if possible, or as they relate to the current stage of the building project. Decide which reading, writing and math skills can be incorporated into the teaching of vocational skills.

**Cultural History/Theme**

Identify the academic skills that will be needed to help students relate topics of cultural history to the theme. Examine the learning activities to determine what skills will be needed to engage in these activities.

**Leadership**

Identify the leadership skills that relate to the theme of the unit.

**Job/College Readiness**

Identify the job/college readiness skills that relate to the theme of the unit.

**Individual Study**

During individual study time, students can either practice isolated skills that are particular to his or her needs, or work on a culminating project that brings the skills learned in the unit together into a unified whole.
Culminating Project Ideas

As a group, brainstorm a series of projects that students can do individually or in small groups to demonstrate their achievement of the unit objectives. Projects can be developed throughout the course of the unit, and presented at the end of the unit, for a sense of mastery and completion. Culminating projects are an excellent way to assess student skill acquisition. See the sections on “Alternative Evaluation Tools,” “Projects,” and “Portfolios” in Chapter Eleven for suggestions.
Item 10: Sample Theme-based Interdisciplinary Curriculum Format/Worksheet

Unit: ________________________________________________________________

Theme: ______________________________________________________________

Unit Objectives:

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
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Suggested Activities:

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Skills:

Silent Individual Reading:

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GED Preparation:

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Construction-related Math:

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Vocational Education and Worksite:

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Cultural History / Theme:

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Leadership:

Job/College Readiness:

Individual Study:
Culminating Project Ideas:

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Item 11: Model Theme-based Interdisciplinary Curriculum

The Local Community

Unit: One (Two Months)

Theme: The Local Community

Unit Objectives

Upon completion of the unit, the student will be able to do the following:

- Identify and explain how to use the community resources in the city, including legal services, housing services, health care services, banking services, educational services, and employment services.

- Demonstrate and use map-reading and geography skills, including using subway and bus maps, following written directions, writing directions, knowing the geography of a city and using key map and geography terms.

- Analyze and discuss the meaning of “access” (to areas of the city, to public and private places, to opportunities) and the impact it has on his or her own life.

- Describe and discuss the history of his or her own neighborhood and how it has influenced him or her.

- Demonstrate understanding of the history and culture of at least three ethnic or racial groups in the city.

- Define the term “community” in writing, using GED-essay format. Discuss the following questions in the essay: What makes a community? What is “community culture”? What enables a community to succeed? What gets in the way of community? What activities are necessary for community?

Suggested Activities

Do a photographic study of the community, focusing on those buildings or institutions or gathering places that are most representative of the community. Make a book in which students name the places in the photos, give their history, and discuss the changes that have occurred over time.

Make a video documentary of public reactions to a local community that is in the news. Using a “person on the street” format, students can ask a pointed question about a particular subject and edit the responses into a documentary format. Follow up this activity by charting people's reactions in graph format, and figure the percentages of people giving particular responses.
Hold “Community Scavenger Hunts.” Design scavenger hunts for students to find particular artifacts in different ethnic neighborhoods. Send them out in pairs or small groups to follow written directions and find or purchase artifacts of a chosen culture. Students come back to the large group and report about where they went and what they learned.

Investigate the cultural life of a select ethnic group. Research a variety of aspects of a group's culture, including food, religion, dress, holidays, schools, and wedding rituals. Invite a speaker to show slides or artifacts of the culture. Study maps of the country of origin. Plan a visit to an area of the city that is representative of the culture and where students can sample the relevant ethnic cuisine. Develop a list of questions about the culture before you leave and have students find out the answers by asking people on the street or in shops to assist them. Culminate the study by creating a “Guidebook to the Culture of . . .” in which they write about and draw pictures of what they have learned.

Stage a public debate on an issue related to cultures in the city. After studying various points of view related to any number of current debates, have students take sides and prepare arguments to support their points of view.

Skills

*Silent Individual Reading*
- Complete one book of choice
- Brainstorm ideas
- Organize ideas
- Express clear main idea
- Support main idea with reasons
- Support reasons with details
- Summarize main idea
- Write book report draft

*GED Preparation*
- Introduce commentary on the arts
- Infer sequence
- Infer comparisons
- Infer cause and effect
- Identify sentence problems
- Identify style and diction
- Use logic and organization
• Introduce physics concepts
• Introduce economics concepts

Construction-related Math
• Convert fractions, decimals, and percents
• Reduce fractions
• Add and subtract fractions
• Solve construction-related fraction, decimal, and percent problems

Cultural History/Theme: The Local Community
• Read literature
• Recall main idea
• Recall sequence
• Recall comparisons
• Recall cause and effect
• Recall character traits
• Write fiction
• Write personal letters
• Locate information on a map
• Use sequence
• Use sequence in maps
• Show cause and effect
• Compare and contrast

Leadership
• Find information through research
• Explain and participate in brainstorming

Job/College Readiness
• Read job applications
• Read maps
• Read schedules
• Use telephone book
• Make phone calls in job search
• Write business letters
• Use community employment resources
• Demonstrate transportation and map-reading skills

**Individual Study**

• Complete unit project
• Complete all individual assignments

**Culminating Project Ideas**

Create a “Where Am I? Personal Map Book.” The student will either create or compile a series of maps of his or her life, starting from the area closest to home to a map of the world. Have the students draw maps or otherwise visually depict their places in the world, with a map each for:

- School
- The school’s neighborhood
- The student’s neighborhood
- The student’s borough or town
- Subway or bus routes in the city
- The state or commonwealth
- The United States
- North America
- The world

Develop a community resource booklet listing important community services (legal, housing, employment, educational, and healthcare) that the students have researched themselves. Students can write the book, type it on the computer, and reproduce it either to sell or distribute to other students and staff.

Interview community residents, asking them “What do you think community is?” “What do you think the most important aspects of this community are?” “What kinds of changes would you like to see in this community?” Develop a survey with multiple choice questions and chart the results on a graph. Do a fraction and percentage study of the answers.
Item 11: Model Theme-based Interdisciplinary Curriculum

Housing

Unit: Two (Two Months)

Theme: Housing

Unit Objectives

Upon completion of this unit, the student will do the following:

• Describe, in writing, the relationship between housing and the quality of life and between housing and community life

• In a GED-format essay, identify three key problems related to housing in the local community and identify possible solutions from this list: gentrification, redlining, housing discrimination, availability of affordable housing, abandoned buildings, public housing safety, homelessness, and private development

• Identify 10 needs met by adequate housing

• In small groups, design a building for 10 families that adequately meets the families’ needs. In the design, address the following issues: locality, climate, proximity to transportation, proximity to services, appearance of the building, size of the building, number of stories, materials needed for construction, professional tradespeople who will be involved in the construction of the building, special features of the building

Suggested Activities

Invite an architect into the class to talk about the types of dwellings she or he builds and the different knowledge needed to construct the various types. Interview him or her about how families’ needs are taken into account in planning the housing design.

Create a bulletin board about the various kinds of shelter in different societies. Research and write about the relationships between climate, resources, culture, and housing. Why are certain kinds of buildings built in different areas? How do the kinds of houses we live in affect our cultural life?

Create graphs and charts about housing issues in the local community. Based on research and meetings with community housing groups, illustrate, using fractions and percents, the following information:

• Number of rental properties
• Racial makeup of certain parts of their city
• Multiple dwellings vs. single family homes
• What percent of income goes to housing in different communities
• What percent of the buildings are owned by absentee landlords
• What percent of buildings are abandoned
• What number (or percent) of people in the city are homeless

Take a neighborhood walk in which students chart the types of buildings they see. Create a neighborhood map that illustrates the various kinds of housing and businesses in the neighborhood. Identify materials used in construction, number of stories, and number of families who live in each. Discuss and write about the quality of the housing and solutions for improving it.

Read the Langston Hughes’ poems “Ballad of the Landlord” and “Madam and the Rent Man.” Both are poems in two voices. Have students take turns reading them in front of the class then composing their own “poems in two voices” on a topic related to housing or community.

Skills

**Silent Individual Reading**
• Complete one book of choice
• Brainstorm ideas
• Organize ideas
• Express clear main idea
• Support main idea with reasons
• Support reasons with details
• Summarize main idea
• Write book report draft

**GED Preparation**
• Infer character traits
• Predict outcomes
• Infer figurative language
• Introduce to poetry
• State spelling rules
• Introduce to chemistry concepts
• Introduce to political science concepts
Construction-related Math
• Multiply and divide fractions
• Add, subtract, multiply, and divide decimals
• Create and use bar graphs
• Create and use circle graphs
• Create and use tables and charts

Cultural History / Theme: Housing
• Write poetry
• Evaluate adequacy of information
• Evaluate logical reasoning
• Evaluate values

Leadership
• Participate in “self-evaluation” to evaluate progress
• Write a clear, concise report
• Take useful notes
• Participate in a group in a positive, responsible manner
• Listen well to others, give quality attention

Job/College Readiness
• Demonstrate reliability
• Demonstrate responsibility
• Complete a resume
• Write a cover letter

Individual Study
• Complete unit project complete all individual assignments

Culminating Project Ideas for Students
Imagine that you are a video photographer and you have been asked to interview homeless people about their lives and problems with housing. Read three articles about homelessness. Take notes on the key points of the articles and develop a list of 10 questions that you plan to ask three or more people who live on the streets or in shelters. With a partner, videotape the interviews of the people, concluding by videotaping yourself giving your analysis and opinions, relating them to the information in the articles.
With a partner, choose a current event, related to housing, which raises many questions. Each partner will then research the issue, getting at least four articles that give background information. Each person should formulate an opposite point of view that can be supported with evidence from the articles and develop it into an essay. Each partner will then read the essay in front of the class and be prepared with notes to defend this point of view during the debate.

With a small group, invite members of the community to visit the class and discuss their needs regarding housing. Create a “community panel” and prepare a set of questions in advance. Have a moderator ask the questions. If appropriate, organize a community meeting at night and invite a local council person to attend, or invite different people in the community who have different needs to discuss those needs from their perspective—a single mother, a disabled person, or an elderly person.
Item 11: Model Theme-based Interdisciplinary Curriculum

Careers in Construction

Unit: Three (Two Months)

Theme: Careers in Construction

Unit Objectives

Upon completion of this unit, the student will do the following:

Describe the following careers in construction, telling the qualifications needed for each and the role each plays in the construction industry:

- Glazier
- Mason
- Electrician
- Draftsperson
- Architect
- Tilesetter
- Sheetrocker
- Plumber
- Rough carpenter
- Finish carpenter
- Foundation builder

Describe the interrelationship of the building trades. Describe the building of a 10-story building and the order of work that is required and how subcontractors coordinate with one another.

Give a presentation on a job in construction that interests the student. In the presentation include the qualifications needed for the job, the salary scale, the apprenticeship requirements, the tasks involved in doing the job, and the steps the student will take to pursue a job in that field.

Suggested Activities

Play “Careers in Construction Jeopardy.” Ask the students to write the names of all the trades they can think of on index cards, then use these cards in a simulated Jeopardy game.

Compile an apprenticeship information file, in which students write information about the various trades and jobs discussed. Each student should have a file box with file cards, and should fill out their cards with the following information:

- The job title
- Skills used on the job
- Tools the worker must be able to use
• Training and experience involved
• Apprenticeship involved
• The salary scale
• Phone number and contact person for the union
• Documents needed to apply
• Dates and requirements for tests

Write a GED-format essay about the key issues women workers and people of color might face on a building site. Write about conflicts that might arise and strategies workers might use to deal with them.

Write a fictional story, play, or poem from the point of view of a woman construction worker.

Make a “Careers in Construction” bulletin board, in which small groups of students design presentations about various trades, using photos, quotes, the skills used on the job, the tools the worker must be able to use, the training and experience involved, and instructions on how to pursue careers.

Make a “Careers in Construction” scrap book, in which small groups of students take responsibility for creating chapters on trades of their choice, including photos, quotes, the skills used on the job, the tools the worker must be able to use, the training and experience involved, interviews with representatives of the trades, and instructions on how to pursue careers.

Skills

Silent Individual Reading
• Complete one book of choice
• Brainstorm ideas
• Organize ideas
• Express clear main idea
• Support main idea with reasons
• Support reasons with details
• Summarize main idea
• Write book report

GED Preparation
• Review comprehension skills
• Review summarizing skills
• Review inference skills
• Review application skills
• Review analysis skills
• Review evaluation skills
• Review prose literature
• Review capitalization
• Review punctuation
• Review sentence structure
• Review spelling
• Write GED Essay
• Review physics and chemistry concepts

**Construction-related Math**
• Identify angles, triangles, and circles
• Figure volume
• Use pythagorean rule
• Use number line
• Perform operations with signed numbers and nominals
• Write and solve equations with variables
• Use ratio and proportion
• Use rectangular coordinates

**Cultural History/Theme: Careers in Construction**
• Review GED political science concepts
• Review GED behavioral science concepts
• Write GED essay

**Leadership**
• Explain the basics of sexual reproduction, pregnancy prevention and AIDS/STD prevention
• Demonstrate readiness to secure and hold a job

**Job/College Readiness**
• Pass drivers’ license test
• Investigate college opportunities
• Complete college education forms
• Complete job/college readiness portfolio
• Do job search

**Individual Study**

• Complete final project
• Complete all individual assignments

**Culminating Project Ideas**

Imagine that you have been asked to write and direct a film for television about a task in the field of construction which you either participated in or are interested in learning. Find two sources that describe how to do the task in sequenced steps, and write them in bibliography form. Interview a worksite instructor or supervisor about the task. Using the three sources, write a script for the video project that outlines the task in sequenced steps. Practice the presentation, and present it in final form on videotape.

Create a scrapbook about a task in the field of construction which interests you. Using three sources (books or people) write up the steps involved in doing the task. Accompany the text with photos and labeled drawings.

Imagine that you are a graphic artist and you have been asked to design flyers for a construction company advertising available jobs. Choose three jobs or careers in construction which you might be interested in and create a flyer for each, including the following information:

• The job title
• Skills used on the job
• Tools used
• Training required the apprenticeship involved
• The salary scale

Choose one of the jobs and write a one-page essay about why you are interested in pursuing it for yourself.
Item 12: Model Theme-based Interdisciplinary Curriculum Sample Lesson Plan and Evaluation

Unit: __________________ Lesson: ________________________________
Date: ___________ Instructor: _____________________ Group: __________

1. Write a brief paragraph describing the purpose of this lesson. How does it relate to the overall curriculum goals?

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2. What concepts will be learned? What specific skills will be developed?

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3. Materials needed. (Specify titles of articles and worksheets. Include copies.)

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4. Write step-by-step instructions for leading this lesson:

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5. How will you determine that the student learned the concepts of the lesson and the specific skills that go along with it? (See #2)

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## Evaluation of Lesson

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<td>Student interest in materials</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Student interaction with teacher</td>
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<td>Materials were interesting</td>
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<td>Materials were informative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Materials were relevant</td>
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<td>Sufficient time was allotted</td>
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<td>Specific skill development occurred</td>
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<td>Increased understanding of concepts</td>
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Additional comments:
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Suggestions for improvement:
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Appendix A-45

**Item 13: Leadership Development Curriculum Outline**

It is important to help young people start to think about the world beyond their own community or ethnic group. Experience starts at home, but doesn’t stop at the borders of the neighborhood.

This curriculum was developed in response to the questions raised by young people at a local Youthbuild program:

**Cycle 1: Current Reality**

What is the current reality in the students’ neighborhood (town, city, rural or tribal area) now and why is it that way?

*Community Economics*

An explanation of basic economic concepts. Review of community strengths and weaknesses, resources, and needs. An exploration of opposing viewpoints of economic problems facing the Youthbuild students’ neighborhood (town, city, rural, or tribal area).

*United States Government and Political System*

The structure and process of government; three branches of government; federal and local relationships; legislative process; elections and voting; two-party system; comparison with other political systems.

*Current Affairs*

A study of current crises and important issues. Research, study, and debate on opposing points of view and interpretation of current local, national, and international issues.

*The Local Political Structure and Issues*

How are the decisions made in the local area affecting Youthbuild students? What are the basic outlines of issues in local government, education, housing, crime, employment, drugs, and welfare?

*Growing Up in the Community; Relating to Each Other*

Issues of personal identity, intimate and peer group relationships, family, communication, and difficult realities faced by young people in the Youthbuild program.

**Cycle Two: Methods of Change**

How can the current reality be changed?
This cycle will begin with an orientation focused on the positive changes students would like to bring about. The students will develop a view of the future of their neighborhood as they would design it if they could.

**History and Methods of Selected Movements**

How people have tried to bring about change in societies of the past. Some case studies: the American Revolution, abolition of slavery, civil rights movement, and women's movement. Review of several other countries: Brazil, China, France, Sweden, Russia, Cuba, Chile, Kenya, Mozambique, Japan, South Africa, El Salvador.

**Leadership Theory and Theories of Change**

Historical and current leaders will be studied and evaluated, including their biographies, theories, methods, and leadership qualities. Examples: Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Susan B. Anthony, Mahatma Gandhi, Julius Nyerere, Nelson Mandela, Jesus of Nazareth, Colin Powell, Louis Farrakhan, John F. Kennedy, Adolph Hitler.

**Personal Change**

What personal changes do young people who want to be leaders need to make? What methods of overcoming addictions like alcoholism and smoking have worked? What are the current ideas and traditional methods of personal change that students can use? Examples: religion, psychiatry, Eastern doctrines (martial arts, meditation, Zen) group therapy, re-evaluation counseling, mutual support, peer counseling.

**Organizing for Change in the Community**

The theory and method of community organizing. What can be done by an individual or group on the local level? Defining issues, creating a program for change, gaining unity or consensus, finding allies, carrying out an active campaign, handling opposition.

**Cycle Three: Culture and Human Relationships**

How do human psychology and culture relate to change? Can people change and treat each other with enough respect to make it worthwhile to try to improve society?

**Culture and History of the Local Community**

Study of the history of the local community including the various ethnic groups who live in the community.
Culture and History of the Major Ethnic Groups in the United States

A history of the various cultures within the United States including: black cultures (African-American, West Indian); Latin culture (Mexican, Puerto Rican, Dominican, Latin American, Central American); Asian cultures (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Cambodian, Vietnamese); Native American Cultures (Iroquois, Navaho, great plains, and others); white cultures (English, Irish, Italian, Jewish, and other ethnic groups). Discuss the origins of these groups, regional differences, and how they relate to mainstream American culture. Discuss what the overall culture is, if there is one.

Culture in Our Lives

How does culture affect students' daily lives? Discuss life experiences, values, art, spiritualism, religion, child-rearing, concepts of privacy, time, money, sharing, etc. Compare culture and cross-cultural experiences as an approach to understanding oneself and others.

Human Nature and Society

Discuss what the following systems and philosophies assume about human nature: capitalism, socialism, democracy, fascism, and traditional African and Native American societies. Discuss how these systems relate to Christianity, Confucianism, Judaism, and Buddhism. What are the needs of human beings that societies must be organized to meet? How have different societies attempted to meet human needs or control human nature? What is the role of leadership in sustaining a humane society? How much of a society depends on the “the system” or the leadership and how much on the people living within it?

Cycle Four: Leadership Skills

What skills must students learn if they want to become leaders? How do people work in groups to improve the local community or society as a whole?

Public Speaking and Oral Communication

Students will learn: how to plan and deliver a talk to an audience, debating skills, how to be interviewed, making space for oneself in a discussion, knowing the audience, setting the tone, knowing the subject, using vivid examples, improving pronunciation and vocabulary. Tape recorded or videotaped speaking, debating contests, assignments to do speeches in the community, and group feedback will be used to help students learn skills.

General Organizing Skills

Planning meetings, setting agendas, chairing a meeting, taking minutes, and making decisions. Making plans of actions including: sequencing actions, mapping desired results, scheduling, making workplans, budgeting. Interpersonal rela-
tions: showing respect to group members, handling disagreements, and dealing with gossip and rumors.

**Writing Skills**

Writing, with specific emphasis on resume writing, proposal writing, position papers, and letters. High standards will be set for organization, correct grammar, clarity of ideas, and spelling.

**Techniques of Peer Counseling**

The techniques of peer counseling and support will be presented and practiced. Skills necessary to create good environments for one-to-one sharing, support, and methods of dealing with difficult experiences.
**Item 14: Community Education Activities**

Following are suggestions for activities that foster an understanding of local issues and encourage leadership development.

- Have students write about the places in the neighborhood that they feel are “community centers.” Where do people go to gather, to plan, and to have fun?

- Help students do a photographic study of the community, focusing on those buildings or institutions that are most representative of the community. Have them make a book in which they name the buildings, describe their histories, and discuss changes over the years.

- Have students create a city block. Distribute large sheets of paper or oak tag and sets of colored markers, scissors, scotch tape, and colored construction paper. Tell small groups that the task of the group is to create a city block. Ask them to suggest some of the things that might be included in this picture: an apartment house, a grocery store, a post office, single family houses, a playground, and traffic lights. Explain the task: they are to meet in their small groups and discuss what they feel would make a livable and healthy city, and decide who will draw what. Tell the groups that this is a cooperation activity and that their task is to share ideas and skills. When finished, each group will take turns showing their drawings to the whole class.

- Develop a cooperative training relationship with a number of enterprises in your community. This gives students the opportunity to volunteer for a day or for a few hours on a couple of days, in order to learn firsthand what is involved in the enterprise and how it contributes to the local community. Students then return to the classroom and teach each other what they have learned about their particular workplace.

- Help students organize a community meeting around a key local issue. They should plan the meeting in advance, deciding:
  - What issues will be discussed
  - Who will be invited
  - How it will be advertised
  - What solutions will be suggested
  - What actions will be presented for achieving the solution
  - Who will facilitate the meeting
  - Where it will be held
  - What follow-up will be done

- Have students facilitate a “community panel discussion.” Invite members of the community to visit the class and discuss their needs and feelings regarding a particularly pressing community issue. Invite different people
in the community who have different needs to discuss those needs from their perspective—a single mother, a disabled person, or an elderly person would all be interesting speakers. Prepare a set of questions in advance. Have a moderator ask the questions. If appropriate, organize the community meeting at night and invite a local councilperson to attend.

- Suggest that students participate in or help organize a demonstration related to a community issue. Have students write a report analyzing the experience.

- Have students publish a community newspaper designed to educate their neighbors about the issues they have researched. Have them suggest solutions to community problems.

- Have students arrange to meet with a local councilperson about the issues they have investigated. Help them prepare to express their points of view on a key local issue, including:
  - An explanation of the problem
  - Examples of the problem
  - Causes of the problem
  - Suggested solutions

- Have students research the history of the local community. Decide on a particular neighborhood (their own or that of the program) and research the changes that have occurred over the last 100 or 200 years. Have them visit local archives to investigate what photos exist and what has been written about the neighborhood. Find a few people in the neighborhood who have lived there for many years and interview them about their knowledge of the area and how it has changed.

- Have students research and then draw cartoons about important community issues, and how they occur, i.e. abandonment, crime rates, unemployment, gentrification, and redlining. Then publish the cartoons in a community newspaper.

- Have students imagine that they are journalists who have been asked to interview homeless people about their lives and problems with housing. Tell them to develop a list of at least 10 questions that they plan to ask three or more people who live in the street or in shelters. With a partner, have them videotape the interviews with people, concluding by videotaping themselves as they give their analyses and feelings about what they have learned. Have them relate it to information learned in class.

- Suggest that students volunteer to share construction skills with a homesteading or sweat equity project in another part of the city for a day. Write an essay describing where they worked, what they experienced, and how it was different from what they expected. Relate what they learned on the site to what they have learned in class.
**Item 15: Certification of Community Service Hours**

Name of Student: ______________________________________________________

Name of Agency: ______________________________________________________

Name of Supervisor: ___________________________________________________

Date: _________________ Hours: _________ to ___________

Duties performed:

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Performance Rating (circle one): Excellent  Good  Fair

Supervisor remarks:

____________________________________________________________________
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Student remarks:

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Supervisor Signature: ________________________________________________

Student Signature: ___________________________________________________

*Source: Atlantic City YouthBuild*
Item 16: Field Trip Information Form

Field Trip Location: _________________________________________________________

Address: ________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

Contact Person: __________________________ Phone Number: ______________

Hours: _______________ Fees: ______________

Directions: __________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

Description of Program or Activity:

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

Time allotted: _________________________________________________________

Type of workshops and tours available:

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

Educational materials available:

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Suggestions for pre-trip activities or readings:

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______________________________________________________________________
**Item 17: Checklist for Ongoing Evaluation**

**Youthbuild Education Component**

Following is a list of program issues that should be considered on a regular basis (every two months is recommended). Review them with the program staff in order to discuss what is going well and what should be changed.

- Overall quality of instruction
- Overall quality of instructional materials
- Overall progress toward objectives
- Overall quality of instruction in job/college readiness
- Overall quality of instructional materials
- Overall quality of instruction in construction skills
- Overall quality of instructional materials
- Overall quality of instruction in leadership
- Overall quality of instructional materials
- Attendance in classroom
  
  Reasons for poor classroom attendance: ______________________________

  ______________________________

  Plans for improvement: ______________________________

  ______________________________

- Attendance on worksite
  
  Reasons for poor worksite attendance: ______________________________

  ______________________________

  Plans for improvement: ______________________________

  ______________________________
Describe methods used to assess student skills and success:

- Standardized tests: ________________________________________________
- Teacher-made tests: _______________________________________________
- Written evaluations: _______________________________________________
- Portfolio evaluations: _____________________________________________
- Peer evaluations: _________________________________________________
- Self-evaluations: _________________________________________________

Tell whether progress is being made in the following areas:

- Reading skills: ___________________________________________________
- Amounts and kinds of reading: _____________________________________
- Math skills: _____________________________________________________
- Writing skills: ___________________________________________________
- Job/college readiness skills: _______________________________________
- Vocational/construction skills: _____________________________________
- Leadership skills: _______________________________________________
- Critical thinking and problem-solving skills: _______________________
- Self-image and self-respect: ______________________________________
- Cultural awareness and respect: ________________________________
- Employment status: _____________________________________________
- Completion of competencies: _____________________________________
- Follow-up with students who have left: ___________________________
- GED preparation: _______________________________________________
- Earning of credits: _____________________________________________
Item 18: Assessment of Youthbuild Performance on Enrollment, Attendance, Retention, and High School Diploma or Certificate

Date of Assessment: ____________ Program Name: ______________________
Person Completing Assessment: ______________________________________

Education and Training Component

1. Total number of trainees enrolled during the program year:
   _______ _________
   (Number) (Original enrollment target)

2. Total number of trainees who completed at least six months and were placed in jobs or who completed the entire program:
   _______ _________
   (Number) (Percent of total)

3. Total number of trainees who obtained a high school diploma:
   _______ _________
   (Number) (Percent of total)

4. Total number of trainees who have received a GED:
   _______ _________
   (Number) (Percent of total number of trainees who needed a GED)

5. Number of trainees who have earned additional credits during the program year:
   1-3 credits ___________; 4-6 credits ___________; 7-9 credits ___________; 10-12 credits ___________

Attendance and Retention

1. Total number of enrollees at beginning of program year: ____________
2. Total number enrolled throughout program year: ________________________
3. Total number of trainees who dropped out during the program year: _______________________
4. The total number of trainees who dropped out during the program year (see Number 3 above) equals _________ percent of the total number enrolled throughout program year (see Number 2 above).
5. Total number of trainees who passed orientation and remained for the entire school year with the following attendance percentages:
   85-100% _________ 60-84% _________ 59% and below __________

6. Average daily classroom attendance: _______ Percent of total ______

7. Average daily worksite attendance: _______ Percent of total ______

8. Total number of trainees put on probation:_____ Percent of total ____

9. Total number of trainees terminated from the program: _____
   Percent of total ______

10. Total number of trainees who have received raises for attendance, performance, and other reasons: _______ Percent of total ______

11. Total number of trainees who have received bonuses for attendance, performance, and other reasons: _______________ Percent of total___________

Analysis of Results

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

Suggestions for Improvements

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
**Item 19: Biweekly Performance Evaluation (for instructor’s use)**

Participant Name: ___________________________________________________

Evaluator: ____________________________ Period Ending: _______________

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<th><strong>Motivation/Attitude</strong></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Seldom</th>
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<td>Does student care about quality of work?</td>
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<td>Can student work by himself or herself?</td>
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<td>Does student show interest in classroom activities?</td>
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<td>Does student work cooperatively?</td>
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<td>Does student show respect for fellow students and instructors?</td>
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<td>Does student come prepared?</td>
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<td>Does student have good work habits?</td>
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<td>Does student work well on his or her own?</td>
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<td>Does student complete assignments?</td>
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<td>Does student return on time from breaks?</td>
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<td>Does student return on time from lunch?</td>
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<td>Does student leave at dismissal time?</td>
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Skills Attained During this Evaluation Period/Assessment

Date _____________ Skill ________________________________________________

Assessment: __________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Date _____________ Skill ________________________________________________

Assessment: __________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
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Comments

Note areas where participant needs improvement or has shown improvement:
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________
**Item 20: Student Education Files: Checklist of Contents**

Develop an education file for each student. Gather assessment tools which will help you assist students in planning their learning goals for the program year, and guide your evaluation of student growth and progress during the course of the program.

Name:________________________ Date: ______________

Date:

_____ Initial Standardized Test Scores (if required)
_____ Follow-up Standardized Test Scores (if required)
_____ GED Test Scores
_____ GED Practice Test Scores
_____ Academic History Interview Questionnaire
_____ High School Transcript (if relevant)
_____ Initial Reading Assessment
_____ Follow-up Reading Assessment
_____ Initial Math Skills Assessment
_____ Follow-up Math Skills Assessment
_____ Initial Measurement Skills Assessment
_____ Follow-up Measurement Skills Assessment
_____ Initial Writing Sample
_____ Follow-up Writing Sample
_____ Skills Competencies Checklists
_____ Individual Learning Plans
Item 21: Academic History Interview Questionnaire

Name: ____________________________ Date: ______________

Ask the student the following questions during an interview early in the pro-
gram year. Tell the student you are talking with him or her in order to get to know his or her individual learning needs and interests, so that you can better plan to meet those needs. Do not have the student fill out the questionnaire; use it as the basis for a conversation.

Age: _________ Birthdate: __________ Birthplace: ______________

Schools attended: ____________________________

Last grade completed: __________ Date of leaving: ______________

1. Did you start school in nursery school, Head Start, kindergarten, first grade or some other program?

2. Have you ever had a serious accident or illness? Were you ever hospitalized? Did you have any vision or hearing problems? Do you know if you ever ingested lead or had lead poisoning?

3. Starting with your first school experience, tell me all the schools you attended. Where were they? What grades did you attend in each? Tell about each year of school and how you felt about it.

4. What was your school experience like?
   What did you like about school? ____________________________

   What did you dislike? ____________________________

   What was your favorite subject in school? ____________________________

   What were you good at? ____________________________
What were you not good at? _____________________________________
______________________________________________________________

How did you know? ____________________________________________
______________________________________________________________

5. Were you absent a lot from school? In what grades?
________________________________________________________________

6. Did you repeat any grades? What grades?
________________________________________________________________

7. Were you ever in an advanced class? _____________________________
Were you ever in a special education class? __________________________
Were you ever in a resource room? _________________________________
What grades? __________________________________________________
Describe everything you remember and know about the experience.
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

8. How did your family feel about school? ____________________________
________________________________________________________________

9. Did you ever get extra help with reading, math, or schoolwork from a
   family member, teacher, friend, or other person? ______________________
________________________________________________________________

10. What important events or people do you remember from your
    school experience? ____________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

11. Was there a time when you started to experience difficulty in school?
    Describe difficulties you had. ____________________________________
________________________________________________________________

12. What grade were you in when you left school? Why did you leave
    school? How did you feel on the day you left school? _______________
________________________________________________________________

13. Have you attended other education programs since you left school?
    Where? For how long? __________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

14. Have you ever been in a GED class? Where? For how long? __________
________________________________________________________________
15. Have you ever taken the GED test? When? What were your scores?  
________________________________________________________________________

16. How do you feel about being in an education program now? ________  
________________________________________________________________________

What are your expectations? ________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

What are you looking forward to? ______________________________
________________________________________________________________________

What are you not looking forward to? __________________________
________________________________________________________________________

17. Do you like to read? ____________________________________________

18. Do you read the newspaper? What parts?__________________________

   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

19. What kinds of subjects do you like to read about or would you like to learn more about? _____________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

20. What things distract you or make it difficult for you to learn? _______
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

21. What ways do you feel you learn best:
   When working alone?___________________________________________
   When working with others?______________________________________
   With a tutor?__________________________________________________
   When it is quiet? _____________________________________________
   When there is activity and noise?________________________________

22. What are your learning goals?____________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

23. What would you like the teacher(s) to do to help you achieve your goals? _______________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
Plan to do an individual reading assessment with each student. Make time early on in the program (during orientation, if possible) to talk with each student about his or her school history and experiences with reading. Listen to each student read.

Before you begin, explain to the student that the purpose of this session is for both of you to learn about his or her interests and concerns and about what the student does well while reading. Explain that this is not a test, but an opportunity to determine what materials and approaches will best facilitate the student’s development as a reader. Then use the information in the assessment to guide the choice of materials for the student. Plan to re-assess for improvements or changes mid-way through the program year.

**Oral Reading Passage(s)**

Select a variety of passages from various levels of text. Tell the student that one of the reasons you are asking him to read is self-assessment; the more he knows, the more he can make decisions about his own educational needs. Tell the student you are going to write the answers down so that you can talk about them later and so that you can use them to help you plan.

Ask the student to choose the reading passage. Make notations on a copy of the passage as the student reads, and attach it to the summary. Ask the student to read the passage aloud, then summarize (re-tell) the text and answer the questions. Note student’s ability to re-tell the text and answer questions. Describe errors in comprehension. Use the following categories to assess the student’s ability to handle the passage and suggest that the student attempt a more difficult passage if he or she reads independently, and a less difficult passage if the first was at frustration level.

- **Independent** = Recognizes 98% of words and has 100% comprehension. The student can work without assistance at this level.
- **Instructional** = Recognizes 95% of words and has 75% comprehension. The student can work at this level with teacher assistance and instruction.
- **Frustration** = Recognizes less than 90% of words and has less than 50% comprehension. This level is too difficult.

**Silent Reading Passage**

Suggest to the student that he or she read silently the passage that you feel is at the student’s instructional level. Ask the student to summarize (re-tell) the passage and ask additional comprehension questions when the student is done. Use the comprehension guidelines above to help determine the readability of the passage for the student.
**Item 23: Individual Reading Assessment Summary**

**Oral Reading Passage**

Reading Passage (title) _______________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

Student summary of text: ____________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

Answers teacher questions: __________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

**Level of passage:** independent / instructional / frustration

**Silent Reading Passage**

Reading Passage (indicate title) _______________________________________

Student summary of text: ____________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

Answers teacher questions: __________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

**Level of passage:** independent / instructional / frustration
Item 24: Checklist of Reading Strengths and Difficulties

1. This student uses phonics to decode:
   _____ letter-by-letter
   _____ in large units
   _____ slowly and laboriously
   _____ easily and quickly

2. The student guesses at unfamiliar words:
   _____ using the context (says incorrect word but retains meaning)
     ex: I will wash the car (says “I will hose the car”)
   _____ using syntax (using grammatical structure of sentence)
     ex: I will go and get lunch (says “I will get lunch”)
   _____ by using similar letter configurations
     ex: how for now
   _____ by first letters
   _____ with no semantic correspondence, with no apparent pattern

3. The student frequently:
   _____ adds letters or words
   _____ omits letters or words
   _____ repeats words
   _____ reverses letters

4. The student uses the following strategies:
   _____ substitutes words
   _____ reads slowly and deliberately
     (retaining meaning)
   _____ self-corrects
   _____ reads word-for-word correctly
   _____ cross-checks (refers to sentence for guidance)
   _____ points to the text as he or she reads
   _____ reads syllable-by-syllable correctly

5. The student needs instruction and practice with:
   _____ consonant sounds (specify)
   _____ common syllables
   _____ consonant blends (specify)
   _____ blending syllables
   _____ vowel sounds (specify)

6. When this student reads, he or she:
   _____ seems frustrated, angry, or tense
   _____ reads in a monotone or has difficulty articulating
   _____ seems indifferent, bored, or sleepy
   _____ holds paper too close or too far
   _____ asks teacher for assistance
7. Student seems:
   _____ realistic about own strengths and difficulties
   _____ to undervalue own abilities
   _____ confident about ability to self-correct
   _____ lacking in confidence
   _____ able to choose appropriate materials

Note student comments made before, during, and after reading:
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

On back, write other notes and recommendations.
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
Item 25: Measurement Skills Assessment

Name: ___________________________________________ Date: ____________

Number Correct ______________

Total # of Questions __________

Percent Correct ______________

I. In this section of the test, the teacher will ask you to measure the lengths of the following objects, using either the ruler or the tape measure. Write the length of each object on the line.

1. Object A ____________________ Length: ___________________________
2. Object B ____________________ Length: ___________________________
3. Object C ____________________ Length: ___________________________
4. Object D ____________________ Length: ___________________________
5. Object E ____________________ Length: ___________________________
6. Object F ____________________ Length: ___________________________
7. Object G ____________________ Length: ___________________________
8. Object H ____________________ Length: ___________________________

9. What does this mean? Write this measurement in words.
   3 ' 4 "____________________________________________________

II. Draw lines of these lengths right next to the words.

10. Two inches
11. Three inches
12. 1 and 1/2 inches
13. 4 and 3/8 inches
14. 1 and 3/4 inches
15. 2 and 5/8 inches
16. 2 and 1/4 inches
III. Measure the length of the following lines, and write the measurement on the line.

17. ___________________________________
18. ______________________
19. _______________________________
20. ___________________________________________________________
21. __________________________________________________________
22. __________________________________________________________
23. How many inches are in one foot? _____________________________
24. How many feet are in one yard? _______________________________
25. How many inches are in one yard? _____________________________
26. How many inches are in six feet? ______________________________
27. How many inches are in two feet and four inches? ________________
28. How many inches are in two yards and two feet? ________________
29. How many feet are in 48 inches? _______________________________
30. How many feet are in 6 yards? _________________________________
31. One piece of wood is 6 feet, 2 inches long, another is 3 feet, 11 inches long, another is 5 feet, 6 inches long.
   What is the total length of all three pieces? ________________

IV. Add these measurements:

32. 2 feet + 3 feet + 5 feet + 6 feet
33. 2 feet, 2 inches + 4 feet, 9 inches + 5 feet, 2 inches + 3 feet, 5 inches

Teacher Comments:
Item 26: Writing Sample

Name _______________________________________ Date _________________

Using the whole page, write about yourself. Describe your appearance, your personality, and your talents. You may write about your family and friends and people who are important to you. You may tell about your background, where you grew up, and some important experiences in your life. What makes you unique?

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Using the whole page, tell about what you would like to be doing five or 10 years from now. What will your family be like? Where would you like to live? What kind of work would you like to be doing? How will you be different as a person than you are now?

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## Item 27: Individual Learning Plan

Name: _____________________________________________________________

Unit: _______________________________ Target Completion Date: ________

### Reading Requirements

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Assessments/Evaluations: ____________________________________________

### Writing Requirements

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### Construction Skills Requirements:

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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessments/Evaluations: ____________________________________________

# Job Readiness Requirements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Assessments/Evaluations: ____________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________
Item 28: Individual Culminating Project

Target Completion Date: ____________________

Description of Project: _______________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Teacher Evaluation of Project: ________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Student Evaluation of Project: ________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Date Project Completed: ______________________

I have successfully completed the requirements for this unit. All of my assign-ments are initialed and dated, and all of my completed work is organized in my folder.

Student Signature ___________________________________________________

Teacher Signature ___________________________________________________

Date ______________
### Item 29: Biweekly Performance Self-evaluation (for student’s use)

Participant Name: ____________________________________________

Period Ending: _______________ Instructor Initials: ______________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation/Attitude</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Seldom</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I care about quality of work?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I work by myself?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I show interest in classroom activities?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I work cooperatively?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I show respect for fellow students and instructors?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I come prepared?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I have good work habits?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I work well on my own?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I complete assignments?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I take initiative?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I pay attention?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I finish assignments?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I come on time?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I come regularly?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I return on time from breaks?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I return on time from lunch?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I leave at dismissal time?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Skills I attained during this evaluation period / assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A-76 Appendix
## Date  Skill  Assessment

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

**Comments**

In what areas do I need improvement? In what areas have I shown improvement?

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________
**Item 30: Independent Study Contract**

Name ______________________________________
Unit __________________________ Target Completion Date: ______________

**Skills and Concepts**

To successfully complete the Independent Study Contract, the student will demonstrate acquisition of the following skills and understanding of the following concepts:

1. __________________________________________________________________
2. __________________________________________________________________
3. __________________________________________________________________
4. __________________________________________________________________

**Materials to be used**

1. __________________________________________________________________
2. __________________________________________________________________
3. __________________________________________________________________
4. __________________________________________________________________

**Tasks to be performed**

To successfully complete the Independent Study Contract, the student will perform the following tasks:

1. __________________________________________________________________
2. __________________________________________________________________
3. __________________________________________________________________
4. __________________________________________________________________

**Evaluation**

To demonstrate achievement of skills and understanding of concepts, the student will:

1. __________________________________________________________________
2. __________________________________________________________________
3. __________________________________________________________________

4. __________________________________________________________________

Teacher Evaluation of Independent Study Project: _________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

Student Evaluation of Project: _________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

Date Project Completed: _______________

I have successfully completed the requirements for this contract. All of my assignments are initialed and dated, and all of my completed work is organized in my folder.

Student Signature: _____________________________________________
Teacher Signature: _____________________________________________

Date: _____________
**Item 31: Staff Evaluation of Education Component Quality**

1. How would you evaluate the overall quality of instruction in the EDUCATION part of the program?

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

   How would you assess the overall quality of the curriculum materials used in the EDUCATION part of the program?

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

2. How would you evaluate the overall quality of instruction in the JOB/COLLEGE READINESS part of the program?

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

   How would you assess the overall quality of the curriculum materials used in the JOB/COLLEGE READINESS part of the program?

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

3. How would you evaluate the overall quality of instruction in the CONSTRUCTION TRAINING part of the program?

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

4. How would you assess the overall quality of the curriculum materials used in the CONSTRUCTION TRAINING part of the program?

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

5. How would you evaluate the overall quality of instruction in the LEADERSHIP SKILLS part of the program?

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
How would you assess the overall quality of the curriculum materials used in the LEADERSHIP SKILLS part of the program?

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

5. To what extent are curriculum materials and instruction sequenced so that they progress from:
   a. Easy to difficult? ________________________________
   b. The familiar to the unfamiliar? ________________________
   c. Participants wants to needs? __________________________
   d. Understanding to application? __________________________
   e. The practical to the theoretical? _________________________

6. How does the program supplement the instructional sessions with other activities that extend and reinforce the learning opportunities?
   a. Supplemental volunteer tutoring? ________________________
   b. Supplemental peer tutoring? _____________________________
   c. Coordination with TV or radio instruction? ______________
   d. Homework assignments? ________________________________
   e. Activities within the agency that require application of skills learned in the program? _____________________________
   f. Activities within the community that require application of skills learned in the program? _____________________________
   g. Other: ______________________________________________

7. On average, what percent of enrolled applicants attend a scheduled learning session? If less than 85%, what might be causes of non-attendance and what can be done to increase the attendance rate?

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

8. At what points are the learner's skills and other development fully assessed?
   __ Before entry into the program
   __ Upon entry to the program
   __ Periodically (every ____ weeks/months)
   __ At the end of the term of instruction
   __ Other: ________________________________________________
**Item 32: Student Evaluation of Program Quality**

Name ____________________________  Date ________________________

Congratulations on completing Youthbuild! This is an end-of-program survey to help us learn how your year went and to help us improve the program for the future.

**Part One**

1. How much better do you think your future will be because you have participated in the Youthbuild program? (Circle one answer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Much better</th>
<th>A little better</th>
<th>The same</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Did Youthbuild deliver what it promised?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Totally</th>
<th>Mostly</th>
<th>Partly</th>
<th>Very Little</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. How would you rate the quality of Youthbuild with regard to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>OK</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construction training</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership training</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect for young people</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom instruction</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping you find a job or college</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing you to do well after Youthbuild</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. For each of the items listed below, please indicate HOW IMPORTANT it has been to you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Most Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
<th>Doesn't apply to me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construction training</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GED preparation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better reading and math skills</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help getting into college</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New friends and positive people</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It has been fun</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The staff treated me well</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I helped my community</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I made good use of my time</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I got paid</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership experience and training</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Of all the items listed above, which two things were the most important?
   Most important: ________________________________________________
   Next most important: ____________________________________________

6. Please name two things about Youthbuild that you would like to change.

   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

7. Because of Youthbuild, do you expect to earn a better living?
   Yes       Maybe       No
   _3_        _2_         _1_

8. Because of Youthbuild, do you now THINK more before you act?
   Yes       Somewhat     No
   _3_        _2_         _1_
9. Because of Youthbuild, do you feel more confident?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. If you answered yes, what do you feel more confident about?

______________________________________________________

______________________________________________________

11. Because of Youthbuild, do you take more responsibility than before:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. in general</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. in your community</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. for your children (if applicable)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. Do you think that people believe in you more now because you have participated in Youthbuild?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Mother?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Father?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Girlfriend or boyfriend?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Other people?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. How much did people believe in you before Youthbuild?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>A little</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Mother?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Father?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Girlfriend or boyfriend?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Other people?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14. Please rate how important the staff in Youthbuild has been for you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Only a little Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As teachers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As people to confide in</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As role models</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As sources of information</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As people who really care about you</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As people who really know you</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For help with personal problems</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To help you feel good about yourself</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As people who know what they're talking about</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As people you can depend on</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. Which two things from the last question were the most important?
Most important: _________________________________________________________
Next most important: _________________________________________________

16. Do you have at least one person on the staff who really cares about you and to whom you can go to talk about personal things?
Yes No If yes, who?_________________________

17. Also, if you answered yes, how do you think things would have gone differently for you this year if you had not had someone on the staff to talk to?

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
18. When the staff took disciplinary actions, did they explain their reasons for these actions clearly?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Seldom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did their reasons seem fair?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Seldom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Were their reasons consistent with the rules in the contract?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Seldom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. Did the staff care about what trainees had to say about how the program should be run?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Seldom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20. Now that you are out of Youthbuild:

a. What is the next step for you? ________________________________

b. How much do you know about getting to and succeeding at this next step?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>More Than Enough</th>
<th>Almost Enough</th>
<th>Not Nearly Enough</th>
<th>Enough</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c. How helpful was the staff in teaching you what you needed to know?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Helpful</th>
<th>Sort of Helpful</th>
<th>A Little Helpful</th>
<th>Not Helpful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21. Do you already have a job to go to after Youthbuild?

Yes       No

If yes, did Youthbuild help you find this job?

Yes       No
22. Are you accepted into a school or college for after Youthbuild?

Yes No

If yes, are you going to attend soon?

Yes No

If you have been accepted into a school or college for after Youthbuild, did Youthbuild help to arrange this?

Yes No

Part Two: Time

1. During the past few months, how many hours per day did you usually spend on the following activities (please circle your answers):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>None or Almost None</th>
<th>One</th>
<th>Two or Three</th>
<th>Four or Five</th>
<th>Six or More</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV or listening to the radio</td>
<td>0 1 2/3 4/5 6+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanging out</td>
<td>0 1 2/3 4/5 6+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readying or studying</td>
<td>0 1 2/3 4/5 6+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working</td>
<td>0 1 2/3 4/5 6+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In school or training</td>
<td>0 1 2/3 4/5 6+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking for a job</td>
<td>0 1 2/3 4/5 6+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleeping</td>
<td>0 1 2/3 4/5 6+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just laying around</td>
<td>0 1 2/3 4/5 6+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. In the past few months, how often did you any of the following activities (please circle your answers):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Almost Every Day</th>
<th>Once or Twice a Week</th>
<th>Once or Twice a Month</th>
<th>Almost Never</th>
<th>Does't Apply to me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baby sit</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hang out with friends during the day</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hang out with friends past midnight</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in community organizations</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break the law in order to earn money</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read a newspaper</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend church</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drink beer or wine</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drink hard liquor</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use marijuana</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use other drugs</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break a promise</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay up past 2 o’clock in the morning</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try to set a good example for a child</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get angry</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow friends into trouble</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel proud of something good that you did</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep to a schedule for getting up and going to bed</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend time with your child</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Item 33: Student Evaluation of Education Component Quality

1. How would you assess the overall quality of instruction in the program?
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

2. In what ways do you feel better about yourself now than you did before?
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

3. What can you do now for yourself that you could not do before?
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

4. Which of the following activities did you participate in?
   __ I got my driver’s permit
   __ I got my driver’s license
   __ I learned computer skills
   __ I was involved in leadership activities
   __ I went on all the field trips
   __ I got my library card
   __ I was involved in peer tutoring
   __ I was involved in cultural activities
   __ I was involved in publishing student writing

5. Please offer your suggestions on how to improve these activities? Are there other activities that you feel we should offer?
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

6. What did you learn about looking for a job that you did not know before?
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
7. What construction skills did you learn that you did not know before?
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

8. Did you miss more than one day of class a month? If so, why?
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

9. What should the program do to improve attendance of all students?
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

10. What other comments or suggestions do you have for improving the program?
    ________________________________________________________________
    ________________________________________________________________
    ________________________________________________________________

11. Writing Skills:
    a. Did you make as much progress in writing as you expected?
       __ I made more progress than I expected
       __ I made as much progress as I expected
       __ I made less progress than I expected
    b. What did you learn about writing that you did not know before?
       ________________________________________________________________
       ________________________________________________________________
    c. What do you write now that you did not write before?
       ________________________________________________________________
       ________________________________________________________________
    d. What did the teachers do well to help you improve your writing?
       ________________________________________________________________
       ________________________________________________________________
e. What else could the teachers have done to help you improve your writing?
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________

f. What materials did you use that were helpful?
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________

g. What other materials could the teachers have used to help you improve your writing even more?
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________

h. Which of the following areas do you think should have received more (or perhaps better) instruction?
__ Writing applications
__ Writing a resume
__ Writing directions
__ Writing letters
__ Spelling
__ Writing essays

Reading Skills
a. Did you make as much progress in reading as you expected?
__ I made more progress than I expected
__ I made as much progress as I expected
__ I made less progress than I expected
b. What did you learn about reading that you did not know before?
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
c. What do you read now that you did not read before?
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
d. What did the teachers do well to help you improve your reading?

______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________

e. What else could the teachers have done to help you improve your reading?

______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________

f. What materials did you use that were helpful?

______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________

g. What other materials could the teachers have used to help you improve your reading even more?

______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________

h. Which of the following areas do you think should have received more (or better) instruction?
   __ Understanding what I read
   __ Improving my vocabulary
   __ Reading directions
   __ Reading about work
   __ Reading for my own enjoyment
   __ Reading the newspaper

Math Skills

a. Did you make as much progress in math as you expected?
   __ I made more progress than I expected
   __ I made as much progress as I expected
   __ I made less progress than I expected

What did you learn about math that you did not know before?

______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
What math do you do now that you did not do before?

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

d. What did the teachers do well to help you improve your math?

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

e. What else could the teachers have done to help you improve your math?

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

f. What materials did you use that were helpful?

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

g. What other materials could the teachers have used to help you improve your math even more?

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

h. Which of the following areas do you think you should have received more (or better) instruction in?

   __ Measurement
   __ Addition and subtraction
   __ Multiplication and division
   __ Fractions
   __ Decimals
   __ Percents
   __ Budgeting
   __ Estimating
   __ Problem solving
   __ Other ________________________