

An integrated academic language, civics and history curriculum for adult learners

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Rationale—Language learners

- In 2024, there were more than **300 million international migrants** or about **3% of the world's population** lived in a country in which they were not born (World Migration Report, 2026)
- In the United States, more than half of adults in adult education programs are taking some English courses

- To adapt and function well in a new community, need to:
 - learn the language
 - understand its history and systems
- A new curriculum to address these multiple needs, named **CILIA-T**
- **It is developed for the learners in the US, but the principles and the basic approach can be adapted to international contexts and other content areas**

Rationale--Other learners

- Around the world the average completion rate for upper secondary education (high school equivalent) is 61%.
- The completion rate can range between 28-96% depending on the region of the world.
- Native speakers who could not complete their education because of various economic, sociocultural reasons can also benefit from a curriculum such as CLIA-T.

CILIA-T: Content-Integrated Language Instruction for Adults, with Technology Support

Free, open access eBook, integrating academic English, history, civics, digital skills

CILIA-T: Civics, U.S. History, Academic English and Digital Skills

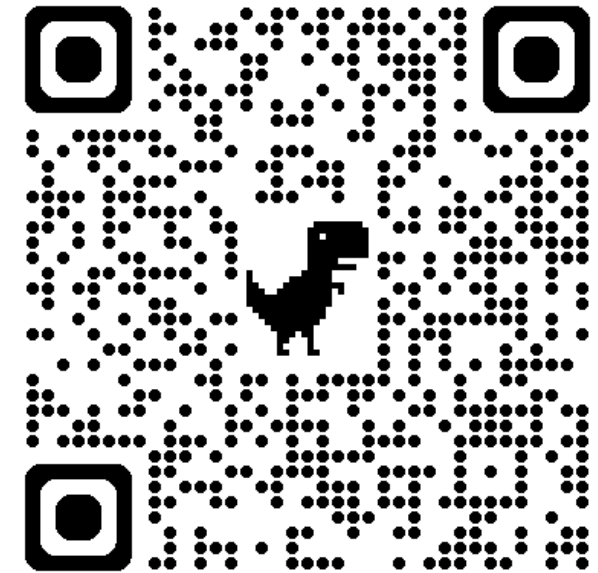
for Adult Learners

by Aydin Durgunoglu; Erin Cary; and John Trerotola

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<https://open.lib.umn.edu/ciliat>

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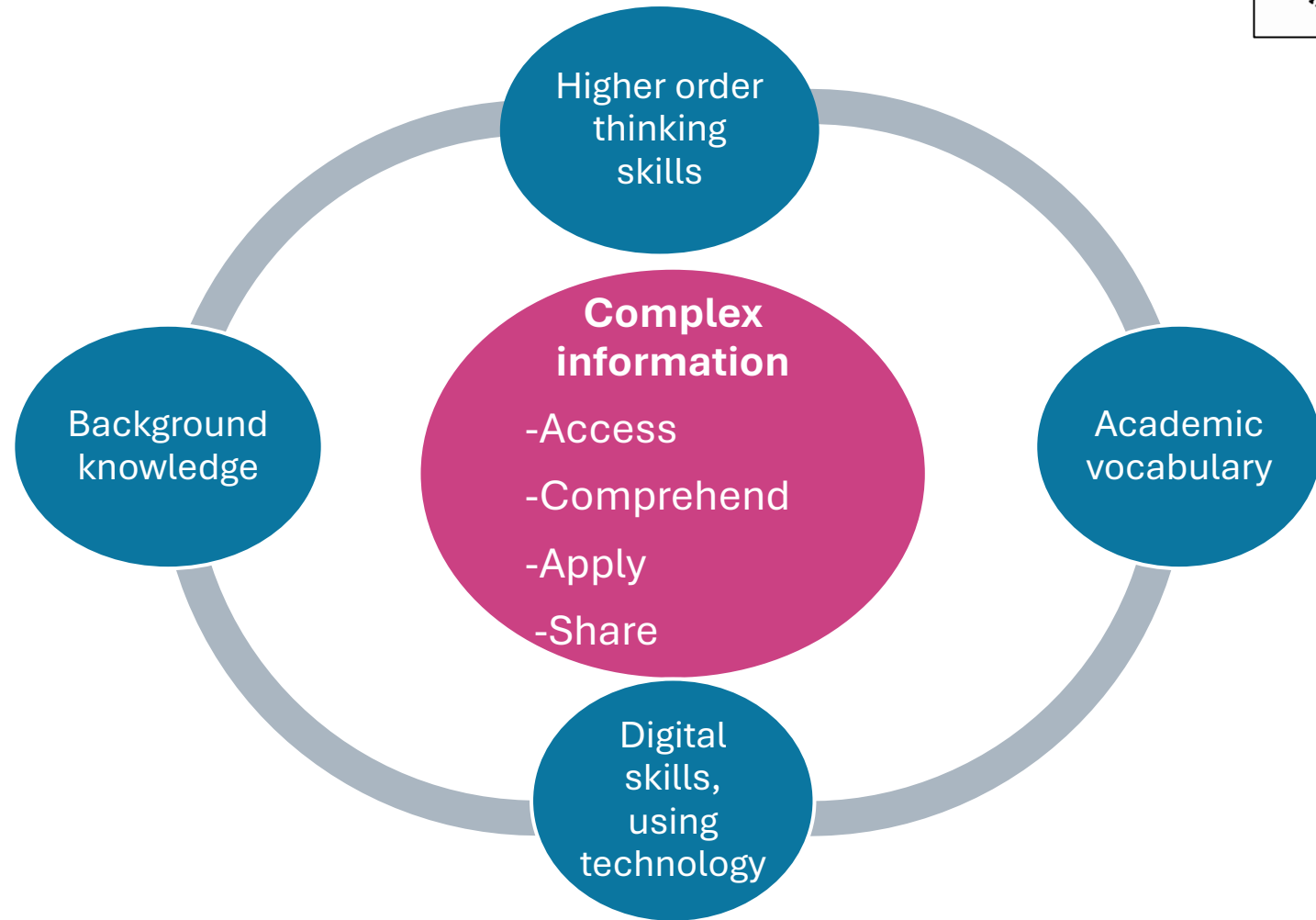
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Theory behind CILIA-T

To interact
effectively with
complex
information
(access, comprehend,
apply, share),
strengthen these
proficiencies:



The 16 modules in the in the CILIA-T eBook (covering U.S. History and Civics)

Module 1  Digital Literacy Basics	Module 2  Immigration and Global Human Movement	Module 3  Forms of Government	Module 4  U.S. Constitution
Module 5  Branches and Powers of Government	Module 6  Bill of Rights and Constitutional Amendments	Module 7  Civic Participation and Power of the People	Module 8  Indigenous Peoples of the Americas
Module 9  European Colonization of North America	Module 10  Declaration of Independence and American Revolution	Module 11  Westward Expansion and Indigenous Communities	Module 12  Civil War and Reconstruction
Module 13  Industrialization and Labor	Module 14  U.S. International Relations	Module 15  Civil Rights and Beyond	Module 16  Review: Civics and Community



Each module has the following sequence of activities:



1 – Warmup and Introduction

2A – Read the Text #1: Getting an Idea

2B – Read the Text #2: Vocabulary and content

2C – Read the Text #3 – Practicing Fluency

3 – Think and Apply Activity 1

4 – Digital Literacy Practice

5 – Word Workshop

6 – Read the Text #4 – Putting It All Together

7 – Think and Apply Activity 2

8 – Module Project and Reflection

9 – Module Self Check

10 – Additional Resources

1. WARM UP and INTRODUCTION (Examples from the Constitution module)

- Activate existing background knowledge
- Introduce the new module topic, guiding questions



What do you already know about the Constitution of the United States?

- What is a Constitution?
- Does/Did your home country's government have a constitution?
- Why is it important that a government has rules that it must follow?

Big Questions

Question #1: How does a constitution structure and maintain government?

Question #2: How does the U.S. Constitution change over time?

2A. READ THE TEXT #1: GETTING AN IDEA

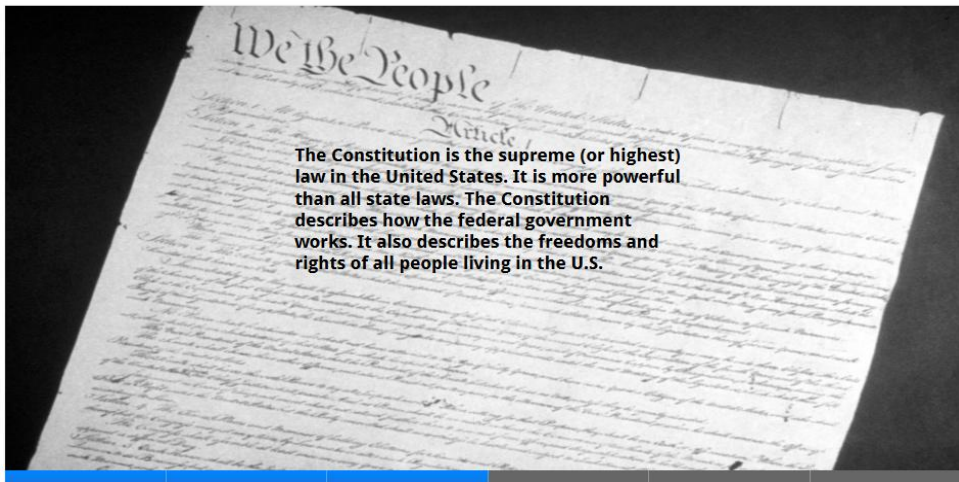
First reading (with audio): Individual reading for gist and basic textual content

2B. READ THE TEXT #2: BUILDING COMPREHENSION

Second reading: Whole class reading, paragraph-by-paragraph analysis of vocabulary and key details in context

2C. READ THE TEXT #3: PRACTICING FLUENCY

Third reading: Paired reading, review module vocabulary, dictation



- Learn the word DESCRIBE: (verb) to say or write what someone or something is like
 - What is the word in your home language?
 - Can you describe your childhood home? Where was it? How did it look?
- How powerful is the Constitution?
- What does the United States Constitution do?

4. DIGITAL LITERACY

Practice digital skills as related to the module topic



How do we decide if a website is reliable?

First watch Part 2 of this [video](#) . (starting at minute 4:35-9:00)



5. WORD WORKSHOP

Study morphological features and connectors; practice in context



New Morpheme	What does it do?	What is it in my home language?	Examples in Text	Other Examples
1. Un-	Describes the opposite of an action (verb) or quality (adjective) Balanced → Unbalanced			
Example Sentence: After many years of this <u>unbalanced</u> system, leaders thought the United States needed a stronger central government.				

Drag the words into the correct boxes

In the U.S., the federal voting age has been 18 1971. Before 1971, the voting age was 21. The change happened because many young people wanted their voice heard. , they thought that a voting age of 21 was unfair. At age 18, men could serve in the military, go fight in a war, and then return home, but could not vote because they were not old enough. many people talked about this problem, the 26th amendment to the U.S. Constitution was passed, lowering the voting age to 18.

After In addition since

✓ Check

Connectors	What does it do?	Example Sentences
1. After	Gives the timeline of activities Part 1: first event Part 2: second event <u>After</u> is used with the first event.	From the text: <u>After</u> defeating the British during the American Revolution in the late 1700s, the United States of America became an independent country. Other examples: <u>After</u> she had lunch, she took a nap. OR She took a nap <u>after</u> she had lunch.
Complete the sentence: <u>After</u> the states ratified the Constitution, _____		

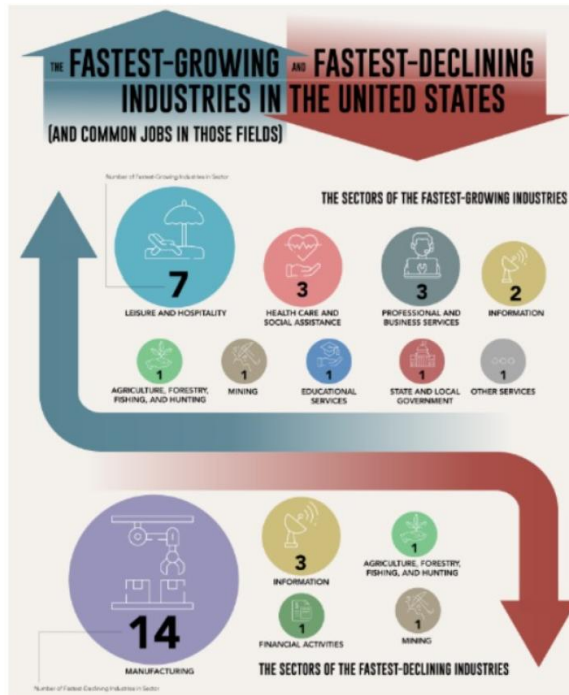
7. THINK AND APPLY 2 (from the Industrialization and Labor module)

Integrating additional resources, personal experiences, opinions and background knowledge; practicing critical thinking



Growing and Declining Industries Activity

1) Look over this infographic from the U.S. Career Institute as a class ([click here to look at it closely](#) [📄]).



Write answers to these questions individually or in pairs/small groups. When finished, share your responses as a whole class.

1. Which career fields are growing? Which career fields are declining or getting less popular?
2. Why is it important to choose a career in a growing industry?
3. We've been discussing the word "sustainable." What would it mean to have a "sustainable" career?
4. Consider the "growing industries" listed on the infographic. Do you see jobs or industries that might interest you? What are they, and why are they interesting to you?

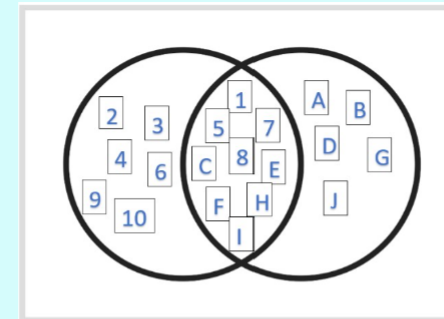
8. MODULE PROJECT AND REFLECTION

Apply the information, build connections between text, related themes and personal experiences

Activity

- Have you heard about the Universal declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)?
- Do a brief internet search on this (One reliable source is the United Nations website)
- Compare the U.S Bill of Rights and UDHR

	U.S. Bill of Rights	Matching Letter	Universal Declaration of Human Rights (10 are listed here)
1	Freedom of religion, speech, press, gathering in a group	A.	Right to education
2	Right to own or have guns/weapons	B.	Right to good work and to join trade unions
3	People don't have to let soldiers live in their homes during war/conflict	C.	Freedom of belief and religion
4	No searches without a good reason	D.	Right to social security
5	Rights during trial	E.	Right of peaceful gathering in groups
6	Rights if you are charged with a crime	F.	Freedom from torture and harsh treatment
7	Right to have a trial with a jury in court	G.	Right to marriage and family
8	No fines or punishments too large	H.	Freedom of opinion and information
9	People have other rights that aren't listed	I.	Right to a fair public hearing
10	The states can make laws, too	J.	Right to a fair living standard



Discuss the following questions:

- What did you notice about the rights/freedoms in both documents? Did any of the rights/freedoms in the UDHR surprise you?
- What rights from the UDHR would you add to the U.S. Bill of Rights? Should Americans be guaranteed the right to food, shelter, education, and health? Why or why not?

9. SELF-CHECK

Complete a short test to check own understanding.



3. What is in the Constitution?

✓ The rules for how the government works and the rights of the people.

A list of the laws made in every state of the country.

Stories about the country's history and important leaders.

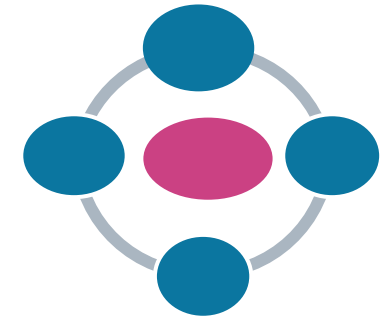
The speeches of all the presidents.



How can such a curriculum be used in other contexts and in different content areas?



- Basic approach is **transferable**, focusing on:
 - Respecting, activating and building on learners' background knowledge
 - Deep analysis of the materials, inviting higher-order thinking, inferencing, application
 - Integrating content and academic language instruction
 - Building relevant digital skills
- Possible domains
 - Health, finance, science, workplace basics (e.g., tourism)....



Thank you!



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