

NEVADA Connections

Bringing Resources to Nevada's Adult Education Community

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Innovative resource pinpoints areas of need

“PinPoint” maps for Washoe County and the Clark County School District have been posted at www.literacynet.org/nevada/pinpoint.pdf. The maps graphically depict neighborhoods in high need of ABE services by showing the density of LEP (limited English proficiency) and FRL (free and reduced lunch) students. ABE/ESL program sites have been overlaid on the maps, providing a tool for programs to determine which neighborhoods are being adequately served. Also posted are Excel spreadsheets showing similar information for less populated areas throughout the state.

In thanking Project Leader John Griffin and the team of professionals who helped implement this imaginative project, Adult Education Director Mary Katherine Moen said, “What I particularly like about PinPoint is that it takes advantage of coordinating systems that are already in place at the Nevada Department of Education and with Washoe County School District and Clark County School District. We did not have to ‘reinvent the wheel.’ This generates high promise for enabling PinPoint to be an integral part of our adult education planning process every year.”

What works

Margaret Patterson (margaretbpatterson@yahoo.com), former ABE coordinator at WNC, and Daryl Mellard, director of the Division of Adult Studies at the University of Kansas, recently published results of their study, “Program Characteristics That Predict Improved Learner Outcomes” in the summer issue of *Adult Basic Education and Literacy Journal*. They analyzed four years of data from Kansas’ Indicators of a Quality Adult Program and NRS (National Reporting System) reports to determine program characteristics predictive of learner outcomes.

They found several predictors that contribute to learner outcomes: learner entry level, size of community, staff qualifications, and learner exposure to high-quality services. Surprisingly, they did not find robust outcome predictors that were consistent from one year to another.

The *Adult Basic Education and Literacy Journal* is available via hard copy subscription at \$65 per year, \$35 for members of COABE or ProLiteracy America. See www.coabe.org, click on ABEL Journal.



Financial aid key to success in college transition

An adult education student who receives financial aid for college is three times more likely to succeed or complete a program than an adult education student receiving no financial assistance, according to a recent study conducted by the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. Researchers said 70 percent of the students studied who had a high school diploma were eligible to apply for financial aid. The study found that less than one-fourth of these students knew about financial aid on their own, were told about it by their programs, or accessed it.

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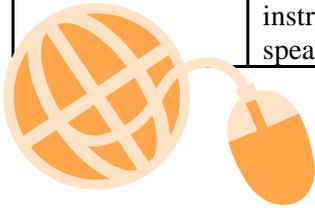
Back issues archived at:
<http://www.literacynet.org/nvadulted/newsletters.html>

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Listservs especially for Nevadans

The following listservs were created to facilitate communication among Nevadans. To subscribe to any of these lists, send an email to saylv@cox.net specifying the name of the listserv and your connection to adult basic education.

List name	Audience
NVGED	For instructors, tutors, program directors and others who work with English-speaking adults functioning at the high school level and working toward procurement of an Adult High School Diploma or GED Certificate. GED Examiners will find this forum useful as well.
NVESOL	For instructors, tutors, program directors, coordinators, and others who provide one-on-one, small group, or class instruction in ESL or EL/Civics to adults. Although ABE and GED instructors are not excluded, this list is primarily for those who teach English to Speakers of Other Languages.
NVADULTED	For instructors, tutors, program directors, coordinators, and others who provide one-on-one, small group, or class instruction in adult basic education (i.e., reading, writing, and math) for adult native speakers of English who are functioning at a level below high school completion. Although ESL instructors are not excluded, this is primarily for providers of basic education to native English speakers.



Thinkfinity offers free online courses for adult educators

Thinkfinity currently provides nearly 40 free, online courses to support educators and volunteers working with adult learners. Topics include adult basic education (ABE), GED preparation, English language learning, reading, writing, numeracy, learning disabilities, assessment, goal setting, lesson planning, and parent education.

For example, recently added interactive courses include:

- "Teach Me Technology," a basic introduction to computers for adult students with suggestions for instructors, tutors, mentors or volunteers to facilitate computer skill building, and
- "Increasing Learning Gains Through Intensity of Instruction," which looks at ways to utilize active learning and investigates how to create volunteer roles that support intensity of instruction.

The courses are short (less than two hours) and are not facilitated, so you can move at your own pace. To register, go to www.thinkfinity.org, then click on "Free Online Courses" (under "Thinkfinity Literacy Network" on the right side).

About Thinkfinity Literacy Network

Thinkfinity Literacy Network, funded through a generous grant from Verizon Communications, is a collaboration of leading literacy organizations.

Its mission is to be a resource for all literacy-related information, linking literacy providers to the general public online and providing valuable information while encouraging collaboration and resource sharing.

The network uses technology to expand the reach of literacy information for increased awareness and understanding.

Reports on 2003 literacy study provide answers

Are American adults literate in health issues?

"The Health Literacy of America's Adults: Results from the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy" details results from the Health Literacy component of the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL). The report measures health literacy among American adults including their ability to read, understand, and apply health-related information in English.

To download the report, go to <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/>. Enter "health literacy" in the search box (near top of page).

Do adults with GEDs have high school-level literacy skills?

A recently released study from the GED Testing Service, "The Literacy of U.S. Adults with GED® Credentials: 2003 NAAL and 1992 NALS," provides evidence of the academic value of the GED. According to the study, adults with GEDs have literacy scores about equal to those of adults with high school diplomas who did not go on to postsecondary education. GED holders displayed significantly better scores on prose, document, and quantitative literacy tasks than did adults with less than a high school education, or just some high school.

Access the 50-page report at www.acenet.edu. Enter "literacy of U.S." in the search box (upper right).

Register now for free adult educators' workshops

The following workshops are available at no cost to all adult education teachers and tutors in Nevada on a space-available space. The trainings qualify for .5 credit toward renewal of Nevada's ABE Certificate of Performance and for .5 Inservice Renewal Credit for Nevada's Teaching License. In order to receive the credit, workshop participants must attend the six-hour workshop AND submit evidence showing they have completed a 1.5-hour follow-up activity within 30 days of workshop completion. Contact the host to reserve your spot!

Title, date, place, and contact	Workshop presenter, description, and objectives
<p>ESL Teacher-Learner Interactions and Task-based Listening</p> <p>10/13/07; Las Vegas Nita Russell-Latham Catholic Charities 702/693-6761 jlatham@catholiccharities.com</p>	<p>Kathleen Santopietro Weddel. Experienced or novice ESL teachers who work with adult learners at any level of proficiency will appreciate this workshop about the impact of classroom teacher talk. Using audio-taped sound bites, participants identify communication barriers and problems that can impact learning. The presenter will review techniques and guidelines from field research on teacher-learner interactions conducive to adult learning.</p> <p>Objectives: Identify categories of teacher-learner interaction including warm-up chats, direct instruction, directions, transitions, feedback, and comprehension checks. For each category of interaction, learn about and practice instructional strategies that encourage meaningful, level-appropriate, and engaging teacher talk. Review and take home five application activities to try in your classroom. The activities are designed to help you listen to the way you communicate with learners and to facilitate meaningful interactions.</p>
<p>What IS "Good" Teaching?</p> <p>11/17/07; Las Vegas Nita Russell-Latham Catholic Charities 702/693-6761 jlatham@catholiccharities.com</p>	<p>Claudia Bianca-DeBay. How do YOU define "good" teaching? More often than not, our definitions evolve from our personal beliefs, our values, and our own past experiences of learning, both negative and positive. Over the past several years this question has been researched in several countries. Five prominent perspectives of teaching have derived from 250 practitioners in the field. This workshop will explore these perspectives and invite you to explore your own. You may find yourself empathetic to one or more of these views and — more importantly — you will be given the opportunity to consciously choose a teaching perspective that fosters student learning and best teaching practices. This workshop is applicable for all teachers of ESL, ABS, or GED students.</p> <p>Objectives: Become aware of HOW you teach, explore other perspectives of teaching, and decide which perspectives work best for you and your students. Learn easy ways to improve your teaching practice using proven effective strategies such as content standards, student goal-setting and holistic alternative assessments. Make concrete plans that will incorporate your newly founded beliefs of what "good" teaching is.</p>
<p>Strategies, Techniques, Applications, and Lessons for Writing in the ESL, ABS, and GED Classroom (Part 1: Introduction)</p> <p>11/17/07; Reno Brad Deeds TMCC 775/829-9052 bdeeds@tmcc.edu</p> <p>12/1/07; Las Vegas Fay Savedra-Gamboa College of Southern NV 702/651-4722 fay.savedra@csn.edu</p>	<p>Gail Hettich. New and experienced teachers of all levels will learn how to create practical, easy-to-use writing lessons that are consistent with Nevada's Content Standards and require minimal preparation time. Participants will practice a variety of strategies and techniques for teaching writing.</p> <p>Objectives: Practice active-learning strategies that involve all students. Create writing lessons that can be adapted to every student's level. Learn a variety of vocabulary development group activities that promote writing development.</p> <div data-bbox="467 1501 1531 1736" style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 10px;"><p><i>"Everyone deserves a life of inner peace and self-satisfaction. A life one can be proud of and is able to utilize as an example for others. A story that is not told is a story that will never be heard, and experiences not shared are words of counsel that will never be taught. It is through people's efforts, yours and mine, that we are able to reach out and touch a heart of someone who may feel all alone in the wilderness."</i></p><p>—Stephanie Acosta-Patel, GED student, Irvington Learning Center, Houston, TX <i>Literacy Links</i>, June 2007</p></div>

An investment in ESOL instruction is an investment in workforce development:
improving the English language skills of new labor market entrants

strengthens not just their own earning power, but the local economy as a whole.

— "Lost in Translation," Center for an Urban Future and the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy
November 2006. www.lacnyc.org/resources/adult/LostInTranslation.pdf

This professional development project is a leadership activity funded by a grant from the Nevada State Department of Education, Workforce Investment Act, Title II (Adult Education and Family Literacy). There is no discrimination or denial of participation on the basis of race, color, sex, age, religion or religious creed, national origin, sexual orientation, ancestry, or disability.



Key upcoming events

Additional events at www.literacynet.org/nevada (click on calendar)

November 1 Deadline to answer "Call for Presenters" for MPAEA Conference
April 23-26, 2008, Salt Lake City. <http://www.uaacce.org/>

What: Southern Nevada CATESOL Conference, October 12-13, Las Vegas, NV

Contact: www.snvcatesol.org, Regina Marshall-Smith, 702/254-5777

Join teachers and ELL educators from K-12, postsecondary, and adult education for workshops based on strategies, techniques, and methods for highlighting English language learning in the classroom. Presentations are designed to provide teachers with real lessons, materials, and strategies that can be easily applied to existing classes and/or curriculum.

What: UT Corrections Education Workshop, October 19, Draper, UT

Contact: <http://www.uaacce.org/> (then scroll to bottom of page)

What: AAACE 2007 Conference, October 30-November 2, Norfolk, VA

Contact: www.aaace.org

What: ProLiteracy Worldwide Annual Conference, November 7-10, Alexandria, VA

Contact: www.proliteracy.org/conference, conference@proliteracy.org, 315/422-9121 ext. 352

What: Effective Transitions in Adult Education, NCTN, November 8-9, Providence, RI

Contact: <http://www.collegetransition.org/novconference.html>, nctn@worlded.org, 617/482-9485

What: California Reading Association 41st Annual Conference, Nov. 8-10, Sacramento, CA

Contact: 714/435-1983