

Student Centred Individualized Learning (SCIL)

People learn in different ways, so they should be taught in different ways. Student Centred Individualized Learning (SCIL) is Frontier College's teaching philosophy (Frontier College Press, 1986). SCIL is based on the premise that everyone has unique interests, strengths, and learning needs. To be effective, a tutor needs to select the strategies and techniques that work best for a particular student. This guide is designed to help tutors choose the tools to meet the varied learning needs of their students.

Whether you are working with one, two or a small group of students, it is important to talk with each student about his or her strengths, goals, needs and learning styles. Ask:

- *Strengths: What do you do well? What are your interests and skills?*
- *Goals: What do you want to do? What would you like to learn?*
- *Learning needs: What do you need to learn to be able to achieve your goals?*
- *Learning Styles: How do you learn best? How do you gain new knowledge?*

The SCIL approach is based on the following adult education principles:

- Learning is based on the student's strengths rather than deficits.
- Learning is based on the student's life experience using skills and strengths that she has developed over the years.
- Curriculum is developed with your student and should be based on what he wants to learn.
- Learning is voluntary.
- Everyone can learn.
- You and your student are equal partners in the learning process. Mutual respect is the foundation of your relationship. Learning is most effective in an environment that is comfortable for both you and your student.

Using the SCIL approach, your role is to facilitate learning with your student and assist her to reach her learning goals at a comfortable pace.

Your roles and responsibilities as a tutor

As a volunteer literacy tutor following the SCIL methodology, your role is to:

- Attend a Frontier College tutor training session and follow-up training sessions.
- Meet regularly with your student. Let the staff person know if you need to cancel or postpone a meeting or if you are going to be late.
- Work with your student for a minimum of six months for at least two hours a week. Help him move on if he has reached his goals.
- Create a positive, encouraging learning environment for your student. Build success into every session, especially early on, so that the student has a feeling of accomplishment.
- Encourage your student to bring materials or topics of interest to the sessions.
- Be flexible and varied in your tutoring approach by using a variety of activities. Involve your student as much as possible in every activity.
- Use real life situations for teaching new skills (e.g., use a bank or bank machine, pay for purchases at a store, read street signs, read and pay bills).
- Respect your student's privacy and right to confidentiality.
- Maintain monthly contact with the literacy program coordinator to report on successes, difficulties, and time spent with your student.
- Participate in program evaluation processes through questionnaires, telephone surveys, or focus groups.