TEXAS Adult Education & Literacy QUARTERLY

Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning

THE PIAAC REPORT: WHAT'S THE IMPACT ON ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAMS?

by Federico Salas-Isnardi, TCALL

Have you heard of the 2013 PIAAC (Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies) report? Have you met with your adult education and literacy colleagues to discuss the implications of this report on our field? If the answer to these questions is no, shame on us! Shame on administrators and professional developers and shame on educational leaders who are failing to impress upon each of us in adult education the importance of this report.

The PIACC[1] was a survey of the literacy, numeracy, reading, and problem-solving (in technology-rich environments) skills of adults 16 to 65 in the U.S. and 23 other countries. Many of the comparison countries are members of the twenty largest economies in the world; these are countries we compete with for a share of the global economy. Other countries, like Finland, were added to the study because of the well-known reputation of their educational system.

The Report for the United States

The report for our country was published as *Time for the U.S. to Reskill? What the Survey of Adult Skills Says*[2] in November 2013. Adults in our country did not perform as well as most of their counterparts in literacy, numeracy, and problem solving in technology-rich environments in spite of having higher levels of education and more access to technology; that is, even though adults in this country tend to have completed higher levels of education than counterparts in other nations, our adults do not have the skills needed in these three areas. The U.S. ranked 13 out of 24 countries in English language skills, 19 out of 24 in numeracy, and 15 in problem-solving skills. The study indicates that low skills are distributed among the population so that we have not only more adults with low skills than most of the other countries but also fewer adults with skills at the higher levels. Over 36 million adults in the U.S. have low-literacy skills and fully one out of every three adults have weak numeracy compared with the average across countries of one out of every five adults surveyed. A particular challenge is the performance of minorities. Blacks and Hispanics are over-represented among the population with low skills; 43% of Hispanics and over one-third of Blacks score at the lowest levels of literacy.

TCALL Tweets
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TCALL Bits and Bytes
by Dr. Debra Hargrove

Other Findings

In 1993, the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) drew attention to the fact that over 20% of the adult population was functionally illiterate and fully 90 million adults in America performed at the lowest two literacy levels in the survey. It is worth considering the PIAAC results indicate, twenty years later, that the situation has not improved and may have actually worsened slightly. Over 50% of the population surveyed by PIAAC functions now at the two lowest levels of literacy while only 12% functions at the highest levels compared with Japan where over 20% of the adult population functions at the highest levels.

In addition, we are, as a nation, not doing as well as other countries educating our young. A separate OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) report on the skills of in-school 15 year olds[3] shows that our youth score below their international counterparts in literacy and numeracy. The challenge is that other countries have been able to address the gap separating youth and adults in terms of skill achievement, while in the U.S. the youth don't perform better than the previous generations.

Another problem identified for the U.S. is that the socio-economic background has a stronger incidence on the skills of the adult population than it does in other countries. That is, in our nation, the poor and minorities are over-represented among the population with weaker skills.

Recommendations

The report includes recommendations for policy and action.

➢ Take concerted action to improve basic skills and tackle inequities affecting sub-populations with weak skills.
➢ Strengthen initial schooling for all, ensuring that all children receive an adequate standard of education, with effective interventions to support the basic skills of those in difficulty.
➢ Ensure effective and accessible education opportunities for young adults, using the strengths of the community college system to support and develop basic skills and offer substantive career options.
➢ Link efforts to improve basic skills to employability, recognizing that good jobs open up further learning options, while basic skills can often be more readily acquired in practical contexts.
➢ Adapt to diversity. Adapt adult learning programs to better respond to the diverse challenges of different groups with different needs.

➢ Build awareness of the implications of weak basic skills among adults, their links with other social factors, and the need to tackle this challenge in the interests of all.
➢ Support action with evidence. Build on U.S. excellence in research and data-gathering to construct evidence-based policies and programs.

The Challenge to Adult Educators

The results of the PIAAC report represent a challenge to educators and policymakers alike. Adults with low-literacy levels face overwhelming obstacles to obtain employment particularly when one considers that, also according to the report, the U.S. has one of the highest percentages of available jobs requiring skills at a high school level or above. In other words, while most jobs in demand in this country require higher-literacy skills our adult population has lower skills than the countries we compete with.

A perplexing finding of the PIAAC report is that, while adults in the U.S. have a higher rate of participation in adult education and training, those who need the training the most are the least likely to get it. As educators, we should want to find out what is happening (or not) in our adult education and training classes to explain why, in spite of the higher participation rate in education programs our adults not only perform below average internationally but also show that we are getting worse instead of better over the last two decades. The results of the PIAAC report are not the news we want to hear but it is up to us to take action. We must make a concerted effort to promote the value of adult education and literacy programs to address the problems made clear by the PIAAC report.

We should convene our colleagues, administrators, leaders, and other stakeholders and come together to discuss the implications of this report to our local programs and the local and statewide responses to the challenge. The recommendations made by the report are our call to action and we should respond each within our purview because only collective action will address the massive challenges. Adult educators must be proactive and sit at the table as solutions for the problem in K-12 are considered because the literacy crisis affecting our adults is made worse by an ongoing flow of under-skilled youth. Within our programs, we should consider how these findings affect what we do in the classroom and how our programs meet the challenge:

• What partnerships and collaborations do we form?
• Who comes to the negotiating table?

- How do we recruit participants?
- What changes do we make in our curriculum?
- What wrap-around services are needed?
- What is the impact of the problem and the demands of the solution on our professional development?

The challenges of PIAAC are many; let us respond in a concerted manner so that 10 or 20 years from now a future report will show us that we have made significant strides forward rather than showing stagnation once again.

[1] For information on PIAAC and the study, visit the OECD at http://www.oecd.org/site/piaac/
[2] To access the study for the United States, go to http://skills.oecd.org/Survey_of_Adult_Skills_US.pdf
[3] PISA 2012 http://www.oecd.org/pisa/keyfindings/pisa-2012-results-volume-v.htm)

IN THIS ISSUE

TCALL Welcomes Dr. Debra Hargrove

by Harriet Vardiman Smith, TCALL Director

I am delighted to introduce TCALL's newest team member, Dr. Debra Hargrove. A native Texan raised in La Porte, Dr. Hargrove has spent the past 20 years working in Florida's Adult Education state leadership system, building a state and national reputation with her cutting-edge work in technology integration and teacher training. She has also taught graduate courses in Adult and Community Education at Florida Atlantic University, where she earned her master's and doctoral degrees in Educational Leadership.

When Dr. Hargrove and her retired husband Terry decided last year it was time to return to their home state of Texas, Debra applied for a Clinical Professor position in TCALL's home department of Educational Administration and Human Resource Development at Texas A&M University. The prospect of teaching at Texas A&M was a dream come true for a Houston native who was accepted to A&M as a teen, but whose family's needs kept her in Houston, where she earned a B.S. from the University of Houston in Psychology, with an emphasis in Organizational Development.

After Debra married into the itinerant world of retail management, she and her husband Terry soon left Houston for a series of posts in El Paso, Plano, and Atlanta. Terry's last pre-retirement position with Target took the Hargroves to Florida (Ft. Lauderdale and Tampa), where Debra finished graduate school, and then began to build the Florida Adult Education "Florida TechNet" Project. In fact, many of our own Texas Adult Educators have accessed Florida TechNet's website to grab GED® Lessons and participate in online Professional Development.

Leaping "back to the future," at the time in late 2013 when Dr. Hargrove applied for the faculty position at Texas A&M, TCALL was also beginning a search to replace our beloved Dr. Debbie Chang as research team leader. Other budget priorities had necessitated leaving that position open for several months after Dr. Chang left Bryan-College Station for an opportunity in San Antonio. In the absence of a full-time professional research leader during summer and fall of 2013, other staff teamed with TCALL Principal Investigator Dr. Mary Alfred and me to guide our three part-time doctoral student researchers. (Many thanks to TCALL's now-retired Professional Development Specialist, Ken Appelt, and our Adult Literacy Specialist, Federico Salas-Isnardi.) But even with all that capable help, it's quite a lot of work to guide three doctoral students in research activities designed to support improved instruction and professional development for Texas Adult Education and Literacy, the research component of TCALL's TWC-funded Clearinghouse Project.

So when we learned that Dr. Hargrove had applied for a faculty position in our department, we approached her and - in effect - said, "Excuse me, don't you want to apply for the TCALL research position instead?" In fact, Debra applied and interviewed for both positions, and TCALL successfully wooed her away from the professorial track. The job offer was made in January, but with a move from Florida to Texas to negotiate, Dr. Hargrove actually started work at TCALL at the beginning of April. At this point, thanks are in order for Debra's willingness to begin providing guidance on research processes at TCALL, even while she was still packing in Florida then en route to Texas with husband Terry, cat William Tell and dog Abraham Maslow. Now that is dedication!

As Director of Research, Dr. Hargrove works with TCALL Graduate Assistant researchers Michelle Johnson, Donald Stoddart, and Porscha Jackson, under the faculty leadership of Dr. Mary Alfred. She is also assisting TWC Adult Education and Literacy staff with updates to the state's Distance Learning 101 training, in the context of our Clearinghouse Project's long-time supportive role in state office-run professional development initiatives. Debra will also share her love of technology integration with a regular new feature in *The Quarterly* and the new TCALL Tweets, featured on page 13 of this issue. Please join us in welcoming Debra to TCALL, and home to Texas.

Transition of TEAMS, AEGIS, and CredITS from TEA to TWC

by Carrie Tupa, Assistant Director
Texas Workforce Education Adult Education and Literacy

This summer, access to TEAMS, AEGIS and CredITS will move from TEA to TWC. In preparation, TWC Adult Education and Literacy staff is hosting a series of webinars to inform current users on the transition process as well as the prerequisites that current users will need to complete in order to gain access to these applications at TWC.

What you need to know
The first of these webinars was held on May 6. The content of the webinar is available on the TWC Adult Education and Literacy website at http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/adultlit/adult-basic-education.html.

The second webinar took place on, June 3. This webinar covered key topics discussed in the first webinar, and provided additional critical information regarding the transition of these applications to TWC. The content of this webinar is also available on the TWC Adult Education and Literacy website at http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/adultlit/adult-basic-education.html.

Who should review these webinars?
These webinars include critical information which will be necessary for accessing the TEAMS and AEGIS applications after July 15. Therefore, all providers who currently use the system should review them.

These webinars are not intended to be training for Offerors who have responded to Request for Proposal 320-14-10, Texas Adult Education and Literacy Programs. Offerors who are awarded contracts under this RFP will receive specialized instructions and training for accessing and using TEAMS.

Other important information
- TWC plans to formally transition access to TEAMS beginning July 18, 2014*. After this time, no users will be able to access their TEAMS account through their TEA login.
- There are requirements all users must complete before they will be granted access to TEAMS through TWC. These include a short FERPA computer-based training and submission of a TWC P-41 Security form. Information regarding these requirements will be available on the TWC Adult Education and Literacy Website: http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/adultlit/adult-basic-education.html.
- In preparation for the transition of current users, no new users will be granted access to the TEAMS application at TEA after June 23, 2014. Users are encouraged to ensure that they are able to log into their accounts through TEA prior to this date to ensure there is no disruption of service.
- At this time, there are no plans to grant current or new users access to CredITS at TWC. After July 14, 2014, access to this application will be terminated at TEA and all data will be housed securely at TWC for historical purposes.
- At this time, current users will not be able to access AEGIS at TWC. Further development is necessary for the application to function accurately with PY'14-'15 grant targets and contract deliverables. After July 18, 2014 access to this application will be terminated at TEA and all data will be housed securely at TWC for historical purposes. TWC has alternative methods for monitoring program performance and contract compliance.

Transition of TEAMS, AEGIS and CredITS to TWC
Timeline of Events
July 2014

*Implementation dates are subject to change based on the project status. Users will be notified by July 1, 2014 if this date will be changed.

If you have questions or need more information, please contact Carrie at *teams.technicalassistance@twc.state.tx.us*
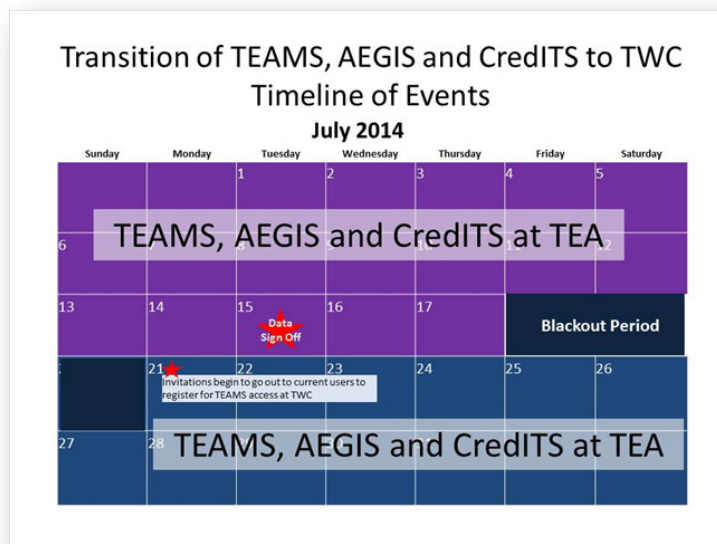
TWC Adult Education and Literacy
Texas Adult Completion & Skills Initiative

by Gloria Rodriguez, Program Specialist
Texas Workforce Education Adult Education and Literacy

With the establishment of the Adult Education and Literacy rules and subsequent request for proposals for local service delivery, the Texas Workforce Commission is deploying strategies to foster increases in career and higher education outcomes for adult learners. The Texas Adult Completion and Skills Initiative provides an opportunity to further support TWC's objective by investing in the expansion and enhancement of evidence-based models for increased employment and training performance for high school non-completers.

Community Colleges will lead the development and deployment of the partnership-driven model to enroll high school dropouts in an integrated program of study that supports high school completion and short-term technical training in demand occupations. High school completion may be through secondary-school credit recovery or completion of a Certificate of High School Equivalency (currently the GED® 2014 test). Models are expected to offer integrated education and training in which students attend basic skills courses while enrolled simultaneously in short-term training in demand occupations culminating in a continuing education certificate or level one credit certificate.

The Agency is expected to release a Request for Proposals for the AEL Texas Adult Completion and Skills Initiative during the summer of 2014, with expected student enrollment beginning in early 2015.

If you have questions or need more information, please contact Gloria at *gloria.rodriguez1@twc.state.tx.us*

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Grapevine, Texas

Gaylord Texan Hotel and Convention Center

November 19 – 21, 2014

For more information, contact Denise Foster
denise.foster@twc.state.tx.us

Tex-BEST Workforce Literacy Summit
July 23-25, 2014
and
Accelerate Texas/IPAES Summer Meeting
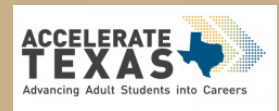## July 22-23, 2014

The Fifth Annual Tex-BEST Workforce Literacy Summit will meet in San Antonio July 23-25 preceded by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's Summer Meeting of Accelerate Texas and IPAES (Intensive College Readiness Programs for Adult Education Students) programs on July 22-23.

This year's Tex-BEST Summit "Embracing New Opportunities: Pathways to Prosperity" will once again bring together local, state and national practitioners from developmental education, adult basic education, and workforce development to participate in a forward-looking agenda that will help us prepare for the significant transitions and advances being made in our field in the next year.

Both meetings will be held at the beautiful Hilton Palacio Del Rio, 200 S. Alamo St, San Antonio, TX 78205.

For registration, hotel information, and Call for Presentations, visit the conference website.
www.alamo.edu/Tex-BEST

A New Model for Texas Adult Education and Literacy Professional Development

by Denise Guckert, Program Specialist
Texas Workforce Education Adult Education and Literacy

After almost a decade of providing comprehensive professional development services and support for Texas adult educators, the GREAT Centers closed their doors on May 30, 2014. We thank the GREAT Centers for their major contributions to the improvement of adult education and literacy throughout Texas.

A Centralized Professional Development Model
Taking the place of regional GREAT Centers is a new, centralized professional development and support system that combines professional development services and support resources. This new professional development system provides a centralized, state-directed structure to assure consistent direction from the Texas Workforce Commission while maintaining local program flexibility. Online delivery options will be a major focus to provide increased access, responsiveness, and cost-savings for professional development.

A Tiered Training System
The new professional model creates a three-tiered system of training.
- Tier 1 is based on training that is most commonly needed at the local level, which includes assessment training; introduction to TEAMS; goal setting; career awareness; local practices for student recruitment, intake and orientation; and any other areas in which program staff have expertise.
- Tier 2 training includes most state initiative training, including but not limited to GED 2014; Career Pathways; Counseling to Careers; Contextualized Instruction; Multi-level Instruction; Beginning ESL Literacy; Learning to Achieve; and Content Standards. Tier 2 training also includes Training of Trainers in order to build local expertise in Tier 1 training topics.
- Tier 3 training includes specialized trainings and requires approval from the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC).

Increased Funding, Control, and Responsibility for Local Programs
Grant recipients will receive double the amount of funding to be dedicated to professional development than they have received in past years. However, with this increased funding, local programs are tasked with providing all Tier 1 training. Furthermore, Grant Recipients must designate and fund a Professional Development Coordinator who

works with the state professional development contractor to schedule Tier 2 training. This Grant Recipient PD Coordinator, with support from the state professional development contractor and the Grant Recipient director, will also develop an annual strategic Professional Development Plan for continuous improvement.

A Pool of Vetted Adult Education and Literacy Contract Trainers
Past professional development efforts in Texas have relied greatly on expert contract trainers to develop and deliver training. Grant Recipient Directors and PD Coordinators will have access to contact information for trainers with whom they can contract directly to provide Tier 1 training. This gives local programs greater flexibility in choosing whome they use for their training efforts. The state professional development system will also rely on this pool of contract trainers to assist with Tier 2 training efforts.

Diagram of the New Professional Development Model
Below is a diagram explaining how TWC, the Statewide Professional Development and Support Contractor, and Local Program PD Coordinators will work together within the new centralized system. Please see http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/adultlit/professional-development-model.pdf for a detailed overview of the new state system for professional development and support.

If you have questions or need more information, please contact Denise at *denise.guckert@twc.state.tx.us*
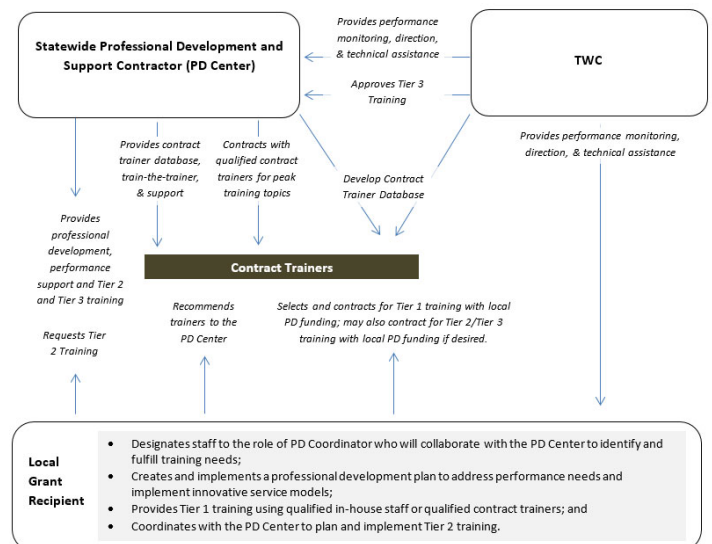
Learner Engagement

Adult Learners Need: C.A.R.E.

by Dr. Donald Finn

Anyone who has worked with adult learners knows they have unique needs and motivations for participating in educational ventures. Adult learners require instructors, administrators, and programs that support them as they work toward accomplishing their goals; they need C.A.R.E.:

> **<u>C</u>ompetence** in subject matter and knowledge of adult learners
> **<u>A</u>daptability** in planning learning experiences and resources
> **<u>R</u>elatability** toward adults' educational challenges & apprehensions
> **<u>E</u>ncouragement** to help learners persist and "stretch" beyond what they think is possible.

Competence refers to the expertise of the adult teacher in the subjects they teach. It goes without saying; teachers should be well-versed and appropriately placed to teach their assigned subjects as this adds to the credibility of the instructor and program. Brookfield (2006) notes that students view teachers as credible if they have something to offer that will benefit the students' learning. However, "competence" also refers to the level of understanding teachers and administrators have about what makes programs "adult appropriate." Adult appropriate programs are those that create an environment that is cognizant and responsive to the physical and psychological needs of adults. *Physical* environmental factors such as room temperature, appropriate furniture, and other characteristics that create a comfortable learning setting are vital components for adult success (Merriam & Brockett, 2007). These learning environments also take the *psychological* factors into consideration which includes establishing an atmosphere of activities that are "safe" for teachers and learners to engage in *genuine exchanges* and activities without fear of being singled out, ridiculed, or

embarrassed.

Adaptability is the willingness and ability of teachers and programs to personalize learning experiences for adults. Because adults have diverse backgrounds, particularly in their educational and life experiences, a "one-size-fits-all" approach to education is rarely an effective way to reach all learners. This is where the importance of individualized instructional practices comes into play. Knowles, Holton, and Swanson (2005) note that life experiences distinguish adult learners from youths. Educators must remain sensitive to the experiences of individual adult students and how these might impact the learning strategies and resources that are employed in the adult education classroom as the variety of individual experiences may enhance instruction and individual and group activities. Wlodkowski (2008) notes that a key to fostering learner success is being an empathetic instructor meaning "giving learners things to do that are within their reach" (p. 65), or striking a balance between activities that are too challenging which may lead to frustration, and those that are too easy leading to boredom or disinterest. Getting to know individual students' abilities and experiences is critical and is best accomplished through getting to know them through one-on-one discussion, analysis of competency through classroom activities, and placement tests. These techniques can lead to creating more personally relevant and useful experiences that can motivate adult learners to do well because they relate to their experiences and interests.

Relatability is the sensitivity teachers have toward the challenges and apprehensions adult learners bring into the learning environment. In his book, *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher,* (1995), Brookfield discusses instructors who critically examine their personal learning journeys, or "autobiographies" and the benefits that such examination may have on the experiences of adult learners with whom they work.

Brookfield writes "our autobiographies as learners in childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood frame our approach to teaching at the start of our careers, and they frequently exert an influence that lasts a lifetime" (Brookfield,1995, p. 50). Furthermore, it is important for adult teachers and administrators to occasionally engage in learning such as credit-bearing and non-credit-bearing courses or professional development as ways to remain sensitive to the emotions and concerns learners may experience in their programs. Delving into new learning experiences often brings time and ability-related stresses and questions which are common traits of the adults we serve. Teachers and administrators who engage in such experiences themselves often develop a renewed sensitivity to the value of a welcoming and supportive environment that addresses the doubts and fears of learners.

Encouragement is something we all need, and encouraging instructors and environments are critical for learner success and persistence in their educational journeys. Often, adult learners enter into our programs viewing their academic potential as low. However, these same learners may be quite competent and confident in other areas, such as in a trade or within their occupation. Noted psychologist Albert Bandura (1997) refers to this as self-efficacy. Different from the concepts of self-esteem or self-confidence, which are general and tend to be based upon individual perceptions, self-efficacy is context specific. Self-efficacy is tied to a learner's belief that they can be successful in a given endeavor, particularly one that builds upon competencies and successes in related areas. High self-efficacious individuals often visualize themselves being successful in an endeavor which, in turn, feeds into learner persistence. Astute adult education programs and instructors must remain keenly aware of their individual student's strengths and be a source of encouragement to them during times of struggle. A seasoned adult education teacher taught me a principle many years ago that has stuck with me ever since: "adults vote with their feet." What this means is that adult learners who are pushed to the point of frustration, or who lack the confidence that they will be successful in academic endeavors are likely to exit a program, that is unless they work with a teacher who encourages them to persevere. Our programs and the teachers who are on the front lines of adult education need to remain mindful that a small dose of encouragement can go a long way in the academic journey of the adults they serve.

It is critical for adult educators and administrators to remain aware that adult learners do not enter into their programs as "blank slates," rather, they often have experiences and conceptions and misconceptions that may work against their success. This is where programs and teachers who C.A.R.E. are vital to success of adult learners, are you one?

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About the Author

Dr. Don Finn is an Associate Professor of Adult Education at Regent University in Virginia Beach, VA. An adult education specialist for over 20 years, Don has consulted with organizations to help them better understand the unique traits of adult learners and the programs that serve them.

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Thank you!

Building and Sustaining Effective Father Engagement Pathways

by Anthony Gabriel

As family literacy and fatherhood practitioners seek to effectively engage more men and fathers in responsible fatherhood and literacy activities, consideration must be given to the systematic and societal barriers that affect how many fathers fail to become valued or consistent contributors to their children's lives.

Contrary to public perception, many non-custodial and parentally-challenged fathers want to shed the stereotypical image of the "dead beat" or unengaged dad. However, the challenges they face in attempting to become the men they want to be instead of the men they are perceived to be often defeat their good intentions.

This is where efforts to recruit and support the fathers you want to be involved with your family literacy and fatherhood program begins. The primary focus of building effective father engagement pathways should be to find ways to strengthen fathers and their families. Bringing value to fathers and solutions to their challenges opens the door to honest discussion and interactions that hopefully leads to changes in behavior and self-perceptions. This awareness then becomes the seed to grow your father-friendly family literacy and fatherhood initiative efforts.

Where Do I Start?
If you are considering or beginning a campaign to recruit or engage more fathers, don't try to "reinvent the wheel." Look for places in your community, other organizations, and your own program or agency that are already incubators for mentoring and developing men as fathers and leaders. For example, if you are trying to recruit low-income or minority fathers, seek out organizations whose mission is to service this demographic of men then engage them in conversations of how your mutual interests can be served by collaborative strategies and services.

Any advocacy efforts that lead to networking and relationship building opportunities with the business and workforce development community will be one of the most important keys to building your father engagement initiatives. Before a man can focus on his family, he must first feel he is of value to his family

and can also provide for himself and his family. Helping fathers learn to navigate the business and workforce development environment is critical to getting more men engaged in family literacy and fatherhood efforts. Fathers must see real connections to employment, education, training, transportation and housing to seriously invest their time and efforts in any kind of well intentioned father engagement initiative. They must also see and hear that men are welcomed and celebrated in your family literacy or fatherhood engagement environments.

According to the Making Connections *Promoting Responsible Fatherhood* guide published by the Technical Assistance Resource Center of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2005, (page15):

> "Research shows that the majority of fathers who fail to meet child support obligations are uneducated, unskilled, and, perhaps most significantly, disconnected from the economic opportunities, social supports and competent services that might help them overcome these deficits."

Many of these men are under-educated and under-skilled and cannot meet the demands of today's job market. The education and skills they currently possess limit their opportunities for advancement and income increases which in turn affect the amount of support they can give to their children and families. Additionally, these deficits are more pronounced in the barriers these fathers face on a daily basis. For example, the issue of limited or no income is a leading factor in how some fathers rationalize not being active participants in the rearing and support of their children. Disconnected fathers must learn to face and overcome challenges in order to become better fathers and providers. Among challenges, fathers must face below surface obstacles; they must have an understanding of their own self-knowledge, self-love, and expectations of manhood and how it affects their interactions or lack of interactions with their children and family. Other forces that also impact particularly low income and other minority fathers include their environments and "Codes of the Street" which can often lead to involvement with crime and the prison

system. If the goal of your fatherhood or family literacy father engagement program is to recruit and reach these types of fathers, it is imperative that specific linkages and pathways to the services these men need are readily available. How you obtain feedback and implement changes will be the foundation for a sustained and successful father engagement effort.

Men must have opportunities to vent and discuss the internal or personal barriers that inhibit their success as men and fathers. The emotional deficits that impact the fear, anger, and psychological damage that many fathers struggle with must also be primary areas of focus if there is to be a sustained shift and change in the behavior of fathers seeking to become better men and dads.

The societal and systematic elements of racism, poverty, and crime all work to impact many low income and minority fathers. Additionally, media perceptions and portrayals of these types of fathers also become obstacles that these men must work to overcome.

Best Practices
How then do you sustain an effective father engagement effort?

The *Promoting Responsible Fatherhood* guide produced by the Technical Assistance Resource Center of the Annie E. Casey Foundation lists the following as elements of effective fatherhood programs:

    Community-Based Outreach
    Life Skills Training
    Links to Physical and Mental Health Care
    Education and Job Training
    Helping Fathers Get Access to Their Children
    Legal Services
    Peer Support or Mentors
    Parenting Skills Training
    Relationship Skills Training
    Housing Assistance
    Transportation
    Services for Formerly Incarcerated Fathers and
        Their Families

Of course, the limitations of your budget and staff will impact how many of these elements you can assist your fathers with, but keep in mind, someone is already doing this work. All you have to do is strengthen the pathways and linkages that will help your fathers. Help them make the connection!

Many fathers want a voice and active role in their

children's lives but face challenges and stereotypical perceptions of what they can and can not do. It is my hope that family literacy and responsible fatherhood efforts seek to engage and develop more men as the drivers and deliverers of father engagement pathways and sustainability efforts.

About the Author
Anthony Gabriel is the owner/operator of GABRTEACH/GABRWORKS, an educator, consultant, trainer, and activist deeply committed to Adult Education, Workforce Development, Emotional Literacy, and Fatherhood Advocacy. You can contact him at gabrteach3831@gmail.com or gabrielliteracy@gmail.com.

~~Save the Date!~~

COABE 2016 National Conference is coming to Texas!

April 11-14, 2016
Pre-Conference on April 10, 2016
Dallas, Texas

Texas Association for Literacy and Adult Education (TALAE) will host the national Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) for a joint annual conference in 2016. This is a great opportunity for Texas educators to attend the major national conference for adult education and literacy practitioners, and to present sessions showcasing the work of Texas Adult Education and Literacy.

What is COABE? With 13,000 members nationwide, COABE is a membership organization whose mission is to provide leadership, communication, professional development and advocacy for adult education and literacy practitioners in order to advance quality services for all adult learners.
All TALAE voting members have automatic dual membership in COABE and can register at the COABE member rate.

To join TALAE with free dual membership in COABE, visit the Membership page of the TALAE website *http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/talae*

Building Collaboration & Program Improvement

A Partnership with Workforce Solutions-Cameron

by Debbie Alford

In 2010, I came on board as the new administrator for Brownsville Independent School District's Adult Continuing Education Program (ACE). Coming from K-12, I had much to learn about the world of adult education. In order to comply with the requirements of the grant, I held a community advisory meeting. I called around to different agencies and community members and was fortunate to contact the Workforce Solutions-Cameron (WFS-Cameron) director and asked her to attend my meeting.

During the advisory meeting, I informed the audience of the National Reporting System (NRS) targets and provided the data of how the program did the prior year. I also included the current initiatives that were taking place and portrayed program highlights in the presentation. After the meeting, the WFS-Cameron director stated that she was impressed with the transparency of the program and asked if I would be a board member for WFS-Cameron to represent adult education. I had never done anything like that before, but wanted to ensure that I did my part to promote ACE and build community relationships.

Debbie Alford & Pat Hobbs, Director WFS-Cameron

It has been three years now that I have been serving on the board of directors for WFS-Cameron and I have seen the value in our relationship with that organization. The new director for WFS-Cameron, Mr. Pat Hobbs, continued the tradition of attending my biannual advisory meetings and has grown to be a great proponent of ACE. He serves on various committees in our community and is always a positive voice for adults and their need for edu-

cational services. Mayors, superintendents, college presidents, and local economic development council members, just to name a few, look to him and WFS-Cameron for leadership, guidance, and monetary assistance. When he places great value in adult education, it translates to them that they need to believe in it as well. The WFS-Cameron director always supports me when I call him to assist at meetings where I feel his input is needed.

Aside from the promotion that our local workforce agency provides, it also provides services to our students. They offer opportunities for employment and assist adults with searching for jobs. They also offer the Child Care Management Services (CCMS) program, which allows our students to receive assistance for child care while enrolled at ACE. Their One Stop Center also assists our students who are 21 years old and younger with monetary support to attend college.

Being a board member for WFS-Cameron has allowed me to learn a lot about budgets, expenditure reports, federal guidelines, and community relations. It has also allowed me to be a voice for adult literacy and basic education. Although it may appear that I am just one voice in a group of many, my voice is heard when I feel the need to clarify, advocate, or promote adult literacy and basic educational services. It provides me a platform to educate other county representatives about the necessity of adult literacy and adult education. I have served on sub-committees while on the board that has granted me opportunities to network with

community leaders, thus establishing key relationships that benefit ACE. When I network with other community leaders, I always gather their information and invite them to my advisory meetings.

I encourage all adult education program directors to form a relationship with their local Texas Workforce Agency. You can locate their information on the internet. Call them. Email them. Visit them in person. The list of board members is public information and can also be accessed on the internet. You are also allowed to provide public comments at the scheduled Workforce board meetings. The more adult education directors can network with community members, the more the opportunities to form partnerships will happen. Be a proponent of your program. Reach out to your community, form partnerships, and make things happen for those in most need.

About the Author
Debbie Alford is the Adult Continuing Education Administrator for the Brownsville Independent School District. She has 29 years of service with the district and has served as the administrator for ACE for the last four years. She is a certified secondary ELA teacher, counselor, principal, and superintendent.

Evidence-based Instruction
in Adult Education and Literacy

TCALL Research Team

Visit TCALL's website to find a newly updated resource that we hope will be of value to program leaders, teachers, and professional developers in Adult Education and Literacy.

To support the implementation of evidence-based instructional techniques in Adult Education and Literacy programs, TCALL's research staff periodically reviews the literature to identify instructional and curriculum practices that are evidence-based, as defined by the US Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences: The integration of professional wisdom with the best available empirical evidence in making decisions about how to deliver instruction.

In this updated page (http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/research/ipqs.html) of TCALL's website, selected reports, articles and resources are grouped into five categories based on practices that:

- Are based in adult learning theory
- Are learner centered and standards-based
- Are contextualized
- Incorporate critical thinking, problem solving, and 21st Century Skills
- Are data-driven

The five areas described above correspond to the Adult Education State Plan's Indicators of Program Quality in the area of Curriculum and Instruction.

Instruction based in adult learning theory corresponds to the IPQ regarding *Adult Learning Theory*: Curriculum and instruction are based on learner outcomes, are consistent with and supportive of adult learning theory, and are supported by research and knowledge of effective practice.

Learner centered and standards-based Instruction corresponds to the IPQ regarding *Learner Centered and Participatory*: Curricular and instructional processes reflect learner-centered and participatory approaches that are designed to meet individual learner needs; and to the IPQ regarding *Holistic Assessment*: Curricular and instructional assessment are consistent with and supportive of a holistic, learner-centered instructional approach.

Contextualized Instruction corresponds to the IPQ regarding *Functional Contexts*: Curricula content and instructional practices are based on functional contexts within a holistic framework.

Critical thinking, problem solving, and 21st Century Skills correspond to the IPQ regarding *Thinking and Problem Solving*: Curricula and instructional processes contribute to the development of independent problem-solvers and thinkers.

Data-driven Instruction corresponds to the IPQ regarding *Curriculum and Instruction are Dynamic*: Curriculum and instruction are adapted according to evaluation information; and to the IPQ regarding *Holistic Assessment*: Curricular and instructional assessment are consistent with and supportive of a holistic, learner-centered instructional approach.

TCALL Bits & Bytes

Short, yet purposeful introductions to topics related to the integration of Technology in Adult Education, ESL and Literacy.

Contributed by Debra L. Hargrove, Ed. D., TCALL

Do you have a cell phone? A smartphone? A tablet device? Chances are, you've answered yes to one of those questions. In fact, in a recent survey from the PEW Internet Project, over 90% of Americans own a cell phone. Ninety percent! Of those cell phone owners, 58% own a smartphone. "What's the difference?" you might ask? Ask a cell phone owner and they'll be the first to tell you what the difference is. You can't go anywhere these days without someone you're with (I'm just as guilty) pulling out their smart phone or their tablet during a conversation and sharing a picture, "Googling" an answer to a question that has you all stumped or opening up the latest "coolest" App that you've downloaded. I admit it. And I'm sure you will to. But the point is, this is the way we take in our information. We don't look for that four inch phone book, or dig through our car glove compartment to find that trusty (circa 1994) Rand McNally map when looking for something. No sir, Bob… we pull out our smartphone or our 4G tablet device and pull out the Yellow Pages App, or the Map App!

It's faster, up to date (Assuming you update yours. That's what the number on the top of your APP icon means.) AND the best use of my time in this multi-tasking environment we live in.

But how do you know which Apps to choose? Let's

face it. There are over one million apps in the Apple App store and just as many or more in the Google Play Store. Where do you begin to find apps, especially for educational purposes?

If you're like me, you've downloaded a ton of Apps that looked really good for the classroom or a workshop, but never did what you wanted them to do, and now you're too busy to find something to replace them. That's where we come in… TCALL, that is. Every quarter, we'll highlight a handful of Apps for Adult Education, ESL and/or Literacy. We'll provide a detailed description taken right from the website and then give you the link so you can download it for yourself. We don't want to overwhelm you, so our list will be short and sweet. Oh, and we'll do our best to limit our highlighted Apps to FREE.

We're kicking off our first story with some interesting and engaging Apps for Digital Storytelling, ESL and learning to read. We've also included information on an App/Website that really rocks, called Appolearning. This is a web community of educators and education experts who review apps and post their recommendations. It's worth checking out, or at least bookmarking the website.

Let's get started!

Literacy Skills Sampler (by The Conover Company)
Literacy Skills Sampler is a part of a series of applications that focus on functional life, literacy, math, social, health, transportation and work skills for both the iPod/iPhone and iPad. Includes 80 of the most common words in the Functional Literacy Skills System. Helps adults living independently recognize words and signs that would be present in any social situation.

(https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/literacy-skills-sampler/id375422643?mt=8)

Phonics Genius (by Innovative Mobile Apps)
One of the best ways to rapidly learn how to speak, read, and recognize words is through phonic awareness. This app is specifically designed to help students recognize and distinguish words by sounds. This app is loaded with content. We are talking over 6,000 professionally recorded words carefully grouped into 225 categories by phonics.

(https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/phonics-genius/id461659980)

Vocabulary Videos App - Free (by GCFLearnfree)
Our Vocabulary Videos app covers some of the most commonly used words in the English language. With more than 400 entertaining, professionally made videos that use both audio and visual elements, it serves as a great way to fully immerse yourself in the language.www.gcflearnfree.org/mobile-apps

(https://itunes.apple.com/app/gcf-vocabulary-videos/id418426036)

The Game Gals' Word Generator (by Spark Genius)
The Game Gal's Word Generator app gives you words to play games like pictionary, catchphrase, or charades. Just choose which game you're playing and a category, tap for a new word, and voila! The app will give you one word at a time to act out, draw, or guess with your friends.

(https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/the-game-gals-word-generator/id546236058)

Speaking Pal Plus! With ETS® TOEIC® Free Edition/With in-app purchases (by SpeakingPal Ltd.)
Turn your mobile device into a personal English tutor!Sharpen your English speaking skills anytime, anywhere using your mobile device.SpeakingPal Ltd. has teamed up with Educational Testing Service (ETS), creator of the TOEFL® and TOEIC® tests, to bring you SpeakingPal Plus!(TM) — a mobile-learning product that turns your mobile phone into a personal English tutor. SpeakingPal Plus! is a subscription-based English-language learning system that offers a unique range of interactive exercises, role playing and language activities with premium content from ETS.

(https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/speakingpal-plus!/id465301897)

Phrasal Verbs Machine (by Cambridge University Press)
Frequently, phrasal verbs can have more than one meaning. In the examples we've chosen, you can sometimes find the most common and well-known meaning while other times we use the more obscure one. In any case, you can always find an example sentence in English and the translation into five different languages. We've also included other meanings when they are useful or necessary to fully understand the phrasal verb.

(https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/phrasal-verbs-machine/id593374912)

30 Hands (by 30hands Learning, Inc.)
30hands Mobile is a fun, innovative storytelling app that allows students, teachers and anyone with creativity to easily create narrated stories or presentations based on photos, images, drawings using an iPad, iPhone or iPod.Different from other presentation apps, 30hands Mobile focuses on the power of storytelling and ITERATIVE CREATIVITY. Like pages in a book, photos or images are dragged around the desktop into the order of the story. Next, the teacher or student records audio over each image. Easy editing allows students to take learning to a higher level and creates a better final video whether created by a student or teacher.

(https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/30hands/id605013231)

Paper by Fifty Three (by Fifty Three, Inc.)
App of the Year in 2012! Paper is where ideas begin. It's the easiest and most beautiful way to create on iPad. Capture your ideas as sketches, diagrams, illustrations, notes or drawings and share them across the web. Try it free—buy additional tools from the in-App Store. MOBILE CREATION DONE RIGHT. Paper was designed from the ground up for touch and creating on the go. No fussy buttons, settings or other distractions. Paper works the way you think, like a familiar notebook or journal. Have all of your ideas with you in one place.

(https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/paper-by-fiftythree/id506003812)

Find the BEST Education Apps!

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The appoLearning iPad app features the best apps across more than 165 categories handpicked by more than 65 educational experts and scored using a transparent methodology. appoLearning was created to give you the confidence to know that these apps will help your child learn. Every app has been selected and vetted by a team of experts, and scored according to metrics that matter.

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Revisiting Flash Cards

by Dr. Glenda Rose

Most people probably remember going through flash cards with a parent, sibling, or friend. Long before computers were commonly available, students made flash cards for everything from vocabulary to the periodic table of elements. They did it because there are some things that have to be memorized, and flash cards are a great way to test yourself on those concepts.

Adult learners may or may not have had experience with flash cards, but they learn to use them very quickly. In my ESL (English as a Second Language) classroom at Austin Learning Academy, students would make vocabulary rings. They would cut index cards into strips and put them on a keychain. They could take the keychain with them and pull it out on their breaks at work or while waiting to pick up their children after school. Itzel R. decided to make a necklace of her irregular past tense cards and wear them around her neck! She now has an inexpensive, portable resource that she can use outside of our classroom.

Flash cards are very versatile learning tools. You can simply review by yourself. You can quiz a friend, or you and your friend can put your cards together and create a game like "Go Fish." (I do this for Integrating Career Awareness at low-level ESL and call it "Go to Work.") You can play "Concentration." You can create a quiz show game (like "Jeopardy" or "Who wants to be a Millionaire") using the cards. For higher levels, partners can randomly draw flash cards to create sentences or solve math problems. Who can get the most correct answers in the shortest amount of time? Students tend to be highly motivated when racing against the clock. Even if they do not want to compete against each other, they can compete against their own best time.

Flash cards are indeed very useful learning tools. Enter Web 2.0. For those who still aren't sure what "Web 2.0" is, the Internet has moved from static pages with information only (virtual text) to interactive, collaborative pages (a virtual world). This means people no longer just visit the Web—they create it. That transfor-mation has resulted in a plethora of applications and programs that learners can use to improve their learning. In fact, just search for "flash card application" and you will get 80 million results in less than a second. It can be overwhelming. Where do you start?

Let me suggest you start by trying my favorite online flash card application: Quizlet (www.quizlet.com). It's free and simple to use. Create an account and then create your first set, or borrow from the thousands of sets already created. It is easy enough for your students to create their own sets, which is a great transitional skill for your students to learn. You can also modify sets that other people have created for your own purposes. Just copy the set and make your changes. Quizlet is free, but for $25.00 per year, you can have a teacher account, which 1) eliminates ads, and 2) allows you to create classes so you can track your students.

When you create your Quizlet flash cards, you can add text, images and audio. Students can review the cards, practice spelling (great for listening comprehension), play games like "Scatter" (matching) and "Space Race" (type the correct answer before the other side flies off the screen) and even take a test to evaluate their learning.

If you happen to have a class website or use a Learning Management System (LMS) such as Schoology (www.schoology.com) or Edmodo (www.edmodo.com) you can copy and paste the HTML code into what you are already using and use the flash cards from within your LMS or website. Quizlet also has applications for Android and iOS devices, so some students may be able to access your sets on their phones or tablets.

Finally, if you don't have access to computers for your class, don't despair. You can still use Quizlet. You can print out your sets as cards or glossaries. Then you are back to traditional flash card activities, but with a much wider range of flash card sets available to you.

About the Author
Dr. Glenda Rose is an educational consultant who has been teaching adults for 25 years, including five years as an ESL instructor and Distance Learning Coordinator at Austin Learning Academy. She currently focuses on helping adult education instructors through facilitating professional development workshops.

Translating Research into Literacy Practice

Three Research-based Strategies Empower Adults for Daily Literacy Tasks

by Dr. Laurie A. Sharp

According to Kirsch, Jungeblut, Jenkins, and Kolstad (2002), literacy is defined as: "Using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential" (p. 2). Rather than focusing on specific behaviors and skills associated with traditional definitions of reading comprehension, literacy, as defined by Kirsch et al. involves an expansive set of skills adults use while engaged in a multitude of literacy tasks within their home, school environments, and community activities.

Adult literacy necessitates the ability to successfully engage with three different types of literacy tasks throughout daily life: prose, document, and quantitative tasks (White, 2011). Prose tasks require the ability to process continuous texts, which are structured with sentences organized into paragraphs (e.g., reading a magazine article). Conversely, document tasks require the ability to process noncontinuous texts, which encompass varying organizational patterns, such as lists, schedules, tables, graphs, and maps. Quantitative tasks require the simultaneous use of numbers and text to perform calculations. Within each type of literacy task, successful performance involves an interaction between the features of a text, the specific demands of the literacy task, as well as the skills one must possess in order to respond to the literacy task at hand. The demands of daily literacy tasks for adults require the development of many different skills, and adult literacy educators must have a repertoire of strategies to draw upon while addressing specific learning needs.

While working with adult learners, I often ask, "What are issues you have when engaged with daily literacy tasks?" Interestingly, I receive many similar responses and have responded to these needs through the use of research-based instructional approaches with roots in pedagogy. The following three approaches have become an integral part of my instruction with adult learners.

Explicitly Teach Text Structure and Features

Many adult learners have shared the following with me: *"I am not sure how to find what I am looking for when I read sometimes."* Prose, document, and quantitative tasks all possess a wide variety of texts each having a unique structure and different features (Risko & Walker-Dalhouse, 2011). Meyer and Poon (2001) found that coupling training of the structure strategy with systematic instruction enhanced reading performance among learners. Meyer and Poon described the two steps involved with structure strategy training. First, while reading, learners identify the overall structure of the text and the ideas that are organized within this structure (see Figure 1). Next, learners apply the identified text structure to improve memory through recall activities, such as writing or retelling ideas from the text.

Providing real-world examples of the types of texts learners interact with and familiarizing them with the structure and features of these texts is essential (Meyer & Poon, 2001; Risko & Walker-Dalhouse, 2011). Akhondi, Malayeri, and Samad (2011) recommended teaching expository text structures in the recommended order as shown in Figure 1, while keeping the following considerations in mind:

- Focus upon a single text structure during each lesson. Do not combine text structures into the same lesson, and devote several consecutive lessons to one text structure before introducing a new structure.
- During lessons, provide opportunities for learners to practice working with text structure under review in the form of short passages.
- Draw attention to the signal words and phrases for each text structure, and provide opportunities for learners to locate signal words and phrases within texts.

- Incorporate use of graphic organizers appropriate for each text structure, and scaffold learners to work towards completing graphic organizers independently.

> **Types of Expository Text Structures**
> - Description – The writer describes a subject or topic.
> - Sequence – The writer lists events in a numerical or sequential order.
> - Problem/Solution – The writer presents a problem and then provides a solution.
> - Cause/Effect – The writer outlines one or more causes, followed by descriptions of the resulting effects.
> - Compare/Contrast – The writer compares and contrasts two or more happenings, ideas, or objects.

Figure 1. Meyer and Poon (2001) found that training learners to use the structure strategy enhanced reading performance. One of the essential components of the structure strategy requires explicit instruction with different expository text structures (Meyer, 1985).

Risko and Walker-Dalhouse (2011) also emphasized the importance of previewing texts with learners and drawing attention to the unique features and structures of a text.

Encourage Use of Graphic Organizers
"My mind wanders," "I have to go back and reread often," "I sometimes get lost when reading." Much research has demonstrated the benefits of the use of graphic organizers during reading tasks (e.g., Fisher, Frey, & Williams, 2002). Graphic organizers encourage active participation from the learner during reading; completing a graphic organizer while reading promotes cognitive processing and lays the foundation for meaningful understanding to occur. Graphic organizers can be provided for learners, or learners can create their own (Hoffman, 2003; Stull & Mayer, 2007).

Robinson (1998) relayed that the primary intent for use of a graphic organizer should be to foster comprehension among learners as they "discover knowledge of content relations" in an impactful manner through the aid of a visual (p. 99). Graphic organizers may assist learners with understanding defining attributes of a concept, recognizing defining attributes through examples, developing structural knowledge about a concept (i.e., coordinate and hierarchical relations among concepts), and the ability to transfer knowl-

edge gained through identification of concepts to different examples. When using graphic organizers with learners, Merkley and Jefferies (2000) recommended the following:
- Verbalize the relationships among concepts presented in the graphic organizer.
- Provide opportunities during instruction for learners to give input.
- Make connections between information presented in the graphic organizer and previously learned information.
- Use graphic organizers to reference an upcoming text the text learners will encounter.
- Use graphic organizers to reinforce basic reading skills, such as structural analysis and decoding.

Model
Often, adult learners require a demonstration or example in order to develop an understanding of a reading skill. Modeling is the best way to meet this need (Fisher, Frey, & Lapp, 2008). Through shared reading experiences, teachers are able to model reading comprehension skills, the structure of language, as well as how to use specific aspects of the text to foster understanding. Think alouds are a wonderful way to model cognitive processing for learners by simply talking through mental processes aloud (Regan & Berkeley, 2012). Regan and Berkeley also contended that modeling cognitive reading strategies, such as rehearsal, cueing, and summarization supports learners' development with comprehension, as well as with recalling and organizing information. Furthermore, modeling cognitive writing strategies serves as an excellent instructional approach when developing adult learners' writing skills. Figure 2 depicts two cognitive writing strategies that rely upon modeling that target specific writing processes (i.e., planning, drafting, revising, and editing).

Regan and Berkeley (2012) advised that the level of explicitness with modeling is dependent upon the content and the learners' needs. When modeling cognitive reading and writing strategies, teachers must ensure they develop learners' conditional knowledge (i.e., the purpose for use of the strategy, as well as specific reasons that justify selection of the strategy); procedural knowledge (i.e., explicit steps aligned with use of the strategy); and declarative knowledge (i.e., intentional strategy selection dependent upon the context). Regan and Berkeley emphasized modeling that includes explicitness, flexibility, and specificity can be coupled with any research-based instructional practice to improve learning.

Self-Regulated Strategy Development Model (SRSD)
1. Develop background knowledge: Identify the required skills needed for use of the strategy, and assess whether learners possess these skills.
2. Discuss it: Determine learners' motivation and willingness to learn the strategy.
3. Model it: Show learners how to use the strategy. Facilitate a discussion regarding the benefits and challenges associated with the strategy.
4. Memorize it: Develop learners automaticity with the steps involved with use of the strategy.
5. Support it: Scaffold instruction by gradually releasing responsibility for use of the strategy to learners.
6. Independent performance: Provide frequent opportunities to practice use of the strategy in a variety of contexts.

STOP Strategy
1. Suspend judgment: Learners consider the topic from both sides. Learners write down ideas that are both supportive and against the topic.
2. Take a side: Learners select a position and determine the strength of their written ideas.
3. Organize ideas: Learners select which ideas to include, as well as the order. Learners also select one opposing idea they intend to rebut.
4. Plan more: Learners make additions to their ideas while writing.

Figure 2. Regan and Berkeley (2012) named two cognitive writing strategies that utilize modeling to assist with learners' development of writing skills. Santangelo, Harris, and Graham (2008) described the six steps associated with the Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) model, and De La Paz (2001) articulated the four steps that comprise the STOP strategy.

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Dr. Laurie Sharp is an assistant professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas. She teaches undergraduate and graduate literacy courses and works with adults seeking state-level teaching certifications. She currently is exploring how instructional design coupled with best practice with literacy enhance learning experiences for adult learners.

Overcoming Obstacles to Success:
Surviving and Thriving on the Job

by Jennifer J. Osborn

Everyone has good days and bad days on the job. Feeling a little up and down about a job is normal, but if our students are consistently negative about what they are doing for a living, then it is our role as adult educators to help them learn how to survive and thrive during these challenging economic times. In their book about burnout and the influence of one's job on personal stress, authors Maslach and Leiter say "The goal of surviving and thriving on the job is possible and necessary in today's working world. In order for employees to thrive, people have to work together to make it happen" (Maslach & Leiter, 2008, p. 127). We can help students prepare for these ups and downs and understand that while they may not be able to control all of their circumstances, they can control their reaction. In my GED®, College Prep and College and Career Transition Services, I created a module titled "A New You! Surviving and Thriving on the Job" to establish an effective reaction that can make the difference between whether our students survive or thrive in a job or career.

The first objective in this module is for the students to self-reflect on the current challenges they face and how they have reacted to them. During this reflection, I ask my students to identify themselves with the analogy of a thriving plant. We also discuss the evidence for the need to care for themselves and recognize what they can take control of to improve their personal well-being. Understanding the effects of not taking care of their well-being is critical to success and happiness on the job and at home. Throughout the module, we discuss stress and burnout factors that may impact them in a job and at home, and how to recognize these symptoms early on. I have incorporated scenes from the movie, "The Pursuit of Happyness" starring Will Smith, to demonstrate stress,

burnout, the effects of both, and how determination and a strong self-awareness lead to achievement and success.

Students also learn that the cycle of survival in a job or career begins with anxiety about future expectations and responsibilities from others, followed by anxiety about performance that leads to exhaustion and feelings of being trapped. In Goleman's article *What Makes a Leader*, self-awareness is crucial for employee success. "Self-awareness means having a deep understanding of one's emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs, and drives. People with strong self-awareness are neither overly critical nor unrealistically hopeful. Rather, they are honest with themselves and others" (Goleman, 1998, p. 95). At this point in the module, I administer a personality assessment from Robert Heyward's "The Personality Page" and a career interest and work values inventory from Washington State's "Where are you going? Career Guide." With these results, students begin to or expand on their self-awareness and embrace the truth of who they are so they can freely receive, give and hope for a more promising future, regardless of their circumstances. It also provides students strong motivation by helping them weed their personal garden and identify their beliefs, desires and gifts; cultivate strong roots with their own values, and recognize ways they can receive nourishment with stress management techniques and personal development.

When my students finish their job and career readiness modules, featured in Texas Adult and Family Literacy Quarterly, Volume 17, No. 4, they learn that thriving in a job or career means they have reached a certain level of success in their position and are connected at the spirit and interest level for what they are

doing. This combination allows them to feel fulfilled, happy and productive. One final thought I leave with my students is that attitude is everything. It is vital for them to understand that each day they are empowered to make a decision (consciously or unconsciously) about whether their day is going to be good or bad. It all has to do with how they perceive and react to events. In order to thrive, not just survive, the secret is that a positive attitude will bring to them what is sought; if they search and react positively, then the same will come back to them. In his *Let your life speak*, Parker Palmer says "Vocation does not come from willfulness. It comes from listening…Vocation does not mean a goal that I pursue. It means a calling that I hear. Before I can tell my life what I want to do with it, I must listen to my life telling me who I am." (Palmer, 1999, p. 59).

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Palmer, P. (1999). *Let your life speak.* Jossey-Bass, CA.

About the Author
Jennifer J. Osborn is a native of San Antonio and is the Workforce Development Program Specialist with Alamo Colleges and a Job and Career Readiness Continuing Education Instructor for Palo Alto College. Jennifer received her Bachelor of Arts from Our Lady of the Lake University with a dual concentration in Math and English and a minor concentration in Psychology. She received her Master of Arts in Administration and Organizational Development from University of the Incarnate Word, and will begin her Doctorate in Higher Education at University of the Incarnate Word in fall 2014.

Tools for Classroom, Workplace, and Beyond

by Courtney Salcedo, Jennifer Quintanilla, and Hannah Wright

Imagine a room of twenty adults. In Texas, three of them will have no high school credential. Because earnings tend to increase with education, from high school diploma and beyond, adult education is a vital part of improving economic opportunity. Many students come to class with the goal of learning new skills and getting a better job, and yet for many adult learners, the journey from course completion to career comes without a map.

What do adult learners in Central Texas need? Where are the service gaps and how can we bridge them?

Over a year ago in Austin, a group of adult literacy providers and the Literacy Coalition of Central Texas came together to answer these big questions. In that conversation, and in the conversations to follow, we identified service gaps in Workforce Transitions and Computer Literacy. The Literacy Coalition mobilized a taskforce for each service gap, and after months of collaboration, we present the Workforce Transitions Toolkit and the Computer Literacy Volunteer Training Template.

Workforce Transitions Toolkit
The toolkit is just that—a box of tools that literacy providers and instructors can use to integrate a workforce focus into what they are doing already. We understand that in the world of adult education, time and resources are often scarce. We think providers and instructors will find a box of tools a more useful starting place than blueprints for a complete overhaul.

Because higher education takes place not overnight but over a lifetime, it is important to establish a workforce focus from the very start. For providers, we have included recommendations for aligning orientation with workplace demands, as well as sample intake forms that ask students the same kinds of questions they will need to answer when filling out job applications. For instructors, we present nationally-developed curricula that incorporate workforce readiness into lesson planning. For students, we provide contact information of local agencies that offer workforce readiness services.

The toolkit has varying levels of customization—from modifiable intake forms, to targeted occupations and industries, to Central Texas specific service providers. The toolkit was made for Central Texas, yet adaptable for many.

Computer Literacy Volunteer Training Template
As companies become more dependent on technol-

ogy, they often measure the value of potential employees in terms of technological competency, or computer literacy. Computer literacy is the knowledge and ability to use computers and technology efficiently.

However, low-income and minority Americans disproportionately find themselves on the wrong side of the digital divide, excluded from the $8 trillion digital economy and all its benefits. Those who use computers and the Internet more frequently have access to more opportunities.

In an effort to bridge that digital divide, Central Texas community-based organizations provide free or low-cost computer literacy classes. Without the help of dedicated volunteers, these programs would be unsustainable. In order to prepare volunteers to provide quality instruction and services to their students, the Literacy Coalition of Central Texas led a taskforce to create the Computer Literacy Volunteer Training Template.

In the presentation, we include statistics to support the importance of computer literacy in the job market, volunteer instructor expectations and the benefits of volunteering, as well as principles of adult learning, learning differences, the learner-centered approach, and much more. There are program-specific topics that are important to include in training volunteers, and those slides are titled and intentionally left blank, for organizations to add their own content to those areas. The template will support providers as they train volunteers, and, in turn, those volunteers will enter classrooms excited and ready to teach.

Access
You can access both the Workforce Transitions Toolkit and the Computer Literacy Volunteer Training Template through the Literacy Coalition's website, www.willread.org, under the "Resources" tab, for Literacy Providers. If you have any questions when accessing either resource, please email info@willread.org.

We hope you find the Workforce Transitions Toolkit and Computer Literacy Volunteer Training Template useful—and that our communities continue to benefit from engaged learners and skilled workers. We look forward to the day when twenty out of twenty adults in Texas have a high school credential, are computer literate and tech-savvy, and are working at jobs with family-sustaining wages.

Thanks to the Workforce Transitions and Computer Literacy Taskforces, for your expertise and hard work.

Workforce Transitions Taskforce
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Matt Figg, Goodwill
Dawn Allen, Literacy Coalition
Courtney Salcedo, Literacy Coalition
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Kamna Tripathi, Literacy Coalition
Courtney Salcedo, Literacy Coalition

The Literacy Coalition of Central Texas is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that represents 50+ programs in the Central Texas area who are providing literacy services. The Literacy Coalition is dedicated to improving and expanding the quality and availability of literacy services, so that people can work, businesses can hire, and families can thrive.

About the Authors
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Literacy Texas 2014 Conference
August 4-5
Embassy Suites, San Marcos

Please join us for the Literacy Texas 2014 Conference! This year's conference offers a wide variety of workshops and exhibitors as well as the opportunity to network and discuss current issues with literacy providers from around the state.

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Visit our website to become a member.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Success Story

Promising Practices: Creating Videos to Tell the Story

by Nancy Crawford, Literacy Council of Tyler
Cynthia Zafft and Ben Bruno, National College Transition Network

Introduction

If a picture is worth a thousand words, you may find that creating a video is just what you need to get the word out about your program, highlight your successful students, and capture the impact your program has on your students and your community. There are several adult education programs and regional and national initiatives that use videos for storytelling in a teaching, learning, and promotional context. This Promising Practice profiles a Texas adult basic literacy program and is a collaboration between Nancy Crawford, Executive Director of the Literacy Council of Tyler, and Cynthia Zafft, and Ben Bruno, at the National College Transition Network (NCTN) at World Education, Inc.

Program Context

The Literacy Council of Tyler (LCOT) began in 1990 as an adult basic literacy program, but quickly expanded in collaboration with other area agencies and began to offer English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. Their reputation of quality program delivery and solid financial management led Tyler Junior College to subcontract their entire Texas Education Agency adult education program to Literacy Council of Tyler in 2001. LCOT now offers Basic Education, GED, and ESL classes. They also have a successful family literacy program at the Family Learning Center of Tyler.

In 2012, LCOT provided educational services to 2,300 students with a staff of 44 and 360 volunteers. They have programs in three counties that draw from a seven county region, however the majority of their services are provided in Smith County. Because of their excellent student results, the Texas Education Agency recognizes LCOT as a "Model Program;" only 25% of the Texas programs received this award. In fact, the Literacy Council of Tyler was one of the few programs in the state to achieve 100% of the Federal Performance Measures for Adult Education.

Literacy Council of Tyler has an intensive College Prep program. College Prep is an 8-week program and students attend for 16 hours per week. Its purpose is to continue to build the students' skills so they will succeed in college. Prior to the program, only 27% of GED graduates were completing a semester the local community college. However, when they participate in this program, 70% complete a semester and the staff members at the Literacy Council of Tyler are now tracking the completion of a degree or credential and it is looking very promising.

Rationale and Background of the Practice

In January 2012, LCOT hosted Former First Lady Barbara Bush as their keynote for a fundraiser. The video was viewed at the event and it helped raise money to start an endowment. LCOT had a professional company, Glow in the Dark, do the video. In total, the video cost $3,000, which was paid for through private funds. Although this may be prohibitive for some programs, from LCOT's perspective it has been an investment as opposed to an expense.

The video is posted on LCOT's website and has taken on a life of its own, telling the success stories of four students. The video continues to be an effective outreach and fundraising vehicle. According to Nancy, "We plan to produce one video annually."

> **WHY CREATE VIDEOS?**
>
> **Videos can tell complex stories.** Is it difficult to convince students that college is the next step? You can invite your program graduates back for a panel discussion, ask the graduates to stay a little longer, and videotape their answers to a few key questions. Why should students go on to college? How did you get over your initial college jitters? How did you decide what to study? There's many ways to go (full-time

or part-time, days or evenings). Have panelists answer those few key questions your students always ask. And, you can certainly videotape the student panel as well.

Videos can be used to fundraise. YouTube is the second biggest search engine after Google, and they provide fundraising advice for nonprofits. But, your supporters may be closer by. You can include links to your video in fundraising announcements and show your video at community events.

More people prefer their information in video format. There's a reason why YouTube is so popular for outreach and teaching. Videos are engaging and increase the time people spend on a website. One in three young adults (think Millennials) watch more online videos than TV. (Source: *2013 New York Times Video Study*)

Focus on Replication

Nancy Crawford commented, "[Our experience at LCOT has shown] you should keep your video short. Our first video was 7 minutes long. Our second is 3 minutes long. So, we are still learning." If you would like to learn more about making your own video, here are some tips and resources from the NCTN team.

Start by identifying the purpose and audience for your video. For example, a video to recruit students for a transition program might look quite different from a video for fundraising for an entire adult education program. One video will probably not serve both purposes.

Keep it short and engaging. This cannot be emphasized enough. A short, one-minute video is a good place to start. Long videos are more time consuming to produce and more difficult to disseminate. In general, videos with crowds of people, poor lighting, and muddled audio turn viewers away. Try to use concise language, deliver a straightforward message, keep the visual elements simple but engaging, and carefully integrate audio elements.

Your video is an investment. Create a video project schedule, like a professional studio would do. That way, your video is more likely to be completed and everyone's time respected. Do your best to make your video timeless - rather than mentioning specific dates or program details that change over time, encourage viewers to contact your program for more details. You want your video to have the longest shelf life possible. Lastly, make sure your video is seen. That requires a dissemination plan. Who needs to view your video? How will you reach them?

Plan carefully. Surf the internet and find 3-5 videos that represent what you are aiming for. What do they contain? What do you like about them? From there, create a pre-

production storyboard that lays out exactly what you want to do. During production, try to get the best quality video possible. A smart phone might be sufficient or a simple DSLR camera. Plan to use a tripod. Read these tips on quality video production. Post-production is the most time consuming part of creating a video. Consider making more than one draft and make sure you get honest feedback before you finalize your video.

Start your high quality multimedia library now. Most videos require a variety of images, such as still pictures. Is there an amateur photographer in your program or in a photography club in your community? Invite them to attend as the official event photographer. Consider restaging key moments 'for the camera' to get the best shots. A library of 20 bright, high quality photos can go a long way. And don't forget written permissions! It's important to get permission from participants in writing. Keep a file with these permission slips along with the photos.

More on the technology. Rather than invest in expensive software, consider starting your video production using free software like Windows' Movie Maker or iMovie for Mac. Browse the offerings at Tech Soup, a nonprofit that distributes software and hardware at free or reduced costs to other qualifying nonprofits. Consider saving time by transferring existing resources into videos by narrating a slide show. Posting your video to YouTube is easy. Just follow the simple directions provided on the YouTube website. Your video can be designated as either public or private. See directions here if you would you like to embed your YouTube video into a page on your website. Make your video accessible. For additional information on making videos accessible, see the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). The federal government has a wealth of information on web content and social media, see www.howto.gov.

Need more support? Your local public-access channel may be interested in filming and posting your program events on their station. They can also teach you to use their equipment. If you would like to use the material on your own website, you will need permission and access to a digital format that you can use. Your video could also make a good project for your local high school or college multimedia studio class. How about a joint project between your adult education students and a college class?

Does your program have a video you would like to share? Have you or your students created a video that focuses on transition to postsecondary education or training? We'd love to see it. Just send a link to your video to Ben Bruno.

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materials by mail or information on the Library's services.

120 Content Strategies for English Language Learners: Teaching for Academic Success in Secondary School, Second Edition. Reiss, Jodi (2012). Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc. This book offers practical instructional and assessment strategies built on a strong foundation of second language acquisition theories and principles that you can easily incorporate into your daily classroom instruction. These strategies address how to build background knowledge and learning strategies, read for comprehension, give clear instructions, assess learning, consider culture & its impact on learning, and more. All 120 strategies are concise and easy to follow with helpful guides to help you maximize your secondary students' performance potential in the content areas at every level of English language development.

Bilingual Language Development & Disorders in Spanish-English Speakers, Second Edition. Goldstein, Brian A. Ed. (2012). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. This book gives information on language development and disorders of Spanish-English bilingual children. This book explains how to accurately distinguish language disorders from typical bilingual development.

Budgets and Financial Management in Higher Education. Barr, Margart J. and McClellan, George S. (2011). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. This book is designed to help new administrators understand and become more proficient in their financial management role within the institution. Budgets and Financial Management in Higher Education is grounded in the latest knowledge and filled with examples from across all types of institutions. This is a resource for courses in graduate programs in higher education leadership and administration.

Challenging Ableism, Understanding Disability, Including Adults with Disabilities in Workplaces and Learning Spaces. Rocco, Tonette S., Editor (Winter 2011). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers. Number 132 in the New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education series. From the Editor: At present, no issue of diversity, privilege, or human rights in the field of adult education has been given less attention than disability. This sourcebook aims to broaden the view of disability from a medical or economic concern to a social justice concern. Disability affects adults across the life span, at work,and while seeking further education—and they are the one minority group every person can join. This sourcebook examines practical, theoretical, and research aspects of disability—including those who question disability classifications—and situates it as a political and social justice concern, technical and pragmatic concern, and personal experience. The authors present the perspectives of individuals with disabilities, service providers, parents, and teachers and offer analyses that range from the personal to the broadly political.

Cost Control for Nonprofits in Crisis. Smith, G. Stevenson (2011). United States of America: American Library Association. This book includes tips for planning efficiently for the future by determining the most cost-effective methods of providing services to clients and patrons of non-profit cultural institutions. The book also discusses monitoring financial and non-financial performance by cutting out "non-value" activities that drain resources.

Financial Literacy: Timeless Concepts to Turn Financial Chaos into Clarity. Kunkler, Duke (2013). USA: Lawrence Kunkler. From this book, the teacher will learn how to teach their students about financial concepts, investing concepts, stock investing mechanics, and financial mechanics.

A Handbook for Language Program Administrators, Second Edition. Christison, Mary Ann and Stoller, Gredricka L. (2012). United States of America: Alta Book Center. The second edition of this book has been revised and updated to reflect current issues in language program administrators by experienced professionals in the field, focuses on the multiple roles that language program administrators must play, including multicultural manager; strategic planner; decision maker; negotiator; innovator; advocate for students, faculty, and the program; promoter; organizer; personnel manager; quality guarantor; and financial planner. Each chapter includes a list of suggested reading and a set of discussion questions and activities. The volume begins with a section on transitioning from teaching to administration and concludes with a section on different contexts for English language teaching-adult education, bi-national centers, intensive English programs, international schools, K-12 programs, and private schools-with an emphasis on the duties of language program administrators and the challenges that they face in these contexts.

Second Language Learning Theories, Third Edition. Mitchell, Rosamond and Myles, Florence and Emma Marsden (2013). New York, NY: Routledge. The book cov-

ers all the main theoretical perspectives currently active in the SLA field and sets them in a broader perspective per chapter, e.g. linguistic, cognitive or sociolinguistic. Each chapter examines how various theories view language, the learner, and the acquisition process. Summaries of key studies and examples of data relating to a variety of languages illustrate the different theoretical perspectives. Each chapter concludes with an evaluative summary of the theories discussed. Key features include: a fully re-worked chapter on cognitive models of language and language learning; a new chapter on information processing, including the roles of different types of memory and knowledge in language learning; the addition of a glossary of key linguistic terms to help the non-specialist; and a new timeline of second language learning theory development.

"So You Think I Drive a Cadillac?": Welfare Recipients' Perspectives on the System and Its Reform, Third Edition. Seccombe, Karen (2011). Boston, MA: Pearson. This look at the welfare system provides readers with stories from welfare recipients themselves and from those who recently left welfare for work. Welfare recipients who were interviewed by the author share their perspectives on work requirements, family caps, time limits, and other features of the new welfare reform (TANF) program. They discuss the importance of a livable wage and health insurance in providing the needed security to leave welfare for good. These interviews contain current statewide and national data on welfare reform and its consequences.

Teachers' Roles in Second Language Learning: Classroom Applications of Sociocultural Theory. Yoon, Bogum and Kim, Hoe Kyeung (2012). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing. This book is designed to provide practical applications of sociocultural theory with regard to teachers' roles in second language education. By providing specific examples of teachers' roles in the classroom, the book aims to help researchers, teacher educators, and classroom teachers make clear connections between practice and theory in second language learning. All the studies in this book are conducted in the PreK-16 classroom setting. Each chapter presents rigorous research analysis within the framework of sociocultural theory and provides rich descriptions of teachers'

roles. The book is intended to be used in teacher education courses. The primary audience of the book is in-service teachers who work with second language learners (SLLs) in their classrooms including ESL/Bilingual classrooms or regular classrooms. Since many SLLs receive instructions both in the ESL/Bilingual classrooms and in the regular classrooms, it is important to discuss teachers' roles in both settings. The secondary audience of the book is teacher educators and researchers who work with pre-service and in-service teachers in teacher education.

Teaching and Learning at a Distance: Foundations of Distance Education, Fifth Edition. Simonson, Michael and Smaldino, Sharon and Albright, Michael and Zvacek, Susan (2012). Boston, MA: Pearson. Book offers comprehensive overview of how to make the experience of the distance learner as complete and satisfying as that of the local learner. Authors cover the foundations of the field and how it came to be dominated by the Internet; and explain how to do distance teaching through computer technology, videotape, or simple audio techniques. This fifth edition offers increased coverage of online learning with specifics on designing, delivering, and evaluating online learning in every chapter. The authors also cover copyright protection and plagiarism; and offer treatment of multiple instructional models suitable for distance education.

Unfair Advantage: The Power of Financial Education: What Schools Will Never Teach You About Money. Kiyosaki, Robert T. (2011). Scottsdale, AZ: Plata Publishing. The author takes a new look at the factors that impact people from all walks of life as they struggle to cope with change and challenges that impact their financial world. This book underscores that message and challenges readers to change their context and act in a new way. Readers are advised to stop blindly accepting that they are 'disadvantaged' people with limited options. They are encouraged to act beyond their concept of limited options and challenge the preconception that they will struggle financially all of their lives. This book is about how debt and taxes make the rich richer and why debt and taxes makes the poor and middle class struggle. It explains why the rich get richer, paying less in taxes, while the middle class shrinks with many losing jobs, homes, and retirement while paying more in taxes. Book is about the five unfair advantages a real financial education offers.

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Read it Online or Free by Mail

Addressing the Health Literacy Needs of Adult Education Students. Mooney, Angela and Prins, Esther (May 2013). University Park, PA: Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy. The purpose of this guide is to inform practitioners about the current descriptions of health literacy, the relevance of the topic to adult education and family literacy practice, and ways to incorporate health literacy into the classroom.

Adult College Completion Tool Kit. U.S. Department of Education (August 2012). Washington, DC: Office of Vocational and Adult Education. This report is a collection of resources designed to connect state administrators and local practitioners to the strategies, resources, and technical assistance tools resulting from the Department's work in the area of adult education. The toolkit focuses on three key areas: access, quality, and completion. Four target student populations include veterans, adult basic education students, incarcerated individuals, and skilled immigrants.

An Analysis of the Differences Between the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards and the Texas Adult Education Standards and Benchmarks. The Education Institute Transition Project (October 2011). San Marcos, TX: Texas State University. From the Executive Summary: The Texas Adult Education Content Standards and Benchmarks (TAECSB) for ESL/ABE/ASE Learners was developed by Texas adult education practitioners as a tool to describe what adult learners should know and be able to do, as well as the performance expectations they should master, as they exit from ESL/ABE/ASE programs. The Texas College and Career Readiness Standards (TCCRS), approved in 2008, represent the content knowledge and skills that students should master before entering postsecondary education. This report compares the TAECSB, representing the National Reporting System (NRS) level six, the highest level, with the TCCRS to determine where the two sets of standards match and don't match. In particular, this paper addresses the areas in which the two sets of standards agree and the levels of agreement in the disciplines of English language arts and mathematics. The conclusions drawn from this year-long study comparing the TCCRS and the TAESB are that the two sets of standards are in agreement for many of the English language arts standards and a limited number of the mathematics standards, but they are substantially dis-

similar for most of the mathematics section.

Beyond the GED®: Promising Models for Moving High School Dropouts to College. Zachry Rutschow, Elizabeth and Crary-Ross, Shane (January 2014). New York, NY: MDRC. This report provides a snapshot of innovative adult education programs and the challenges involved in helping high school dropouts acquire a GED® and gain postsecondary credentials. The study finds that the most successful adult education programs for high school dropouts contextualize basic skills and GED® instruction within specific career fields and support students in their transition to college. These programs offer more rigorous academic curricula, as well as support services such as career and college admissions advising. Supporting students in their transition to college has been shown to increase the rate of their entry, persistence, and success.

College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education. Pimentel, Susan (April 2013). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. In this report, readers will find a set of college and career readiness standards that reflect the content most relevant to preparing adult students for success in colleges, technical training programs, work and citizenship—in the areas of English language arts/literacy and mathematics.

Connecting Curriculum, Assessment, and Treatment in Developmental Education. Office of Vocational and Adult Education (January 2012). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. This report describes recent changes in developmental education and explores promising practices that align curriculum, assessment, and treatment to more effectively tailor developmental education services and improve students' chances for success.

Federal Adult Education: A Legislative History 1964-2013. Eyre, Dr. Gary (2014). Bethesda, MD: U.S. Department of Education. This report is a careful examination of the origins of federal involvement in adult education. The report provides a chronological mapping of federal laws for adult education, offering a historical perspective along with insight on the years ahead. As the first compilation of the history of adult education legislation, the report spans from the mid-60s into the new century, providing a broad historical overview for general readers. It also serves as "a guide to primary source material related to federal leg-

islation and on adult basic education."

From Innovation to Transformation: Texas Moves to Reform Developmental Education. Clancy, M. Colleen and Collins, Michael L. (April 2013). Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future. This brief tells the short story of how Texas community colleges decided to implement the New Mathways Project in every college in the state. The decision grew out of many years of collaboration among partners, statewide experimentation with developmental education redesign, and a maturation of student success initiatives and demonstration projects designed to help students succeed and advance toward degrees. This brief can help states move toward more systemic, ambitious reform efforts, building off their particular histories, activities, and relationships. It offers lessons about the critical importance of involving college leaders and faculty and about effective strategies for creating buy-in and committing to specific innovations.

Integrating Industry-Driven Competencies in Education and Training Through Employer Engagement. Office of Vocational and Adult Education (January 2012). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. This report describes partnership efforts between community colleges and employers, exploring models promoting curricular change and innovation.

Is College Worth It for Me? How Adults Without Degrees Think About Going (Back) to School. Hagelskamp, Carolin and Schleifer, David and DiStasi, Christopher (November 2013). San Francisco, CA: Public Agenda. A recent publication from Public Agenda examines what adults ages 18 to 55, who are considering pursuing postsecondary credentials want, need, and expect from a school, and if these students know how to find the best institution to meet their needs.

Markers that Matter: Success Indicators in Early Learning and Education. Preskill, Hallie and Jones, Nathalie and Tengue, Afi (July 2013). Boston, MA: FSG. The report identifies a synthesized set of 48 early childhood indicators that reflect healthy development of young children. The indicators were synthesized and prioritized with input from over two dozen expert advisors after reviewing over 1,100 indicators from 11 existing early childhood indicator sets. The authors also identify gaps where more research is needed, particularly to develop indicators that reflect the increasing diversity among young children and their families in the U.S. The indicators can be used to support the healthy development of young children, to better understand and address inequities across racial and cultural groups, and to provide a common language that facilitates communication and coordination on behalf of all young children.

Parent Interventions and Interactive Literacy Activities. Grinder, Elisabeth L. and Toso, Blaire Wilson (Au-

gust 2012). University Park, PA: Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy. The purpose of this guide is to inform family literacy practitioners and other educators who work with families about the benefits of targeted skill training for parents that move beyond encouraging parents to be involved with their child and to provide examples of such initiatives. This guide outlines the research literature on parent intervention studies, offers cultural and literacy considerations for working with diverse populations, and concludes with suggestions for types of trainings and activities that have proven successful.

Policy to Performance Toolkit: Transitioning Adults to Opportunity. Alamprese, Judith A. (November 2012). Arlington, VA: Kratos Learning. The Toolkit is designed to provide state adult education stakeholders with guidance and high quality resources and tools for developing, implementing, and evaluating policies and practices that support comprehensive and coordinated systems for ABE transition services for low-skilled adults.

Promoting College and Career Readiness: Bridge Programs for Low-Skill Adults. Office of Vocational and Adult Education (January 2012). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. This report describes recent approaches to bridge programs and explores promising practices that contextualize and integrate instruction, and strengthen student support and transition services to improve postsecondary transition and completion.

Results of the 2012 Research and Survey of Adult Education Providers in Texas. Texas Workforce Investment Council (June 2012). Austin, TX: Texas Workforce Investment Council. This report follows A Primer on Adult Education in Texas (2010) and the subsequent companion papers. The research contained in this report focuses on the development of a comprehensive list of adult education/literacy providers in Texas and the estimation of the delivery of programs to address the statewide need for adult education.

Texas College and Career Readiness Standards. Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (2011). Austin, TX: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. These standards in the areas of English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies specify what students must know and be able to do to succeed in entry-level courses at postsecondary educational institutions in Texas. The standards were developed beginning in 2007 by Vertical Teams composed of secondary and postsecondary faculty. Public comment was incorporated into final drafts, which were adopted by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board at its January 2008 meeting. The standards distinguish themselves from high school graduation standards by emphasizing content knowledge and the effect of that knowledge to stimulate students to engage in deeper levels of thinking.