



TEXAS Adult Education & Literacy QUARTERLY

Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning

Literacy Texas Receives TWC Grant to Deliver Training with Focus on Volunteers

by Jennifer A. Edwards, Executive Director, Literacy Texas



Literacy Texas has been awarded \$250,000 from the Texas Workforce Commission to fund its' Volunteer Training Initiative (VTI) to provide professional development throughout Texas, with a focus on volunteers. Literacy Texas is the statewide literacy coalition, connecting and equipping literacy providers through resources, training, networking and advocacy. We provide leadership to help community-based organizations that provide literacy services, literacy coalitions and adult education programs throughout the state build capacity and improve literacy levels in Texas.

The VTI provides support for three primary initiatives, including funding for the recent Literacy Texas Conference held in San Marcos on August 3-5. Because of funding from both TWC and TCALL, Literacy Texas was able to expand their annual conference to a third day. The third day provided several six-hour intensive training programs including grant writing and change management. Additionally, the funding allowed the majority of the conference participants to attend for free via a scholarship process, targeted at adult education organizations that do not receive TWC funding, including faith-based organizations.

The second initiative of our VTI will be to take a stripped down version of the conference "on the road" – rolling out a series of seven symposiums across Texas, designed to reach populations where access to training is scarce. Each symposium will offer scholarships and training workshops customized to the needs of the region. The regional symposiums will be led by a local coalition and supported by Literacy Texas.

Along with the conference and symposiums, the final project of the VTI will be to build out the Literacy Texas website to incorporate free access online training available to all.

The theory behind the three initiatives is to provide maximum availability of free professional development to nonprofit organizations and their volunteers through our large conference, a local symposium, and online 24/7.

Working closely with Literacy Texas on the Initiative are our partners at TCALL and their TRAIN PD Consortium.

THE VTI STEERING COMMITTEE

Literacy Texas VTI Project Manager:

Literacy Texas Representative:

Literacy Texas Board Representative:

Literacy Texas Board Representative:

Literacy Texas Conference Representative:

Dr. Sydney Granger Saumby*

Jennifer Edwards, Executive Director

Nancy Dunlap, Board Chair

(Coordinator, NISD Adult Ed Program)

Robert Pinhero, Treasurer

(ED, Literacy Council of Williamson County)

Dale Pillow, Vice Chair

(CEO, The Adult Reading Center)

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Lester Meriwether (ED, Literacy ConneXus)

2. South Texas Symposium Representative:

Dr. Ida Acuna-Garza

(ED, South Texas Literacy Coalition)

3. East Texas Symposium Representative:

Jennifer Slade (ED, East Texas Literacy Council)

4. West Texas Symposium Representative:

Lynda Dutton (ED, Literacy Lubbock)

5. Gulf Coast Symposium Representative:

Joe Wappelhorst (ED, Literacy Advance of Houston)

6. Metroplex Symposium Representative:

Kathryn Thompson

(ED Tarrant County Literacy Coalition)

7. Final Symposium Location:

TBD

AD HOC/TECHNICAL ADVISORS

Harriet Smith, Director, TCALL

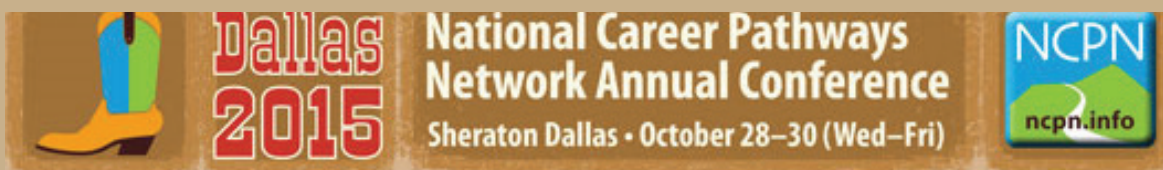
Federico Salas-Isnardi, Director, TRAIN PD Consortium

Sue Matkin, VP, Community Relations, United Way of Tarrant County

Cynthia Colbert, CEO, Catholic Charities Houston Galveston

*Dr. Sydney Granger Saumby is a recent graduate of Texas State University's Developmental Education doctoral program where she specialized in literacy and focused her research on policy and professional development for adult and developmental education professionals. Before joining Literacy Texas, Sydney worked at The Education Institute at Texas State, where she supported professional development projects including the Central GREAT Center. Most recently, Sydney served as the Grant Research Coordinator for the Texas Success Initiative Professional Development Program. Sydney has a Master's degree in secondary education from Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi and a Bachelor's degree in English from Texas State.

The Literacy Texas vision is that every literacy organization in Texas will have the resources it needs to help as many people as possible learn basic literacy skills in order to participate fully in society. Through the Volunteer Training Initiative, Literacy Texas moves closer to achieving its' mission. To learn more about the Initiative and Literacy Texas, visit www.literacytexas.org.



Texas will be the site of this national conference to be held at the downtown Sheraton Dallas Hotel. This professional development opportunity will include over 150 breakout sessions with conference strands based on the U.S. Department of Education's "10 Components of a Program of Study (POS) Design Framework" and the U.S. Department of Labor's "6 Key Elements," along with a variety of preconference workshops, keynote speakers, networking opportunities, and exhibits of the latest products and services.

NCPN is a membership organization for educators, employers and others involved in the advancement of Career Pathways, Career Technical Education, and related education reform initiatives.

For more information, visit the conference web page.

www.ncpn.info/2015-ncpn-conf.php

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TEAM USERS' EMAIL DISCUSSION LIST

Under the direction of Texas Workforce Commission, TCALL hosts and moderates several limited-access email discussion lists (or Listservs) targeted to particular audiences in TWC-funded Adult Education and Literacy programs. One of those is for users of TEAMS - the Texas Educating Adults Management System. The target audience is local Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) program staff who regularly enter data into TEAMS. Subscribers can share tips and will be alerted of TEAMS-related news.

To request subscriptions to TEAMS Users, the AEL Grant Recipient Administrator should email moderator Federico Salas-Isnardi at fsalas-isnardi@tamu.edu. Email should include the new subscriber's first and last name, e-mail address, and position, and should use the subject line "Subscribe TEAMS Users."



TRAIN PD@TCALL Welcomes Three New Staff

by Harriet Vardiman Smith, TCALL Managing Director

I am delighted to introduce three new members of the TRAIN PD Consortium team at TCALL.



Beth Ann Ponder will join the TCALL staff as a Professional Development Center Specialist in mid-September. Mrs. Ponder holds a B.A. in English from The University of Tennessee-Knoxville, where she has also done graduate work in Information Sciences. From 2001 through August 2015, Beth held leadership roles at UT-Knoxville's Center for Literacy, Education & Employment (CLEE), and brings experience in statewide and national professional development initiatives for Adult Education and Literacy educators. As Associate Director of CLEE since 2004, Beth has directed a major grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education's, namely the LINCS Region 2 Professional Development Center. For the past two years, Beth has been responsible for oversight of the Leadership Excellence Academies, a national two-year certification program for local adult education program supervisors. She has also overseen the Library Anchor Models Bridging Diversity Achievements (LAMBDA) grant in collaboration with the University of Tennessee, School of Information Sciences, funded through the Institute of Museum and Library Services.



Steven White joined the TCALL team this summer as our new TRAIN PD Training Coordinator. His job is to make sure the professional development delivery process works smoothly, from the initial request to the documentation of participants and evaluation of training. A graduate of Texas A&M University in Kinesiology and Outdoor Education, Steven earned an M.A. in Intercultural Leadership from the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. For several years prior to relocating to Bryan-College Station last year, Steven worked in Southern India as a Research and Leadership Development Trainer with the International Mission Board. Prior to that position, he was a Program Director at Camp Tejas in Giddings, Texas.



Vanessa Gonzales joined the team this summer as our new bilingual Office Associate. In addition to fielding Spanish language calls to TCALL's statewide Literacy Hotline, Vanessa supports numerous other critical functions of TRAIN PD. Vanessa is a recent graduate of Texas A&M University in Biology, during which she completed an internship with Walt Disney Parks & Resorts in Lake Buena Vista, Florida.

Updates from TWC



Riding the Next Wave: A Call to Action for Adult Education and Literacy

*Anson Green, Director Adult Education and Literacy,
Texas Workforce Commission*

At the Texas Association for Literacy and Adult Education (TALAE) conference last winter, I started a dialog with the field about the factors driving change in Texas Adult Education and Literacy. I called my conference presentation *Not If, But When*, and sought to underscore that the question is not *if* things are changing (they are and have been), but *when* they will and *how* we will work deliberately together through this evolution of the field under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, our new federal law.

I engaged many of you since then in numerous meetings, conferences, hallway conversations, and conference calls and shared my excitement around how well Texas is positioned to lead under the new law. The driving factors in this dialog have been what we've needed to increase program accountability and better equip adult learners with the skills needed to succeed in college or training so they can be competitive in the job market, finding family sustaining jobs, and making sure employers have access to highly-qualified employees in our communities.

My aim is to engage as many of you as possible in enhancing the field of Adult Education and Literacy and engender greater collaboration across other systems so we can implement new strategies and solutions quickly and efficiently and be full partners with our workforce and postsecondary education allies. I think that most everyone in adult education now knows that we can no longer be content working in a silo and with an ambiguous mission and strategy if we are to truly deliver on our goals for student success.

The historic results of our field have not kept up with the transition demands for work and post-secondary education of our students... *our customers*. In the past, adult education was perfectly structured for the results it received. If we desire to attain different results, results that truly impact the lives of students and our communities, we must restructure how we do business. We must revisit our local vision and implement strategies that support student transition beyond the legacy classroom experience. Adult education is a means to an end: employment, career growth, or transition to skills training or college. Education for education sake is a diminishing model and we need to ensure we fully recognize the implications of this.

We have accomplished a significant amount since the program transfer in 2013 and the re-procurement of local services in 2014. Programs across the state are scaling up career pathways services for students including models integrated with occupational training and partnerships with employers. As a result, we are reaching new customer groups—new students and partners—and delivering new models at a rate never before seen in Adult Education and Literacy in Texas.

At the recent Tex-BEST conference in San Antonio, I spoke to several of my colleagues from other states and they reiterated again and again how envious they were of the progress we have made in the area of career pathways. In particular, they admired how we have accomplished this with strong partnerships with our Local Workforce Development Boards and at the state level with the Texas

Higher Education Coordinating Board with whom we have partnered to build on the momentum that agency initiated with Accelerate Texas back in 2009.

We are delivering very different and more outcome-oriented services than Texas had just a year ago. Our model is shifting from one that focused on just *outputs*... students progressing up educational levels toward often unrefined goals, toward one focused on *outcomes*... students applying their educational gains toward very specific career, college or training objectives that will have positive results for themselves, their families and their communities.

I am proud of how our local programs have stepped up in just one year to deliberately rethink and implement transformational models: **Amarillo College** has worked to ensure adult education students benefit from the same college services that all students at the college can access. At Amarillo, adult education students *are* college students! By implementing these systemic changes in the college administrative system, the program is working to best align adult education with other education and workforce training programs at the college and with their other regional college partners.

We are fortunate to have three workforce boards leading adult education efforts across the state and they will lead the balance of the state in developing models for successful workforce integration that will be essential under WIOA. By outreaching customers in both workforce centers and adult education and co-enrolling these students in both adult education and workforce system services, **Workforce Solutions Dallas** is implementing a model that brings many more supportive assets to the table to support student success and increase both employment and college transition.

We all read in the last issue or have heard from numerous presentations in the last few months of the innovations in distance education at **Community Action, Inc. of Central Texas**. There, English language learners employed in local school districts are developing both English and digital-literacy skills using cell phone technology that provides them the opportunity to learn English anytime, anywhere, and delivering the precious time-on-task needed to develop fluency. This breakthrough model shatters our legacy notions of what ESL students can accomplish, how we can deliver educational services, and how we work with employers.

Increasing system enrollments has been a state priority. We can no longer just open our doors in the fall and be content that we are reaching those that would most benefit from our services. Last December I challenged the adult education directors to create models that would attract what I call the “non-consumer” of adult education services to our system. These are the individuals in our communities who have driven by our centers—sometimes for years—but never stepped foot in the door; or those who are working two or three jobs and don’t have the time for traditional brick and mortar classroom services; or those languishing (and often spending their limited Pell grant) in college developmental education classes when they can better benefit from the curriculum and adult learning theory our system delivers.

We are now seeing across the state program staff and instructors challenging traditional notions and models to reach new populations in their communities. Programs are also dramatically rebranding how they message their valuable services to the public. I see exciting examples (page 7) in my email every day. Consider how both **McLennan Community College** in Waco and the **Adult Reading Center** in Pearland, have taken steps to tell the public how they offer something dramatically different than the uninspired advertising of “ESL and GED® classes” we have used in our signage and bulletins for years. Similarly, I was amazed to hear the high quality radio spots in both English and Spanish delivered by **Navarro College** in Corsicana. Programs are innovating in powerful ways and convey-

ing messages that reflect what Adult Education and Literacy delivers. This, with corresponding programs that deliver responsive services, will draw in the important non-consumer of our services.

I want to close with a message on how programs are finding new and better ways to support the most important segment of our workforce, our instructors.

Just a few weeks ago I was thrilled to see the new director of **Denton ISD** providing his new year in-service training both in-person and via streaming video! I sat watching him as I wrote this message on a Saturday morning and reflected on how simple and powerful it was because it provided both access to individuals who might not be able to make the Saturday in-service as well as serve as a resource for which all staff can reflect back over the year. His opening message was equally bold... *Lead, follow, or get out of the way!* Denton ISD is one to watch this year.

We will see online delivery positively enhance Adult Education and Literacy in another way very soon. This fall instructors and other staff will gain access to high quality professional development services via the web-based learning management system, Cornerstone. Train PD and TWC have been working this past year to customize a system that will eventually deliver over 200 on-line professional development modules. This will greatly increase anytime/anywhere access to professional development training for instructors and remove the barriers that result in unmet professional development requirements.

This short review of the activity in our communities reflects just a sample of the transformative efforts underway across the state. I am advocating that we learn from the examples around us and invest in individuals within our programs who are promoting the changes that support system enhancement toward college and career transition. I encourage your institutions to submit proposals for the competitive funds TWC is making available to fund innovation and please continue to engage me with your ideas on increasing student success and innovation this coming year as we begin to implement the exciting opportunities WIOA provides us. I look forward to future discussions with you.



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COLLEGE
Adult Education & Literacy

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WIOA Update



How Texas is Well Positioned for the New Law

*Anson Green, Director Adult Education and Literacy,
Texas Workforce Commission*

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides a critical opportunity to support innovative practices in both the adult education and literacy and workforce development systems. The new law supports the establishment of a high-quality local adult education delivery system where services are aligned with local needs and instruction is based on rigorous research and promising models. In this new system, students have access to services that are well integrated with training and are coordinated with employers and social service providers to ensure access to a wide variety of supportive services to promote student success.

Texas is very well positioned to implement the new law. On August 18th, the Department of Education released its Vision for Adult Education and Literacy under WIOA (<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/octae-ae-fla-vision.pdf>). This vision reflects the reality Texas is already implementing as we began the journey of alignment and integration with the workforce development system over two years ago with the program transfer to TWC from the Texas Education Agency. Since then, grantees have been required to implement activities that are now key features of this new law. Grantees in Texas have been required to implement career pathways models since 2013 and these models are in place across the state and have served over 1,500 students this first program year. The integration with our workforce development system is very strong. Three of our grantees are Local Workforce Development Boards. Strong alignments with the workforce system exists across the state within our provider system and have been strengthened by the Regional Workforce and Adult Education Integration events which convened this summer in ten locations across the state.

To augment our local integration efforts, TWC has allocated millions of dollars in the last two years to support innovation and development toward a fully integrated, workforce-focused adult education and literacy system. These discretionary efforts support workforce integration within our workforce system, through alignments with employers, expansion of the integrated education and training model with community colleges (Accelerate Texas), AEL standards alignment, and mentoring efforts in the areas of distance-learning and career pathways development. Below is a list of the allocations dedicated by the TWC Commission in support of full integration of the adult education and workforce development system.

	Initiative	How this supports WIOA	
2013	Accelerate Texas through THECB	Expands career pathways models and integration with Local Workforce Development Boards	\$1,000,000
2014	Integrated Child Development Associate Credential and Adult Education and Literacy	Expands career pathways models and integration with Local Workforce Development Boards	\$2,000,000
	Accelerate Texas	Expands career pathways models and integration with Local Workforce Development Boards	\$3,612,000
	Texas Adult Education and Literacy – Workforce Development Integration	Strengthens integration with Local Workforce Development Boards	
	Site-Based Workplace Literacy Projects	Expands work-based projects with employers	\$2,000,000
	Texas Adult Completion and Skills Initiative	Expands career pathways models and services to disconnected youth	\$2,000,000
2015	Texas Adult Education and Literacy – Workforce Development Integration	Strengthens integration with Local Workforce Development Boards	\$840,000
	Local Performance Quality Improvement Funds	Strengthens services quality to support increased services to employers, integration with Boards and career pathways	\$980,000
	Accelerate Texas	Expands career pathways models	\$3,600,000
	Career Pathways Expansion	Supports quality of career pathways models	\$500,000
	Pell Grant Ability to Benefit Capacity Building for Career Pathways	Supports sustainability of career pathways models	\$500,000

Recruiting



Recruiting Real Students for Real Education

*Lori Slayton, Program Specialist/Special Projects,
Texas Workforce Commission*

Adult learners frequently show up for evening and weekend classes to darkened buildings and dimly-lit parking lots. Often the student is returning to the very high school he or she dropped out of, or the elementary school that their children currently attend. While these facility constraints are often based on necessity, or sometimes convenience, we must be mindful of the message this sends to adult learners: that they are not “real” students. Adult learners will come to understand that they are valued members of the educational community when recruiters, intake, and other student support staff are friendly, knowledgeable about the process, and accessible to assist adult learners in moving ahead.

While recruiting, we must demonstrate an awareness that adult learners have needs that are different from those of their younger classmates but of equal importance to Adult Education providers. A successful recruiting event says, “Welcome adult learners!” in a believable way, and backs that up with easily-navigated admission processes, registration procedures that are simple, and that are held at times that fit the schedules of working adults.

The rapidly increasing diversity of students in Adult Education means that “one-size-fits-all” recruiting effort will often fail to reach critical populations who may stand to benefit greatly from our services. However, identifying our “target population” is very complex, as there really is no viable profile of the “typical” nontraditional student.

Nontraditional students are production line workers seeking better pay, parking-lot attendants who do not speak English well enough to get a better job. They are immigrants, displaced homemakers, adults changing careers, individuals seeking personal growth and development, grandparents, single parents, and married couples. Adult learners come to us to prepare for the GED® test, develop marketable skills, become an LVN, learn English, discover how to help their children successfully complete their homework and communicate with teachers. Some even return to school while they are incarcerated, determined to make a better life upon release.

Holistic Recruiting: It Takes a Village

So, how do we develop sound recruiting efforts geared toward such a mobile and diverse population? The greatest chance for success is through good customer service. “Customer” is exactly how adult learners think of themselves and they are seeking results from education that can make a substantial difference in their lives. Although our services are free, adult learners pay for their education with the most valuable resource they possess, their time and attention. When developing a recruitment plan, involve your community resource network; eliminating barriers for adult learners is crucial to their success. Invite local non-profits, foodbanks, representatives from the Chamber of Commerce for employer engagement, Workforce Solutions staff, and community college development education and advising staff. These are all community partners whose interaction can truly provide value-added services to our respective programs, as well as to our customers.

The following recruiting examples have come in from every corner of Texas; data shows that all are working extremely well and all are approved expenditures for recipients of Adult Education and Literacy grants, and can be found in the FMGC, Chapter 8.

- Utilize the proper message and media for different populations; you can pay a small fee each month to enhance or “boost” a YouTube channel or Facebook page promoting recruitment events and other useful program information.
- Ensure information and message on website is helpful and easily navigated by those who may not have proficient computer skills.
- Identify appropriate media to advertise; direct mail, radio, television, print are all good ideas, but you can always “go big” and rent a bus banner to advertise your program and services.
- Host a remote broadcast at your recruiting event by collaborating with a local radio or television station – hand out bottles of water, book bags, pens & pencils with your program contact information.
- Flash drives can be useful advertising tools if you load them with your program information and a few success stories, then hand them out at a recruiting event.
- Stress your Distance Learning program, and how you can assist students without internet access by checking out “hot spots” to them.

Adult Education and Literacy is no longer languishing in the shadow of “real” education. As we continue to integrate Workforce Development and community-based organizations with our own new and innovative strategies for recruitment and retention, we are collectively enhancing the community at large, one student at a time.

References

WD Letter 17-10

TWC TA Bulletin 259

FMGC



19TH ANNUAL
TEXAS WORKFORCE CONFERENCE

Pushing Beyond Limits

Hyatt Regency Dallas November 18–20, 2015

The conference will feature an Adult Education and Literacy strand and performance awards.

19th Annual Texas Workforce Conference

Pushing Beyond Limits describes that daily work and effort of Texas Workforce Solutions. Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards), workforce partners and the state have their finger on the pulse and are mindful of the needs of both employers and job seekers. Texas Workforce Solutions develops and facilitates pioneering programs that safeguard the success of businesses and job seekers in Texas. Please join us in Dallas at the Hyatt Regency Dallas at Reunion for the 19th Annual Texas Workforce Conference, co-hosted with the Texas Chapter of The International Association of Workforce Professionals, as we present an information-filled conference that will help continue to Push Beyond Limits.

Pushing Beyond Limits is a customary method of doing business throughout the entire Texas workforce system. The conference reinforces this methodology by offering conferees the opportunity to hear nationally-renowned speakers, attend informative workshops, and numerous networking opportunities that will enhance the knowledge and relationship base of all those in the business of Pushing Beyond Limits. The conference gives employers, boards, economic development professionals, educators, federal partners, and partners from other states the chance to learn about workforce issues that impact us locally, statewide and nationally.

The Exhibit Hall, where we expect nearly 80 exhibitors, serves as an ideal networking hub or just a relaxing place to catch up on evolving workforce technologies and resources. On Wednesday, join us for the Awards Reception and exhibitor displays; on Thursday, enjoy a continental breakfast and the Exhibitor Networking Reception; and on Friday, start your day with a great breakfast in the Exhibit Hall. Great door prizes, donated by boards and exhibitors, will be awarded again this year, so stop in and see if you are a prize winner.

Click on link below to register:

Register today for the 2015 Annual Texas Workforce Conference!

Registration is limited to the first 1,500 registrants, so secure your spot now. Additional information on speakers, workshops, and exhibitors can be found on the Texas Workforce Commission website at <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/events.html#wfconf>. Check the website often, as information is updated regularly.

For hotel reservations please call the Hyatt Regency Hotel Reservations: 1-800-233-1234 or use the online reservation link <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/TWFC2015>.

For questions or assistance, please contact 512-463-6389 or conferenceplanning.media@twc.state.tx.us.

Annual Texas Workforce Conference co-hosted with The Texas Chapter of The International Association of Workforce Professionals

19th Annual Texas Workforce Conference, November 18-20, 2015, Hyatt Regency Dallas. **Register Today** for the 2015 Annual Texas Workforce Conference!

Don't miss out on the early bird special! Register by September 30, 2015 to receive the discounted rate of \$450 per attendee and \$500 after the deadline.

XPrize and Barbara Bush Foundation Set Sights on Empowering 36 Million U.S. Adults Through Literacy

Reprinted with permission from Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy

\$7M Adult Literacy XPRIZE Will Incentivize Mobile Applications to Bring Low-Literate Adults to Basic Literacy Within 12 Months

Los Angeles (June 8, 2015) — XPRIZE, the global leader in incentivized prize competitions, in partnership with the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy and the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, today announced the launch of the \$7M Adult Literacy XPRIZE, a global competition challenging teams to develop mobile applications for adult learners that result in the greatest increase in literacy skills in just 12 months.

“A parent’s literacy level is a significant predictor of their child’s future educational success, influencing generations to follow,” said Barbara Bush, founder of the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy. “As I celebrate my 90th birthday today with my grandchildren and great-grandchildren, I am inspired and hopeful that this Adult Literacy XPRIZE will bring about a radical breakthrough to end the cycle of low-literacy in America and that my grandchildren will grow up in a country where education is abundant and accessible to all.”

“An estimated 36 million adults in the U.S. lack basic literacy skills, as do millions more around the world,” said Dr. Peter H. Diamandis, chairman and CEO of XPRIZE. “Existing programs require classrooms and teachers and cannot possibly scale to meet the need of the millions of adults who need support. The Adult Literacy XPRIZE demonstrates a paradigm shift in how we approach adult learning globally, with educational applications that are effective, scalable and that can be accessed anytime, anywhere.”

“In partnership with the XPRIZE Foundation and the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy, the Dollar General Literacy Foundation is excited to support the Adult Literacy XPRIZE to help propel adult education into the 21st century and beyond. This initiative helps create smart, mobile solutions that take learners further and faster than they thought possible,” said Denine Torr, Dollar General’s director of community initiatives.

After a six-month team registration period, competing teams will have 18 months to develop their solutions. A panel of third-party expert judges will then select the top five teams to move on to the 12-month field-testing phase of the competition. The five finalist solutions will be tested with a minimum of 1,000 adult learners each (5,000 total), ages 18-64, who read at or below the equivalent of a third grade reading level. The \$4M Grand Prize will be awarded to the team with the best performance across all adult learners, over the

12-month field test. Bonus Prizes of \$500,000 will also be awarded to the two teams with the best performance in each of the two key demographic groups: native English speakers and non-native English speakers.

Following the awarding of the Grand Prize and Bonus Prizes, cities across the U.S. will compete to encourage their adult learners to download and use the winning applications, using tailored education, marketing and outreach campaigns. A \$1M purse will be split among all finalist teams that meet the minimum performance benchmark to advance to the Cities Competition. A \$1M prize will be awarded to the city that encourages the greatest percentage of its adult learners to download and use any of the finalist solutions over a six-month period.

For more information, and to register your intent to compete, visit <http://adultliteracy.xprize.org/>.

About XPRIZE

Founded in 1995, XPRIZE is the leading organization solving the world’s Grand Challenges by creating and managing large-scale, high-profile, incentivized prizes in five areas: Learning; Exploration; Energy & Environment; Global Development; and Life Sciences. Active prizes include the \$30M Google Lunar XPRIZE, the \$15M Global Learning XPRIZE, the \$10M Qualcomm Tricorder XPRIZE, and the \$2M Wendy Schmidt Ocean Health XPRIZE. For more information, visit www.xprize.org.

About the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy

The Barbara Bush Foundation is the nation’s leading advocate for family literacy. The goals of the Foundation are simple: we want children to start school ready to excel and help parents improve their literacy skills. To learn more about the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy’s commitment to promote family literacy in homes across America, please visit www.barbarabush.org or join the conversation on Facebook or Twitter (@BarbaraBushFdn).

About the Dollar General Literacy Foundation

The Dollar General Literacy Foundation is proud to support initiatives that help others improve their lives through literacy and education. Since its inception in 1993, the Dollar General Literacy Foundation has awarded more than \$100 million in grants to nonprofit organizations, helping nearly six million individuals take their first steps toward literacy or continued education. For more information about the Dollar General Literacy Foundation and its grant programs, visit www.dgliteracy.org.

Translation Research into Literacy Practice

The Do Now Process

by Cecilia Hines

Among the plethora of learning theories, one component common to all is the necessity for review, reflection and assessment. As a college instructor of developmental math, I most definitely understand the importance of these components. Yet ironically, with class periods of eighty minutes or less, I've found myself downsizing the time for review and reflection as I rush to cover more and more material.

Needless to say, class time has become a mad dash to the finish line. As the semester progressed, instead of moving forward, my students were falling behind. Material discussed at the beginning of class had long been forgotten. I finally realized I had to find a way to consistently incorporate time for review, reflection and assessment within every class period.

My solution came in the form of a little half-sheet of paper I like to call the "Do Now." Many educators use a Do Now, a Bell Ringer, or some other type of warm-up activity. However, I have discovered the Do Now is far more than a warm-up. It's a process, a strategy, a review, an assessment, and a classroom management tool all in one.

Procedure

1. Start each class with a Do Now.
 - Keep it short (3 to 5 questions). If you add too many questions, you won't have time to grade it, much less time to cover new material.
 - Allow approximately 5–10 minutes for completion. (Try to stay within the 5-minute timeline).

- Pick up the Do Nows and grade each one after class. This is your time to assess your students' progress. If students are having difficulty completing the Do Now, they'll probably have difficulty completing exams. This is your opportunity to intervene and address any skill deficiencies.

- When grading Do Nows, keep corrections and comments positive! Instead of a letter grade, I assign extra-credit points based on the number of Do Nows completed by the end of the semester.

2. Remember, effective feedback should occur in a timely manner. So, return graded Do Nows at the beginning of the next class. If you take too long grading the Do Now, then you've defeated the purpose and you'll be right back where you started, neither you nor your students will know how they're doing.

- Briefly review incorrect questions.
- Distribute current Do Now; allow five minutes for completion and then proceed with class.

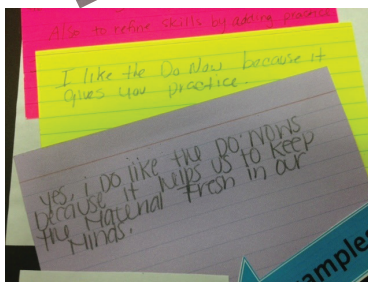
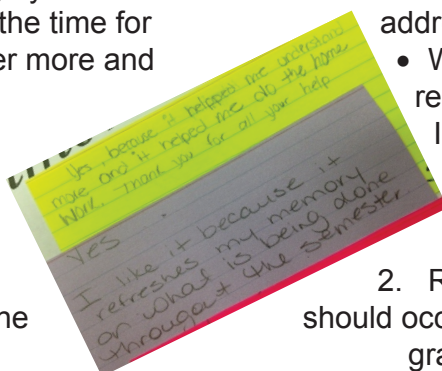
3. The process continues...

Discoveries

The Do Now is a "process" not an activity. Therefore, to be effective it must be done consistently!

The Do Now addresses several best practice strategies:

- Provides continuous-consistent review.
- Help students connect prior knowledge with new concepts.
- Serves as a quick assessment tool for the instructor.



"Exit Ticket" from students

- Provides instant feedback for students.
- Allows for early intervention: Instructor can address skill deficiencies before the first exam.
- Adding a bonus question: Engages advanced learners or can be used to introduce new material (preview question).

About the Author



Cecilia Hines is a Developmental Math Instructor at El Paso Community College; a credentialed Adult Education Instructor, and is listed in TRAIN PD's Texas AEL Contract Trainer Database. Ms. Hines presented the Do Now Process at the 2014 CASP Conference in San Antonio.

The Do Now improves classroom management:

- Constructive focus at the beginning of class.
- Each class begins with positive feedback and motivation. (Positive Affirmation)
- The Do Now helps improve student retention: less tardiness, fewer absences, and fewer drops.
- Using a half-sheet of paper is less intimidating and saves money.

Conclusion

The Do Now addresses several best practices strategies. It provides for continuous-ongoing review; helps students connect prior knowledge with new concepts; serves as a quick assessment tool for the instructor and provides instant feedback for students. This semester, I had zero failures and zero drops!

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Do Now Example

DO NOW
Math 0301 9-26-13 😊

Simplify $7(1-5) - (12 \div 4) + 2^3 \rightarrow 2^3 = 8$

Watch your Careless Mistakes!

$$\begin{array}{r} 16 \\ -13 \\ \hline 3 \\ 28 \\ -13 \\ \hline 15 \end{array}$$

$7(1-5) - (3) + 8$

$-28 - 3 + 8$

$-31 + 8 = -23$

2. Simplify the expression $3x - 1(y - z)$ when $x = -1$, $y = 5$ and $z = 2$

$$3x - 1(y - z)$$

$$3(-1) - 1(5 - 2)$$

they are multiplying

$$3 \cdot -1 = -3$$

$$-3 - 23 \rightarrow -3 - 3 = -6$$

-1

Simplify $5 \cdot (8 - 4) - 6$

$$\begin{array}{r} 5 \cdot (8 - 4) - 6 \\ 5 \cdot 4 - 6 \\ 20 - 6 \\ \hline 14 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 25 \\ -6 \\ \hline 19 \end{array}$$

4. Bonus Question: Simplify the expression.

$$\frac{1}{3} \div \left(\frac{13}{8} - \frac{5}{4} \right)^2$$

you will learn who in Chapter 3 but I'm glad you tried it!

$$\frac{1}{3} \cdot \frac{18}{6} = \frac{18}{6}$$

$$\frac{1}{3} \cdot \frac{6}{18} = \frac{6 \cdot 6}{54 \cdot 6} = \frac{1}{9}$$

$$\frac{1}{3} \cdot \frac{144}{48} = \frac{18}{6}$$

$$\frac{8}{11} \cdot \frac{4}{4} = \frac{2}{11}$$

$$\frac{13}{8} - \frac{5}{4} = \frac{13}{8} - \frac{10}{8} = \frac{3}{8}$$

$$\left(\frac{3}{8} \right)^2 = \frac{9}{64}$$

$$\frac{18}{6} \div \frac{9}{64} = \frac{18}{6} \cdot \frac{64}{9} = 3 \cdot \frac{64}{3} = 64$$

See the Back

Building Collaboration & Program Improvement

Using College Tips and Data Tricks to Boost Program Success

by Susan Gusler

At the University of Houston's May Commencement Speech, Texas-native actor Matthew McConaughey advised "Dissecting Your Success" rather than only dissecting failures. Being a fan, I took his advice and dissected our "data related" program successes. FY15 was challenging: new state leadership, new rules, new organizational structures, complex procedures to gain access to data, aggressive enrollment targets, new GED® test, low unemployment rates, and changing demographics. Those challenges prompted me to examine and share what data-related strategies went well, many of which we borrowed from higher education.

We started the year with full classes--at least in ESL. How? By using past data, we were able to accurately estimate how many students would complete the enrollment process and actually attend. Some call this "overbooking," but most colleges have these numbers down to a science. At Texas A&M, for example, 30,874 students applied for admission last fall. About half were admitted and 10,333 enrolled according to their web-site: <http://dars.tamu.edu>. Similarly about half of the students who were accepted to the University of Texas actually attend per their official web-site <http://bealonghorn.utexas.edu/whyut/profile/app-to-enroll>. Admissions offices across the country predict very accurately what percentage of prospects will continue to the next step and actually enroll. Using similar data points, Adult Education Programs can better understand their enrollment data.

Meeting enrollment goals is an uphill battle for any program starting the school year with many empty seats, but starting fully enrolled in the current economy requires good data. We started tracking where we lost students in the enrollment process and what percentage we typically lost at each step. This data is not that difficult to track, but requires intentionality

and consistency to collecting it. We started requiring students to complete applications in advance, to schedule placement tests, and to return for registration. We could then quantify our ratios like major colleges do. If we know that 50% of students who apply will actually enroll, we need to start testing in July so we can test twice our seat capacity.

We adjusted our class offerings to meet local demand. When we realized that demand for GED® classes was weak in August, we made some adjustments to accommodate students where demand was high: low level ESL. Our subcontractors made similar adjustments. We were able to keep our enrollment stable, but the mix of students changed.

We worked together. Our subcontractors do an amazing job serving their populations and working with each other to serve the diverse needs of the community. Early on, we set data policies that would encourage, rather than discourage cooperation. We shared data monthly with our subcontractors on their progress and the progress of the whole consortium. If a student moved or got a new job and went to a different partner, we made sure both organizations were credited with helping that student. We publicized enrollment schedules and referred students to each other frequently, meeting student needs and boosting consortium enrollment.

We reached out to students who didn't enroll. Once we started tracking prospective students from the time they applied, contacting them was easier. We soon had a databank of hundreds of students who tested, but never enrolled. Contacting them and offering multiple options for registration was a great way to make them feel welcomed and save them the step of taking the pretest again.

We provided more baseline TABE testing location and time options. We knew from enrollment form data that most of our students work. So we weren't surprised when students told us that getting several hours off at a particular time on a particular day so they could take two buses to test was a barrier to enrolling. Partnering with our campus assessment centers allowed us to offer more options for those needing a TABE baseline. We used TABE Online for placement testing outside our office to make data-tracking easier. This wasn't perfect. Sometimes there were miscommunications or technical failures with TABE Online, but it created more options that helped our GED® classes grow as the year progressed.

We offered every student a distance learning option. Distance learning isn't for everyone. Many lack basic computer literacy, regular access to technology, time, and/or motivation. This year we piloted offering distance learning to every student. Usage rates increased and those taking advantage of it had good outcomes.

We assigned every student a permanent unique ID number. I didn't anticipate all the ways this would

help. We knew it would make it easier for our students to take advantage of college resources, but we didn't realize how much more easily we would be able to match data on multiple spreadsheets from different sources. Previously, we had to manually research and match each student. Accomplishing this took a lot longer than a year, but it was worth it. This is the first year we really saw the full benefits.

In fact, several of these took more than a year, and much teamwork across multiple campuses and locations. Even with "dissection," we don't know which had the most impact or which have most potential to work in other programs, but if one program gets a workable idea from it, then in the words of the illustrious UH commencement speaker: "Alright, Alright, Alright."

About the Author



Susan Gusler, MBA SPHR serves as Data Management Coordinator at Austin Community College. She also enjoys teaching ESL and offering PD in TEAMS, Data Analysis and Mining, and Enrollment Enhancement.

NEW FROM THE TRAIN PD CENTER

Starting in September, Train PD has 2 new offerings to help programs use data more effectively for program improvement.

Using Data to Increase Enrollment teaches participants to accurately plan and boost enrollment by capturing and analyzing often undervalued and ignored data and information. Options include a basic 2-hour introductory session or a 4-hour session with more hands-on activities. *This is NOT a TEAMS session.*

TEAMS Data Mining for Program Improvement is a new advanced TEAMS session providing hands-on training in using Excel to extend the power of TEAMS and more thoroughly analyze critical program data. The basic session is 2 hours, but can be extended to include more advanced techniques such as using look-ups to combine multiple reports.

For more information, please contact your TRAIN PD Specialist.

Creating a Partnership with your Local Library

by Deborah Carter

Six Steps to Partner with your Public Library
Libraries are a natural place for adult learning, and librarians are great advocates of literacy and learning. Stand in a library and look around. What do you see? Adults learning! Public libraries, in particular, were made to help the community members in their learning goals with vast materials and free classes that are open to everybody. Libraries nurture the community

up to a higher standard of self-sufficiency and have a strong and rich history of serving the immigrant community (Cuban, 2007). If you are not using your library as a teaching tool, now may be the time to start.

Here's how:

1. Enrich your curriculum by checking out materials from the library. Big books with huge photos offer

a wealth of opportunity for learning, particularly magazines (you can check out the non-current issues), books on CD, DVDs, materials about health, food, history, jobs, famous people, foreign countries, and how-to books, including browsing the juvenile nonfiction sections which generally have more pictures, broader topics, and fewer and easier sentences, avoiding books that seem childish. Such vast material lends itself to project-based learning and learner-generated objectives, as well as exposing learners to a wide range of topics and material types that would not otherwise be available to them.

2. Call ahead to arrange for a librarian to give your class a tour of the library. If the staff is too busy, you may need to give the library tour yourself, or make arrangements to tour during a not so busy time. During the tour, students should be shown where the ESL or GED® materials are, as well as other materials as listed above. Develop a library scavenger hunt so that they can practice their newly acquired information literacy, with one of the requirements being to ask the librarian to locate some information, breaking the ice between your learner and the library staff. Tip: print or photocopy the library card application and library check-out rules, and have all this filled out and pre-taught prior to your visit.
3. Use the library as a venue for increasing the information literacy skills of your students by showing them how to interact with difficult information and technology to achieve learning goals. This is your opportunity to teach dictionaries, indexes, card catalogs, finding materials on the shelf and using the available technology. Then guide your students through the learning process such as brainstorming a research topic, locating relevant information, creating a paper or poster on the topic, and then telling or demonstrating the topic to their peers. Ask to use the meeting room, or just use the regular public tables.
4. Chat with a librarian about the adult education programming that you offer - they field related questions daily and will be interested to hear from you. Librarians are adult educators too, after all. While you are at it, discuss adult education challenges and successes you've had and get ideas about how to enrich your classes and services.
5. Take advantage of the library as a recruitment tool and marketing hub for new and existing community classes, by recruiting people who walk through the doors for other services such as access to free Internet, tax aid, or to borrow a book, CD, or DVD. Ask to set up a table in the front to adver-

tise your program. A library is also a good place to recruit literacy and technology volunteer tutors for your program by putting up a "volunteers wanted" poster on the community bulletin board.

6. Overcome the resistance! Many adult learners who have had a problematic experience with school and learning may feel anxiety about going to a formal, institutional looking library building full of printed material, and so feelings of insecurity must be met with warmth and assistance. Provide special incentives to attend the library tour as well as guidance and encouragement to attend other library services such as tax aid, author days, and children's crafts and story times.

Libraries can be your most important literacy ally. Every community has one - they are permanent structures, free, close to home, and usually open on the weekends and evenings.

They also do not carry stigma that can be attached to learners' experiences of school classrooms or of other public service centers. A great thing about the wealth of material that libraries offer is that students can focus their learning on topics that are authentically interesting to them, thus increasing their learning outcomes. Libraries provide literacy opportunities and also offer a larger infrastructure of educational services for all members of the family, including a community that fosters independent learning (McNicol, 2006). Libraries and adult education are synonymous, and a working partnership can be the key to your students' future self-directed learning.

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About the Author



Deborah Carter has more than a decade of experience teaching adult basic education, including in the space of two public libraries. She holds two masters degrees, in Adult Education and the other in Library Science. She is currently an Adult Education Specialist for the San Antonio Public

Library where she is facilitating a pilot adult literacy program called LEARN.

Adult Learner Engagement

Above and Beyond for Adult Learner Success

by Dr. Karla D. Brown

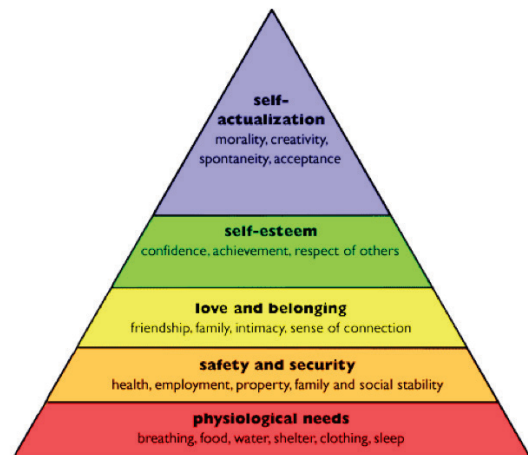
Civil Rights activist Cesar Chavez, is quoted as saying, “We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community... Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own” (Education of the Heart-Quotes by Cesar Chavez). These powerful words still stand true, today, and should represent the mission of all organizations seeking to minimize barriers to adult participation and retention in literacy programs. The dire need is evidenced in the numbers in counties in Texas which, according to the Institute of Education Sciences, has nearly one-fifth of its population that is unable to read a newspaper. In one county, the number may be as high as 48% (National Center for Education Statistics).

Determining issues that impact retention are most often easy to identify simply through communicating with the participants and daily observations.

Addressing the issues with viable solutions is the tough part. Most often, adult learners that struggled with program completion were faced with obstacles that they reported or that were observed, and they included: unmet needs, time constraints, inadequate support systems, lack of self-value, and facilitator’s disconnect from the participants.

When one thinks of unmet needs, it is often related to children. But, a brief glance over Maslow’s Hierarchy Needs illustrates the necessity to apply it in adult education as well.

When the lowest level of needs (Physiological) is unmet, the academic involvement becomes less of a priority. That means ensuring that each participant has adequate shelter, clothing, and food. The list could also be inclusive of utilities at home, transportation, and even issues related to their children. It is imperative that program facilitators understand the



ways in which they can be of service to the adult participants. One way would be to equip learners with information to resource providers in the community to help remove distractors that thwart their goals that are typically achieved near the top of the hierarchy.

Once the basics are addressed, adult learners must learn to manage their time so that their academic pursuit is not compromised. Most adult learners are juggling family, work, and social responsibilities and education takes the low spot on their list of priorities. With that said, it is important that flexibility be a strong characteristic of one’s program. Providing students with a variety of class times and class formats (in-person, on-line, etc.) offers them multiple ways of meeting the demands of their academic program. Additionally, one cannot assume that the learners already know how to create schedules to balance their obligations, so time management sessions may be necessary. These sessions may include personalized plans that help the adult learners organize their lives to minimize the occurrence of overwhelming schedules.

Providing adult learners with a support team that is focused on their success in the program is also

imperative. A network of individuals that offer academic support through tutorials, assigned mentors specific to their professions, life coaches that can give guidance with daily decisions, and access to a pipeline of internship or volunteer(ship) opportunities can be significant assets. Depending on the participant, he/she may need one, all, or none of the services, but they should definitely be available.

While support for the adult learner is necessary, it is also important that each views himself/herself as a resource. Learners need to know that they are a valuable part of the community and have much to offer. Identifying those skills that one already possesses invariably helps each to recognize his/her importance in the academic program. The University of Kansas' Work Group for Community Health and Development states in their Community Tool Box, "Every community has needs and deficits that ought to be attended to. But it is possible to focus on assets and strengths—emphasizing what the community does have, not what it doesn't. Those assets and strengths can be used to meet those same community needs; they can improve community life" (Web). Once the adult learners recognize themselves as valuable to the learning community, it would ideally solidify the importance of completing their programs.

Finally, program facilitators must take the time to get to know the adult learners that are participating in their respective programs. Creating open dialogue with participants about the things that are important to them is a great starting point. It provides a foundation on which to build a trusting relationship and it improves the ability of the facilitator to recognize problems that could become possible obstacles in one completing a program. If problems are identified early it gives facilitators a better chance of assisting to eliminate hindrances or at least lessen the impact.

Eliminating barriers to improve retention and program completion of adult learners often requires a group effort in which everyone goes beyond the call of duty. Optimal conditions may never exist, but the

concerted efforts of caring program facilitators and administrators can provide adult learners a path that encourages program completion. The value of a productive human life is priceless, and a very necessary part of the economy. It stands to reason, "A well educated workforce is key to state prosperity" (Berger and Fisher), and, if we are to improve literacy rates, we must include the success of adult learners in the solution.

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About the Author



Karla D. Brown, Ed.D. is the founder and Executive Director of The Providence on Southmore, Inc. She is an educator with over 20 years of experience as an elementary school teacher and administrator in southeast Texas and southern California. She has served as Adjunct Professor at Texas Southern University and California

Baptist University preparing pre-service educators. She holds a doctorate degree in Curriculum and Instruction and credits her academic and professional experiences with giving her the inspiration to see the vision of the organization to fruition.

Federal Student Aid: Adult Student Checklist

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Student Aid has a "Preparing for College" checklist, specifically for adult students. The checklist is accessible online, with links to College Navigator, to locate schools based on career goals, the U.S. Department of Labor's scholarship database, and instructions on filling out the Free Application for Federal Students Aid (FAFSA). This is an excellent one-stop resource for adult educators to share with learners as they begin the process of exploring post-secondary education options.



Find the checklist online here: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/prepare-for-college/checklists/adult>

Career Pathways & College Transitions for Adults

Mentoring AEL Students in Transition

by Dinah Sherrill

Show me a successful individual and I'll show you someone who had real positive influences in his or her life. I don't care what you do for a living—if you do it well I'm sure there was someone cheering you on or showing the way. A Mentor. — Denzel Washington

How is continuity of services ensured when students transition from Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) to a workforce situation then to eventual employment? Some AEL students admit they are not prepared for:

- Jobhunting skills, especially networking, interviewing, and salary negotiation
- Importance of teamwork
- Budgeting personal finance issues
- Time management between work and personal life
- Dealing with varied personalities.

What is the answer to student preparation during this transition? Most definitely one who networks between the Texas Workforce Commission, the Adult Education and Literacy program, the employer, and the student entering the world of work. A qualified mentor promotes a realistic vision for the jobseeking student and works with the student from entry level to final job placement. The mentor's purpose is to measure progress, emphasize accountability, and ensure a smooth transition toward gainful employment.

An experienced mentor emphasizes the importance of spending quality time daily researching job possibilities. Quality time is not an overreliance on the Internet and passive job hunting. It is networking with teachers, other students, recent alumni, former co-workers, bosses, etc. who have access to the Texas work world. Furthermore, investigating resources promotes confidence on behalf of the AEL student and lays a solid foundation for securing the appropriate employment. Because he has done his homework on

the job's mission and purpose, he can definitely assure the employer that he will be a strong contributor to the needs of the company. The more quality time put into a resume, an application, interview skills, and networking, the better the results for finding meaningful employment.

We hear, "There is no I in team." The mentor needs to make certain that the student knows he will be a part of the whole – only one employee of many who contributes to the expansion of the business. Working together, he must fully understand that he can ask for guidance and at the same time, offer help to fellow colleagues. No one will last long on the job who is a bully to coworkers and who refuses to be a positive factor in the progress of the company.

The newly hired employee will most likely receive an increase in pay and realize the necessity to budget according to his or her new salary. It is important that loans for college, technical school and all other job preparation training be repaid or at least, make a plan for installment payments. The mentor can assist in creating a prudent reserve immediately. Students who overspend regret not following a spending/saving plan when unexpected medical, living, expenses etc. arise.

All time obligations change once the student commits to employment. A mentor works with him or her to stress dependability beginning the first day on the job. Transitioning from being a student with varied attendance requirements in a training program to being an employee with mandatory hours becomes priority. A mentor focuses the student's attention to the importance of being punctual, being a selfstarter, learning from mistakes, and following protocol.

Principles above personalities – a mentor who keeps

a student focused on the likenesses, not the differences, other workers will ensure that the ultimate goal is to create success for the business. Instead of complaining to a job supervisor, the individual has a mentor to consult and apply problemsolving techniques. Consequently, he can take solutions to the workplace instead of complaints and become proactive with workers and administration.

The Strategic Plan for 2015 adopted by the TWC on November 25, 2014, states: "The goal for AEL is to support increase in employment, higher education transition, skill gains, and secondary completion through demonstrated approaches that integrate system services and leverage community partnerships." The mentor knows that AEL supports training and job

readiness and that TWC targets job placement. Incorporating a comprehensive approach, a mentor would align the AEL student with TWC services thus building a transitional pathway that prepares Texans to be accountable to families, careers, and communities.

About the Author



Dinah Sherrill teaches EL Civics in the Adult Education program in Birdville ISD, Haltom City, Texas. Dinah teaches EL Civics in Birdville ISD, an affiliation of the Tarrant County Adult Education & Literacy Consortium.

She also teaches to a diverse population, many of which have succeeded professionally.

College Transitions for Adults

by Dr. Debbie Alford and Dr. Babette Eikenberg

Throughout the state of Texas, Adult Education and Literacy programs are suiting up to send our students to college. Many of our students are first-generation college students (FGCS) and have little to no background regarding transitioning to college. It is up to our programs to find the appropriate means to adequately prepare our students for this major hurdle in life. Through our transitions programs, our students may find great reward in their future.

Most adult education students face many obstacles in life. Many of their parents did not attend college and this often provides a lack of awareness regarding higher education. According to Engle (2007) FGCS face many obstacles, and most come from low-income and minority backgrounds. Thus, many encounter a number of hurdles, such as having poor academic preparation, inadequate finances, and a weak support system, which make it difficult for them to get in college and finish with a degree. McCall (2010) reported that many FGCS believed that they would not be successful in college. Often, they were less prepared than the college bound student and had lower family incomes, lower self-esteem and came from families that did not have the background to support a college.

McCall (2010) noted that FGCS needed curriculum and programs and that were specifically designed to target their needs, and that educators needed to learn about the cultures and barriers these students faced in order to assist them. FGCS required pro-

grams while in high school that provided information and counseling to build up their self-esteem and knowledge about higher education. McCall (2010) reported that many FGCS were recent immigrants that came to the United States with limited English. Thus, it was essential for parents to be provided with information sessions in a non-threatening environment so that the school gained trust with them. These students came to school with added stressors and educators should have found ways to lessen their fears. Schools needed to find ways to work with these students and provide a bridge between schools and families.

Adult Education students can attend college and finish with a degree if they are provided proper guidance and awareness to transition into post-secondary education. Colleges have discovered that many students will stay in school longer if they have participated in some type of transitions program (Lynch, 2013). Lynch (2013) further stated that colleges need to require that students participate in some type of course that prepares them with the necessary skills to transition from college to their career. Horwedel (2005) noted California State University actually had a majority minority population of American Indian, Asians, African Americans, and Hispanics, and many were FGCS. California State University implemented a transitions course for FGCS to assist them in the transition and acclimation to college life, which led to higher retention rates for those who participated. UCLA also implemented a similar program for FGCS.

According to Horwedel (2005), an important component of the success of both universities FGCS' assistance programs was mentoring. Students were mentored by other students and faculty that allowed students to receive direct feedback and assistance when needed.

All across Texas, AEL programs are working with Adult Education FGCS. Programs are building transitions programs and bridge programs to ensure these students receive the necessary tools to transition into post-secondary education. In order for our students to continue to be successful, proper transitions courses for our AEL students need to be implemented. Programs that are not junior colleges should partner up with local agencies to develop proper transitions programs for AEL students, which may include sub-contracting with institutions that offer higher education or certification for employment. Programs should develop proper curriculum to bring awareness of the burdens and requirements of fulfilling college coursework. Students must also be provided opportunities to participate in college orientation, including financial aid seminars, tours, and advisement, and be offered mentoring when available. By implementing proactive bridge courses and transitions courses, we may ensure that our first-generation adult education students receive the support services they need to be successful.

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About the Author



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Dr. Babette Eikenberg is a professor at Lamar University.

Ideas for Teachers of Adults

Self-Paced Individualized Instruction in a Multi-Level Classroom

by Joni Van Reenan

What does it mean to be a struggling student? For some, it means having trouble keeping up with the pace of whole class instruction, tracking from the teacher's work on the board to their work on the desk, or following instructions. Some struggling students are traumatized by getting laughed at by their classmates when they read aloud, scolded by teachers when they are unable to answer questions they are called on to answer, or humiliated when their failing test scores are called out in class.

The Literacy Coalition of Central Texas is a community-based organization that serves as a centralized point of coordination as well as a means for public awareness and resources for its community's literacy services. Ascend Center for Learning is a program of the Literacy Coalition that offers Adult Basic Education (ABE), GED® Prep, and Job Readiness classes to low-income adults. Many of the adults we serve were struggling students when they were in school. How do we help adults who were struggling

students achieve their goals as adult learners? We provide them with instructional delivery that is self-paced and individualized, ongoing feedback that presents evidence of progress, and a classroom environment that engenders a feeling of safety.

If whole class instruction didn't work for our ABE students when they were in school, then it stands to reason it may not work for them now. Therefore, to help our ABE students achieve their educational goals, we address their instructional needs individually. However, our ABE classes are multi-level. We have students who are functioning in the Beginning Basic, Low Intermediate Basic, and High Intermediate Basic levels. How do we serve a classroom of multi-level students individually? First, we have leveled education plans. There are a variety of leveled math and language arts materials available for ABE students. We've made education plans for each of the levels in each of the subjects. Each education plan is a checklist of skills covered in the leveled instructional materials we use. We give each student both a math and language arts education plan on his/her first day of class according to his/her baseline TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) scores. The students work individually at their own pace on the skills covered in their plans. We help them with their work throughout the class day by providing them one-on-one tutoring. We assess each student's work daily and adjust plans and assignments as appropriate. In addition, we have a year round open entry/open exit enrollment to completion system. This system allows students, who struggled to keep up with the pace of classroom instruction in school, to work and make progress at their own pace.

We want our ABE students to see the progress they're making, so we provide them with continuous feedback. We conduct error analysis on the students' work as we check it throughout the class day, so we can let the students know what they're comprehending and where they need more practice. When the students see us paying this kind of attention to the work they're doing, it lets them know that what they're doing is important. They feel proud of themselves when we show them what they're comprehending and doing well, and they feel taken care of when we find what they're having trouble with, explain it to them, and give them more practice work. This motivates the students to keep working because they realize the work they're doing is being tracked for their benefit. We check off the skills the

students have completed on their education plans, keep the plans in their notebooks, and discuss the plans with the students on an ongoing basis. The goal of our ABE students is to get their math and reading language arts skills up to levels that qualify them to transfer into our Job Readiness and GED Prep classes. When we track their education plans daily, we let them see the progress they're making toward achieving that goal.

For some of our students, the first day of class brings back memories of being laughed at, scolded, or publically humiliated. When students enroll in our ABE program, they quickly learn they are not going to get called out in class. The individualized instruction described above allows the students to work by themselves at their level and at their pace. At the same time the students are working on their assignments individually, they are doing that work in a classroom environment with classmates and teachers. This combination of individual work and a classroom setting allows the students to feel good about being in school and making progress without feeling like they have to keep up or compete with their classmates. This creates an atmosphere in which the students feel safe with each other and their teachers, and camaraderie is easily developed.

Giving each student in a multi-level ABE classroom individual instruction and attention is time consuming and can be challenging when the classroom is full, so having a structured classroom routine helps keep the classroom operation running smoothly. We have a daily class schedule and a method for distributing each student's assigned work so it is ready and waiting for them when they enter the classroom. In addition to eliminating downtime, this routine allows the students to feel at ease when they come to class. They know what to expect; therefore, they do not feel anxious about the upcoming class day.

The self-paced one-on-one instruction method along with the structured classroom routine creates an atmosphere in which adults who did not succeed in a traditional classroom feel at ease and empowered as they progress in their own way at their pace.

About the Author



Joni Van Reenan is the Assistant Director of the Ascend Center for Learning, a program of the Literacy Coalition of Central Texas. She has a Master of Education in Elementary Education from Southwest Texas State University.



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Professional Development

Using Toolkits to Create Student-Centered Learning in Low-Resource Environments

by Wendy Taylor Wampler

This article originally appeared in the TESOL Adult Education Interest Section Newsletter and has been edited from the original for format and content.

From research, we know the importance of contextual relevancy to student learning. According to Wrigley (2003), “Students learned more, as measured in movement on standardized tests, in classes where the teacher made the connection between life outside the classroom and what was learned in the classroom than in classes that did not” (p. 15). For years in our new teacher trainings, we’ve emphasized the importance of bringing the outside world into the classroom through the use of authentic materials, or realia. “Adult learners in classes using real-life (authentic) literacy activities and texts read and write more often, and use a greater variety of texts, in their lives outside class” (Purcell-Gates, Degener, Jaconson, & Soler, 2000, p.1). We know that if we can hook them and engage them with something that is tangible and that is tied to their interests and goals, our students will be more likely to succeed both inside and outside the classroom.

New teachers just starting out look first to textbooks for lesson content and likely overlook the things in their everyday environment—authentic materials at their fingertips—which they could use instead. Even veteran teachers get stuck in a rut, or are strapped for time and energy, and could benefit from using more authentic materials in the classroom. In response to these challenges, we developed the Teacher Toolkit Creator (<http://literacyforward.org/tesol-2014>), giving our teachers a tool that would decrease their lesson planning time while increasing student engagement through the use of free authentic materials readily available in their local communities.

The Teacher Toolkit Creator

Because the goal of the Toolkit Creator is to make instruction more engaging and relevant to students, it is important to start by eliciting students’ feedback rather than making assumptions about their needs and interests. This is where student assessments come into play. The Toolkit Creator includes two assessments—one text based

(http://literacyforward.com/images/TESOL_2014_Docs/Student_Needs_Assessment_Advanced.pdf) and one image based (http://literacyforward.com/images/TESOL_2014_Docs/Student_Needs_Assessment_Beginning.pdf)—for both lower-level and more advanced students.

The assessments ask students six key questions:

- What are your hobbies?
- What kinds of classroom activities do you prefer?
- Why are you learning English?
- Where do you speak English outside of class?
- Where do you work?
- What community services are in your neighborhood?

Once a teacher has collected feedback from students through the assessments, it is entered into the Realia Generator (http://literacyforward.com/images/Classroom_Toolkit_Needs_Assessment.xlsx). The Realia Generator is a program configured to take in information about students and then generate a list of 50-100 corresponding realia. From this list, you can then assemble your own classroom toolkit.

For more details, watch our demonstration video (<http://screencast.com/t/xtPP6KE4t>) outlining how to use the Generator. Depending on your students’ feedback, you will receive a list of 50–100 authentic materials from the Generator.

When completing the student assessments, students are given a choice of up to 10 items to select from. We understand the limitations this puts on student responses. The Creator does not reflect all needs and interests, and the goal of the Toolkit Creator is not to fully represent all students. Rather, the Toolkit Creator is meant to help teachers move toward more relevant and engaging classrooms. To get a more comprehensive picture of students’ need and interests than the Toolkit Creator allows for, we also designed the Supplemental Teacher Worksheet (http://literacyforward.com/images/TESOL_2014_Docs/Teacher_Toolkit_Supplemental_Worksheet.pdf). This

worksheet encourages teachers to reflect on the results of the Generator and any student interests not addressed, and to think of ways to incorporate these interests into the classroom.

Adult education classrooms vary in their access to technology tools and resources. To account for this diversity, we included a number of digital options such as websites and phone apps in the Toolkit Creator, and we also designed filters to screen out any equipment unavailable to specific classrooms such as computers, Internet access, projectors, and so on.

Other adult ESL classrooms are limited not by access to technology but by the literacy level of students. For these classrooms we created a filter to screen out realia containing large amounts of text that may be inappropriate for the low-literacy level classroom.

Classroom Implications

As we developed the Toolkit Creator, we asked our local instructors to complete the Realia Generator based on their current students. We wanted to get a feel for the interests of the local community. Among the results, common themes and their corresponding realia included:

- Work (work schedules, pay stubs, cleaning supplies, photos of food and drink)
- Local entertainment and activities (live music schedule, local map, community newspaper)
- Civics (citizenship application form, images of U.S. historical figures)
- Children and children's school (report card, behavior notes, school calendar, school supply list, children's books)
- Health (health history form, intake form, empty medicine bottles)

The next step is to turn the realia into relevant and engaging lessons for students. Here in Central Texas, with Austin known as the "Live Music Capital of the World," a schedule of live music is a great representation of something that is both engaging and representative of our local community. Go here (<http://thesaxonpub.com/printable-calendar/>) for examples of downloadable music calendars from local Austin favorite Saxon Pub.

Working from one of these calendars, teachers could focus on the *Wh-* question words (specifically, "who" and "when") and either do an information gap activity with students working in pairs or a line dialogue activity in which students form two lines facing each other. Another option is to focus on practicing days of the week and prepositions of time (specifically, "at" and "on") and do a whole class True/False activity to test students' comprehension. To practice numbers, the teacher could cut up the schedule by date, give each student one square, and do a line up activity by having them form a single line in order by date. The culminating activity could be a class field trip to see a

free live music performance.

Other general ways to include realia in the classroom, regardless of the lesson topic, include:

- Activating Background Knowledge – Realia related to the lesson for the day can be the basis of a warm-up discussion as a way to help students connect their background knowledge to the lesson topic.
- Role Plays – Role plays that are situational and use realia integral to the conversation are especially effective (e.g., ordering from a menu or a discussing a health history form with a nurse).
- Predicting – Students guess what a lesson will be about based on the realia you bring in for class.
- Sorting Realia– This works well with smaller realia and images. Students can sort realia into groups set by you (e.g., Sorting different over-the-counter medications into groups by the symptoms they treat), or they can select their own groups for sorting based on the realia you give them.
- Think-Pair-Share – In this case, the realia serves as the basis for individual, group, and then full-class discussions on a topic.
- Matching – Students match up realia with vocabulary words. For more advanced students, realia can be matched with related sentences, paragraphs, or definitions.

Check out a video (http://literacyforward.com/images/videos/Step_One_3.mp4) of local teacher, Karen Green at Manos de Cristo, using a number of these strategies to make a health lesson on symptoms and medication come alive.

How would you use these ideas in your own classroom? What is unique about your city, town, or state that you use as the basis for a lesson? Download the Toolkit Creator and try it out. We'd love to hear your feedback.

References

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3-Minute Motivators, Revised and Expanded Edition. Paterson, Kathy (2014). Markham, Ontario, Canada: Pembroke Publisher. This book helps teachers recognize and respond to the daily needs of their students and distract, refocus, and provide a "hit of fun" in the school day to help students become more focused, motivated, and self-aware. New material in this practical book explores novel ways to inspire students as well as to build and practice important life skills and includes more than 200 activities (150 brand new!), new "Tech Too Motivators," new "Stress Attack Motivators," and more. Teachers and students alike can use the strategies in the revised and expanded edition of 3 Minute Motivators to defuse negative situations and tune students back into learning.

Barron's English for Foreign Language Speakers: The Easy Way. Lacie, Christina (2008). Hauppauge, NY: Barron's Educational Series. Students of English as a second language will value this book as an excellent self-instruction guide, or alternately, as a handy workbook to supplement their formal ESL course. Many ESL teachers will also value this volume as their preferred textbook or textbook supplement. Following a diagnostic pretest, the author guides students through the details of reading, writing, developing vocabulary and grammar, listening, speaking, and correct pronunciation of American style English. She devotes separate chapters to each of the parts of speech, as well as to sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, word roots, homonyms and synonyms, idioms, rules for academic writing in English, and more. Each chapter contains a list of vocabulary words carefully selected to expand every ESL student's word power in English. The book concludes with a set of comprehensive vocabulary review exercises and a lengthy comprehensive English exam with answers.

Bumper Sticker: Witty, Thought-Provoking Sayings from North American Highways to Think, Talk, and Write About. Burrows, Arthur A. (2013). Brattleboro, VT: Pro Lingua Associates. This book is a collection of 363 bumper sticker sayings that express people's opinions on a great variety of subjects from religion to politics to the environment to the "battle of the sexes." Most use humor and witty language. The book contains 60 photocopyable pages of bumper sticker sayings, an explanatory preface for the teacher, and an introduction for the student. This collection of Bumper Sticker sayings was chosen to provoke interesting conversations or writing about both the language and the culture. Although the bumper stickers and this book are meant to prompt students to think and

talk, they can also be read for fun.

Conversation Strategies: Pair and Group Activities for Developing Communicative Competence, Third Edition. Kehe, David and Kehe, Peggy Dustin (2014). Brattleboro, VT: Pro Lingua Associates. This textbook captures and makes more understandable the difficult tactics of talking to strangers in our culture and language. Exercises run the gamut from formal meetings, for which parliamentary language is translated into common phrases, to such basic problems as deciding on an evening's entertainment.

Cultural Differences: Read, Discuss, and Write: Exploring and Understanding Cultures Using Academic Skills. Kehe, David and Kehe, Peggy Dustin (2014). Brattleboro, VT: Pro Lingua. This book is a content-based college/university preparation course introducing and giving practice in using a wide range of academic skills. It is of value to English language learners and native speakers who are or will be living in a culturally diverse environment and community. It was written for high-intermediate and advanced learners of English, as well as for adults and young adults who are not language learners but who associate with people from other cultures. This title is actually two books: the Basic Text and the photocopyable Supplementary Activities.

Got It!: A Game for Building Vocabulary and Conversation. Gardner, Phyllis (2014). Brattleboro, VT: Pro Lingua. In this game, the class is usually divided into groups that will compete with each other to create a vocabulary list. The groups are given a card with a topic. The objective is to come up with vocabulary that is relevant to the topic within a given time limit. When time is up, they compare lists. When a group has a word that no other group has, they score a point. The tension increases as cards are compared one-by-one. Inevitably new words are discovered, words are challenged, and there is conversation/discussion.

Helping English Language Learners Succeed. Dunlap, Carmen Zuniga and Weisman, Evelyn Marino (2006). Huntington Beach, CA: Shell Publishing. Intended for new teachers and pre-service educators, this resource provides up-to-date, research-based theory and practical applications to help teachers effectively develop ways to teach English language learners through a deeper understanding of these students' needs. Featuring best

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practices based on solid research and proven methodology, this resource is packed with background information, underlying principles, and ideas. 172 pp.

Interactive Dictations: An Intermediate Listening/Speaking/Writing Text, Second Edition. DeFilippo, Judy and Sadow, Catherine (2014). Brattleboro, VT: Pro Lingua Associates. Each dictation is preceded by an introduction and vocabulary/pronunciation work and followed by discussion topics. Pair and small-group work is encouraged. Following the discussions there are an optional writing topic and a variety of other activities, including idiom/vocabulary work, role plays, and many cooperative learning activities. It is for intermediate students.

Lessons on Life, Learning, and Leadership for Reading, Thinking About, and Discussing. Remer, Brian (2014). Brattleboro, VT: Pro Lingua. The purpose of this book is to develop the skills of reading, critical thinking, and discussing - essential skills in academia and the workplace. The lessons also offer an opportunity to develop the learner's vocabulary and gain additional insights into contemporary American culture. This photocopyable collection of "lessons," is intended for high-intermediate and advanced learners of English. It is particularly valuable for learners in college preparation or other intensive English programs.

New Password 1: A Reading and Vocabulary Text, Second Edition. Butler, Linda (2009). White Plains, New York: Pearson Education. New Password 1: A Reading and Vocabulary Text is a new addition to the Password series. It helps beginning students develop reading skills and increase their active vocabulary through engaging readings about real people, places, events, and ideas. Students benefit from a systematic, corpus-informed approach to learning more than 300 high-frequency words, expressions, and collocations. Book (152 pages): **Loan Item.**

New Password 2: A Reading and Vocabulary Text, Second Edition

New Password 3: A Reading and Vocabulary Text, Second Edition

New Password 4: A Reading and Vocabulary Text, Second Edition

New Password 5: A Reading and Vocabulary Text, Second Edition

Perspectives on Teaching Adult English in the Digital World. Rose, Glenda (2015). Alexandria, VA: TESOL Press. This book presents an overview of adult ESL online in the USA illustrating a number of important points, and focuses on teaching and learning English online, specifically at the tertiary level in the US. The book also presents a clear and concise summary, this time of adult education and workplace English language learning and teaching online in the US.

TalkAbouts: 72 Everyday Situations Illustrated to Stimulate Conversation, Listening, Writing, and Vocabulary Development. Clark, Ray, Editor and Mesa, Oscar, Illustrations (2012). Brattleboro, VT: Pro Lingua. A photocopyable collection of pictures with few words, but worth a thousand words, offering plenty of possible conversations, descriptions, discussions, narrations, dictations, and a lot of fun. What kind of pictures are they? There are three types: the first part, TalkAbout Situations, features conversations; the second part, TalkAbout Topics, focuses on vocabulary; the third part, TalkAbout Events and Occasions, focuses on putting it all together with emphasis on grammar (verb tense) and discourse.

Teaching Languages for Communication and Accuracy: Classroom Techniques and Tactics. Clark, Raymond C. and Duncan, Janie L. (2013). Brattleboro, VT: Pro Lingua Associates. This is a clear and practical handbook that describes and illustrates 20 techniques and 17 tactics for teaching and learning any spoken language. The techniques are classroom practices that may take a full 50-minute class. There is typically a beginning (presentation), middle (practice), and end (production) to the full lesson.

What's Ahead?: Transitioning from Adult Education to a Career. D'Emilio, Barbara and Tickin, Ruth (2013). Brattleboro, VT: Pro Lingua Associates. This book is for the intermediate to advanced ELL or Adult Education student who is considering pursuing a career after leaving an English language or GED program. It explores six careers where job growth is expected in the 21st century. The careers investigated: Health, Computer Technology, Skilled Trades, Hospitality and Food Service, Your Own Business, and Day Care and Education. The teacher's supplement provides photocopyable supplementary material for students and teacher references to make planning the transition course easier and more effective.



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Career STAT: A Guide to Making the Case for Investing in the Frontline Hospital Workforce. Wilson, Randall; Holm, Robert (2012). Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future. This guidebook was prepared for CareerSTAT, an employer-based project of the National Fund for Workforce Solutions and Jobs for the Future to make the case for developing frontline hospital workers. It documents effective practices in leading hospitals around the United States, drawing on interviews with senior managers and executives. It presents the arguments that managers themselves make for investing in the training and education of less-skilled workers, along with the types of evidence and metrics that managers and senior decision makers find most persuasive.

Dialogue Journaling - A Classroom Practice that Works. Harling, Elizabeth and Berthold, Dr. Barbara (December 2011). College Station, TX: Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy and Learning. In this article for TCALL's Quarterly publication, the authors believe that speaking and understanding spoken English usually comes before being able to write in the language. For that reason teachers often face challenges in incorporating writing assignments that their students see as meaningful. Dialogue journals give insight into student's interests and what they can do with language. The student's responses and questions can be used to create relevant and meaningful lessons, enhance student engagement, individualize the language acquisition process to better fit the student's needs, and take the fear out of writing.

Enhancing GED Instruction to Prepare Students for College and Careers. Martin,

Vanessa; Broadus, Joseph (2013). New York, NY: MDRC. This article is an MDRC report that details the GED Bridge to Health and Business program operating at LaGuardia Community College of the City University of New York (CUNY). The authors show that there needs to be stronger pathways for students to attend college.

Fast Forward: A Case Study of Two Community College Programs Designed to Accelerate Students through Developmental Math. Kelley Fong; Mary G. Visher (2013). New York: MDRC. A key barrier to students finishing college is the remedial work especially in math. This is a case study of two community college programs designed to accelerate students through developmental math and thus increase completion rates.

Implementing Pen-Pal Writing in the Adult ESL Classroom. Larrotta, Dr. Clarena (December 2011). College Station, TX: Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy and Learning. In this article for TCALL's Quarterly publication, Dr. Larrotta describes how she used letter writing as a means to teach English writing skills. Her class of "sixteen Spanish-speaking adult English learners exchanged letters weekly with a group of volunteer native-English-speakers enrolled in an Adult Master's Program. This article describes pen pal letter writing as a successful learning activity promoting literacy development and fluent writing in English as a second language."

Integrating Curriculum: Lessons for Adult Education from Career and Technical Education. Chernus, Kathleen and Fowler,

Donna (September 2010). Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy. Policymakers and educators are paying increased attention to determining how best to prepare those in adult education programs not only for immediate employment, but also for career advancement and further training or postsecondary education. This focus echoes current efforts among secondary educators, particularly those in career and technical education (CTE), to ensure that high school graduates are ready for both college and a career—not one or the other. Are there strategies currently in use in high schools that could inform efforts in adult education to prepare adults for both work and further education? The authors examine one strategy—the integrated curriculum—now being implemented in various forms in high schools to see if adult education might benefit from a similar approach. It combines academic and technical content in programs that focus on problem solving, active engagement in projects and real-world applications of the knowledge and skills taught. This paper reviews several types of curriculum integration and examines research on its effects, primarily in K–12 education, since research in adult education is sparse. After discussing two curriculum integration models in detail—the multiple pathways approach promoted by ConnectEd: The California Center for College and Career, and the Ford Partnership for Advanced Studies (PAS) program—the authors describe several efforts to incorporate integrated curricula in adult education. They conclude that three approaches have promising prospects for expanding integrated curriculum efforts already under way in adult education: course integration, cross-curriculum integration and program integration.

My Next Move: For Veterans. My Next Move (3/30/2015). Online: My Next Move. This is a website of resources for veterans who want to get back into the workforce.

Returning to Work after Prison: Final Re-

sults from the Transitional Jobs Reentry Demonstration. Jacobs, Erin (2012). New York: MDRC. People released from prison often face obstacles trying to reintegrate into daily life. This final report in the Transitional Jobs Reentry Demonstration project assesses how the transitional jobs programs affected employment and recidivism during the two years after people entered the study.

Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP). Veterans Workforce (3/30/2015). Online: Veterans' Priority. VRAP helps connect veterans with jobs through training support and employment assistance. This site provides information and tools to fulfill the requirements of VRAP to help veterans making this transition.

What Content-Area Teachers Should Know About Adolescent Literacy. Anstrom, Kris and Richardson, Trenace (September 2010). Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy. The goal of this report is to help address middle and high school classroom teachers', administrators', and parents' immediate need for basic information about how to build adolescents' reading and writing skills. This report summarizes some of the current literature on adolescent literacy research and practice. It is not a research synthesis or a literature review; rather the report suggests some methods of building adolescent reading and writing skills in the classroom. This report is a revision of the 2006 Preview Copy What Content-Area Teachers Should Know About Adolescent Literacy. There has been some new work in adolescent literacy published since the Preview Copy was released and these important publications have been included in the Additional References section. http://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/adolescent_literacy07.pdf

Workforce Solutions. Workforce Solutions (2013). Online: Workforce Solutions. This website is a resource for solutions to challenges that workforce development professionals face every day.

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