Teaching Adults to Read: Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles

Participant Handbook
This guide and presentation are supported by funds from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education through CFDA 84.257T, LINCS Regional Resource Center Grant No. X257T06001. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education. No official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education of any product, commodity, service or enterprise mentioned in this course is intended or should be inferred.
Contents

Contents ........................................................................................................................................... i
Workshop Description ................................................................................................................... 1
Objectives ....................................................................................................................................... 1
Agenda ............................................................................................................................................ 1
What Is Reading .............................................................................................................................. 2
   Major Components or Aspects of Reading Instruction ............................................................... 2
   Publications and Resources ....................................................................................................... 3
Reading Profiles ............................................................................................................................. 5
   Activity: Sample Adult Education Student—Ed .......................................................................... 5
   Activity: Sample Adult Education Student—Ruth ....................................................................... 6
   Adult Reading Components Study (ARCS) NCSALL Research Brief ........................................ 7
   ARCS Clusters ......................................................................................................................... 11
Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles Web Site ................................................................. 12
   Match an ASRP Profile ............................................................................................................ 12
   Activity: Match an ASRP Profile .............................................................................................. 12
   Activity: Match an ASRP Profile—Ed and Ruth ...................................................................... 13
   Ruth—Suggestions for Instruction for ASRP Profile 4 Learners ............................................ 14
   Ed—Suggestions for Instruction for ASRP Profile 5 Learners .................................................. 15
   Learner Questionnaire ............................................................................................................. 17
Next Steps ..................................................................................................................................... 19
Workshop Description

Learn how to navigate the Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles Web site and use the Match-an-ASRP-Profile feature to access reading profiles that you can use to assess students’ reading strengths and weaknesses. Review the research and assessment tools; learn how to use the site and the profiles to plan reading instruction.

Objectives

This workshop is designed to increase your awareness, knowledge, and use of research-based practices for adult reading assessment and instruction.

After completing the workshop, you will be able to:
- Name the uses of reading profiles
- Explain what the Adult Reading Components Study (ARCS) shows about adult learners
- Use the Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles Web site
- Use assessment results to create reader profiles and to inform instruction

Agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:15</td>
<td>Welcome and Introductions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:25</td>
<td>Reading Profiles and the Adult Reading Components Study (ARCS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:40</td>
<td>Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles Web Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:20</td>
<td>Using Reading Profiles to Plan Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:40</td>
<td>Closing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Is Reading

Major Components or Aspects of Reading Instruction

Alphabetics is the whole process of using the letters in an alphabet to represent spoken words. It includes an awareness that words are made up of basic sounds (phonemes), and knowledge of the relationship between these basic sounds and the letters used to represent them (word analysis or phonics). Students demonstrate their phonemic awareness with tasks that require the manipulation of basic sounds in words, removing sounds from words for example (cat becomes at when the first sound in removed), or adding sounds (at becomes cat). Phonics instruction teaches individual letter-sound correspondences (the sounds made by the letters b, t, and oa, for example), and how individual letter-sound combinations are blended together to form words, b-oa-t). Word analysis or decoding instruction includes phonics as well as other ways to recognize words. Sight word recognition, for example, is taught along with phonics. Common and irregularly spelled words (was, want, to) are taught so that they are recognized on sight as whole words rather than being analyzed into smaller parts and blended. Morphology, or the use of prefixes, suffixes, and compounding to form words, may also be taught as an aid to word recognition.

Fluency in reading is the ability to read with speed and ease. When readers are fluent, they read accurately, without making mistakes in pronunciation, and with appropriate rate, intonation, and rhythm.

Vocabulary is a term used to refer to all of the words in a language. One person’s vocabulary consists of all the words the person understands or knows the meaning of. Vocabulary words in reading instruction are usually those words that a person is studying in order to learn their meanings.

Reading comprehension is understanding a text that is read, or the process of “constructing meaning” from a text. Comprehension is a construction process because it involves all of the elements of the reading process working together to come up with what a text means. Readers interact with and become engaged in a text as ideas from the text are combined with their own prior knowledge or experience.

Motivation is the need and desire to learn to read. Motivation is especially important in adult literacy because in addition to an initial desire to learn to read, adults must set aside the time necessary to receive effective reading instruction, and overcome any embarrassment resulting from the stigma associated with seeking help for poor reading skills.


Publications and Resources

The Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS) disseminates publications and resources for families and educators of learners across the lifespan. LINCS Regional Resource Centers, Resource Collections, and Discussion Lists provide information on a wide variety of literacy and relevant topics, issues, and resources. As national attention has increasingly focused on the quality of instruction and educational resources, LINCS products provide quality information that is based on scientifically based research.

A Summary of Scientifically Based Research Principles: Teaching Adults to Read

This booklet summarizes the emerging principles and trends in adult reading instruction identified in a report of the Reading Research Working Group: Research-Based Principles for Adult Basic Education Reading Instruction. It presents the results of the Working Group's review of adult reading instruction research; it is not intended to offer extensive examples of how the research can be translated into practice.

Research-Based Principles for Adult Basic Education Reading Instruction

This report presents results from an analysis of the adult basic education reading instruction research base providing the best information available about how adults learn to read. It focuses on principles that can be derived from the research and outlines a research agenda for the future of educational research.

What Content-Area Teachers Should Know About Adolescent Literacy

This publication helps 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, and suggests some methods of building adolescent reading and writing skills in the classroom.

Applying Research in Reading Instruction for Adults: First Steps for Teachers

This publication provides an introduction to research-based principles of reading instruction for instructors in adult education and literacy classes. It is intended as a first resource for those with little knowledge of reading instruction and is written with the needs of teachers in mind, those who want to improve their ability to provide reading instruction for adults in family literacy and other basic education programs. This volume begins by building background knowledge of important concepts and principles and then suggests practical ways to apply research recommendations to the adult learning setting.

Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles (Web site)

ASRP provides research-based assessment strategies to improve reading instruction for Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Adult Secondary Education (ASE) learners. Use the Web site to:

- learn about the components of reading
- learn about reading profiles and instruction
- watch videos of a teacher giving diagnostic reading tests to an adult learner
- download free tests with directions for administering and interpreting them
- match your adult learners' test scores to research-based adult reading profiles
- get instructional suggestions for teaching your learners based on their profile matches
- access additional resources and references on reading, assessment, and instruction

For more information visit: http://lincs.ed.gov/readingprofiles/
Learning to Achieve: A Review of the Research Literature on Serving Adults with Learning Disabilities

The six topics covered in the review—assessment, English language learners, teaching methods, accommodations, transition, and impact of LD—address needs and issues consistently raised by service providers working in the field.

Learning to Achieve: A Professional's Guide to Educating Adults with Learning Disabilities

This companion guide is a resource for professionals who work with adults with LD. The six chapters cover relevant characteristics of adults with learning disabilities matched with descriptions and examples of practical intervention strategies. A major theme in research and practice is that effective interventions for this heterogeneous group are appropriate for all individuals who struggle with learning.

What is Scientifically Based Research? A Guide for Teachers

This brochure provides a brief introduction to understanding and using scientifically based research. Teachers can strengthen their instruction and protect their students' valuable time in school by scientifically evaluating claims about teaching methods and recognizing quality research when they see it.

Using Research and Reason in Education

This publication provides guidance on how to recognize scientifically based instructional strategies, and how to use the concepts of research in the classroom. It offers a primer for those skills that will allow teachers to become independent evaluators.

Understanding and Applying Research in the Classroom: A Guide for Today's Educators

This self-paced online course introduces users to information about scientific research and its relevance to educational decision making.

It is important for teachers to recognize credible information about instructional strategies in order to make informed decisions about which teaching methods to use in their classroom. This course will increase educators' awareness of education research methods and the characteristics of credible scientific research. It will help educators develop the ability to determine which research findings can be applied in their educational practice and are most likely to have a positive impact.

For more information visit http://lincs.ed.gov/pd/applyingresearch.html

To download copies of the publications or to learn more about these materials, visit http://lincs.ed.gov and click on Publications.
Activity: Sample Adult Education Student—Ed

- 33 years old, single, born in Trinidad
- Second time in adult education program
- Low socioeconomic status (SES)
- Unemployed auto mechanic
- Wants a GED to get a good job
- Comprehension Score: Grade Equivalent (GE) 6

Directions: Use the slide to fill in Ed’s profile scores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Recognition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What might these additional scores suggest? What do you think Ed needs to work on? What do you see as his strengths? What do you see as his weaknesses?
Activity: Sample Adult Education Student—Ruth

- 31-year-old native English speaker who was born and attended school through the 9th grade in Tennessee
- Has a GED but poor reading and math skills
- Diagnosed with a learning disability
- Comprehension Score: GE 6

Directions: Use the slide to fill in Ruth’s profile scores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ed</th>
<th>Ruth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Analysis</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Recognition</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Reading</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Vocabulary</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What do these additional scores suggest? Do you think Ed and Ruth are about the same when it comes to reading? Why or why not? How do you think they differ?
Adult Reading Components Study (ARCS)
NCSALL Research Brief

by John Strucker and Rosalind Davidson

NCSALL’s Adult Reading Components Study (ARCS), conducted by John Strucker and Rosalind Davidson at Harvard Graduate School of Education, was designed to describe the various types or clusters of readers enrolled in US adult basic education (ABE) programs, including those enrolled in ABE classes and those enrolled in classes of English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). The goal of the study was to help practitioners and policymakers understand who adult learners are as readers in order to match instruction to their specific reading needs.

Nine hundred and fifty-five randomly-selected learners (676 ABE and 279 ESOL) were interviewed and assessed at learning centers in Texas, Tennessee, New York, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. They were given a battery of reading and language assessments to determine their instructional needs. Over half of this testing was done by local ABE and ESOL practitioners who were trained to administer the battery and conduct the interviews in a uniform manner. Each of the students in the study was tested in phonological awareness, rapid naming, working memory, word recognition, oral reading, spelling, vocabulary, and background knowledge. Researchers also interviewed students about their educational history and reading habits.

In this research brief, we present some preliminary findings from the ARCS. These findings and implications for practice related to the findings are presented in two sections: 1. ABE Clusters, and 2. Native Spanish Speakers’ (ESOL) Clusters. Following that, we refer readers to additional resources based on the ARCS.

**ABE Clusters**

For the 676 students enrolled in ABE classes, 71 percent were native speakers of English, 51 percent had repeated at least one grade, and 22 percent reported having trouble with reading in grades K–3. Of those who grew up in the U.S., 53 percent reported receiving either Chapter 1 (reading support) and/or Special Education help in K–12.

The mean word recognition score for these students was a 6.6 grade equivalent (GE). Their mean oral reading mastery level was GE 7.9, and their mean receptive vocabulary score was equivalent to a GE 6.5. On a test of background knowledge, the mean for the group was below average range for the test, and the mean score on a word analysis test (Woodcock-Reading Mastery Word Attack) placed this group of students in the 26th percentile.

From the 676 adult basic education students assessed in this study, the researchers identified 10 “clusters” (students with similar reading profiles) in three groups. The table below details the three common groups and the clusters within each group for the 676 ABE students in this study.
Table 1: Percentage of ABE Students in the Ten Clusters in Three Common Groups of Reading Skill Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups and Clusters of Reading Skill Levels</th>
<th>Percentage of Students in ABE Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1: GED / Pre-GED</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 1: Strong GED</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 2: Pre-GED with Vocabulary/Background Information Needs</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 3: Pre-GED with Vocabulary/Spelling/Rate Fluency) Needs</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2: Intermediate Students</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 4: High Intermediates with Difficulties in Print Skills/Rate</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 5: Intermediates with Stronger Print than Meaning Skills</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 6: Intermediates with Low Reading Rate</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 7: Low Intermediates</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 8: Low Intermediates/Should-Be-in-ESOL</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3: Lower Level/Beginning Students</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 9: Beginners</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 10: Reading/Rate Impaired</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In general, many adult basic education students below the GED level have reading skills similar to those of children at risk for reading difficulty. Phonemic awareness problems that existed in childhood persisted into adulthood. Their reading comprehension and reading rate (fluency) seem to have stalled at middle school levels. Perhaps this is because, although some received extra help with reading in the primary grades from Chapter 1 or special education teachers, few received such help in middle or high school. Because their reading was stalled at middle school levels, their background knowledge and vocabulary also top off at that level.

Some of the specific findings about this group, and the implications for practice related to each finding, are listed below:

- **GED-level and low-level/beginning readers have different reading profiles from intermediate readers.**
  
  **Implication:** GED group needs help in passing the test and building skills (in preparation for post-secondary education). Low level/beginning students, because of poor phonemic awareness and word recognition skills, need direct, systematic, sequential instruction in these skills.

- **In the intermediate group, who comprise the largest percentage of adult students, students appear to have learned some word attack skills; they know basic phonics, but don't make strong use of those skills.**
Implication: The primary needs for intermediates are increasing fluency and developing a more literate (above grade equivalent 4–5) vocabulary and background knowledge. Without middle school background knowledge in history, geography, science, and math, these students have an inadequate preparation for the GED or for post-secondary education. For the intermediate group of adult students, practitioners should focus on increasing students' reading fluency (using oral reading) and on acquiring background knowledge and vocabulary.

The researchers also advocate for further research aimed at identifying strategies for teaching vocabulary to help students achieve accelerated growth in reading.

**Native Spanish Speakers (ESOL) Clusters (Analyzing Spanish Speakers English Reading Skills)**

Of the 279 ESOL enrollees tested in the ARCS, 78% were native speakers of Spanish. They were interviewed in Spanish and given both English and Spanish reading components tests. The interview included questions on the learner’s childhood educational history; Spanish reading problems, if any; parents’ levels of education/years living in the US; time spent studying English; home and work literacy practices and spoken language use in Spanish and English; educational goals; and health.

The researchers used the data from four English tests and five Spanish tests to create clusters of similar learners. While the size of the sample used in this analysis means that these findings shouldn't be generalized across all Spanish speakers, they can be suggestive. Key findings from this analysis and related implications include:

- **Contrary to what many ESOL teachers told the ARCS researchers to expect, more than 80% of the native Spanish speakers had adequate or better native language literacy skills.**

  Implication: For many of those students, who have adequate-to-strong native language literacy skills, an “English-as-a-Foreign-Language” (EFL) approach might produce faster growth than traditional survival/conversational ESOL approaches. These students should be given the opportunity to apply their literacy and school-based skills to the task of learning English. This might mean more formal EFL courses that teach grammar and vocabulary sequentially, using basic EFL texts as well as materials taken from real-world contexts. For these already literate adults, increased emphasis on reading and writing English may actually facilitate their acquisition of English oral-aural skills.

- **Unlike the ABE enrollees discussed previously, ESOL Spanish speakers’ reading ability in Spanish was directly related to years of Spanish school completion: the more years completed, the stronger their skills. It is also possible that their years of school completion in Spanish are related to the speed of English skills acquisition.**

  Implication: Most of these students were did not have reading disabilities as children. As discussed above, students with strong skills in Spanish might benefit from a more formal EFL approach, as if they were normally developing high school students taking English as a foreign language.
All participants, regardless of level, were surprisingly weak on English consonant sounds.

Implication: Literacy programs often quickly gloss over English phonemes (letter sounds) in beginning ESOL classes because the learners who are already literate in Spanish seem able to chunk English words correctly into syllables immediately. This is because they transfer this chunking skill from Spanish. But it is important for all ESOL students to practice producing and perceiving English consonant sounds. English has a lot of medial and final consonant blends (-nt, -st,) that are difficult to perceive in the natural speech stream, but they are nevertheless important because they often carry vital syntactic and semantic information. In addition, because English vowels can be pronounced several different ways, formal attention to basic English phonics patterns and rules is a valuable investment for their future pronunciation and spelling, even if learners seem to already know how to decode English.

The two clusters of Spanish speakers who have low levels of education in Spanish also have severe decoding problems and show other signs of reading disabilities. They also appear to be acquiring English at a slower rate. Despite an average of almost ten years in the US and almost three years of ESOL instruction, unlike students in the other clusters, their English skills remain at early beginning levels.

Implication: Initial instruction in English for these students might emphasize oral-aural conversational skills at first, then introduce English reading and writing using a direct, structured, and sequential approach such as Wilson, Orton-Gillingham, Lindamood, etc.

Interactive Web Site

The National Institute for Literacy has supported the construction of an interactive website that builds upon the work of the ARCS. The site provides both a mini-course on reading and an opportunity to match your learners' profiles with that of learner profiles developed using ARCS data. Once you have matched your learners' profiles, you can use the information presented to make instructional choices. The Web address is http://lincs.ed.gov/readingprofiles/.

To learn more about NCSALL’s Adult Reading Components Study and other NCSALL research, and to download NCSALL publications, please visit our main website at: http://ncsall.net

ARCS Clusters

ARCS ABE Cluster 1: Strong GED

ARCS ABE Cluster 4: High Intermediates with Difficulties in Print Skills/Rate

ARCS ABE Cluster 5: Intermediates with Stronger Print than Meaning Skills

ARCS ABE Cluster 8: Low Intermediate/Should-be-in-ESOL

ARCS ABE Cluster 9: Beginners
Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles
Web Site
Match an ASRP Profile

Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles Web Site
http://lincs.ed.gov/readingprofiles

About the ASRP Profiles

- We limited the number of components we used to form the Comparison Profiles to those that a teacher would be able to test in a short time and that would give a good picture of a learner's instructional needs.
- Learners were clustered into 11 Profiles by their similarities on 5 components: word recognition, spelling, word meaning, comprehension, fluency as reading rate.
- To mirror practices in the field, we first grouped learners according to their scores on silent reading comprehension scores: 0–3.9, 4–5.9, 6–8.9, 9–12.
- Reading Profiles were then formed from each of the comprehension groups.
- The Reading Profiles serve the purpose of the Web site—to bring research into the classroom.

Activity: Match an ASRP Profile

Materials:
- Reading Profiles (pp. 5–6)

Directions: In this activity you will Match an ASRP Profile using Ed’s and Ruth’s scores.
- Choose Enter Learner's Scores in the left navigation bar.
- Scroll down the page to Match an ASRP Profile.
- Enter Ruth's scores from the chart on p. 6 of the handbook. Make sure to fill out all the fields.
- Read the information about Ruth's match with an ASRP Profile.
- Click on the Return to Analysis Page to Enter a New Set of Scores button in the Browse Profile: Menu at the bottom of the page.
- Enter Ed's scores from the chart on p. 5 of the handbook. Make sure to fill out all the fields.
- Read the information about Ed's match with an ASRP Profile.
- Browse the three profiles in their Intermediate Group by clicking on the Comparison of the Three Profiles in the Intermediate Group button and discuss the differences between Ruth in Profile 4 and Ed in Profile 5.
- Use your browser's back function to return to Ed's profile.
- Now go to the Suggestions for Instruction pages from the profile you've created for Ed. Click on Suggestions for Instruction for Profile 5 Learners in the menu at the bottom of the page.
- On the Suggestions for Instruction page, check out the Find more suggestions for instruction near the bottom.
- Then browse the Suggestions for Instruction pages for Profile 4 Learners, which is Ruth's profile. Note where you can find more suggestions for instruction on that page, too.

**Activity: Match an ASRP Profile—Ed and Ruth**

**Directions:** In this activity you will create an instructional plan for either Ruth or Ed.

- Assemble into small groups. Read information about your assigned student: Ruth, p. 14, or Ed, pp. 15–16.
- Create an instructional plan for your learner, focusing on one of the components of reading.
- Choose a reporter to provide a brief summary of the plan for the whole group.
Ruth—Suggestions for Instruction for ASRP Profile 4 Learners

Reading components work together. Increasing skill on any component increases skill on the others.

**Word Meaning (Vocabulary)**

Some of the new vocabulary words that are appropriate to middle and high school social studies and science curricula also can be used for both Word Recognition and Spelling instruction. In that way, learners will be able not only to read and understand new words but also to use them in written work. There will be reciprocal reinforcement among all three of these reading components (Word Meaning [vocabulary], Word Recognition, and Spelling).

**Silent Reading Comprehension**

Other than subject content words, there are groups of words that are important for reading comprehension and writing clarity. Most helpful are the signal words that tell the reader "...how information is organized and provide clues about what is important." Some examples are: "... also, next, although, even though, until, already, since, because, therefore, different from, either...." (Fry et al., pp. 185-187).

Elicit Background Knowledge before reading. Provide additional Background Knowledge. Learners need all the information about the content that they missed in middle school and high school.

**Fluency**

Profile 4 learners have relatively strong Print Skills, including Fluency, but guided oral reading with discussion can be helpful for building Background Knowledge and developing skill in acquiring Word Meanings in context.

Effective techniques for practicing Fluency can be found in Chapter 5 of McShane, S. (2005). *Applying research in reading for adults: First steps for teachers.*

---

Ed—Suggestions for Instruction for ASRP Profile 5 Learners

Reading components work together. Increasing skill on any component increases skill on the others.

Word Analysis, Word Recognition and Spelling

Have your learners mastered these prerequisite skills to accurate decoding (reading) and encoding (Spelling):

- Do they know the names and sounds of the consonants with automaticity?
- Do they know the names and the long and short sounds of the vowels with automaticity?
- Do they know the principles of open and closed syllables?
- Do they understand segmentation/chunking practices?

Profile 5 learners have not mastered the above skills to the point of being able to apply them automatically when they begin to read or spell a word. Developing automaticity in attaching sounds to symbols (phonological awareness) is a skill to aim for. However, Profile 5 learners have a dyslexic’s reading component profile of low Print Skills (Alphabetics) and high Meaning Skills, and therefore, for some in this group, Phonological Awareness may never become fully automatic. But, practice will strengthen these skills.

- Phonemic Awareness (PA):
  Any kind of practice that involves only the sounds of letters—not the letters themselves—will help focus learners' attention to "sounding out" a word before spelling it. Give them a PA assessment such as the Test of Auditory Analysis Skills (TAAS) (5 minutes per learner) to see where their mastery of consonant deletion gets shaky. Five minutes of a PA game (see the Spelling page) before you start a Spelling lesson will prompt the learners to listen to and manipulate sounds before they put symbols to the sounds in the lesson itself.

- Phonological Awareness:
  To know just which letter combinations and syllable forms that a learner needs further practice on, you can administer a Word Analysis assessment. It will save instructional time in that you will be able to zero in on just those phonic elements that have not been mastered, that are holding up a learner's progress.

- Visual Memory:
  Enlarge their bank of sight words. Similar techniques to those you would use to teach decoding phonetically irregular words (sight word practice) apply to teaching to encode (spell) them.

Word Meaning (Vocabulary)

Some vocabulary words that are appropriate to middle and high school social studies and science curricula can be used also for both Word Recognition and Spelling instruction. In that way, learners will be able not only to read and understand new words but also to use them in written work. There
will be reciprocal reinforcement among all three of these reading components (Word Meaning, Word Recognition, and Spelling).

**Fluency**

Many Intermediate Level (GE 4-8.9) readers read so slowly and laboriously that their comprehension is adversely affected. Their reading includes many repetitions and self-corrections because they rely on context to decode unfamiliar words. Assessment in *Word Recognition* reveals that they have difficulty with multi-syllable words and words that contain lower-frequency phonics patterns, such as vowel digraphs (-ai, -ay, -ea) and diphthongs (-au, -ow, -aw) or *ch* pronounced as /k/, as in *psychology*. These issues should be addressed in the Word Recognition and Spelling parts of the lesson. In addition, learners in Profile 5 usually need to review more basic Word Analysis skills, such as those identified in Sylvia Greene’s Informal *Word Analysis Inventory*.

**Nonnative Speakers of English (NNSE)** who are intermediates sometimes also read slowly, but they usually do so for different reasons. They are able to decode unfamiliar English words, but they often slow down to figure out the meanings of unfamiliar words and unfamiliar grammatical features.

Texts chosen for Fluency practice for intermediates should be at or slightly below learners' Word Recognition grade equivalent (GE).

Effective techniques for practicing Fluency can be found in Chapter 5 of McShane, S. (2005). *Applying research in reading for adults: First steps for teachers.*

Learner Questionnaire

Questions in **bold faced italics** throughout the questionnaire are for non-native speakers of English only.

1. Where were you born? _______________, _______________, ______________ city or town, state, country

2. (If not born in U.S.) How old were you when you came to the USA? _______________

3. What was the first language you spoke as a child? _______________
   3a. (If other than English) *Do you still speak this language*? yes / no

4. What is the highest school grade you completed not including adult education? ____________
   4a. (If left before graduating) Why did you leave school? _______________

5. In what town or city, state (country) was that school? _______________

6. (If not born in the U.S.) Did you attend school in (native country)? yes / no

7. (If yes to #6) How many years? _______________

8. (If yes to #6) In what language were you taught? _______________

9. *Can you read* (native language)? yes / no

10. *Can you write* (native language)? yes / no

11. *Can you read and write English? Yes / no / a little* 11a. *How old were you when you learned to read and write English?*

12. *Where did you learn to read and write English? (home, school)?* _______________

13. How many schools did you attend as a child? _______________

14. Did you ever repeat a grade? yes / no. (If yes) Which grade(s)? _______________

15. Do you remember ever having trouble with reading as a child? yes / no

16. (If yes to #15) In which grade did you first have trouble? ___ first grade; ___ second or third grade; ___ fourth or fifth grade; ___ sixth, seventh or eighth grade; ___ high school

17. When you were a child did you ever participate in any of the following programs? If you did, please describe when and where.
   ___ individual tutoring ________________ at home ______ in school ________________
   ___ Chapter I or Title I ________________
   ___ Resource Room ________________
   ___ special classes ________________
   ___ Core evaluation ________________
   ___ Special education ________________

18. What made you decide to take adult education classes? _______________

19. What do you plan to do after you complete your adult education classes? _______________
20. About how many hours a week do you read for pleasure (in English)? ___ less than 1; ___ 1–3; ___ 4–6; ___ more than 6

21. About how many hours a week do you read for pleasure in (native language)? ___ less than 1; ___ 1–3; ___ 4–6; ___ more than 6

22. What do you find hard about reading? Which of the following problems seem to apply to you when you read? English native language

___ I can't read or pronounce the long, hard words.
___ I can't understand most of the hard words.
___ Sometimes I don't understand what I read.
___ I forget a lot of what I read right afterwards.
___ I forget a lot of what I read a few days later.
___ I read very slowly.
___ Other problems? ______________________________________________________
___ Spelling problems? ________________________________________________

Next Steps

1. What will your next steps be? How will you use what you learned in this session with your particular students?

2. Do your next steps require personal study of the research findings? If so, what will you do next? How will you put what you’ve learned into practice?

3. If time remains, write down the one research finding about reading that is most likely to influence your practice and why it will do so