

INTENSIVE ENGLISH PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

At PIA, most students take Intensive English courses, which focus on university preparation. Intermediate and advanced students can also add interesting electives to their schedules, such as Service Learning and ESL Test Preparation, and Level 5 graduates can earn TOEFL/IELTS waivers to partnering universities.

PIA's method of teaching and learning focuses on student production, English immersion, and engaging activities. PIA's experienced teachers use a detailed curriculum and academic assessments to guide students to proficiency in English.



INTENSIVE ENGLISH

Students in PIA's Intensive English program learn the skills and knowledge they need to study at universities in the US. There are six levels of classes, starting with English Basics (Level B) and finishing with Level 5. PIA follows a quarter system, and each quarter is 10 weeks long. Full-time students take 20 hours a week of classes that focus on grammar, reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Along with these subjects, students learn how to work in groups, use relevant technologies, and explore cultural topics.

Levels B, 1, and 2 focus on practical skills. For example, students in Level 1 learn to read signs, practice completing forms, study everyday vocabulary words, work with English grammar, and discuss common topics. These skills help people live in the US and prepare to study academic English.

Levels 3, 4, and 5 focus on academic work, such as research, presentations, group work, and essays. Students in Level 5 write a research paper, deliver 10-minute presentations on academic topics, read challenging texts, and explore high-level grammar. PIA's upper-level classes help students understand what US college work is like.

MEET THE TEACHERS



Brandon Kurtz

"Hi! My name is Brandon. I want to tell you about my Writing 3 class. Every day, we start with a warm-up. Usually, I show students a strange or funny picture, and they write about it for a few minutes. Then they share what they wrote with their classmates. In Writing 3, we focus on writing paragraphs, so each week students learn about a different style and about useful grammar points. Sometimes we practice the grammar by playing games, and students can win a little prize - usually candy! At the end of each class, we spend a few minutes talking about the homework assignment. My favorite thing about this class is reading my students' paragraphs - I love understanding their opinions about different topics!"



Diane Murphy

"Hello, I'm Diane. I enjoy teaching Reading 5 because reading makes us think. We make connections between what we read, our lives, and the world. Interesting discussions and different points of view develop as a result of what we've read and how we understand it. Our class comprises three parts that work together to prepare students for reading in the real world—reading skill building, nonfiction reading, and vocabulary development—and we usually cover all three topics in each class. We read nonfiction articles from books, magazines, and newspapers to help prepare for university study. We also read a novel and talk about the characters, plot, and themes of the book. For many students, this is the first book they've read in English and it's very rewarding. In addition, we study vocabulary, word parts, and word families in order to increase students' fluency and to broaden their understanding of a text and the language. The reading skills we strengthen in Reading 5 are useful far beyond the classroom's walls!"



Michael Bess

"Hi there! My name is Michael. I really enjoy my Speaking & Listening Level 3 class, and I hope that my students enjoy it, too! We have a wonderful textbook that has interesting topics like nutrition, business, and advertising. We listen to interviews and lectures, learn how to take notes, practice using new vocabulary, and discuss ideas. Sometimes students talk together in pairs or in groups. The textbook has a website, so students can practice outside of class. We also do special projects and presentations. My students gave presentations about traditional music from their countries. It was so interesting! Everyone enjoyed learning about music and musical instruments from other countries. We also listened to example recordings of traditional music. We have so much fun that we often forget that we're preparing for serious university studies!"



Abigail Pecore

"Hello! I'm Abigail. I teach Reading 4. We start class with a student sharing an idiom. Once a week, students practice reading quickly by doing a timed reading and answering questions about it. This way, students begin to be able to read faster over time. Then we usually talk about a reading strategy like skimming, scanning, or making inferences. Students learn how to identify patterns like comparison or cause and effect. Also, students study new vocabulary words from several sources: newspapers, stories, and the Academic Word List. Sometimes I assign a newspaper article that students read and discuss in class. Today we read about the issue of fake news in class, and students discussed their summaries of the article in small groups. It is really interesting to hear different students' opinions on important issues."

