

# adult learning

quarterly




## GED Take-Out serves adults on the go in North Carolina

WHEN MEAGAN Hackney refers to take out, it's not necessarily about the hamburgers and ice cream she dishes out as part of her job at Dairy Queen. She is just as likely to be discussing her GED work.

Hackney is just completing one of the GED Take-Out courses at Coastal Carolina Community College in Jacksonville, NC. The six-week, self-study course is part of

a flexible array of instruction options for GED students at the community college.

As the name implies, GED Take-Out courses are designed for students who need more flexibility than a traditional campus-based course affords. The courses are perfect for students such as Hackney who must balance their time between preparation for the GED exam and a job. They are also ideal for students who have

transportation or child care problems as well as those who simply prefer to work at their own pace.

In Hackney's case, asthma often kept her from attending classes at Swansboro High School. She missed so many days that although she was doing well, the school could not give her credit for the courses. Hackney decided to enroll in the GED Program at Coastal Carolina Community College to complete her high school education. She is simultaneously enrolled in a take-out course and a campus-based math course.

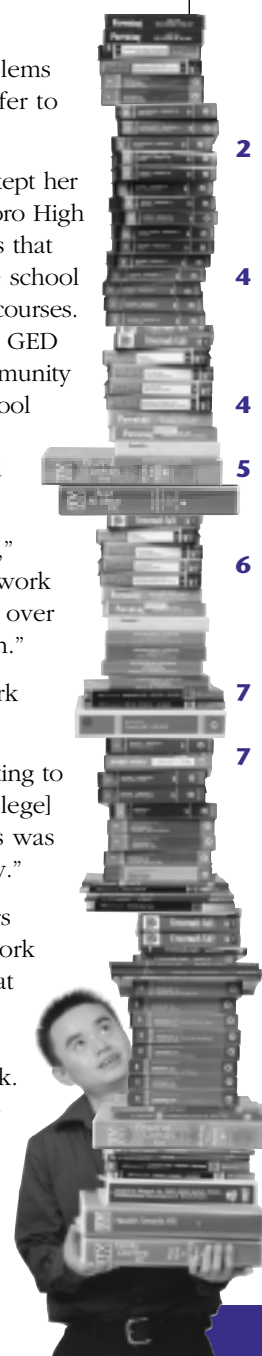
"I really like the take-out course," Hackney says. "I like that I can work at my own pace. If I need to go over something more than once, I can."

It also meshes well with her work schedule.

"I work, so I had a hard time getting to Coastal [Carolina Community College] in the mornings," she adds. "This was much easier to work into my day."

Hackney spends about five hours each week completing course work and records her time in a log that her teacher, Heather Spence, reviews. Every student checks with Spence at least once a week. That gives Spence an opportunity to check the students' progress and answer any questions.

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Getting ready to go back to school can be a tall order. Best wishes for a great school year from your friends at KET!

*Meagan Hackney (seated) reviews material with her Take-Out teacher, Heather Spence.*

[www.ket.org/ged](http://www.ket.org/ged)



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Margaret Galloway works with her student, Michael Satawake.



## Multi-level GED materials help Kentucky learners grasp concepts faster

“THOSE PRE-GED books are a lot easier for our students to understand.”

As she was working with her 16- to 18-year-old students at the Christian County (KY) Adult Education Center one day, Margaret Galloway overheard a fellow adult education instructor make that comment about some books Galloway wasn't even familiar with. The comment triggered her curiosity, and she decided to see if the books could help her students as well.

The books—KET's Pre-GED Connection® series—are designed to help students who are reading at a 4th-6th grade reading level while focusing on the same content areas as the GED series.

“I started with one of my students who was having reading problems,” Galloway recalled. “I started her in the social studies/science book and had her work through the book. When she completed the book, we discussed it. I then had her take the post-test at the end of the book. When she scored well on it, I had her take the official GED practice test. She had already taken the practice test in this subject and failed. When she re-took it this time, she raised her score 80 to 100 points.”

Galloway was intrigued and decided to investigate a little further.

“I asked her if she read the questions the first time or if she just skimmed them,” Galloway said. “Sometimes teen-agers don't really read the material; they just skim it. But she told me she gave it her best shot the first time she

took the test, adding ‘the second time it was like I understood what they were talking about.’”

Galloway used the books several more times with basically the same results.


“When I use the pre-GED books in social studies or science or another content area, I go over it with them after they have read it. We discuss the graphics and then use the post-test in the back. If they get 17 or 18 correct out of 25, I find they can usually pass the official GED practice test.”

The veteran educator believes the lower reading level of the books helps her students focus on the content rather than struggle with vocabulary.

“It seems the pre-GED reading level and content are both very helpful,” she says. “Many of my students dropped out of school at 16. They never had U.S. history or economics. With the Pre-GED books, they are exposed to these subjects at a reading level they can understand and with content that is interesting

to them. They are able to grasp the concepts rather than struggle with the reading. If they understand the concepts, then they are also able to do the thought-provoking questions on the GED test.”

In short, the books help Galloway do what she loves most about teaching.

“I love working with teen-agers,” said Galloway. “They are fun and bright and have so much potential. I just love helping them realize some of that potential.” 

### teacher tip

From Margaret Galloway  
Adult Education Instructor  
Christian County Adult Education Center

Use the Pre-GED Connection series to help students who are struggling with GED-level vocabulary and comprehension. The lower reading level allows the students to focus on content while building their reading skills.

**GED Take-Out serves adults** from page 1

Spence says all students also take an assessment test before starting the program to determine their skill level, attend a two-hour orientation session where they receive their books and a list of assignments, and complete a post-test when the course is finished. The coursework is divided for the students—two weeks are devoted to writing, one to reading, one to social studies and science combined, and two weeks to math. During the second week, students write an essay, which Spence reviews.

Otherwise, students are free to go at their own pace. They can choose to use online instruction through one of two websites or the PBS LiteracyLink® *GED Connection* videos.

Hackney chose the videos and says they are “just like having an instructor standing right in front of you teaching.” She checks out two videos a time from the college, returns them, and checks out two more.

The take-out courses have been offered since early 2001 when Dr. Randy Whitfield, associate vice president of academic and student services for the North Carolina Community College System, requested ideas for distance learning pilot programs.

Paula McElheney, director of basic skills programs for the college, proposed the idea of a take-out course, and it was chosen as a pilot project. Fourteen students enrolled in that first class, and three to five take-out classes have been offered each year since then, with a total of 347 participants.

“We hear students telling their friends about preparing for the GED online, and it is a big accomplishment for our adult students,” McElheney notes.

Their progress could also be considered a big accomplishment.

“Our assessment process is correlated to grade levels,” McElheney says, “and students go up an average of 1.5 grade levels after completing the take-out course.”

The educators leave little to chance; the college does everything possible to help students succeed.

“We have tried to really individualize our programs,” McElheney says. “There are so many different learning styles. Many students don’t have time to sit in

a class from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. every day. We offer a variety of settings and instruction—whatever our students need to succeed.”

Having access to a teacher is a critical part of that, according to Colette Teachey, public information officer for the college.

“These classes are not just online,” she says. “All the students have personal contact with a teacher. They need a teacher who is available to them, someone they can call with questions. The instructor has to be really organized, too. That is a key to our students’ success.”

As students succeed by completing their GED work, Teachey notes that they aren’t just released to find their own way. She frequently works individually with GED graduates to obtain financial aid or whatever else they need to go on to college work.



*Meagan Hackney shows off her diploma with her teacher, Heather Spence (right).*

“Our assessment process is correlated to grade levels, and students go up an average of 1.5 grade levels after completing the take-out course.”

—Paula McElheney


“We really hold their hands and encourage them to go on to additional higher learning opportunities, whether it is college or a specialty,” she says. “A big college campus can be intimidating. We try to get them past that.”

Students at Coastal Carolina Community College are fortunate that the next step can be right on the same campus. Coastal is one of 58 community colleges in North Carolina—the largest system of community colleges outside of California. At the Jacksonville campus, 4,000 students are currently enrolled in curriculum programs, and there are approximately 21,000 students each year in continuing education classes. Students can choose between vocational and technical training, two-year associate degrees, diplomas

(1-year programs), and certificates (one-semester programs that are often required for certification in many fields.)

Meagan Hackney knows what her next step will be. She plans to get a diploma

in cosmetology. Hackney’s teachers and the entire community college system will be rooting for her.

“The GED is a really wonderful indicator of ability,” says McElheney. “We are so proud of our students.” 

## PARTNERSHIPS ENRICH OUR LIVES



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## KET celebrates partnerships

### PARTNERSHIPS ENRICH OUR LIVES.

Most fundamental is the partnership between teacher and learner. And there are many more.

Today, senior citizens tutor GED students, family resource centers work with health departments and community colleges, banks and hospitals are joining forces with television producers, libraries team up with community centers and schools, public television stations work with state departments of education to air instructional programs, and correctional facilities bring in adult educators. The possibilities are only limited by our imaginations.

If you'd like to know more about creative adult education partnerships, you'll find some wonderful examples in our newsletter, our new catalog, and on our website at [www.ket.org/ged](http://www.ket.org/ged). We hope these stories will energize and inspire you to find partnerships of your own.

If you haven't received a catalog in the mail already, please give us a call at 800.3554.9067. We'll send one out right away.

**WHEN DOES ONE PLUS** six total into the hundreds?

The answer is when one innovative adult learning manager forms partnerships with educators at six agencies to help thousands of adults in need of workforce training.

In 2003, Ayla Tiago, manager of adult learning for KQED TV in San Francisco, received a grant to start a pilot program in the Bay area to train adult educators who help their clients prepare to enter the workforce. The goal was to introduce the educators to KET's Workplace Essential Skills (WES) as a tool for use in job training classes. Once trained themselves, the trainers would then use WES to prepare their clients for work.

## San Francisco PTV station, partners pro

Six agencies submitted proposals to participate in the program, and Tiago decided to accept all of them because collectively they serve such a diverse group of people. In fact, the partners serve clients ranging in age from high school students to the elderly and representing all ethnic backgrounds. Most are non-native English speakers. Some are refugees, displaced workers, and workers' compensation clients. One group was made up entirely of transgender inmates.

The participating organizations are important to note:

### **Mission Language and Vocational School**

– Part of Centro Obrero, this 37-year-old community-based organization offers medical assisting, clerical, CISCO networking, accounting, and culinary courses.

### **Mission Valley Regional Occupational Program (ROP)**

– This ROP serves three South Bay unified school districts that provide job training to high school students and adults. They have 2,300 students in their high school program and another 2,300 attending their adult courses.

### **7th Step Foundation/Freedom House**

– They serve adult male parolees who participate in a comprehensive program of substance abuse recovery, basic adult education, and job training.

**English Center for International Women at Mills College** – The Center serves women ESL students, providing English instruction combined with job training services.

**San Mateo County Regional Occupational Program** – This ROP serves adult learners between the ages of 18 and 65. All students are ESL learners and attend beginning office skills and English language communication classes.

San Francisco Sheriff's Department/Five Keys Charter School – They have been working with about 55 students a week and have used WES as their employment training curriculum.

Each agency received at least a \$600 grant along with 20 sets of workbooks and video

tapes of the first eight WES programs. Partners could spend their money freely, as long as it was related to the pilot. Some used the money to buy sorely needed equipment for their classrooms such as TV sets and VCRs; Mission Language and Vocational School bought a video camera for filming and critiquing students' mock interviews.

Each organization was also part of an initial training session conducted at KQED by Milli Fazey, former director of sales and marketing for KET's Enterprise Unit and now a trainer herself. Fazey provided participants with models and strategies for using WES as a tool in the workplace training. In addition, KQED conducted training sessions and ongoing activities with Mission Valley ROP, Mission Language and Vocational School and the 7th Step Foundation.

“This was an excellent example of the “train the trainer” model, which extended the value of the initial training and introduced WES to a larger number of educators.”

—Ayla Tiago

“This was an excellent example of the ‘train the trainer’ model, which extended the value of the initial training and introduced WES to a larger number of educators,” says Tiago. “In addition, many of our partnering organizations work with a majority of ESL (English as a Second Language) students.

These teachers adapted the materials for this population, which was not a targeted audience in the original development of WES.”

Partners focused on the first six tapes and workbooks—the employment section.

“This made perfect sense since our partners work with students who are currently seeking employment and need these skills,” Tiago notes. “One of our partners used programs 17 and 18, which cover working on forms and charts, and following instructions and directions. These were ESL students and materials had to be adapted, but they proved to work well in improving vocabulary, developing reading proficiency and the ability to follow instructions. The 7th Step

Foundation used mainly tapes 2 and 5 to prepare their clients to re-enter the job market.”

Building on the training provided by KQED, the partners used selected segments from the tapes, preparing activities to support the extracts. They used role-play and discussion along with exercises designed to practice the skills demonstrated in the programs, as well as pair and group work to stimulate group involvement and interaction.

Although Tiago initially planned to host only one post-training meeting for the partners, it soon became clear that a more collaborative and supportive framework would be productive.

“Our project worked very closely with the teachers throughout the pilot,” she says, “and a curriculum-working group met several times to discuss progress, review testing and assessment strategies, and share lesson plan ideas. The working group also generated a wealth of lessons that will be collated into a large volume.”

Tiago says the partnering agencies were extremely committed to this pilot and saw it as a great opportunity to enhance their work.

The results confirm her beliefs.

“Overall, the pilot exceeded our expectations,” she says, giving much of the credit to the excellent teachers they worked with. “One of the best outcomes from this pilot



*Graciela Tapia (center) poses for a photo with Xuan-Vu 'Sunny' Nguyen, EL Civics coordinator (left), and Lynne Wilkins, associate director of programs at the English Center for International Studies at Mills College.*

"They are making it possible to continue the work, not only with WES, but also with other series and projects," Tiago says. "In addition, our division (Education Network) has been using the catering services of their Culinary School for our events. This is especially positive since the school is in our neighborhood and it allows us to support their efforts and students in yet another way.

"We would also like to involve partners in future training sessions and eventually have a pool of trainers to work with us. We have already started this model by having a Mission Language and Vocational School teacher participate in one of

## promote work readiness



*Career Coordinator Lisa Johnson celebrates graduation with Han-jia 'Don' Liang from China.*

*Ayla Tiago, manager of adult learning for KQED TV, takes a popcorn break.*



has been the fact that most partners will continue using the series on an ongoing basis. In fact, the San Francisco Sheriff's Department has adopted WES in its workplace curriculum as a permanent component to be offered every other month. Mission Language and Vocational School will also continue to use the series, and the teacher who received the initial training has now trained another five teachers who have adopted WES into their curriculum."

Tiago says yet another benefit is the connection and working relationships KQED established with the agencies.

our trainings. Having teachers illustrating good and effective use of video, and more specifically demonstrating their experience with WES and other series will be very helpful to other educators."

Tiago said there were several surprising results of the project.

"The first was the quality and amount of material produced by the partners," she says. "It was very rewarding to see teachers take the series and, building on their initial work with us, make it their own, creating a real resource for their students."

ESL teachers were particularly creative.

"This was especially positive because it points to the power of using video and making the material relevant to each group of students," she says.

Measuring the precise change in the students' workforce readiness was more difficult, according to Tiago, largely because WES was only one variable among many.

"What we can say with certainty (from the informal and formal feedback from partners) is that the use of WES made a positive contribution to their work and was without doubt one of the factors in students' progress," Tiago says. "Teachers were happy with the WES materials and found that they enhanced their curriculum and provided them with an opportunity to use video creatively and interactively with their students." **KET**



## New York City hospital waiting rooms become classrooms

BESIDES THUMBING through old magazines, there is little to do in a physician's waiting room besides wait—unless you are at one of five New York City area hospitals. At these hospitals, the wait could be an opportunity to expand your health literacy.

Through a partnership between the Adult Learning Media Alliance (ALMA) and the New York Methodist Family Health Center in Brooklyn, patients are provided with videos and print materials about health-related matters as they wait to see their physician. Volunteers are trained to do mini health literacy workshops right in the waiting room.

The workshops include three primary units. The first is about active ingredients and measurements. The second explains what to consider when taking multiple medications, and the third discusses how to properly prepare for a doctor's visit.

We have had a tremendous response in New York," says Alex Quinn, executive director of ALMA, "and with support from the Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation, we will be expanding the project to five additional hospitals next year."

Materials for the project were adapted from the TV411 Health Smarts Kit. The partnership with New York Methodist Hospital was funded with a grant from the United Hospital Fund. ALMA trains the volunteers who then bring the materials—videos and supporting print materials—to the waiting rooms. They then gather a group of patients together, show a video, and discuss the topic.



"The first is on understanding an active ingredient," says Quinn. "They show the patients a five-minute video and then talk about points raised in the video. They also have handouts and a poster-size enlargement of an over-the-counter drug label, similar to what was shown in the video. The volunteers talk about over-the-counter medications—how to determine the active ingredients and how to make sure you have the correct dosage. The entire session takes about 20 minutes. Someone might get called away during the session, but people are often there for quite some time."

Quinn says the partnership is a natural for ALMA.

"It's what we do," he says. "We try to model real situations. What can be more real and necessary than managing your health care? Although we love working in adult education classrooms, we need to find other ways of reaching people. Not everyone has the time to get to classes. Bringing literacy into the community and hospital waiting room is a really vital way for learning to happen." **KET**

*The TV411 Health Smarts Kit is available from KET. Call 800.354-9067 to learn more.*

# Rosie Maum: Our newest Forum guest makes connections for English language learners



“When you find yourself in a new culture, you have to figure out how to fit the old and the new together. A lot of it is cultural. A lot of teachers don’t deal with that at all, but it is a very important aspect of keeping adults motivated and helping them be more comfortable learning.”

—Rosie Maum

WHEN ROSIE MAUM FIRST moved to the United States, she was disappointed when May 1st came and went as just another day. In her native Europe, it was a significant holiday, and everyone took the day off to celebrate. Then on July 4th, fireworks lit up the sky and smoke rose from barbecue grills throughout her neighborhood. Maum felt only confusion and a deep loneliness.

“It is quite challenging to move to a new country,” says Maum. “The food is different. The holidays are different. You try to make friends, but you don’t understand them, and they don’t understand you. Nothing is familiar, and you don’t have any of the support systems you once did.”

Still, the move was exciting at first.

“It was cars and hamburgers and rock ‘n’ roll,” Maum recalls. “There was so much technology, and everything was hands-on. There were also so many choices. In the stores there are hundreds of different brands. I was raised in eastern Europe where there is one brand of toothpaste. That’s it, and they run out of that sometimes.”

When the excitement wore off, though, a kind of sadness Maum had never known set in.

“When you move to a new country with a new culture, you have to give up who you were and find a new identity,” she says. “You have to deal with new roles and a new identity and figure out how to fit the old you with the new you.”

Maum didn’t know it yet, but her personal experience and education would soon culminate in an exciting new way. First, though Maum needed to write her Ph.D. dissertation. Maum decided to bring her interests in ESL and adult education together in her dissertation, comparing beliefs about teaching English as a second language among both native and non-native ESL teachers.

Maum concluded that the non-native teachers had a distinct edge. Her personal experiences provided the perspective to help her understand why.

“When you find yourself in a new culture, you have to figure out how to fit the old and the new together,” Maum observes. “A lot of it is cultural. A lot of teachers don’t deal with that at all, but it is a very important aspect of keeping adults motivated and helping them be more comfortable learning.”

About that time, Maum attended her first TESOL (Teachers of English as a Second Language) conference. A few years later, in 2003-2004, Maum chaired the adult education interest section of TESOL. Along the way, she also discovered the unique skills she and her fellow non-native teachers bring to the classroom.

Two items stand out to Maum: the understanding and corresponding empathy of what it really means to acquire another language and the emotional aspects of adapting to a new culture.

She used that insight on a new challenge known as Project CONNECT that she developed with Fran Keenan, Donna Moss, Susan Riley, and Kate Silc. Each of the teammates brought diverse geographical and academic backgrounds, and they joined forces with the National Center for Adult Literacy (NCAL), and the Public Broadcasting System (PBS), who did much of the programming and pilot testing.

Today, Project CONNECT ([www.pbslearnenglish.org](http://www.pbslearnenglish.org)) is the only online product designed and crafted specifically for adult English language learners.

Project CONNECT has three main areas:

1. Learning in the USA—understanding of how the American educational system works and where to get education
2. Working in the USA—learning about the culture of the workplace, how to apply for a job, what it means to interview, and where to look for job training
3. Living in the USA—understanding American culture, community resources, and civic involvement

The advantages of learning online are many, according to Maum.

“Learners can use it 24/7, can do it at their own pace,” she says of two advantages. “With English language learners, if they want to hear how something is pronounced, they can click on the audio button as many times as they want. In a classroom setting with other students, that would not be possible. There is not enough time to practice over and over.”


Maum says another advantage is that students are able to take more ownership of their learning. “They can see what they still need to work on or what they want to concentrate on,” she says.

That is important because adult English language learners come to the classroom with such diverse needs and backgrounds. Some are not literate in their own language, while others have a Ph.D. in their native tongue. Some want survival English—just enough to get by—while others want to learn enough English to get a job or advance in a job. In the classroom, all these learners come to class together under the same teacher.

Still, Maum stresses that the teacher remains an important and necessary part of the educational process.

“Teachers need to remember that these programs supplement instruction. They cannot replace the teacher. You cannot expect someone to learn a language completely online, but this is a wonderful way to supplement instruction not available before.”

For Maum, the end result is what really matters.

“In adult education, literacy is gaining the skills that can empower you to function as a citizen, a family member, and in a work setting,” she says. “Online instruction is so full of possibilities. It is an exciting way to learn those skills.” 

**Read the entire interview with Rosie Maum and ask her questions at [www.pbs.org/literacy](http://www.pbs.org/literacy).**

## And the winner is...



**CONGRATULATIONS TO IRMA LANCE**, manager of Adult Basic Education/ESL at the Center for Continuing Education & Workforce Development for the Borough of Manhattan Community College (CUNY). She won a six-month free license to ESL/CivicsLink online professional development at the 2005 TESOL conference.

ESL/Civics Link is a flexible, online professional development system for adult education ESL teachers. Developed by adult educators for adult educators and tested in the field, this Web-based product prepares teachers to teach English to speakers of other languages, enhance cross-cultural awareness, and integrate English literacy instruction and civics education.

"I was very pleased to have won the six-month free license to the ESL/CivicsLink at the TESOL convention," writes Lance in an e-mail to KET. "This summer we are planning to use the ESL/CivicsLink as a focus of our ESL staff development. What a wonderful opportunity for us and what great timing."

The Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC) Center for Continuing Education and Workforce Development serves about 500 ESL students. Their ESL classes serve predominately Chinese speaking students in lower Manhattan as well as Spanish speaking students in Washington Heights. Classes held at their main campus in lower Manhattan have an even wider mix of nationalities.

Congratulations once more to the BMCC. 

To learn more about ESL/Civics Link, go to [www.pbs.org/civicslink](http://www.pbs.org/civicslink) or call 1-800-354-9067.

## KET adds two new offerings

ADULT EDUCATION IS most effective when it is immediately relevant to the learner's life. KET is now offering brand-new products that help with two key areas of life—employment and community involvement.

### The Employment Readiness Scale (ERS)

This new online assessment tool can be used to evaluate an individual's strengths and challenges, identify the types of assistance that would be most helpful, measure changes as a result of interventions, and predict employment outcomes.

The ERS model is based on an assumption that becoming ready for employment involves achieving three interrelated goals: achieving self-sufficiency in five areas, understanding the particular stresses or challenges you face, and coping effectively with these challenges. Research shows that people who face significant challenges without assistance in handling them are likely to fail at work even if they are successful in getting a job.

ERS can:

- provide quick, comprehensive initial employability assessments

- link feedback to an action planning tool
- measure client changes from interventions
- confirm when a client is employment ready



For the agency, ERS can help identify the programs and services clients need, demonstrate client improvement, assess the effectiveness of an intervention, and provide funders with accountability reports.

"Employment is a crucial issue for virtually every learner," says Ron Griffin, KET's director of sales and marketing. Many adult learners are motivated by the promise of a job or a better job, and this product can help them determine what skills they need to learn or enhance to get the job they desire."


### On Common Ground

From the producers of Crossroads Cafe, this new software program addresses key civic and government concepts for EL Civics and citizenship education.

To explain what it means to be a U.S. citizen and the rights and responsibilities associated with citizenship, On Common

Ground uses dramatic stories on controversial issues, usually in situations that lack a single right answer. Each episode con-

cludes with an important event from U.S. History relevant to the theme of the episode. Individual lessons focus on such crucial issues as racial polarization, extremism and freedom of speech, individual rights versus the public good, separation of powers, and checks and balances.

"On Common Ground helps learners fully understand the rights, privileges and responsibilities associated with citizenship," says Griffin. "With today's complex global economy, there has perhaps never been a more important time for all citizens to fully understand and participate in their government." 



### On Common Ground Program Titles

Domino Effect  
Like Taking Candy From a Baby  
For the Greater Good  
Collision Course, Part 1  
Collision Course, Part 2  
A Delicate Balance  
Rules of the Game  
Sticks and Stones, Part 1  
Sticks and Stones, Part 2  
A House Divided  
Fall from Grace, Part 1  
Fall from Grace, Part 2  
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Hidden Agenda

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