# Principles of Adult Learning Scale (PALS) 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 O	Seldom S	Almost Never AN		Λ	leve N	r		
	Question/Item						ons	e Ca	tegor	y
1. I allow students to participate in developing the criteria for evaluating their performance in class.							0	S	AN	N
2. I use disciplin	2. I use disciplinary action when it is needed.							S	AN	N
3. I allow older s	students more time to co	omplete assignme	ents when they need	it.	A	AA	О	S	AN	N
4. I encourage stu	udents to adopt middle	class values.			A	AA	О	S	AN	N
5. I help students	diagnose the gaps betw	veen their goals a	nd their present leve	el of performance.	A	AA	О	S	AN	N
6. I provide know	vledge rather than serve	as a resource per	rson.		A	AA	О	S	AN	N
7. I stick to the ir	nstructional objectives t	hat I write at the	beginning of a progr	ram.	A	AA	О	S	AN	N
8. I participate in	the informal counselin	g of students.			A	AA	О	S	AN	N
9. I use lecturing	as the best method for	presenting my sul	bject material to adu	ılt students.	A	AA	О	S	AN	N
10. I arrange the	classroom so that it is e	asy for students t	o interact.		A	AA	О	S	AN	N
11. I determine th	ne educational objective	es for each of my	students.		A	AA	О	S	AN	N
12. I plan units w	hich differ widely as po	ossible from my s	students' socio-econ	omic backgrounds.	A	AA	О	S	AN	N
	t to motivate himself/heg group discussions.	erself by confront	ting him/her in the p	presence of	A	AA	0	S	AN	N
14. I plan learnin	g episodes to take into	account my stude	ents' prior experience	es.	A	AA	О	S	AN	N
15. I allow students to participate in making decisions about the topics that will be covered in class.						AA	О	S	AN	N
16. I use one basilearning.	ic teaching method beca	ause I have found	that most adults ha	ve a similar style of	A	AA	0	S	AN	N
17. I use differen	t techniques depending	on the students b	eing taught.		A	AA	О	S	AN	N
18. I encourage d	lialogue among my stud	lents.			A	AA	О	S	AN	N
19. I use written directions for lea	tests to assess the degre	e of academic gro	owth rather than to i	indicate new	A	AA	0	S	AN	N
20. I utilize the nobjectives.	nany competencies that	most adults alrea	dy possess to achiev	ve educational	A	AA	О	S	AN	N
21. I use what his learning episodes	story has proven that ad	ults need to learn	as my chief criteria	a for planning	A	AA	О	S	AN	N
22. I accept error	rs as a natural part of the	e learning process	S.		A	AA	О	S	AN	N
23. I have individ	dual conferences to help	students identify	y their educational n	eeds.	A	AA	О	S	AN	N
24. I let each stud to learn a new co	dent work at his/her own	n rate regardless	of the amount of tim	ne it takes him/her	A	AA	O	S	AN	N
25. I help my stu	dents develop short-ran	ge as well as long	g-range objectives.		A	AA	О	S	AN	N
26. I maintain a v	well disciplined classroom	om to reduce inte	rference to learning.		A	AA	О	S	AN	N
27. I avoid discus	ssion of controversial su	ubjects that involv	ve value judgments.		A	AA	О	S	AN	N
28. I allow my st	udents to take periodic	breaks during cla	SS.		A	AA	О	S	AN	N
29. I use methods	s that foster quiet, produ	active desk work.			A	AA	О	S	AN	N

Question/Item	Response Category						
30. I use tests as my chief method of evaluating students.	A	AA	О	S	AN	N	
31. I plan activities that will encourage each student's growth from dependence on others to greater independence.	A	AA	О	S	AN	N	
32. I gear my instructional objectives to match the individual abilities and needs of the students.	A	AA	О	S	AN	N	
33. I avoid issues that relate to the student's concept of himself/herself.	A	AA	О	S	AN	N	
34. I encourage my students to ask questions about the nature of their society.	A	AA	О	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	О	S	AN	N	
36. I have my students identify their own problems that need to be solved.	A	AA	О	S	AN	N	
37. I give all my students in my class the same assignment on a given topic.	A	AA	О	S	AN	N	
38. I use materials that were originally designed for students in elementary and secondary schools.	A	AA	О	S	AN	N	
39. I organize adult learning episodes according to the problems that my students encounter in everyday life.	A	AA	О	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	О	S	AN	N	
41. I encourage competition among my students.	A	AA	О	S	AN	N	
42. I use different materials with different students.	A	AA	О	S	AN	N	
43. I help students relate new learning to their prior experiences.	A	AA	О	S	AN	N	
44. I teach units about problems of everyday living.	A	AA	О	S	AN	N	

Always Almost Always Often Seldom Almost Never Never A AA O S AN 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

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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<sup>rd</sup> ed., pp. 87-91). Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company.

Factor	Mean	Standard 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	
TOTAL	146	20	