

Peace Corps/Tonga

Reader



Background Readings for English Literacy Facilitators

August 30, 2017 Edition

Introduction

This Reader is written for Peace Corps Trainees and Volunteers working in the Tongan English Literacy Project. It contains background information on key topics covered in “technical” sessions (i.e., those sessions that pertain most directly to the work they will be doing as English Literacy Facilitators) in Pre-Service Training and subsequent training events. This information comes from the PCVs, partners, and staff who have worked in our project for the past five years and from other sources (e.g., personnel at PC HQ and research being done worldwide).

This background information is presented in two ways:

- In brief “Background Notes” on the various technical topics. (These were prepared by our staff with input from Volunteers and partners in the first five years of our English Literacy Project.)
- By referring readers to other source documents (like the Peace Corps/Tonga “Idea Book,” Technical Note Series, and other resources developed by our staff, Volunteers, and other sources). These other sources typically go into more depth on the chosen topic.

Regardless of how much prior training and experience Trainees and Volunteers have in English-language instruction and related fields like elementary education, it will be very important for them to take time to familiarize themselves with how particular issues are dealt with in Tonga.

Readers are encouraged to use these materials in two ways:

- Upon receiving this document, skim the entire document to familiarize yourself with the topics to be covered in PST and other training events.
- A day or two prior to particular training sessions, carefully read the corresponding section(s) of this Reader, taking notes and jotting down questions. You might also be asked to complete a worksheet for that section.

By doing this background reading and thinking ahead of time, Trainees and Volunteers will help ensure that the limited training time we have is spent efficiently. We can avoid having to go through “lecture-type” activities in which new information is presented fresh to Trainees. Instead, we can jump to more-engaging thinking, discussing, solving problems, and other forms of active learning.

By preparing themselves in these ways, Trainees and Volunteers will help themselves as individuals while also their fellow Trainee and Volunteers and our trainers by raising the level of discourse in the training and maximizing its efficiency.

Paul Jurmo, Ed.D.
Director of Programming and Training
Peace Corps/Tonga, 2012-2017

TOPICS COVERED AND WHERE TO FIND RELATED INFORMATION

Note: The documents cited under “Sources” can be found on PCLive (Peace Corps’ on-line resource center, www.pclive.peacecorps.gov.) This is a great source of information on many topics of possible interest to PCVs in Tonga.

Topic	Sources
“Development:” Peace Corps’ Approach and Roles Tonga PCVs Can Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 4)
Our Project Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Idea Book for English Literacy Facilitators”
Understanding Your Students and Helping Them Succeed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 11)
How to Decide What You’ll Teach and Roles You’ll Play to Support the MET Curriculum and Student Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 13)
Tonga’s National English Curriculum Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 17)
The Tongan Education System: Key Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 22)
Who Are Your Co-Workers? And How Can You Work with Them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 25)
Co-Teaching Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 29)
Student-Centered Strategies: Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 33); • Technical Note on “What to Teach and How to Teach It (in Our English Literacy Project)”
Planning Your Instructional and Assessment Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 36)
Classroom Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 38)
Decoding: Assessment and Instructional Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 41); • Technical Note on “What to Teach and How to Teach It (in Our English Literacy Project)”
What Is “Grammar”? And How Can PCVs Teach It in the Tongan English Curriculum?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 44); • “Sai Ke Tau Ilo” (“Good to Know Grammar Book) • Technical Note on “What to Teach and How to Teach It (in Our English Literacy Project)”

Integrating English with Other Subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 48); • Technical Note on “What to Teach and How to Teach It (in Our English Literacy Project”); • “Idea Book for English Literacy Facilitators”
“English for Health” and “English for Earth”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 51); • “Idea Book for English Literacy Facilitators;” • Technical Note on “What to Teach and How to Teach It (in Our English Literacy Project”)
Libraries and Books as Teaching/Learning Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 55); • “Idea Book for English Literacy Facilitators;” • “Tongan Libraries Surveys 2015” • “Tonga Guide to Leveling Books and Library Organization”
Tech Tools for Literacy in Tonga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Note on “Tech Tools for Literacy in Tonga;” • Background Notes (p. 57)
Providing Literacy Development Opportunities for Young Children, Youth, and Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 59)
Responding to the Literacy Needs of Secondary School Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 64)
Serving the Harder-to-Serve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 66) • “Idea Book for English Literacy Facilitators”
Extra-Curricular Activities and Secondary Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 69) • “Idea Book for English Literacy Facilitators” • Technical Note: “Atakai ‘o e Ako: Family, Village, and School as Partners for Learning and Literacy”
Family, Village, and School as Partners for Learning and Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Note: “Atakai ‘o e Ako: Family, Village, and School as Partners for Learning and Literacy”
M&E Strategies for Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Notes (p. 73)

Peace Corps/Tonga

“Development:”

Peace Corps’ Approach and Roles Tonga PCVs Can Play

BACKGROUND NOTES

Evolving Approaches to International Development

Under Peace Corps’ Global Goal # 1, PCVs are to help to build the capacity of HCN (host country national) individuals and institutions to deal constructively with problems they have identified as a priority. This is the “development” goal of Peace Corps. (PC Goals 2 and 3 focus more on promoting intercultural understanding and cooperation.)

Peace Corps began in 1961, at a time when the world had emerged from the mass destruction of World War II and was going through various kinds of “international development” efforts. The Marshall Plan, for example, had the United States investing in the rebuilding of the infrastructure of Europe after the physical destruction of so many countries there. The Kennedy administration was also rolling out efforts in Latin America and elsewhere to help the masses of people move out of poverty. Other efforts in the 1960s saw uses of new technologies to increase food production through introduction of new varieties of scientifically-created crops, fertilizers, pesticides, and farming techniques on large-scale farms that replaced traditional small-scale farming. New medicines were introduced to reduce disease, transportation was “modernized” (through building of roads and airports and railroads and massive introduction of petroleum-fueled vehicles), and power infrastructures were “modernized” (through construction of dams and fossil-fuel-powered power plants).

Education systems were created which focused on creating white collar workforces (i.e., workers who would work in offices) to administer the business and government institutions of emerging “developing countries” and a “blue collar” workforce of technicians and laborers who would carry out the “manual” labor side of these new nations.

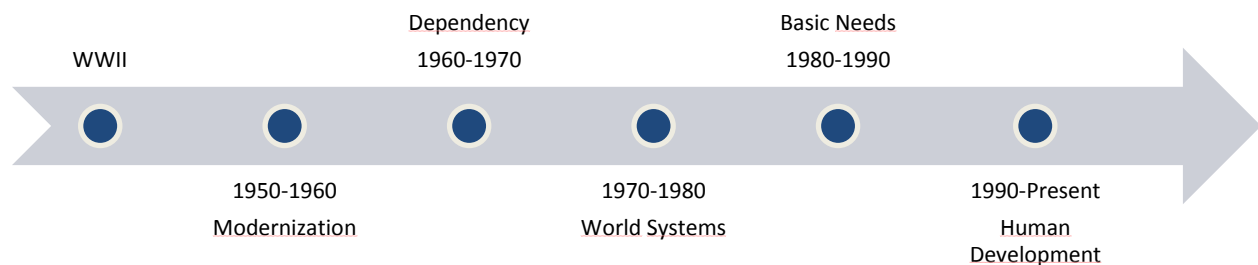
In many cases, the effects of these new development efforts were, intentionally or not, to create bifurcated societies, with a wealthier managerial class at the top and larger masses of lower-income workers and marginalized people at the bottom.

Guided by the vision of President John Kennedy and leaders in his administration (such as Sargent Shriver), Peace Corps Volunteers were, from the start, supposed to counter the worst effects of emerging societies and take a “bottom-up” approach to development that focused on

human development (e.g., through new forms of education and public health); more equitable, fairer distribution of wealth; and more environmentally-sustainable uses of resources). By immersing themselves in the material, social, and political challenges imbedded in the countries where they worked, PCVs often emerged with a deeper understanding of strategies that might be used to create a fairer, healthier, environmentally sustainable world. Many Returned PCVs have gone on to use what they learned in development efforts around the world and back home in the U.S.

Outlined below are approaches to development that have evolved in developing countries (including Tonga) since World War II.

Approaches to international development since World War II



Modernization

Modern development as we know it began in the post-WWII era. The Marshall Plan was successful in post-war Europe and led into modernism, which became the dominant theory of the time, through the 1950s and 1960s. It was a development approach based solely on modernization and industrialization, believing the quality of life in undeveloped countries would improve just as it had in Europe. The priority was for capital and technical investment to induce development. But the conditions in Europe, an educated population who simply lacked infrastructure, were vastly different than the conditions in developing countries that were coming out of colonialism and sometimes lacked both capital and infrastructure.

Dependency

There was a backlash against this approach in the developing world during the 60s and 70s, as strong dependencies began to develop between what many viewed as the 'haves' and the 'have nots.' During this timeframe, we see the emergence of revolutionary education and development theories, such as Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of

the Oppressed” and the “participatory” approach to development, with emphasis on the empowering of people to be more independent; analyze their own problems and needs; and formulate their own development strategies on local, national and even regional levels without the interference of international organizations from the “first world.”

World Systems

In the 1970s and 1980s, there was a major focus on economic development, but on a global scale, and it was called the World Systems Approach. This is where we begin to see what we know as the phenomenon of “globalization.” During this period, international organizations saw the greatest opportunity for global development in the division of labor among “core,” “semi-periphery,” and “periphery” countries. It was believed that each of these had its role in, and would benefit from, increased global manufacturing, trade, and commerce. This concept is still very much alive in the development world. Just as there was a backlash against the modernization approach to development, with the dependency approach, people began to realize that despite all the industrial development and international trade, the majority of the people in the world were still struggling to survive poverty.

Basic Needs

As a counterweight to the World Systems approach, a new Basic Needs Approach emerged, with emphasis placed on reducing absolute poverty and increasing individuals’ abilities to consume food, purchase clothing, and have shelter and access to health care. There was an important growth spurt of the non-profit, non-governmental sector during this period to address these issues, as many international organizations and governments begin to dedicate significant resources to this approach.

Human Development

Finally, one the most recent development approaches that is very popular and well-received is that of the Human Development approach, based on increasing the choices and opportunities people have in their daily lives through improved health care, educational, and economic opportunities. This approach to development led to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, which aim to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS and other diseases, and ensure environmental sustainability and develop a global partnership for development.

What “development” has looked like in Tonga

A PCV arriving in Tonga will find many forms of “development” going on, many of which might fall under the above categories. Some examples include:

- International donor-funded initiatives such as . . .
 - major educational reforms aimed at replacing old curricula with new ones that draw on research done in other countries.
 - efforts to help Tongan citizens to participate in informed, active ways in new electoral and governance structures which allow for greater representation of the common people in elected government positions (funded by UN Development Programme).
 - infrastructure improvements such as:
 - building of roads, causeways, and government building by workers imported from China;
 - donation of a commuter plane by China;
 - building of a new wharf for international commerce in Nuku’alofa (by Japan);
 - construction of indoor arena at Atele by government of Taiwan;
 - building of a community center/cyclone shelter in Te’ekiu village by the U.S. military;
 - donation of ferries for inter-island travel (by Korea).
 - donation of buses for public transportation (by China);
 - international cooperation of navies to patrol Tongan waterways (to reduce poaching of fishing stock);
 - upgrading of water catchment systems in response to climate change (funded by USAID);
 - building of solar-power “farm” with funding by Japan.
 - school water catchment upgrades carried by Rotary Club and community members (with funding by Australia);
 - building of the American Wharf by the US military in WWII.
 - public health (preventive and curative care) improvements such as . . .
 - family health services funded by International Planned Parenthood Federation;
 - construction of hospital in Nuku’alofa by Japan;
 - construction of soccer training center by FIFA;
 - introduction of a community swimming program by international swimming association;
 - creation of model organic vegetable farm and farmer training program at Nishi farm (with funding by Australia);
 - community exercise program (sponsored by ANZ Bank).
- Church-sponsored efforts in the areas of . . .
 - education (e.g., upgrading of infrastructure and curricula of church-sponsored schools)
 - community development (e.g., church-sponsored community clean-up, youth development)

- religious education (to foster positive values).
- Community-supported initiatives such as . . .
 - PTA and community support to upgrade school toilet at Vaini.
 - Community clean-up campaigns

Variables in these examples of “development” in Tonga

These examples represent a mix of the types of variables that a PCV will encounter in Tonga, including:

- Who funds the program and their motives for funding;
- The types of improvements focused on (e.g., public health, educational opportunity, various types of physical infrastructure, democratization . . .);
- Who makes the decisions;
- Who carries out the work and their capacities to do the technical and social aspects of the work;
- Who benefits and in what ways, including . . .
 - Public/international relations.
 - Professional advancement for individuals.
 - Environmental impact.
- Sustainability of the effort and impact over time.

Factors that can support or inhibit desired outcomes

The success of these efforts depends on many variables, including:

- Material and human resources available.
- The relevance and importance of the project to those involved.
- The values and vision and leadership abilities of those who make decisions and carry out the work

The Peace Corps approach to development

PC’s approach emphasizes . . .

- people-to-people,
- “process” being as important as “product,”
- bottom-up,
- long-term vision,
- participatory and inclusive,
- capacity building, and
- sustainability.

Where PC/Tonga's English Literacy Project fits into PC's approach and Tongan development efforts

Project framework has three goals and seven objectives (with activities) to . . .

- build local capacity to plan, implement, and support English literacy education that can help kids (and others) succeed in school and in adult life roles.
- do this through collaboration with people likely to use and sustain the work over time, rather than PCV providing free labor and doing all the work in isolation.
- use M&E to document, reflect on, improve, and share good practices.
- build support at national level for such work.

Some final thoughts about *sustainability* from PC HQ

- *As you work to build capacity, Peace Corps wants the Volunteer efforts to also be sustainable. There are just as many, if not more definitions of sustainability out there as there are definitions of development. **Peace Corps defines sustainable development as a process whereby people learn to build on their strengths in order to take charge of their own lives and address their expressed needs.** It is only through working with community members and host country organizations that long-term sustainable change can be achieved. **So your future work as a Volunteer will be a balance between your personal goals, needs, interests and skills, and those of your community and/or host country organizations.***
- *At the development approach level, and for achieving sustainability, the **process of development is just as important as the ultimate product.** At the community or organizational level, there are several factors that can impact the sustainability of any program initiative.*
 - *Culturally sustainable: Does the basic approach or concept fit within, and build on local beliefs and traditions, or will it be seen as an "outsider's idea" and not be accepted or continued when the Volunteers leave? (We acknowledge that there can be a tension between American-style values and those found in host countries, particularly in areas such as gender equality. Keep in mind that, within any culture, there are people who hold different views and there are always host country nationals who are working for change in gender relations or other areas whom we can partner with as part of our work.)*
 - *Politically sustainable: When there is no longer an outsider, such as a Peace Corps Volunteer, involved in the project, will it be sustainable within the sociopolitical context?*
 - *Economically sustainable: Will there be sufficient local resources, or the capacity to generate them, when supportive outsiders, such as Volunteers, leave?*

- Managerially sustainable: Will there be the local management capacity to carry on the work when the Volunteers leave?
- Environmentally sustainable: As the project grows, will the environment be able to sustain the use of resources?

How Tonga PCVs can make a difference

Realistically, a PCV brings limited authority, time, material resources, and Tongan-specific technical expertise to her/his work in Tonga. Nonetheless, PCVs can make small but very important contributions by working with others (i.e., fellow Volunteers, PC staff, and innovative Tongans) to plan, design, field-test, and share effective practices and tools that others can use to meet relevant objectives.

For this work to be sustained, PCVs will preferably do it with . . .

- Tongan innovators (at local and national levels) and
- support of forward-thinking funders.

Understanding Your Students and Helping Them Succeed

BACKGROUND NOTES

Why it's important to understand the students we are trying to serve

- In a “student-centered” approach, PCVs should understand the strengths, interests, and challenges of their students. This helps Volunteers to customize instruction and other supports to students, to ensure their relevance and effectiveness and to help students build on their strengths and interests.

Students and teachers in primary schools

- 16,719 students
- 680 primary school teachers
- Number of primary schools: 132 total (87% = GPS, 13% = “mission” or “church” schools)

Class levels and ages of students

- Grades/classes: 3 through 8 (in rural and a few urban primary schools) PCVs can also work with younger children and teens (and adults)
- Ages: 7 up to 12-13 years old (though possibly younger and older children, as well)

Students' readiness vis'a-vis learning English

- Mixed abilities within any classroom.
- Students come with positive energy, rich cultural and community environments which provide fuel and opportunities for learning, some foundational skills that can be built on.
- But in general: significantly lower English literacy than children in American schools. Children generally lack very fundamental English skills (e.g., phonics and decoding, comprehension strategies, grammar) even when reaching middle school.

Supports students can build on

- Educational opportunities: local schools attempting to adopt modern educational content and methods; other agencies (e.g., Ministry of Health) providing supports to schools and children.
- Supports for education in the home and community: Families often support idea of education and emphasize study, attendance, PTAs provide supports to schools . . . Community organizations (especially churches) can provide venues for ongoing learning.
- A rich physical and social environment for learning.

Challenge students face

- limited daily exposure to English,

- limited quality and quantity of educational opportunities,
- home environments with mixed ability to support students' success in English literacy and education more broadly,
- limited expectations and economic incentives for children to learn English and continue their education,
- health challenges (e.g., nutrition, sleep, communicable and non-communicable diseases),
- cultural reinforcement of children not appearing too "*fiapoto*" and reliance on deferential behavior and corporal punishment.
- learning disabilities.

How to Decide What You'll Teach and Roles You'll Play to Support the MET Curriculum and Student Growth

BACKGROUND NOTES

(NOTE: Some of the content of these Background Notes is included in Peace Corps/Tonga's "What to Teach and How to Teach It" Technical Note. Readers are encouraged to read that document for a more-complete discussion of this topic.)

To be an effective English Literacy Facilitator, PCVs will need a solid grasp of . . .

- the strengths and needs of their students;
- the official curriculum they are to work with;
- additional learning objectives that students are expected to meet (e.g., passing the Class 6 exam);
- effective strategies (e.g., for planning, teaching, assessment . . .) for working with counterparts and supporting student growth within that curriculum – in classroom, extra-curricular, and home/community settings.

The "good" and "less-good" news

- The good news is that *ELFs have much to choose from* (e.g., the official curriculum used for Classes 3 through Form 2, as well as resources provided by fellow PCVs, PC HQ, and other sources).
- The not-so-good news is that *ELFs have much to choose from* (which makes it hard for ELFs to know what to use – especially ELFs who have less training and experience in primary-level literacy education for non-native English speakers).

What priority content will you teach? Options to consider . . .

Option #1: Content that PCV assessments and experience (and feedback from our Project Advisory Committee) indicate is relevant to the students in the class (based on formal and informal assessments of student abilities, interests, limitations . . .)

- "Fundamental" skills that students need extra help with, including:
 - phonics and decoding
 - comprehension and fluency
 - grammar(See PCV-made assessments, Grammar Book, SWBs, lesson plans....)
- Test-taking skills/knowledge (especially for Class 6 exam)
- Study skills
- Creativity, curiosity, willingness to try something new, and critical thinking
- Classroom etiquette, respectful behavior, and teamwork

- Skills that ELF's have special expertise in (e.g., pronunciation, spelling, grammar, particular contextual uses of English literacy skills)

Option #2: Content stated in the MET curriculum

MET's Pupil's Book

- is the book most widely used by most ELF's;
- contains a summary (at end of each unit) of useful content (phonics, grammar, vocabulary, spelling tips) which ELF's can focus activities on. (Also contains vocabulary covered in Class 6 exam.)
- is too advanced/difficult for many students.

MET's Teacher Guide

- contains . . .
 - the main objectives for each unit (in Know and Do Statements);
 - the expected outcomes for each objective;
 - many student-centered activities to teach the unit, organized by:
 - reading
 - writing
 - speaking and listening
- is complicated/difficult for many to use.

MET's English Resource Book for Class 3-6

- is a supplement to the Pupil Book and Teacher Guide.
- has poems, stories, etc. for teachers to use to teach unit objectives.
- is a wonderful source of information!

Option #3: Content suggested by experience and study in the field (including Peace Corps literacy specialists. See "Literacy Wheel" below and PC's related "Building Blocks of Literacy" guide.)



Option #4: “Supplementary materials,” including . . .

- books from school library (e.g., simple reading materials, Reading Box Blue, . . .)
- items made by teachers, ELF, students, and possibly parents (games, charts, worksheets, white boards. . .)
- items provided in:
 - PCV LAVA Kit
 - ELF flash drives.

So how should you decide what to teach?

There are thus many things (e.g., literacy skills, content from other curriculum areas and life contexts, test-taking skills, study skills, positive behaviors and attitudes) that a PCV could focus on. How can a PCV figure out where to focus her/his work?

We can learn from current and past PCVs how they tackled this task by, for example . . .

- Doing an initial, broad assessment of student and school interests, strengths, and needs when the PCV first arrives at site.
- Do ongoing informal observations and communications with students, parents, and others during Summer Break when the PCV first arrives at site.
- Doing more-detailed assessments of specifics of:
 - Student abilities (through various kinds of assessments, including written and oral tests, observation, review of written work, interviews, field-testing of instructional activities, class discussions . . .)
 - Teachers’ and principal’s perspectives about student needs and how PCVs can help.
 - Parents’ perspectives about their children’s needs, how literacy is (or isn’t) supported at home, to clarify how the PCV might fill gaps.

What this means for new PCVs

- Every PCV's experience will be different because:
 - Schools will need different things (e.g., particular topics teachers and students need help with,)
 - ELF's and counterparts have various strengths and interests related to teaching and literacy.
- PCVs will have to decide (on your own, with fellow Volunteers and staff, and with counterparts) which content and activities to use (to respond to the needs of your schools and students and to "fit" with your own strengths).
- PCVs need to patiently adapt your expertise to Tongan realities, regardless of your previous experience.
- This Pre-Service Training and subsequent training and other supports are designed to help you develop your expertise in these areas.

Tonga's National English Curriculum Reform

BACKGROUND NOTES

(NOTE: Some of the content of these Background Notes is included in Peace Corps/Tonga's "What to Teach and How to Teach It" Technical Note. Readers are encouraged to read that document for a more-complete discussion of this topic.)

Why has Tonga shifted to a "child-centered" ("student-centered") approach to teaching of English?

Research and policy worldwide support a shift to a new way of teaching that emphasizes:

- relevant content: a focus on skills that students need to move ahead academically and in other life areas (work, family, community . . .)
- active engagement of students in the learning process (to think, create new knowledge, solve problems, use information, communicate . . .)
- continuous use of assessment to identify learner needs and strengths, monitor progress, make adjustments.
- building on learners' prior knowledge and local learning resources.

How does the Ministry of Education and Training define a "child-centered" ("student-centered") approach?

MET defines its student-centered (child-centered) approach as one which:

- Provides guidance, encouragement, and opportunities for learners to actively develop new knowledge and skills that they can apply in meaningful ways.
- Recognizes that learners learn in different ways and at different rates.
- Encourages learners to learn through application and then to assess and think critically about what they are learning and take responsibility for learning.

How does this contrast with a "teacher-centered" approach?

In a "teacher centered" approach . . .

- Knowledge is created by others and transmitted to the student whose role is to then memorize that knowledge without question.
- The student is thereby a passive recipient of information rather than an active creator of knowledge.

- The student is less likely to take responsibility for the learning process or know how to apply knowledge in creative, practical ways.
- The student is less likely to question sources or accuracy of information.
- The student is less likely to take risks, actively pursue new ideas,

How is MET's new English curriculum "student-centered"?

- Uses instructional activities which help students to **actively** engage in mastering skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) and related sub-skills (vocabulary, letter and word recognition, phonics, spelling, grammar...) through application (practice) to common uses ("themes") of English literacy.
- Uses ongoing assessment to assess students' needs and monitor student progress.
- Uses "differentiated instruction" to customize activities to each students' strengths, needs, . . .

Tonga has joined other nations that are making this shift by . . .

- developing a new English curriculum.
- piloting various aspects of the curriculum in selected sites.
- training principals and teachers.
- seeing PCVs as a way to further develop and pilot (model) new approaches and help Tongan educators adapt them.

What does the English curriculum teach?

Explicit/stated content: Theme-based content related to English literacy/language such as:

- basic skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing)
- sub-skills (vocabulary, grammar, spelling, pronunciation, phonics, letter recognition)

Implicit content: Other important skills, attitudes such as. . .

- Study skills
- Test-taking skills
- Teamwork/collaboration
- Organization of learning activities and materials
- Use of learning tools/technologies
- Curiosity/research/questioning/interest in learning
- Critical thinking/problem solving
- Persistence/resiliency
- Self-confidence/self-efficacy
- Use of strategies for learning outside the classroom
- Content knowledge related to themes (e.g., shopping,)

What materials are used?

- Teacher Guides

- Pupil Books
- Teacher Resource Book
- English Syllabus Overview
- Formative Assessment Book
- Summative Assessment Book
- Supplementary materials (e.g., from school library, made by teacher . . .)

How is the curriculum organized?

- By class level (for ELFs: Class 3 through Class 8/Form 2)
- By unit (8 per year)
- Over the school year (by week, term, school year)

(This requires ELFs to use a “scope and sequence” approach to planning what they will teach over the course of the school year.)

Components covered in the 8 curriculum units

A. Strands

1. Language for Social Interaction – (to maintain relationships and it addresses immediate interactions; face to face or distant)
2. Language for Information – (focus on accessing and retrieving information; from people, books and other sources)
3. Language for Response and Expression – (focus on passing information through various modes and feelings; simple description or explanation, essays, poetry, drama, pictures, stories etc.)

B. Sub-Strands

1. Language Forms – text types
2. Language Features – conventions or rules of texts
3. Reflecting on Language – demonstrate comprehension of text through interpretation, analyzing, evaluating and making judgments.

C. Modes

1. Speaking and Listening
2. Reading and Viewing
3. Writing and Presenting

D. Sample Topics Covered in Units

1. Social Contact
2. Reference Texts
3. Personal Recount
4. Instruction

5. Discussion
6. Narrative
7. Information Report
8. Poetry
9. Description

How has the curriculum been developed and rolled out over the past 5-7 years?

- Developed by MET’s Curriculum Development Unit with help of Australian consultants.
- Rolled out in schools over past 5-7 years.
- Training provided to veteran and new teachers.

What roles have PCVs played in this national reform effort so far?

As “ELFs” (English Literacy Facilitators), PCVs are now completing the fifth year of a five-year English Literacy Project (which is now being extended) in which they have been. . .

- developing and piloting student-centered activities.
- sharing them with counterparts (through modeling, co-teaching, co-planning, teacher workshops, file sharing . . .)
- clarifying (through observation, reflection, and more formal assessments, and through dialogue with our partners) what skill areas PCVs can be most helpful with as “supplementary” ELFs.

What have been the results so far?

For those who believe in the importance and power of education, this is a time which is both exciting and challenging.

- We see promising results in the classroom, as children improve skills and many teachers are trying to use the new curriculum and the tools PCVs are developing.
- PCVs have produced many useful, innovative tools and “lessons learned.” (See our “Idea Book,” our Technical Notes series, the PC/Tonga “Reader,” and the assessments, curricula, and materials developed by PCVs.)

But reform efforts face challenges, too.

- We also encounter confusion and/or resistance to change.
- The national curriculum appears to be too ambitious and hard to use for many students and teachers.
- Traditional practices and reward systems continue (e.g., heavy emphasis on testing, rigid adherence to a challenging curriculum, and reliance on rote memorization of pre-packaged materials . . .)
- Resources to do this work are limited.

P.S., These challenges are also found in educational reform efforts worldwide.

Our PCVs are playing important roles in this national effort.

- G81 is the fifth PCV group to participate in this English Literacy Project.
- Our education partners (at national, district, and school levels) recognize the value that PCVs are bringing to schools and communities.
- MET and other important partners have a better understanding of how they can actively support and work with PCVs.
- We can learn from and build on the great work that Groups 77, 78, 79, 80, and 81 have already done.
- All PCVs are encouraged to use their two years to build on their own strengths to help strengthen our partnership and project.

Peace Corps/Tonga

The Tongan Education System
Key Features

BACKGROUND NOTES

(September 2016)

Vision and Mission of Ministry of Education and Training (MET)

Vision for Education

The people of Tonga will achieve excellence in education that is unique to Tonga.

Mission

To provide equitable, accessible, relevant, and sustainable quality education for all Tongans.

Recent reforms are in response to international education system reform efforts, including:

The Millennium Development Goals (United Nations)

- Goal 1: Eradicate Poverty and Hunger
- Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education by 2015
- Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women
- Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality
- Goal 5: Improve maternal health
- Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS (and Malaria and Other Communicable Diseases)
- Goal 7: Support Environmental Sustainability
- Goal 8: Build Global Partnerships

Education for All Goals (Unesco)

- Goal 1: Provide Comprehensive Early Childhood Education (especially for most vulnerable and disadvantaged)
- Goal 2: Universal Basic Education - Accessible & Free
- Goal 3: Lifelong Learning Opportunities for Youth and Adults
- Goal 4: Improve Literacy Rates
- Goal 5: Ensure Gender Equality (Eliminate gender disparities)
- Goal 6: Quality of Education – Learning Achievement (related to ESD)

Tongan Education System

Education enshrined in law

- Education cited in various government decrees of 1800s.

- Royal Decree in 2009 expanded Compulsory Education Age to ages 4-18,

Types of schools (primary and secondary)

- Government schools (87%)
- Mission schools (Wesleyan, Free Church of Tonga, Seven Day Adventist, Baha'i Faith, Anglican, Tokaikolo, Catholic)

Financing from:

- International sources: NZAid and World Bank and AusAid
- Communities (via PTAs)

School Calendar

- Starts at end of January (42 weeks academic year, 4 weeks break within)
- Four 9-10 week terms, with 1-2 week breaks between terms

Teacher Training

- Increased emphasis on certification of teachers (All teachers should be registered and trained by 2015).
- Training provided (with emphasis on student-centered learning) by:
 - Tonga Institute of Education (TIOE): 2 year program for new teachers;
 - Professional Development Unit trains current teachers.
 - Tupou Tertiary Institute (TTI) also has 2-year certification course for teachers in Wesleyan system.

Structure of Ministry of Education and Training (MET)

Highest level leadership

- Minister of Education
- Director/Chief Education Officer

Divisions

- Policy and Planning (Leadership, Policy, Strategic Planning, Reports)
- Administration and Corporate Service (Administration, EMIS, ICT Procurement, Media Communication & Public Relations, Support Officers, Internal Affairs & UNESCO, Human Resources, Recruitment, Training & Development, Finance, Budget, Grants & Maintenance, Development Budget, Development Project)
- Quality Assurance (Student Assessment and Staff Appraisal)
- Learning and Teaching (Early Childhood Education, Primary, Secondary, Learning & Teaching Resources, Professional Development, EFA, ESD, MDG)
- Post-Secondary Education (Higher Education, National Center for Vocation and Training, Open Schooling, Teacher Education, TIST, TVET, TMPI)

At the School Level

Number of Primary Schools: 132 total

- Government: 113
- Non-Government : 19

School Schedules

8:30 am to 3:20pm Monday-Friday (except holidays)

School Assets

- Classrooms and office space
- Community support
- Play areas
- Experienced and newly-trained staff
- New initiatives (curricula, healthy lifestyles)

Challenges

- Use of old methods.
- Focus on tests
- Limited professional development opportunities for staff.
- Teacher attitudes & preparedness
- Facilities in need of repairs
- Lack of technology for administrative, professional development, or instructional purposes.

Peace Corps/Tonga

**Who Are Your Co-Workers?
And How Can You Work with Them?**

BACKGROUND NOTES

Our working definition of “collaboration”

Partners sharing responsibility, control, resources, work, and reward in a joint effort.

Shared roles include goal setting, planning, implementing, monitoring, reporting, and decision making (continuous improvement) to ensure goals are achieved.

Who are the primary “co-workers” whom PCVs work with at their schools?

In most cases, PCVs work at their schools with:

- A principal (who serves as the PCV’s supervisor)
- One or more teachers, whom the PCV may work with in one or more ways. These teachers might teach English and/or other subjects.

What strengths do co-workers typically bring with them?

Peace Corps promotes a “strengths-based” approach to workplace collaboration. In such an approach, we try to focus on the range of strengths a person might bring to the working relationship and build on those strengths (rather than over-focus on limitations that individuals might bring to the relationship).

Here are some strengths that principals and teachers can have:

- Significant experience in working with students, parents, communities, Ministry, and other stakeholders.
- Knowledge of curricula, assessments, reporting, facilities management, and other functions.
- Prior experience with PCVs.
- Interest in learning about and using innovative practices.

What limitations might principals and teachers have that make collaboration with a PCV difficult?

Principal and teacher limitations might include:

External (contextual) factors

- Limited funds to support school improvements
- Limited teaching resources (e.g., books, technology . . .)
- Limited available training in modern methods
- Limited community/parental support for education
- Pressure to focus on test scores rather than innovative teaching
- Cultural assumptions about age, gender, and ethnic differences (can impact how principals and teachers interact with PCVs)

Internal factors

- Adherence to old, familiar methods
- Limited fluency in English
- Limited computer knowledge
- Limited financial supports and career opportunities
- Tendency to want to rely on PCV to do too much of the work
- Limited familiarity with how to manage libraries and technology
- Isolation

What strengths and limitations might PCVs bring with them?

PCV strengths might include . . .

- Training and experience in use of student-centered methods
- Expertise relevant to school libraries, technology, healthy lifestyles, proposal writing, children's camps,
- Openness to trying new things, positive energy, . . .

PCV limitations might include . . .

- Unfamiliarity with the way things are done in Tongan schools and communities
- Need to juggle a new job with daily living demands in a new country
- Limited fluency in Tongan
- Unrealistic expectations
- Lack of flexibility (ability to adapt, re-think, . . .)
- Limited prior training and experience as teacher (e.g., lesson planning, classroom management.....)
- Limited understanding of technical aspects of teaching English language and literacy
- Isolation

What other factors might support or block collaboration between a PCV and co-workers?

- Site development by PC staff needs to be done properly, to ensure that the PCV has an appropriate role and support at the site.
- Turnover of principals and teachers can undermine continuity of support for PCVs.

- All involved at the site typically need to juggle many demands and lack time to focus on sustaining positive collaboration.

What are potential benefits of collaboration between PCVs and co-workers?

- To optimize efficiency by focusing efforts on agreed-upon goals and activities, using human and material resources in smart, coordinated ways.
- To maximize partner buy-in for the immediate effort and partner interest in using and sustain it over the longer term.
- To build positive relations among partners.
- To build the capacities of partners to carry out similar work in the future.

How can PCVs collaborate with their principals and counterpart teachers?

- Establish positive relations with principals and teachers.
- Assess needs and plan curricula.
 - Define “student centered teaching.”
 - Get to know counterparts’ teaching styles and school culture.
 - Review existing curricula.
 - Use the school library to identify in-school literacy resources.
- Co-plan classes.
- Co-teach in various ways (during and outside regular school hours).
- Plan and implement additional activities (e.g., secondary projects, parent-education activities).
- Monitor progress and share feedback with counterparts.
- Conduct professional development activities with partners.
- Develop financial and in-kind resources with counterparts.

How can PCVs prepare for effective collaboration with supervisors and teachers?

Here are ways for a PCV to build effective working relationships with their principals and counterpart teachers:

1. Build your expertise as an English facilitator so you are able to confidently and professionally show that you have something to offer.
2. Build your ability to communicate with counterparts in a respectful, collegial way. Be sensitive to the strengths and limitations that you and your counterparts face as you embark on a new relationship.
3. Prepare “scripts” (talking points) and handouts to use in your initial interactions with principals and staff. These should succinctly and clearly summarize our project goals, roles PCVs can play in the school, and ways PCVs might collaborate with the principal, teachers, and other local stakeholders (e.g., PTAs).

4. Be patient and flexible as you try out some initial forms of collaboration. Maintain a dialogue with counterparts about how you can work together in ways that work for your counterparts, your students, and *you*.
5. Use Summer Break time productively to introduce yourself to stakeholders.
6. Participate in your Supervisor Orientation Workshop (in November or late January) to help you, Principal, and Co-Teachers to get off to good start in new school year.
7. Use the first term of the new school year as a “get-to-know-you” period. Sit in and observe other teachers in action. Get to know your students. Try out various activities and roles in the school. Do all of this before you settle into more clear patterns of work that build on your strengths and also respond to the needs of your students and co-workers.
8. . . . have fun as you embark on a new professional adventure which will provide both challenges and potentially great rewards for your students, their families and communities, Tongan educators, and *you*.

Peace Corps/Tonga

Co-Teaching Options

BACKGROUND NOTES

Introduction

Co-teaching is one way for PCVs to understand their co-worker teachers and help them understand and become comfortable using student-centered practices. Establishing a co-teaching relationship with other teachers requires patience, diplomacy, and respectful communication on the part of the PCV. Similarly, the counterpart teacher needs to have a willingness to try something new and work with an American who might have more formal training than the counterpart and is likely to be more fluent in English. Gender and age differences might also be hurdles that need to be overcome.

It is thus important for the PCV to do the “get-to-know-you” work described in the “Who Are Your Co-Workers” section of the “Peace Corps/Tonga Reader.”

In our Pre-Service and other training workshops, we introduce Peace Corps Trainees and Volunteers to various ways of doing co-teaching, shown below. Some PCVs have gradually slid into co-teaching relationships with their counterparts by using the first school term to teach English classes using student-centered methods, while having their counterpart(s) observe the PCV in action. Then, in the second school term, the PCV then works more actively in the classroom with the counterpart, who by then has become familiar with the particular teaching activities the PCV brings with her/him. The co-teaching models used by the PCV and counterpart can then vary over time, to make their work together more interesting, respect and build on the counterpart’s strengths, and respond to various teaching and learning challenges that the students and school present.

Readers are encouraged to read the following information about possible co-teaching models they can use, talk with fellow PCVs and staff about what has worked for PCVs in Tonga, and then try these models out during training sessions and at their sites. Examples of co-teaching can also be seen on YouTube.

Models of co-teaching that PCVs might adapt

This is taken directly from the work of Marilyn Friend and Lynne Cook (1996a).* They have presented several approaches to co-teaching that provide ways for two teachers to work together in a classroom. Their videotape (1996b) also explains these approaches, which are briefly discussed below. They include: one teach, one support; parallel teaching; alternative teaching; station teaching; and team teaching.

1. ONE TEACH, ONE SUPPORT

With this model one teacher has the primary responsibility for planning and teaching, while the other teacher moves around the classroom helping individuals and observing particular behaviors. For example, one teacher could present the lesson while the other walks around or one teacher presents the lesson while the other distributes materials.

Some advantages of this approach are:

- Students receive individual help in a timely manner
- It's easier to keep students on task because of the proximity of the teacher.
- It saves time when distributing materials.
- As a process observer, the supporting teacher can observe behavior not seen by the teacher directing the lesson.
- The supporting teacher can walk around and still continue to observe the other teacher model good teaching practices.

Some disadvantages of this approach are:

- Through the eyes of the students, one teacher has more control than the other.
- Students often relate to one person as the teacher and the other as a teacher's aide.
- Having a teacher walk around during the lesson may be distracting to some students.
- Students begin to expect immediate one-on-one assistance.

2. PARALLEL TEACHING

In parallel teaching, the teacher and student teacher plan jointly but split the classroom in half to teach the same information at the same time. For example, both teachers could be explaining the same math problem-solving lesson in two different parts of the room. If the room had two computers, each teacher could use a computer to model the use of the Internet or a new piece of software to half of the class. Each half of the class could be involved in a literature study group during a novel study.

Some advantages of this approach are:

- Pre-planning provides better teaching.
- It allows teachers to work with smaller groups.
- Each teacher has the comfort level of working separately to teach the same lesson.
- Splitting the class allows students to be separated who need to be.

Some disadvantages of this approach are:

- Both teachers need to be competent in the content so the students will learn equally.
- The pace of the lesson must be the same so they finish at the same time.
- There must be enough flexible space in the classroom to accommodate two groups.

- The noise level must be controlled.

3. ALTERNATIVE TEACHING

In alternative teaching, one teacher manages most of the class while the other teacher works with a small group inside or outside of the classroom. The small group does not have to integrate with the current lesson. For example, a teacher could take an individual student out to catch him/her up on a missed assignment. A teacher could work with an individual or a small group for assessment purposes or to teach social skills. A small group of students could work together for remedial or extended challenge work.

Some advantages of this approach are:

- Working with small groups or with individuals helps meet the personal needs of students.
- Both teachers can remain in the classroom so one teacher can informally observe the other modeling good teaching.

Some disadvantages of this approach are:

- Groups must vary with purpose and composition or the students in the group will quickly become labeled (e.g., the “smart” group).
- The students might view the teacher working with the larger group as the teacher in control.
- Noise level must be controlled if both teachers are working in the classroom.
- There must be adequate space.

4. STATION TEACHING

Both teachers divide the instructional content, and each takes responsibility for planning and teaching part of it. In station teaching, the classroom is divided into various teaching centers. The teacher and student teacher are at particular stations; the other stations are run independently by the students or by a teacher’s aide. For example, three or more science stations, each containing a different experiment, could be organized with the teacher and student teacher working with the two stations that need the most supervision. It is also possible to use an aide or parent volunteer to supervise stations.

Some advantages of this approach are:

- Each teacher has a clear teaching responsibility.
- Students have the benefit of working in small groups.
- Teachers can cover more material in a shorter period of time.
- Fewer discipline problems occur because students are engaged in active, hands-on learning.
- It is possible to separate students who need to work away from each other.
- This approach maximizes the use of volunteers or extra adults in the room.

Some disadvantages of this approach are:

- To work effectively, this approach requires a lot of preplanning.
- All materials must be prepared and organized in advance.
- The noise level will be at a maximum.
- All stations must be paced so teaching ends at the same time.
- One or more groups must work independently of the teacher.

5. TEAM TEACHING

Both teachers are responsible for planning, and they share the instruction of all students. The lessons are taught by both teachers who actively engage in conversation, not lecture, to encourage discussion by students. Both teachers are actively involved in the management of the lesson and discipline. This approach can be very effective with the classroom teacher and a student teacher or two student teachers working together.

Some advantages of this approach are:

- Each teacher has an active role.
- Students view both teachers as equals.
- Both teachers are actively involved in classroom organization and management.
- This approach encourages risk taking. Teachers may try things in pairs that they wouldn't try alone.
- "Two heads are better than one."

Some disadvantages of this approach are:

- Pre-planning takes a considerable amount of time.
- Teachers' roles need to be clearly defined for shared responsibility.

Co-Teaching References

Friend, M. & Cook, L. (1996a). *Interactions: Collaboration skills for school professionals*. White Plains: Longman.

Friend, M. & Cook, L. (1996b). *The Power of 2: Making a difference through co-teaching* [Videotape]. (Available from the Forum on Education, Smith Research Center, Suite 103, Indiana University/On-site, Bloomington, IN 47405-1006)

Walsh, J.J. & Snyder, D. (1993, April). *Cooperative teaching: An effective model for all students* ED 361 930. Paper presented at the annual convention of the Council for Exceptional Children, San Antonio, TX. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 361 930)

**Retrieved from Liberty University Student Teaching Handbook 2010-2011*

Student-Centered Strategies: Overview

BACKGROUND NOTES

(NOTE: The content of these Background Notes is included in Peace Corps/Tonga’s “What to Teach and How to Teach It” Technical Note. Readers are encouraged to read that document for a more-complete discussion of this topic.)

How do our various partners and stakeholders define a “student-centered approach” to English literacy education?

Guidelines suggested by MET

MET defines its child/student-centered approach as one which:

- Provides guidance, encouragement, and opportunities for learners to actively develop new English-related knowledge and skills.
- Recognizes that learners learn in different ways and at different rates. (Therefore instructors should use “differentiated instruction” to customize activities to each students’ strengths, needs, . . .)
- Uses instructional activities which help students to *actively* engage in mastering skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) and related sub-skills (vocabulary, letter and word recognition, phonics, spelling, grammar...) through application to (practice with) common uses (“themes”) of English literacy.
- Uses ongoing assessment to assess students’ needs and monitor student progress.

Guidelines suggested by PC HQ

- Focus instruction systematically on helping students master components (building blocks) of literacy.
- Take a bi-literacy approach (blending teaching of English literacy and mother tongue literacy).
- Build support for literacy in schools but also in homes and communities.
- Adapt the activities in the PC Building Blocks of Literacy manual to your particular school context.

Guidelines suggested by PC/Tonga staff

Research worldwide supports a shift to a new way of teaching that emphasizes:

- relevant content: a focus on applied literacy skills that students need to move ahead academically and in other life areas (work, family, community . . .)

- active engagement of students in the learning process (to think, create new knowledge, solve problems, use information, communicate . . .)
- continuous use of assessment (by teachers and students) to identify learner needs and strengths, monitor progress, make adjustments.
- building on learners’ prior knowledge and local learning resources.

But we need to figure out how to adapt these guidelines to the realities of Tongan schools. These include:

- What the official curriculum asks for and supports.
- Other learning outcomes (e.g., passing exams) expected of schools.
- The perspective and expertise of principals and teachers vis-à-vis English literacy education.
- Large class sizes.
- Limited material resources.
- Competing demands from families and communities placed on students.

What kinds of “student-centered practices” have stakeholders identified?

Practices suggested by MET

- Introduce bite size new vocabulary, concepts . . .
- Give multiple opportunities to practice individually, in small groups, and in whole group.
- Link language learning to real life tasks/applications.
- Precede written activities with speaking activities.
- Encourage students to brainstorm ideas, vocabulary (in response to open-ended questions).
- Have students work in pairs and small groups to share ideas, model for each other, give feedback to peers, provide opportunities to use English to communicate . . .
- Use role plays to allow for modeling and practice in use of English communication skills.
- Use songs, games, flashcards, realia (real objects) related to themes . . .
- Provide templates (e.g., sample letters, Cloze activities) which allow students to “fill in the blanks” and understand various ways oral and written English is used.
- Use shared reading activities.

Practices suggested by PC HQ

- Use routines and structures (e.g., book routines).
- Continually assess (through observation, “tests,” etc.) student progress, needs, strengths, interests, and use that information to guide your activities.
- Help counterparts build their capacity (through co-teaching ...)

- Be creative, flexible, and well prepared.
- Make reading materials accessible and read them multiple times.
- Use visual aids (e.g., pictures, charts, symbols, signs ...)

Practices suggested by PC/Tonga staff and Volunteers

- Games (cooperative/competitive, individuals/teams) (e.g., cards)
- Performing arts (music, public speaking, role plays, miming, movement/aerobics/stretching)
- Visual arts (making or viewing drawings, photos, videos . . .)
- Reading
- Writing (poems, lists, . . .)
- Research projects (gathering and reporting information)
- Portfolios
- Worksheets

(See FLASH and LAVA Kit. And consider the kinds of participatory language instruction activities modeled in our PST language classes.)

We want Trainees to develop a tool kit of useful student-centered practices . . .

- During PST
- In first 2-3 months at your site
- In first three months (first term) of new school year
- Beyond....

How can PCVs further develop their expertise in this area?

- Read relevant resources on the PCV FLASH and other PC-provided documents
- Share ideas and questions with other PCVs (in trainings, etc.)
- Use first 3-6 months at site to learn from counterparts about the kinds of practices they use, how they might fit into a “child-centered” (“student-centered”) approach, and whether and how they might work with you to develop and field test child/student-centered activities
- Work with other PCVs (including in an existing or new PCV committee or work group), and Tongan agencies to create new student-centered materials related to various literacy skills and themes.
- Adapt your prior experience teaching or working with other subjects (e.g., art, sports, gardening, etc.)
- Adapt “student-centered” (active learning) methods learned in your Tongan language classes.

Planning Your Instructional and Assessment Activities

BACKGROUND NOTES

Why is it important to plan your instructional and assessment activities?

- A relevant, well-designed plan can ensure that your instructional and assessment activities are effective, well-organized, and achieve the results you want.
- You are new to this job and will need to be well organized, with effective, user-friendly activities and materials to use when given the chance.
- You want to feel confident, hit the ground running, and demonstrate (to your students, counterparts, and parents) that you are ready to contribute.
- You will have limited time in each class session, will need to juggle many things at once (e.g., becoming familiar with the students and existing routines and resources, while getting started in a positive way with each class).

What time periods will you need to plan for?

- Individual lessons typically organized in 50-60 minute segments
- Multiple lessons typically organized by:
 - week
 - unit (8 per year)
 - term (usually 2 units per term, 4 weeks per unit)

(Note: Class 6 tries to finish all 8 units by June, to prepare for Class 6 exam at end of September.)

How to plan an individual lesson

It is important that you work with your principal and other teachers to ensure that the content and timing of your activities are helpful. This is true whether you are working alone with students (in a pullout activity or after school activity) or with a counterpart in the same room.

You should focus your activities on agreed-upon skills that are relevant to your students' needs and which support what your principal and fellow teachers are trying to achieve in English literacy and other curriculum areas.

Lesson plans vary from PCV to PCV but typically include (explicitly or implicitly):

- Title of lesson
- Objectives (KSAs students should strengthen as a result of participating in this lesson. Relate these to Tongan Know & Do Statements where possible.)
- MET Curriculum Unit(s) the lesson is relevant for

- Students the lesson is designed for
- Time required
- Resources required (materials, equipment . . .)
- Activities (instructional and assessment activities, with time for each activity, role of co-teachers...) A common sequence of activities in a lesson might include:
 - An introduction to explain focus of this lesson and help students get focused/organized/energized)
 - Review to activate students' prior knowledge and interest related to this session's topic
 - Introduction of new skills/concepts to be practiced in this session
 - Guided practice of new skills (as discrete skills and in combination with others) with emphasis on practical applications
 - Review and assessment
 - Celebration
- Other relevant notes

(PCVs should try to use a similar lesson plan structure, to make sharing of plans with other PCVs and counterparts efficient.)

What resources can PCVs use for lesson planning?

- MET resources: Teacher Guide, Pupil Book, Teacher Resource Book, Teacher's Planner Book . . .
- Resources from PC/Tonga
 - The Assessment Book (in hard copy and on FLASH)
 - FLASH containing:
 - PCV-made lesson ideas
 - Other assessment tools
 - Peace Corps' Literacy Resource Manual
 - Other

How might PCVs share plans with other PCVs and counterparts?

Share with fellow ELFs

- Via on-line and/or FLASH file sharing system
- Via email
- In one-to-one communications
- Through participation in a PCV committee/group that develops instructional and assessment resources
- In upcoming PC training events (e.g., IST, MST,)

Share with counterparts (priority for this year)

- Via on-line file sharing
- In meetings at your school and/or in your district

Classroom Management

BACKGROUND NOTES

What is “classroom management” and why is it important?

Our working definition: “How teachers organize the space, time, and material and human resources available to them to ensure achievement of objectives.”

Why classroom management is important:

- In general, it is important to provide a well-organized, productive learning environment for students . . .
 - to make good use of the time and resources available, to help students reach desired learning goals.
 - to maintain teacher morale, energy, efficiency.
- For PCVs in particular, they face special challenges related to classroom management, including . . .
 - unfamiliarity with student language and culture and with Tongan school culture.
 - (for some) limited prior teaching experience.

What are some possible classroom management challenges a PCV might face?

- Student abilities and behaviors
 - Unruly behavior,
 - Students hitting or punishing each other,
 - Students doing work for other students,
 - Lack of focus by students,
 - Different skill levels of students,
 - Different levels of interest and participation shown
 - Lack of enthusiasm/interest.
- Classroom environment
 - Large class sizes,
 - Noise and other distractions in classroom environment,
 - Lack of materials and equipment.
 - Ineffective seating arrangements
- Teacher practices: ineffective curriculum content and activities
- Ineffective reward systems for students and teachers:
 - lack of appropriate positive reinforcement and
 - reliance on inappropriate forms of reinforcement.

What are potential causes of classroom management problems?

- What the students bring with them such as . . .
 - learning disabilities and other physical problems [hearing, vision, nutrition, other health problems],
 - different learning styles,
 - unequal educational backgrounds,
 - lack of support in students' homes,
 - negative experience with schooling,
 - lack of prior experience with student centered type of instruction,)
- The background of the staff at the school (e.g., being wedded to old ways of teaching and treating children, limited training, limited budgets)

What strategies have PCVs used to prevent or respond to classroom management problems?

- Use of routines and structures such as . . .
 - Writing "Do Now" assignments on board to maintain focus (and erase tasks as they complete them);
 - Using familiar "templates" of activities while varying the content covered within the activities (e.g., "matching" games that match pictures with written or spoken names of the items depicted).
- Optimizing a class's social dynamics by using . . .
 - Strategic seating arrangements
 - Positive reinforcement (making it fun, stimulating, using various learning styles and activities . . .);
 - Clever uses of competition;
 - Physical movement to reduce jitters, fidgets, hitting, and other distracting behaviors and wake students up;
 - Use of separate spaces (e.g., library . . .) to vary the learning environment, move students to a place where they can think and act differently and/or access different learning tools, and/or remove students from distracting social or physical environments.
- Strategies for reducing and responding to unruly behavior:
 - "Courtesy Counts"
 - "The Countdown"
 - "Suffering" (yard work)
- Differentiated learning/instruction (to customize activities to different needs, strengths, etc.)
 - Using small groups to:
 - Group kids by skill level
 - Group kids in mixed skill levels
 - Group kids by common interests or leaning styles
 - Assigning different tasks to different groups

- Coming prepared with more work than you'll ever need.
- Having co-teacher on hand to:
 - Deal with discipline/negative behavior issues.
 - Explain instructions.
- Using students to help with various classroom management tasks (e.g., explaining activities to other students).

How can new PCVs develop expertise in the area of classroom management?

- Ask fellow Volunteers what types of classroom management problems they face and how they and counterparts deal with them.
- Observe how other Volunteers and Tongan teachers manage their classes (during site visits to PCV schools, HVV, etc.)
- In the first few weeks after arriving at site, talk with your supervisor and counterpart teachers to ask what classroom management issues they face, how they handle them, and how you as the new PCV might be of help. (Might you, for example, do pull out groups? Or help a fellow teacher teach English lessons? Or do assessment to clarify what special help students might need? Or introduce new kinds of teaching activities to help kids stay focused? Or conduct physical education activities to help kids relax, channel their energy more constructively, etc.?)
- Try out various classroom management practices and keep a log, to monitor what works and what doesn't work so well. Also record classroom management practices you observe (e.g., sleepy kids, disrespectful kids, "hitting," irregular attendance). Talk with your supervisor and co-workers about what you observe and learn, to get their feedback and suggestions. Also talk with fellow Volunteers to get their insights.
- Share what you are learning about classroom management with fellow PCVs and PC staff.

Peace Corps/Tonga

Decoding: Assessment and Instructional Strategies

BACKGROUND NOTES

(NOTE: Much of the content of these Background Notes is included in Peace Corps/Tonga’s “What to Teach and How to Teach It” Technical Note. Readers are encouraged to read that document for a more-complete discussion of this topic.)

What is “decoding”?

According to PC’s “Building Blocks of Literacy” resource book, decoding skills consist of:

- print awareness and knowledge
- alphabet knowledge
- phonological and phonemic awareness
- phonics

These sub-skills are shown on the right side of the Peace Corps “Literacy Wheel” as the fundamental skills required for reading comprehension (shown on the left side of the wheel):



These are explained further below:

- print awareness and knowledge

Print awareness and knowledge are normally acquired in a child's natural environment (i.e., home, school, place of worship, neighborhood/community) where the child is learning that written words are symbols that communicate ideas and information.

In some societies/communities, the use and availability of printed materials can be limited. This is further exacerbated in Tonga, where the print materials that are available are often in a language which children do not understand or use, and rely on background knowledge that the children do not have.

PCVs can develop print-rich environments in which the print materials are attractive, meaningful, engaging . . .

- alphabet knowledge

Alphabet knowledge is the ability to name the letters of the alphabet and recognize the letter symbols in print. “

Alphabet knowledge is NOT “identifying the letter sounds.”

PCVs can expose students to letters in multiple, engaging ways, so they can identify the name of the letter, see how it is written/printed, practice writing of letters, and recognize the similarity of certain letters (e.g., “b” and “d.”)

- phonological and phonemic awareness

Phonological awareness is the ability to recognize how sounds function in words.

Phonemic awareness is the understanding of the smallest sound units (i.e., the phonemes) in words.

PCVs can use:

Rhyming activities (to help students to identify if different words in the same sound).

Sentence segmentation (to help students to be able to distinguish the individual words that make up a sentence or phrase).

Syllable segmentation (to help students to be able to break words into syllables).

Blending phonemes

- phonics

“Phonics” is an instructional approach for teaching literacy that emphasizes understanding the components (sounds and functions of letters) rather than memorizing whole words.

Why is focusing on decoding important for Tongan students?

- Observation and other assessments indicate Tongan students generally lack fundamental decoding-related knowledge and skills.
- This is exacerbated by the facts that Tongan children generally have limited exposure to meaningful oral or written English, and so are not familiar with the sounds and forms of oral and written English.
- Without these “building blocks of literacy” skills, it is very difficult for students to move forward with development English literacy development and academically more generally, especially starting in Form 1 when instruction in all subjects requires fluency in English.

What might PCVs do to further develop decoding-related expertise and tools and help Tongan colleagues adapt those tools?

Some ideas:

- Read relevant resources on the PCV FLASH and other PC-provided documents.
- Identify decoding-related strategies (e.g., songs, games, and other activities) you bring with you. Share ideas and questions with other PCVs (in trainings, etc.)
- Use first 3-6 months at site to learn from counterparts about the kinds of practices they use to teaching decoding-related skills, how they might fit into a “child-centered” (“student-centered”) approach, and whether and how they might work with you to develop and field test child/student-centered activities
- Participate in the M&E or other relevant committee to help further develop assessments and innovative curricula (including reading materials) related to decoding.
- Draw on models of decoding education inside and outside Tonga (including activities brought here by G81s and PC’s “Building Blocks of Literacy” resource book).
- Ask your principal and counterparts how they assess and teach decoding.
- Do decoding-related assessments and share the resulting data, to inform decision makers, curriculum developers, etc.
- Work with relevant agencies and local schools to help Tongan colleagues understand and adapt useful tools related to decoding.

What Is “Grammar”? And How Can PCVs Teach It in the Tongan English Curriculum?

BACKGROUND NOTES

Developed by Mark Coopriider (Group 77) and Paul Jurmo (DPT)

(NOTE: Some of the content of these Background Notes is included in Peace Corps/Tonga’s “What to Teach and How to Teach It” Technical Note. Readers are encouraged to read that document for a more-complete discussion of this topic.)

What is “English grammar”?

A common definition:

. . . the body of rules that describe the structure of expressions in the English language, including words, phrases, clauses, and sentences.

What types of grammar are taught in the Tongan English curriculum?

- Parts of speech: verbs, nouns, pronouns, prepositions, articles, conjunctions, adjectives, adverbs, modals . . .
- Syntax: how those parts of speech are assembled in proper word order in phrases and sentences

Examples of grammar-related questions taken from MET English exams

(Multiple Choice)

1. Malia danced _____ in the concert.
 - A. beauty
 - B. beautify
 - C. beautiful
 - D. beautifully

2. The manager talks to ____ workers politely.
 - A. a
 - B. an
 - C. the
 - D. and

3. What _____ the Good Samaritan do?
A. did
B. done
C. don't
D. doing
4. We will _____ the meeting this afternoon.
A. attend
B. attends
C. attended
D. attending
5. One of the women _____ carrying a lot of firewood.
A. do
B. have
C. is
D. are
6. A friend of _____ saw the fearful accident.
A. my
B. mine
C. me
D. I

(Sentence translation and sentence writing)

7. Write a good sentence for each of the following words

- a. because _____
b. behind _____

8. Translate these sentences into English

Ko e ha 'oku ke toutou li'aki ako ai?

(Sentence re-arranging and completion)

9. Rearrange the words in order to form correct sentences
in The staying hotel the enjoyed visitors

10. Complete this conversation by filling the spaces provided

Mother: "Did you finish the whole house?"

Daughter: "No, I _____"

Mother: "Can I finish it tomorrow?"

Daughter: "But you will be _____ to school."

(Cloze Activities)

11. Choose the correct words from the box to fill in the blanks
on in shop faithfully dearly apply job leader

12. I would like to _____ for a job in your shop. I have passed my sixth form Exam _____ 2010. I love working with people and helping them out. At our church, I am the youth group _____. If I get this _____ I promise to do my best.

Some tips for teaching grammar

1. Keep it simple and focused (thru use of familiar routines). Remember that English is not a first language for almost all of your students.
2. Start with simple and build up in sequential way.
3. Teach grammar through contextualized applications (using language taken from other subject areas and real-world themes).
4. Provide lots of practice time (use of various types of grammar) but in varied, authentic, and fun ways.
5. Correct miscues, but in a gentle way (which encourages students to do their own "miscue analysis" and self-correction).
6. Link English grammar to Tongan grammar concepts that students are familiar with.

A suggested sequence of grammar-related topics

1. "Be" Present or "Linking Verbs": am, is, are
2. Subject Pronouns: I, you, he, she, it, we, they
3. Possessive Pronouns/Adjectives: my, our, your, his, her, its, their
4. Simple Present (e.g., We eat lu every Sunday.)
5. Present Progressive/Continuous: (e.g., They are going to town.)
6. Prepositions (of time and place): (e.g., My family is moving to Vava'u.)
7. Object Pronouns: me, we, you, him, her, it, them (e.g., Sulieti takes food to him.)
8. Simple Past: (e.g., I went to town yesterday.)
9. Past Progressive (e.g., Ana was talking to me.)
10. Simple Future (e.g., The test will be difficult.)
11. Modals ("Helping Verbs") (e.g., can/could)
12. Comparatives and Superlatives (e.g., more/most, better/best)
13. Present and Past Perfect (e.g., "She has/had gone.")
14. Gerunds (e.g., "Reading is my favorite hobby.")
15. Infinitives (e.g., "I want to go to 'Eua.")

Other important grammar-related topics

- Demonstrative Pronouns (this, that, these, those)
- "WH" question words (what, when, where, who, why)
- "Non-action" verbs

- There is/There are
- Count vs. Non-Count Nouns
- Articles (a, an, the)
- “Some” vs. “any,” “many” vs. “much”
- Giving Instructions (Imperatives)
- Giving Suggestions (e.g., Let's, Why don't)

Two general approaches to teaching grammar

OPTION 1: Teaching grammar indirectly (“inductive” teaching)

- Done thru activities that expose students to properly used English, such as songs/chants . . . daily routines . . . speaking activities (role plays, discussions) . . . reading activities (group, pair, independent, read-alouds, reader’s theater) . . . listening activities (dictation, re-telling) . . . cloze activities . . . games . . .
- Tips for inductive teaching: Create resources that reinforce (through repetition) desired grammar point in a natural, authentic way. (Avoid nonsensical phrases.)

OPTION 2: Teaching grammar directly (“deductive” teaching)

Use centers/worksheets/blackboard activities, including:

- Translation activities (for words, phrases, sentences)
- Fill in the blanks
- Multiple choice
- Re-writing sentences into correct form or different form (tense, voice)
- Sentence expansion (e.g., add time or place words)
- Guided creative writing
- Picture-guided writing
- Games

To build your expertise in grammar-teaching methods

- Read PST handouts and MET curriculum.
- Prepare and try out some grammar activities during PST.
- Talk with counterparts and fellow PCVs.
- Try some games and other grammar activities during the summer break.

Integrating English with Other Subjects

BACKGROUND NOTES

(NOTE: Some of the content of these Background Notes is included in Peace Corps/Tonga's "What to Teach and How to Teach It" Technical Note. Readers are encouraged to read that document for a more-complete discussion of this topic.)

What do we mean by "integrating English with other subjects"?

When we use the term "integrating English with other subjects," we are referring to activities which help learners develop English literacy skills through application to other academic and real-life themes. Here are some examples:

- Teaching the English terminology for numbers and other math-related concepts and functions.
- "English for Health" activities which help students develop the particular English language vocabulary related to physical exercise, hygiene functions, safe behaviors, or healthy foods.
- Occupational English activities in which learners master particular vocabulary (e.g., names of tools, materials, and functions) related to a particular occupation.

Why might it be useful/important for PCVs to integrate the teaching of English with other subjects?

Such "integrated English" activities can . . .

- help learners:
 - relate English terms to words and concepts they are already familiar with;
 - see English as something meaningful, useful, interesting;
- provide real opportunities for learners to practice applying English skills to authentic uses of English, rather than learning abstract, less-meaningful forms of the language;
- prepare students for secondary education and real-life roles.

How is English integrated with other subjects in the MET curriculum?

The syllabus says

In MET 's English curriculum units, other subjects are interwoven into units which are organized around these kinds of "themes":

- Tongan Culture and Values
- Life Skills
- Education for Sustainable Livelihoods
- Enterprise
- Education for sustainable development

How are Tonga PCVs integrating English with other subjects?

PCVs are integrating English with other subjects in these ways:

- English for Health activities including:
 - Tooth-brushing song
 - Using English to give instructions in physical exercise activities (e.g., basketball).
 - Integrating physical activities into English classes (e.g., “Simon says stand up. Simon says jump three times.”)
- English for Earth activities including:
 - Using English in school garden activities.
 - Reading Sight Word Books about the importance of not burning rubbish.
 - Singing the “Sima Vai” song.
- Guided reading of materials (including Sight Word Books) on various themes.
- Working with a science teacher to teach the English vocabulary related to science lessons.

How might PCVs work with counterparts to integrate English with other subjects?

Here are some examples:

- PCV and counterpart co-facilitate a lesson which repeats concepts taught in a previous Tongan-language science class, with the PCV introducing the English vocabulary related to that previous lesson.
- PCV conducts a game which teaches English vocabulary related to a particular topic, while the counterpart helps manage the activity by explaining rules, coaching one of the “teams,” etc.
- Counterpart works with the PCV to make teaching/learning materials (and related assessments) that teach English vocabulary relevant to a particular subject.
- Counterpart observes the PCV teaching a theme-based activity and then gives feedback to the PCV about how to improve that activity.
- PCV and counterpart use “project-based learning” to carry out a multi-phase learning activity in which students collect information related to a theme and present their findings, using Tongan and English in their presentations.

How can PCVs further develop their expertise in this area?

- Read relevant resources on the PCV FLASH and other PC-provided documents (e.g., “Teaching in the Whole Garden” which describes how to use a vegetable garden to help learners develop multiple kinds of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, including English and math.)
- Share ideas and questions with other PCVs (in trainings, etc.)
- Use first 3-6 months at site to learn from counterparts and others about community issues you might focus on in integrated lessons.
- Work with other PCVs (including in an existing or new PCV committee or work group), counterparts, and Tongan agencies to create new materials (e.g., Sight Word Books and more-advanced reading materials, games, etc.)
- Adapt your prior experience teaching or working with other subjects (e.g., art, sports, gardening, etc.)
- Adapt “integrated language” methods learned in your Tongan language classes.

Peace Corps/Tonga

“English for Health” and “English for Earth”

BACKGROUND NOTES

What do we mean by “English for Health” and “English for Earth”?

The terms “English for Health” and “English for Earth” were coined by Peace Corps/Tonga staff to refer to English literacy education activities that integrate the learning of English with the development of health and environmental knowledge, skills, and behaviors. As such, “English for Health” and “English for Earth” are examples of the “integrating English with other subjects” that is called for in the MET’s English syllabus.

Why do we focus on “health” and “earth” (environment) in particular?

“English for Health” came from early discussions (in approximately 2012, when our new English Literacy Project was being conceived) between our post staff and the Ministry of Education and Training and the Ministry of Health. The two Ministries asked that our PCVs, as part of their English literacy work in schools, also focus some of their attention on helping students and communities deal with the “NCDs” (“non-communicable diseases) that were (and still are) plaguing Tonga. These NCDs include obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and other health problems attributed to poor diet, lack of exercise, smoking, and other unhealthy behaviors.

As our project got underway in late 2012 and we revised our Project Framework with the help of staff at PC headquarters, we settled on the concept of “English for Health” to ensure that our PCVs retained their primary role of English Literacy Facilitators while also using English literacy activities as a way to promote healthy lifestyles.

Similarly, in the case of “English for Earth,” from the start of the project we recognized that Tonga was being impacted by significant threats to the health of the environment (e.g., rising sea levels, droughts, poor farming practices, pollution of groundwater, destruction of reefs). By 2014, about 1.5 years into the project, our PCVs were also starting to get access to various sources of funding and in-kind assistance for environmental projects. So we borrowed from “English for Health” and created “English for Earth” as a term for English literacy activities that incorporated themes, knowledge, and skills related to environmental sustainability.

What are some examples of “English for Health” and “English for Earth” activities that our PCVs have engaged in?

“English for Health” activities have included integrating the use/teaching/learning of English with:

- physical exercise activities such as . . .
 - Zumba/dance/aerobics
 - soccer
 - running (before school, after-school)
 - walking (with local women’s group)
 - hiking (with ‘Eua Girls Outdoor Club)
 - after-school basketball league
 - using physical actions (miming, stretching, “Simon Says) to “wake up” students while helping them learn various English skills.
- hygiene education related to:
 - tooth brushing (alternating brushing of teeth with singing of “tooth brush” song)
 - simple first aid (e.g., cleaning of wounds) with help of Red Cross
- teen education about safe behaviors and wise choices.
- nutrition education related to:
 - awareness of healthy foods
 - growing of vegetables in school garden
 - reading of Sight Word Books related to healthy foods
 - preparation of healthy snacks and meals

“English for Earth” activities have included:

- Environmental clean-up activities, such as:
 - Involving students in picking up rubbish on the school grounds and sorting it into recyclable and non-recyclable activities.
 - Incorporating community clean-up activities into regular “‘Eua Girls Outdoor Club” hikes.
 - Working with community leaders and youth group and governmental and non-governmental organizations to create a community waste management system. Students painted environmental messages displayed around the community.
- Water catchment upgrades at the school in which . . .
 - Community members and students work with an outside agency to repair and replace school water catchment systems; students (a) learn about the importance of clean water and how to use their water tanks properly (and learning an English-language “Sima Vai” [“Water Tank”] song); (b) write English-language “thank you” letters to the donor agency.
- School garden activities (See “English for Health” example above.)

- Incorporating environmental science vocabulary and concepts (e.g., about the rain cycle, sea creatures) into English lessons.
- Reading of Sight Word Books on environmental themes (e.g., “Stop Burning Rubbish” and “The Bush”)
- Introducing teen girls to “nature” (i.e., remote, “bush” areas that are typically off-limits to girls and women) through a Girls Outdoor Club.

Why might it be useful/important for PCVs to integrate the teaching of English with health and environmental themes?

Such “integrated English” activities can . . .

- help learners:
 - relate English terms to words and concepts they are already familiar with;
 - see English as something meaningful, useful, interesting;
 - practice applying English skills to authentic uses of English, rather than learning abstract, less-meaningful forms of the language;
 - prepare for secondary education and real-life roles (as consumers, family members, workers, business owners);
 - prevent and solve health and environmental problems commonly faced by Tongans;
- help counterparts to develop skills in this area of “integrated English.”

How might PCVs work with counterparts to integrate English with health and environmental education?

Here are some examples:

- When they arrive at their sites, PCVs should ask their supervisors and counterparts what kinds of health and environmental activities already exist at the school (e.g., how health and environmental themes are covered in the curriculum, what health and environmental activities go on outside the classroom). Ask them how the PCV might support those activities in general and whether and how the PCV might help students learn useful English-language health and environmental terms.
- The PCV might work with one or more counterparts (who teach health and environmental topics) to co-plan and co-facilitate a series of activities in which the PCV uses English to reinforce health or environmental concepts taught in a previous Tongan-language class, with the PCV helping students to master relevant English vocabulary.
- PCV leads physical activities (e.g., sports, “tag,” Zumba) while using English to communicate instructions, vocabulary, . . . while the counterpart helps manage the activity by explaining rules, coaching one of the “teams,” etc.
- Counterpart works with the PCV to make teaching/learning materials (and related assessments) that teach English vocabulary relevant to a particular subject. Options

include posters, flash cards, collages (of photos cut out from magazines, showing particular health or environmental vocabulary).

- PCV and counterpart show an environmental- or health-related video and discuss the content, vocabulary, etc. used in the film with the students. (Students might complete a worksheet or do another activity in which they develop English skills and content knowledge simultaneously.)
- Counterpart observes the PCV teaching a health- or environmental-theme-based activity (e.g., creating a compost pile, sorting rubbish into recyclable and non-recyclable items) and then gives feedback to the PCV about how to improve that activity.
- PCV and counterpart use “project-based learning” to carry out a multi-phase learning activity (creating a seed bed, shopping for food products and then using them to create a healthy meal) in which students collect information related to a theme and present their findings, using Tongan and English in their presentations.

How can PCVs further develop their expertise in this area?

- Read relevant resources on the PCV FLASH and other PC-provided documents (e.g., “Teaching in the Whole Garden” which describes how to use a vegetable garden to help learners develop multiple kinds of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, including English and math.)
- Share ideas and questions with other PCVs (in trainings, etc.)
- Use first 3-6 months at site to learn from counterparts and others about community health and environmental issues you might focus on in integrated lessons.
- Work with other PCVs (including in an existing or new PCV committee or work group), counterparts, and Tongan agencies to create new materials (e.g., Sight Word Books and more-advanced reading materials, games, etc.)
- Adapt your prior experience teaching or working with other subjects (e.g., art, sports, gardening, etc.) to your teaching of English.
- Adapt “integrated language” methods learned in your Tongan language classes.

Libraries and Books as Teaching/Learning Tools

BACKGROUND NOTES

Why is it important to use books and libraries in our English Literacy Project?

Challenges Tongan students face related to access to appropriate reading materials

- Tongan schools, homes, and communities generally lack appropriate texts organized in user-friendly way for students, teachers, and parents to use to support English literacy development.
- Tongan schools, homes, and communities also generally lack computer-based resources which could be used to provide students with opportunities and incentives to use electronic versions of written text.
- Tongan teachers often don't "see" what a more student-centered learning environment looks like.
- Libraries are often treated as special places full of donated materials that should not be disturbed.

Use of libraries (including stand-alone libraries, book corners, and portable book collections [in boxes or on carts]) and carefully selected books can:

- help students to . . .
 - develop awareness of how English literacy is used
 - practice using English literacy skills
 - get in the habit of using print materials for pleasure and for academic and other purposes
- provide teachers and ELFs with
 - awareness of how to use various kinds of texts to help students develop English literacy skills
 - texts to use in their English literacy activities.
- provide parents with . . .
 - awareness of how to use texts in the home to support their children's literacy development.
 - texts to use for that purpose.

What PCVs have done so far to develop effective uses of books and libraries

So far, our English Literacy Facilitator PCVs have . . .

- developed school libraries as venues/opportunities for learning for students, teachers, and parents (e.g., as a resource room and learning center for students and teachers; as a safe and comfortable venue to do computer-based activities; as a place to teach students “book etiquette;” as a space to do Saturday morning or after-school reading programs; and as a place to teach parents how to support their children’s literacy development.
- organized existing book collections in user-friendly ways;
- sorted donated books and distributed them to interested PCV schools;
- developed new, “Tonga-friendly” reading materials (e.g., Sight Word Books);
- developed and implemented appropriate ways to teach reading (e.g., guided reading);
- created guidebooks for PCVs and counterparts about (a) how to develop and use school libraries and (b) how to level books and organize book collections;
- converted under-used spaces into libraries in schools and community venues;
- advocated for more-appropriate supplies of books for schools.

Where can PCVs get more information on this topic?

Readers are encouraged to read the following two documents about Tongan libraries that were developed by Volunteers at Peace Corps/Tonga:

- “Tongan Libraries Surveys 2015”
- “Tonga Guide to Leveling Books and Library Organization”

Also recommended: Visit www.pclive.peacecorps.gov and do a search for resources related to “library.”

Tech Tools for Literacy in Tonga

BACKGROUND NOTES

NOTE: This topic is covered in more depth in “Tech Tools for Literacy in Tonga,” a Technical Note developed in 2017 by Peace Corps/Tonga.

What does our Project Framework say about working with technologies?

Objective 1.3 says that . . .

ELFs should work with counterparts to help them better use libraries and ICT (information communication technology).

But technology might also be woven in with all our other project objectives.

What technologies have our PCVs been developing and using so far?

PCVs have been...

- Assessing the status of the school’s computers and other technologies (e.g., printers...)
- Helping to get computers and software donated to their schools.
- Installing and maintaining computers and other technologies (wireless sticks).
- Building teacher capacities by teaching them basic computer skills, loading FLASH and other resources onto computers for teacher use, helping teachers take on-line USP courses.
- Helping students by teaching basic computer skills (e.g., typing), using ESL software to help students practice English literacy.
- Using other technologies (e.g., DVD players, karaoke machines) for “English Movie Time” and “English Karaoke Night.”
- Scanning and copying books to use as reading materials.
- Using DVD players to play music (e.g., Coopriider songs).

Challenges to using technologies

- Computers can be:
 - non-functioning and/or full of hazardous viruses.
 - a few decent and functioning computers.
 - equipped with printers and scanners that may or may not work properly.
- Teachers and principals often have little or no familiarity with computer equipment (apart from “Facebook”)

- Electrical systems can be unreliable (with fluctuating currents that “fry” computers) or dangerous (not properly grounded).
- Heat, humidity, dust, and even geckos can damage computers.
- MET generally lacks a plan for using computers in schools.

Opportunities for using computers

- Interest in learning about technologies
 - People (students, teachers and principals, and parents and community members) are curious about learning to use computers.
 - Schools are being pushed to use computerized record keeping.
 - Teachers are interested in professional development (via on-line course, learning basic computer skills . . .)
- MET has radio shows for students and teachers that PCVs might work with.
- Other organizations (including PC posts elsewhere) have developed models we might adapt.
- PCVs and others have developed user-friendly ways to . . .
 - adapt English software,
 - use typing software,
 - use music software,
 - use movies,
 - share teaching resources via flash drives

What can new PCVs do to better understand whether and how they can use ICT at their sites?

With other PCVs, principal, teachers, PTAs, and/or other community members . . .

- Find out what technologies exists, how they are used, and their condition.
- Ask whether and how you might work with colleagues to further develop the technologies.
- Explain that “developing technologies” falls under our Project Goals. But don’t over-promise. Emphasize capacity building for staff and the PTA/community rather than you doing it all yourself.
- Try out some ways to use technologies, if appropriate.
- For ideas, ask PCVs from previous groups and consult PC publications about ICT.

See technologies as tools for achieving our project goals.

Focusing on technologies in the next few months can give you opportunities to work with counterparts, students, and/or community members around something tangible. You can:

- build relationships;
- better understand the school’s resources and culture;
- help counterparts expand their sense of the school and other settings as learning venues for students and other community members (e.g., parents);
- produce something useful that you and counterparts can use in the new school year.

Providing Literacy Development Opportunities for Young Children, Youth, and Adults

BACKGROUND NOTES

Who are the “young children,” “youth,” and “adults” that PCVs can work with?

Under Objective 3.2 of our Project Framework, PCVs are encouraged to help populations other than Class 3-6 children to access literacy development opportunities. We define those “other” populations as:

- Young children enrolled in Classes 1 and 2;
- Secondary-level students: Form 1 and 2 and other “Form” students;
- School-age dropouts;
- Post-secondary level (tertiary level) students (e.g., University of the South Pacific or Tupou Tertiary Institute students, students in post-secondary occupational training programs);
- Various adult populations including parents, teachers, and others.

(Note: In Tonga, “youth” is a term used to describe unmarried young people roughly in the age range of 14 to 30 years old. “Adults” tends to refer to people who are married.)

What are key characteristics of these populations that can impact their readiness for learning and English literacy?

- Young children enrolled in Classes 1 and 2:
 - May or may not have much support for learning and literacy in the home.
 - Generally have little exposure to English literacy in school, as under MET policy exposure to English literacy instruction officially does not begin until Class 3.
 - Nonetheless, parents might be eager to have their young children get a jump start on English literacy instruction and may be open to supporting introductory English activities in the home if given the tools to do so.
- Secondary-level students: Form 1 and 2 and other “Form” students:
 - Often arrive in Form 1 with very limited English literacy ability and/or limited learning skills and confidence overall.
 - May or may not have much support for learning and literacy in the home.
 - Some can nonetheless be motivated to learn, given that they, their families, and the larger society understand that their success in secondary school highly depends on English literacy.

- Could potentially connect the learning of English with academic, occupational, and/or social applications of English, if given guidance on how to do so.
- School-age dropouts:
 - May not have much support for learning and literacy in the home.
 - Often have very limited English literacy ability and/or limited learning skills and confidence overall.
 - But might also be highly motivated and fairly well equipped to learn English. (They may have dropped out due to pregnancy, poverty, health, or other factors.) They may be eager to learn, given that they, their families, and the larger society understand that their success (e.g., to re-connect to education, to get meaningful employment, to get married, to hold a respected role in society) highly depends on English literacy.
 - Could potentially connect the learning of English with academic, occupational, social applications of English, if given guidance on how to do so.
- Post-secondary level (tertiary level) students:
 - Often arrive in tertiary education with very limited English literacy ability and/or limited learning skills and confidence overall.
 - May or may not have much support for learning and literacy in the home.
 - Some can nonetheless be motivated to learn, given that they, their families, and the larger society understand that their success in post-secondary education highly depends on English literacy.
 - Could potentially connect the learning of English with academic, occupational, and/or social applications of English, if given guidance on how to do so.
- Various adult populations including:
 - Parents who . . .
 - Might have limited English literacy ability but who want to know how to help their children develop English literacy and more generally succeed academically.
 - Might be interested in getting guidance on how to support children's literacy in the home/family context.
 - Might also be willing to help out at school as a teacher's helper or in other roles, thereby developing their ability to help their own children while also providing a service to the school and community.
 - Might also be motivated to develop their English language abilities for occupational, social, or other reasons.
 - Might have basic computer and other technology (e.g., web surfing, email) skills that could be integrated with the learning of English.
 - Teachers who . . .

- Might have limited confidence in their ability to speak, understand, read, and write English.
- Might want to improve their English, to be more effective teachers and to participate in professional training courses (including on-line courses) available to teachers.
- Might have basic computer and other technology (e.g., web surfing, email) skills that could be integrated with the learning of English.
- People who work in various occupations who . . .
 - Might have limited confidence in their ability to speak, understand, read, and write English.
 - Might want to improve their English, to be more effective in their current jobs and to participate in occupational training courses (including on-line courses).
 - Might have basic computer and other technology (e.g., web surfing, email) skills that could be integrated with the learning of English.
 - Could work in many different areas in which oral and/or written English is used (e.g., hospitality, retail, tourism, public safety, banking, healthcare, and other industries).

What is already being done (through formal, non-formal, and informal activities) in PCV communities to help young children, youth, and adults develop English literacy skills?

- Young children can develop basic English literacy skills through:
 - Participation in Tongan-language literacy activities in school. These activities can introduce students to the use of Roman script, writing, classroom behaviors, background knowledge in other subjects (e.g., basic numeracy, foods, etc.), and other fundamentals of language and literacy development. These fundamentals can, in turn, be applied to the learning of English in oral and print forms.
 - Exposure to uses of English in the home, via media presentations (e.g., children’s videos) or by listening to older siblings, parents, or other family members using English.
- “Youth” and “adults” can develop English literacy skills through:
 - formal study inside (e.g., high school, USP, TTI) and outside school (e.g., test prep, study groups . . .)
 - self-directed learning (e.g., reading);
 - immersion in use of English in authentic ways (e.g., at work, with friends and relatives);
 - use of technology (e.g., computers, videos, MP3 players...)

What have PCVs been doing to help youth and adults improve their literacy?

Our PCVs have . . .

- Provided English tutoring for students in occupational programs.

- Helped students at the University of the South Pacific strengthen the writing and other English skills required for post-secondary education.
- Helped Tupou Tertiary Institute students develop business and technical English skills.
- Tutored secondary students and adults in English and other subjects.
- Taught high school level courses in subjects other than English, but used extensive English in those courses and thereby reinforce students' practical uses of English.
- Provided computer skills training for youth and adults (including co-workers). Because English is the language used in many computer applications, the learners developed English skills along with computer skills.
- Helped in *kindi* (pre-school) and Class 1 and Class 2 classrooms, providing songs and other activities that laid the groundwork for the learning of English and development of literacy skills.
- Helped parents understand how they can help their children learn English and develop basic literacy and learning skills at home.

How might you develop your expertise in this area of responding to the literacy needs of other populations in your community?

- Do an informal or more formal survey of your principal and counterparts, youth, adults, and community leaders and community groups when you arrive at your site. Ask:
 - What is currently being done to provide educational supports to youth and adults?
 - What are the result of those efforts?
 - What might be done to expand and strengthen such efforts?
 - Who might be involved?
 - How might a PCV support such efforts?
- Pilot a simple activity (See list under the kinds of activities described under “What have PCVs been doing to help youth and adults improve their literacy?” above) to provide a service and guide future possible activities by the PCV and community. This could include:
 - Tutoring secondary school students to help them with homework or test preparation.
 - Doing informal English activities (e.g., reading sessions, singing of songs, watching of videos) with young children in the neighborhood or at school.
 - Helping your co-workers develop computer skills, do classwork for professional development courses, or deal with grammar, vocabulary, or other questions they have about English.
 - Conducting formal or informal activities for parents, to show them how they can read to their children, help them with homework, provide a home environment in which their children are exposed to English.

While many of these activities might not be seen as “English instruction” in the normal sense, they can have the effect of helping learners feel comfortable trying to understand and speak English and give them practice in the uses of oral and written English. This kind of authentic practice of the uses of English is a vital component of learning a second language.

- Reflect on and share what you are learning in these activities with PC staff, fellow Volunteers, and the people you work with at your school and community. This will help all of us better understand how PCVs and Tongan partners can respond to the literacy needs of a variety of populations in a typical community.

Responding to the Literacy Needs of Secondary School Students

BACKGROUND NOTES

(Prepared by G79 PCV, Carrie Lee Pugh)

The following is a brief overview of the English requirements of students at the secondary level in the Kingdom of Tonga. These expectations may vary somewhat from one school to another; however, it is important to note that all secondary schools share the same curriculum. This means that all students at secondary schools, regardless of their Class 6 exam scores, are expected to complete similar work.

Form	English Needs	School Culture	Grading
1&2	Use English in ALL classes (English, Math, Science, Art) except Lea Tonga and Tongan Society and Culture Read fluent English texts (novels). Write complete paragraphs. Answer EA questions in English. Use a library to complete assignments for class. Perform role-plays. Complete exams for ALL classes in English.	All subjects are compulsory. Students may join school sports. Term 2-3 Fridays are a half day for sports. Mon & Fridays start with school assembly.	70% Mid Term and End of Year Exam 30% Common Tests
3&4	Use English in ALL classes except. Lea Tonga and Tongan Society and Culture. English tasks same as above but with increasing language complexity.	English, Math, Lea Tonga, and Tongan Society and Culture are compulsory. Students able to choose options classes.	70% Mid Term and End of Year Exam 30% Common Tests
5	Use English in ALL classes. Read multi-page texts. Write multi-page compositions. Perform role-plays IA: Create Multi-Page Research Papers. IA: Present 5-7 min. oral presentations Complete school exams. Complete external exams.	Select students chosen as school prefects. Students can be held back if they fail the final exams.	70 % External Exams 30% Internal Assessments :20% Research 10% presentations (this may change yearly) Also takes common exam at school to determine class placement.
6	Use English in ALL classes. Read multi-page texts.	Same as above	Same as above

<p>Create multi-page compositions. Perform role-plays. IA:Present 5-7 min oral presentations IA:Create a continuous journal entry task for 2weeks Complete school exams. Complete external exams.</p>		
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Serving Your “Harder-to-Serve” Students

BACKGROUND NOTES

Who are the “harder-to-serve” students in Tongan primary schools?

Worldwide

An estimated 10% of children have one or more special needs which can make learning and teaching difficult.

In Tonga, “harder-to-serve” children might show these behaviors:

- Consistently don’t pay attention.
- Don’t seem to absorb or remember what is taught.
- Are disorganized.
- Are withdrawn.
- Are over-active.
- Write letters incorrectly.
- Don’t follow instructions
- Have problems with:
 - pronunciation
 - rhyming
 - learning alphabet, colors, shapes, numbers, days of week
 - manipulating pencils, crayons...
 - manipulating buttons, zippers . . .

What causes them to be “harder-to-serve”?

- “Organic” limitations/differences . . .
 - in how they process information and communicate it;
 - due to auditory, visual, oral “wiring;”
 - can fluctuate (improve, worsen) over time ...
- “Environmental” factors including. . .
 - home/community environments where literacy/language/learning related skills aren’t modelled or reinforced;
 - neglect of physical, emotional, cognitive, linguistic needs of the child.

Learning disabilities are one category of “organic” differences and can include:

- Dyslexia (reading)
- Dyscalculia (math)

- Dysgraphia (writing)
- Dyspraxia (motor skills)
- Aphasia/dyspasia (language)
- Auditory processing disorder
- Visual processing disorder
- ADHD (Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder)
- Autism

How are they currently served or not served?

In schools, these children are;

- Sometimes supported via:
 - personal attention to “slower” students.
 - mainstreaming and allowing them to participate in the school community.
 - support from their peers.
- Sometimes not supported by being...
 - not assessed for special needs;
 - ignored or pigeonholed as “slow;”
 - improperly taught.

In homes and communities, these children are;

- sometimes supported via:
 - “doing things” for them (i.e., given lower expectations)
 - empathy;
 - assigning to special roles.
- sometimes not supported by being...
 - shunned or made fun of;
 - neglected.

What strategies might PCVs use to better serve these students?

- Normal assessment to clarify the child’s challenges and strengths.
 - Record assessment results to identify students with consistently low performance;
 - For those children, try to identify what literacy elements and classroom behaviors are most problematic.
- (Specialized assessments can help but require expertise and other resources.)
- Customized help including...
 - targeting activities to a child’s particular needs and strengths through individualized attention;
 - using alternative learning modes (multiple modalities) (e.g., songs, pictures, or games);
 - using routines to help students know what is expected of them;

- slowing down the pace of activities;
- more practice time via:
 - extracurricular activities at school & home;
 - computer or other tech (e.g., listening to CDs, watching videos....)
- Involving others in support of the child including:
 - parents and other family members
 - principal and teachers.
- TLC (encouraging words, celebrations of success)

Where can PCVs go from here on this topic?

Options include:

- Tap into expertise of PCVs who've studied or worked in this area of special needs education. (Many of them are members of our Inclusive Education Group.)
- Circulate useful resources that PCVs can read as background.
- Informally assess/identify needs of "harder to serve" students and try some strategies described in articles.
- Talk with MET's Inclusive Education Unit and possibly other organizations about how PCVs might work with counterparts on this issue.

Extra-Curricular Activities and Secondary Projects

BACKGROUND NOTES

How do we define “extra-curricular activities” and “secondary projects”?

These two terms are often used almost interchangeably, leading to confusion. To help us have a common language about these activities, we define them in these ways:

- Extra-curricular activities are those activities that PCVs engage in that occur outside normal classroom hours but still directly serve our English Literacy Project objectives. (See our “Idea Book” for a description of our seven project objectives.)
- Secondary activities are those activities that PCVs engage in that do not directly serve our English Literacy Project objectives. (See list of examples of secondary projects in the Volunteer Reporting Form that PCVs submit twice a year.)

(Sometimes it’s not clear which category an activity or project falls in. In that case, let’s talk.)

Examples of extra-curricular activities

Typically, “extra-curriculars” refer to educational activities that:

- are conducted outside normal school hours (e.g., in afternoons or evenings, before school, on weekends, during school breaks) at the school or in another location;
- are especially relevant to English Literacy Project Objective 2.2.

Here are some examples of extra-curricular activities that our PCVs have carried out, on their own and with Tongan counterparts:

- Po ako (“night school”) classes for primary school, middle school, and older students, providing extra practice in material covered in school or to help students prepare for exams;
- Saturday morning reading activities at a school, library, PCV home, or other location; (PCVs have conducted such activities at Tupou Tertiary Institute in Nuku’alofa, Neiafu Public Library, a converted shop in a village in Vava’u, and at a school on Tongatapu);
- Individual tutoring for primary school, middle school, and older students;
- “English Movie Nights” (in which PCVs show English-language children’s videos while discussing the content and possibly doing worksheet exercises related to the movie content – sometimes with popcorn!);
- Informal discussion sessions with students in which English is used;

- English for Health activities (e.g., morning tooth-brushing activities for the PCV's class, with an English-language "toothbrush song;" or after-school cooking activities in which English is used);
- English for Earth activities (e.g., school garden in which English skills are reinforced);
- Showing parents how to help their kids with literacy and school work;
- Tutoring of counterparts in computers or for University of South Pacific courses;
- Preparation and sharing of reading materials and lesson plans for use by PCVs and counterparts (individually and via Sight Word Book Committee);
- Upgrading of a school library (through construction of book shelves, soliciting and organizing book donations);
- Youth leadership or sports activities in which English skills are reinforced;
- Computer classes for youth in which English is used (and in which counterparts strengthen their ability to use English and use student-centered teaching methods);
- Work with Scholarship Committee to create a village library;
- Creation of a school English newsletter or school English bulletin board.

Examples of secondary projects

PCVs have carried out the following kinds of secondary projects, on their own or with Tongan counterparts:

- Writing funding proposals for the school or community (e.g., school library, hand washing stations, seawall).
- Community exercise group or sports activities in which little English is used.
- Community clean-up in which little English is used.
- Working with a non-governmental organization to upgrade the school's water catchment system.
- Helping to purchase a fence for a school or a glass crushing machine for the community.
- Helping to purchase supplies or build a playground for Inclusive Education Center.

Where can you get support for projects?

As much as possible, try to rely on the local community for financial and in-kind support for a proposed project. For example:

- The PTA might recruit helpers to do labor for a school upgrade project;
- A church might provide access to their basketball court for a PCV-led after-school sports program;
- The PTA might run a "konseti" ["concert"] to raise funds for a school upgrade or supplies.
- Kava Clubs raise funds for good causes, including scholarships to cover costs of school fees for deserving students. Communities might consider doing a "Fun Run" to generate awareness and resources for a project.

- Community leaders or businesses might be approached to help out with a youth leadership program (e.g., to provide speakers, funding, or transportation).

There are also other “external” sources of funding and in-kind help that you might explore, but you need to first do research about those sources’ capacities and limitations. Possible sources include:

- Tongan governmental organizations;
- Foreign embassies (e.g., Australian High Commission, New Zealand High Commission, Japanese Embassy, U.S. Embassy);
- Non-governmental organizations operating in Tonga (e.g., Rotary Club, Red Cross, Vava’u Environmental Association);
- Your contacts back in the U.S. (e.g., alumni associations, Returned Peace Corps Volunteer [RPCV] groups in your home state, churches, family members, local Rotary Clubs).

PCVs are prohibited from actively working with funders until after they have been at their sites for six months and have gone through Project Design and Management (PDM) training provided by Peace Corps/Tonga. But that doesn’t mean you can’t be doing preliminary research about needs and potential projects for your school and community in your first six months at site. In fact, you should be doing so, as part of the process of getting to know and integrate into your community.

PCVs can also access funds through several Peace Corps-sponsored funding channels, including the Peace Corps Partnership Program, Small Project Assistance (from U.S. Agency for International Development), and Let Girls Learn.

When deciding on projects and activities to pursue . . .

- Keep in mind that:
 - our partners and our funders have brought us here to meet our project goals and objectives.
 - literacy education is an important priority for our communities.
 - our project objectives can encompass many kinds of projects that match your personal interests and community requests.
- Try to link activities to our English Literacy Project objectives as much as possible.
- If a proposed activity doesn’t clearly focus on a particular Project Objective, consider how you might do a “spin-off” activity (e.g., a literacy activity) that relates to that that “secondary” activity.
- If you have a question about this, contact ‘Ila and other programming staff (PM, DPT...)

Remember to keep good records

If you are undertaking extra-curricular activities and secondary projects, remember to keep good records about:

- The activities you engage in (step by step, week by week, etc.)
- The numbers of individuals you serve and work with in the project.
- How equipment and supplies are used.
- Relevant financial information (including receipts).
- Other information required for your Volunteer Reporting Form or by the funder or organization you work with.

If you collect and organize this information efficiently, you will save yourself a lot of headaches when it comes time to report about the activity!

How does a new PCV get started figuring out what extra-curricular activities or secondary projects to engage in?

- Remember that there is no pressure from Peace Corps to start lots of activities in your first six months. Be careful that you don't jump into a project impulsively or because someone is pressuring you.
- However, you should:
 - use initial time at site to begin to clarify school and community needs you might focus activities on.
 - learn from PCVs and staff about possible projects. (This can be done through PCV committees/work groups.)
 - do background research (through reading, attending meetings, interview subject matter experts) to bolster relevant expertise.
 - learn from PDM (Project Design and Management) training that will be provided six months into your service, to clarify how to plan and implement a small project.

M&E Strategies for Continuous Improvement

BACKGROUND NOTES

What is “M&E”?

“M&E” is . . .

- “Monitoring and Evaluation” (sometimes also called “MRE” – “Monitoring, Reporting, and Evaluation”)
- the processes we use to collect, organize, analyze, use, and report various kinds of information for various audiences and purposes.
- integrated (formally and informally) into the work that PCVs and staff (and our partners) do.
- used to inform how we:
 - meet our English Literacy Project goals/objectives and PC’s three global goals;
 - support our PCVs.
- something we will continue to work on in the coming year.
- something Group 81 can help to develop, use themselves, and share with others.

What types of M&E activities are PCVs now engaged in?

ELFs are . . .

- informally and formally monitoring and reporting what they are doing to accomplish our project objectives (along with successes, challenges, requests, suggestions . . .)
- also giving feedback to staff about supports provided by staff.
- using various means to communicate (e.g., through the Volunteer Reporting Form, monthly phone calls, site visits by staff, training events, pre-workshop surveys, training evaluations, annual All Volunteer Survey . . .)

What M&E activities are our staff using?

Staff are monitoring, reporting, and following up on what ELFs, partners, and staff are doing and how our efforts can be improved. Staff are:

- collecting information via using observations, interviews, questionnaires, document review during site visits, training events, monthly phone calls, review of safety data, and other exchanges with ELFs and partners
- analyzing this information in staff meetings and taking follow-up actions.
- sending regular reports to HQ, CD, our local and national partners, the public (on our web site), and future PCVs.

Who else is involved in our post's M&E activities?

- Our partners (who give us input and review our reports) . . .
 - at national level (e.g., MET) and
 - at local (i.e., schools, parents and PTAs . . .) levels.
- PC HQ staff (who review our reports).

What are the purposes of our M&E activities?

- It's required by our funders (U.S. Congress) and PC HQ (to confirm that we are using resources productively).
- It's good practice in virtually any kind of organization because it provides us (staff and PCVs) with information we can use to:
 - improve our work (by understanding what we are accomplishing, improvements we can make, and new ideas to explore).
 - inform funders (Congress and HQ) and partners in Tonga (at national and local levels) what we are accomplishing and where further support can be directed.
 - motivate ourselves (ELFs and staff) and those we work with (e.g., students, parents, education partners, communities . . .)
 - contribute to the broader development of English literacy work in Tonga and other countries.

M&E is thus much more than . . .

- . . . "filling out forms" and sending in reports, never to be used or heard from again.
- . . . something threatening, negative, burdensome.

(But, for it to be meaningful and productive, we should approach it in a constructive, positive way and see it as a tool for continuous improvement of what PCVs and staff and partners do.)

M&E has this additional benefit for PCVs . . .

- Most organizations (especially in international development and education) that ELFs will work for in the future have some kind of M&E component.
- Having expertise in M&E makes an ELF more marketable in the future.

Our PCVs have done important work related to M&E, including . . .

- Developing (by designing and field testing) assessment tools that PCVs and others can use to assess key literacy skills (e.g., phonics and decoding, comprehension and fluency, grammar) of Tongan students.

- Gathering and analyzing assessment data from PCV sites to provide information to be used by PCVs, their principals and counterparts, and national-level decision-makers.

How you might develop your expertise in assessment

- Ask your principal and teachers what assessment and other M&E tools they now use.
- Ask whether and how you might support your school's efforts to do assessment and other forms of M&E (e.g., by serving as an English assessment specialist).
- Field test and refine the student assessment tools now available to us.
- Possibly develop other student assessment tools (e.g., portfolios) adapted from G81s, from MET, from other sources.
- Analyze, use, and report the results (possibly using a common tool across PCV sites).
- Share these with MET and counterparts.