# Principles of Adult Learning Scale (PALS) <br> Developed by Gary J. Conti 

## DIRECTIONS

The following survey contains several things that a teacher of adults might do in a classroom. You may personally find some of them desirable and find others undesirable. For each item please respond to the way you most frequently practice the action described in the item. Your choices are Always, Almost Always, Often, Seldom, Almost Never, and Never. If the item does not apply to you, circle never.

| Always A | Almost Always AA | Often <br> O | Seldom S | Almost Never AN | Never N |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Question/Item |  |  |  |  | Response Category |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. I allow class. | ts to participate in deve | g the cr | evaluating | rformance in | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 2. I use dis | ry action when it is |  |  |  | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 3. I allow | udents more time | te ass | hen they |  | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 4. I encoura | dents to adopt midd | values. |  |  | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 5. I help stu | diagnose the gaps b | heir goa | ir prese | performance. | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 6. I provide | edge rather than server | resour |  |  | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 7. I stick to | structional objectiv | write a | ing of a |  | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 8. I particip | the informal couns | tudent |  |  | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 9. I use lect | as the best method | ting $n$ | material | udents. | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 10. I arrang | classroom so that it | or stude | eract. |  | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 11. I deter | e educational obje | each | ts. |  | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 12. I plan | ich differ widely | from | ts' socio | backgrounds. | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 13. I get a classmates | t to motivate himsel group discussions. | by con | $\mathrm{m} /$ her in | ence of | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 14. I plan l | g episodes to take i | nt my | prior expe |  | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 15. I allow class. | ts to participate in | ecision | he topics th | be covered in | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 16. I use one learning. | teaching method b | have fo | most adult | similar style of | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 17. I use di | techniques dependi | e studen | aught. |  | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 18. I encou | dialogue among my s |  |  |  | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 19. I use w directions | tests to assess the de rning. | academic | rather than | icate new | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 20. I utilize objectives. | any competencies th | adults | ossess to ac | educational | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 21. I use w learning ep | tory has proven that | need to | my chief cri | r planning | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 22. I accept | s as a natural part of | ning pro |  |  | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 23. I have i | dual conferences to h | dents ide | r education |  | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 24. I let eac to learn a | dent work at his/her ncept. | regardl | amount o | takes him/her | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 25. I help m | dents develop short-r | s well as | ge objectiv |  | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 26. I maint | well disciplined class | o reduce | nce to learn |  | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 27. I avoid | ssion of controversia | cts that in | lue judgme |  | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 28. I allow | udents to take period | ks during |  |  | A | AA | 0 | S | AN | N |
| 29. I use m | s that foster quiet, prod | e desk w |  |  | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |


| Question/Item | Response Category |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 30. I use tests as my chief method of evaluating students. | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 31. I plan activities that will encourage each student's growth from dependence on others to greater independence. | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 32. I gear my instructional objectives to match the individual abilities and needs of the students. | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 33. I avoid issues that relate to the student's concept of himself/herself. | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 34. I encourage my students to ask questions about the nature of their society. | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 35. I allow a student's motives for participating in continuing education to be a major determinant in the planning of learning objectives. | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 36. I have my students identify their own problems that need to be solved. | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 37. I give all my students in my class the same assignment on a given topic. | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 38. I use materials that were originally designed for students in elementary and secondary schools. | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 39. I organize adult learning episodes according to the problems that my students encounter in everyday life. | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 40. I measure a student's long term educational growth by comparing his/her total achievement in class to his/her expected performance as measured by national norms from standardized tests. | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 41. I encourage competition among my students. | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 42. I use different materials with different students. | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 43. I help students relate new learning to their prior experiences. | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| 44. I teach units about problems of everyday living. | A | AA | O | S | AN | N |
| Always Almost Always Often Seldom Almost Never <br> A AA $\mathbf{O}$ S AN |  |  | ever <br> N |  |  |  |

## Scoring the Principles of Adult Learning Scale (PALS)

## Positive Questions

Question numbers $1,3,5,8,10,14,15,17,18,20,22,23,24,25,28,31,32,34,35,36,39,42,43$, and 44 are positive items. For positive questions, assign the following values: Always=5, Almost Always=4, Often=3, Seldom=2, Almost Never=1, and Never=0.

## Negative Questions

Question numbers $2,4,6,7,9,11,12,13,16,19,21,26,27,29,30,33,37,38,40$, and 41 are negative items. For negative questions, assign the following values: Always=0, Almost Always=1, Often=2, Seldom=3, Almost Never=4, and Never=5.

## Missing Questions

Omitted questions are assigned a neutral value of 2.5.
Factor 1: Learner-Centered Activities

| Question \# | 2 | 4 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 16 | 19 | 21 | 29 | 30 | 38 | 40 | Total Score |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Score |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Factor 2: Personalizing Instruction

| Question \# | 3 | 9 | 17 | 24 | 32 | 35 | 37 | 41 | 42 | Total Score |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Score |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Factor 3: Relating to Experience

| Question \# | 14 | 31 | 34 | 39 | 43 | 44 | Total Score |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Score |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Factor 4: Assessing Student Needs

| Question \# | 5 | 8 | 23 | 25 | Total Score |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Score |  |  |  |  |  |

Factor 5: Climate Building

| Question \# | 18 | 20 | 22 | 28 | Total Score |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Score |  |  |  |  |  |

Factor 6: Participation in the Learning Process

| Question \# | 1 | 10 | 15 | 36 | Total Score |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Score |  |  |  |  |  |

Factor 7: Flexibility for Personal Development

| Question \# | 6 | 7 | 26 | 27 | 33 | Total Score |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Score |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## Computing and Interpreting Your Scores

Factor scores are calculated by summing the value of the responses for each item/question in the factor. Compare your factor score values to their respective means (see table below). If your score is equal to or greater than each respective mean, then this suggests that such factors are indicative of your teaching style. From such factors, you will then begin to identify what strategies you use to be consistent with your philosophy (from the Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory, PAEI). Those scores that are less than the mean indicate possible areas for improving a more learner-centered approach to teaching.

An individual's total score on the instrument is calculated by summing the value of each of the seven factors (see table below). Scores between 0-145 indicate your style is "teacher-centered." Scores between 146-220 indicate your style as being "learner-centered."

For a complete description of PALS and each of the seven factors, see Conti, G.J. (1998). Identifying Your Teaching Style (Ch. 4). In M.W. Galbraith (Ed.), Adult Learning Methods (3 ${ }^{\text {rd }}$ ed., pp. 87-91). Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company.

| Factor | Mean | Standard <br> Deviation | Your Score |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1 | 38 | 8.3 |  |
| 2 | 31 | 6.8 |  |
| 3 | 21 | 4.9 |  |
| 4 | 14 | 3.6 |  |
| 5 | 16 | 3.0 |  |
| 6 | 13 | 3.5 |  |
| 7 | 13 | 3.9 |  |
| 7 | 146 | 20 |  |
| TOTAL | 146 |  |  |

