



TEXAS Adult & Family Literacy QUARTERLY

Updates on State Initiatives

STAR: Evidence-Based Reading Instruction for Adults Reading at the Intermediate Level

by Ken Appelt, TCALL

During the academic year 2008-2009, Texas will participate with six other states in the second national cohort of the *STudent Achievement in Reading* (STAR) training. Our Texas group will have 45 members and will include both teachers and administrators. The goal of this training program is to help adult educators understand and implement evidence-based reading instruction in the classroom to improve student success rates at the intermediate level.

The STAR training is part of a larger Office of Vocational and Adult Education initiative called the National Diffusion of Reading Research. The STAR training focuses on Adult Basic Education (ABE) students reading at the intermediate-low and intermediate-high levels (NRS levels 3 & 4) or those students having a 4–8.9 reading grade level equivalency.

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Letter from the TCALL Director

Dear Readers,

As this issue goes to press in late September, our thoughts are with those of you in areas of the state that are still suffering the effects of Hurricane Ike. As part of Texas A&M University in Brazos County, TCALL escaped direct impact from Ike. At the direction of our new President, Dr. Elsa Murano, our campus will soon be hosting faculty and over 1,000 undergraduates from the Texas A&M University–Galveston campus, accommodating them with classroom space and housing them in community members' homes to prevent their education being interrupted for an entire semester.

At TCALL, we similarly hope to bring an element of continuity in providing services, resources, and communication to adult and family literacy programs and practitioners statewide. If there is any way we can be of assistance as local programs rebuild in the coming months, we hope you will let us know. As we are all aware, the adult learners and families served by literacy programs are likely among those most affected by natural disasters such as this, making it all the more important to sustain and extend the work you do in building the capacity of individuals and entire communities.

In this issue of *The Quarterly*, our goal is to update you on several important statewide initiatives intended to support the professional growth of literacy educators and build the capacity of literacy programs and their leaders. Most of the initiatives you will read about are led and supported by Texas LEARNS and their partner state leadership projects including the GREAT Centers, Adult Education Credential Project, Texas Family Literacy Resource Center, and the Clearinghouse Project at TCALL. Two articles describe other initiatives at TCALL: the First Lady's Family Literacy Initiative for Texas, for which technical assistance has been provided through TCALL since 1996; and the Barbara Bush Fellowships that support the family literacy-related research of doctoral students at Texas A&M. You will read about some of the work of the Barbara Bush Fellows in an article by 2007-2008 Fellows Rebekah Haynes, Petra Robinson, and Megan Terry.

Finally, I wish to share important news about TCALL itself. Since the departure of TCALL's faculty Center Director Dr. Dominique Chlup on January 1, 2008, I have served as Interim Director of TCALL while the search for Dr. Chlup's successor continued. Because the faculty search has failed to locate another person with Dr. Chlup's unique combination of qualifications, our adult education faculty, department and college leadership have decided to cancel the faculty search and to name me as TCALL Director on a permanent basis.

I will be joined in collaborative leadership of the center by Dr. Mary Alfred, Associate Professor of Adult Education, who will serve as TCALL's Principal Investigator. Having served as mentor and advisor to TCALL's doctoral fellows for the past year, Dr. Alfred brings extraordinary skills and experience in academic and research leadership. Her research interests include: adult learning and development among marginalized populations; equity and social justice in education and the workplace; immigration and learning; and welfare reform and women's economic development. Dr. Alfred currently serves as Editor of *Adult Learning*, a practitioner-oriented journal published by the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE). She is on the editorial board of *Adult Education Quarterly* and *New Horizons*

in Adult Education and Human Resource Development. Dr. Alfred is the incoming president of the Commission of Professors of Adult Education and serves on the executive board of AAACE. I hope you will join me in welcoming Dr. Alfred to the TCALL leadership team.



*TCALL Director Harriet Vardiman Smith
with Associate Professor of Adult Education
and TCALL Principal Investigator, Dr. Mary Alfred*

Harriet Vardiman Smith
TCALL Director

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Why does the STAR reading training concentrate on this population? Intermediate level ABE students have difficulty transitioning to Adult Secondary Education. A significant number of students in Texas have difficulty improving reading skills beyond the intermediate reading level and cannot show progress. For example, in the 2006-2007 academic year, Texas had 12,855 students at the ABE intermediate-low level; of those 39% completed the level. Only 32% of the 11,377 Texas students at the ABE intermediate-high level completed; this is the lowest completion rate for any level.

The STAR training consists of three 2-day training institutes. In the first institute, participants will learn how to conduct diagnostic reading assessments which measure student skills in four of the major components of reading: alphabetic skills, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. They will learn to create reading profiles that characterize the strengths and needs of each student and will learn how to target instruction to meet student needs. The first session also includes time to examine the program and classroom structures to determine any changes necessary to support implementation of these methods. Finally, both teachers and administrators will develop a personal action plan for implementation.

The second 2-day institute explores the evidence-based strategies for teaching alphabetic skills, vocabulary, and fluency. Participants will learn how to plan lessons that include instruction and practice in these skills. The program and state support available to effectively implement these teaching practices will be evaluated. Then, implementation action plans for classroom instructors, local programs, and state level support will be developed.

The final 2-day institute covers comprehension strategies and planning lessons that include comprehension instruction. Participants will discuss key elements of successful implementation and evaluate the status of implementation in their local program. Then everyone will set goals and develop action plans to support implementation of evidence-based reading instruction for the classroom, the program, and the state level. This session will close with a discussion of what must happen to sustain professional development in evidence-based reading instruction in Texas.

Between institute sessions, the national trainers will return to Texas for technical assistance visits in the programs. Trainers will observe how the program and

teachers are doing on their implementation action plans. They will meet with teachers and administrators, answering questions and offering suggestions to enhance implementation. Administrators as well as GREAT Center personnel will be invited to *shadow* the trainers on these visits so that Texas' professional development personnel will be able to provide technical assistance for teachers in the future.

The professional development design of the STAR training draws on the results of the *How Teachers Change* study (Smith, 2003). This study found that administrators play an important role in how effectively teachers can make changes in their teaching approach and implement new teaching methods in their classrooms. Since the goals of the STAR training are the implementation of and the long-term sustainability of evidence-based reading instruction, administrators are included in the cohort. Smith (2003) also found it important for teachers to support each other through informal conversation, observation, and problem solving, so the STAR training encourages sending several teachers from the same program to facilitate collegial support.

Three research publications support the content of the STAR training institutes. First, the *Adult Reading Component Study* (ARCS), led by John Strucker (2003), informs the diagnostic testing element of the STAR training. Strucker found that adult readers with the same score on conventional reading comprehension tests, such as the TABE, can actually have very different skill levels in word recognition skills, spelling, word meaning, and oral reading rate.

The second and third studies inform the instructional practices selected for inclusion in the STAR training: *Research-Based Principles for Adult Basic Education Reading Instruction* by John R. Kruidenier (2002) and *Applying Research in Reading Instruction for Adults: First Steps for Teachers* by Susan McShane (2005). These reports reflect a consensus among experts on the implications for instruction of the existing research on reading instruction for adults. Intermediate level adult students should have specific instruction that meets their differing needs, so the developers of the STAR training selected research-based instructional methods that have proven effective in developing the different skill areas.

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This year's STAR training initiative is the first step in developing the capacity within Texas to provide professional development in evidence-based reading instruction for adults who read at the intermediate level.

Resources

Curtis, M. E. & Kruidenier, J. R. (2005). *Teaching adults to read*. Washington, DC: Partnership for Reading. This document is a 12-page summary of Kruidenier, J. (2002). Retrieved September 18, 2008, from www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/publications/html/teach_adults/teach_adults.html

Kruidenier, J. (2002). *Research-based principles for adult basic education reading instruction*. Washington, DC: Partnership for Reading. (Note: this publication reviews existing research on reading instruction for adults and summarizes scientifically-based principles and practices). Retrieved September 18, 2008, from www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/publications/html/adult_ed/adult_ed_1.html

McShane, S. (2005). *Applying research in reading instruction for adults: First steps for teachers*. Washington, DC: Partnership for Reading. (Note: this publication focuses on classroom reading instruction practices that are evidence-based and supported by experts in the field of reading. It is teacher-friendly and addresses the "how to" of scientifically-based

reading instruction for adults). Retrieved August 25, 2008, from www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/publications/html/mcshane/index.html

National Institute for Literacy. (2003). *ARCS: The adult reading components study at NCSALL*. Retrieved September 18, 2008 from the NCSALL Web site (Note: this is the 4-page Brief Edition of the report; other versions are also available on the NCSALL Web site) www.ncsall.net/?id=652#strucker

Smith, C., Hofer, J., Gillespie, M., Solomon, M., and Rowe, K. (Nov. 2003). *How teachers change: A Study of professional development in adult education*. NCSALL Report #25. Cambridge, MA: National Center for the Study of Adult Learning Literacy. (Note: this is the 4-page Brief Edition of the report; other versions are also available on this Web site.) Retrieved September 18, 2008, from www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/research/brief25.pdf

Strucker, J. (1997). What silent reading tests alone can't tell you. *Focus on Basics*, 1, pp. 13-17. Retrieved September 18, 2008, from www.ncsall.net/?id=456

These resources are also available through the TCALL Clearinghouse Library. See Click on Over, page 23 for Web Resources related to this article.

The Texas Content Standards' First Year

by Eduardo Honold

As we celebrate the Texas Adult Education Content Standards' first year of implementation, it is hard not to feel like a proud parent of a toddler who has taken her first steps and is slowly making her way down a rocky path. We have come a long way in the implementation of the Standards, but there is still a lot of work to be done and many more lessons to be learned.

Let's look at the basic facts. When the Standards were launched in June 2007, about 500 teachers and administrators received the initial introduction to using the Standards. Since then, another 1,539 teachers have been trained by Standards specialists in all eight GREAT Center regions. Considering there are about 2,500 adult education teachers statewide, this is quite an accomplishment.

While many teachers across the state have some basic information on the Content Standards, the extent to which they are being used in a meaningful way is still quite mixed. During the last Adult Education Director's meeting in Fredericksburg in July 2008, only a few directors reported fully implementing the Content Standards in their programs. Most program directors are either slowly beginning to think about how to implement the Standards or seem to be waiting for more information. This is understandable considering this year was supposed to be one of voluntary implementation with no strings attached.

All this progress, however, has not come without some bumps in the road. One big issue has to do with the effectiveness of the Content Standards training itself. Those of us that have been involved in the

Standards process recognize that the existing training does a good job of presenting the basic information teachers need to know about the Standards, but that it may not do enough to help teachers use them in the classroom. Not surprisingly, a recent survey of Standards Specialists revealed that they would like to have a follow up to the Content Standards training that would give teachers an opportunity to share their own experiences in using the Standards in the classroom. It has also come to our attention that the lesson plans that were generated during the Standards trainings have not been very consistent or always useful to other teachers, which is understandable considering the limited time provided for that activity during the workshop.

So clearly there is room for improvement. Currently, a committee of the GREAT Centers and TCALL staff is working on revising the Standards training to make it more meaningful for teachers and to maximize the impact they can have in the classroom. The committee has also relied heavily on the lessons learned from the Standards-in-Action Pilot, a federally supported effort to improve standards instruction in Texas. (See my article in the November 2007 edition of the *Literacy Links*) Among the recommendations from this pilot is a greater emphasis on using the Standards to plan coherent units of instruction, that is, connected lessons or activities over a longer period of time rather than individual lessons. Another of the insights of the Pilot is that teachers need tools to help them decide how to prioritize among the standards and benchmarks that they choose to teach.

Ultimately, we hope that the revised training will empower adult education teachers to use the standards to make better choices about what they want their students to learn.

Revising the standards training is a necessary first step in a comprehensive strategy for getting the most out of standards-based education in Texas. Programs and teachers need to realize that meaningful change based on standards takes time, extensive professional development, and yes, resources. But the payoff is worth it: common high expectations for our students, rigorous academic work, and adult students who are better prepared to meet the challenges of work and post-secondary education.

Summarized versions of the Texas Content Standards and Benchmarks created by the Far West GREAT Center's Mary Jo Ochoa can now be found at www-tcall.tamu.edu/taesp/westsum/index.html You may also request a copy of the Standards-in-Action report and recommendations by emailing me at ehonold@sisd.net.

About the Author

Eduardo Honold is the Coordinator for the Far West Project GREAT. He was a member of the Texas Content Standards writing team, is an active Standards trainer, and is currently the state liaison for Standards-in-Action, a federally supported pilot program designed to help states improve the implementation of state standards.



SAVE THE DATE!

Texas Association for Literacy and Adult Education



“Stars Across Texas”

TALAE State Conference
February 12-14, 2009

Hilton Austin Airport Hotel



February 11 ~ Adult Education Directors and EL Civics Coordinators & Pre-Conference Business Meeting	February 12 ~ Even Start Business Meeting
February 12 – 14 ~ TALAE Conference	February 13 ~ TESPIRS Users Group (afternoon)
February 13 ~ Even Start TESPIRS New Users Training (morning)	

More information will be coming your way as plans are finalized.

Jeanni Pruitt, TALAE Conference Chair
jpruitt@ntcc.edu

Jennifer Myers, TALAE Conference Co-Chair
jmyers@ntcc.edu

Texas Adult Education Credential Project

by Ken Stedman

As the summer of 2008 draws to a close, Credential Project staff members want to share an update on participation in the Teacher and Administrator Credentials with the field. For the Teacher Credential, 64 practitioners have submitted all the documentation required to start the credential process and have accumulated varying numbers of points toward the required 150 points. Thirty-five more have submitted a letter declaring their intent to pursue a Teacher Credential. Nine have completed the full Texas Teacher Credential and five are making substantial progress toward finishing.

Six administrators completed the Texas Adult Education Administrator Credential as members of the original Pilot Group in February 2008. The 11 participants in the Expanded Pilot Group are testing the enhancements made in CredITS (Credential Information Tracking System) – the electronic environment where administrators submit materials into their electronic portfolios and track their progress toward a Credential.

The Expanded Pilot closed on September 26. The Credential Project staff will review the results of the pilot based on feedback from the 11 administrators and input from additional sources. Sometime in early fall, the Texas Adult Education Administrator Credential will be opened statewide to those administrators identified in TEAMS (Texas Educating Adults Management System) and approved by Texas LEARNs as eligible to participate—current assignments as Administrators, Directors and Instructional Coordinators.

So, why would you, as an adult education practitioner, invest your time and energy pursuing a Teacher Credential or an Administrator Credential? There would have to be a pretty compelling reason, right?

The highest reward for achieving either the Teacher Credential or the Administrator Credential is intrinsic: adult education practitioners and administrators get a credential because they want to be better teachers and better administrators. Texas Association for Adult and Literacy Education (TALAE) has generously agreed to award a stipend of \$100 to each of the first 200 teachers or administrators who complete a Credential. But beyond that one-time stipend, there are

no guaranteed extrinsic rewards other than becoming a better professional and increasing the opportunity to move beyond part time teacher status. So the real bottom line is: Earning a credential is essentially about the internal drive to keep pushing forward, to continually improve, to get as close as possible to achieving your full potential as a teacher or administrator.

Teachers have said they value a Teacher Credential for the following reasons: 1) personal growth, 2) promote professional improvement, 3) establish minimum acceptable standards for the field of adult education, 4) acknowledge the adult educators professional dedication and achievements, 5) potential for additional professional opportunities, 6) revitalization, 7) increase teacher retention, 8) increase student retention, and 9) increase student achievement.

The goals stated for the Administrator Credential closely reflect the above list and include the following: 1) establish guidelines for effective practice, 2) provide direction for new administrators, 3) create collaborative learning environments, 4) encourage support and mentorship of new administrators, 5) validate the work of experienced administrators, 6) encourage formative assessment and reflective practice, 7) stimulate professional growth, 8) revitalize experienced administrators, 9) increase teacher retention and effectiveness, and 10) increase student retention and achievement.

Globally, the two lists above reflect the overarching intent of both the Teacher Credential and the Administrator Credential to professionalize the field of adult education. On this point, the literature on professional development clearly shows that the more practitioners are engaged in long-term, sustained, quality professional development that they subsequently apply, the better their performance. Better performance yields stronger programs. Stronger programs bespeak a higher level of professionalization. Or, as the famous adage states: *When the tide comes in, all ships rise.*

Although the two Texas credentials are structured somewhat differently, they share some common basic elements. Both credentials are available to

novices as well as seasoned practitioners. Both credentials lead participants to learn not only **what** to do and **how**, but also **why**. Both credentials rely heavily on a reflective process, that is, application of new skills and knowledge, then reflection on results with a view toward changing approaches in order to improve outcomes. Both credentials provide a systematic pathway to meaningful professional growth. Both credentials provide a way to get the maximum benefit from professional development hours (for teachers) and administrative activities (for administrators) by framing them into a cohesive, personal plan for professional growth. Both credentials provide a lens for solving problems with new knowledge and skills. Both credentials are voluntary.

Getting started on the Teacher or Administrator Credential is easy. To begin either Credential, participants must submit a signed letter of intent and a signed letter of support from their supervisor, and must get a TEASE (Texas Education Agency Secure Environment) account so they can access CredITS. Your supervisor or administrator will be responsible for providing you access to CredITS once Texas LEARNS and Texas Education Agency approve your request. The CredITS database is administered by Texas LEARNS. Teachers have the added require-

ment to submit a draft, written professional development plan. The Teacher Credential requires attending a Professional Development Planning Workshop—available through your Regional GREAT Center (See links to eight regional GREAT Centers for professional development on the TCALL home page.). The Administrator Credential requires an Introductory Activity, completed via distance education.

Fall 2008 is a great time for you to make the commitment to get going toward a Texas Credential. For details:

- Visit our website:
(www.tei.education.txstate.edu/credential/)
- Or, give us a call toll free: 866-798-8767
- Or, send us an email: aecredential@txstate.edu

About the Author

Ken Stedman launched a career in adult education in 1969 as a trainer for the Texas Adult Basic Education Guidance & Counseling Project. Through the years, he has staffed several national and statewide special projects and currently is Project Director for the Texas Adult Education Credential Project. In the early 1970's, Ken traveled Texas assisting Adult Education Co-op directors in preparing for the newly required comprehensive annual program plan.

How Do Rider 82 Curricula Respond to Texas Adult Education Content Standards and Benchmarks for Learners?

by Barbara Tondre-El Zorkani

This article serves as both an update on the latest development in Adult Education's response to Rider 82 in the form of the Texas Industry Specific English as a Second Language (TISESL) Curricula—and also links that curriculum response to another important state initiative—the adult education content standards.

Now that the TISESL curricula are complete and have been made available to Adult Education Programs across the state, programs are gearing up for voluntary implementation during FY 2009. Programs engaged in this initial round of implementation include the following:

South Central Region: Seguin ISD (healthcare &

manufacturing); *West Texas Region:* Abilene ISD (sales and service); *Far West Texas Region:* El Paso ISD, Socorro ISD and Ysleta ISD (healthcare); *South Texas Region:* Laredo Community College (manufacturing) and ESC Region One (healthcare); *Central Texas Region:* Austin Community College (healthcare), Austin Learning Academy (employability), and Navarro College (manufacturing/ oil and gas); *Coastal Region:* Beaumont ISD (TBD); *North Region:* Dallas ISD and Fort Worth ISD (TBD); *East Region:* Sam Houston State and Panola College (TBD).

The TISESL curriculum products correlate to the Adult Education Content Standards and Benchmarks for ESL Learners and with the National Reading

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System Standards for Low Beginning and High Beginning ESL. Adults whose English language proficiencies fall between Levels 2 (High Beginning) and 4 (Low Intermediate) are the targeted audiences for the curricula in three industry sectors: healthcare, manufacturing, and sales and service. The curricula “bundle” skills in meaningful, thematic contexts that include English language learning, related math, technology, and employability, consistently reinforcing the content standards, strands, and benchmarks.

A missing piece in the accountability system for Adult Education had been defining what should be taught and assessed. Content standards fill that gap by describing what learners should know and be able to do. Instructors use content standards to plan instruction, and learners use standards to set learning goals. Standards keep both instructors and learners focused and engaged. They ensure consistency and link assessments to curriculum and instruction.

In a review of the scope and sequence for each curriculum, practitioners found that the learning activities consistently respond to the content standards. Strands addressed by the curricula include vocabulary for oral and written communication; grammar usage and language structure; pronunciation; comprehension strategies; cultural conventions; locating, organizing and presenting information; monitoring language use and determining purpose; revising; and editing.

An integrated approach to language and industry-related materials provides learners with opportunities to practice using high-interest vocabulary related to the industry sectors so that they might eventually navigate employee handbooks; for example, address health and safety issues related to the workplace; extract information from tables, charts, and graphs; use writing strategies such as outlines and graphic organizers; report on-the-job situations to a supervisor; demonstrate ability to read and understand job duties; and understand brief instructions from supervisors and exchanges with co-workers.

What advantages are there to implementing these curricula as part of an adult education and workforce partnership?

- The curricula have been developed in response to the demand-driven, industry-related needs of the Texas workforce

- Employers are looking for workforce-related and employability skills instruction for their incumbent workers and new employees.
- The curricular products are designed to be replicable in a variety of instructional settings.
- All materials are provided and ready for duplication – from the instructor’s manuals to lesson plans to student workbooks and supplementary materials.
- Materials are based on principles of adult learning and employ a five-step model for language development.
- Materials are thematic and modular in format, allowing instruction to be delivered in manageable increments.
- They exemplify what learners are expected to know and be able to do as members of a 21st century workforce.

The use of the TISESL curricula by no means replaces occupational training; rather, it may serve as an excellent spring board or bridge to occupational training for a population that might otherwise be denied access to career opportunities in growing industry sectors.

For questions about professional development for adult education programs interested in implementing one of the curricula, contact your regional GREAT Center. Contact information can be found on the TCALL website (www-tcall.tamu.edu)

Copyright information regarding the use of the TISESL curricula can also be found on the TCALL website.



This article was first published in August 2008 as #25 in the SHOP TALK series sponsored by Texas LEARNS to highlight promising practices and address issues, concerns, and questions related to meeting the adult education needs of Texas’ emerging, incumbent, and displaced workers. See all releases in the SHOP TALKS series on the Workforce Partnerships Web page linked from TCALL’s home page www-tcall.tamu.edu.

Effective Instruction for All Adult Education Students Including Those with Special Learning Needs

by Tracy Hendrix

"It is common sense to take a method and try it; if it fails, admit it frankly and try another. But above all, try something." Franklin Roosevelt

This quote from Franklin Roosevelt aptly describes the Special Learning Needs Training initiative that our state began last year. The issue of disabilities and special learning needs is almost like a giant elephant sitting in the middle of the room and the question is "How do we move the elephant out of the room?" The debate, along with many opinions and solutions, could literally generate hundreds of answers. All the while, the elephant is still sitting in the middle of the room as are the many adult students sitting in our classrooms who have disabilities and special learning needs.

The good news is that Texas is doing a lot of work to train **all** adult education teachers how to help their students get out of the room. Last year was the first year of the Special Learning Needs Training called "*Effective Instruction for All Adult Education Students Including Those with Special Learning Needs*." The training successfully produced 33 adult educators who are now called Special Learning Needs Resource Specialist.

The training was taught by nationally recognized consultants in the field of learning disabilities, Neil Sturomski and Nancie Payne. The Special Learning Needs Training Institute provided 90 hours of intensive training which will enable the Resource Specialist to use their training in the classroom to practically help adult education students with disabilities and special learning needs overcome the many barriers and challenges faced by our student population.

The adult educators who are Special Learning Need Resource Specialists are also trained to use the Payne Learning Needs Inventory to screen adults with suspected learning disabilities to determine if the student needs further diagnostic testing. Most importantly, the Resource Specialist learns many practical tools and strategies to help the students in the classroom on a daily basis. The

Resource Specialist is also aware of how to assist a student who already has a diagnosed disability to apply for accommodations for GED Testing. Basically, this training equips the adult educator to help their students to begin to overcome their disabilities and barriers.

Year Two, which will begin in November 2008, will include another 40 adult education teachers along with a ten-member Train-the-Trainers cohort chosen from Year One. These trainers will be given hands-on instruction as they in turn train another 40-50 adult education teachers statewide during the program year at their local program. With the completion of Year Two, Texas Adult Education will have 120 Special Learning Needs Resource

Specialists and ten statewide trainers. Beginning in Year Three, the regional adult education professional development centers (GREAT Centers) will begin to provide this training to **all** adult education teachers statewide and continue this endeavor until **all** adult educators have been trained.

All is definitely a tall order and sounds a little bit like utopia. However, if the elephant were actually sitting in the middle of the room, the goal would be to get **all** of

the elephant out of the room. Just as Franklin Roosevelt urges to "try something," Texas will pursue this great training initiative to equip **all** adult educators so that **all** the adult students who sit in our classrooms with disabilities, special learning needs and multiple challenges will have a way to successfully get out of the room and into the rest of their lives.

About the Author

Tracy Hendrix is the East Region Grant Services Manager at Texas LEARNS and the state contact for the Special Learning Needs Initiative. Prior to working for Texas LEARNS, she worked in the Adult Education Program at North Harris College for nine years as a Counselor, Coordinator and Chief GED Examiner. She is a graduate of Texas Tech University and has a background in social work, teaching, and counseling.



2007-2008 Special Learning Needs Cohort

Leadership Excellence Academy

by Sheryl Jefferson

The Leadership Excellence Academy is a joint venture between the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium (NAEPDC) and ProLiteracy America. They joined forces in 2006 to launch a professional development initiative for local program managers. The initial pilot began in 2006-2007 with managers from Arizona, Maryland and New York. Texas is one of a selected number of states invited to join in 2007-2008. Texas currently has two cohorts consisting of program directors from ABE, Civics and Even Start.

The Academy is designed to offer support to program managers and give them tools and strategies to strengthen their program's performance. Participants in the Academy will become one of the first administrators to earn national certification in adult education with professional designation after their name (CMPI-Certified Manager of Program Improvement).

Participants from Cohort 1 began their inaugural year in September 2007 and concluded May 2008 with a culminating project. Texas LEARNS would like to thank all of the participants for their dedication and diligence in this initiative. Cohort 2 will begin their first year in September 2008. Texas LEARNS welcomes all new Academy participants. During this period of transition, the Leadership Academy will provide knowledge to help you develop your own leadership and management style as well as put you on a course that will promote success.

The Academy participants complete online introductory courses; participate in face-to-face workshops and follow-up interactive web casts; and complete interim activities and learning projects that allow them to apply the knowledge gained through the training activities. Academy participants may earn a total of nine (9) hours of graduate credit from Ohio University for the two-year training series. Participants must meet all of the requirements for both Year 1 and Year 2 to be eligible.

Comments from Cohort 1:

This Academy has provided me the opportunity to capitalize on the knowledge and experience of other adult education administrators. It has also provided a

structured process for programs to collect, analyze, and interpret program data in order to guide program initiatives. Guadalupe C. Ruvalcaba; Director of SAISD-Adult & Community Education Department.

The Leadership Academy taught me the types of surveys available for program improvement and better ways to implement change within our programs. Susan Pritchard, Director of Brenham ISD Adult Education Program

Having pushed me out of my comfort zone, the Leadership Excellence Academy, has taken our already existing team to higher levels. At a recent professional development session, one of my team members (a support staff person) was overheard telling a colleague from another ABE site that "we (teachers and support staff) all actually run this program together with our director" because the program has become the product of our collective mind. Christina Palacios, Director of GED Instruction; Del Mar College; Corpus Christi

The Academy was helpful to lay out steps for programs that were on Program Improvement Plans. John Stevenson, Grant Services Manager; Texas LEARNS

The Academy has been very productive because it gave us all ideas on how to do our jobs better. Although I had thought about some of these issues, it wasn't until I had articulated them as priorities (and had those priorities reaffirmed by my staff) that I could focus my attention on developing solutions for them. Eduardo Honold, Far West Project GREAT Coordinator

I have witnessed the true beauty of evaluation through the Leadership Academy. My staff and I annually review the program's strategies framework to ensure our vision, mission, values, goals and objectives are clearly reflected in our services. However, learning to use the tools referenced in the Leadership Academy allows data to generate this process. The subjectivity is removed and we as a team can focus on accessing, understanding, judging, and integrating research findings to improve the program. Paula Bauer, Project LEARN Coordinator

The National Leadership Academy has provided me with a different perspective in identifying program improvement needs for our campus. It has also created a network of resources for us to implement strategies which will lead to school improvement. Fred Anaya, ABE Director; Ysleta Community Learning Center

I would highly recommend the Academy for any administrator really interested in comprehensive program improvement. This Academy provides tremendous support for identifying a need, structuring and implementing a plan, and evaluating the impact. The homework and deadlines keeps us on track. It is really great to share this experience with Texas colleagues. Donna Byrum, Director of Adult Education Centers; Grayson County College

The Leadership Academy has given me research-

based methods to study and receive feedback from the instructors in our consortium as to what they observe to be priorities to address for program improvement. I have been able to utilize the talents of our staff in studying and creating processes for program improvement. Sofia Zamarripa; Adult Education Director; Fort Worth ISD

Resource: www.naepdc.org

About the Author

Sheryl Jefferson worked as a chemist for twelve years before entering the education field. She taught at Integrated Physics and Chemistry, a local high school and at a local community college. She also served as local Even Start program coordinator before joining Texas LEARNS as a grant services manager.

Parents Make the Difference: An Update from the Texas Family Literacy Resource Center

by Dr. Deborah Stedman

The 2007-2008 year was an exciting one for the Texas Family Literacy Resource Center (TFLRC). Attendance at our events was gratifying and evaluations continued to reflect the family literacy field's appreciation for professional development.

Training in required assessments is provided to Even Start Family Literacy projects each year as a strategy for assuring that Texas gathers the best data possible. TFLRC training on required early childhood and parent education assessments was consolidated to a single location in 07-08. TFLRC conducted assessment training at Texas State University on September 20-21, 2007. Kathy Hughes, a certified Denver II trainer for Parents as Teachers, provided training for developmental screening of Even Start children ages birth through two and all newly enrolled three-year-olds. Debra Coe provided training on using the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) for assessing English vocabulary of Even Start three-to-five-year olds. Ysabel Ramirez presented training on using the Brigance Screens, another developmental screening option for birth to three, and Deborah Stedman pro-

vided training on using the HOME Inventory, a pre/post measure used in Texas Even Start for assessing parenting skills. Training in the use of the PALS-PreK phonological awareness assessment had been previously provided online by TFLRC to Even Start early childhood practitioners during summer, 2007.

Report Cards have become a vital part of the operation of a family literacy project and are being used to provide information about family literacy outcomes for both children *and* parents and to maintain and build support among school and community constituents. TFLRC produced a second year of Report Card Training during the annual fall '07 Even Start meeting in Fredericksburg. Denise Guckert, TFLRC's own Technology Guru, designed and presented this update training. Each coordinator developed his/her own project Report Card using TESPIRS and TEAMS data and took the product home on a CD.

TFLRC also provided training to Even Start Coordinators who were newly hired for 07-08. TFLRC has

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Parents Make the Difference, continued from pg. 11 developed a comprehensive approach to assisting new coordinators with programmatic and compliance knowledge. A one and a half day face-to-face workshop was held at Texas State University in December of 2007. The balance of the New Coordinator training was delivered through the Internet and Texas State's distance learning platform. New Coordinator Training topics included Even Start legislation and requirements, adult education, early childhood education, orientation and goal setting for parents, parent education and home visiting, program design, program sustainability and local evaluation.

TFLRC and Texas LEARNS collaboratively reviewed professional development needs assessment and program needs data to identify parent education as the primary topic for the Spring '08 initiative. TFLRC staff conducted a literature search which indicated the need for several parent education themes in order to provide Even Start family literacy staff with research-based information that had instructional implications without duplicating the parent education programs that are already in place in Even Start (e.g., Parents as Teachers, Family Frameworks).

Using the literature search data, TFLRC developed the three-day *Parents Make The Difference* (PMTD) initiative. The initial day focused on parents as first teachers, a primary tenet of Even Start. A curriculum entitled *You Make The Difference* was identified as providing a framework for positive everyday interactions that supports the language, social and emergent literacy development of very young children in low income, vulnerable families with limited literacy and English skills. Participants spent the day exploring this curriculum and planning for its use and each project received a bilingual set of the curriculum books and an accompanying DVD for use as they integrated the curriculum at home.

A second theme that emerged was clearly connected with the first: promoting simple, inexpensive but powerful activities for parent-child interactions that supported social development and emergent literacy throughout early childhood and could be used easily by parents at home and in center-based Even Start components. Participants explored the use of *Learninggames*, an outgrowth of the ground-breaking Abecedarian Project research, in all components in Even Start. A bilingual set of the *Learninggames* manuals and handouts were provided to each participating family literacy project.

The third theme that emerged was the importance of recent research on dialogic reading, a strategy that promotes language development that can be used by virtually any parent or caregiver. Dialogic reading is essentially "book sharing" and research has consistently demonstrated that simple book sharing steps can accelerate language development particularly in children ages 18 months to three years. Participants examined the research and practiced book sharing using bilingual children's books.

Then the fun really began. Because children love to talk about themselves and things they have done, Denise Guckert showed participants how to incorporate photos of children into Personal Picture Books. Participants then were able to teach parents how to make their own Personal Picture Books for their children to use in book sharing.

The *Parents Make The Difference* themes were initially presented as pilots to participants at the El Paso Adult Learning and Literacy conference sponsored by the Far West GREAT Center in El Paso in November 2007. Using feedback from these family literacy educators, subsequent *Parents Make The Difference* initiatives were presented to the Coastal and East regions at Cy-Fair College in February of 2008, to the Central, South Central and South regions at Texas State University in early April 2008, and to the North and East regions in late April 2008.

About the Author

Deborah Stedman has been the director of the Texas Family Literacy Resource Center at Texas State University since July 2004. Beginning in 2000, Deborah spent six years as an external Even Start evaluator. Prior to that experience Deborah worked for the Texas Education Agency for 18 years. During that time she was responsible for adult education state leadership projects in addition to general adult education and family literacy administrative duties. Deborah lives in San Marcos with her husband Ken and her three furry children, Elle, Ms. Kitty and Tuxie.

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Literacy Volunteer Training Initiative

by Dale E. Pillow

Pioneers in non-profit adult literacy organizations paved the way for the Literacy Volunteer Training Initiative that was conceived in 2003. The early years of this decade brought much change to the field of adult literacy. Two non-profit groups in Texas – Texas Adult Literacy Laubach and Literacy Volunteers of America – came together to form the Texas Association of Adult Literacy Councils (TAALC), a statewide coalition of non-profit literacy providers. Texas led the way and the nation followed as Laubach Literacy International and Literacy Volunteers of America came together to form ProLiteracy America. Within our state, non-profit literacy providers vary greatly in size and focus from small faith-based programs to large city literacy coalitions serving many thousands of adults each year. All share a common passion for this critical social and economic need while struggling to meet that need with limited resources.

Into this atmosphere of change and challenges, came another transformation as the Texas Education Agency contracted with Texas LEARNS to provide leadership and support services to adult and family literacy providers. Texas LEARNS began to look seriously at how non-profit volunteer literacy providers could be supported in order to encourage collaborations between these non-profits and adult basic education providers. Volunteer organizations were recognized as valuable partners and new thinking prevailed in a spirit of strong cooperation. Into this season of collaboration, the Literacy Volunteer Training Initiative was born.

Texas LEARNS authorized the Texas Adult & Family Literacy Clearinghouse Project at the Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning (TCALL) to include in its grant objectives the Volunteer Training Initiative and, in early 2004, the initiative began providing support for training of volunteers as a collaboration between TCALL and Literacy Texas (formerly TAALC). Through this initiative, volunteers and administrators of community-based literacy programs with no access to state funds are provided support for professional development.

Since January 2004, over \$500,000 supplied by this initiative has funded expenses for volunteers and administrative staff to attend conferences, trainings,

and workshops. By using the train-the-trainer model, strength within each region to conduct trainings is built, thereby reducing travel costs and time. Literacy Texas and the TCALL staff work closely to review and recommend conferences and other trainings for which reimbursement of participants' and/or trainers' expenses will be offered.

Additionally, for programs seeking ProLiteracy Accreditation, the Volunteer Training Initiative funds have supported the accreditation fee and Literacy Texas has provided technical support as programs seek that Accreditation. This is another critical area which brings increased quality and accountability to the field through program improvement. ProLiteracy America supports an organizational accreditation that assists non-profit program administrators and their boards in ensuring the highest quality management and service delivery. ProLiteracy America Accreditation acknowledges literacy organizations that are distinguished by superior professional leadership, effective programs, committed governing boards, and outstanding volunteer support. Literacy Texas is the lead organization to provide accreditation services to the non-profit literacy community in Texas.

Further collaboration happens through *LiteracyTexasLink*, an email discussion list that helps to connect literacy providers from across the state. TCALL Clearinghouse Project staff provides hosting, moderation, and subscription management services for *LiteracyTexasLink*. Although the Volunteer Training Initiative is limited to community-based literacy programs with no access to state funds for professional development, the listserv is open to all volunteer literacy programs, adult basic education programs, and individuals who are interested in improving literacy in Texas, particularly in community-based settings that utilize volunteers. This listserv is used to communicate the availability of funding for professional development opportunities in addition to sharing relevant information about research, statistics, and resources. It is a connecting vehicle through which to network, to communicate, to share resources, to seek professional development opportunities, and to provide access to new allies.

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Literacy Volunteer..., continued from page 13

The fact that the Literacy Volunteer Training Initiative provides reimbursements for instructors and volunteer tutors to attend professional development offerings allows program dollars to be used for learner instruction and leverages these dollars for direct instructional services to build statewide system capacity. With a broad base of volunteer expertise, precious resources are saved through the donation of time and talent.

These resources support the mission of community literacy and the vision of 100 percent literacy through 100 percent community engagement that is embraced

by Literacy Texas to bring educational equity to every family in the state. No one organization can solve a problem of this scope – it takes collaboration and cooperation by all interested parties working together to solve this problem. It can work only in an environment of strong, sustained collaboration.

About the Author

Mrs. Dale E. Pillow is Executive Director of the Adult Reading Center in Pearland and Immediate Past President of Literacy Texas (www.literacytexas.org). She can be reached at linktoliteracy@sbcglobal.net.

The First Lady's Family Literacy Initiative for Texas 2007-2008 Grant Program Accomplishments *by Emily Moore, Pat Peebler, and Harriet Vardiman Smith*

The First Lady's Family Literacy Initiative for Texas, a program of The Barbara Bush Texas Fund for Family Literacy, is a statewide family literacy initiative designed to complement important school reform efforts at the PreK-3 grade levels. Laura Bush launched the Initiative in 1996 while serving as First Lady of the State of Texas. Since that time, the Initiative has awarded over \$3 million to 128 programs across the state. Grantees have included school districts, community colleges, universities, charter schools, pediatric medical clinics, Head Start and Even Start programs, community-based organizations, libraries, and prison programs. The money for this Initiative is raised at the Barbara Bush Foundation's annual fundraisers, *A Celebration of Reading*, held in Houston and Dallas.

Laura Bush serves as Honorary Chair of *The First Lady's Family Literacy Initiative for Texas*. "A child who can read is a child who can succeed in school and in life. Parents demonstrate by participation and example that reading is a joy and books are treasures," said Mrs. Laura Bush. "The impact these family programs have cannot be measured simply by the number of participants, but more accurately by the depth of change and lasting impact in communities across Texas." For the family literacy seed grant programs funded each year in Texas, technical assistance is provided by Emily Moore of the Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy and Learning at Texas A&M University. Pat Peebler administers the Initiative for The Barbara Bush Texas Fund for Family Literacy.

The grants are awarded to family literacy programs that focus on reading instruction for both parents and their children, and provide structured time for parents and children to read and learn together. In the 2007-2008 program year that recently concluded, grants of \$50,000 each were awarded to eight programs. Following is a brief summary of the accomplishments of those eight programs in the past year.

- AVANCE-Austin, Texas – The AVANCE program brought family literacy to a rural area with few resources. Grant funds were used to hire a full time ESL teacher for parents. The AVANCE curriculum features a unique toy making component in which parents are shown how to make a simple toy that relates to a children's book. Families receive the book and parents try the activity at home. These experiences were fun and motivated everyone in the family to get involved.
- Deer Park Independent School District, Deer Park, Texas – This program used grant funds to hire an Early Childhood Literacy Specialist and to provide twice monthly "Reading Party Workshops" hosted by education majors at the University of Houston-Clear Lake. These workshops featured activities relating to a children's book, which was given to each family for their home library. The intensity of the Deer Park program (fifteen hours per week) enabled students to accumulate a large number of instructional hours. Twenty-six adults attended more than 100 hours and half of those attended over 400

hours. This program was successful because of the case management approach and the support services they provided in a positive and motivating environment.

- Judson Independent School District, San Antonio, Texas – Judson ISD built a new family literacy center and grant funds were used to purchase equipment and hire staff. Families were provided with a full service family literacy program which became a vital part of the surrounding neighborhood.
- Richardson Family Literacy Center, Richardson, Texas – The Richardson program hired additional personnel and purchased *Parenting for Academic Success*, an adult literacy/parenting curriculum developed by the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) in collaboration with the Center for Applied Linguistics and K. Lynn Savage. Training in the curriculum by NCFL was also provided. Not only were parents and children able to improve their language skills, but they also reported that reading with their children in the evenings became their favorite activity.
- Sisterhood of Faith in Action, Houston, Texas – Located in an urban area of Houston, this program used grant funds for additional staff to offer families a comprehensive literacy experience which was unique in the area. It was instrumental in bringing parents into the elementary school where they learned to become advocates for their children. Parents and children thrived in the safe and supportive environment.
- Vickery Meadow Learning Center, Dallas, Texas – This very innovative program collaborated with the Dallas Children’s Theater to involve families in *Curtains Up on Literacy*. Actors visited the school and led families in activities relating to a well-known children’s book. Families attended the play at the theater and afterwards went backstage. The actors provided the parents and children with props and costumes so that they could create their own version of the play.
- Reach Across Houston, Houston, Texas – The program used grant funds to hire staff and provide adult ESL and early childhood education classes. In addition to literacy instruction, families were provided guest speakers on a variety of topics such as nutrition, child safety and legal issues.
- Communities in Schools, Austin, Texas – Grant funds were used to hire additional teachers in this program. A unique feature allowed parents to visit their child’s classroom several times a week to observe and help with literacy activities. These activities could then be replicated at home. These experiences in the classroom encouraged parents to become involved in school activities and build relationships with the early childhood teachers.

For more information on The First Lady’s Family Literacy Initiative for Texas, including the ten 2008-2009 grant programs, see the Initiative’s Website, linked from the TCALL home page menu.

One Size Does Not Fit All: Choosing the Right PACT Curricula *by Rebekah Haynes, Petra Robinson, and Megan Terry*

Introduction

The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy began funding the Barbara Bush fellowship during the 2007-2008 academic year. The overarching goal of the fellowship was to contribute to research in the field of family literacy. The first fellowship recipients, along with Emily Moore, who serves as technical assistant for the First Lady’s Family Literacy Initiative of Texas, found a particular need for family literacy programs to have more information about curricula available for the program component Parent and Child Together (PACT), also called Interactive Literacy Activities (ILA). The component of PACT specifically

aims to provide structured and supervised time for parents and children in which parents use the strategies they have learned through parent education to support their children’s literacy and language development (Ward & Franquiz, 2004). The purpose of this study was to investigate the curricula that are available specifically for PACT and provide an overview of available programs and feedback from practitioners in the field. The study researched existing curricula through information provided by publishers and surveyed past and present family literacy program directors for feedback on curricula they had personally used.

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Findings

Commercially Available Curricula

The PACT curricula which were investigated are displayed in the PACT Curricula Matrix, which can be found on the TCALL Web site. This portion of the research revealed some interesting findings. There are very few curricula available that are specifically designed for PACT time; consequently, practitioners rely on a variety of other early childhood curricula and research based practices. Parenting for Academic Success, created by the National Center for Family Literacy, was one of the few curricula found that provided programming specifically for a PACT-like component. The curricula also vary greatly with regards to the materials, intended audience, training requirements, and cost. As would be expected, both training requirements and cost increase as the curricula become broader and more comprehensive. Lastly, while some curricula investigated do have an extensive research base supporting their effectiveness (i.e. Parents as Teachers) and others are grounded in practices shown to be important for literacy development (i.e. shared book reading), solid research efforts to test the immediate and long term effects of such programs are minimal.

Survey Results

A survey was used to solicit feedback from current and past practitioners regarding their experience with specific commercially available curricula, as well as on methods of creating PACT activities without the use of a curriculum package. Parenting for Academic Success is the only commercially available curriculum reviewed that was created specifically for family literacy programs, and provides ample material to incorporate into PACT time. Strengths of this program, as reported by practitioners, included providing practical information for families, opportunities for parents to get involved with the school and community, and forums to learn and discuss not only literacy strategies, but positive family behaviors in general. A notable weakness was that the program provides limited English instruction; therefore, it may be necessary to supplement it with additional parent ESL materials.

Another class of programs that practitioners utilize for PACT curricula is large scale parenting programs, which generally have educational and literacy components within the broader context of parent training. Parents as Teachers is one such program, which takes place in the context of home visits. A notable strength is that the program has been extensively researched to ensure the curriculum content contains evidence-based practices for language and literacy development. This

program, however, requires a lengthy and expensive certification process for the practitioners, which was described as both a strength and weakness.

Make Your Own

The majority of our survey respondents create their own PACT curriculum by using a combination of several small programs or developing their own activities. Several innovative ideas were described. For example, some programs use literacy bags or backpacks to extend learning to the home for both the child and the parent. The bags are sent back and forth between the classroom and home on a regular basis and contain directions and all materials needed for a literacy project to be completed by the parent and child together. Other ideas include planning PACT around a weekly or monthly theme, using free educational computer games, or inviting parents into the classroom to observe and volunteer.

Conclusion

The results of this area of research are promising in several ways. First of all, curricula for PACT appear to address the needs of different programs. This research also revealed many affordable, and often free, ways that family literacy programs can supplement existing practices.

This research also highlights areas in need of improvement. There is certainly room in the field for the development of new PACT curricula consistent with the goals of PACT that is both affordable and flexible in meeting the needs of different families. There is also a tremendous need for more research on existing curricula in order to provide evidence of effectiveness and to inform development of new curricula. Family literacy programs reach diverse populations; therefore, research should investigate what strategies are most effective with different populations.

References

Ward, P.A., & Franquiz, M.E. (2004). An integrated approach: Even Start family literacy model for migrant families. In C. Salinas & M.E. Franquiz (Eds.), *Scholars in the field: The challenges of migrant education*. Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools.

About the Authors

Rebekah Haynes, Petra Robinson, and Megan Terry recently completed the inaugural year of the Barbara Bush Fellowship in Family Literacy.

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"TCALL has the most current resources available for a quick review or study."

Marilyn Calhoun, Trainer
North Region GREAT Center



SPECIAL LEARNING NEEDS

These titles are recommended by Nancie Payne and Neil Sturomski, Special Learning Needs consultants and trainers.

Academic Success Strategies for Adolescents with Learning Disabilities & ADHD. Minscöff, E. & Allsopp, D. (2003). Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing Company. This handbook for education professionals explains how to help students with mild disabilities develop academic skills in organization, test-taking, study skills, note taking, reading, writing, math, and advanced thinking. An overarching five-step model (the Active Learner Approach) for effective instruction helps teachers introduce these strategies to students, model the steps of the strategies for them, give students guided and independent practice applying the strategies to assignments, and assist students in generalizing the strategies to other subjects and settings.

The Educator's Guide to Medical Issues in the Classroom. Kline, F. M., Silver, L.B., & Russell, S.C. (2001). Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing Company. Teachers are often the first to notice emotional, behavioral, or mental disorders in their students. Along with a detailed overview of the mental health system and the different types of mental health professionals, education professionals will get separate chapters on 11 specific mental health issues. Educators will also find specific strategies for building collaborative partnerships with mental health professionals and families; and case studies illustrating successful collaboration. Appendices offer definitions, common medications used to treat mental health disorders, and support organizations.

Embracing the Monster: Overcoming the Challenges of Hidden Disabilities. Crawford, Veronica (2002). Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing Company. Crawford describes her personal experience living with hidden disabilities including learning disabilities, bipolar disorder, ADHD, dyslexia, and sensory integrative disorder. Through her struggles in school, at work, and in her personal relationships, readers gain insight into the emotional turmoil of living with hidden disabilities and be inspired by the author's resourcefulness as she learns to confront and accept them. The book also includes clinical commentary from a noted expert on these types of disabilities, Dr. Larry B. Silver, who concludes each chapter with information on what can be done to help individuals with hidden disabilities lead more positive, productive lives.

Learning Disabilities and Employment. Gerber, Paul J. and Brown, Dale S. (1997). Austin, TX: PRO-ED, Inc. The authors divide this book into four sections: Employment of People with Learning Disabilities: The Big Picture; Training Persons with Learning Disabilities for Employment; Workplace Issues; and Experiences in the Workplace. A variety of topics are covered in these sections. Some of the topics addressed are legal rights, preparing for employment with learning disabilities, job accommodations, and personal stories. Book is available for loan to Texas educators ONLY.

Learning Disabilities, Literacy, and Adult Education. Vogel, Susan A. and Reder, Stephen, Editors (1998). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. This resource devotes attention to learning disabilities (LD) and literacy in adults. The book describes: how and when to screen for LD; the pros and cons of identification of adults with LD; and specific methods for teaching adults who have LD. Once areas of difficulty have been identified, this guide details plans for matching student needs to instructional strategies in literacy and math skills. Information is included on the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 regulations, as well as examples from effective staff preparation programs. Book is available for loan to Texas educators ONLY.

Learning Strategies for Adults: Compensations for Learning Disabilities. Crux, Sandra C. (1991). Middletown, OH: Wall & Emerson, Inc. This book is written from the author's experience training and teaching at all levels. Chapter 1 provides background about learning and the adult, particularly the learning disabled. Chapter 2 addresses techniques of informal assessment of students. Chapter 3 describes environmental supports and study techniques to compensate for deficits. The author provides a useful matrix of difficulties encountered, crossed with strategies and supports for learners and classroom methods for trainers and teachers.

Legacy of the Blue Heron: Living with Learning Disabilities. Sylvester, Harry (2002). Farmington, ME. Oxton House. Sylvester started life in rural Maine as a youngster with serious learning disabilities. He retired after being a successful mechanical engineer, business owner, and boatbuilder. His book is a story of persistence in the face of misunderstanding, survival by patient perseverance through years of puzzlement and frustration, and much more. Sylvester shares many lessons he learned the hard

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way, during the years in which our society was discovering what learning disabilities are. He lays out coping tactics for the estimated 10% of people who have learning disabilities and describes productive strategies for the people and social agencies that interact with them.

Live it Learn It: The Academic Club Methodology for Students with Learning Disabilities. Smith, Sally L.

(2005). Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing Company. This guidebook provides a "learning-by-doing approach" to improving academic success for students who have learning disabilities and ADHD. Smith describes a 15-step process for establishing an Academic Club with minimal expense; information on how the clubs promote positive behavior and foster cooperation among students; detailed profiles of Academic Clubs; interviews with teachers who have used the Academic Club Approach; chapters on using the approach in different settings; and principles for effective group management.

Meeting the Challenge of Learning Disabilities in Adulthood. Roffman, Arlyn J. (2000).

Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing Company. This book is intended to offer a window into the experience of living with LD as an adult. A diverse group of adults with LD, many of whom also have ADHD, describe how they have met disability-related challenges at work and at home. Ten chapters discuss challenges and benefits that LD/ADHD can present in a wide range of areas. Practical tips and proven strategies are offered to help adults with LD identify and capitalize on their strengths and meet disability-related challenges. Book is available for loan to Texas educators ONLY.

On Their Own: Creating an Independent Future for Your Adult Child with Learning Disabilities and ADHD.

Ford, Anne & Thompson, John-Richard (2007). New York, NY: Newmarket Press. The author provides a road map to ease parents' fears and answer their questions about whether and how their adult child will be able to manage on their own. The book covers such topics as: social skills and dating; staying healthy; sibling relationships; interaction with employers and co-workers; job hunting; finding the right college or trade school; and estate planning. Also included are a resource guide and exclusive interviews with prominent professionals who have surmounted learning disabilities: CEO's Sir Richard Branson, John Chambers, David Neeleman, and Charles Schwab, and former West Virginia Governor Gaston Caperton.

The Power of the Arts: Creative Strategies for Exceptional Learner. Smith, Sally L. (2001). Baltimore, MD:

Brookes Publishing Company. Written by the founder and director of the Lab School in Washington, D.C., this book provides an alternative method for teaching academic subjects to students with disabilities via the arts. Educators can read how to infuse academic material and life skills into arts activities in order to help exceptional students learn. Interviews with Lab School teacher-artists provide step-by-step instructions for a variety of projects that enable students to see science in woodwork, find geometry in sculpture, learn vocabulary through theater, and study math through music. Case examples illustrate that this approach builds on students' individual strengths and interests and raises their self-esteem.

What About Me? Strategies for Teaching Misunderstood Learners. Lee, Christopher & Jackson, Rosemary

(2001). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. Lee, who has struggled and ultimately triumphed over dyslexia joins Jackson, an experienced special education trainer, to offer specific help to teachers and parents of misunderstood learners. This book includes specific guidance on: what you can do and where you can go if your student has a learning disability; what it's like to perceive words and numbers differently; how to help students with learning disabilities become creative writers; how to maximize memory skills; how to encourage kinesthetic and tactile learners to thrive in the classroom; how to recognize, deal with, and honor personal survival skills; how to help students develop self-advocacy skills; how assistive technology can help; and where to find more information on learning disabilities and assistive technology.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION & LEADERSHIP

Adult Education in an Urban Context: Problems, Practices, and Programming for Inner-City Communities.

Martin, Larry G. and Rogers, Elice E., Editors (Spring 2004). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers. From the Editors: "This sourcebook offers adult education scholars and practitioners in academic, community, and work-related urban settings insight into the education and learning problems and needs confronted by low-income residents of inner-city communities. Additionally, it offers fresh perspectives and approaches to practice that can assist these residents in crossing the socioeconomic and race-ethnicity borders that separate them from more affluent urban communities." Book is available for loan to Texas educators ONLY.

Building Powerful Community Organizations: A Personal Guide to Creating Groups that Can Solve Problems and Change the World. Brown, Michael Jacoby

(2006). Arlington, MA: Long Haul Press. This new book provides detailed information to help you build a new group or strengthen an old one to solve problems in your community, workplace or the world. It includes details about how to take specific steps to build an effective group from the start, revitalize an existing group, tap into the special resources and talents of your particular community or group, recruit participants and keep them active – so that all the work does not fall on your shoulders, inspire others to take on tasks and responsibility.

The Courage to Lead: An Essential Guide for Volunteer Leaders, Board Trustees, and Public Servants.

Floyd, Robert A. (2003). Austin, TX: 1st World Library. Essays on volunteer leadership include thoughts on subjects including authenticity, change, credibility, and trust. From the editorial notes: “To succeed in leading change, the leader must have stamina, courage, and the common sense to involve those affected by the change. It helps to have a sense of humor. ... Credible leaders believe in the inherent self-worth of every individual. They demonstrate this by affirming others and by showing confidence in their followers.”

Drawing on Experience in Adult and Continuing Education.

Edelson, Paul Jay (2006). Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company. The book looks at continuing education as it is practiced in an urban community college, at a major national museum, and at a premier research university. Topics include program development and administration, leadership, creativity and innovation, e-learning, staffing, budgeting, and the culture of higher education. Dr. Jerry Hickerson of Winston-Salem State University writes of the book, “Paul Edelson shares the joys and frustrations of his 30-year journey through administration and teaching in programs for adults. Veterans of the profession will smile or cringe as they encounter territories that are all too familiar; newer leaders in the field will be given ideas that they can use.”

Encouraging the Heart: A Leader's Guide to Rewarding and Recognizing Others.

Kouzes, James and Posner, Barry Z. (2003). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. “Charged with real-world examples, practical ideas, and expert advice, Encouraging the Heart is your guide to mastering one of the most important elements of exemplary leadership.” Also from the back cover, “a wonderful tool for creating a workforce that cares,” comments P. Lencioni. The chapters cover seven essentials for encouraging the heart, describe the heart of leadership, and explain how to find your voice. This book works for new leaders and those needing a new perspective.

Forces for Good: The Six Practices of High-Impact Nonprofits. Crutchfield, Leslie R. and Grant, Heather McLeod (2008). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. Forces for Good is an innovative guide on how great nonprofits

achieve extraordinary social impact. What makes great nonprofits great? Authors Crutchfield and McLeod Grant searched for the answer over several years, employing a rigorous research methodology which derived from books on for-profits like Built to Last. They studied 12 nonprofits that have achieved extraordinary levels of impact—from Habitat for Humanity to the Heritage Foundation—and distilled six counterintuitive practices that these organizations use to change the world. This book has lessons for all readers interested in creating significant social change, including nonprofit managers, donors and volunteers.

Grant Proposal Makeover: Transform Your Request from No to Yes.

Clarke, Cheryl A. and Fox, Susan P. (2007). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. According to the authors, “Nine out of ten grant proposals are rejected. Grant Proposal Makeover shows how to transform lackluster proposals into excellent ones – that have the potential to be funded. This book stands out from other traditional grantwriting books because it illustrates common flaws and problems in proposals and shows exactly how to fix them. It also includes helpful tips and quotes from foundation program officers and funding community insiders taken from an international survey of foundation professionals.”

Helping Teachers Learn: Principal Leadership for Adult Growth and Development.

Drago-Severson, Eleanor (2004). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. Drago-Severson describes methods educational administrators can use to create opportunities for teacher learning that support teachers with different needs and preferences. Case studies from 25 diverse schools across the U.S. examine strategies that help shape a school climate of teacher support, growth, and learning. Concepts include: a new model of learning-oriented leadership that can be tailored to particular settings or individuals; adult learning principles that inform teacher growth and development, and show why they are essential to effective teacher development programs; The Four Pillars: teaming, providing leadership roles, engaging in collegial inquiry, and mentoring; and real-world examples of principals sharing leadership, building community, and managing change. Book is available for loan to Texas educators ONLY.

How to Help Your Board Govern More and Manage Less.

Chait, Richard P. (2003). Washington, DC: Board-Source. The author believes that understanding the distinction between managing and governing will increase a nonprofit board's ability to work effectively. Chait suggests how a board can successfully work with staff, and how this dynamic changes as the size of an organization's staff changes. Book includes specific procedures to strengthen a nonprofit board's capacity to govern.

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Welcome to Our Library, continued from page 19

The HR Answer Book: An Indispensable Guide for Managers and Human Resources Professionals.

Smith, Shawn and Mazin, Rebecca (2004). New York, NY: AMACOM - American Management Association. Written in a question-and-answer format, this reference book addresses over 200 areas of concern for managers who must contend with human resource (HR) issues. The authors are an attorney with a corporate background specializing in employment law, and a recruiter and former HR manager. Key areas include: employee selection; policies; performance management; training; employee relations and retention; compensation; benefits; major employment laws; termination; and "tough stuff" such as email monitoring and workplace violence.

Leadership Roles in Nonprofit Governance. Gale, Robert L. (2003). Washington, DC: BoardSource. Strong board leadership is important to the success of a nonprofit organization. Gale clarifies the difference in the roles of the chief executive and board chair and provides suggestions for how this partnership can be strengthened. He describes how leadership can effectively work with the governance committee to facilitate board development. Book also includes sample job descriptions and a discussion on "What Keeps the President Awake at Night."

The Nonprofit Legal Landscape. Hyatt, Thomas K., Editor and Ober/Kaler, Attorneys at Law (2005). Washington, DC: BoardSource. Designed for executive and board members, this book explains the laws and legal concepts that affect nonprofit organizations. Written by lawyers, at the law firm of Ober/Kaler, it is intended as a reference tool for laws specific to tax exemption and for those regulating general business practices. Designed to communicate core principles of the law, in an accessible way, the book addresses: legal obligations of nonprofit board members; recent developments in the nonprofit legal landscape; how to avoid losing tax-exempt status; the difference between lobbying and electioneering; regulations addressing employee relationships; criminal investigations and civil litigations; and more. Book is available for loan to Texas educators ONLY.

Nonprofit Public Relations Toolkit: A Basic Introduction to Public Relations. Mason, Debbie (2003). Austin, TX: 1st World Library. From the editorial notes: "This toolkit is designed to be used as a simple guide for nonprofit organizations that have little access to trained professionals and want to manage their own public relations efforts. Public relations can assist nonprofit organizations in branding and positioning themselves uniquely in their communities while informing the public of their value."

Recruitment and Retention for Literacy Programs National Center for Family Literacy (2005). Louisville, KY: NCFL. Strategies gathered from practitioners working in the field are highlighted throughout this guide. Guide

examines goal setting and tips for planning recruitment events. Also available from NCFL is a "Recruitment and Retention for Literacy Programs Resource Kit," which includes this guide book, a CD-ROM with templates and forms, 30 Posters (15 in English + 15 in Spanish) for raising awareness about your program, 200 Postcards (100 in English + 100 in Spanish) to remind potential and returning students about your program, and 100 Bookmarks with reading tips for parents (1 side printed in English, the other in Spanish) to hand out at special events.

Reducing Waiting Lists in Adult Education and Literacy Programs. St. John, Kathy, Project Coordinator (2006). Syracuse, NY: Dollar General Literacy Foundation and ProLiteracy America. Book describes several practices that local programs are using to involve students in meaningful learning activities while they wait for tutors or classes. Also included is a CD-Rom with many of the resources that the programs use to implement their practices, including class outlines, lists of software used in computer learning labs, recruitment flyers, newspaper articles, and job descriptions for staff and volunteers -- all of which can be adapted for use in other programs. ProLiteracy intends to publish these resources in downloadable format on their website. Set is available for loan to Texas educators ONLY.

Streetwise Project Management: How to Manage People, Processes, and Time to Achieve the Results You Need. Dobson, Michael S. (2003). Avon, MA: Adams Media Corporation. This book covers key aspects such as time management, resource allocation, quality control, risk management, controlling costs, and communications management. Issues that can potentially derail a project getting done on time and on budget are discussed, including: how to launch a project the right way; determining your objective; working with a project sponsor; understanding time constraints; writing project charters; balancing multiple projects; developing a task list; program evaluation and review techniques; and critical path method.

The Team Handbook, Third Edition. Scholtes, Peter R., Joiner, Brian L. and Streibel, Barbara J. (2003). Madison, WI: Oriel Incorporated. Handbook is a tool for program improvement through team building. Every chapter includes tips, traps to avoid, notes and templates. Some chapter topics include: The Process Excellence Approach to Management; Teams Using Tools to Solve Problems; Building an Improvement Plan; Learning to Work Together; and Dealing with Conflict.

Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards. Ingram, Richard T. (2003). Washington, DC: BoardSource. Ingram explores the 10 core areas of board responsibility, including the basic responsibilities, determining mission and purpose, ensuring effective planning, and participating in fundraising. Reference book can assist in drafting job descriptions, assessing board performance, and orienting board members on their responsibilities.



"It was great to receive materials that focused exactly on my problem area."

Judy Morris
ESL Teacher

East Texas Literacy Council

Things to Send For. . .

HEALTH LITERACY

Health Literacy Study Circles+ Facilitators Training

Guide. Rudd, Rima, et al (Jan. 2007). Cambridge, MA: National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. The purpose of this training guide is to help experienced professional developers and others organize and conduct a one-day session to train and orient those who will serve as facilitators of a NCSALL Health Literacy Study Circle+, which is a professional development activity for ABE, ASE, or ESOL practitioners. (See separate Clearinghouse Library title for the Study Circle+ materials.) This guide includes the information and materials you will need to conduct the training, but not background information on planning and facilitating training. Facilitators of the Health Literacy Study Circle+ Facilitators Training should be experienced trainers. Free copies are available to Texas educators ONLY. Paper may also be downloaded from the NCSALL website (www.ncsall.net).

Quick Guide to Health Literacy. Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (2005). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. The Quick Guide to Health Literacy is for government employees, grantees and contractors, and community partners working in healthcare and public health fields. It contains: a basic overview of key health literacy concepts; techniques for improving health literacy through communication, navigation, knowledge-building, and advocacy; examples of health literacy best practices; and suggestions for addressing health literacy in your organization. These tools can be applied to healthcare delivery, policy, administration, communication, and education activities aimed at the public. They also can be incorporated into mission, planning, and evaluation at the organizational level. For those new to health literacy, the toolkit will provide information needed to become an effective advocate for improved health literacy. For those already familiar with the topic, the guide provides user-friendly, action-oriented materials that can be easily referenced, reproduced, and shared with colleagues.

WORKFORCE/WORKPLACE LITERACY

LEP Guide for Workforce Professionals. Texas Workforce Solutions (2007). Austin, TX: Texas Workforce Commission. This resource is designed to assist Workforce Boards, workforce center staff, and training and adult education agencies in providing appropriate and effective services to Texas' rapidly growing limited English proficient

(LEP) workforce. Increasingly, businesses are looking for strategies to recruit and train workers from this growing workforce. The guide covers dozens of topics including: effective intake and case management strategies for LEP customers; comprehensive assessment strategies and a review of available assessment tests for LEP customers; strategies for introducing female LEP customers to non-traditional occupations and entrepreneurial opportunities; and a balanced scorecard review tool that allows Boards to evaluate the capacity and effectiveness of local training services for LEP customers. Free copies are available to Texas educators ONLY. Paper may also be downloaded from the TWC website (www.twc.state.tx.us/boards/guides/guides.html).

The State of Working Texas 2007. Center for Public Policy Priorities (September 2). Austin, TX: Center for Public Policy Priorities. In this annual Labor Day report on the status of the Texas economy and workforce, CPPP draws from various federal and state data sources, with assistance from the Economic Policy Institute. This report analyzes trends in unemployment, wages, and demographics, along with other issues that affect working Texans. On a positive note, unemployment has declined considerably, the gender wage gap has narrowed, and a smaller share of workers is earning poverty wages. On the negative side, Texas continues to lag far behind the nation and even the region on several key indicators, including educational attainment, health insurance, and wage growth.

The Work Readiness Credential Profile. EFF Center for Training and Technical Assistance (2005). Knoxville, TN: Center for Literacy Studies, University of Tennessee. The Equipped for the Future (EFF) Work Readiness Profile defines a cross-industry foundation of knowledge, skills and abilities that new workers need to succeed in entry-level jobs across industries. Front line supervisors from businesses across the country helped develop this profile. The profile identifies four categories of essential skills: communication, interpersonal, decision-making, and lifelong learning skills, as well as the critical entry-level tasks that require use of those skills.

Higher Skills, Bottom-Line Results: A Chamber Guide to Improving Workplace Literacy. Center for Workforce Preparation (2003). Washington, DC: U.S. Chamber of Commerce. This guide is part of a Literacy Toolkit developed by the Center for Workforce Preparation in collaboration with the National Institute for Literacy and Verizon

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Free Things to Send For, continued from page 21

SuperPages.com. The Toolkit presents a strong case for businesses and other community stakeholders to become advocates for workplace education programs and initiatives in their communities, thereby assisting adult learners in gaining the basic skills they need to become productive workers.

FAMILY LITERACY

The Importance of Social Interaction and Support for Women Learners: Evidence from Family Literacy Programs. Prins, Esther, Toso, Blaire Willson, and Schafft, Kai (May 2008). University Park, PA: Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy, Pennsylvania State University. "Although many women value and benefit from social interaction in adult education and family literacy, these social dimensions are often treated as tangential or inconsequential. Utilizing data from two studies of family literacy programs in Pennsylvania, this study examined how family literacy programs provide a supportive social space for women in poverty. We found that many learners had limited social support and social ties with people outside their program and few opportunities for recreation. As such, family literacy programs fulfilled important social functions by enabling women to leave the house, enjoy social contact and support, engage in informal counseling, pursue self-discovery and development, and establish supportive relationships with teachers. In sum, adult education and family literacy programs play an important role in helping women in poverty receive social support and, in turn, enhance their psychosocial well-being." -- Key Findings section of the Research Brief.

Parenting for Literacy Development and Educational Success: An Examination of the Parent Education Profile. Prins, Esther and Toso, Blaire Willson (May 2008). University Park, PA: Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy, Pennsylvania State University. "The Parent Education Profile (PEP) is an instrument that rates parents' support for children's literacy development. This study examined how the PEP portrays the ideal parent, its assumptions about parenting and education, and the values and ideals it promotes. In sum, many aspects of the PEP evaluate parents by the mainstream (White, middle-class) parenting style. Although the PEP uses the language of scientific research to support this model, it presents no information about reliability or validity. The PEP tends to assume that a universal set of parenting practices best supports children's literacy development, without fully considering cultural and economic differences. It also implies that parents, particularly mothers, are mainly responsible for their children's academic success. In order to follow some of the PEP practices, parents need access to resources often unavailable to poor families; yet, the PEP does not seem to encourage recognition of mitigating circumstances (e.g., poverty) that might lower parents' ratings. Finally, while the PEP encourages staff to ask for parents' perspec-

tives, it gives parents little say in assessing themselves. In conclusion, caution and cultural sensitivity are needed when using instruments that prescribe, monitor, and rate parental support for education and literacy." -- Key Findings section of the Research Brief.

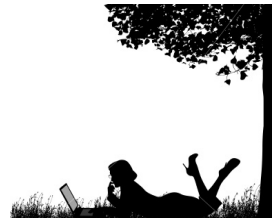
The Financial Psychology of Worry and Women. Ricciardi, Victor (February 2008). Lexington, KY: Kentucky State University/Social Science Research Network. This paper provides a review of significant academic studies and non-academic research endeavors in the realm of negative emotions, gender, and decision making. The author encourages behavioral finance researchers to place greater attention into the development of new research studies and academic papers in the area of negative affect. The financial psychology literature on gender and worry documents the emerging hypothesis that researchers should explore as women reveal greater degrees of worry than their male counterparts for different categories of financial services and investment products.

Promoting Effective Early Learning: What Every Policymaker and Educator Should Know. Klein, Lisa G. and Knitzer, Jane (January 2007). New York, NY: National Center for Children in Poverty, Columbia University. This brief provides a blueprint for state and local policymakers, early learning administrators, teachers, families, community leaders, and researchers to use effective preschool curricula and teaching strategies to help low-income young children close the achievement gap in early literacy and math to be ready for kindergarten like their more affluent peers. New research shows that an intentional curriculum and professional development and supports for teachers are important components of effective preschool classrooms and programs. A special focus on these strategies is important because many low-income children in early learning settings fall behind early and remain very much behind their peers in reading and math.

Starting Off Right: Promoting Child Development from Birth in State Early Care and Education Initiatives Schumacher, Rachel and Hamm, Katie, et al (July 2006). Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy. State early care and education policies that start at birth and address the full range of children's development can potentially identify health and developmental issues, link families to necessary supports, and assure that those who care for infants and toddlers have the tools to stimulate early learning and development and ease transitions into the preschool and elementary years. This paper describes a menu of state strategies to improve early care and education for infants and toddlers, and supports to their families, including: examples of specific policies to promote child development birth to 3, as well as ideas for state funding and governance structures that provide attention and resources for all children birth to age 5. Free copies are available to Texas educators ONLY. Paper may also be downloaded from the CLASP website (www.clasp.org).

Click on Over. . .

Browsing the Web, TCALL staff found these literacy-related sites particularly relevant, helpful, or just plain fun.



Media Library of Teaching Skills (MLoTS) is a free online digital library featuring short videos of adult education teachers and their classes, intended for use in professional development. Each video is an example of a state-approved content standard, research-based practice, preferred approach, or specific teaching method or skill. Some of the MLoTS videos were made and edited by the MLoTS Team, David J. Rosen and Owen Hartford; some were made by other people and groups. <http://mlots.org/index.htm>

Assessment Strategies & Reading Profiles — Research-based assessment practices for the adult education classroom.

This interactive Website for adult education practitioners is based on the Adult Reading Components Study (ARCS), a study that assessed the reading of 955 adult learners. Researchers tested participants individually on eleven skills (components) that contribute to reading ability. A list of scores for each learner became that individual's reading profile, illustrating his or her strengths and instructional needs. Each profile group shows a distinctive pattern and/or level of reading component skills. You will learn more about profiles as you navigate the site. www.nifl.gov/readingprofiles/

On the Go, Spanish version developed by Dr. Angela Notari-Syverson and colleagues. These materials include 14 activities designed to be used outside the home: in the car, while walking, during bus rides, etc. The activities encourage early language and literacy development from birth through preschool. They are appropriate for children with disabilities as well as children who are developing typically. To download materials go to www.wlearning.com and click on the purple button that says "Free Parent Education Handouts" on the home page. Look for the "On the Go" files to download the materials in PDF format. The development of these materials was supported by Grant H324M020084 from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. www.wlearning.com

STudent Achievement in Reading (STAR) is a comprehensive Tool Kit and training package built upon evidence-based reading instructional strategies. STAR helps adult education teachers and administrators improve reading outcomes among intermediate-level learners - those learners who read at the fourth to ninth grade levels. STAR is not a reading curriculum. It is a reading reform initiative that includes professional development, tools, and resources that expand participants' knowledge of effective reading instruction and improves their ability to build local and state systems that support reading improvement. You can find out more about the STAR reading training on this website. Of special interest are Reading Resources, STAR Issue Papers (located under Ready for STAR?) and STAR Panel Discussion (streaming video - located under "Ready for STAR?"). www.startoolkit.org

Superpages.com® is a free online course that helps new adult readers develop computer and Internet skills. Adults with low-level reading skills now can learn basic computer and Internet search skills while they practice reading and writing using this free online course developed by the partnership of ProLiteracy and Superpages.com®. The course is designed for adults with a fifth-grade reading level and who are familiar with computers and the Internet. The course consists of five lessons; each lesson demonstrates a specific search skill - getting directions to a specific location, for example, or using the keyword search to find a specific type of business. After the demonstration, the student can practice exactly what he or she saw in the demonstration. The lesson ends with the student using Superpages.com® to perform a similar search for businesses in his or her own city. Each screen has accompanying audio and the demonstrations are narrated to support adult learners who have trouble reading the screen text. In addition to the course, there are free, downloadable Teacher's Notes that offer discussion ideas for introducing each lesson, identify key vocabulary, and provide ideas for expanding the activities. There also is a free, downloadable Student Workbook with step-by-step directions for the features highlighted in the lesson and a worksheet for the activity in which the student applies the new skills to search for businesses in his or her home community. www.superpages.com/adultlearners

Texas Adult & Family Literacy Quarterly is the publication of the Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning (TCALL). The publication is free to adult educators, literacy providers, and others interested in adult and family literacy. **The Quarterly** is dedicated to advancing knowledge in the field by addressing topics of concern to adult and family literacy practitioners, adult learners, and scholars. The audience includes teachers, students, administrators, program coordinators, researchers, literacy volunteers, and in general individuals interested in the fields of adult and family literacy.

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TEXAS ADULT & FAMILY LITERACY CLEARINGHOUSE PROJECT

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