



Adult Learning & Learner Differences

INSTRUCTOR / EDUCATOR PROGRAM - Unit 3

Applies to: Instructor / Educator

Suggested time: 3 hours (theory and application)

How to use this plan: The lines under "Say" are scripted word for word so every class hears the same information - read them aloud. *Italic in brackets is what you do.* The jade "Teaching move" names the method; the "Students" line is their involvement.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Describe the principles of adult learning.
- Identify learner differences in style, intelligence, and background.
- Apply motivation strategies for adult learners.
- Adapt instruction to diverse learners.

Materials and Equipment

- SGS chapter slide deck, projector, and whiteboard
- Learner-differences handout and a class-profile worksheet
- Student-educator workbook

Key Terms

andragogy, adult learning, self-direction, relevance, prior experience, learning styles, multiple intelligences, motivation, intrinsic motivation.

Lesson Sequence

1. Opening Hook - 10 min

Teaching move: Adults learn differently than children.

SAY (read aloud):

You will mostly teach adults, and adults do not learn the way children do. They come with experience, they want to know why something matters, and they need respect and a say in their learning. Understanding how adults learn is what makes your teaching actually land. Today we learn the science of the adult learner.

- **Students:** name one way an adult learner is different from a child learner.

2. How Adults Learn (Andragogy) - 25 min

Teaching move: The principles of adult learning.

SAY (read aloud):

Adult learning - andragogy - rests on a few principles. Adults are self-directed; they want input and choices. They bring rich prior experience you can build on. They are problem-centered; they learn what is relevant to their goals. And they are motivated most by purpose. So you connect every lesson to why it matters for their career, and you respect what they already know.



- **Students:** name two principles of adult learning.

3. Learner Differences - 25 min

Teaching move: Styles, intelligences, backgrounds.

SAY (read aloud):

No two learners are the same. They differ in learning style - visual, auditory, kinesthetic - in their strengths, or multiple intelligences, and in their background, language, and life situation. A great educator does not teach to one type; they vary their methods so everyone has a way in. Knowing your learners is the start of reaching them.

- **Students:** give an example of teaching the same idea to a visual and a kinesthetic learner.

4. Motivation - 20 min

Teaching move: Intrinsic over external.

SAY (read aloud):

Motivation drives learning. External motivators - grades - help, but the deepest learning comes from intrinsic motivation: the learner's own desire to master the craft. You build it by connecting work to their goals, celebrating progress, giving meaningful challenges, and showing you believe in them. A motivated learner outworks a merely graded one every time.

- **Students:** name one way to build intrinsic motivation in a student.

5. Activity, Check, and Recap - 35 min

Teaching move: Profile a class and recall.

SAY (read aloud):

On the class-profile worksheet, imagine a class of diverse adult learners and plan one way to reach different types. Quick check: what motivates adults most? *[Pause.]* Relevance and purpose. Should you teach to one learning style? *[Pause.]* No - vary your methods. To recap: adults are self-directed, experienced, and purpose-driven; learners differ; and you teach to the whole class by varying methods and building intrinsic motivation.

- **Students:** complete the class-profile worksheet and share one adaptation.

Assessment

- Written: quiz on andragogy, learner differences, and motivation.
- Performance: a class-profile and adaptation plan.
- Verbal: participation in the discussion.

Assignment

Read Adult Learning & Learner Differences and complete the workbook. Plan two ways to reach different learners in the same lesson.

Instructor Notes and Safety

Connect to the learning styles and multiple intelligences from the building blocks.

Reinforce relevance - always answer 'why does this matter.'