

BUILD YOUR TOOLKIT FOR

Reading + Writing

with

CROWDEDlearning



[CrowdED Learning](#) has developed and offers this resource as part of its mission to increase awareness and use of free and open education resources (OER) within adult education. While the original event through which this resource was developed was hosted on the LINCS Community, such inclusion does not represent any endorsement or reflect the opinions of the US Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE), or members of the LINCS Community.



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Week 1 [Resource Exploration](#)

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Welcome to the Resource!

This professional development resource was developed as part of a 10-week event that took place Fall 2019 on the [LINCS Community](#).

The event consisted of five, two-week topics focused on integration of free and open education resources to support literacy skill development for adult learners.



Topic 1

CrowdED Learning



Topic 2

Comprehension



Topic 3

Fluency



Topic 4

Vocabulary + Grammar



Topic 5

Sharing + Assigning Content

Each week consisted of a new discussion thread, posted to the Reading and Writing, Integrating Technology, and Teaching and Learning Communities of Practice. Through these discussions, practitioners shared their thoughts about using the resources being introduced in relation to the topic of focus.

Week 1 of each topic was intended to introduce a new resource or set of resources particularly well-suited to support the current topic. The focus during week 1 was to explore the various resource(s) introduced—including useful features and benefits of each—and then share ideas around how it might be beneficial to learners.



Week 1
Resource Exploration



Week 2
Strategies for Integration

Week 2 of each topic focused on practitioners sharing strategies for integrating the resources introduced—or others currently being used—into their instruction.

While this set of professional development activities was designed as part of a synchronous sequence of topics and discussions, all of the discussions reside and remain “live” within LINCS. Any discussion posts will be communicated to members of the Community, allowing for continuous contribution and collaboration amongst practitioners. Given this, we encourage instructors, curriculum specialists, and professional developers to freely use any or all of the activities outlined within this resource as part of ongoing training for instructors and literacy volunteers on how to leverage free and open education resources to support reading and writing skill development in adult learners.

How to Use This Resource

This resource is designed to be flexible in how it is used. The most important thing to consider is this: regardless of how you choose to use this resource, you never have to do it alone!!

- **Self-Guided Development** | Instructors, tutors, and professional developers who provide reading and writing instruction to adult learners may use this resource to learn about new resources, practices, and strategies that can be used to support instruction.

If you are working individually, we encourage you to join the LINCS Community. Again, because the discussion threads are archived and reside within LINCS, other members will be able to read and respond to your posts. This means you can tap into the expertise of practitioners nationwide!

- **Ask A Question** | Reach out to the community by asking a question related to how others use a particular resource or incorporate various reading and writing skills into literacy instruction.
- **Share a Strategy** | Share and explain a strategy you currently use with learners that you have found to be particularly effective.
- **Share New Tools** | Let others know what great resources or tools you have found to be effective in your instruction, or share your experience in using one of the tools introduced within these materials.
- **Design Your Own Training** | Is your organization looking for a new reading and writing curriculum? Are you looking for more engaging and authentic practice opportunities that can extend learning beyond the classroom? Use this resource as a tool to explore potential new resources and share out ideas amongst your team. Use the LINCS discussions to reach out to other practitioners around topics of interest, or create your own discussion threads using tools such as [Facebook Groups](#), [Google Groups](#), or [Slack](#).
- **Reach Out to CrowdED Learning** | CrowdED Learning's mission is to increase awareness and use of free and open education resources that can help adult learners develop the skills needed to achieve their personal, civic, educational, and career goals. We support practitioners by connecting them with tools and resources that support their training and instruction efforts. Visit [CrowdED Learning](#) or email us at hello@crowdedlearning.org.

Index of Free and Open Resources

The following free and open education resources were used as part of the original LINC S event. Over time, these likely will be updated, changed, or even removed. If you encounter a broken link, please let us know at hello@crowdedlearning.org.



Topic 1 | CrowdED Learning

- [Homepage](#) | Overview of CrowdED and its resources
- [Skill Directory](#) | Subject-level directories of tools
- [SkillBlox](#) | Alignments documents for select resources



Topic 2 | Comprehension

- [CommonLit](#) | Leveled reading library with guided reading
- [ReadWorks](#) | Comprehensive leveled reading library
- [ReadTheory](#) | Personalized leveled reading program
- [Overview](#) | Shared doc describing the above resources



Topic 3 | Fluency

- [Reading Skills for Today's Adults](#) | Leveled library with multiple audio recordings for each story to model fluency
- [Reading Skills for Healthcare Workers](#) | Leveled library of texts within healthcare specific contexts
- [ELC StudyZone](#) | Fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary activities for ESL students
- [We Speak NYC](#) | Episodic videos with scripts that can be used for reader's theatre activities



Topic 4 | Vocabulary and Grammar

- [Vocabulary for Intermediate Adult Learners](#) | Set of 38 Tier 2 vocabulary lessons ([Quizlet Decks](#))
- [Quill](#) | Extensive grammar skill development curriculum



Topic 5 | Sharing and Assigning Content

Content Sharing Apps

- [Google Sites](#) | Simple website creation tool with free hosting
- [Padlet](#) | Content sharing and collaboration tool that allows for visually display and organization of content
- [LiveBinders](#) | Content curation tool that allows content to be organized like pages in a binder and shared
- [Symbaloo](#) | Visual bookmarking tool used to create dashboards of commonly used websites
- [Pinterest](#) | Social media site used to visually share photos, videos, webpage around topics of interest
- [Wakelet](#) | Content curation tool used to organize and share learning content within collections
- [Glide](#) | No-code app creator used to develop visual mobile apps by simply organizing content within Google Sheets

Communication Apps

- [Remind](#) | Messaging app designed for instructors to share announcements, assignments, and content and individual and small group communication
- [Messenger](#) | Facebook's messaging platform that allows for private group messaging, such as classes or small groups.
- [WhatsApp](#) | Messaging and voice over IP app that allows for text, voice, and video messaging and communication

Learning Management Systems

- [Canvas](#) | Free and paid LMS that allows for courses to be created and shared. Includes a "Commons" of courses created and shared amongst the community.
- [Edmodo](#) | Social learning tool that allows for content sharing, quiz creation, and communication in a social media-style environment.
- [Moodle](#) | Free, open source learning management system platform.
- [Google Classroom](#) | Free learning management system that seamlessly integrates into Google's suite of tools.

Want to suggest a resource?

Our entire library is built on suggestions from educators just like you! If you know of a particularly effective resource you don't see in our directories you feel should be added, [please fill out this form to let us know about it!](#)

Index of LINCS Discussion Threads

The Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS) is a national leadership initiative of the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) to expand evidence-based practice in the field of adult education.



LINCS is free to use, and it is free to become a member. While anyone can view the discussion threads below, you need to be a LINCS member to add your insights or ideas. If you currently are not a member and interested in joining, [simply complete this account creation form](#).

[Event Welcome Post](#)



Topic 1 | CrowdED Learning

- [Week 1 Discussion: Resource Exploration](#)
- [Week 2 Discussion: Strategies for Integration](#)



Topic 2 | Comprehension

- [Week 1 Discussion: Resource Exploration](#)
- [Week 2 Discussion: Strategies for Integration](#)



Topic 3 | Fluency

- [Week 1 Discussion: Resource Exploration](#)
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Topic 4 | Vocabulary and Grammar

- [Week 1 Discussion: Resource Exploration](#)
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Topic 5 | Sharing and Assigning Content

- [Week 1 Discussion: Resource Exploration](#)
- [Week 2 Discussion: Strategies for Integration](#)



Topic 1 | CrowdED Learning



Resources

[Homepage](#)
[Skill Directory](#)
[SkillBlox](#)



Discussions

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Video

[Video link](#)

Topic 1, Week 1

Explore CrowdED Learning Resources!

During Week 1 of this topic, we will be exploring [CrowdED Learning's website](#) to check out the range of free resources and tools they have provided to support teaching and learning.

[Watch the video overview for this topic.](#)



Resource Exploration Overview

The CrowdED Learning website is constantly changing as we experiment to make resources more readily available and retrievable for instructors. However, there are three main areas to focus on for this week's exploration, all of which can be found in the site's main navigation.

- [SkillBlox](#) | Check out the Reading, Math, and Language sections where there are links to various, high-quality free and open education resources. Within each, you will see there are standards alignments that allow you to find specific resources that align to College and Career Readiness Standards.
- [Our Work](#) | This section includes links to current webinars and recordings of previous webinars. It also includes a link to the CrowdED Musings blog and an index to all of featured the Resources of the Month.
- [Explore](#) | This section includes the Skill Directory, which includes listings of resources organized into 11 different subject areas, including academic competencies, employability competencies, and 21st-Century competencies.

Additional Resources / Bonus Content

Use these resources to learn more about open education resources—what they are, what are the challenges to their use, and the concept of open licensing.

CrowdED Learning Resources

- **Free or Open?** | Webinar recording that provides an overview of the difference between “free” resources and “open” resources.
- **Barriers to OER Use** | Blog series exploring reasons behind limited use of OER within adult education:

[Blog 1](#): Paradox of Choice

[Blog 3](#): Trust

[Blog 2](#): Need for Relevance

[Blog 4](#): Mindset

External Resources

- [What are Open Education Resources?](#) | Simple Overview of OER
- [Creative Commons](#) | Overview of Creative Commons license types

Discussion Questions ([View or add to LINCS discussion.](#))

How do you currently evaluate learner fluency levels?

What resources do you currently use to teach, practice, and apply reading, writing, and language skills with your learners? What features make them particularly helpful, engaging, or effective?

For what areas of reading, writing, or language instruction do you feel there is a lack of resources?

Explore CrowdED Learning's Skill Directories, particularly for Reading and Writing. Check out some of the resources listed within these directories. What resources seem like they might be particularly effective and easy to implement with your learners? Why?

Topic 1, Week 2

How do you integrate resources?

During Week 1 of this topic, you explored [CrowdED Learning's website](#) to check out the range of free resources and tools they have provided to support teaching and learning.

During Week 2, our focus shifts to sharing strategies for incorporating these and other resources you find effective into everyday reading, writing, and language instruction.



Using Multiple Resources to Ensure Full Standards Coverage

One of CrowdED Learning's main goals is to provide a wide range of freely available resources and tools to offer more options for instruction and learning within adult education. One strategy we have for doing this is to aggregate resources from multiple sources such that, for any particular standard or skill, learners have a variety of options for learning and practice. We believe this can help instructors ensure they provide full standards coverage.

The example on the right shows how this might work for a particular math skill—*Use Variables to Represent Quantities*. In this case, the instructor first has indicated resources—including one publisher resource—being used and/or available to students. Next, the skill has been identified. Because all resources within our database have alignments to the CCRS, all lessons, activities, or simulations from the resources the instructor has selected that align to this standard are organized into a type of playlist, or resource set, for that skill.

The screenshot shows the SkillBlox interface. At the top, there's a blue header with the SkillBlox logo and a 'Save' button. Below the header, the title 'Use Variables to Represent Quantities (7.EE.4)' is displayed. The interface is divided into two main sections: 'Required' and 'Optional'. The 'Required' section contains three items: 'Print Textbook | Paxen Publishing TABE Tutor: Mathematics, Level D Lessons 11, 13', 'Content Set | CK-12 Applications of Multi-step Equations', and 'Interactive Practice | Khan Academy Two-step Inequalities'. The 'Optional' section contains one item: 'Simulation | PhET Equality Explorer'. Each item has a checkbox, a star icon, and a menu icon (three horizontal lines).

SkillBlox BETA LEARNING. ORGANIZED.			
Save Cancel			
Use Variables to Represent Quantities (7.EE.4)			
Required ⓘ			
☒		★ Print Textbook Paxen Publishing TABE Tutor: Mathematics, Level D Lessons 11, 13	⋮
☐		Content Set CK-12 Applications of Multi-step Equations	⋮
☒		★ Interactive Practice Khan Academy Two-step Inequalities	⋮
Optional ⓘ			
☒		Simulation PhET Equality Explorer	⋮

This aggregation of content works great for math and even for language skills, where it is easier to isolate the focus of a lesson or activity on a single standard or related set of standards. **Please note—for ANY subject, we are not advocating to focus instruction specifically on a single standard. All standards are interconnected and these connections should be a major focus of instruction.** However, it is important for instructors to be able to map their instruction to standards in order to ensure full coverage; and this starts with knowing how resources align.

This type of aggregation is slightly more challenging for reading. Consider, for example, concepts such as “Main Idea and Details” or “Use Context Clues”, for which there are multiple standards at all levels. Publisher resources provide distinct, isolated lessons around these particular standards, skills, and concepts. They tend to be limited, however, in providing learners authentic opportunities to practice so they learn how to apply these skills to any and all reading they encounter. Similarly, while free, external resources such as leveled libraries provide extensive opportunities for applied reading, they typically aren’t explicit in defining what skills or strategies might be more prominent or applicable for learners.

Given we know instructors typically pull from a variety of different resources to provide comprehensive reading, writing, and language skill development, our focus this week revolves around the question: ***How do you integrate various learning resources from various sources to ensure comprehensive standards-aligned instruction?***

Discussion Questions ([View or add to LINCS discussion.](#))

In what ways do you provide direct, explicit instruction related to reading, language, and writing skills and standards. What main resources do you use with your learners?

Describe how you currently provide relevant and/or contextualized practice and application of the reading, writing, and language skills learners need as defined by the standards? What resources do you use—particularly online resources?

When using outside resources that don’t explicitly focus on skills (i.e., online leveled libraries, web-based readings), how do you make connections for learners between what they read and the reading skills and strategies they need to develop? (e.g., Key idea and detail, draw inferences, identify cause and effect, compare and contrast, use context clues, etc.)

How do you take the various resources you use—publisher textbooks/workbooks, learning software, leveled readings, workplace contextualized resources, etc.—and design units of curriculum that provide full coverage of the standards / skills learners need to develop?

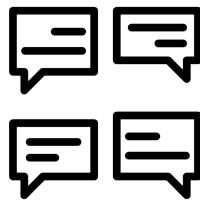


Topic 2 | Comprehension



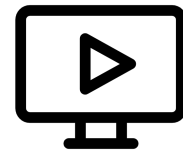
Resources

[CommonLit](#)
[ReadWorks](#)
[ReadTheory](#)



Discussions

[Week 1](#) | [Week 2](#)



Video

[Video link](#)

Topic 2, Week 1

Explore Resources for Reading Comprehension!

During Week 1 of this topic, we will explore a selection of freely available resources that are particularly well-suited for developing reading comprehension skills and strategies with students at multiple levels.



Resource Exploration Overview

The resources we will explore as part of this topic are all freely available and include expansive libraries of high-interest readings at multiple levels.

- [CommonLit](#) | Leveled library of texts at GLE 3–12, available both online and as downloads. Guided reading provides formative checks throughout each passage. Each passage also includes interactive assessment questions and discussion questions. [Visit the about page to watch a video that provides an overview of the resource.](#) (02:18)
- [ReadWorks](#) | Leveled library of texts at GLE K–12 that includes ability to adjust Lexile levels for select passages. Passages can be searched by way of a number of filters, including reading skills and strategies. [Visit the about page to watch a slide show that provides an overview of the resource.](#) [This PDF also provides a concise overview.](#)
- [ReadTheory](#) | Personalized reading program in which learners engage with readings at increasing or decreasing levels of difficulty (GLE K–12) based on performance. Learners earn “knowledge points” as they answer questions, and reporting is specifically aligned to the CCRS Reading Domains and learner Lexile levels. [Learn more on this FAQ page.](#)

CrowdED Learning has developed premade search filters for CommonLit and ReadWorks that will yield results for passages that are at recommended Lexile levels for Levels A–E of the [College and Career Readiness Standards](#). In addition, the CommonLit alignment doc includes filters for passages as organized by domains (Key Idea and Details, Craft and Structure, and Integration of Knowledge and Ideas) and the associated reading anchor standards.

CCRS Domain	Reading Anchor Standards
Key Idea and Details	R1, R2, R3
Craft and Structure	R4, R5, R6
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	R7, R8, R9

These aligned filters can be found on the CrowdED Learning website by navigating to the SkillBlox tab and clicking on the reading icon. [Here is a link directly to that page.](#)

Exploration Focus—Key Features of the Resources

The goal of this week’s exploration is to investigate the various features and tools available within each of the resources, and to share out what you find within the discussion. If you currently use any of the resources, your sharing will be particularly valuable to your colleagues to get a clear sense of how these resources work “in action” with adult learners.

All of the resources have very similar features and focus on reading comprehension while aligning to the Reading Anchor standards, while certain differences might make one better suited for certain settings over others. As you explore these resources, consider the following:

- **Leveled Texts** | What options does it provide for locating texts at the appropriate levels for a range of students? Does the range of levels meet the needs of your learners?
- **Engagement** | How appropriate/relevant are the text selections to learner interests? Can learners select texts based on their interests?
- **Visual Cues** | How effective/relevant are the visual cues that are provided to learners?
- **Culture and Diversity** | Do the readings include contexts, people, and perspectives that incorporate a wide and representative range of culture and diversity?
- **Answer Feedback** | What type of feedback is provided to the learner based on their responses to questions? Does it facilitated increased understanding?
- **Focus** | What filters/features does it have ensure students are focusing on particular comprehension skills and strategies?
- **Vocabulary** | What features and tools are provided to help students develop their vocabulary related to the text selections?
- **Language** | Are the the text selections made available for multiple languages?
- **Reporting** | How does the reporting help track learner progress in relation to standards?

It also helps to consider the technology itself and the skills needed to use it with your students. Questions to consider as you explore this week’s features resources might include:

- **Digital Skills** | What digital skill levels do learners need to use the resource effectively?
- **Mobile-Friendly** | How mobile-friendly is the resource? Are the passages easy to read on a mobile device? Are questions and activities easy to operate on a mobile device?
- **Navigability** | How easy is it for learners to navigate to the programs core elements?
- **Media** | What media (audio, visual, etc.) are provided, and what is the quality?
- **Accessibility** | What accessibility features (adjustment of text size, audio, keyboard navigation, etc.) are provided to allow for all learners to engage with the resource?
- **Offline** | Are the materials available offline? (In print formats? Digital formats?)

[Here is a shared doc](#) is being used for people to collaboratively gather the above information. For additional questions to consider, check out this [Tool Evaluation Criteria](#).

Discussion Questions ([View or add to LINCS discussion.](#))

After watching the video and exploring the resources, combined with whatever experience you have using the featured resources, what specific features (media, leveling, reporting, etc.) do you feel are/would be most beneficial to your students? Why?

Important to learner engagement with text is providing authentic, relevant texts that are of interest to students. How do you currently provide this for your students? After exploring the resources featured this week, what are your thoughts on how your learners would respond to the text options provided?

All of the resources featured this week have leveled reading options, which can allow for students at multiple levels to be focusing on the same reading skills/strategies (i.e, Key Idea and Details, Sequence, etc.). How do you currently provide instruction aimed at developing learners' comprehension skills and strategies while including differentiated, leveled reading opportunities for them to apply these skills? How might using any of the resources featured this week help you provide increased opportunities for differentiation?

What additional comments/ideas do you have related to developing comprehension skills and strategies with your learners? Are there other freely available resources you have found particularly effective?

Topic 2, Week 2

Strategies for Integrating Reading Comprehension Tools

During Week 1 of this topic, we explored a selection of freely available resources that are particularly well-suited for providing leveled reading opportunities for students at multiple levels—[ReadWorks](#), [CommonLit](#), and [ReadTheory](#).



As people explored the resources, we used this [Group Sharing Document](#) to gather information about each. This document will remain live, and you are encouraged to add what you know so others can learn about and compare the features of each of these resources to better understand which might work best for their learners.

For Week 2 of this topic, we are now going to shift our attention to strategies for incorporating resources such as these into your curriculum, with a focus on developing comprehension.

Providing Authentic, Relevant Reading Opportunities

The process of developing learners' ability to comprehend what they read is informed by a number of factors. These factors influence 1) the **content and structure** of texts we select; 2) the **skills and strategies** we promote to students before, during, and after reading the texts; and 3) the **levels of the texts** such that they are accessible to the learner based on his or her reading level. The following resources from LINCS can provide guidance related to all these factors:

- **Adult Learning Theory** | When considering reading opportunities for adult learners, we should be certain to provide **relevant texts** for which learners can see value in the information and/or for which learners can relate to and draw from their own personal experiences. LINCS provides [this great overview of Adult Learning Theories](#).
- **Evidence-based Reading Instruction** | Comprehension is one of the four components of evidence-based reading instruction. Although these components are clearly integrated and should be developed as often as possible with each learner engagement with text, comprehension is the end goal of reading. LINCS provides this guide, [Comprehension Research and Teaching Strategies](#), which includes research along with **assessment and instructional strategies** for developing comprehension skills.
- **College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education** | In addition to developing comprehension skills and strategies, we also must provide **texts at the appropriate levels of complexity** that both challenge and accommodate developing readers. The CCRS include guidelines (Reading anchor standard 10, page 21) for appropriate text complexity at each level. [The full standards can be accessed on LINCS](#).

Developing Skills Along with Leveled Reading Opportunities

As noted during your exploration, [CrowdED Learning has developed alignments](#) for ReadWorks and CommonLit. These help instructors find readings at the appropriate levels and, to some extent, the domains most developed within the text and corresponding assessments.

CCRS Domain	Reading Anchor Standards
Key Idea and Details	R1, R2, R3
Craft and Structure	R4, R5, R6
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	R7, R8, R9

CrowdED Learning has not provided such alignments/filters for ReadTheory as this program is personalized based on learner levels. Because of this, the readings that learners engage with is based on performance to that point and constantly adjusts based on ongoing performance.

Discussion Questions ([View or add to LINCS discussion.](#))

What methods and resources do you use to teach and model reading comprehension skills and strategies? If you work with learners at mixed levels, how do you provide differentiation?

How do you assess learner comprehension of what they are reading? What specific skills do you assess? How do you monitor learner mastery of the CCRS reading standards within the domains of Key Idea and Details, Craft and Structure, and Integration of Knowledge and Ideas?

Consider your current methods for developing comprehension and the resources we have been exploring. How you would integrate these free reading resources into your current instruction? If you already use one of these resources, how do you integrate them into your instruction?

What additional ideas do you have related to developing comprehension skills and strategies with your learners? Are there other resources you have found particularly effective?



Topic 3 | Fluency



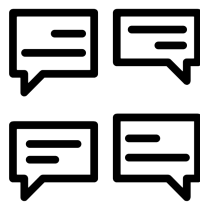
Resources

[Reading Skills for Today's Adults](#)

[Reading Skills for Healthcare Workers](#)

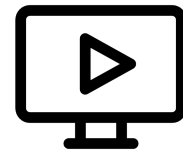
[ELC Study Zone](#)

[We Speak NYC](#)



Discussions

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Video

[Video link](#)

Topic 3, Week 1

Explore Resources for Fluency!

For the next two weeks, we will be exploring resources and discussion strategies for developing learners' fluency. During Week 1 of this topic, we will explore a set of freely available resources that are particularly well-suited for developing reading fluency skills with learners at multiple levels.

[Please watch the video overview for this topic.](#)



Resource Exploration Overview

The resources we will explore as part of this topic are all freely available and include expansive libraries of high-interest readings at multiple levels. While the resources we explored last week also included libraries of texts at different levels, we are focusing specifically on these resources because they are specifically designed to help adult readers build fluency.

- [Reading Skills for Today's Adults](#) | (CC-BY-NC-SA) From Southwest Minnesota ABE, this leveled library includes nearly 350 readings ranging from Lexile level 200-300 / ATOS 1.1 / GLE K to Lexile level 1100-1200 / ATOS 9.6 / GLE 8. The library includes a wide range of topics, including safety, parenting, work, money, health, and more. Each text includes three audio recordings at different speeds, along with pre-reading questions and vocabulary and post-reading comprehension questions. The newly updated series also has a supplement that includes a series of additional vocabulary, grammar, speaking, and comprehension practice activities for every reading.

Please note the updated library has a new URL!!! At present, if you Google "Reading Skills for Today's Adults", the old site (Marshall Adult Education) is what will appear at the top of your search. The updated URL is <https://www.readingskills4today.com/>

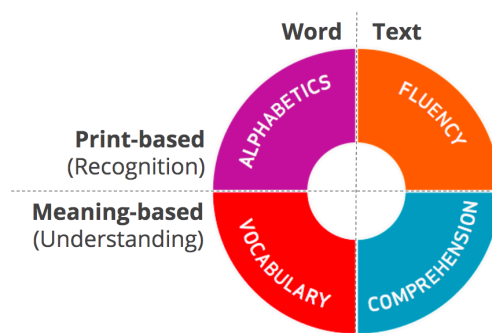
- [Reading Skills for Health Care Workers](#) | Also from Southwest Minnesota ABE, this leveled library includes a number of features similar to those in RSTA. The 175 readings are at intermediate levels (between GLE 5.5 and 8.5) and are all contextualized to health care scenarios and focus on academic and content vocabulary.
- [ELC Study Zone](#) | (CC-BY-NC-SA) From the University of Victoria (Canada), the English Learning Centre Study Zone is designed specifically for English language learners. While this resource does not include all the same tools as the previous two resources, the content is organized by ESL level and includes readings with audio recordings, comprehension questions, and vocabulary exercises.

Fluency Strategies

Fluency is one of the four core components of Evidence-Based Reading Instruction. Whereas alphabetics focuses on recognition of letter and letter-combination sounds needed to decode words, fluency focuses on learners' ability to *fluently* decode series of words within a text.

In particular, fluency refers to a reader's ability to read a series of words, or text, at an appropriate speed, and with appropriate expression, intonation, and rhythm.

When developing fluency, it is critical learners work with texts that are easy to read for the student, as opposed to texts that might prove challenging to the student. Fortunately, the [College & Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education](#) (p. 21) provide guidance on what level of complexity is appropriate for each level within the standards. Additionally, [LINCS offers this great overview from CALPRO on research and teaching strategies for building fluency in adult learners](#). This resource provides guidance on how to ensure students are placed at the appropriate level.



Discussion Questions ([View or add to LINCS discussion.](#))

Use these questions to organize your thoughts before posting and to guide your exploration of this week's resources.

How do you determine what is an appropriate level of text for students before providing opportunity to develop fluency?

How do you currently provide learners with opportunities to practice fluency? What resources do you use for doing so, and what features of that resource(s) make it particularly useful?

Examine at least one of the resources featured this week. What features are included that you believe might make that resource helpful for developing your learners' fluency skills?

Topic 3, Week 2

Strategies for Developing Fluency!

During Week 1 of this topic, we explored a selection of freely available resources that are particularly well-suited for helping readers' fluency skills—[Reading Skills for Today's Adults](#), [Reading Skills for Health Care Workers](#), and the [ELC Study Zone](#).



For Week 2 of this topic, we are now going to shift our attention to strategies for incorporating resources such as these into your curriculum, as well as general strategies for assessing, modeling, and providing ample practice for learners to develop their fluency skills. The following resources will be helpful as you consider fluency strategies:

- [Fluency Research and Teaching Strategies](#) | This resource from CALPRO provides guidance for assessing and evaluating fluency levels, as well as strategies for providing ample practice.
- [College & Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education](#) | Page 21 provides guidance on what level of text complexity is appropriate for each level within the standards.

Fluency Is Not Just “Speed Reading”

As noted in Week 1, fluency refers to a reader's ability to read a text at an appropriate level with ease, speed, and expressiveness. We measure fluency by considering the **accuracy** with which a reader reads a text, the **rate** at which they read the text, and **prosody**.

As such, “fluency” does not refer simply to how fast a text is read. Whereas accuracy and speed are two core elements reflective of one's decoding skills, prosody refers to a reader's ability to use proper phrasing, stress, intonation, and expression in a way that accurately conveys the meaning of the text when read aloud. This requires a deeper understanding of the text's meaning, and requires ample modeling and practice.

Rating Scale for Assessing Learners for Prosody	
4	Conversational; phrasing and expression indicate understanding of what is read
3	Frequently conversational in tone; occasional lapses in phrasing or expression
2	Primarily two-word phrases; little attention to punctuation or expression
1	Word-by-word reading with no attention to phrasing, punctuation, or expression

Using Technology to Develop Fluency Skills

There are a number of technology tools that can be used to provide engaging options for modeling, practice, and ongoing evaluation of fluency.

Modeling and Practicing Fluency

The importance of modeling fluency cannot be understated. There are a number of techniques that can be used, including guided oral reading, echo reading, read-along, pair reading, and reader's theater. In addition to these techniques, which include both teacher and guided peer modeling, some tech-based resources provide additional, self-directed modeling of fluency.

- **Audio Recordings** | A number of free reading resources provide audio recordings that model fluent reading of text. [CommonLit](#), explored during the Comprehension topic, includes audio recordings of very reading. [Reading Skills for Today's Adults](#) has three audio recordings of each article, each recorded at different speeds and designed especially to model fluency.
 - Recording 1 exposes students to the words and their pronunciation for **accuracy**.
 - Recording 2 develops **rate** and **prosody** by grouping text into meaningful chunks.
 - Recording 3 is read at normal speed, with inflection, to model fluent reading.
- **Videos + Scripts** | While there is no shortage of video content available online, not all video content is necessarily appropriate for modeling. [We Speak NYC](#) offers episodic videos that model language learners use in their everyday lives. Each video includes downloadable scripts and a number of other resources for discussion and practicing reading. The videos and associated script and activities are perfect for reader's theater.

Evaluating Fluency

There are a number of free technology tools that can be used creatively for learners and instructors to monitor fluency.

- **Recording Apps** | Most smartphones have a default app that allows the user to record themselves. Learners can use these apps to record themselves reading aloud then play the recording back to themselves or to an instructor to evaluate speed, accuracy, and prosody. This can be a fun way for learners to practice fluency independently.
- **Speect-to-Text Apps** | Many applications, including Google Translate, have text-to-speech functionality that allows users to speak into a computer or smartphone microphone and convert what is spoken to text. The clearer the speaker is when speaking into a microphone, the more accurate the text output. While not 100% foolproof, these tools continue to improve and provide creative options for evaluating proper pronunciation and accuracy while reading.

Discussion Questions ([View or add to LINCS discussion.](#))

Fluency Strategies | What strategies and techniques do you use for assessing, monitoring, and developing fluency levels of your learners? Please provide links to specific tools, websites, or resources you find particularly helpful.

Incorporating Free Resources | How would you use one of the resources from last week's discussion (or something else you may use) to provide opportunities for modeling and practice of fluency skills? If you currently use one of these resources, please describe strategies for how you use it to evaluate skill levels or provide opportunities for skill development.

Integrating Technology | How do/might you use media (videos, audio recordings) to provide learners with independent modeling of fluency? How do/might you use tech tools such as voice notes, text-to-type resources, or other recording tools to provide learners with practice reading aloud and evaluating their skills?

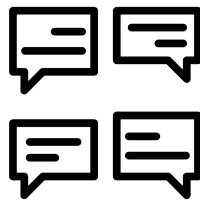


Topic 4 | Vocabulary + Grammar



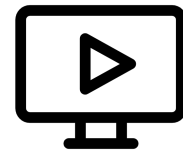
Resources

[Vocabulary for Intermediate Adult Learners](#)
[Academic Word List](#)
[Vocabulary Profiler](#)
[Quill](#)



Discussions

[Week 1](#) | [Week 2](#)



Video

[Video link](#)

Topic 4, Week 1

Explore Resources for Grammar + Vocabulary!

For the next two weeks, we will be exploring a pair of freely available resources—one focused on building Tier 2 academic vocabulary and one focused on providing instruction and practice on grammar and usage in writing.

[Please watch the video overview for this topic.](#)



Resource Exploration Overview

Both resources we will explore as part of this topic are both freely available.

- **Quill** | Quill is a comprehensive set of activities, lessons, and assessments designed to provide whole class instruction and extensive individual practice of standard grammar, punctuation, and usage. There are four main types of activities—teacher-led interactive lessons ([see example](#)), sentence writing activities ([see example](#)), interactive passage proofreading activities ([see example](#)), and formative assessments ([see example](#)).
- **ASU Tier 2 Vocabulary** | From Appalachian State University, this curriculum includes 38 lessons, each consisting of five, tier-2 academic vocabulary words. Lessons are downloadable Word documents teachers can adjust however they see fit. CrowdED Learning has developed [Quizlet decks for each of these lessons as well](#), giving learners mobile-friendly, interactive options for learning and practicing the vocabulary words.

Conventions of Standard English

The [College & Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education](#) include standards for Language (pp. 33–39) that provide guidance for the skills learners need to develop. These include grammar and usage in writing and speaking (Language anchor standard 1); capitalization, punctuation, and spelling (Language anchor standard 2); and making appropriate choices based on context and the information being communicated (Language anchor standard 3).

CrowdED Learning has taken Quill’s lessons and activities and created [a document that indicates how each activity aligns to the CCRS and TABE 11/12](#). This allows instructors to easily locate lessons, activities, and assessments that are specific to the concepts they wish to teach.

Quill Resource Sets (Organized by CCRS + TABE 11/12 Levels)

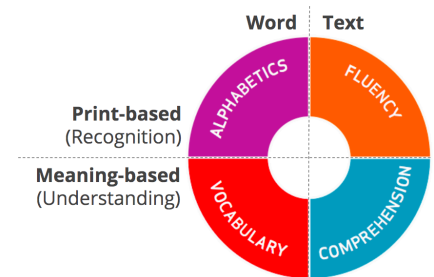
[View all resources organized by Common Core State Standards on the Quill website.](#)

Note: All links within this document access Quill content, which is generously made freely available. [Click here to view Quill Terms of Use.](#)

CCRS Level	TABE Level	Domain	CCSS Code	CCRS Code (Actual)	TABE Emphasis	Topic	Activity Title
B	E	Conventions of Standard English	2.2a	B.L.2a	High	Capitalize Holidays, Product Names, and Geographic Names	The Pilgrims
B	E	Conventions of Standard English	2.2c	B.L.2f	High	Use an Apostrophe to Form Contractions	Brer Rabbit & the Briar Patch
B	E	Conventions of Standard English	2.2c	B.L.2f	High	Use an Apostrophe to Form Contractions	Can't, Won't
B	E	Conventions of Standard English	2.2c	B.L.2f	High	Use an Apostrophe to Form Contractions	Common Contractions
B	E	Conventions of Standard English	2.2c	B.L.2f	High	Use an Apostrophe to Form Contractions	Haven't, Don't
B	E	Conventions of Standard English	2.2c	B.L.2f	High	Use an Apostrophe to Form Contractions	I'm, You're, Let's
B	E	Conventions of Standard English	2.2c	B.L.2f	High	Use an Apostrophe to Form Contractions	It's, Its

Tier 2 Academic Vocabulary

Vocabulary is one of the core components of Evidence-based Reading Instruction. It refers to understanding the meaning of the words that make up texts. CCRS Language anchor standards 4–6 all focus on vocabulary. With the increased rigor of the CCRS, particularly the emphasis on more complex informational texts, adult learners require explicit instruction of the academic words and phrases that appear in these texts and allow for greater comprehension (Language anchor standard 6).



[LINCS offers this overview from CALPRO on research and teaching strategies for developing vocabulary with adult learners.](#) It explains the various tiers of vocabulary, and defines Tier 2 words as “...words that learners encounter in written text more than in conversation and whose meanings may not be immediately apparent based on context clues.” One of the most widely recognized sources for identifying what Tier 2 vocabulary words to develop with learners is [the academic word list](#), which includes 570 word families that frequently appear in academic texts.

Discussion Questions ([View or add to LINCS discussion.](#))

What current resources do you use to help learners develop Tier 2 academic vocabulary? To develop and practice skills using proper conventions of standard English language (for speaking and writing)? How do you integrate them into your reading and writing curriculum?

Go to the CrowdED Learning website and [open the alignments document for Quill](#). Find some concepts you currently teach and click on the links to open the activities. How might you use activities such as these with your learners?

Visit the [Appalachian State University vocabulary curriculum](#) and explore one of the lessons. What are your thoughts on the structure and sequence of the activities? How might you use these lessons to help your learners strengthen their vocabulary? How might you share and/or assign [the associated Quizlet decks](#) to provide learners with practice engaging with the words?

Topic 4, Week 2

Strategies for Integrating Vocabulary + Grammar

During Week 1 of this topic, we explored a pair of freely available resources that are effective for providing skill instruction and practice in two important components of reading and writing instruction:



Grammar and Usage | Clearly outlined within the Language standards of the College & Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education, mastery of the conventions of standard English are essential for being effective communicators in writing and speech. To support development of these skills, we explored [Quill](#).

Vocabulary | Words form the building blocks of everything we read. With increased focus on informational text and readers' ability to derive meaning from complex texts, understanding the vocabulary used in these types of text is critical for comprehension. To support instruction of academic—or Tier 2—vocabulary, we explored Appalachian State University's [Teaching Vocabulary for Intermediate Learners](#) lesson bank.

For Week 2 of this topic, we are now going to shift our attention to strategies for integrating grammar and vocabulary into your regular instruction using these resources and more.

Which conventions of standard English should be taught?

The Language anchor standards within the [College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education](#) “include the essential ‘rules’ of standard written and spoken English, but they also approach language as a matter of craft and informed choice among alternatives.” (p. 33)

CCR Anchor 1 | *Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English **grammar and usage** when writing or speaking.*

CCR Anchor 2 | *Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English **capitalization, punctuation, and spelling** when writing.*

CCR Anchor 3 | *Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to **make effective choices for meaning or style**, and to **comprehend more fully** when reading or listening.*

Within each of these anchor standards, there is specific detail as to what conventions should be focused upon at levels A through E, with the expectation that a learner at one level has mastered all conventions at previous levels. Crowded Learning has provided [alignments of Quill lessons and activities to most of the above CCRS standards](#).

What is “Tier 2” Vocabulary?

The CCRS emphasize the importance of building academic and content-area vocabulary in Language anchor standard 6:

CCR Anchor 6 | *Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.*

As noted in Week 1, the [Academic Word List](#) is a commonly referenced source for identifying Tier 2 vocabulary. While resources such as ASU’s *Teaching Vocabulary for Intermediate Learners* provide explicit instruction and practice with sets of words with this list, how do you apply instruction of academic vocabulary with the specific texts your students are reading?

Many reading resources—publisher and free alike—include activities or at least identification of the academic vocabulary used within each text. One resource that was shared as part of an earlier discussion within this event was the [Web VP Classic Vocabulary Profiler](#)*. This tool allows you to type or copy-paste any text to see what words within the passage come from the Academic Word List. The list shown here was generated when by copying and pasting the text from [a story about Sacagawea from Reading Skills for Today’s Adults](#). As you can see, the tool MAGICALLY pulled all words from the Academic Word List within this text and organized them into their respective sublists.

Tools such as the Vocabulary Profiler give instructors the ability to take any text—from existing resources, contextualized resources such as employer manuals, safety manuals (OSHA guidelines), and other resources that are relevant to adult learners, and extract the key Tier 2 vocabulary needed for learners to better comprehend the text.

Sublist 1
consisted role significant

Sublist 2
elements journal obtain

Sublist 3
constant

Sublist 5
aware contact enabled symbols

Sublist 7
survived

Sublist 8
accompany

Sublist 10
encountered

*Cobb, T. Web Vocabprofile [accessed 30 October 2019 from <http://www.lexutor.ca/vp/>], an adaptation of Heatley, Nation & Coxhead's (2002) Range.

Heatley, A., Nation, I.S.P. & Coxhead, A. (2002). RANGE and FREQUENCY programs. Available at <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/staff/paul-nation.aspx>.

Discussion Questions ([View or add to LINCS discussion.](#))

Grammar Instruction | How do you incorporate development of grammar and usage skills into your language arts instruction? Is it integrated into or applied within the context of specific reading or writing activities, or is it done in isolation. How might you use a resource such as Quill to provide leveled and/or contextualized development of grammar and usage skills?

Vocabulary Instruction | What strategies do you use to incorporate vocabulary into reading or content-area instruction? Specifically, how do you develop Tier 2 academic vocabulary? How might you integrate the tools introduced within this topic into your instruction?

Integrating Technology | How might you leverage technologies such as the *Teaching Vocabulary for Intermediate Learners* [Quizlet decks](#) or Quill to provide increased opportunities for integrating vocabulary and grammar into your instruction?



Topic 5 | Sharing + Assigning



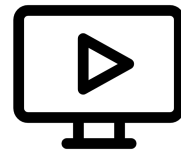
Resources

See following page



Discussions

[Week 1](#) | [Week 2](#)



Video

Video link

Topic 5, Week 1

Explore Resources for Sharing + Assigning Content

Now that we have explored a wide range of learning resources aimed at supporting reading and writing instruction across a variety of components, topics, and levels, it's time to focus on what technology tools you use or might be interested in using to share and assign content with your students!



Check back for a video of this week's topic.

Resource Exploration Overview

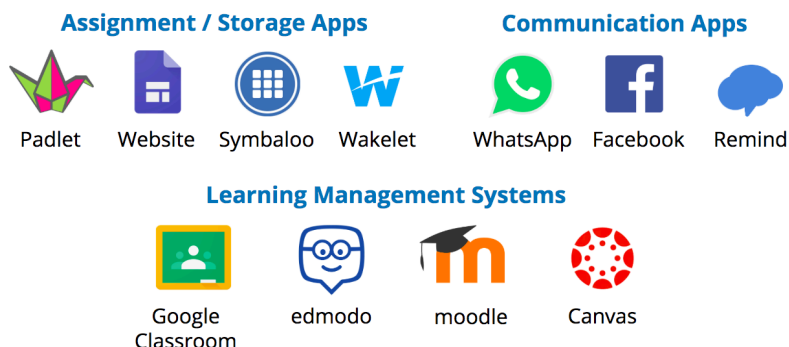
All of the resources we will explore as part of this topic are freely available. Given instructors all have different levels of tech integration impacted by comfort levels (learner and instructor), classroom dynamic, student access, and general preference, we've organized a handful of the seemingly infinite content sharing resources into the following categories:

- **Content Sharing Apps** | Numerous apps are available to allow teachers to share and provide access to content in a variety of “permanent” ways. While posting content to websites using tools such as [Google Sites](#) is a more traditional method for making content resources available anytime, anywhere, other tools such as [Padlet](#), [LiveBinders](#), [Symbaloo](#), [Pinterest](#), and [Wakelet](#) provide dynamic, visual, and engaging ways for instructors to share content with students in an organized, easy-to-access manner.
- **Communication Apps** | Many instructors enjoy using communication apps to directly engage with learners or to assign a specific lesson, activity, or resource to students. These communication tools are responsive and often mirror texting and messaging apps many learners already use in their daily lives. Some tools, such as [Remind](#), have been designed specifically for classroom use, while others tools such as Facebook's [Messenger](#) and [WhatsApp](#)—popular already with many students—have been successfully leveraged by teachers to assign content, send reminders, and foster collaboration through one-on-one and group communication.
- **Learning Management Systems** | Instructors who manage specific courses or their entire class online might use a Learning Management System, which provides a single place for creating lessons, units, or courses. Most LMS's provide classroom management tools, calendars and assignment tools, assessment creation tools, reporting, and even communication tools. There are a number of great LMS options available, including [Canvas](#) and [edmodo](#)—which include both free and freemium options—along with [moodle](#) and [Google Classroom](#), both of which are free.

Directories for Finding and Evaluating Resources

This week's exploration is intended to be an open exploration. While we have listed a selection of high-quality apps and tools we know are commonly used by adult educators, there are hundreds available! Because there are so many options, a number of websites have emerged dedicated to helping educators, students, and parents learn more about the range of tools and resources available. Some even include evaluations from third parties or even educators.

- [EdSurge Product Index](#)
- [Common Sense Education](#)
- [Workforce EdTech Tech Tools Repository](#)
- [Top Tools for Learning](#)



Each of these sites takes a different approach to how they index, describe, and evaluate tools. For instructors just

getting started or who wish to learn more about a particular tool before they commit to using it, these sites can be invaluable resources for exploring the myriad options available.

Discussion Questions ([View or add to LINCS discussion.](#))

Which, if any, of the tools mentioned do you use or have you tried with students. What features did you and/or your learners find particularly helpful, engaging, and/or effective? If you do not have experience with the tools mentioned, feel free to answer for an app or tool you have used.

What learner factors do you consider when selecting sharing and assignment tools for learners? (Factors might include technology skill level, device and wifi access, and resource quality.)

What do you feel are the biggest benefits of using apps such as the ones described to share and assign content with learners?

Topic 5, Week 2

Strategies for Sharing + Assigning Content

During Week 1 of this topic, we explored a selection of freely available tools that can be used to share content with learners. These included:

- **Communication tools** that can be used to share and assign content in formats such as texting (with which many learners are familiar),
- **Website and workspace tools** that allow you to share links to websites, specific activities, or sets of readings in one place for learners to access at any time, and
- **Learning management systems** that allow you to manage assignment and sharing of content in a course-based format with additional functionality that allows for collaboration, tracking student progress, and reporting.



For Week 2 of this topic, we are going to focus on strategies for using tools such as these to effectively share content and make learning resources more readily available to your learners.

Before You Begin—Know Your Learners

Before implementing a new technology, it is important to understand your learners—in particular their current use of and perceptions about technology. Many tools and models are available to help you get an objective sense of your end users—from designing solutions around users to simply getting a baseline understanding of learner skill levels and access.



- **Human-centered Design** | Human-centered design is, quite literally, the process of designing a solution around the human(s) who will be using it. [IDEO offers this Design Kit](#) to help you understand how to develop a solution through the process of inspiration, ideation, and implementation. They also provide [an overview of HCD in this video](#).
- **User Personas** | User personas are a human-centered approach to building an objective representation of a student (or, technology end user) through interviews and observation. User personas provide you with a relatable user standpoint from which to consider different technology options. [Usability.gov offers this guide](#), and [useful adult education student personas](#) have been developed by the GED Testing Service.
- **Surveys + Assessments** | A simple way to understand user skills and needs is through surveys. As part of its required process for developing technology and distance learning plans, California has implemented both an [Adult Learner Survey](#) and a [Teacher Skills Assessment](#). Other surveys and assessments that can be used to ascertain learner skill levels can be found on [CrowdED Learning's Digital Skill Library](#).

Effective Technology Integration Requires Planning

It is also important to consider your goals for using technology before selecting a tool. How will teaching and learning look different when using a new technology? If you wish to be thorough in your decision-making process around selecting, testing, implementing, and evaluating technology, numerous resources are available to provide guidance. Here's a small sampling.

- **SAMR Framework** | The SAMR Framework provides a guide to consider how technology impacts teaching and learning, ranging from substitution of current activities to a transformation of students and instructor behavior. [This article from Schoology](#) provides an introduction to the framework, while [this article provides tangible examples](#).
- **Integration Strategies** | [This recent Tech Tips blogpost](#) from EdTech Center @ WorldEducation provides a great overview of the Triple E Framework, which is designed to help educators measure how well they integrate technology tools into instruction.
- **Evaluating Tools** | Workforce Ed Tech provides this [criteria for evaluating tech tools](#) that can be used as a basis for the types of questions to ask when evaluating whether a particular technology is the right fit for your learners.

Discussion Questions ([View or add to LINCS discussion.](#))

Sharing and Assigning Content | What tools do you currently use or are you interested in using to share and assign content to learners? (i.e., Padlet, Wakelet, Remind, Canvas, etc.)

Integration Strategies | What strategies do you find effective for using content sharing and assignment tools to provide learners with access to additional learning content? (In particular, how do you currently use tools such as these to extend options for learning outside of class?)

Expanding Learning Opportunities | Considering the variety of free reading resources we have explored over the course of this event, what are some ideas you have for using a particular resource(s) or tool(s) to expand learner opportunities for reading skill development?