



Straight into the Deep End?

A Systematic Approach to Skill Acquisition and Goal-Setting in Interpreter Training

Guest Trainer:

Rachel E. Herring, M.A.

Webinar Work Group Hosts:

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July 24, 2014

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NATIONAL COUNCIL ON INTERPRETING IN HEALTH CARE

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Housekeeping

- This session is being recorded
- Certificate of Attendance
 - *must attend full 2 hrs
 - *trainerswebinars@ncihc.org
- Audio and technical problems



- Questions to organizers
- Q & A
- Twitter #NCIHCWebinar



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Welcome!

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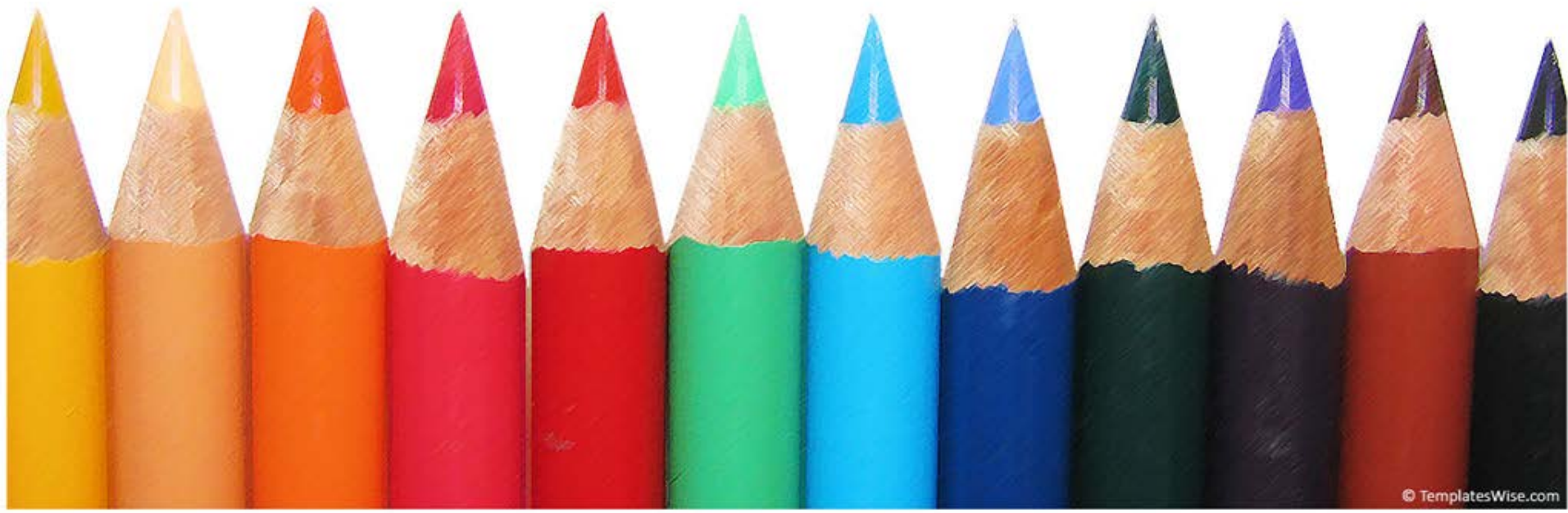


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A Systematic Approach to Skill Acquisition and Goal-Setting in Interpreter Training

Rachel E. Herring

NCIHC Home for Trainers Webinar Series, July 2014



Objectives:

In this webinar, participants will:

1. Learn about basic concepts in skill acquisition and expertise studies as applied to interpreting.
2. Be introduced to a systematic approach to interpreting-skill acquisition and goal-focused practice.
3. Practice adapting material and practice activities to focus on specific skills or subskills of interpreting.



Skill Acquisition & Expertise



Photo Credit: UW Medicine, Clare McLean



Why study skill acquisition and expertise?

- Supports a reasoned, systematic approach to learning
- Provides a framework for isolating and focusing on problem areas
- Explains (predicts!) common problems—reassures learners
- Discussion of expertise and expert performance is not aimed at making comparisons or separating experts from non-experts—the goal is to increase our understanding of the task and refine our pedagogical approaches!

Novices and Experts...

... perceive situations differently

... access and use knowledge differently

... approach problems differently

... are not equally able to monitor and control
their performance

...two kinds of expertise?



Stages in Skill Acquisition

- How do I do this? What are the steps? In what order must they be performed? (*Cognitive*)
 - What does it look like when done well?
- I don't have to consciously think about every step in the process. I am able to change my approach in order to improve. (*Associative*)
 - What will make my performance better?
- I perform smoothly and competently. I complete some parts of the task without conscious effort/awareness. (*Autonomous*)
 - What happens when I encounter a novel situation?



Deliberate Practice



Motivation

Well-defined tasks

Concrete, achievable goals (for **this** practice session)

Feedback from others

Analysis & reflection (feedback from self)

Cyclical

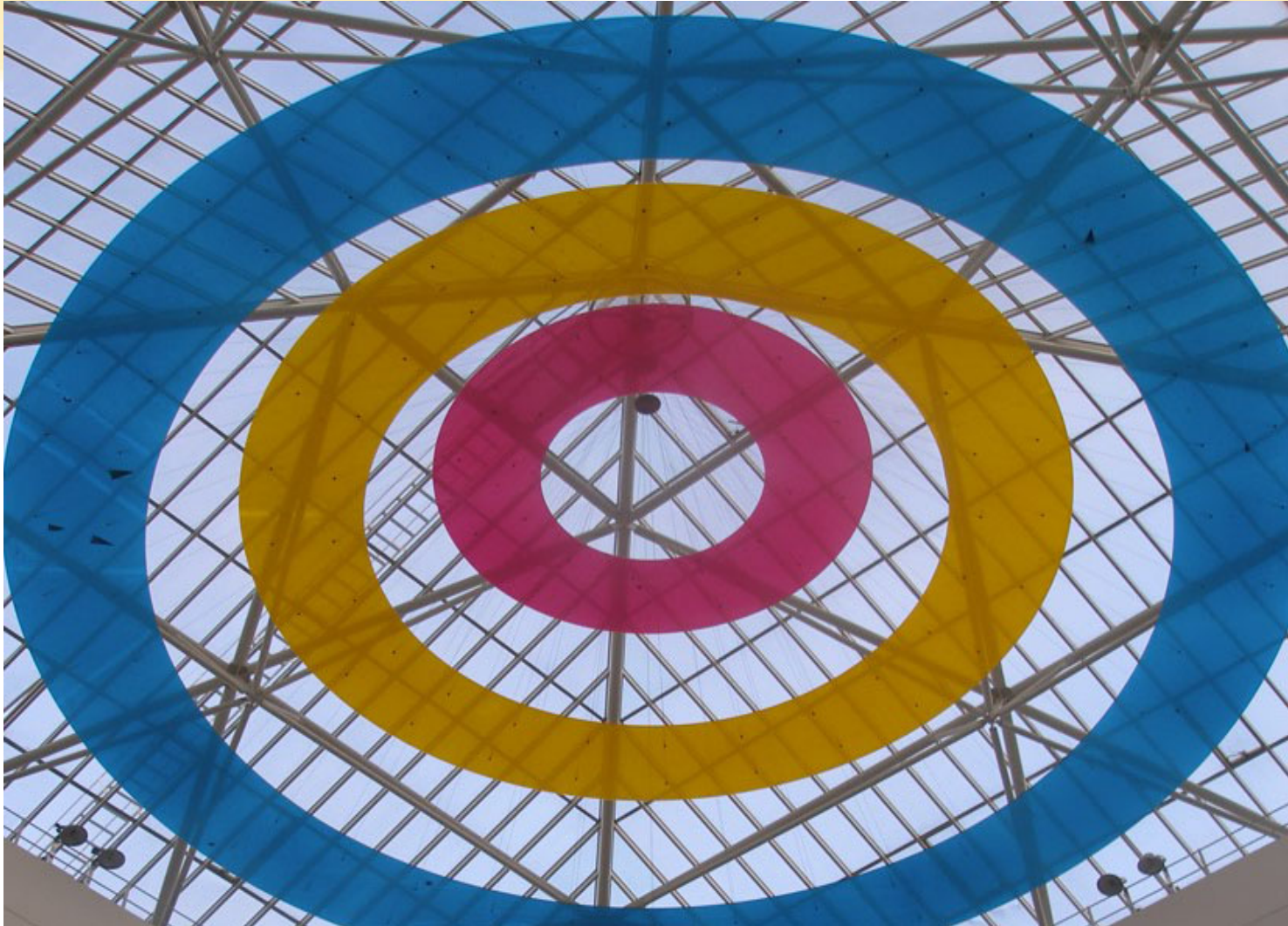
Systematic

Not necessarily fun

A balancing act



Interpreting as performance: a multifactorial management problem



Skills

Active command of (at least) two languages

Interpersonal skills

Communication skills

Decision-making skills

Topic preparation skills

Critical thinking

Concentration

Stamina

Monitoring/Control

Interpreting
(one skill?)





Listening
Comprehension
Analysis
(Memory)



Reformulation



Production

(Monitoring & Control)

What exactly do I need to do in order to interpret?

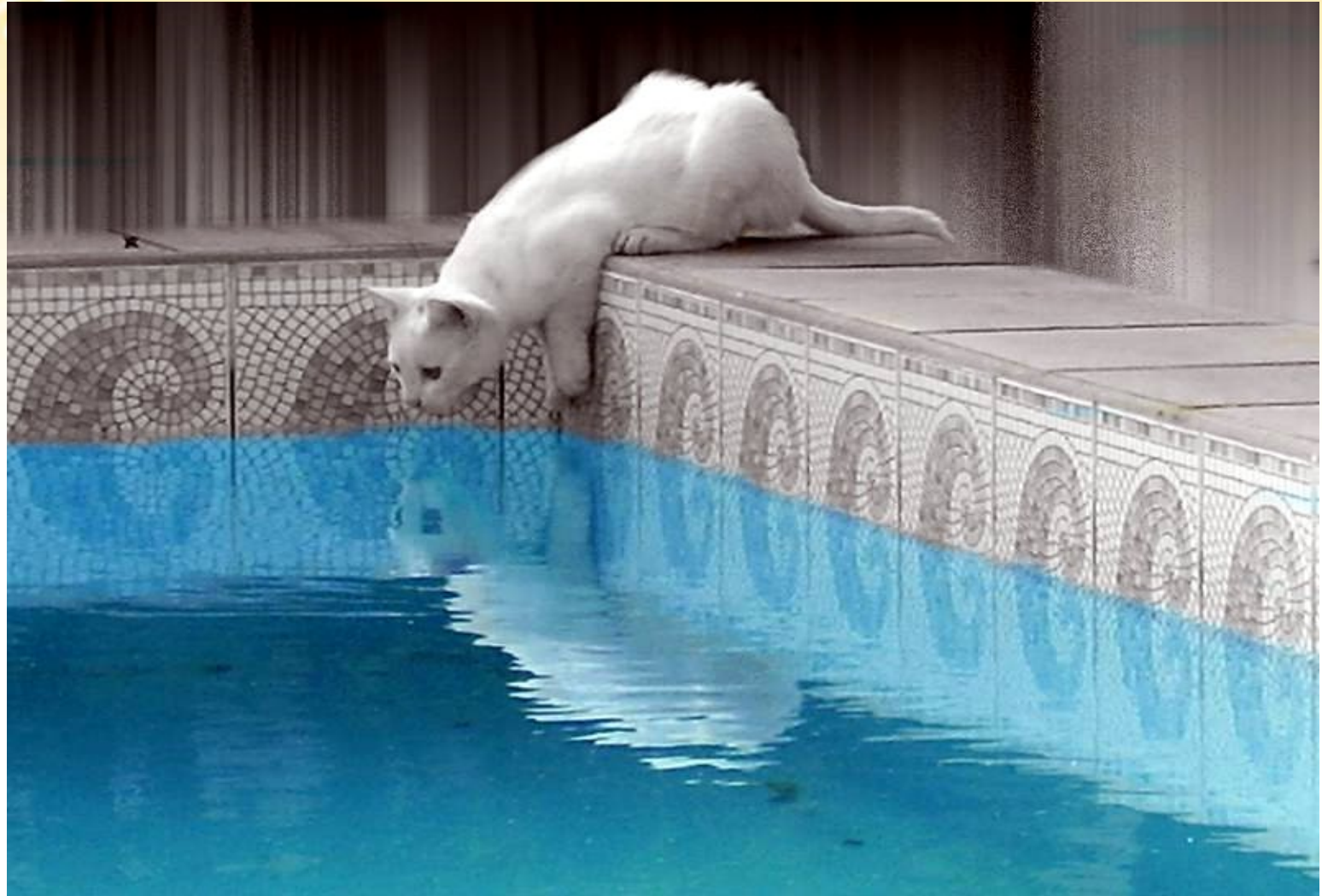
Listen for meaning (active listening)—Not just words!
(tone, emotion, pragmatic force, context...)

Analyze content—identify main ideas, details, logical structure (links)

Reformulate—re-cast message in TL with appropriate grammar, syntax, register, pragmatics, nonverbals

Produce—convey message with good pace, tone, volume, enunciation.

Straight into the deep end?



Or step-by-step?



We cannot ask students to do synchronized swimming before we have taught them to tread water!

Skill Progression in Interpreting

(AN approach... not THE approach)

- Listening
- Analysis (main ideas, details, logical cohesion; purpose, affect)
- Reformulation
- Production
- Analysis (features of interactional discourse, genre/scripts)

Also:

- Topic preparation (concepts, terminology)
- Situational management (decision-making; application of standards of practice/code of ethics)



Remember:

Skill acquisition is non-linear and iterative.

A Systematic Approach to Skill Development

What is my goal? Precisely what is it that I want the students to be able to do today? (next week? next month?)

What subskill(s) need(s) to be developed in order to reach that goal—and in what order? What foundation needs to be laid? Do I need to set some intermediate goals?

How can I isolate the skill I want them to work on right now?

What can I do to mitigate confounding factors?

How does what I am doing today fit with what I did yesterday and what I will do tomorrow?

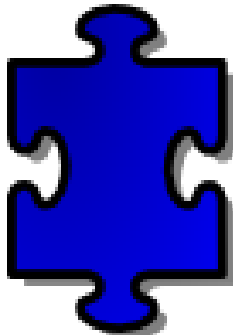
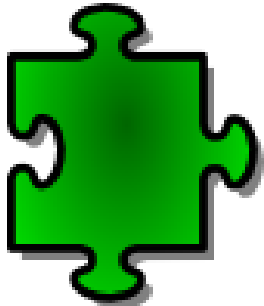


Goal-Setting



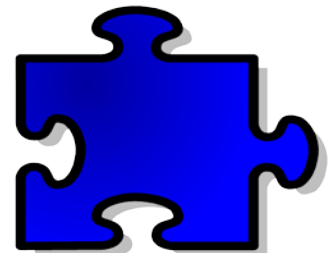
Goals should be...

- specific (for TODAY, THIS exercise)
- attainable (at the edge of what the learner can do)
- measurable (how will we recognize success?)
- progressive (what is the next step?)



Goals...

- Focus attention
- Provide a basis against which to judge progress
- Reinforce deliberate practice cycle



Food for thought:

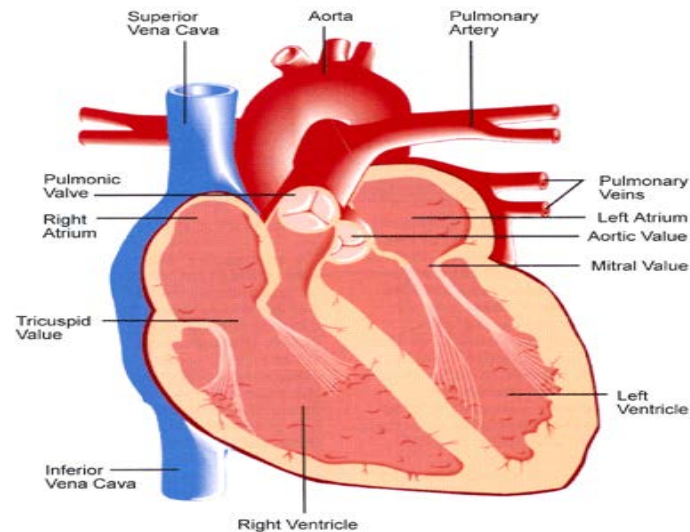
Don't prescribe blindly!

An exercise is only useful insofar as it develops the (sub)skill being targeted.

Putting it into practice...




Sample source material:
Cardiac catheterization discharge instructions



Given this material and an imaginary group of students/interpreters, what could we do with it?

Your turn!

- **Take a moment to think about the characteristics of a group of students/interpreters that YOU might encounter.**
- **Pick a goal for your imaginary students.** (What have they been doing? What will they do today? What do they need to be able to do tomorrow?)
 - **Some possible goals:** listening, analysis, dealing with unfamiliar terminology, telling a convincing story, producing natural-sounding TL output....
- Using the **A1C test information**, the **template** (links in the chat box) and the **examples** we looked through, **plan** an exercise that will **target** the goal you chose.

- 
- We'll talk through some more examples in a few minutes.

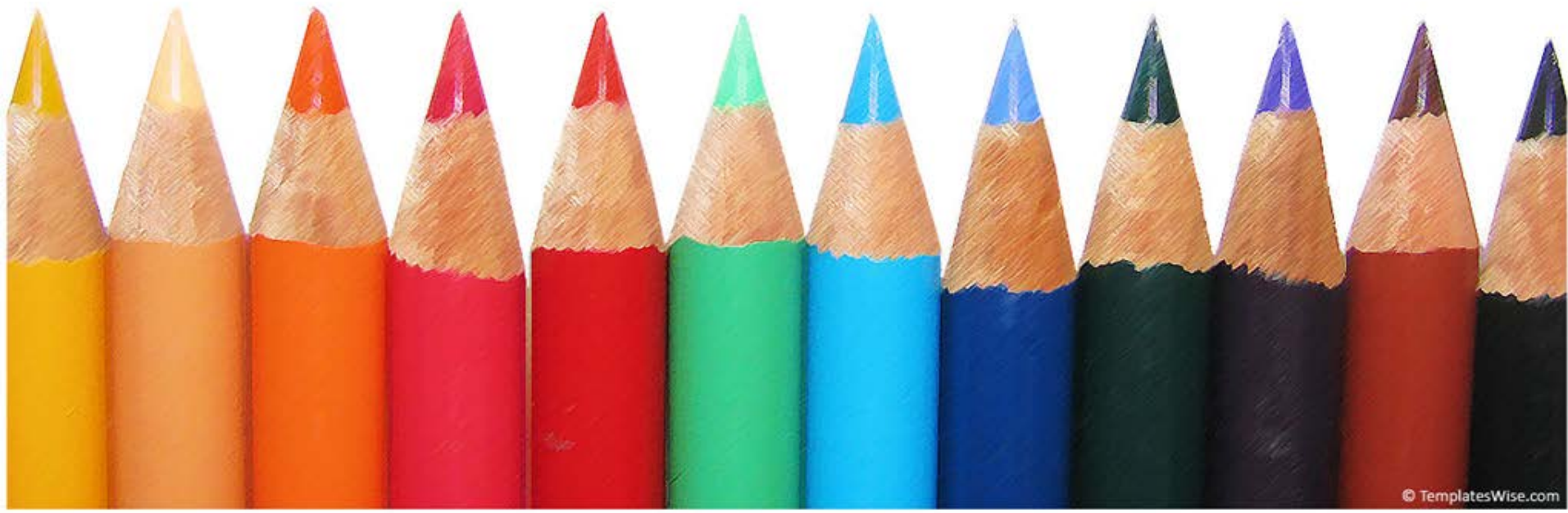
Sharing Time



Thank you!

Questions? Comments?

Rachel.Herring@century.edu





Announcements

-Next webinar: September 4, 2014

Topic: Giving Effective Feedback

Presenter: Jacolyn Harmer, Monterey
Institute of International Studies

-Session Evaluation

-Follow up via email

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Thank you!

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