

the **Change** Agent

An Adult Education Magazine
for Social Justice

Use Relevant, Engaging
Content to Teach College
and Career Readiness
(CCRS)-Aligned Reading
and Writing Skills

Cynthia Peters
cpeters@worlded.org



ated Education and Training program at gain literacy and numeracy skills as they go. The training program leads 13 levels and points are also over the Service Manager or culinary workers? Research it and create a. See the pathways for other careers on PP-10 or a model, or make up a new model.

AND READY-TO-USE.
Get and audio at various levels of complexity—designed to teach basic skills & transform & inspire adult learners.

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Ruthie Barro, a student at the Brooklyn Public Library in New York City, opened her own barber shop in 1986. Read her story on pp. 50-51.

ENGAGING, EMPOWERING, AND READY-TO-USE.
Student-generated, relevant content in print and audio at various levels of complexity—designed to teach basic skills & transform & inspire adult learners.

A MAGAZINE & WEBSITE: CHANGEAGENT.NELRC.ORG

changeagent.nelrc.org

The Change Agent is a theme-based magazine and website, written mostly by adult learners, designed to be engaging and empowering, and to teach basic skills.



It's Easy to Access Online!

If you are in a program supported by the AALRC, you can access our website using the following credentials:

**Username: arkansas
Password: changeagent
changeagent.nelrc.org**



In this webinar, you will:

1. Get a tour of *The Change Agent's* online resources, including strategies for using audio articles
2. Dig into the “Career Pathways” issue and the “Hair” issue for examples of CCRS-aligned activities
3. Learn about our Call for Articles and how to support students to write for *The Change Agent*.



TAKE THE TOUR

1. Global Table of Contents – sortable by LEVEL:

changeagent.nelrc.org/in-the-classroom/reading-levels/

2. Lesson Packets

changeagent.nelrc.org/in-the-classroom/lesson-packets/

3. Back Issues

changeagent.nelrc.org/issues/

4. College and Career Readiness Standards grids

changeagent.nelrc.org/in-the-classroom/ccr/

From Impossible Journey to Successful Career

It takes a village.

Sidonie Gbazale

A Dream Resurfaces

As a child growing up in the Ivory Coast, my dream was to be a midwife. However, for financial reasons, I had to drop out of school. I thought I would not be able to pursue my dream. When I immigrated to the U.S., I did not expect miracles because I did not speak English. Still, I enrolled in ESL classes in Providence, Rhode Island, to begin my new journey.

Once I started feeling more confident in English, my dream of becoming a midwife resurfaced. My teachers encouraged me to get a high

school diploma through the National External Diploma Program (NEDP), which I accomplished in just three months. With a high school credential in hand, I had more employment options. I enrolled in a skills training program, became a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), and I moved on to a better job.

Getting Support to Go to College

The next step in my journey was to find a way to enroll in college to study nursing. It was then that I met the Transition to College (TTC) team at Rhode Island Regional Adult Learning (RIRAL). TTC played a significant role in my education. Through this program, I worked closely with teachers who encouraged me to excel in subjects where I had previously struggled. Moreover, they provided the guidance necessary for me to enroll in the Community College of Rhode Island Nursing Program. The TTC team was with me every step of the way—checking to make sure I took the right courses and getting help when I needed it. Believe me, navigating the sea known as the U.S. higher education system would have been much rougher if I had not received support from TTC.

After years of working hard and receiving the guidance to pursue my education, working as



“Midwife” comes from the old English “mid” (with) and “wife” (woman). Source: www.yourdreamz.com

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dition, being a mother of five who also needed to work full time meant that I could not always study as much as I needed to. Thankfully, I was able to overcome all those hurdles to becoming a nurse.

Despite the many challenges, I learned to adjust by working harder than I ever had in my entire life. Over time, I excelled in my courses and even started helping other struggling nursing students. After years of hard work, sacrifice, and countless challenges, I graduated as one of the top students in the nursing program and landed a job as a nurse in a local nursing home shortly after graduation. Moving from an entry level job, to a better job, to a great career in nursing took time, a village, and a strong commitment for a better life.

Still Working on My Dream

Regarding my dream of becoming a midwife, I am still working toward it. Unfortunately, for now, due to the various financial responsibilities that I have, I am going to be working to support my family. But hopefully in the near future I will be in a better financial situation, and I will return to school.

Sidonie Gbazale is from the Ivory Coast in West Africa. In 2010, she graduated from RIRAL’s Transition to College program and went on to complete her degree in nursing at the Community College of Rhode Island.

a CNA, and raising a family, I finally passed the nursing entrance exam and am proud to have “RN” at the end of my name. I faced many hurdles along my way, which I believe contributed to making me the strong woman that I am today. Not being a native English speaker was one of the biggest barriers I faced. In addition,



Healthcare Occupations with the Most Projected Job Openings in the U.S. 2010-2020

	Job growth number (in 1000s)	Job growth percent increase	Job openings due to growth & replacements (in thousands)
Registered Nurse	711.9	26.0	1,207.4
Home Health Aides	706.3	69.4	837.5
CNAs and Orderlies	302.0	20.1	496.1
LPNs and LVNs	158.5	22.1	369.2
Physicians	158.3	24.4	305.1
Medical Assistants	152.9	30.9	243.8
Pharmacy Techs	108.3	32.4	166.3
Dental Assistants	91.6	30.8	154.0
Pharmacists	59.7	25.4	139.6
EMTs and Paramedics	75.4	33.3	120.8

Make several true statements about the information in the chart. Explain how RNs could have higher job growth in numbers than Home Health Aides but a lower percent increase. Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Look at Language

Read the pull quote. Find three words that Sidonie uses to create a metaphor that describes her experience going to college. Write a new version of the sentence using a different metaphor.

What does she mean when she says it required a “village” to help her become a nurse? Who was in her “village”?

Who is in your village? Write about what supports you have and some specific ways they support you. What supports could you add to your network?

Look at the career pathway on p. 7. What steps should you take if you want to become a nurse?

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*"Midwife" comes from the old English "mid" (with) and "wife" (woman).
Source: <weknownyourdreamz.com>*

Career Steps

What steps has Sidonie taken so far to realize her dream? List them here:

1. _____

2. _____

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Nursing Career Pathway

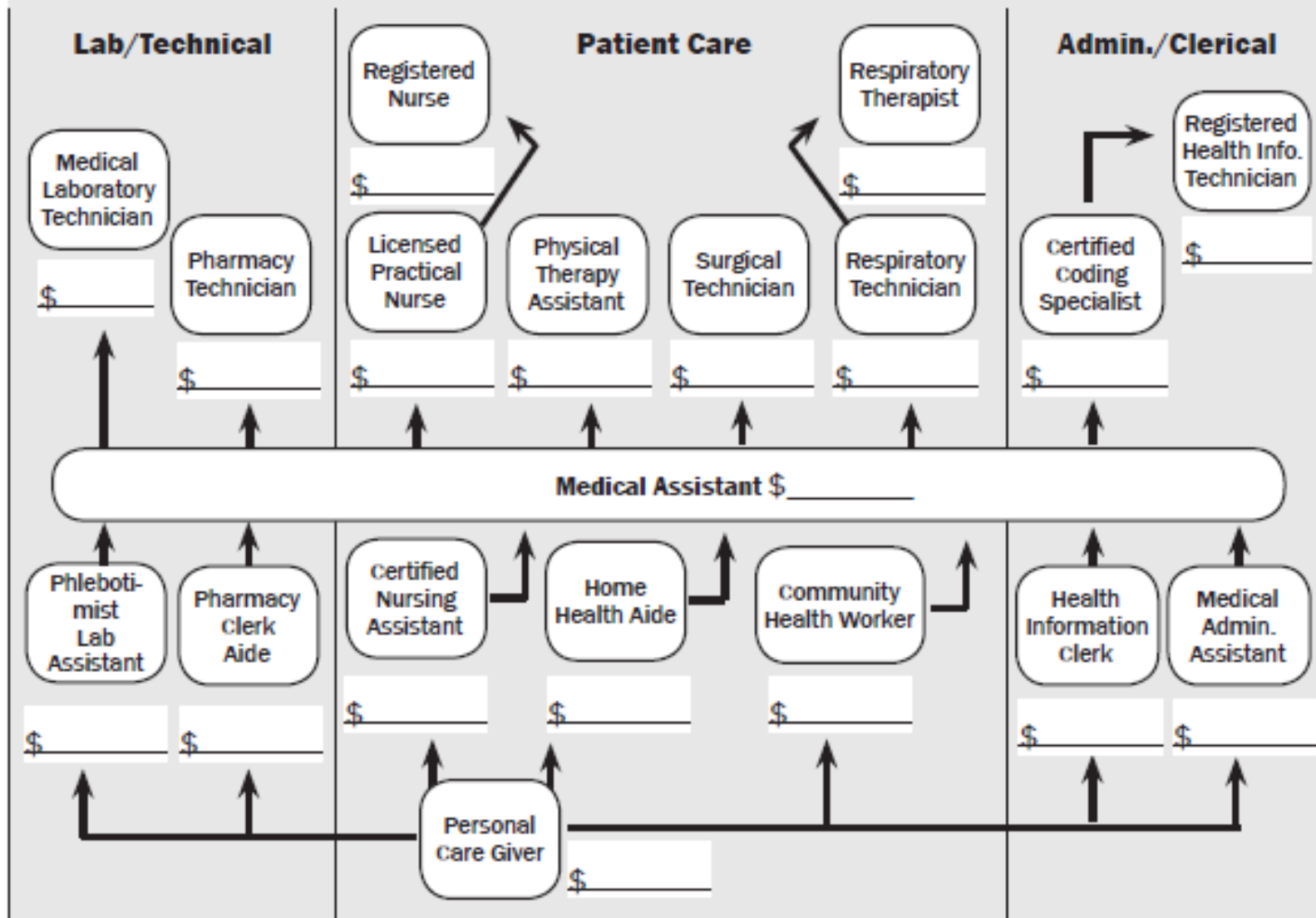
Median Hourly Pay* & Title

Skills/Tasks

Education & Time Required

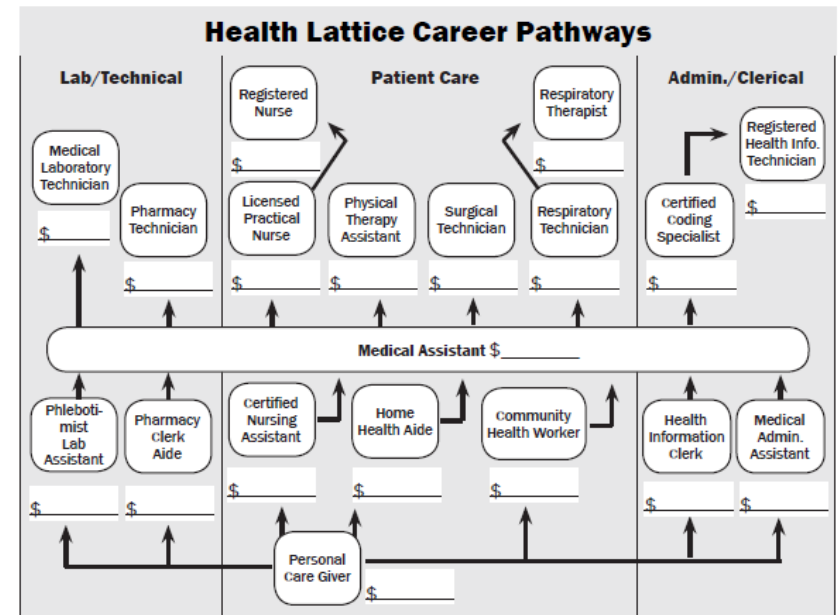
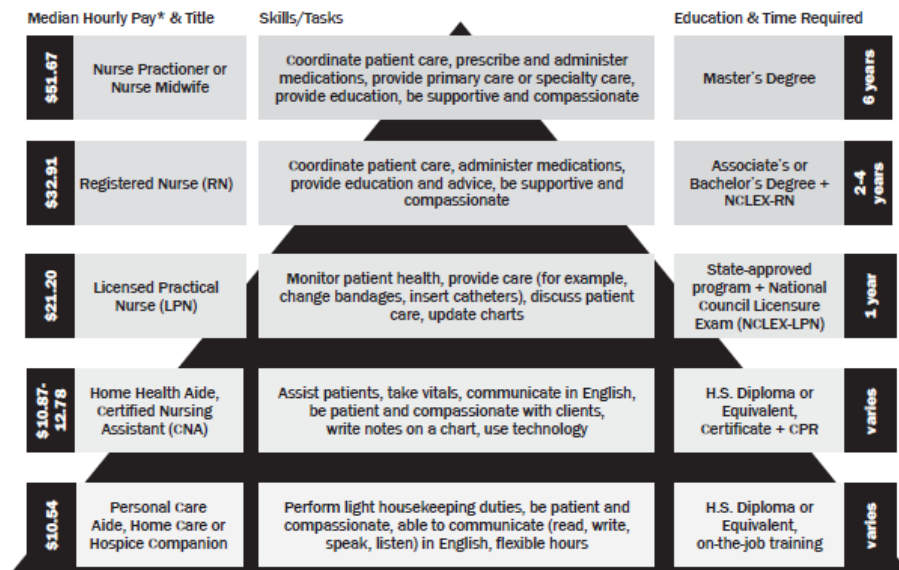
\$51.67	Nurse Practitioner or Nurse Midwife	Coordinate patient care, prescribe and administer medications, provide primary care or specialty care, provide education, be supportive and compassionate	Master's Degree	6 years
\$32.91	Registered Nurse (RN)	Coordinate patient care, administer medications, provide education and advice, be supportive and compassionate	Associate's or Bachelor's Degree + NCLEX-RN	2-4 years
\$21.20	Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)	Monitor patient health, provide care (for example, change bandages, insert catheters), discuss patient care, update charts	State-approved program + National Council Licensure Exam (NCLEX-LPN)	1 year
\$10.87-12.78	Home Health Aide, Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)	Assist patients, take vitals, communicate in English, be patient and compassionate with clients, write notes on a chart, use technology	H.S. Diploma or Equivalent, Certificate + CPR	varies
\$10.54	Personal Care Aide, Home Care or Hospice Companion	Perform light housekeeping duties, be patient and compassionate, able to communicate (read, write, speak, listen) in English, flexible hours	H.S. Diploma or Equivalent, on-the-job training	varies

Health Lattice Career Pathways



Compare “pyramid” vs. “lattice”

Nursing Career Pathway



Reality: Carlos's Story



“Now these hands have a different purpose.”

Access the video here:

<https://changeagent.nelrc.org/issues/issue-45/>

Or here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M5ij3pFkGA8>

Carlos Contreras Article

My Life in Concrete

Carlos Contreras

Written in loving memory of my father, Frank (Mighty Mouse) Contreras, my main teacher in the trade.

Starting from the Bottom

Let me tell you how it began. My life in concrete started one summer when I went to work with my father. I was young, so it was fun for me. We started work at 5:00 a.m. We poured the concrete and then sat around for about an hour waiting for it to “set up” (get hard). That’s when we had lunch. By the time we were done with lunch, the concrete was set up. Then we would start finishing it,

which meant working on my knees.

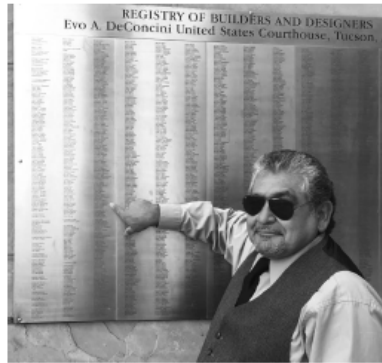
I worked that summer, and it was great. I had a lot of fun and the money was good. It felt good to contribute

to the household. The summer ended, and I decided I didn’t want to go back to school. I wanted to work. My parents were upset, but they said ok. My father took me to work with him, but instead of working in concrete, I started as a laborer doing pick and shovel work. He told me that’s where I was going to start—from the bottom. He told me I could work my way up at the pace I wanted to.



Finishing concrete can be hard on your knees!

He told me I could work my way up at the pace I wanted to.



Carlos Contreras points to his name on the plaque outside the U.S. District Court in Tucson, AZ.

I labored for four years. Being a laborer meant digging ditches and leveling the dirt where you pour the concrete. It was fun. Then I started setting forms. You set forms around the foundation of the building that the concrete is poured in. That was also fun. I swung a sledge hammer all day, pounding in steel stakes that held the wooden forms in place. I did that for about four years, as well.

Now I drive around town and see my work everywhere.

Becoming a Finisher

Then I started finishing concrete. That’s when the fun really started because you get to go to different

job sites. For example, worked at the U.S. District Court and at the University of Arizona. I poured the concrete for the Student Union and the Main Library. It was fun because at the end, I got to see my finished work. This work lasts forever, and when you go by places where you worked, the memory returns.

My father and my uncles taught me the trade. They always told me to work smarter not harder. After they were done with me, I was one of the best concrete finishers in town. Everybody knew me. I could go to any company and get hired.

I worked for about five companies in the time I was finishing concrete. Each one paid me more money than the previous one. One of the jobs I did is the Tucson Federal Building. My name is on the brass plaque by the door along with everyone else that worked there.

Knees Gave Out, Time for a New Career

I am very satisfied with the career path I chose. Finishing concrete is and always will be a favorite part of my life. Sadly, my knees gave out and I

couldn’t finish concrete any more. Now, I’m on a new path. I got back into school; I’m getting my GED and I’m aiming to get a degree in Social Services work. I picked this path because I can relate to many individuals I will be working with. I can have empathy and compassion and I want to give back to my community. I am very optimistic about what the future holds and I cannot wait for the next chapter in life!

Carlos Contreras is a student at Adult Basic Education for College and Career (ABECC) in Tucson, AZ. He is a single father of a 12-year old boy, and Carlos wants to show him that education is important. Carlos is active in the student leadership council at El Rio Learning Center. Volunteering in his community has made him want to continue his education in social services to be a better advocate and resource for those in need.

AFTER YOU READ:

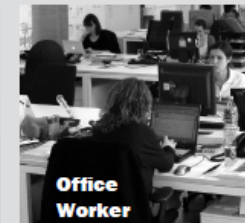
- 1) Carlos is changing careers. What skills from his “life in concrete” might be transferable to a career in social services?
- 2) Concrete is a hard, fixed substance. Is there any irony in the title “My Life in Concrete”?

Some Careers are Hard on the Body

In the pictures below, what activities does each worker do? Which do you think is hardest on the body? Why? Considering the wear and tear on the body, what are the pros and cons of each job? What kind of job would be right for your body?



Roofer



Office Worker



Housekeeper

Learn more about workers’ rights to safety on the job. See “Workplace Safety: Learn It, Teach It.” Available for free at <changeagent.nelrc.org/in-the-classroom/lesson-packets>.

Look for our “extras” at <changeagent.nelrc.org/issues>; read an essay by Salisa Chuon, “From Assembly Line to Accounting,” about wanting work that is easier on her body.

LEVEL 4

Mundan Ceremony

A Sacred Ritual. A Chance to Bond with Family.

by Priyanka Singh

BEFORE YOU READ: What rituals do you practice? What rituals help you connect with your family?

In Hindu tradition, babies go through a hair removal ceremony called *mundan*. Hindus perform this ceremony because we believe that the hair from birth is associated with undesirable traits from past lives. In this ceremony, the priest shaves

In this ceremony, the priest shaves off a part of the child's hair while chanting sacred hymns.

off a part of the child's hair while chanting sacred hymns. After that, the barber shaves off the rest of the hair. The shaved hair is either offered to a deity or

to a sacred river like the Ganga. We perform this ceremony for both boys and girls.

My parents performed the mundan ceremony for me and my siblings. I remember my sister's mundan ceremony. The whole family went to Haridwar City, one of the seven holiest places to Hindus. My father contacted a priest and a barber to perform the ritual. In the early morning on the banks of the holy river Ganga, the priest started the ceremony by chanting mantras and

started to shave off my sister's hair, she started crying, and she cried for the entire ceremony. Once her head was completely shaved, we collected each and every strand of hair and immersed them in the river Ganga. After that, all the elder family members bestowed their blessings on my sister, and my mother distributed sweets to everyone. After the ceremony, my grandfather explained to us the importance of mundan ritual. He said, "All the festivals and rituals are important but most important is family bonding."

Many of my friends also performed this ceremony for their kids. But some of them didn't. Even my sister didn't perform the mundan ceremony for her son. When I asked her why, she said, "My son has beautiful hair. He is comfortable with it. Whenever I feel that it is bothering him, I will cut it off."

Mundan ceremony is important to me not just for religious reasons, but also because these kinds of ceremonies connect families.



Caption under Mundan Ceremony photo

- *Study the photo above. Describe what you see. Be as detailed as possible.*
- *For example, notice the hands in the photo. What are the hands doing? Do the hands belong to men or women or both? Explain your opinion.*
- *Describe the child's expression.*
- *After reading the article on p. 10, write a story about the picture. Include details about mundan ceremony.*

The Sadness of My Hair

Melvin Reyes

This is a story about a guy from Nicaragua.

He was born in 1986 during the war in a little state called Estelí. His father was a soldier, and his mamá took care of him and his siblings.

The war ended in 1990.

In the middle of his childhood, in 1995, his parents decided to go live in the capital, Managua. His father started studying, and his mamá worked a lot to provide them with food. Life was hard. They lived in a little house and didn't have electricity or much money for food and clothing. His father got his PhD in Nicaraguan history, but he then abandoned his family.

It was a hard time for his mamá because he and his siblings were going through adolescence. His mamá worked really hard to pay for their education. They were growing up, and he and his siblings started at the University. But his sister got pregnant, and his little brother didn't like to work.

LEVEL 5 He worked for a company that delivered helped his mamá with the bills. But, it was not enough. He had a couple of uncles in the U.S. With their help, he could emigrate to

the U.S. He stopped his studies at the University and started enjoying a little bit of life because he and his mamá knew it would be dangerous to take the train across Mexico. When he left, the guy promised his mamá that he would not cut his hair until he saw her again.

That's me. I live in Vermont. I haven't seen my mamá in eight years. My hair is so long. When I look at it and touch it, the sadness is entangled in my hair.

NOTE ABOUT ACCENTS: How do the accents in Estelí and mamá affect pronunciation?



Melvin Reyes was born in Nicaragua and is currently a student at Central Vermont Adult Basic Education in Montpelier. He has been writing poetry in Spanish and English for the last two years.

What is the Main Idea?

Which of the following sentences captures the main idea of this essay? Explain why the one you pick succeeds when the others do not. (See p. 12 for more “main idea” practice.)

1. This is a story about a guy from Nicaragua.
2. He delivered propane, his mamá worked hard, and his sister got pregnant.
3. In this story, Melvin Reyes describes the symbolic act of not cutting his hair to convey the sadness he feels at leaving his mother behind in Nicaragua, where economic hardship forced him to migrate to the U.S.
4. The author, Melvin Reyes, had a hard life in Nicaragua, and now he feels very sad because he hasn't seen his mother or cut his hair for eight years.

Answers: 1. No. This gives little information about what the story is about. 2. No. These are details from the story, but they do not convey the main idea. 3. Yes. This captures the main idea. 4. No. This almost captures the main idea, but it leaves out Melvin's immigration to the U.S., which is a key part of the story.

Gum in My Hair

Ismett Vasquez

When I was a young kid in school, my hair was very long. One day, two classmates put gum in my hair.

That afternoon, when I went home, my mom saw the gum. She got upset and cut my hair short.

Maybe those girls were just playing. But I got hit and my hair got cut.



LEVEL 2

Ismett Vasquez is 47 years old, and she was born and raised in the Bronx. She studies at Lehman College Adult Learning Center. She has six kids and two grandkids, and her fiancé has four kids and 5 grandkids. Her Mom and Dad were raised in Puerto Rico.

Get It?

In English, we use the verb “to get” in many ways. “Got” is the past tense of “get.” In this article, the author uses “got” in two ways:

1. In the first, *She got upset*, “got” means “became.”
2. In the second, the author uses “got” to create passive voice. (Passive voice is when you are not sure who is doing the action. For example: *My car got stolen*. You don’t know who stole it, so you use the passive voice.)

Try writing your own sentences with “get” or “got.”

Recipe Cards for Hair Care

Cynthia Peters

IN THIS SECTION (pp. 28-33), we have compiled recipes for homemade hair care. *The Change Agent* does not have a test kitchen, so we have not tried out these products. However, each writer stands by their recipe!

USE THE ACTIVITIES on this page to build vocabulary and reading, writing, and speaking skills.

BEFORE YOU EXPLORE THE RECIPES, discuss your own family recipes for hair care.

LEARN NEW VOCABULARY. Verbs: massage, wash, rinse. Nouns: ingredient, scalp, follicles, vitamins, tangles, emollient. Adjectives: oily, creamy, thick, shiny, moist, smooth, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal.

REVIEW MEASUREMENTS. Bring in measuring cups and spoons and review the vocabulary for each of them. Learn how to abbreviate teaspoon (tsp) and tablespoon (Tbs or tbsp).

MAKE YOUR OWN RECIPE CARDS. Make copies of the blank recipe card below. For each of the recipes on pp. 28-33, fill in a recipe card. First, make up a name for the recipe. Then list all the ingredients. Finally, list the steps you need to take to make the recipe. The process of reading the recipes and then re-writing each one so that it fits on the recipe card will be a great way to practice reading comprehension, writing, and finding key information.

Recipe Name: _____

Ingredients: _____

Steps:

Questions about this recipe: For example, some recipes don't list quantities.

My Family's Hair Care Recipe

Mildred Sanchez

This recipe has been used in my family for many years. My grandmother used this recipe. My mother used this recipe. I use this recipe. And now my daughters use this recipe on their children, too. My recipe includes three ingredients: one teaspoon of castor oil, one teaspoon raw honey, and half of a teaspoon of peppermint oil.

then shampoo like you normally would. Shampoo twice if you feel like your hair is too oily. You can use this hair repair recipe twice a month. You have actual results.



Mildred Sanchez is a student at the Methuen Adult Learning Center in Methuen, MA. She is originally from New York City. She hasn't missed a single day of class and has been on time. Her goal is to have perfect attendance this year.

Mix the ingredients until the mixture becomes a creamy paste. Then part your hair into 4 sections. Using your fingers, apply the mixture to your scalp and massage. Use the entire mixture. Then put on a plastic shower cap for about 10 minutes. After the 10 minutes, rinse with warm water and

Learn More about Mildred's Ingredients



The last ingredient is peppermint oil, which is known to help with hair growth.

Hair Growth without Chemicals

Serena Cruz-Santiago

When I was a little girl, my hair was thin. It didn't look good, so my father cut my hair short. My mom bought potato "juice" from a neighbor. She poured some onto my head. She massaged my hair and head. Then she peeled and boiled tomato. She rinsed my hair with that. She did this once a week, many times.

When I was a teenager, my hair started to grow thick and shiny like it is today.

I am thankful for my wonderful parents. With their help, my hair is shiny and thick.

Serena Cruz-Santiago is a student at the Adult and Continuing Education Program in Plainville, CT. She was born in Oaxaca, Mexico. Her mom is a lovely person who likes to make everything naturally.



Beauty from Handmade

Ellen Wang

My friend's husband had gray hair when he was 40 years old. One day, they went to a party, and a little girl called her "aunt" but called her husband "grandpa." Another time, someone thought her husband was her father. No one wants to be so embarrassed.

Luckily, we are smart and invent our own solutions to create solutions to our problems.

Second, I apply the henna paste to my hair, covering it from my scalp to the ends of my hair. I leave it on for 2-3 hours and then rinse until my hair is clear of all particles. Finally, I shampoo and condition. I then apply a natural hair oil.

LEVELS 3-7

Coconut Oil Massage

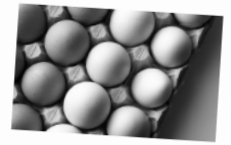
Emily Santos

When I was a child, my mother used to take a coconut and grind it. Then she would put the ground coconut in a clean, thin sock to take the oil out of the coconut.

After my mother washed my sisters' and my hair, she would place some of the coconut oil on her hands and put it on our hair. She then massaged the oil into our scalp, which I loved as a child.

When she was finished, she put our hair in a pony tail.

Emily Santos was born in Brooklyn, NY. She studies at the Department of Education, Office of Adult Education, Alternative Education Complex, School 4 in New York City. She worked as a medical receptionist for 12 years.



Mom's Homemade Hair Care Product

Victor Marrero

My mother used to comb my sister's hair. My sister's hair was tangled and uncontrollable until one day my mother tried a new recipe that included different ingredients: mayonnaise, avocado, one whole egg, and tinfoil.

Once a week my mother used these ingredients to make my sister's hair shine and to get rid of tangles. It worked like a charm.

Mix all the ingredients in a bowl, then take a handful and spread the mixture on your head. Wrap the tinfoil around your head. Rinse with warm water.

I will be three years old.

Eliminate Frizz

MacKenna Shea-Smith

BEFORE YOU READ: DIY stands for "do it yourself." What are some other contexts where you might see DIY used?

I've had to deal with having frizzy hair my whole life. I used to just embrace the frizz. But one day, I came across this DIY hair serum, and I've been in love ever since. The only two ingredients you need are coconut oil and avocado oil! Here are the instructions:

1. Melt coconut oil in a microwave-safe bowl.
2. After the coconut oil is melted, add the avocado oil in the bowl and mix.
3. Put the serum in a spray bottle and enjoy. (The avocado oil helps keep the coconut oil from coagulating.)

I really love this serum because it doesn't only get rid of frizz, but it keeps my hair silky smooth all day long, so I always use sparingly. If I use too much, it can cause your hair to be greasy. Sometimes, I prefer to spray it and then run it through my hair.

This is my go-to solution for frizz and bed head, and now hopefully it's yours too!

AFTER YOU READ:

1. What does the word "embrace" mean? What do you think the author means when she says she used to "embrace the frizz"?
2. Another idiom she uses is, "A little bit goes a long way." Talk about recipes you use that only require a little bit of a certain ingredient. Incorporate the saying, "A little bit goes a long way!"
3. More vocabulary: Find the words *serum*, *coagulate*, and *sparingly*. Using the context for clues, what do these words mean?

MacKenna is an 18-year-old student at Vermont Adult Learning in St. Albans, VT. She is enrolled in the High School Completion Program earning her high school diploma from Bellows Falls Free Academy Union High School. She expects to graduate in June 2018.



Turn a Noun into an Adjective

In this article, MacKenna uses the word "frizz" (a noun) and "frizzy" (an adjective). By adding "y" to the end of the noun, it becomes an adjective. Try turning some of the nouns in this article into adjectives by adding "y" to the end.

Adjective

Write for *The Change Agent*

- Check out our “Call for Articles” The theme of our next issue is on Math and Numeracy
- Students can write for a national magazine.
- Their story will be read by peers.
- They will experience “the editorial process,” including revisions, etc.
- Next writing deadline is May 3, 2018.
- Students whose pieces are accepted receive \$50.

Download “Call for Articles” at:

<http://changeagent.nelrc.org/write-for-us/>

Submitting Articles to *The Change Agent*



Each submission includes all relevant contact information for the student and the teacher.



Please email submissions as attachments.

Subscribing to *The Change Agent* changeagent.nelrc.org/subscribe/



The Change Agent provides socially relevant content, powerful student writing that inspires discussion, and ready-to-use, CCR-aligned lesson plans – all oriented toward a multi-level audience. Subscribe now and receive a new issue every March and September. Include the online option in your order and receive full access to all of our back issues as well as our issue extras and growing collection of audio articles. See [sample pages](#) and [sample audio](#).



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Finally...

A recording of this webinar will be available at ***AALRC.org***.

Questions or comments? Contact Cynthia Peters cpeters@worlded.org

Thank you for participating!

