

## **Creating Learning Resources In-House – Checklist \***

\* Adapted from Appendix 4b, Te Poutama Painga – Quality Assurance Standards of Literacy Aotearoa.

### **Introduction**

In student-centred programmes, the most appropriate resources are 'real materials' that are linked to student goals. These materials can be used to create learning resources that will meet the specific needs of the student. The teaching strategies and accompanying learning resources that a tutor uses are significant factors in determining whether students make progress.

Learning resources include reading comprehension exercises such as Cloze, three level guide, sequence activities, vocabulary; spelling activities such as dictionary chases and word finds; writing motivators and activities; self-paced learning packs; radio or computer learning programmes; audio tapes, etc.

### **Six Principles to Use When Creating a Learning Resource**

1. The learning resource should include an 'easy-to-read' statement about its 'purpose'.
2. The learning resource should be gender and culturally appropriate, of interest to the student, and promote inclusive practice.
3. The learning resource should have information and activities that are pitched at the student's skill level and be presented in a sequence that will assist learning.
4. The learning resource should assist the student to self-assess and to become a self-directed learner.
5. The learning resource should assist the student to become critically literate.
6. The learning resource should be attractive and presented in an 'easy-to-read' format.

## Examples of Putting the Six Principles into Practice

1. **The learning resource should include an ‘easy-to-read’ statement about its ‘purpose’.**

### Examples of statements:

- “This worksheet looks at *when* we need to use apostrophes in writing and *why*. The apostrophe is a punctuation mark that many people find confusing. If you are one of these people read on...”
- “The main aim of this game is to encourage students to share and increase their knowledge and understanding of tikanga Māori.”
- “Main objective: This activity will assist you to think critically about what you read.”

2. **The learning resource should be gender and culturally appropriate, of interest to the student and promote inclusive practice.**

- Text and graphics reflect the status of adult students, e.g. the content is of topical interest to adults – whānau, current affairs, job skills, consumer issues, etc. Language and graphics are age appropriate and are not patronising.
- Text and graphics are culturally appropriate, e.g. the content and graphics affirm the various cultural practices and values of students; content includes promotion of Māori knowledge and values.
- Text and graphics show no disrespect towards a specific group, e.g. intent of jokes and cartoons; storyline. This does not mean that student reading material is censored or that topics such as prejudice are avoided. It does mean that tutors should raise issues about the effects of disrespect and prejudice, when depicted in text and graphics.

**3. The learning resource should have information and activities that are pitched at the student's skill level and be presented in a sequence that will assist learning.**

- What the student is likely to know already is presented first and followed up with the areas of difficulty.
- One learning concept is presented at a time along with its accompanying activities.
- If there are instructions, they are clearly presented in sequential order.
- There are references to other activities and learning resources that will help reinforce learnt concepts.

**4. The learning resource should assist the student to self-assess and to become a self-directed learner.**

**Examples:**

- The answers to any exercises are included when practicable, e.g. numeracy exercises.
- Activities and accompanying instructions encourage students to explore and make choices, e.g. brainstorm ideas; select activities.
- Through open questions students explain what they have learnt.
- Common literacy learning terms such as reading and spelling strategies and stages of the writing process are explained.
- The purpose statement for the activity is revisited at the end of the activity, e.g. main points are discussed; brief bullet points are stated at the end of worksheets.

**5. The learning resource should assist the student to become critically literate.**

**Examples:**

- The worksheet that accompanies reading material includes questions that encourage students to analyse the text, e.g. Who has the text been written for? What is missing? Who wrote the text and why? How do you know this?
- A worksheet that accompanies reading material includes a comprehension activity which is directed at three levels of comprehension – literal, interpretative and applied.
- Information that is copied or adapted is put into a 'real context' with the original source being acknowledged whenever possible – newspaper cutting, poem, song lyrics, short story, etc. (Copyright requirements also need to be considered).
- A learning resource that covers a specific topic or event includes activities that assist and encourage a student to research and critique this topic, e.g. compare newspaper articles or TV news items that are reporting the same event.

**6. The learning resource should be attractive and presented in an 'easy-to-read' format.**

**Examples:**

- Where practicable, information is presented in short sentences, with one idea per sentence.
- Where appropriate, line breaks support the sense of the text.
- A clear font is used – font size of point 12, not script, or block capitals.

- There are small blocks of text separated by white space and bold headings.
- Graphics support the text.
- There is plenty of space for students to complete 'fill in the gaps' exercises.

Obviously there are exceptions to presenting all text attractively and in an 'easy to read' format, e.g. when assisting a student to read a type of text that has a particular layout / format, like newspapers, map book, phone book.