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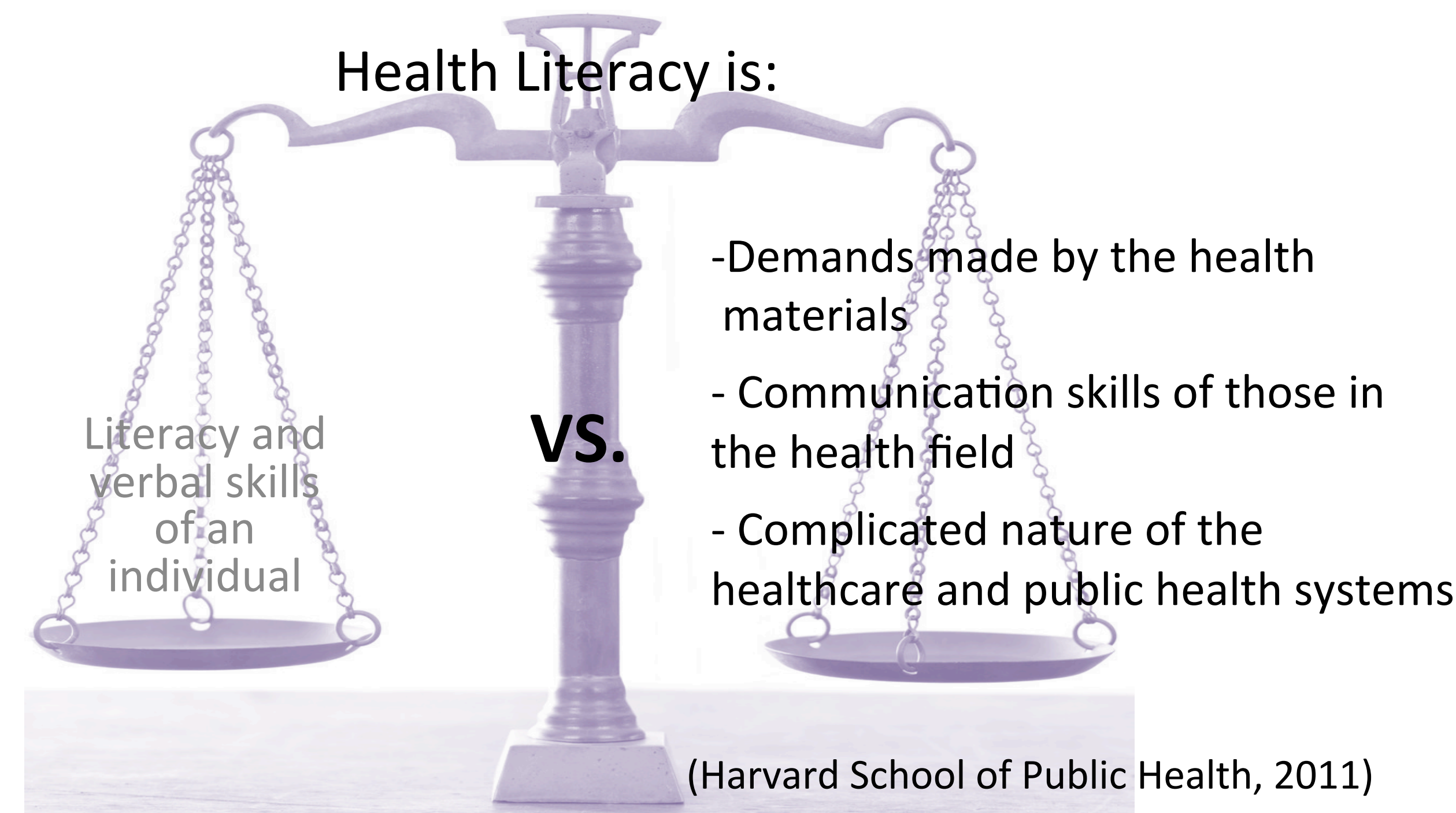
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# Exploring the Depths of Health Literacy

## Are We Teaching This and Why Does It Matter?

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### Background: Why Does Health Literacy Matter?

- ❖ Healthcare practitioners often work with older persons with low health literacy without realizing that this issues limiting the success of their interventions. They may also lack awareness of the serious impact that low health literacy can have, since it is associated with lower reported health status, increased hospitalizations, and increased morbidity (Levasseur & Carrier, 2011).
- ❖ The current US healthcare system places increase demands on consumers to manage their own health (Smith & Gutman, 2011).
- ❖ Educators in the health professions must instill a sense of responsibility in future practitioners to understand the important role they play in promoting health literacy.
- ❖ Students in the health professions must acquire the tools necessary to empower their older adult and other clients using health literacy principles.

### Overall Project Objectives

The primary aim of this project was to provide students with a solid foundation for competency in consumer education and promotion of health literacy in older adult consumers

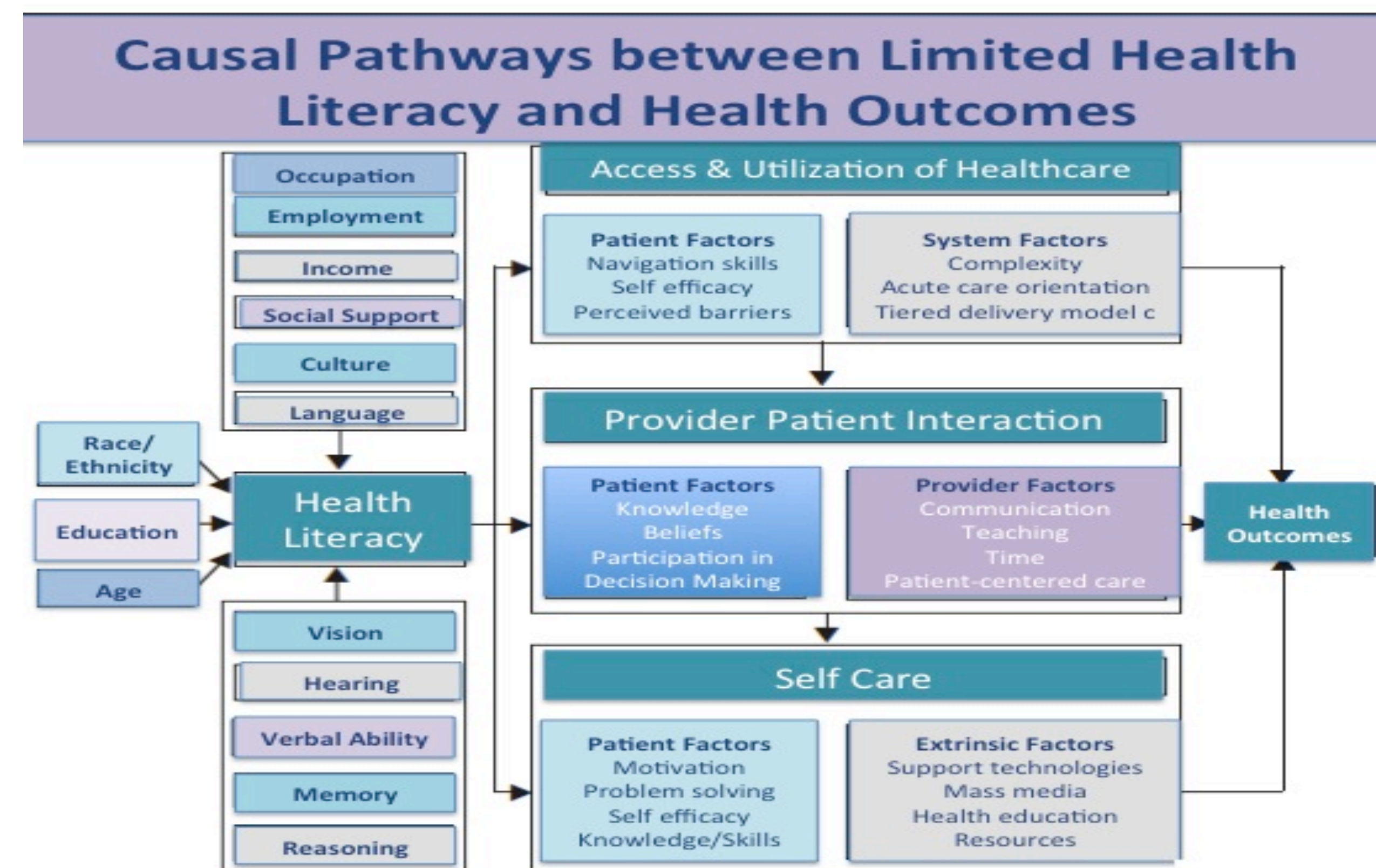
- Train graduate occupational therapy students in the principles, best practices and evaluation of health literacy education for older adults
- Provide direct learning opportunities for students to implement research-based educational strategies using virtual world, web-based, print, for health literacy education for older adults
- Identify ways to enhance existing content and assignments related to health literacy in various older adult certificate and specialty courses

### Best practices for assessment and intervention based on principles of health literacy

- Instruments that assess health literacy in patients/clients
- Effective strategies for assessing health materials and environments
- Strategies for effective health communication
- Methods of empowering clients to navigate challenges in accessing health care resources

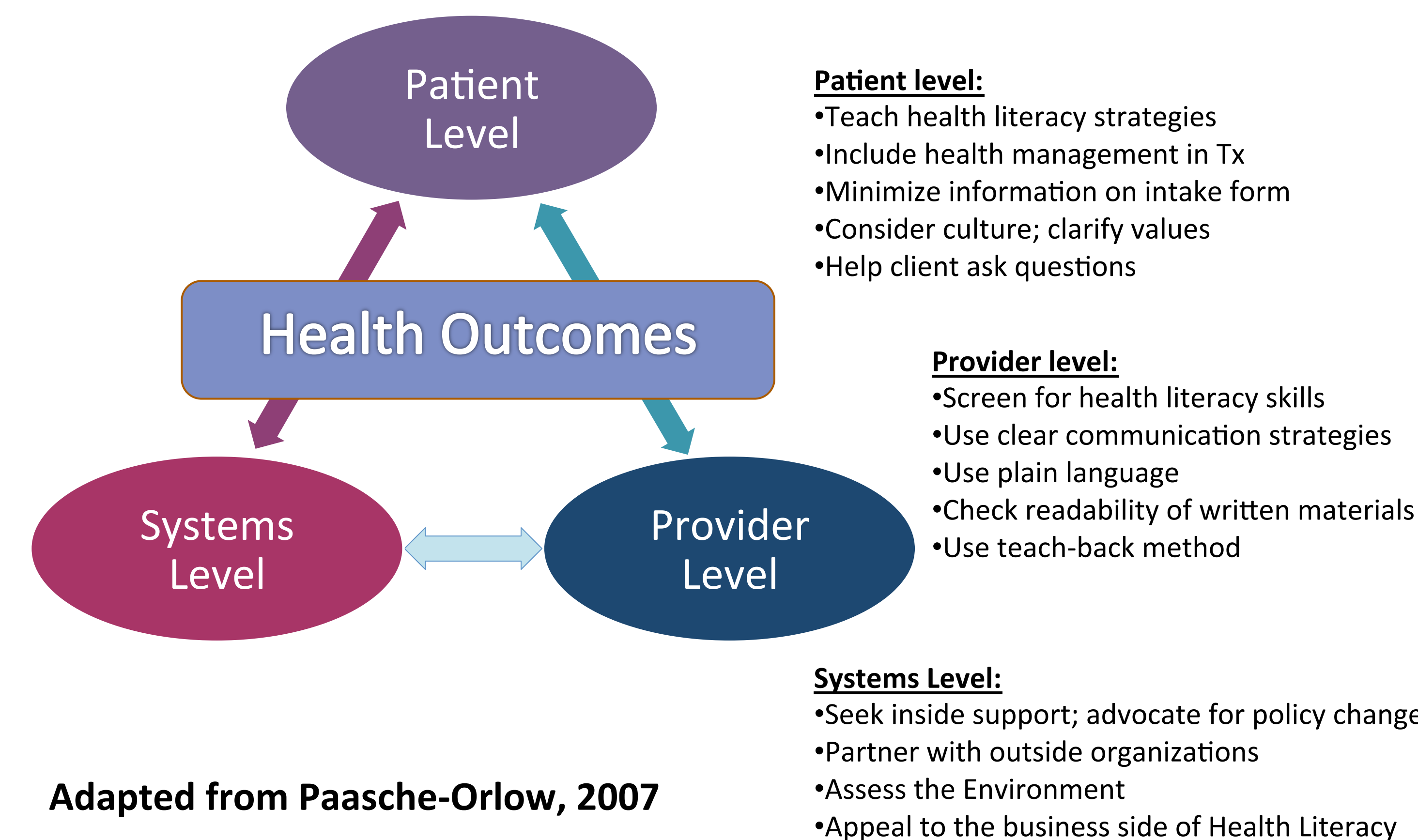
### Strategies for Teaching Health Literacy

Module/Course	Assignments
All	Readings and videos on health literacy, including basic information about why and how it matters to practice and best practices for assessment and intervention
Older Adults and Their Living Environments Fall 2011 (Module with 4 students) Entry-Level MS-OT	Present on a topic of interest related to the interface of older adults and their living environments to a group of residents within the virtual world of Second Life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gather evidence-based resources</li> <li>Apply principles of health literacy</li> <li>Reflect upon the experience and share with other classmates</li> </ul>
Advanced Concepts in Dementia Care and Caregiving across Practice Contexts Spring 2012 (Module with 6 students) Advanced Practice Certificate and Occupational Therapy Doctorate (OTD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a Health Literacy Analysis</li> <li>Develop a preliminary plan for addressing an identified health literacy issue in current work environment</li> </ul>
Health Literacy in Traditional and Emerging Environments  (10 graduate students – 4 OTD, 5 MPH, 1 BSN) – Summer 2, 2012 full course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss health literacy issues as they relate to current or intended clinical population</li> <li>Complete a readability assessment on a web or print resource used or applicable to your practice setting</li> <li>Create a handout or media presentation for your chosen population</li> <li>Discuss the relative advantages and disadvantages of the REALM, the TOFHLA, and the NVS for your chosen population and setting (paper)</li> <li>Create a wiki illustrating the environmental analysis of current or intended practice setting</li> <li>Synthesize ideas for delivering health information for your chosen population using social media, virtual worlds, and interactive web design</li> <li>Create a project or program for your chosen setting and population. Summarize your plan as a presentation for key stakeholders and record on Adobe connect.</li> </ul>
Older Adults and Their Living Environments Fall 2012 (Module with 9 students) Entry-Level MS-OT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed an evidence-based assessment of health literacy in two older adult living environments</li> <li>Create a resource packet for an older adult using principles of health literacy</li> </ul>



Adapted from: Paasche-Orlow, 2007, p. S21

### Applying Health Literacy in Practice



Adapted from Paasche-Orlow, 2007

### Instrument Development: Measuring Knowledge of Health Literacy in Students in Health and Human Services Curricula

