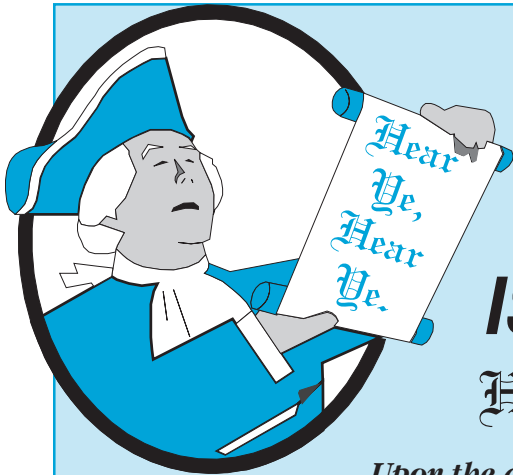


BACK TO BASICS

FOR FLORIDA ADULT BASIC EDUCATION PRACTITIONERS



THE SUMMIT IS COMING, THE SUMMIT IS COMING

Hear Ye, Hear Ye.

Upon the days and nights of the 30 and 31 of March, in the year of 2004, the Adult Education Practitioners' Committee will host the first ever statewide ABE Summit in the fair city of Tampa, in the fair state of Florida, in the grand land of the United States.

The Honorable Committee cordially invites you to attend this inaugural event.

Now that you have been formally invited, mark your calendars and start making reservations. The ABE Summit is something you will not want to miss. Seven primary areas of interest will be highlighted. The Initiative and Directives for ABE Programs will be addressed, including reading, funding, and the Governor's initiatives, as well as, legislative issues. The ever-expanding realm of Distance Learning will be explored, as will the traditional need for fine-tuning Assessment and the application of assessment. Sessions on Organizing the ABE Classroom will provide information on implementing effective group instruction, mentoring productive volunteers, scheduling to fit it all in, and surviving the paperwork. Techniques for effectively teaching Special Needs Populations, such as LD, LEP, and low functioning students will be shared, as will information on Family Literacy, the FCAT and Grant Writing. Whether you are a teacher in the classroom, a volunteer tutor or an administrator, there will something for you to learn and something for you to contribute.

Though all are invited, only 100 shall be allowed to attend. The Committee wants this Summit to be interactive; YOU will become an integral part of what happens. So don't waste time. For more information about reservations and expenses, contact Lynn Cunill at (850) 922-5343 or cunill@ACE-Leon.org.

Don't let the Summit come and go without you!



PARENT AND CHILD ACTIVITY

Brain Boosters from Scholastic

By Bob Barlow

Give your mind and your child's mind a workout with these writing prompts.

What you need: pen/paper

What to do:

Put your head together with your child and answer these questions.

1. If dogs had a country all to themselves, what would be the words to their national anthem?
2. Do you know the details surrounding the invention of the ice cream sundae? Neither do we, but don't let that stop you: Write a one-page play about this very important moment in history.
3. Come up with ten new uses for popcorn (other than eating it).
4. Give three absolutely ridiculous, laughably false explanations for the sky being blue.
5. Some people still believe that the earth is flat! Whether or not you agree with this theory, come up with as much evidence as you can to support it.
6. The items in your refrigerator have gone on strike and posted a list of demands (right next to the mustard). What are their demands?

Learning Benefits

- Develops creative writing
- Strengthens problem solving
- Fosters imagination and creativity

Source: <http://www.scholastic.com>
The Families section provides activities and links for learning with your child.

What is new for the Adult Basic Education Practitioners' Committee for 2003-2004?

The ABE Practitioners' Committee began the year with a bang at the ACE of Florida Conference. Their display booth was a popular hang-out, with many happy practitioners getting their own free copies of Get Your Message Out Marketing Guides, The Adult Beginning Reader Guides, Learning Activities Guides, Resource Guides, and Assessment Guides, as well as *Back to Basics* newsletters and *The Adult Basic Classroom* staff development papers. Over 500 resource books and CDs were shared with practitioners attending the conference! That's good business for both the Committee and the practitioners.

The Practitioners' Committee also provided two presentations at the conference. Lisa Jones presented "The ABE Classroom Comes Together." Lisa presented information on using group instruction and cooperative learning in the adult basic education classroom and then participants joined in to share ideas and resources tested in their own classrooms. It seemed that using group activities with students of varying levels, pairing students for successful work and the daily organization of the classroom were all areas the participants had struggled with and wanted more information about. Again, there were freebies: all participants received the ABE Florida Resource CD-ROM.

"Low to No Cost Marketing Ideas" was presented by Carmen Votey-Mills. Carmen shared tips and ideas for promoting adult education programs to elected officials, the business community and current and potential students.

Carmen's ideas included "Welcome to My Class" packets for students, creative ways to keep elected officials involved in adult education and inexpensive tools for getting the word out to the community on all the wonderful and important services offered by adult education programs in meeting the literacy needs of Florida's citizens.

The ABE Practitioners' Committee has begun to work on the goals of the committee for the 2003-2004 school year. Included in these goals are the revision of the Learning Activities Guides for Reading, Language and Mathematics and the Resource Guide for the Adult Basic Education Practitioner; the continuation of the quarterly *Back to Basics* newsletter and *The Adult Basic Classroom* staff development publication; continuation of the ABE Florida web page and listserv; the planning and conducting of the first ABE Florida Summit for adult basic education practitioners; and the promotion of Distance Learning in the ABE classroom. It is clear that listening to practitioners, students' and business leaders' needs will keep the Committee quite busy this year.

Please remember that the primary goal of the Committee is to communicate with YOU, adult basic education practitioners, and support and provide resources for YOU. Anyone with ideas or suggestions for the committee is encouraged to contact Lynn Cunill at cunill@ACE-Leon.org or call (850) 922-5343. The Committee welcomes your input on existing projects as well as suggestions for new ones.

ABE Practitioners' Committee Members 2003-2004

Barbara Van Camp, Facilitator

Leon County Schools
Adult & Community Education

Debbie Bevan

Indian River Community College

Lynn Cunill

Leon County Schools
Adult & Community Education

Mary Davis

Washington-Holmes Technical Center
Washington County School Board

Sandra Davis

Tom P. Haney Technical Center
Bay County Public Schools

Denise Horne

Goodwill Industries Big Bend, Inc.
Tallahassee, Florida

Barbara Jones

Okaloosa-
Walton Community College

Dr. Rochelle Kenyon

Ex Officio
Bridges to Practice

Jan Lichtenwalter

Brevard County School Board

Rose Martin

D. A. Dorsey Educational Center
Miami-Dade County Public Schools

Linda Neel

Jackson County Schools

Dolores Palladino

Sarasota County Schools

Dr. Kim Rogers

Central Area Adult Education Center
Brevard County School Board

Trish Rowland

School District of Palm Beach County

Barbara Spears-Corbett

Miami-Dade County Public Schools

Robert Thomas

Florida Community College
at Jacksonville

Ruthann Tormey-Martin

Broward County Schools Vocational,
Adult & Community Education

Sheryl Walden

Department of Corrections

Workforce Education

Dorothy Bouie

Florida Department of Education
Office of Workforce Education

Nancy Cordill

Florida Department of Education
Office of Workforce Education

Ron Froman

Executive Director
Florida Human Resources Dev., Inc.

Marcia Maxwell

Florida Department of Education
Office of Workforce Education

Bob Wofford

Florida Department of Education
Office of Workforce Education

Essentials of Learning to Read

Source: Florida Technet Inservice found at <http://www.floridatechnet.org/inservice/abe/reading/comp2.html>

Reading failure is preventable.
Reading failure is preventable.
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Reading failure is preventable.
Reading failure is preventable.

Are you wondering if the writer of this article fell asleep at the switch? Actually, marketing professionals say that in order to get a message out, it must be communicated at least seven times. The message is important. You can help children and you can help adults who are already experiencing reading problems. It is important that you as a teacher believe that! You can make a difference for even your most frustrated student.

Looking at the Research

Illiteracy has a direct negative effect on the quality of life through: lower wages; lost opportunities; lost access to fundamental information regarding nutrition, health, and safety. Literacy, on the other hand, is critical to keeping pace with the daily discoveries and insights of the information age, for the common good and for personal growth (*Teaching Reading Sourcebook*, Consortium on Reading Excellence or CORE).

Dr. Joseph Torgesen, a research professor at Florida State University, wrote an article for the *Bridges to Practice* newsletter's "Practitioners' Points" entitled "What Science Has Taught Us About the Skills Needed to be a Good Reader." In it, Dr. Torgesen notes that it is not an easy task to help adults acquire useful, functional reading skills because of their limited time, impatience with their own learning, and lack of energy after coping with complex lives. Perhaps they ask too much of themselves. Children, on the average, take three or four years of instruction and practice in reading to become skillful enough to begin reading for enjoyment and learning. Fortunately, adults usually do not start from zero, so your job as teacher is to start where they are, and give them a boost to the next level.

What Is Reading?

There are five basic components of the reading process: Phonemic Awareness; Phonics; Fluency; Vocabulary; and Comprehension. Countless research studies show that to read, a person must have:

- An awareness of phonemic (sounds) segments in words;
- An understanding of phonics (how sounds relate to written words) and an ability to decode through phonics skills;
- Fluency in reading beyond just decoding words;
- A sufficient vocabulary and
- Comprehension skills - the ability to read to learn rather than just learning to read.

Getting Started with Improving the Reading Process

Some of your students may need remediation in phonemic awareness and phonics skills. Once a reader has these skills, he or she can begin to identify new words they have never encountered in text before, and after doing this several times, the brain forms a pathway, allowing the word to be recognized instantly. This automatic recognition or what is sometimes called "sight" words, gives the reader more energy to concentrate on thinking about the meaning of what is being read.

To help adults improve their reading skills, it is important to know the level of skills they already possess. According to Torgesen, "the best kind of diagnosis for adults is a diagnosis of what they don't know and cannot do."

If they cannot "sound out" single syllable words, then you as the teacher will need to help them understand the way letters represent sounds in words and give them practice sounding out words they can't read from memory. Without this skill, they will not be able to read challenging text independently.

If students can consistently sound out single syllable words, but struggle with multi-syllable words, you will need to help them with strategies to break down these more difficult words into manageable parts.

Adults need help in building lists of

words they recognize by sight at the same time that they are working on multi-syllable word strategies. One way to do this is to have them read and re-read short passages several times, each time trying to read a little faster. This "repeated reading" is one of the best methods to increase reading fluency.

Many strategies may help students increase comprehension; one of the more useful ways in expanding their vocabulary is to help them think about the overall meaning of a text, and infer the meaning of words while they read. Identifying words they will encounter in job-related reading is a good strategy.

Teaching Reading to Adults - Is It Different?

All good teaching, whether for adults or children, is responsive in nature. For adults, that means that you must be sensitive to helping your students meet their own goals and organize their learning activities to meet their present life needs. Students want to acquire content and learn those skills needed for changing their lives for the better.

In order to assist your adult learners, you should:

- Involve learners in planning and implementing learning activities;
- Draw upon learners' experiences as a resource;
- Cultivate self-direction in learners;
- Create a climate that encourages and supports learning, and enhances learner self-esteem;
- Foster a spirit of collaboration in the learning setting - seat students so that they can see one another;
- Develop and use instructional plans based on students' lives;
- Encourage learners to work in small groups; and
- Orient lessons toward problem-solving.

Visit the Florida Technet website to complete this web-based training. There is a wonderful printable chart on "Effective Reading Instruction," more detailed information on phonemic awareness and phonics, and the complete text of Dr. Torgesen's article.

THE RAREFIED ATMOSPHERE OF RESPECT

By Frances Riotte

An Adult Education teacher might want to claim Rodney Dangerfield's signature complaint, "I don't get no respect," as his own. But why? Let's analyze that remark and then attempt to help that teacher build an atmosphere of respect in the classroom, sending Mr. Dangerfield and his comment back to the world of stand-up comedy.

The first chink in the armor of our mythical teacher is the word "I". Classroom respect (and respect in any relationship) is a multi-directional dynamic—teacher to student, student to teacher, and student to student.

Next, our mythical teacher must be faulted with a grammatical error (that double negative) in the complaint. Students' respect does rest upon a teacher demonstrating competence and control of adult education subjects including spoken English.

Finally, focus on that word "get." No one "gets" respect in the sense that we "get" a paycheck. Respect only comes as a product of effort and standards.

Now comes the surprise! Mutual respect is teachable. Try this method in a series of successive class meetings. At the least, you and your students will learn a few things. But at the most, you will create the atmosphere of respect for which most teachers yearn.

A COOPERATIVE LEARNING UNIT: RESPECT

SESSION ONE:

Skill Focus: Dictionary use, synonyms

Materials: dictionaries, chart paper, poster board, markers

1. Assemble an array of dictionary references at all reading levels (collegiate, crossword, elementary, thesaurus; CD-ROM) and pose the question: *What does the word "respect" mean?*
2. List all answers, regardless of source, on chart paper taped to the wall. Combine duplicate meanings with class concurrence.
3. Ask one student to create a poster listing all of those meanings and post it in your classroom throughout the unit.

SESSION TWO:

Skill Focus: Cooperation to produce a group result

Materials: Chart paper, poster board, markers, old magazines

1. Raise the question: *What qualities in a person earn respect?*
2. Divide the class into groups of four students and allot 5 minutes for each group to come up with five attributes that earn their respect.
3. List *all* attributes on a piece of chart paper. Combine duplicates with class concurrence. Relate the attributes to the definitions from Session One.
4. Ask one student to compile the attributes in a poster to be displayed in the classroom.
5. Invite students to take home magazines to find and cut out pictures that demonstrate these attributes. These pictures can be affixed to the poster.

SESSION THREE:

Skill Focus: Antonyms, vocabulary

Materials: chart paper, markers

1. Brainstorm with the entire group ways in which disrespect manifests itself in the classroom (swearing, ignoring, slouching, hit-

ting, interrupting, etc.). List and number these disrespectful behaviors on a chart taped to the wall. Tape a blank chart next to it.

2. Form groups of three students and direct them to come up with behaviors opposed to the listed displays of disrespect.
3. Chart these opposites on the blank paper. (You can spark interest by offering a prize (candy, small notebooks, fun-design pencils) to the group that comes up with the most positive behaviors.

SESSION FOUR:

Skill focus: Choosing a subject for writing

Material: Your own essay on the topic

1. Introduce the essay topic: *Describe a person you respect and explain why you respect him or her.*
2. Read your own essay to the class and draw comments from them about your choice of a respected person.
3. Ask the students to name persons whom they respect. (If they name you, celebrate!)
4. Allow time until the next class session for students to develop a draft of an essay on their chosen person. (This person could be one discussed in class or anyone else in their experience.)
5. Have the students complete the essays according to your own personal method of practicing essay writing.

SESSION FIVE:

Skill focus: developing self-esteem, speedwriting

Materials: The charts completed in Sessions One and Two

1. Introduce the essay topic: *Why Should I Be Respected?*
2. Review the definitions of respect and the qualities of respected persons.
3. Allow time (ten minutes) for students to develop a draft in class. Explain that this is a speedwriting exercise; there will be no criticism of grammatical and spelling errors.
4. Write along with the students.
5. Invite volunteers to share all or part of what they wrote. Share from your own writing. *Do not collect this work.*
6. Suggest students save what they have written in a place where they can read it from time to time.

SESSION SIX:

Skill focus: Problem solving, concept of voting

Material: Imagination

1. Ask the students to develop a signal that you and they can use when anyone feels they are being treated disrespectfully.
2. List suggestions on the board.
3. Discuss options in voting: voice vote; show of hands; secret ballot.
4. Take a vote.
5. Implement the signal decided upon in future class sessions.

Cement all these efforts with a contest to create a poster illustrating the signal for "Respect Me." Laminate or frame this poster because it will serve as a class traffic sign and will let newcomers know that respect is serious business in this class. It should always be displayed.

Websites

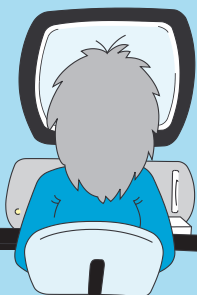
<http://www.floridatechnet.org/>

The Florida Technet website provides many services for teachers. The Information Exchange provides a place for members to collaborate with other adult educators, teachers, students, practitioners and agencies. Here's where you'll find access to chat rooms, bulletin boards and Listservs. The TechNet Living Library houses links to information in over 20 topics relating to Adult and Community Education, including GED Connections. TechNet Workplace provides links to employment throughout Florida and the country. The Professional Development Center offers over 28 Web-Based Trainings, including the "Comprehensive Reading and Strategies Help" highlighted in this newsletter and the recently "Understanding the Adult Basic Education Student!" All professional training sessions provide continuing education credit. Also provided are links to Adult High School, Bridges to Practice, Florida Adult ESOL Website, Family Literacy Taskforce, Operation College, PAC: Positive Action through Cooperation, R2TDC, Region 3 RPDAC.

<http://www.scholastic.com/schoolage/activities>

The Scholastic webpage provides much information to families with children. There are age-appropriate activities in math and reading, parenting advice, development information and, of course, products from Scholastic to buy. The learning activities featured in this newsletter came from the Scholastic webpage. All of the activities are geared toward children, but many can be successfully adapted for adult use.

Also helpful are the activities for parents and children to do together.



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS...

Q: Have the frameworks and checklists for ABE changed with the 2003-2004 school year?

A: Yes and no. The frameworks have been updated based on input from practitioners around the state. The updated frameworks are available on the Florida Department of Education web page at http://www.firn.edu/doe/workforce/adult_ed.htm. The checklists are in the process of being updated.

Q: I keep hearing people talk about phonemic awareness. What is it and how does it impact an adult learner?

*A: Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear, identify and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words. Although phonemic awareness is a widely used term in reading, it is often misunderstood. One misunderstanding is that phonemic awareness and phonics are the same thing. Phonemic awareness is **not** phonics. Phonemic awareness is the understanding that the sounds of **spoken** language work together to make words. Phonics is the understanding that there is a predictable relationship between phonemes and graphemes, the letters that represent those sounds in **written** language. Phonemic awareness, then, is the knowledge that supports the mastery of phonics. We all speak and pronounce sounds and words; once we do that correctly, we can begin to see the connection between sounds and letters, and then read.*

Source: *Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read*. This booklet was written in September of 2001 by The Partnership for Reading, which includes the National Institute for Literacy, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and the U.S. Department of Education. EXR0007B. It is available online at: <http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/publications/PFRbooklet.pdf>.

For more information on phonemic awareness and resources for teaching reading, utilize the web-based training at <http://www.floridatechnet.org/inservice/abe/reading/> entitled Comprehension Strategies. This web-based training will provide you with information and resources that will help you help your students become better readers. This web training includes reading lesson plans, background on teaching reading, brain research, helping the adult help the child and other topics of interest to adult education practitioners teaching reading.

Your Comments Are Important

We hope you enjoy this issue of **Back To Basics**. If you have any comments or questions, please contact: Lynn Cunill, Leon County Schools, Adult & Community Education, 283 Trojan Trail, Tallahassee, FL 32311, (850) 922-5343, cunill@ACE-Leon.org

Reading Activity - Grade Level: 0.0-1.9

ABE Benchmark: 1.2 Recognize that letters make words
2.1 Identify letters of the alphabet
2.4 Identify rhyming patterns

Build a Word: How many words can you make?

By Wiley Blevins, as published on the Scholastic website, http://www.scholastic.com/schoolage/activities/k_2/buildword.htm

What you need:

Index cards, paper, pencil

What to do:

- Using index cards, encourage your student to help you write the following letters or letter groups, one per card: at, an, ap, et, en, ell, it, in, ick, ot, op, ock, un, ut, ub, b, d, f, h, l, m, n, p, r, s, t, w.
- Show your student one letter-pair, such as the “at” card. Then have the student use the single-letter cards to make words with “at.” Invite the student to choose a card, place it in front of the “at,” then try to sound out the word.
- Help your student as needed by blending or singing the sounds together. If it is a real word, encourage your student to write the word on a sheet of paper. You can use the word lists you and your student create for added practice in class or at home.

Learning Benefits

- Develops understanding of the way letters and sounds combine to make words
- Encourages playing with words
- Provides practice with writing

Math Activity - Grade level: 0.0-1.9

ABE Benchmark: 1.4 Understand basic concepts (less, more)
3.2 Solve 1 and 2 digit addition problems without regrouping

Take 10! Add to win in this card game!

By Karol L. Yeatts, as published on the Scholastic website, http://www.scholastic.com/schoolage/activities/k_2/take10.htm

What you need:

One shuffled deck of cards with face cards removed

What to do:

- Invite your student to stack the cards facedown in a pile.
- Together, decide who will collect cards that are “less than 10” and who will collect cards that are “10 or more.” (Eventually, this game can be played between two students instead of between teacher and student.)
- To take a turn, draw two cards. Add the numbers on the cards out loud. (Example: Three plus two equals five.)
- If the sum of the numbers is less than 10, the “less than 10” player wins the cards. If the sum is 10 or more, the “10 or more” player wins the cards.
- Take turns until all cards have been played.
- The player with the most cards wins.

Learning Benefits

- Provides practice with addition

BACK TO BASICS

Back to Basics is always looking for good ideas.

If you have an article or activity you believe would be helpful to other adult educators, please e-mail it to Lynn Cunill at cunill@ACE-Leon.org or mail it to 283 Trojan Trail, Tallahassee, FL 32311 Attn: Lynn Cunill. We look forward to hearing from you.

Leon County Schools

ACE Adult & Community Education

283 Trojan Trail • Tallahassee, FL 32311 • (850)922-5343

www.ACE-Leon.org



Florida Department of Education

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