

Evidence-Based Reading Instruction (EBRI)

**A resource for expanding
the use of EBRI in Minnesota
Adult Basic Education**

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To the Reader:

Since the fall of 2008, Minnesota Adult Basic Education (MN ABE) has partnered with **STudent Achievement in Reading (STAR)**, a reading reform initiative from the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), now called the Office of Career and Technical Adult Education (OCTAE), a division of the United States Department of Education (USDE). STAR targets Intermediate-level adults reading at grade level equivalents (GLE) 4.0-8.9, a large and complex population across the nation. STAR's purpose is "to provide states with professional development (PD) trainings, tools, and resources to support teachers and administrators in acquiring the knowledge and skills to successfully implement **evidence-based reading instruction (EBRI)** in their classrooms and programs" (The STAR Gazer, Volume 5, Issue 3, p. 1).

EBRI, the foundation of STAR, is a set of promising practices proven to increase reading achievement for a particular student population. Minnesota STAR teams, comprised of an ABE program manager and reading teachers, are expected to implement five practices for adult readers performing at National Reporting Service (NRS) levels **Low/High Intermediate Basic Education** and **Advanced ESL**:

1. Establish managed enrollment structures and attendance policies at the program or classroom level to support STAR classes
2. Conduct diagnostic reading assessments in all four reading components (alphabetic, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) prior to or shortly after placement in STAR classes
3. Use diagnostic reading assessment evidence to plan and deliver explicit instruction in all reading components of need
4. Select STAR-recommended techniques, strategies, and materials considered effective and appropriate for adults
5. Organize a STAR instructional routine based on students' reading strengths and weaknesses; monitor its effectiveness and adjust as needed

These proven practices are implemented incrementally during the STAR training year (September through June) and along individual continuums. In fact, many new STAR teams do not implement all five practices until the fall-winter of the next academic year. Ongoing supports include electronic and in-person technical assistance (TA) from certified STAR Trainers, 24/7 access to the online STAR Toolkit, and notice of many STAR/EBRI resources from ABE Teaching and Learning Advancement System (ATLAS).

Continuing STAR teams are expected to sustain all five practices during subsequent years. They continue to receive ongoing TA from the STAR Coordinator (and Trainers as needed) and full access to the STAR Toolkit and STAR/EBRI resources from ATLAS.

For more information on STAR, go to www.startoolkit.org

For more information on MN STAR, go to <http://atlasabe.org/professional/star>

Evidence-Based Reading Instruction (EBRI)

Despite STAR's comprehensive training model and TA package, the complex changes required for full implementation do not fit all MN ABE programs or sites. Even when STAR teams are highly motivated, there may not be the capacity, staffing, space, resources, or target student populations to implement all five practices for all four reading components.

However, **EBRI practices** (as described on page 6) **are for "EBRIbody"**; *every* ABE program manager or reading teacher committed to improving the reading achievement of *most every* adult student performing within a broader range of NRS levels: **Beginning ABE Literacy** (if Roman alphabet skills are present), **Beginning Basic Education, Low/High Intermediate Basic Education, Low/High Intermediate ESL** (if Roman alphabet skills are present), and **Advanced ESL**.

EBRI practices for ABE are:

- Based on valid and reliable findings from reading research and supported by conclusions from adult literacy experts
- Considered to be the most promising practices for adult literacy instruction
- Universal; meaning appropriate for adults with learning disabilities (LD) and English language Learners (ELLs) - with modifications for processing, language, educational, and cultural differences

Therefore, this EBRI resource and companion study circle are intended for ABE program managers and reading teachers who want or need to:

- Increase knowledge and understanding of the reading components and EBRI practices
- Receive public domain assessments, instructional plans, steps, ideas, and practitioner advice for implementation of EBRI practices
- Implement EBRI practices one step at a time – beginning with at least ONE reading group, reading component, diagnostic reading assessment, and reading instructional plan, step, idea, or material

From the Author:

A sincere thank you to the following EBRI supporters:

- MDE-ABE and ATLAS staff
- MN STAR Executive, Leadership, Trainer, and Teacher Team members
- MN STAR 09/10/11/12/13/14/15 participants
- MN EBRI Practitioner Circle 12 and MN EBRI Study Circle 13/14/15 participants

If you have any questions about STAR and EBRI, contact Marn Frank, Literacy & STAR Coordinator, at mfrank06@hamline.edu

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ABE practitioners have permission to copy all pages for teacher or classroom use

Further Introduction to EBRI in ABE

Why is EBRI important to MN ABE?

- EBRI is related to a strategic goal from USDE: “To transform education into an evidence-based field.”
- EBRI has been identified as a priority area of PD by MDE-ABE.
- According to a three-year evaluation of the MN STAR Project:
 - ✓ Understanding EBRI increases reading teachers’ knowledge, skills, and confidence
 - ✓ Implementing EBRI increases reading teachers’ use of effective instructional practices
 - ✓ Participating in EBRI increases Intermediate students’ level completion rates and persistence

Note: To access this evaluation evidence, go to <http://www.atlasabe.org/professional/star> and download “A Report on the MN STAR Project,” an inspiring summary of teacher, program and student outcomes from FY 10-12.

What is the research evidence for EBRI in ABE?

EBRI integrates findings and conclusions from two valid and reliable measures of success:

1. **Scientific reading research studies** (more than one), where data is collected according to experimental methods, analyzed with statistical methods, and findings are scrutinized by journal reviewers from the same or similar fields. There are a limited number of scientific reading research studies in the field of adult literacy.
2. **Professional wisdom**, where adult literacy experts (again, more than one) consider additional findings from K-12 language and reading, adolescent reading, ESOL, and LD research bases and reach consensus on which recommended practices are most effective for improving adult reading achievement. Their conclusions about ‘what works’ fill in the gaps of limited scientific reading research studies in the field of adult literacy.

Where is the research evidence for EBRI in ABE?

Since 2002, there have been four national publications reporting on the integration of scientific reading research findings and adult literacy expert conclusions. All were supported by the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) - Partnership for Reading. Upon closure of NIFL in 2010, all were transferred to the Literacy Information Network and Communication System (LINCS) at <http://lincs.ed.gov> for downloading and printing. All recommend implementation of EBRI practices in ABE; each is referenced and briefly described below in chronological order.

- ***Research-Based Principles for Adult Basic Education Reading Instruction*** (2002) summarizes about 70 research studies from the field of adult literacy and identifies emerging principles (based on two or more experimental studies), trends (based on less than two experimental studies), and ideas (based on reading research with children). This publication was directed by the Reading Research Working Group and authored by John R. Kruidenier.
- ***Teaching Adults to Read: A Summary of Scientifically-Based Research Principles*** (2005) further summarizes the research and briefly describes implications for teachers. For all four components of reading, it answers: *What is the component? Why teach it? How do you assess it?* This publication was authored by Mary E. Curtis and John R. Kruidenier.
- ***Getting Reading Results in the Classroom: What Research Tells Us*** (2010) reports via webcast and transcript on findings from multi-year research projects investigating literacy skill development of students enrolled in Adult Basic and Secondary Education classrooms.
- ***Adult Education Literacy Instruction: A Review of the Research*** (2010) was intended as a follow up to the 2002 report. It prioritizes scientifically-based adult education research, determines gaps in this research, and fills in those gaps with research findings from K-12 reading, K-12 second language, K-12 reading-writing, adolescent reading, and other adult populations. This publication was authored by John R. Kruidenier, Charles A. MacArthur, and Heide S. Wrigley and presents “stronger and weaker” findings for adult reading instruction.

A fifth **practitioner-based** publication supported by NIFL and the National Center for Family Literacy was used extensively for this resource and is also available to download and print from LINCS.

- ***Applying Research in Reading Instruction for Adults, First Steps for Teachers*** (2005) applies the identified research principles to actual reading practice. This “teacher friendly” publication was authored by Susan McShane and reviewed by the Adult Reading Expert Group: Judith Alamprese, John Kruidenier, Daryl Mellard, Stephen Reder, John Sabatini, and John Strucker.

Evidence-Based Reading Instruction (EBRI)

Finally, a recent and highly respected publication from The National Academies Press recommends most, if not all, EBRI practices for academically underprepared students enrolled in ABE programs or developmental courses in post-secondary settings. It is available along with research briefs and summary booklets to purchase at www.nap.edu or to download and print from http://sites.nationalacademies.org/DBASSE/Adult_Literacy/index.htm

- ***Improving Adult Literacy Instruction: Options for Practice and Research*** (2012) was in response to a request from USDE to the National Research Council “to (1) synthesize research on literacy and learning, (2) draw implications for the instructional practices used to teach reading in adult literacy programs, and (3) recommend a more systematic approach to research, practice, and policy” (National Research Council, p. 1).

What EBRI practices are recommended for ABE?

1. Conduct diagnostic reading assessments and use the evidence to plan reading instruction
2. Provide direct and explicit instruction in the reading components of need
3. Maximize learner (or student) engagement in reading instruction
4. Select relevant reading materials and teaching activities
5. Organize an EBRI routine based on need(s), monitor its effectiveness, and adjust as needed

What is the practitioner evidence for EBRI in MN ABE?

Between October 2012 and June 2015, 35 MN ABE/ESL reading teachers from the Department of Corrections (DOC), community-based organizations (CBOs), and Greater Minnesota programs (West ABE, Mankato, and SE ABE) participated in Evidence-Based Reading Instruction Study Circles (EBRI SCs). This MN ABE alternative to STAR trainings requires: (1) attendance at 3 meetings, of 3 hours each, over 3 months, (2) completion of pre- and post-meeting tasks, and (3) implementation of *at least ONE* reading assessment, instructional idea, or teaching material. The EBRI SC facilitators included the author, Marn Frank, and three STAR-trained and experienced teachers: Terrisa Fisher, Liv Musel-Staloch, and Christine Wytaske.

Upon completion, 75-100% of EBRI SC 13-15 participants reported:

- Knowing where EBRI comes from and its reliable sources of findings and conclusions
- Knowing all four components of reading and several interrelationships
- Knowing the purpose and process for conducting at least one diagnostic reading assessment in addition to CASAS/TABE
- Knowing how to use diagnostic reading assessment results to form reading groups based on students' needs
- Using at least one EBRI plan, idea, material, and contextual practice in their reading classes
- Feeling more confident about their reading skills and effectiveness as reading teachers

What did EBRI SC 13-15 participants like best?

- Having FREE access to and training in diagnostic reading assessments
- Having 1:1 time with students to assess their reading skills and engage them in the reading process
- Learning more about the four reading components (alphabets, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension) and four steps of explicit instruction (explanation, modeling, guided practice, application)
- Sharing questions, challenges, experiences, ideas, resources, and solutions with each other at all meetings
- Using and applying what they learned, as they learned

How did EBRI SC 15 participants change their reading instruction?

- "[I can now] gauge, recognize, and address what students need."
- "I know more about where to start students and [my aim and end goal]."
- "It became more structured and intentional."
- "I now use evidence-based instruction."
- "I teach more explicitly."
- "I provide more reading groups."
- "My classes are more leveled and complete."
- "My students and I are more excited about reading instruction."

How is EBRI in Minnesota aligned with the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) for English Language Arts (ELA) and Literacy?

The central purposes of the CCRS are to “forge a stronger link among adult education, postsecondary education, and the world of work” and “provide a starting point for raising awareness and understanding of the critical skills and knowledge expected and required for success in colleges, technical training programs, and employment in the 21st century” (USDE, OVAE, 2013, p. 1). They are intended to inform language, reading, writing, and mathematics instruction for all ABE programs and for all ABE students. Currently, CASAS and CTB (TABE) are working to align their ABE and ESL assessments with the CCRS.

The ELA and Literacy standards are separated into four strands: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language. Each strand is headed by anchors that identify broad college and career readiness expectations. Under each anchor are specific, level-appropriate skills: A=K-1, B=2-3, C=4-5, D=6-8, and E=9-12, which reflect six National Reporting Service (NRS) functional levels: Beginning ABE Literacy, Beginning Basic Education, Low Intermediate Basic Education, High Intermediate Basic Education, Low Adult Secondary, and High Adult Secondary. Together, they outline the necessary skills for developing reading proficiency and comprehension of varied texts across a range of disciplines (literature, science, social studies, and technical subjects).

This EBRI resource recommends practical steps, plans, ideas, and materials for teaching alphabetic skills, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Most are aligned with three **Reading Standards: Foundational Skills (RF)** or four **CCR Anchors** at Levels A-C or K-5:

- **RF.2.** Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes). (Alphabetic)
- **RF.3.** Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words. (Alphabetic)
- **RF.4.** Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. (Fluency)
- **CCR Anchor 1:** Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text. (Comprehension)
- **CCR Anchor 2:** Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas. (Comprehension)
- **CCR Anchor 3:** Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text. (Comprehension)
- **CCR Anchor 4:** Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone. (Vocabulary)

If you have any questions about EBRI and CCRS alignment, contact Kristine Kelly, Literacy & ELA Coordinator, at kkelly01@hamline.edu

1a

Conduct Diagnostic Reading Assessments

All of the national publications described earlier recommend conducting and using diagnostic reading assessments in addition to standardized, silent reading comprehension tests like CASAS and TABE Reading. This involves individual administration of short tests for alphabetics, fluency, and vocabulary to identify students' strengths and weaknesses in the reading process, not just the end product - comprehension of text. The test results (recorded as Mastery or Instructional Levels) become the evidence used to plan reading instruction, group students according to reading needs, and select appropriate techniques and leveled materials.

Recommended published assessments include:

- *Diagnostic Assessments of Reading (DAR)*: tests a variety of reading and spelling skills; includes passages and questions for fluency and comprehension. Available to purchase at: <http://www.riverpub.com/products/dar/index.html>
- *BADER Reading and Language Inventory*: tests a variety of reading and language skills; includes leveled word lists for alphabetics, passages and questions for fluency and comprehension. Available to purchase at: <http://www.prenhall.com> or www.amazon.com

Recommended public domain assessments include:

- *Word Reading Test (WRT)*: tests **alphabetics** or automatic word recognition with grade-leveled word lists (see pages 15-22)*
- *Sylvia Greene's Informal Word Analysis Inventory*: tests **phonics** or English sound-letter knowledge with sequential, one-syllable, real word lists (see pages 23-27)*
- *Quick and Easy Adult Reading Assessments*: tests **fluency** or the ability to read text accurately and smoothly with grade-leveled passages (see pages 28-44)
- *Word Meaning Test (WMT)*: tests **vocabulary** or expressive word knowledge with grade-leveled word lists (see pages 45-51)*

*Also available to print for free at: <https://lincs.ed.gov/readingprofiles/resources.htm>

Practical Steps:

Conducting diagnostic reading assessments with individual students takes extra staff, time, space, paper, and organization. Even with the best of EBRI intentions, it may not be reasonable to conduct additional assessments for: (1) word recognition, (2) phonics skills - as needed, (3) oral fluency, and (4) vocabulary knowledge. However, MN ABE programs, managers, or teachers are not actually implementing EBRI without conducting **at least one diagnostic reading assessment** in addition to TABE or CASAS Reading.

McShane advocates for “a thoughtful, one-step-at-a-time approach” (p. 105) using practitioner wisdom to develop a diagnostic reading assessment plan that meets students’ needs and that a program’s resources will allow.

In the box below and on pages 11-14 are four practical steps to consider while developing a manageable diagnostic reading assessment plan. They are the author’s modifications of McShane’s five-step “start-up plan for component assessment” (p. 31 and p.105-108).

Four Practical Steps for Developing a Diagnostic Reading Assessment Plan

1. Review the four components of reading before developing a diagnostic reading assessment plan.
2. Decide what ONE reading component besides comprehension - *alphabetic, fluency, vocabulary* - will be assessed first.
3. Study the administration guidelines and practice conducting the selected diagnostic reading assessment.
4. Complete a sample of diagnostic reading assessments with students, evaluate the plan, and make any necessary changes or adjustments.

Step One:

Review the four components of reading before developing a diagnostic reading assessment plan.

Here are McShane's definitions for alphabetics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. For more information, consult her publication *Applying Research in Reading Instruction for Adults, First Steps for Teachers* or *Teaching Adults to Read* or locate a copy of *The Adult Reading Toolkit* (2007) disseminated for free to MN ABE providers in 2006-2008.

Alphabetics refers to phonemic awareness and decoding skills. "Phonemic awareness is about speech sounds only. Decoding makes the connection between letters and the sounds they represent. When we talk about phonics instruction we refer to training in the use of letter-sound relationships to identify words in reading or to approximate the spelling of words. Phonics instruction builds decoding skills, which depend to a large extent on phonemic awareness" (p. 34).

Fluency refers to oral or silent reading that "is rapid, efficient, and largely free of errors in word identification. But fluency is more than speedy, accurate word reading; a fluent reader also uses appropriate phrasing and expression. A fluent reader knows how to group words into phrases, where to pause, and what to emphasize. In other words, fluent reading sounds like speech" (p. 49).

Vocabulary refers to the words understood or used by a person. Oral vocabulary is the words we understand and use in speaking and listening. Our reading vocabulary is the store of words we can read and understand" (p. 160).

Comprehension is "the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. Comprehension entails three elements:

- The reader who is doing the comprehending
- The text that is to be comprehended
- The activity in which comprehension is a part" (p. 72).

Step Two:

Decide what ONE reading component besides comprehension - *alphabetics, fluency, vocabulary* - will be assessed first.

McShane recommends having ABE students below the GED level read a short passage at their TABE or CASAS Reading GLE* to screen reading rate (a dimension of fluency) and determine the need for further alphabetics and/or vocabulary assessment (p. 106). Her guidelines are:

- Those students with TABE or CASAS Reading scores greater than (>) GLE 8.0 AND oral fluency rates > 125 Words Correct per Minute (WCM) will not need any further assessment.
- Those students with TABE or CASAS Reading scores less than (<) GLE 8.0 OR oral fluency rates < 125 WCM will need further assessment in alphabetics and/or vocabulary.

The author recommends that MN ABE students with TABE or CASAS Reading scores < GLE 9.0 (high school or GED level) be assessed individually in **at least one other reading component besides comprehension**. Which diagnostic reading assessment to conduct first is a programmatic decision based on available staffing, time, and space - combined with practitioner insights about students' possible needs.

Consider the following:

- a) Which reading component do students seem to struggle with the most?
- b) Which diagnostic reading assessment will be most useful?
- c) Who is best qualified to conduct this diagnostic reading assessment?
- d) When can diagnostic reading assessment take place?
- e) Where can diagnostic reading assessment take place?

If one diagnostic reading assessment is all you can start with, strive to add the other two over time. This will optimize the evidence needed for planning and delivering effective reading instruction.

**See the two charts on the next page to determine approximate GLEs corresponding to NRS levels and/or CASAS or TABE Reading scaled score ranges.*

A Correlation of NRS Levels, CASAS & TABE Score Ranges, and Grade Level Ranges

NRS Levels	CASAS Score Ranges	TABE Score Ranges	Grade Level Ranges
Beginning ABE Literacy	Reading 0-200	Reading 0 – 367	0 – 1.9
Beginning Basic Education	Reading 201-210	Reading 368 – 460	2 – 3.9
Low Intermediate Basic Education	Reading 211-220	Reading 461 – 517	4 – 5.9
High Intermediate Basic Education	Reading 221-235	Reading 518 – 566	6 – 8.9

A Correlation of CASAS Score Ranges and Grade Level Equivalent

CASAS Score Ranges	GLE
180 and below	1
181-190	1
191-200	1
201-205	2
206-210	3
211-215	4
216-220	5
221-225	6
226-230	7
231-235	8

Step Three:

Study the administration guidelines and practice conducting the selected diagnostic reading assessment.

- a) Review the administration guidelines* and Teacher/Student Copies available in this resource.
- b) Note recommended starting points (the first grade level word list or passage) and ending points (the last grade level word list or passage) to ensure efficiency.
- c) Practice conducting diagnostic reading assessment with co-teachers, at home with family members, or with willing friends to ensure comfort.
- d) If more than one teacher will be conducting diagnostic reading assessment, co-test a sample of students and compare results to ensure consistency.
- e) Consider viewing the “Diagnostic Testing Video” available at <http://lincs.ed.gov/readingprofiles/index.htm> **NOTE:** The video differs from some of the diagnostic reading assessment recommendations in this resource.

**The author modified some of the administration guidelines and test formats for clarity and consistency.*

Step Four:

Complete a sample of diagnostic reading assessments with students, evaluate the plan, and make changes or adjustments.

- a) Complete a sample of ONE diagnostic reading assessment with students whose TABE or CASAS Reading scores are < GLE 9.0.
- b) Evaluate your diagnostic reading assessment plan: What’s working? What’s not working? How should it change? How can it be improved? Who else can help?
- c) Make necessary changes or choices and re-evaluate your plan.
- d) Over time, expand your diagnostic reading assessment plan to include the other two components – as staffing, time, and space allow.

An Idea for Using Volunteers or Educational Assistants (EAs)

Consider enlisting volunteers or educational assistants to conduct diagnostic reading assessments. Train them in each test process, have them observe student testing (with permission), then co-test and compare results before expecting “solo” assessment.



Many MN STAR programs find that retired elementary teachers *really* enjoy this volunteer role and hold prior knowledge about reading assessment and its connection to planning and delivering effective reading instruction.

Word Reading Test (WRT) from the Quick Adult Reading Inventory (QARI)

By Jeanne S. Chall, Florence G. Roswell, Mary E. Curtis, John Strucker (2003)
Quick Adult Reading Inventory, Elizabethtown, PA: Continental Press, Inc.
Retrieved from <http://lincs.ed.gov/readingprofiles/resources.htm>

Modified Administration Guidelines for Assessing Alphabetics

1. Start at or one grade level below the student's TABE or CASAS Reading GLE.
2. Tell the student: "I am going to give you a short reading test. I will ask you to read word lists aloud while I listen carefully. This will tell me if I need to teach you how to better sound out or pronounce words. Reading words correctly is important for recognizing words and understanding the meaning of text."
3. Have the student read the appropriate word list(s) from the Student Copy while you follow along on the Teacher Copy. Score 1 for correct word recognition or pronunciation and 0 for incorrect word recognition or pronunciation.
4. As much as possible, write down actual miscues or mispronunciations to help identify patterns of errors for multi-syllable decoding instruction (syllables, prefixes, suffixes).
5. What is counted as an error:
 - An obvious misreading
 - The stress is put on the wrong syllable
 - A long sound is substituted for a vowel's short sound, or vice-versa*
 - Laborious sounding out of each syllable; **The *Word Reading Test* is a test of effortless word reading - of automaticity. Allow only 5 seconds to recognize each word.**
 - A non-English pronunciation is given for a word. Many English words can be read by Spanish and French speakers because the spelling is the same - but make sure they are giving the English pronunciation.

***For ESOL readers:** DO NOT count as errors substitutions of one short vowel for another - distinguishing short vowel sounds is very difficult for English language learners. (BUT this substitution is counted as an error for native English speakers.)

6. There are two Mastery grade equivalents (GE) for each word list:
 - If the student reads 9 or 10 of the words correctly, go to the next higher word list.
 - If the student reads 7 or 8 of the words correctly, stop; the lower GE is Mastery.
 - If the student reads 6 or less of the words correctly, go to the next lower word list.

The highest GE scored as 70% or 90% correct is the Alphabetics Mastery Level.

Note: Form B word lists are also available to download and print from the website referenced at the top.

Word Reading Test, Form A
Teacher Copy

Student Name _____

Date _____

List A (GE 1-2)

man _____
so _____
day _____
sun _____
tree _____
friend _____
her _____
long _____
us _____
when _____

Mastery for GE 1 is 7 correct

Mastery for GE 2 is 9 correct

GE= _____

List C (GE 5-6)

citizen _____
computer _____
information _____
temporary _____
explanation _____
application _____
concentrate _____
development _____
material _____
practice _____

Mastery for GE 5 is 7 correct

Mastery for GE 6 is 9 correct

GE= _____

List B (GE 3-4)

airplane _____
before _____
water _____
hundred _____
bank _____
Thursday _____
complete _____
package _____
record _____
science _____

Mastery for GE 3 is 7 correct

Mastery for GE 4 is 9 correct

GE= _____

List D (GE 7-8)

contribution _____
convenient _____
individual _____
acknowledge _____
pollution _____
optimistic _____
reputation _____
urgent _____
prescription _____
confidential _____

Mastery for GE 7 is 7 correct

Mastery for GE 8 is 9 correct

GE= _____

Word Reading Test, Form A
Teacher Copy

Note: The following WRT list (Student Copy is on page 20) is not necessary for implementing EBRI, but may be used to confirm strong word recognition skills.

Student Name _____

Date _____

List E (GE 9-10)

ambitious _____

politician _____

duration _____

enthusiastic _____

sufficient _____

economical _____

comprehension _____

interruption _____

anticipate _____

productivity _____

Mastery for GE 9 is 7 correct

Mastery for GE 10 is 9 correct

GE= _____

Word Reading Test, Form A/List A
Student Copy

man

so

day

sun

tree

friend

her

long

us

when

Word Reading Test, Form A/List B
Student Copy

airplane

before

water

hundred

bank

Thursday

complete

package

record

science

Word Reading Test, Form A/List C
Student Copy

citizen

computer

information

temporary

explanation

application

concentrate

development

material

practice

Word Reading Test, Form A/List D
Student Copy

contribution

convenient

individual

acknowledge

pollution

optimistic

reputation

urgent

prescription

confidential

Word Reading Test, Form A/List E
Student Copy

ambitious

politician

duration

enthusiastic

sufficient

economical

comprehension

interruption

anticipate

productivity

Sylvia Greene's Informal Word Analysis Inventory

Retrieved from <http://lincs.ed.gov/readingprofiles/resources.htm>

Modified Administration Guidelines for Assessing Phonics

Reading (Decoding) – Individual

1. Determine the appropriate starting point for the student:

Level I: single consonants, short vowels, consonant digraphs, consonant blends, long vowel-silent e

Level II: vowel digraphs, silent consonants, vowel-r, vowel diphthongs, soft/hard c and g, irregular patterns

2. Tell the student: "I am going to give you a short reading test. You will read words aloud while I listen carefully. This will tell me the English letter-sound relationships you know and the ones I need to teach you. This will help you become a better reader and speller."
3. As the student reads down each column, mark his/her pronunciations as correct or write down his/her incorrect pronunciations on the "Teacher's Copy" under the "Reading" column.
4. If you start with Level I and the student reads about 80% of the words correctly, administer Level II.
5. Determine which English letter-sound combinations the student knows (by correct pronunciations) and does not know (by incorrect pronunciations).

Spelling (Encoding) – Individual or Group

1. Determine the appropriate starting point for the students – see above.
2. Tell the students: "I am going to give you a short spelling test. I will dictate words for you to spell. Then I will collect your tests. This will tell me the English letter-sound relationships you know and the ones I need to teach you. This will help you become better readers and spellers."
3. If you start with Level I and the students spell about 80% of the words correctly, administer Level II.
4. After dictating Level I and/or Level II words, collect the spelling tests to check and analyze.
5. Determine which English letter-sound relationships the students know (by correct spellings) and do not know (by incorrect spellings).

Sylvia Greene's Informal Word Analysis Inventory - Level I

Teacher Copy

Name: _____

Date: _____

Reading	Spelling	Reading	Spelling
fan		met	
hag		quit	
Sal		quack	
ban		rank	
tad		link	
rig		Kong	
Sid		hung	
shin		brag	
chat		slot	
pitch		snap	
latch		strut	
sack		sprig	
bath		runt	
thin		Fisk	
wham		Luke	
rum		file	
cup		rote	
log		nape	
mod		Pete	
fen			

Sylvia Greene's Informal Word Analysis Inventory - Level II

Teacher Copy

Name: _____

Date: _____

Reading	Spelling	Reading	Spelling
vain		hark	
jay		port	
peek		verb	
beam		firm	
roam		curl	
mow		pall	
foe		balm	
hue		mild	
few		cent	
void		pace	
soy		cinch	
foul		cyst	
pow		gem	
loop		binge	
hood		gin	
gauze		gym	
jaw		phase	
knack		tough	
writ		deaf	
tight		hunted	
limb		wished	
sly		slammed	
tie			

Sylvia Greene's Informal Word Analysis Inventory – Level I

Learner Copy (Please read down each column.)

fan	thin	hung
hag	wham	brag
Sal	rum	slot
ban	cup	snap
tad	log	strut
rig	mod	sprig
Sid	fen	runt
shin	met	Fisk
chat	quit	Luke
pitch	quack	file
latch	rank	rote
sack	link	nape
bath	Kong	Pete

Sylvia Greene's Informal Word Analysis Inventory – Level II

Learner Copy (Please read down each column.)

vain	gauze	mild
jay	jaw	cent
peek	knack	pace
beam	writ	cinch
roam	tight	cyst
mow	limb	gem
foe	sly	binge
hue	tie	gin
few	hark	gym
void	port	phase
soy	verb	tough
foul	firm	deaf
pow	curl	hunted
loop	pall	wished
hood	balm	slammed

Quick and Easy Adult Reading Assessments: Forms A and B

Teacher and Student Copies

Adapted by Dianna Baycich and Nancy Padak

Three-Minute Reading Assessments, Scholastic Books, Inc.

By Tim Rasinski and Nancy Padak (2005)

Retrieved from http://www.ohioliteracyalliance.org/adultfluency/adult_fluency.htm

Modified Administration Guidelines for Assessing Oral Fluency

1. Start with a Form A or B passage at the same grade level as the student's TABE or CASAS Reading GLE (passages are available from GLE 1-8 only).
2. Tell the student: "I am going to give you a short reading test. I will ask you to read paragraphs aloud while I listen carefully. This will tell me if I need to teach you how to read with accuracy (correct word reading), efficient speed (not too fast or slow), and in meaningful phrases (like conversation). Reading fluently is very important for understanding the meaning of text."
3. Have the student read through the entire first paragraph - *unless it is too difficult or labored*. Provide pronunciations or corrections only as needed to move things along. If you cannot judge the student's reading fluency according to the questions below, have him/her read the second (and if needed, third) paragraph aloud. Students do not need to read the entire passage for fluency assessment.
4. As the student reads each paragraph aloud, listen for fluency and ask yourself these questions:

- Are *most* of the words being read or pronounced correctly?
- Is the speed or pace allowing for understanding?
- Are the words phrased or chunked into meaningful units?
- Is there *some* expression and/or intonation?

5. If the student reads the paragraph(s) accurately and smoothly, but not necessarily perfectly, go up one grade level and repeat steps 3 and 4. Continue moving up one grade level at a time until he/she begins to struggle with correct word identification, efficient speed, or meaningful phrasing. This is likely* the student's **Fluency Instructional Level**, where teacher modeling and guided practice are necessary.
6. If the student struggles to read the first paragraph with correct word identification, efficient speed, or meaningful phrasing, go down one grade level and repeat steps 3 and 4. Continue moving down one grade level at a time until he/she reads the paragraph(s) with good (but not perfect) fluency. The grade level before (with some struggle) is likely* the student's **Fluency Instructional Level**, where teacher modeling and guided practice are necessary.

***Note:** Oral and silent fluency can be influenced by prior knowledge of or a lack of familiarity with passage content. Therefore, both Form A and Form B passages are included on pages 29-44 so that a teacher can select the most appropriate passages for fluency assessment.

Quick and Easy Adult Reading Assessments: Form A

Teacher and Student Copies

1A

On Sunday I went to the park. I took my son. He had so much fun. The park was big. There were lots of things to do. He went on the swings first. He flew high in the air. I told him not to go so high. He told me birds fly higher than him. Then he went on the slide. It was the little one. I went with him. He said I looked silly. I thought so too. He was afraid of the big slide. It was as high as a mountain. I went on it to show him it was OK. He still didn't want to go on it. There was a pond at the park. We fed the ducks there. All the ducks were quacking. They sounded like a traffic jam. Then I sat on a bench. He played in the sand. It was a great day. My son can't wait to go again.

Word Count: 157

2A

This weekend we went to the zoo. It was awesome. Our son went with us. His sister came too. The zoo was in the city. It took a long time to drive there. My son and his sister complained a lot. My wife said they sounded like broken records. When we got there my kids were excited. They wanted to see the seals first. They loved the seals. They put on a show. The seals could balance balls on their noses. We clapped so hard our hands turned red. They looked like they had sun burn. Next we went to see the lions. They were just lying around. My son called them lazy bones. My wife wanted to see the monkeys. She says my son and I remind her of them. The monkeys were cool. They were swinging on ropes like the kids do at recess. Then we got ice cream. It tasted so good I could have eaten ten more. Our trip to the zoo was super.

Word Count: 168

3A

Family trips can be fun, but some are not. Last month our family went to the beach, but it was not a fun trip. The trip took ten hours in the car. Those ten hours felt like ten days. It was plain torture. When we arrived the house looked like it hadn't been lived in for several years. The paint on the house was peeling off in little yellow flakes. In fact, it looked like the house was painted in sticky notes. The stairs to the front door shook when you stepped on them, like walking on a boat in a storm. My son had to share a room with his little sister, which was awful.

The weather was the worst part of the trip. Every day during the entire week was overcast. The skies looked like the gray of our garage floor. It rained day and night, and so we had to stay inside. We did walk down to the beach a couple of times. One day it was so windy I felt like I was a kite being blown around the beach. The sand whipped through the air and stung our faces like tiny bees. We had fun a few times. My son and I went for a walk on the beach, and he found a hermit crab on the jetty. That was really cool.

Next year when we are going to the beach we will be hoping for better weather.

Word Count: 243

4A

Family outings are very important to my family. We go lots of places together. Last weekend we went to a museum in the city. It was an art museum, but it had a lot of other things in it, too. The museum itself was a beautiful building. Stone arches covered the steps to get inside. It felt like walking through a tunnel. The front door was huge. It was so big an elephant could have fit through it. It was an exciting walk just to get in.

We saw a medieval exhibit at the museum. Our kids studied medieval times in school, so they knew a lot about it. The first room was filled with suits of armor. There were all types, not only the kind I had seen before. My wife said it was like a department store for knights. My favorite suit was one like from the books I had read. It was silver and shiny and would cover your whole body. It made me think of a haunted house and how people sometimes hide in armor and spy on you. It was kind of creepy.

Then we went into a room of paintings from that time period. They were nice. The museum was very quiet when we were there. It reminded me of the library. There were lots more rooms in the exhibit. We went to almost all of them. The armor one was my favorite though.

Word Count: 240

5A

Last week, my family went to the county fair. My brother is a volunteer fireman, so he was working at the fair. My children and I went to meet him. I am very glad we did; it was a great night. When we arrived the fair was very crowded, and finding my brother was like finding a needle in a haystack. We finally found him because we heard the fire truck siren blaring and knew it was him. Showing off the fire truck is his favorite pastime; that truck is his pride and joy. There was a feeling of excitement at the fair. Everyone was happy and having fun, just like how the children feel on their birthdays.

First, my children went on a Ferris wheel that was over a hundred feet high. They said they could see the whole town when they were at the top. I was truly nervous when they stopped at the top because the car they were in swayed back and forth like a flag whipping in the wind. Shutting my eyes and pretending they were on the ground helped calm me down, but it felt like forever until they started down again. I was relieved when the ride was over, but, of course, they wanted to go again.

After that we each got something to eat. My son got bright blue cotton candy, blue like a lollipop, not like the sky. I don't know how he could eat it. It was so sweet it tasted like sugar straight from the sugar bowl, and it made his tongue turn blue. My daughter got funnel cake covered in sugar. She got so much powdered sugar on her face that she looked like a mime. I thought it was funny, but she didn't. We rode on several more rides and looked at lots of interesting stuff before we left. It really was a fantastic night.

Word Count: 319

6A

Have you ever been to an amusement park? Over Labor Day, our family went to the largest one in our state. We rode many rides and saw some fantastic shows. The greatest parts were the roller coasters. My children's mission was to go on every coaster at least once, and they accomplished it. They even went on several twice.

The recently constructed Shredder was the first they tried. It is the tallest, largest, and most daunting coaster I have ever seen. Despite my better judgment, I agreed to accompany them on the ride. We didn't have to wait in line too long to experience The Shredder. Once on board, a large metal bar held my body in place, and two pads surrounded either side of my head. It was intimidating to stand there and look up, knowing the ride was about to begin. My heart was beating like drums at a rock concert, and as we slowly climbed up the coaster, it felt like the volume of my heartbeat was being turned up louder and louder. Suddenly, the climb was over, and we began to plunge. It felt as if we were free falling to the ground. I was afraid that the safety bar would release. But to my relief, it didn't.

Upon reaching the bottom, we started to whip around bends and fly upside down like we were a balloon losing air. My head was knocked back and forth between the pads like a pinball. Up and down we went, round and round, upside down and back again. It seemed like the ride would never stop, and then all of a sudden it was over. I was ready to take a break after this adventure, but after my children regained their composure, they were ready for more.

Word Count: 298

7A

Our family has always loved the water. My father, in particular, should probably have been born a fish. Recently, he took us on a fishing trip in the Atlantic Ocean. My children, 8 and 10, are both good swimmers, so he decided it was time to introduce them to the joys of big sea fishing. The drive to the coast only took two hours, but the children were so excited that it really seemed interminable to them. I bet we heard "Are we there yet?" 100 times! My dad's excitement grew as we neared the coast as well. The instant we arrived at the hotel, he headed straight for the docks.

After carefully comparing prices and sizes, he selected a vessel to charter, and we were off. Grayish blue and calm, the waters seemed to be inviting us for an adventure. Our captain was both efficient and an excellent teacher. He involved the children in equipment preparation; they helped him organize rods, reels, lines and bait. They also learned about the importance of staying buckled in while their poles were in the water and saw illustrations of the big fish they might catch. By the time we left the dock, the children were as excited as their grandfather to get out to sea.

We sat down, buckled up, and took off. After about 10 minutes, the captain cut the engines, and we cast our lines into the sea. It was a beautiful morning and quite pleasant waiting for our bait to tempt some aquatic creature. My dad regaled us with stories of the past and the big fish that always seemed to get away. His stories were no doubt exaggerated, but we all enjoyed listening to them. My children got to see a new side of their grandfather. I enjoyed watching the three of them interact.

With a few nibbles here and there and even a few catches, the morning passed quickly. We may not have caught the whopper, but it was great nevertheless. My father, my children, and I have decided to make this an annual trip. We are all anxiously awaiting next year already.

Word Count: 356

8A

As recent immigrants to the United States, my family and I decided to take a trip to see the Statue of Liberty. This symbol of freedom and strength was something we had read about for many years. We wanted to experience it firsthand. Waiting for the ferry to take us to Liberty Island was a wonderful opportunity for “people watching.” We were not alone in our interest to see this landmark. All types of people from all corners of the world seemed to be crushed together on the dock.

The trip to the island was both exhilarating and fascinating. The smells of sea and city blended together in the wind, which seemed to blow a feeling of history and vitality. The statue herself was an awesome sight to behold. Standing at her feet, I found it difficult to comprehend the masses of people who had stood there before me.

We had hoped to walk up to the statue’s crown. However, this was not to be. It was once possible to climb the stairs or take an elevator to the top of the statue. However, recent renovations coupled with security concerns now prohibit going beyond the statue’s base. Instead, our family stood outside at the bottom of Lady Liberty, looking up. We marveled at how high the top of the statue appeared from below. We also spent some time on the grounds observing the magnificent skyline of New York City. It took our breath away.

Visiting this symbol of freedom was an experience I will never forget. It is easy to see why the Statue of Liberty is one of the most important symbols of freedom and democracy in the world.

Word Count: 287

Quick and Easy Adult Reading Assessments: Form B
Teacher and Student Copies

1B

It is hot. The sun is out, and I am very hot. I tell my son to play outside. He says it is too hot to play ball. It is too hot to ride bikes. It is way too hot to play tag. He wants to be cool. He wants to swim, but the pool is not open yet. We have to wait till the pool opens before we can swim. I tell him to go sit under the tree. He says it is too hot to play, and it is hot under the tree. The grass is hot and makes him itchy. He comes in the house. The air is cool in there. Soon we can go to the pool. It is too hot to play.

Word Count: 127

2B

It is so cold today! I went for a walk with the dog, and it was freezing. When I went outside the air hurt my eyes. My eyes were filled with tears, but I was not crying. My ears hurt too. The cold air made them feel like ice cubes in the freezer. I could hear bells ringing that were not ringing. I did not wear gloves even though I should have. My fingers got so cold they felt hot. What a surprise to feel so cold that you begin to feel hot! My body was not cold. I had a big coat on that kept me warm like when I am snuggled up in bed. The dog was cold too. She kept pulling on her leash to go back to the house. Our walk was not very long. I don't like it when it is this cold. My dog does not like it either.

Word Count: 155

3B

Blown around like a kite is how I felt when I was walking to the bus stop today. It was hard to walk in a straight line because the wind pushed me from here to there. It was like being a yoyo on a string going back and forth. Each time I thought I was safe, another gust blew me off in another direction. I saw some children trying to play kick ball, but the ball kept blowing away. It was like a funny movie. I also saw a woman pushing two little girls on the swings. It was an easy job; the wind did most of the work.

I was glad when the bus came, but no one seemed happy on the bus. Many people combed or patted their hair. Others just looked exhausted. When I left the bus, I saw a man lose all his papers; the wind just blew them away. He looked so helpless. I tried to help him catch the papers, but it was hard. We did get all the pieces, but I think they were ruined. The wind seemed to help me arrive at my job. I was glad it was blowing on my back instead of at my face. What a windy day!

Word Count: 210

4B

Today is a dark, dreary, and rainy day. It has been raining ever since I woke up. It rained all day at work. It rained the whole way home on the bus. It rained the entire walk home from the bus stop, and it is still raining even now. Outside there is a rippling layer of water that covers the ground. It is like the whole world has turned into a baby swimming pool that only comes up to your ankles.

There are leaves covering all the lawns and streets. They have been ripped from their branches by rain drops that have been endlessly falling, taking with them everything in their path. The leaves just lay on the ground and they seem to be wondering what they did to deserve this; it wasn't their time to fall yet.

Cars drive by with their headlights on, even though it is not night time. They seem to be confused. The sun has disappeared, and I'm not sure it will ever return. Silently I sit by my window, waiting for the rain to stop. I hope to be freed soon from my indoor prison. Winter is coming; every day before the cold arrives needs to be spent enjoying the outdoors. Today is a dark, dreary, and rainy day. It has been raining ever since I woke up.

Word Count: 224

5B

Lightening crashes, thunder booms, and the earth shakes with the power of the storm. This storm is holding us captive in the lobby of the grocery store. Looking out the huge glass windows we see an angry sky, a sky that seems to be daring us to come outside and make a mad dash for our car. Through the pelting rains we see our brave little minivan. It is just waiting for us to fill her trunk with the week's food and her seats with our bodies.

Another brilliant flash of lightening illuminates the sky. All of us prisoners of the storm gasp together and change our minds about risking the run. Babies cry and toddlers whimper. Even my son, a brave fifth grader, moves closer to me as if to keep me safe. I am getting restless; I need to get home. The ice cream is melting. The crowd at the front of the store is getting bigger. Every now and then a young man darts out into the weather. We all watch as he gets beaten by the rains and struggles to make it into his car. Then we all watch as he drives away, freed from the stuffy store that we are trapped in.

I decide to make that courageous run. I tell my children to hold hands and not to move. They watch in amazement as I run into the rain. I run like an Olympic athlete and reach the car in no time at all. The children watch as our brave little minivan drives to the door. Grocery bags in hand, the children make their dangerous trip. We have beaten the storm. I feel like I have saved the day.

Word Count: 285

6B

The air was crisp and clear after last night's rain. It was one of those fall days that you wait for. Everything was perfect. The leaves that still clung to the trees were a kaleidoscope of colors: red, yellow, orange, brown, and green. The fallen leaves littered the street like remnants of a party that had gone on the night before.

Stepping out of my warm house for my early morning walk was like stepping into a memory of days that had gone before. The cool air met me. I took a deep breath, drawing in the lovely scents of the season. The crispness of this air is what makes this type of day so special. I thought of backyard football, leaf piles, and warm coats and hats as I crunched down the leaf covered sidewalk. I had a small start of excitement and anticipation as I thought of the warm turkey and gravy I would eat at next week's Thanksgiving feast. A few birds called to me from the trees. Squirrels darted out of my path as they hunted for those final nuts to keep them fat and full over the winter.

The few cars that ventured down this street drove slowly, aware that wet leaves are a deceptive hazard. The cars seemed to be showing their own form of respect for this special morning. It was the type of fall day you dream of, the type that you remember for the rest of your life.

Word Count: 246

7B

The word “freezing” cannot sufficiently explain the biting cold that encompasses my body at this very moment. My bones are frigid, stiff, and sore; my inner being is so frozen and dark that no warmth at all remains in my body. Were you to take my temperature right now, it would register 32 degrees or below.

The wait for the bus has seemed interminable and intolerable. I stand out here alone, forlorn and solitary, waiting for the vehicle that represents relief and safety. The air around me seems to crackle like ice breaking apart with each breath I inhale. The condensation coming from my mouth is like the vapor from a locomotive. It hangs in the air like a speech bubble from a cartoon character. My thoughts, muddled by the intense cold, somehow arrive at the idea to stomp my feet to help sensation return. As each foot meets the pavement, a wave of pain travels up my leg like lightning. Although it hurts, I am relieved by the pain, as it means my legs still have the capacity to feel!

I twist around to look at my house, and there, inside the steamy window, is my roommate watching me. She seems surreal as she waves gaily to me; she is dressed only in her pajamas and looks completely comfortable. Is it possible that she cannot be experiencing this torturous cold, that she has escaped this? I turn away, not wanting her to see that I am jealous of her comfort. Off in the distance, I see a metallic glint. Is it possible that I will survive this frozen ordeal? Yes, the bus has arrived, I’m on my way to work, and I am saved for another day.

Word Count: 288

8B

The intense heat sears my back as I slowly cross the parking lot to enter the shopping mall. The black pavement, a sea of molten tar, seems to boil beneath my sneakers. It licks the soles of my shoes trying to melt them with its dark, fiery breath. The air has turned hazy, and everywhere I look seems blurred and watery. The sun, a bright circle, appears to be floating just inches from the top of my head. Its heat emanates in pulses, pushing through the thick atmosphere like waves pounding against my body.

Broadcast from every surrounding car are voices predicting the day's record high temperatures. These reporters, no doubt sitting in air conditioned comfort, warn me to drink plenty of water, stay indoors, and take care of the elderly and my pets.

Each step is such an effort that I am in conflict as to whether to hurry to my destination or to stop right where I am. The double doors to the mall are within sight. They are calling to me, offering solace from this nightmare I am living. I use all my will and determination and force my legs to carry me through the last stretch of heated wind that is pushing me back. Finally, I enter through the doors of the mall and am greeted with a blast of frigid air that meets me like my family after years of separation. I know what awaits me outside, but for now I am encompassed within a cocoon of comfort and safety.

Word Count: 254

Modified Administration Guidelines for Assessing Expressive Vocabulary

1. Start at or one grade level below the student's TABE or CASAS Reading GLE.
2. Tell the student "I am going to give you a short vocabulary test. I will ask you to give me the meanings of words while I listen carefully. This will tell me if I need to include you in vocabulary instruction. Knowing words is strongly related to understanding the meaning of text."
3. Begin with the first word on the list and say: "Tell me what _____ means." DO NOT show the student the words (this changes the purpose of the test from measuring expressive vocabulary to measuring reading vocabulary).
4. On the Teacher Copy, circle or underline the main concept words the student tells. If his/her response is different, write down as much as you can for later review – if needed.
5. Sometimes, a student will misunderstand a word (for example, a student might misunderstand "connect" as "correct."). Stop the student and say, "I will say the word again: _____. Tell me what _____ means." If the student still does not understand the word, count it as incorrect and note that he/she misunderstood the word.
6. If you are not sure how to score the student's response, you may use the prompt: "Tell me more." The student's telling does not have to be of dictionary quality, but does indicate familiarity and knowledge of the word's meaning.
7. If the student struggles to define words, you may use the prompt: "Can you use _____ in a sentence?" Again, the student's sentence usage does not have to be of dictionary quality, but does indicate familiarity and knowledge of the word's meaning.
8. In order to master a level—and go on to the next level—a student must give correct meanings OR use the words appropriately in sentences for 4 or 5 of the words. Continue with higher level words until you finish a list on which a student does not give at least 4 acceptable meanings or sentences.

The highest level with 4 or 5 acceptable responses is the Vocabulary Mastery Level.

Student Examples:

Student A: (TABE Reading GLE 6.2)

Started at Level 6: 4 out of 5 correct responses

Went up to Level 7: 5 out of 5 correct responses

Went up to Level 8: 4 out of 5 correct responses

Stopped for EBRI: Vocabulary Mastery Level 8+

Student B: (TABE Reading GLE 7.4)

Started at Level 7: 2 out of 5 correct responses

Went down to Level 6: 3 out of 5 correct responses

Went down to Level 5: 4 out of 5 correct responses

Stopped for EBRI: Vocabulary Mastery Level 5

Student C: (CASAS Reading GLE 4.0)

Started at Level 4: 3 out of 5 correct responses

Went down to Level 3: 4 out of 5 correct responses

Stopped for EBRI: Vocabulary Mastery Level 3

Note: It is very important that you familiarize yourself with the acceptable responses and sample sentences before you give the test. If you work with an EBRI team, talk about typical student answers and possibly expand the list of acceptable responses.

Davidson-Bruce Word Meaning Test (WMT)

Teacher Copy

Student Name _____

Date _____

Level 1:

____ *home*

Main concept: place where a person lives

Student response _____

____ *train*

Main concepts: railway car; subway; to teach

Student response _____

____ *confuse*

Main concept: mix up

Student response _____

____ *start*

Main concept: begin

Student response _____

____ *climb*

Main concepts: go up or down

Student response _____

Number Correct _____

Level 2:

____ *touch*

Main concepts: come in contact with; feel something; put your hand on something

Student response _____

____ *visit*

Main concepts: go to a person or place

Student response _____

____ *finish*

Main concepts: bring to an end; done; over; completed

Student response _____

____ *fence*

Main concepts: gate; barrier

Student response _____

____ *pretend*

Main concepts: make believe; to act out something that's not real; to fake that you're doing something

Sample sentences: "When people act, they pretending to be other persons. That child is pretending to be an elephant."

Student response _____

Number Correct _____

Level 3:

___ *beast*

Main concepts: monster; animal; cruel, nasty person

Student response _____

___ *explain*

Main concept: make someone understand; give directions or tell somebody something; make clear

Sample sentence: "I'll explain the letter so that you understand what I mean."

Student response _____

___ *guard*

Main concepts: protect; someone who watches prisoners

Student response _____

___ *ordinary*

Main concepts: normal; everyday; average

Student response _____

___ *distant*

Main concept: far off

Student response _____

Number Correct _____

Level 4:

___ *connect*

Main concepts: join together; attach one thing to another

Student response _____

___ *interruption*

Main concept: break in an activity; butting in; disturbing; cutting in when someone is talking

Sample sentence: "It's an interruption when you're in a meeting and a cell phone rings."

Student response _____

___ *ruin*

Main concepts: destroy; really spoil something

Student response _____

___ *inventor*

Main concepts: makes things; the one who thought it up; a person who designed something out of imagination

Student response _____

___ *candidate*

Main concepts: someone who runs for office

Student response _____

Number Correct _____

Level 5:

____ *energetic*

Main concepts: very active; full of pep

Student response _____

____ *victorious*

Main concept: having won

Student response _____

____ *territory*

Main concepts: land area; someone's property

Student response _____

____ *urge*

Main concepts: basic desire; push forward

Student response _____

____ *oppose*

Main concepts: be against; challenge; object

Student response _____

Number Correct _____

Level 6:

____ *surrender*

Main concept: to give up

Sample sentence: "The man surrendered after holding everyone hostage."

Student response _____

____ *occupation*

Main concepts: job; something you do for a living

Student response _____

____ *decline*

Main concepts: become less; go lower; refuse; reject; to turn something down; say no to something

Student response _____

____ *consume*

Main concepts: eat or drink up; digest; use it up

Student response _____

____ *dismal*

Main concepts: gloomy; dark; grayish

Student response _____

Number Correct _____

Level 7:

___ *confide*

Main concepts: entrust to another; give somebody your trust; tell a secret to somebody

Student response _____

___ *acquaintance*

Main concepts: person you know; person you just met; be familiar with someone or something

Student response _____

___ *resume*

Main concepts: go on with; re-start; begin where you left off

Student response _____

___ *ample*

Main concepts: plenty; more than enough; abundance of something

Student response _____

___ *obligation*

Main concepts: duty; something you have to do

Sample sentence: "You are obligated to take the trash out every weekend."

Student response _____

Number Correct _____

Level 8:

___ *cease*

Main concepts: stop; come to an end

Student response _____

___ *aggression*

Main concepts: hostile behavior; an attack; showing a lot of attitude and using physical force to get what you want; being militant

Student response _____

___ *reputation*

Main concepts: the opinion of others; how you're known; how people look at you; good or bad description of a person's character

Student response _____

___ *perseverance*

Main concepts: sticking to an aim; persistent; going to keep going

Student response _____

___ *proposition*

Main concepts: formal statement plan or undertaking; an offer; a deal; a business request

Student response _____

Number Correct _____

Note: The following WMT lists are not necessary for implementing EBRI, but may be used to confirm strong academic vocabulary knowledge.

Level 9/10:

_____ *dispute*

Main concepts: disagreement; argument; quarrel; to fight over

Student response _____

_____ *agitate*

Main concepts: to disturb; to aggravate; swish around, like a washing machine

Student response _____

_____ *initiate*

Main concepts: to do first; to start something, you are the first to start something; to take into a group

Student response _____

_____ *audible*

Main concept: can be heard

Student response _____

_____ *prominent*

Main concepts: standing out; well-known

Sample sentence: "He is the most prominent lawyer in the city."

Student response _____

Number Correct _____

Level 11/12:

_____ *tedious*

Main concepts: tiresome; boring; dull; laborious; time-consuming, aggravating work; a long, repetitive, boring thing

Student response _____

_____ *repulsive*

Main concepts: disgusting something that makes you really sick to your stomach

Student response _____

_____ *indifferent*

Main concepts: not caring about what is happening; neither good nor bad

Sample sentence: "She is indifferent to what's going on in the world."

Student response _____

_____ *inconsistent*

Main concepts: not compatible with; not in harmony with; not done on a regular basis; not all the time; different every time

Student response _____

_____ *punctual*

Main concept: on time

Student response _____

Number Correct _____

Need or want to learn more about diagnostic reading assessments?

Visit the author's FREE online course, *Reading Assessments for ABE*, available at <http://online.themlc.org>

You will need to set up an account and login. As a participant, you can just browse the course units and resources OR complete all required course activities and submit a case study report for 4 Continuing Education Units.

The state-approved CEUs are available to MN ABE providers only.

This course is revised and expanded annually. It now includes updated evidence, more interaction with the instructor, and case studies from past MN ABE participants.

1b Use Diagnostic Reading Assessments to Plan Instruction

Using diagnostic reading assessment results to plan EBRI is critical. Alphabetics Mastery, Fluency Instructional, and Vocabulary Mastery Levels along with Comprehension GLEs identify and document student and class strengths and weaknesses. As mentioned earlier, this assessment evidence is used to “prioritize reading instruction, group students according to needs, and select appropriate techniques and leveled materials.” Below and on pages 54-85 are practical steps, instructional plans, and ideas for implementing EBRI in your classroom - **one step at a time** - beginning with ONE reading group and ONE reading component.

Practical Steps:

1. Transfer students' names and corresponding TABE or CASAS Reading GLEs into a class table. See page 84 for a blank template to copy.
2. Transfer students' Alphabetics Mastery, Fluency Instructional, or Vocabulary Mastery Levels into the same class table.
3. Study the evidence for alphabetics, fluency, or vocabulary (determined by diagnostic reading assessments) and comprehension (determined by TABE or CASAS Reading). Determine strengths: equal to (=) or greater than (>) Level 9 or GLE 9.0 and weaknesses: less than (<) Level 9 or GLE 9.0 for each student and the class.
4. Form reading component groups as described in the practical instructional plans for alphabetics (beginning or intermediate), fluency, vocabulary, or comprehension.
5. If teaching multiple reading groups or components is impossible, begin with just ONE reading group and ONE reading component.
6. If you can only handle ONE reading group or reading component, that's better than not implementing EBRI at all. Consider adding a second (and third) reading component as you gain comfort and confidence with assessing and teaching the first.

Notes:

- To demonstrate instructional plans, the author created assessment evidence for 10 students attending a mixed-level, ABE/ESL/GED class. She tried to create authentic test results; however, adult readers at Beginning and Intermediate levels often have inconsistent skills and uneven profiles. Even if your class or students' assessment results differ, the processes for implementing EBRI remain the same or very similar.
- The assessment evidence was transferred incrementally (see gray shading) to the class table as instructional plans and ideas are described for each reading component.

Practical Alphabets Instructional Plans

The *Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles (ASRP)* website accessible from LINCS at <http://lincs.ed.gov/readingprofiles/index.htm> presents research-based evidence, resources, and recommendations for improving reading instruction in ABE. Under the link “Print Skills (Alphabets)” it reports these common reading profiles:

- **Beginning level readers** (reading at approximately GE 1.0-3.9) usually have difficulties with fundamental or basic reading skills: phonemic awareness, phonics or sound-letter correspondence, and sight or high frequency word recognition. Some may even lack automatic recognition (or naming) of upper- and lower-case Roman alphabet letters.
- **Intermediate level readers** (reading at approximately GE 4.0-8.9) usually possess phonics and sight word knowledge, but may be unsure about irregular vowel and consonant patterns, syllabication, affixes, and roots. This can result in interrelated fluency needs: slow, inaccurate reading, hesitations, and self-corrections. They also tend to have limited knowledge of academic vocabulary words.
- **English Language Learners** (reading at approximately GE 4.0-8.9) enrolled in Intermediate ABE classes usually experience fewer difficulties with alphabets skills; however, they often have interrelated fluency and vocabulary needs because they don't understand some word meanings and/or English grammatical features.

According to these reading profiles and the alphabets assessment evidence below, **Henry, Lois, Sarah, Pablo, Maria, Jessica, John, and Barbara** (with Alphabets Mastery Levels < 9) will benefit from explicit alphabets instruction. **Paul and Katie** (with Alphabets Mastery Levels =/> 9) do not need alphabets instruction.

SAMPLE CLASS TABLE OF ASSESSMENT LEVELS

Students	Alphabets Mastery	Fluency Instructional	Vocabulary Mastery	Comprehension TABE/CASAS
Henry	2			2.1
Lois	6			7.5
Sarah	5			4.3
Pablo	3			2.3
Maria	8			6.7
Paul	10			8.9
Jessica	6			7.2
John	6			7.8
Katie	9			8.3
Barbara	4			4.6

Beginning Alphabets Instructional Plan:

Beginning level students like Henry and Pablo with TABE/CASAS GLE 1.0-3.9 and Alphabets Mastery Levels 1-3 may need review of upper- and lower-case Roman alphabet letters (check knowledge as necessary). They will need instruction in English letter-sound-word patterns and sight or high frequency word recognition.

1. Administer *Sylvia Greene's Informal Word Analysis Inventory* on pages 23-27 as a reading or spelling test. Use the results to determine known and unknown English letter-sound-word patterns.
2. Plan phonics instruction for unknown patterns according to this typical sequence: single consonants, short vowels, digraphs (ck, ch, sh), beginning/ending blends (bl, cr, nk, ng), long vowel-silent e, vowel digraphs (ai, ea, ee), silent consonants (w, k, b), y as a consonant and vowel, r-controlled vowels (ar, er, ir), vowel diphthongs (oi, oy, oo, ou), and irregular spellings (soft c/g, ph, gh).
3. Explain the purpose of phonics instruction to students: "Knowing English letter-sound-word patterns will help you read and spell more words, connect words you've know with words you see, improve your oral and silent reading fluency, and ultimately, your comprehension of text meaning." **Note:** Adjust language as needed.
4. Provide systematic, explicit, and multi-sensory phonics instruction. Have students see and hear English letter-sound-word patterns though modeling. Have students say or read and repeat the same patterns through guided practice.
5. Dictate taught English letter-sound-word patterns for spelling practice and provide immediate correction. This further builds phonemic awareness skills such as sound identity, blending, and segmenting.
6. Teach small sets of sight or high frequency words. See *Fry's Instant Words* on pages 59-61 for the first 300 high frequency words. Use the same multi-sensory and explicit method of seeing, hearing, saying or reading, and writing.
7. Consider teaching phonics with phonograms and word families: at= at, bat, cat, fat, etc. The method of blending onsets (beginning consonants) and rimes (the vowel and ending consonants) provides reliable chunks that can be generalized to many other one- and two-syllable words. Go to <http://atlasabe.org/resources/ebri/ebri-alphabets> to view and print *Teaching Analogy Phonics* for FREE.
8. ALWAYS provide application of taught alphabets skills with teacher-guided, oral reading of phrases, sentences, or passages. See pages 62-64 for *Fry's Instant Phrases and Sentences* and go to <http://atlasabe.org/resources/ebri/ebri-fluency> for a variety of FREE, leveled passages ranging from Beginning to Advanced and Adult Secondary.

Ideas for Using Volunteers or Educational Assistants (EAs):

- Have volunteers or EAs assist students with using alphabetics software programs or FREE alphabetics websites: www.starfall.com and www.abcfastphonics.com
- Have them use *Story by Story* to teach sequential and contextual phonics aligned with *Sylvia Greene's Informal Word Analysis Inventory*. Check your bookshelves for this LDA resource disseminated for FREE in 2007-2008.
- Have them assist students with using 12 *Story by Story* audio versions and exercises available for FREE at <http://www.mcedservices.com/phonics/phonics.html>
- Have them support explicit phonics instruction with word sorting from *Word Sorts for Within Word Pattern Spellers* (Words Their Way™, Allyn & Bacon; Pearson).

See page 95 for more print or online materials for teaching phonics.

Need or want to learn more about teaching Beginning level readers?

Visit the author's FREE online course, *Beginning Level Reading Instruction*, available at <http://online.themlc.org>

You will need to set up an account and login. As a participant, you can just browse the course units and resources OR complete all required course activities and submit a case study report for 4 Continuing Education Units.

The state-approved CEUs are available to MN ABE providers only.

This course is revised and expanded annually. It now includes updated evidence, more interaction with the instructor, and case studies from past MN ABE participants.

Intermediate Alphabets Instructional Plan:

Intermediate level students like Lois, Sarah, Maria, Jessica, John, and Barbara with TABE/CASAS GLE 4.0-8.9 and Alphabets Mastery Levels 4-8 typically need alphabets instruction that includes compounds, syllable types and rules, common prefixes, suffixes, and roots.

1. Analyze students' errors on the *Word Reading Test*: are common errors in the beginning, middle, or ending of words? Most intermediate-level students can read first syllables correctly, but make errors in the middle or ending syllables.
2. Plan intermediate alphabets instruction according to this typical sequence: compounds (combining small words to form new, longer words), syllabication (using the 6 syllable types and 5 syllabication rules to chunk longer words), affixes (adding prefix or suffix word parts to form new, longer words), and roots (knowing word parts that carry the meaning of longer words).
3. Explain the purpose of intermediate alphabets instruction to students: "Knowing word parts (syllables, affixes, and roots) improves reading and spelling (separating and sounding out) of longer words, connections to oral vocabulary knowledge, oral and silent reading fluency, and ultimately, comprehension of text meaning." **Note:** Adjust language as needed.
4. Teach compounds explicitly as an introduction to syllabication. They tend to be easier for students to understand, but be sure to explain that the two words in compounds can be joined or hyphenated.
5. Teach syllable types and related syllabication rules explicitly and one at a time.
6. Teach common prefix, suffix, or root patterns explicitly and one to three at a time - depending on commonality and relationships.
 - a. The 10 most common prefixes are: un, re, in/im/il/ir, dis, en/em, non, in/im, over, mis, and sub.
 - b. The 10 most common suffixes are: s/es, ed, ing, ly, er/or, ion/tion/ation/ition, able/ible, al/ial, y, ness
7. Begin with word lists that demonstrate the compound, syllable, prefix, suffix, or root patterns. Model how to identify the patterns, use any rules, and decode longer words. Then guide students in reading and spelling the same words.
8. ALWAYS provide application of taught alphabets skills with teacher-guided, oral reading of phrases, sentences, or passages. Go to <http://atlasabe.org/resources/ebri/ebri-fluency> for a variety of FREE, leveled passages ranging from Beginning to Advanced and Adult Secondary.

Ideas for Teaching Intermediate Alphabets in Mixed Level Classes:

Invite all ABE, GED, and ESL students with intermediate alphabets needs (Levels 4-8) to participate in 20-30 minute, weekly/bi-weekly lessons focused on English syllable/affix/root patterns.

1. Explain the purpose of instruction: "Knowing word parts (syllables, affixes, and roots) improves reading and spelling (separating and sounding out) of longer words, connections to oral vocabulary knowledge, oral and silent reading fluency, and ultimately, comprehension of text meaning." **Note:** Adjust language as needed.
2. Start by teaching compounds: small words joined together to form new, longer words.
3. Then teach syllable types (or word parts) and related syllabication rules – one at a time.
4. Consider teaching common prefixes and suffixes as they appear in text for fluency or academic word lists for vocabulary (see Vocabulary Instructional Plan).
 - a. The 10 most common prefixes are: un, re, in/im/il/ir, dis, en/em, non, in/im, over, mis, and sub.
 - b. The 10 most common suffixes are: s/es, ed, ing, ly, er/or, ion/tion/ation/ition, able/ible, al/ial, y, ness.
5. Encourage students to experiment with new alphabets skills and provide gentle correction as needed. Assure them that building knowledge of words parts is an ongoing process.
6. Help students apply alphabets knowledge while reading connected text. The selected text does not have to include taught word patterns, but enough multi-syllable words for application.

See page 95 for print or online instructional materials for teaching intermediate alphabets.



MN STAR teachers find that most students greatly appreciate intermediate alphabets instruction. For too long, multi-syllable decoding has been a mystery to them. Learning rules and patterns frequently solves the mystery and reduces life-long frustration with reading and recognizing longer or "big words."

THE INSTANT WORDS 1

FIRST HUNDRED

Words 1-25	Words 26-50	Words 51-75	Words 76-100
the	or	will	number
of	one	up	no
and	had	other	way
a	by	about	could
to	word	out	people
in	but	many	my
is	not	then	than
you	what	them	first
that	all	these	water
it	were	so	been
he	we	some	call
was	when	her	who
for	your	would	oil
on	can	make	its
are	said	like	now
as	there	him	find
with	use	into	long
his	an	time	down
they	each	has	day
I	which	look	did
at	she	two	get
be	do	more	come
this	how	write	made
have	their	go	may
from	if	see	part

Common suffixes: -s, -ing, -er, -ly, -est

THE INSTANT WORDS 2

SECOND HUNDRED

Words 101-125 Words 126-150 Words 151-175 Words 176-200

over	say	set	try
new	great	put	kind
sound	where	end	hand
take	help	does	picture
only	through	another	again
little	much	well	change
work	before	large	off
know	line	must	play
place	right	big	spell
year	too	even	air
live	mean	such	away
me	old	because	animal
back	any	turn	house
give	same	here	point
most	tell	why	page
very	boy	ask	letter
after	follow	went	mother
thing	came	men	answer
our	want	read	found
just	show	need	study
name	also	land	still
good	around	different	learn
sentence	farm	home	should
man	three	us	America
think	small	move	world

Common suffixes: -s, -ing, -er, -ly, -est

THE INSTANT WORDS 3

THIRD HUNDRED

Words 201-225 Words 226-250 Words 251-275 Words 276-300

high	saw	important	miss
every	left	until	idea
near	don't	children	enough
add	few	side	eat
food	while	feet	face
between	along	car	watch
own	might	mile	far
below	chose	night	Indian
country	something	walk	really
plant	seem	white	almost
last	next	sea	let
school	hard	began	above
father	open	grow	girl
keep	example	took	sometimes
tree	begin	river	mountain
never	life	four	cut
start	always	carry	young
city	those	state	talk
earth	both	once	soon
eye	paper	book	list
light	together	hear	song
thought	got	stop	being
head	group	without	leave
under	often	second	family
story	run	late	it's

Common suffixes: -s, -ing, -er, -ly, -est

Fry, E. B., Kress, J. E., & Fountoukidis, D.L. (1993). *The reading teacher's book of lists, 3rd edition*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, pp.185-187. By permission.

PHRASES AND SHORT SENTENCES 1 FIRST HUNDRED

These phrases and short sentences contain the first 100 words from Fry's Instant Word Lists, which represent 50 percent of all words readers encounter in beginning-level materials.

The people	Look for some people.	Write it down.
By the water	So there you are.	Who will make it?
You and I	A long time	What will they do?
He called me.	Have you seen it?	We had their dog.
What did they say?	One more time	When would you go?
No way	All day long	A number of people
One or two	It's about time.	How long are they?
More than the other	Up in the air	Come and get it.
How many words?	Which way?	Part of the time
This is a good day.	He has it.	Can you see?
Sit down.	If we were older	Now and then
But not me	It's no use.	Go find her.
Not now	With his mom	At your house
From my room	As big as the first	It's been a long time.
Will you be good?	When will we go?	Give them to me.
Then we will go.	From here to there	Now is the time.
An angry cat	More people	May I go first?
Write your name.	Go down.	This is my cat.
That dog is big.	Did you like it?	Get on the bus.
Two of us	When did they go?	Did you see it?
The first word	She said to go.	How did they get it?
I like him.	Each of us	Number two
Out of the water	What are these?	Look up.
We were here.	There was an old man.	All or some
Could you go?	It may fall down.	A long way to go
We like to write.	See the water	For some people
Into the water	But not for me	The other people

PHRASES AND SHORT SENTENCES 2 SECOND HUNDRED

These phrases and short sentences contain the second 100 words from Fry's Instant Word Lists, which represent 50 percent of all words readers encounter in beginning-level materials.

Over the river	A good man	My new place
After the game	Another great sound	Most of the animals
Take a little.	Our best things	Give it back.
Just the same	Only a little	My last name
It's only me.	That's very good	I know why.
Think before you act	Three years ago	Mother says to now.
Live and play.	Where are you?	I need help.
Try your best.	I work too much.	Move over.
Any old time	We found it here.	Through the line
Study and learn	Right now	Kind of nice
Mother means it.	Spell your name.	Same time tomorrow
The good American	Tell the truth.	Change your clothes
A little boy	Play it again.	The following day
Back off.	We came home.	Give it away.
We want to go.	Answer the phone.	Show us around.
Turn the page.	Form two lines.	The air is warm.
A small house also	Read my letters.	Another old picture
It's still here.	Write one sentence.	Where in the world
Set it up.	We need more.	Put it there.
I study in school.	Where does it end?	I'm an American.
I don't feel well.	Such a mess	My home is large.
Point it out.	It turned out well.	Right now
Read the sentence.	It's a small world.	This must be it.
Big and small	Hand it over.	Home sweet home
Such a big house	Around the clock	The men asked for help.
Show and tell	A different land	You must be right.
They went here.	Tell the truth.	Get to the point.
Good and plenty	Because we should.	Help me out.
Even the animals	It turned out well.	It's your place.
I think so.	Good things	Read the book.

PHRASES AND SHORT SENTENCES 3 THIRD HUNDRED

These phrases and short sentences contain the third 100 words from Fry's Instant Word Lists, which represent 50 percent of all words readers encounter in beginning-level materials.

Near the car	Stay a while.	Between the lines
A few good men	My own father	Don't open the door.
In the country	You might be right.	Add it up.
It seemed too good.	Read every story.	Along the way
Below the water	Next time	Plants and flowers
It's hard to open.	Will it last?	Something good
Keep it up.	For example	Plant the trees.
In the beginning	Light the fire.	Those other people
The light in your eyes	A group of friends	In my head
We got together	Under the earth	We left it here.
We saw the food.	Both children	Close the door.
It's my life.	The big city	Always be kind.
We started the fire.	Read the paper.	It never happened.
Run for miles.	A good thought	Once upon a time.
Do it often.	Is it really true?	We walked four miles.
It's time to eat.	Until the end	Let me carry it.
A second later	Near the sea	Stop the music.
Talk to my father.	Read your book.	The young face
Sing your song.	The long list	State your case.
My family	I miss you.	I cut myself.
A very important person	Above the clouds	On my side
Watch the game.	I took the car.	The peaceful Indians
So far so good.	Without a care	The young girl
I like being on the team.	My feet hurt.	The tall mountains
The dark night	Next to me	A good idea
A few children	It began to grow.	A long life
Watch the river.	A group of Indians	White clouds
He started to cry.	Too soon	I hear the sea.
Leave it to me.	An important idea	I hear the waves.
The first day of school	Almost enough	Almost four miles

Rasinski, Timothy V. (2003). *The Fluent Reader*. New York: Scholastic Professional Books.

Practical Fluency Instructional Plans

According to the ASRP reading profiles from page 53 and fluency assessment evidence below, **Henry, Lois, Sarah, Pablo, Maria, Jessica, John, and Barbara** (with Fluency Instructional Levels < 9) will benefit from fluency instruction using high-interest passages, novels, or books. **Paul and Katie** (with Fluency Instructional Levels =/> 9) are not a priority for fluency instruction within this group. If staffing and time permits, they may benefit from guided oral reading of GED Science, Social Studies, or Language Arts materials.

SAMPLE CLASS TABLE OF ASSESSMENT LEVELS

Students	Alphabetics Mastery	Fluency Instructional	Vocabulary Mastery	Comprehension TABE/CASAS
Henry	2	2		2.1
Lois	6	4		7.5
Sarah	5	4		4.3
Pablo	3	2		2.3
Maria	8	5		6.7
Paul	10	9		8.9
Jessica	6	5		7.2
John	6	6		7.8
Katie	9	9		8.3
Barbara	4	3		4.6

Beginning Fluency Instructional Plan:

Students with Fluency Instructional Levels 1-3 will benefit from **teacher-directed echo reading**:

1. Select fiction or non-fiction text at in the middle of the group's range of fluency (i.e. Level 2 for level range 1-3).
2. Explain the purpose of fluency instruction: "Learning to read text accurately, smoothly, in meaningful phrases (Who? What? Where? When? How?), and with expression will improve your reading interest and comprehension." **Note:** Adjust language as needed.
3. Model proficient oral reading of each sentence from a paragraph.
4. Then have students repeat (or echo) each sentence.
5. Model proficient oral reading of the entire paragraph.
6. Then have students repeat (or echo) the entire paragraph.
7. Check understanding of each paragraph by asking a few "W" questions.

Note: Echo reading can also be used with higher-level students when a phrase, sentence, or paragraph is especially challenging or complex. The teacher models how to read this text and the students echo his/her proficiency.

Intermediate Fluency Instructional Plan:

Students with Fluency Instructional Levels 4-8 will enjoy and benefit from **teacher-guided oral reading**:

1. Select fiction or non-fiction text at or in the middle of the group's range of fluency (i.e. Level 4 for level range 3-5 or Level 5 for level range 4-6).
2. Preview the text to determine more complex or difficult sections. Plan to model oral reading proficiency for those sections rather than have students stumble through them.
3. Explain the purpose of fluency instruction: "Learning to read connected text accurately, smoothly, in meaningful phrases, and with expression will improve your reading interest and comprehension." **Note:** Adjust language as needed.
4. Set and enforce considerate rules for guided oral reading:
 - a. The teacher starts by modeling how to read the first several paragraphs.
 - b. Then she calls upon a student to read a paragraph or two – but no more than half a page.
 - c. Then students call upon other readers – including the teacher.
 - d. Make sure everyone is called upon to read multiple times.
 - e. *Only the teacher* guides attention to text signals and corrects pronunciations, phrasing, or expression.
5. Check students' understanding of the text by occasionally stopping and asking a few "W" questions.

Ideas for Using Volunteers or Educational Assistants (EAs):



MN STAR teachers find that volunteers or EAs provide *essential* assistance with explicit fluency modeling and guided practice – especially if there is more than one fluency group.

- Begin by training volunteers or EAs in your preferred fluency techniques and have them observe your use of fluency techniques with students.
- When they are ready, alternate fluency groups with the volunteer or EA
- Have them monitor partner repeated reading of previously modeled text.



MN STAR teachers find that students *really* enjoy reading short, high interest, novels together orally. Many students report this is the first time they have ever read an entire book!

See page 96 for print or online instructional materials for teaching fluency.

Other Research-Recommended Fluency Techniques for Adults

- **Choral reading:** The teacher and students read aloud a leveled passage in unison - like a chorus. The teacher's role is to provide modeling of proficient oral reading and pronunciation of challenging words or phrases.
- **Repeated reading:** The teacher models fluency for a leveled passage and the students reread the same text to themselves, in unison, or to a partner. Repeated reading of the same text leads to accuracy and fluency.
- **Text signals:** The teacher models how to look for text signals like commas, colons, semi-colons, and periods and phrase accordingly. The teacher also models how to use expression and intonation by looking at question marks, exclamation points, italicized and boldfaced text. Guided practice leads to automatic text mark attention and improved expression.
- **Text marking:** The teacher models how to mark text into phrases or chunks with lines or loops (sometimes called "scoops") by looking for text signals and meaningful units of words. Guided practice leads to automatic phrasing and chunking of meaningful text.

Practical Vocabulary Instructional Plans

Henry and Pablo (with Vocabulary Mastery Levels 2-3) will benefit from learning *Fry's Instant Words* (Tier One or high frequency) during phonics instruction and in application to text.

Lois, Sarah, Maria, Jessica, John, and Barbara (with Vocabulary Mastery Levels 4-8) will benefit from explicit instruction of Tier Two or academic vocabulary words.

Paul and Katie (with Vocabulary Mastery Levels \geq 9) do not need Tier Two vocabulary instruction. If staffing and time permits, they may benefit from instruction of content-specific vocabulary (Tier Three) selected from GED Science, Social Studies, Language Arts, or Mathematics texts.

SAMPLE CLASS TABLE OF ASSESSMENT LEVELS

Students	Alphabetics Mastery	Fluency Instructional	Vocabulary Mastery	Comprehension TABE/CASAS
Henry	2	2	2	2.1
Lois	6	4	6	7.5
Sarah	5	4	5	4.3
Pablo	3	2	2	2.3
Maria	8	5	7	6.7
Paul	10	9	10	8.9
Jessica	6	5	8	7.2
John	6	5	8	7.8
Katie	9	9	9	8.3
Barbara	4	2	4	4.6

Research Background

Improving knowledge of academic vocabulary words is research-based and essential for adults. There is a strong connection between knowing a variety of academic words and understanding the intended meaning of text. However, according to the authors of *Creating Robust Vocabulary* (Beck, I.L., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L., 2008), simply teaching words and definitions does not necessarily affect comprehension.

“...comprehension [is] a complex process during which a reader must act on information encountered in text to build understanding. The instructional implication is that in order to build the kind of word knowledge that affects comprehension, learners need to actively work with new words – for example, by building connections between new words and words they already know and situations with which they are familiar. It is these connections that make it possible for readers to bring to mind the word-meaning information they need as they attempt to comprehend a text (page 4).”

They advocate for Tier Two (or 2) words being the center of academic vocabulary instruction because they “characterize written text.” We encounter these words from frequent interaction with print materials; however, struggling readers often experience limited interaction with books and text. They tend to not know Tier Two words and cannot learn them on their own in comparison to everyday words from oral language (Tier One or 1). Because there is not enough time to teach all of the words a reader needs to know, the authors recommend focusing instructional time on Tier Two words, which are less likely to be learned independently, but essential for comprehension of academic text.

In Word Knowledge, A Vocabulary Teacher's Handbook (Zimmerman, C. B., 2009), the author makes another strong case for teaching Tier Two words:

“Mastery of the academic register in general, and academic vocabulary in particular, is absolutely necessary for school success. Without it, learners don't have access to the content of the school curriculum. They can't understand what they read, participate in discussions, or complete written assignments. It has been claimed that without academic vocabulary, learners are hindered in their oral and written language and perhaps in their thinking as well” (page 98-99).

The Academic Word List (AWL) serves as an excellent and FREE source of many (but not all) Tier Two words. It was developed by Averil Coxhead in 2000 for her MA thesis at the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. It contains 10 Sublists of words that appear in English-language academic texts and are sequenced from “most frequent to least frequent.” It is presented on pages 73-82 and was retrieved from <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/resources/academicwordlist/>

Intermediate Vocabulary Instructional Plan:

The authors of *Creating Robust Vocabulary* (2008) recommend the following “How to Teach” plan (pages 23-29):

1. Depending on the frequency of instruction, select 5-10 Tier Two words from classroom text likely to appear in a variety of other contexts. **Important Note:** Because ABE classes tend to be less frequent than in K-12, 3-5 words a week is recommended for EBRI.
2. Be prepared to pronounce the selected words as they appear during oral reading or in a list before oral or silent reading. **Important Note:** Selected vocabulary words for EBRI do not have to be present in text; they can be taught as separate, weekly lists.
3. Give simple, “friendly explanations” of word meanings. “Friendly explanations provide a complete sentence that includes the target word, in contrast to more fragment-like statements typical of dictionary definitions” (page 23).

For example, if explaining *devious* in a friendly way, say: “If someone is devious, he or she is using tricky or secret ways to do something wrong.”

4. Discuss the selected words. Provide other contexts for each word – ideally from your personal experiences. For example: “I think my son is devious when he takes cookies without asking for my permission.” OR “I heard that a devious co-worker who added hours to his timecard was fired right away!”
5. Encourage active processing of each word by asking students for their personal contexts, connections, and associations. Use prompts such as: “When have you seen someone be devious?” OR “What action(s) do you consider devious?” Try to elicit an example from all or most of the students.
6. Be prepared to clarify or gently correct students’ usage of the words in oral sentences.
7. Provide multiple exposures to selected words over several days; however, don’t limit practice to just matching exercises. Also include written contextual practice such as fill-in-the-blank, sentence completion, and sentence composition.

Additional Vocabulary Activities:

- Consider making a word wall of all Tier Two words introduced and processed. Refer to the words as they are encountered (or used) in class.
- Ask students to look and listen for taught words outside of class and report back on their usage at work, in the newspaper, on TV, or by friends and family members.

Class Idea for Teaching Vocabulary in Mixed Level Classes:

Invite all ABE, GED, and ESL students with Tier Two vocabulary needs (Levels 4-8) to participate in 20-30 minute, weekly/bi-weekly lessons focused on academic vocabulary words.

Day (or Week) One:

1. Pre-select 3-5 words from the Academic Word List.
2. Explain the purpose of instruction: "Increasing your knowledge of Tier 2 or academic words - which appear *frequently* in written text - will improve your comprehension of newspapers, books, and GED materials." **Note:** Adjust language as needed.
3. Present one word at a time on the board and tell (don't ask!) the pronunciation, meaning, and if appropriate, part of speech.
4. Share several contexts in sentences from your life and experiences – again, one word at a time.
5. Prompt students to share sentences from their lives one word at a time; gently correct or clarify usage and sentence structure as needed.
6. When students are ready, tell antonyms, synonyms, and other members of the word family: relatives or related words with prefixes or suffixes (such as *deviously*, *deviousness*). Be cautious of "word overload."
7. Have students fill in a word map or quadrant chart (see sample below) for each word as key information is presented. Save and organize for review and reference.

Vocabulary Word Map or Quadrant Chart (can be partially filled out for students)

Vocabulary Word	Meaning
Sample Sentence (from teacher)	Synonyms or Antonyms

Day (or Week) Two (and beyond):

Provide multiple encounters or exposures with written practice activities. Scaffold carefully from simple, closed activities (matching & fill-in-the-blank) to open and complex activities (sentence completion & sentence composition).

Need *FREE* resources for teaching academic vocabulary words?

Go to: <http://www.atlasabe.org/resources/by-topic/evidence-based-reading> to access *Vocabulary Units*, a weekly curriculum modified by Vicki Ostrom and Melissa Lupinek, Central MN ABE-Cambridge and *Vocabulary Workouts*, a daily or stand-alone curriculum developed by Susan Finn-Miller, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

Program Idea for Teaching Vocabulary in Mixed Level Classes:

Involve all ABE, GED, and ESL teachers *and* students in “Word of the Week.”

1. Select one Tier Two word a week from the Academic Word List.
2. Write the word on the board or post on a wall in all classrooms.
3. Have all teachers review the pronunciation, meaning, usage in relation to their class on the first day.
4. Have all teachers use the word naturally and frequently in their class during the remainder of the week.

See page 96 for print or online instructional materials for teaching vocabulary.



MN STAR teachers find that direct vocabulary instruction is a *favorite* activity of STAR students. Oral discussion and multiple exposures to a few Tier Two words at a time help students *truly* know academic vocabulary and usage in more than one context. In fact, it is challenging to keep vocabulary lessons to 20-30 minutes!

Sublist 1 of the Academic Word List - Most Frequent Words in Families

This sublist contains the most frequent words of the Academic Word List from the Academic Corpus.

analysis	legislation
approach	major
area	method
assessment	occur
assume	percent
authority	period
available	policy
benefit	principle
concept	procedure
consistent	process
constitutional	required
context	research
contract	response
create	role
data	section
definition	sector
derived	significant
distribution	similar
economic	source
environment	specific
established	structure
estimate	theory
evidence	variables
export	
factors	
financial	
formula	
function	
identified	
income	
indicate	
individual	
interpretation	
involved	
issues	
labor	
legal	

Sublist 2 of the Academic Word List - Most Frequent Words in Families

This sublist contains the second most frequent words in the Academic Word List from the Academic Corpus.

achieve	participation
acquisition	perceived
administration	positive
affect	potential
appropriate	previous
aspects	primary
assistance	purchase
categories	range
chapter	region
commission	regulations
community	relevant
complex	resident
computer	resources
conclusion	restricted
conduct	security
consequences	sought
construction	select
consumer	site
credit	strategies
cultural	survey
design	text
distinction	traditional
elements	transfer
equation	
evaluation	
features	
final	
focus	
impact	
injury	
institute	
investment	
items	
journal	
maintenance	
normal	
obtained	

Sublist 3 of Academic Word List - Most Frequent Words in Families

This sublist contains the third most frequent words of the Academic Word List from the Academic Corpus.

alternative	outcomes
circumstances	partnership
comments	philosophy
compensation	physical
components	proportion
consent	published
considerable	reaction
constant	registered
constraints	reliance
contribution	removed
convention	scheme
coordination	sequence
core	sex
corporate	shift
corresponding	specified
criteria	sufficient
deduction	task
demonstrate	technical
document	techniques
dominant	technology
emphasis	validity
ensure	volume
excluded	
framework	
funds	
illustrated	
immigration	
implies	
initial	
instance	
interaction	
justification	
layer	
link	
location	
maximum	
minorities	
negative	

Sublist 4 of Academic Word List - Most Frequent Words in Families

This sublist contains the fourth most frequent words of the Academic Word List from the Academic Corpus.

access	output
adequate	overall
annual	parallel
apparent	parameters
approximated	phase
attitudes	predicted
attributed	principal
civil	prior
code	professional
commitment	project
communication	promote
concentration	regime
conference	resolution
contrast	retained
cycle	series
debate	statistics
despite	status
dimensions	stress
domestic	subsequent
emerged	sum
error	summary
ethnic	undertaken
goals	
granted	
hence	
hypothesis	
implementation	
implications	
imposed	
integration	
internal	
investigation	
job	
label	
mechanism	
obvious	
occupational	
option	

Sublist 5 of Academic Word List

academic	orientation
adjustment	perspective
alter	precise
amendment	prime
aware	psychology
capacity	pursue
challenge	ratio
clause	rejected
compounds	revenue
conflict	stability
consultation	styles
contact	substitution
decline	sustainable
discretion	symbolic
draft	target
enable	transition
energy	trend
enforcement	version
entities	welfare
equivalent	whereas
evolution	
expansion	
exposure	
external	
facilitate	
fundamental	
generated	
generation	
image	
liberal	
licence	
logic	
marginal	
medical	
mental	
modified	
monitoring	
network	
notion	
objective	

Sublist 6 of Academic Word List

abstract	minimum
accurate	ministry
acknowledged	motivation
aggregate	neutral
allocation	nevertheless
assigned	overseas
attached	preceding
author	presumption
bond	rational
brief	recovery
capable	revealed
cited	scope
cooperative	subsidiary
discrimination	tapes
display	trace
diversity	transformation
domain	transport
edition	underlying
enhanced	utility
estate	
exceed	
expert	
explicit	
federal	
fees	
flexibility	
furthermore	
gender	
ignored	
incentive	
incidence	
incorporated	
index	
inhibition	
initiatives	
input	
instructions	
intelligence	
interval	
lecture	
migration	

Sublist 7 of Academic Word List

adaptation	phenomenon
adults	priority
advocate	prohibited
aid	publication
channel	quotation
chemical	release
classical	reverse
comprehensive	simulation
comprise	solely
confirmed	somewhat
contrary	submitted
converted	successive
couple	survive
decades	thesis
definite	topic
deny	transmission
differentiation	ultimately
disposal	unique
dynamic	visible
eliminate	voluntary
empirical	
equipment	
extract	
file	
finite	
foundation	
global	
grade	
guarantee	
hierarchical	
identical	
ideology	
inferred	
innovation	
insert	
intervention	
isolated	
media	
mode	
paradigm	

Sublist 8 of Academic Word List

abandon	plus
accompanied	practitioners
accumulation	predominantly
ambiguous	prospect
appendix	radical
appreciation	random
arbitrary	reinforced
automatically	restore
bias	revision
chart	schedule
clarity	tension
conformity	termination
commodity	theme
complement	thereby
contemporary	uniform
contradiction	vehicle
crucial	via
currency	virtually
denote	widespread
detected	visual
deviation	
displacement	
dramatic	
eventually	
exhibit	
exploitation	
fluctuations	
guidelines	
highlighted	
implicit	
induced	
inevitably	
infrastructure	
inspection	
intensity	
manipulation	
minimized	
nuclear	
offset	
paragraph	

Sublist 9 of Academic Word List

accommodation	preliminary
analogous	protocol
anticipated	qualitative
assurance	refine
attained	relaxed
behalf	restraints
bulk	revolution
ceases	rigid
coherence	route
coincide	scenario
commenced	sphere
incompatible	subordinate
concurrent	supplementary
confined	suspended
controversy	team
conversely	temporary
device	trigger
devoted	unified
diminished	violation
distorted/distortion	vision
equal figures	
duration	
erosion	
ethical	
format	
founded	
inherent	
insights	
integral	
intermediate	
manual	
mature	
mediation	
medium	
military	
minimal	
mutual	
norms	
overlap	
passive	
portion	

Sublist 10 of the Academic Word List –Least Frequent Words in Families

This sublist contains the least frequent words of the Academic Word List from the Academic Corpus.

adjacent
albeit
assembly
collapse
colleagues
compiled
conceived
convinced
depression
encountered
enormous
forthcoming
inclination
integrity
intrinsic
invoked
levy
likewise
nonetheless
notwithstanding
odd
ongoing
panel
persistent
posed
reluctant
so-called
straightforward
undergo
whereby

Practical Comprehension Instructional Plan

Paul and Katie (with Alphabets Mastery, Fluency Instructional, and Vocabulary Mastery Levels ≥ 9) are ready for comprehension instruction that engages them with a variety of text (see strategies below Class Table).

Henry, Lois, Sarah, Pablo, and Barbara (with Alphabets Mastery, Fluency Instructional, and Vocabulary Mastery Levels *considerably* < 9) will gradually improve their comprehension by focusing on phonics or higher-level alphabets, oral fluency, and vocabulary knowledge.

Maria, Jessica, and John (with Alphabets Mastery, Fluency Instructional, and Vocabulary Mastery Levels *closer to* 9) will be ready for comprehension strategy instruction when they (1) can read connected text at Levels 7-8 fluently and (2) know more academic vocabulary words.

SAMPLE CLASS TABLE OF ASSESSMENT LEVELS

Students	Alphabets Mastery	Fluency Instructional	Vocabulary Mastery	Comprehension TABE/CASAS
Henry	2	2	2	2.1
Lois	6	4	6	7.5
Sarah	5	4	5	4.3
Pablo	3	2	2	2.3
Maria	8	5	7	6.7
Paul	10	9	10	8.9
Jessica	6	5	8	7.2
John	6	5	8	7.8
Katie	9	9	9	8.3
Barbara	4	2	4	4.6

- **Asking questions:** Model and guide how to stop and ask Who, What, Where, When, Why, and hoW questions after each paragraph or section. If questions cannot be answered, the text needs to be re-read.
- **Finding the topics:** Model and guide how to find the topic of each paragraph by looking for repeated or key words in each paragraph or section.
- **Identifying the main ideas:** Model and guide how to write a sentence that describes what the main ideas are for each paragraph or section.
- **Summarizing:** Model and guide how to combine identified main idea sentences into a written summary of key information.
- **Using graphic organizers:** Model and guide how to complete simple charts or maps during or after reading that visually analyze topics, main ideas, supporting details, or event sequences.

The Value of EBRI Routines

Organizing and using EBRI routines benefits both teachers and students. They provide a predictability that decreases teachers' planning and preparation time and increases students' anticipation of instruction and engagement in reading. However, they will vary from class to class depending on certain program, student, and teacher factors:

1. The number of ABE/ESL students assigned to the class
2. Their cultural, language, and educational backgrounds
3. Their reading levels, needs, and wants
4. The number of days and hours available for EBRI
5. Access to reliable support staff or volunteers
6. The teachers' EBRI knowledge and confidence 😊

EBRI routines include lessons that are intentional (based on students' assessed needs) and regular (rather than occasional or incidental). The lessons do not have to be long; an appropriate length ranges between 15-30 minutes per reading component. EBRI routines do not have to occur every day; 2-5 times per week on the same days, at the same times is effective. Using EBRI routines ensures students receive: (1) frequent review of taught skills, (2) teacher modeling and guided practice of new skills, and (3) ample opportunities to develop reading fluency and comprehension of varied text. Below are two flexible EBRI routines for Beginning- and Intermediate/Advanced-level adult readers.

Sample A: Beginning

Time	Activity
5-10 minutes	Visual (read) and auditory (spell) review of <u>taught</u> English letter-sound-word patterns or high frequency words
15-20 minutes	Teacher modeling and/or student guided practice of <u>new</u> English letter-sound-word patterns or high frequency words
15-20 minutes	Teacher-supported, oral fluency practice with leveled text and brief comprehension checking with 6W questions (application)

Sample B: Intermediate/Advanced

Time	Activity
5-10 minutes	Visual (read) and auditory (spell) review of <u>taught</u> syllable-affix-root patterns or Tier 2 or academic vocabulary words
15-20 minutes	Teacher modeling and/or student guided practice of <u>new</u> English syllable-affix-root patterns
15-20 minutes	Teacher modeling and/or student guided practice of <u>new</u> Tier 2 or academic vocabulary words (3-5/week)
15-20 minutes	Teacher-supported, oral fluency practice with leveled text and comprehension strategy instruction (application)

2 Provide Direct and Explicit Instruction

Research Background

The term **explicit** has the connotation of being “way too much information.” In fact, *Merriam Webster’s Online Dictionary* defines explicit as “fully revealed or expressed without vagueness, implication, or ambiguity: leaving no question as to meaning or intent.” However, when combined with instruction, it means giving students full explanation, a model of proficiency, ample guided practice activities, and many opportunities for application, mastery, and transfer.

Explicit instruction is strongly supported for all-age learners by a substantial body of research. It was one of ten effective teaching principles identified from a synthesis of behavioral, cognitive, and social-learning theories called *Research Synthesis on Effective Teaching Principles and the Design of Quality Tools for Educators* (Ellis, E. S.; and Others, 1994). You may download and view the full text report from Educators Resources Information Center or ERIC at www.eric.ed.gov

McShane defines **explicit instruction** as presenting “content clearly and directly, providing step-by-step directions and modeling, followed by guided practice with feedback, independent practice, and frequent reviews. Similar structured approaches may be called direct instruction, active teaching, or expository teaching” (page 155).

Practical Step:

In some ABE programs, especially those operating under open enrollment structures or as “one room schoolhouses,” ABE teachers cannot provide *all* four steps of explicit instruction sequentially and systematically as described on the next pages.

- Out of necessity - as they frequently enroll new students - they may only provide quick explanation and modeling before assigning independent work *until* there is more time for individual attention or small group instruction.
- Out of reality - as they constantly juggle mixed levels and subjects - they may only provide brief guided practice before assigning independent work *until* there is more time for individual attention or small group instruction.

If this sounds like your ABE classroom, consider expanding or increasing the use of ONE step of explicit instruction besides independent work or application. Providing additional explanation, modeling, or guided practice will benefit your reading instruction and your students’ reading progress (and perhaps satisfaction with the class).

Understanding Explicit Instruction

FOUR STEPS OF EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION:

1. **Explanation**
2. **Modeling**
3. **Guided practice**
4. **Application/monitoring**

There are four, sequential steps of explicit instruction: **explanation, modeling, guided practice, and application/monitoring**. Together they address all aspects of the teaching and learning process. Each is described explicitly below:

1. **EXPLANATION (“I” step):** The teacher **explains** the skill or concept (what students will be learning over a series of lessons), the purpose of instruction (why students will benefit from learning the skill or concept), and the process of instruction (how the teacher will present, support learning, provide practice, and measure success).

The students are mostly engaged with the teacher. Explanation is crucial for student buy-in and often persistence with learning new or difficult skills or concepts. Mostly offered at the beginning of instruction, it can be revisited or repeated as needed to relate new skills or tasks to the bigger picture.

For ELLs, choose your words carefully; make sure your explanation is at their level of language comprehension. Consider only explaining the purpose as the process will be obvious during the lessons.

Explanation Example

A teacher observes that her pre-GED students struggle to read multi-syllable words in subject-matter text. She decides to teach them the 6 syllable types and 5 syllabication rules to improve their multi-syllable decoding skills. She begins a series of syllabication “mini-lessons” by telling her students the purpose: to improve reading and pronunciation of multi-syllable words through understanding English syllables, affixes, and roots. She goes on to explain that if they can read and recognize more “big” words accurately, they will better comprehend GED passages.

She then describes the process for syllabication instruction:

1. I will present a clear explanation of each syllable type and/or syllabication rule.
2. I will provide ample guided practice with word lists and worksheets that demonstrate the syllable type or syllabication rule.
3. I will assign application activities such as sentence writing or oral reading of passages containing multi-syllable words.
4. I will support you throughout the process of learning and mastery by repeating, reviewing, clarifying, correcting, and answering questions.

- 2. MODELING (another “I” step):** The teacher **models or demonstrates** the skill or process (what are the steps), talks aloud his/her use of the steps (how I think about it and/or do it), and/or gives students many examples of the new skill or concept (what does it look like in different contexts).

Students are still mostly engaged with the teacher, but may be asking or answering questions. Modeling is crucial for students’ understanding of “how to do it right.” It also reinforces what *all* good readers (or writers, mathematicians) do in order to be proficient and successful.

Modeling Example

The teacher refers her pre-GED students to a list of common, one-syllable words on the board (cat, den, it, pot, fun, etc). She reads the words aloud and then talks about how they are not only words, but syllables: a word part that has one vowel sound (short, long, or schwa). They are also examples of closed syllables because they end in a single consonant (or blend, digraph, trigraph). The ending consonant(s) “close the door” on the syllable. She tells them that many multi-syllable English words have one or more closed syllables.

Then she refers students to a list of two-syllable words on the board (absent, cactus, campus, dentist, gossip, hundred, etc.). She introduces and demonstrates the related VC/CV Syllabication Rule: look for closed syllables, divide between the middle consonants, keep the beginning blends (dr-, bl-, scr-), ending blends (-nd, -ct), digraphs (-ck, -ch-, -sh-), and trigraphs (-tch, -dge) together; then read the syllables quickly until you recognize the word and its meaning. She divides each word according to the rule and reads it as separate, closed syllables and as a whole word.

- 3. GUIDED PRACTICE (“We” step):** Students practice using the new skill or process while the teacher guides them in correct usage and provides assistance, support, and correction as needed. The teacher is readily available and circulates around the room or table. Another term for providing guided practice is “scaffolding,” where the teacher gradually removes his/her support as students gain proficiency with the newly taught and learned skill or process.

Students are becoming more engaged with the text and/or each other. They will likely need several guided practice activities or lessons before being able to work independently of teacher or peer support

Guided Practice Example

The teacher refers her pre-GED students to several columns of other, multi-syllable words on the board. She tells them that all of the words have two closed syllables. She reviews how to syllabicate the first column of words using the VC/CV Syllabication Rule: (1) look for closed syllable patterns, (2) divide between the middle consonants, (3) keep blends, digraphs, and trigraphs together, and (4) say the syllables quickly to pronounce the word. She also briefly tells the meanings of unfamiliar words in the first column and uses them in sentences.

Then she asks students to come up to the board individually and select a word from the second and third columns to syllabicate and pronounce. The teacher assists, clarifies, and corrects as needed. She asks students to use the words orally in sentences. After students read aloud for fluency instruction, she asks them to identify words from the text with one or more closed syllables.

- 4. APPLICATION and MONITORING (“You” step):** Students use the new skill or process independently while the teacher monitors their success and gives feedback on their progress. The teacher provides minimal assistance and support. Students mostly apply the skill or concept on their own and are moving closer and closer to mastery.

Students are mostly engaged with the text (and perhaps each other if working in pairs or small groups). Application and monitoring determines if the new skill or concept is mastered or if it requires more instruction and/or practice.

Application and Monitoring Example

The teacher gives students a list of multi-syllable words which they have previously divided into closed syllables and pronounced. She tells them to select 5-10 of the words and write a sentence for each. After everyone has finished with sentence writing, she asks students to read their sentences aloud. She listens closely to monitor their pronunciation and usage of closed syllable words.

Need or want to learn more about explicit instruction?

Visit the author's FREE online course, *Explicit Instruction for ABE*, available at <http://online.themlc.org>

You will need to set up an account and login. As a participant, you can just browse the course units and resources OR complete all required course activities and submit a lesson plan for 3 Continuing Education Units.

The state-approved CEUs are available to MN ABE providers only.

This course is reviewed annually. It now includes more interaction with the instructor and sample lessons upon request.

Ideas for Using Volunteers or EAs for Explicit Instruction:

Generally, teachers are the better providers of explanation and monitoring and volunteers or EAs are better involved in modeling and guided practice. Below are combined ideas from the author and **Rob Podlasek, Minnesota Literacy Council Senior Training Manager** and member of STAR Leadership Team.

1. Explicit instruction is also the best way to prepare volunteers and EAs for assisting in adult literacy classrooms. Inform them you will be using this research-based, *instructional and training* approach to prepare them for their very important role in your classroom.
 - a. **Explain** WHY you are teaching each reading component and WHY you are using certain reading activities or materials. Don't assume they know why it is important to read aloud frequently to students or why Tier Two words are introduced through oral discussion.
 - b. **Model** HOW each reading activity should be done and/or HOW the reading materials should be used. Have them observe your explicit lessons and list questions to discuss with you later.
 - c. After ample observation and discussion, have them co-teach a few reading lessons with you for **guided practice**. Review the lesson(s) afterward and talk about how to improve "explicitness."
 - d. Finally, have them model or guide practice with students on their own for **application**. Provide monitoring from a distance and feedback afterwards to further improve explicitness.
 - e. Remember that learning is cyclical. After volunteers or EAs have modeled or guided practice independently, have them observe you again. They will pick up on new things previously missed.
2. Be sure to emphasize the importance of modeling: providing frequent examples of proficiency allows students to see and hear "how to do it right."
3. Be sure to emphasize the importance of guided practice: remaining engaged with students in the learning process reinforces "how to do it right."
4. Encourage your volunteers or EAs to browse the FREE online course described on page 89.



Support for Using Explicit Instruction

The following MN STAR teachers supported the use of explicit instruction for teaching reading, math, and language in post-STAR training reflection papers. All statements are used with permission.

Barbara Verstraete, South Suburban Adult Basic Education

"The [explicit instruction steps] of teacher explanation, modeling and providing opportunities for guided practice and application [have] been the key to ensuring that my students fully understand new concepts and the process of using new reading strategies. Both my students and I have experienced success and I have been renewed in my practice."

Heather Hoffer, Southwest Metro Educational Cooperative

"...the use of explicit instruction transfers to all subject areas. Having learned the four [steps] of explicit instruction i.e., explaining, modeling, guided practice, and application, I was able to incorporate them into the math class that I was teaching. I saw that I was often leaving the "explanation" piece out of my instruction. It was an important piece because my math students are constantly asking me when they will ever use what we're learning. While there often isn't a direct correlation of specific math problems to the real world, I now tell them that they are training their brains to think a certain way. They are, in fact, increasing their critical thinking and problem solving skills. These are skills which will transfer to other areas of their lives."

Jeanne Plack, Metro South Adult Education

"I have learned to assume nothing when working with [ELLs]. If I want them to know something or be able to do something, I must teach it explicitly. Most of them are grateful for explicit instruction and rarely offended by what may seem very basic. If they already know the skill or concept, it is affirming to them because many have negative educational experiences. If most students appear to know the skill or concept, I just move on quickly."

Nancy Johnson, Osseo Adult Education

"ELLs really seem to enjoy the purpose of everything they do. Tying the purpose of reading instruction into their personal goals really gives them buy-in. [Explanation, demonstration, and modeling] take more time; however, allowing and understanding [the need for] that extra time really helps with instruction."

3 Maximize Learner (or Student) Engagement

Research Background

According to a K-12 literature review and qualitative research study reported in *Learner's Engagement in Adult Literacy Education* (2006), student engagement has "two components, a cognitive or 'mental' component and a contextual component" (page 119).

Both include multiple factors. The **cognitive component** includes an individual's mental effort focused on learning, intrinsic (desire to satisfy goals) and extrinsic (desire to obtain rewards) motivation to learn, and use of learning strategies. A simple description is "will and skill." The **contextual component** includes the teacher's role and his/her behavior, the other students and their behavior, and classroom expectations and routines. When the educational setting is supportive and conducive to learning, student engagement is enhanced and sustained over time. In contrast, if the educational setting is unsupportive and disruptive to learning, then student disengagement and alienation likely results.

These two components are interactive; the cognitive affects the contextual and vice versa. For example, students typically enroll in ABE because they want or need to achieve a goal (cognitive). The ABE teacher and classroom environment (contextual) have the potential to increase, maintain, or decrease the student's attention, motivation, and engagement in learning.

Recommended Contextual Practices:

- Clarify classroom behavior expectations and consequences; enforce as necessary.
- Identify students' short- and long-term academic goals.
- Diagnose students' academic strengths and weaknesses and explain results.
- Organize classes and instruction around students' identified goals and skill levels.
- Offer praise and encouragement; however, don't overdo as it may seem condescending.
- Recognize when students are stuck or confused; assist and/or reteach as needed.
- Model and prompt use of strategies or processes transferable to other school or life contexts.
- Monitor progress in skill acquisition, goal completion, and provide feedback.

Recommended Reading Practices:

A sample of “stronger findings” (supported by research review and applicable to adult reading instruction) from *Adult Education Literacy Instruction: A Review of the Research* (2010) recommends the following *engaging* strategies or materials:

K-6 Reading Research: Computer programs may be useful in teaching phonemic awareness skills to beginning and intermediate readers (page 21).

Adult Education Research: Word analysis may be taught using approaches that include direct instruction in word analysis along with instruction in other aspects of reading (page 21).

K-12 Second Language Research: Peer-assisted learning, or heterogeneous groups of two to four English learners practicing reading material that has already been taught can lead to improvements on measures of alphabets, oral reading fluency, and comprehension (page 22).

Adult Education Research: Instruction that can lead to increased vocabulary achievement provides opportunities for adult learners to (1) use new vocabulary words multiple times and (2) process them deeply by relating them to other concepts in a text and to prior knowledge (pages 23-24).

K-12 Research: To improve learner’s comprehension of texts using during instruction, teach a strategy that can be used during the reading process and that enables them to become actively engaged in understanding text. Eight effective strategies that have been identified: comprehension monitoring, cooperative learning, graphic organizers, story structures, question answering, question generation, summarization and multiple strategies (page 26).

Adult Education Research: Integrating adult-oriented, contextually relevant material into literacy programs may lead to increased reading achievement (page 25).

Practical Steps:

1. Review the recommended contextual practices. Decide what changes can or should be made to further maximize student engagement.
2. Review the recommended reading practices. Decide which ones are appropriate for your students.
3. Keep in mind that explicit instruction is an approach that constantly engages students with the teacher, with other students, and/or with text. This active and ongoing engagement with READERS or READING is known to increase progress, confidence, and enjoyment of the reading process.

4 Select Relevant Teaching Materials and Activities

Research Background

The term relevant is defined as “relating to a subject in an appropriate way.” In conversation, this means contributing comments and questions related to the topic of discussion. In job search, this means sharing employment experiences related to the desired position. In the field of education, this means selecting teaching materials and activities related to students’ instructional levels, personal or academic goals, and interests.

Implementing EBRI practices allows teachers to maintain relevancy before, during, and after instruction:

- Diagnostic reading assessments are conducted BEFORE instruction to determine relevant student/class strengths and needs.
- Students are grouped BEFORE instruction according to relevant reading needs and similar Levels.
- Materials are selected BEFORE instruction relevant to adults’ goals or interests: GED content areas, workplace advancement, family or community involvement, personal challenges, or transition to post-secondary.
- Teachers engage with students DURING instruction in many relevant ways: by explaining purposes and processes, demonstrating how to “do it right” or “how to do it well,” guiding large and small group practice, and scaffolding to independent work.
- Informal assessment tools (the fifth practice) are used AFTER instruction to monitor when it is relevant to re-teach, review, or move ahead to the next skill or level.



Relevant Recommendations:

As mentioned at the beginning of this resource, MN ABE has partnered with the National STAR Project since 2008. As of September 2015, after seven years of partnership, there are 21 MN STAR programs and over 60 MN STAR classes offered to 100s of Intermediate level adult readers at urban, suburban, and rural ABE sites.

MN STARs are often asked to share their favorite or preferred reading instructional materials. On the next pages are their recommendations of print materials, software, or websites for teaching phonics, alphabets, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. If available from the publishers’ websites, level ranges are also listed. This is NOT an exhaustive list, but will get you started with selecting relevant materials. Check your bookshelves; some of these materials have been around for a while!

Beginning Alphabetics or Phonics:

- **NEW!** *Beginning Alphabetics Tests & Tools* by Marn Frank and Kristen Perry (ATLAS/Hamline University, 2015) FREE at: <http://atlasabe.org/resources/ebri/ebri-alphabetics>
- *Discover Intensive Phonics for Yourself/Reading Horizons* by Charlotte F. Lockhart (HEC Reading Horizons, 2001; print and software versions of “a proven, multi-sensory approach that teaches foundational concepts”)
- *Story By Story - Level I and II: A Contextual Phonics Model and Curriculum for Adults Learning to Read* by Marn Frank (Learning Disabilities Association of MN, 2008)
- **NEW!** *Teaching Analogy Phonics* by Marn Frank (ATLAS/Hamline University, 2015) FREE at: <http://atlasabe.org/resources/ebri/ebri-alphabetics>
- *Ultimate Phonics Reading Program* (Spencer Learning; a reasonably-priced software program for teaching “essential phonics skills”)
- *Words their Way, Word Sorts for Within Word Patterns* by Donald R. Bear, et al (Prentice Hall or Allyn & Bacon, 2008-2009)

Intermediate Alphabetics:

- *Angling for Words* by Carolyn Bower (Academic Therapy Publications, 1999)
- *Intermediate Word Study: Explicit and systematic “mini-lessons” for intermediate/advanced alphabetics* by Marn Frank (ATLAS/Hamline University, 2010) FREE at: <http://atlasabe.org/resources/ebri/ebri-alphabetics>
- *Making Sense of Decoding and Spelling* by Charles A. MacArthur, Judith A. Alamprese, & Deborah Knight. (Literacy Information Network Communication System, 2010) FREE at: http://lincs.ed.gov/publications/making_sense
- *Megawords, 2nd Edition: Decoding, Spelling, and Understanding Multisyllabic Words, Book 1 (syllables) and Book 2 (affixes)* by Kristin Johnson & Polly Baird (School Specialty, 2010)
- *Reading Teacher's Book of Lists, 5th Edition* by Edward B. Fry & Jacqueline E. Kress (Jossey Bass, 2006)
- *Say the Word! A Guide to Improving Word Recognition Skills* by Barbara Rosenberg Loss (New Reader's Press, 1991)
- *Words their Way, Word Sorts for Syllables and Affixes Spellers* by Donald R. Bear, et al (Prentice Hall or Allyn & Bacon, 2008-2009)

Evidence-Based Reading Instruction (EBRI)

Fluency:

- *High Noon Books* (Academic Therapy Publications; high interest/low level books “for struggling readers and those learning English as a second language;” Levels 1-4)
- *Reading Fluency Readers* by Camille L.Z. Blachowicz, PhD (Glencoe/Jamestown Education, 2005; Levels 1-10)
- *Read Naturally* by Candyce and Tom Ihnot (Read Naturally, Inc.; a series of high-interest passages; print and software versions; Levels 1-8)
- *Reading Skills for Today's Adults* (Marshall Adult Basic Education) intended “to help adults become better readers and more informed consumers, parents, employees, citizens and community members;” Levels 0.7-8.0). FREE at: <http://www.marshalladulthoodeducation.org/reading-skills-for-todays-adult>
- *Six-Way Paragraphs: Introductory* (Levels 1-4), *Middle* (Levels 4-8), and *Advanced* (Levels 8-12) by Walter Pauk (Glencoe/McGraw-Hill - Jamestown Education, 1999)
- *Six-Way Paragraphs in the Content Areas: Introductory* (Levels 4-7), *Middle* (Levels 7-10), and *Advanced* (Levels 10-12) by Walter Pauk (Glencoe/McGraw-Hill - Jamestown Education, 1999)
- *Timed Readings and Timed Readings Plus* by Edward Spargo (Glencoe/Jamestown Education, 1998; Levels 4-13)
- *Townsend Library and the Bluford Series* (Townsend Press; a collection of paperback books for \$1 each; multiple levels)

Vocabulary:

- *Collins Cobuild Learner's Dictionary: Concise Edition* - (HarperCollins Publishers, 1996, 2003)
- *Groundwork for a Better Vocabulary* by Beth Johnson, Carole Mohr, Janet M. Goldstein (Townsend Press, 2004; Levels 5-8)
- *Vocabulary Basics* by Judith Nadell, Beth Johnson, & Paul Langan (Townsend Press, 1998; Levels 4-6)
- *Vocabulary Teacher's Book of Lists* by Edward B. Fry (Jossey Bass, 2004)
- *Vocabulary Units*, a curriculum modified by Vicki Ostrom and Melissa Lupinek, Central MN ABE-Cambridge. FREE at: www.atlasabe.org/resources/by-topic/evidence-based-reading
- *Vocabulary Workouts*, conversation and writing activities by Susan Finn Miller, Lancaster, PA. FREE at: www.atlasabe.org/resources/by-topic/evidence-based-reading
- *Words to Learn By, Building, Expanding, and Advancing Vocabulary* by Stephen Dolaiski & S. Elizabeth Griffin (McGraw Hill Education, 2011; Levels 4+)

Evidence-Based Reading Instruction (EBRI)

Comprehension:

- *Reading Basics* by Contemporary (McGraw-Hill Education, 2001; Introductory, Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, Advanced Levels)
- *Six-Way Paragraphs: Introductory* (Levels 1-4), *Middle* (Levels 4-8), and *Advanced* (Levels 8-12) by Walter Pauk (Glencoe/McGraw-Hill - Jamestown Education, 1999)
- *Six-Way Paragraphs in the Content Areas: Introductory* (Levels 4-7), *Middle* (Levels 7-10), and *Advanced* (Levels 10-12) by Walter Pauk (Glencoe/McGraw-Hill - Jamestown Education, 1999)
- *Timed Readings and Timed Readings Plus* by Edward Spargo (Glencoe/Jamestown Education, 1998; Levels 4-13)

Other MN ABE EBRI Resources!

Go to <http://atlasabe.org/resources/ebri> for the **Evidence-Based Reading website**. The purposes are to: (1) share a variety of EBRI professional development and instructional resources and (2) further expand the use of EBRI across MN ABE. Over to the right there is a hyperlink: Check out more EBRI resources>> Click here to access many FREE websites or documents for Professional Development, Diagnostic Assessment, Alphabetic, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Comprehension. The curator is Marn Frank, who reviews and adds at least one new resource a month! Several have already been recommended on previous pages.

Go to <http://youtube.com/c/mnabeprofessionaldevelopment> for the **MN ABE You Tube channel**. It was created by members of the MN ABE Professional Development Committee as a repository of visual resources (for more than just reading). Scroll down to find the video-clips of dedicated reading teachers demonstrating how to:

- Assess alphabetic, fluency, and vocabulary (may be under construction)
- Teach multi-sensory alphabetic (for reading and spelling)
- Facilitate small and 1:1 collaborative, echo, and repeated readings (for fluency)
- Find paragraph topics and identify main ideas for oral (and written) summarizing

5 Monitor Effectiveness of Instruction Continuously

Research Background

A key finding from the *Adult Reading Components Study* (2003) was that “many adult basic education students below the GED level have reading skills similar to those of children at risk for reading difficulty.” This means that many ABE students at Beginning and Intermediate levels have uneven reading skills persisting from childhood into adulthood. Because of this unevenness, TABE or CASAS Reading pre-tests (again, standardized measures of silent reading comprehension) should not be used *alone* to plan effective reading instruction. Likewise, TABE or CASAS Reading post-tests should not be used *alone* to monitor the effectiveness of reading instruction. Informal assessment tools will provide other information regarding students’ incremental progress in alphabets, fluency, vocabulary, and even comprehension. The results will help teachers decide on a day-to-day, week-to-week, or month-to-month basis whether they need to reteach, reprioritize, or move ahead.

Practical Steps:

On the next pages are informal assessment tools for you to consider. The first two can easily be embedded into reading instruction. The next two take more time because they need to be developed and/or copied. The last one takes the most time because it needs to be completed individually with students.

1. Observation

The definition of observe is “to watch carefully especially with attention to details or behavior for the purpose of arriving at a judgment” (Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com>). As teachers, watching and listening to students’ responses helps us to arrive at a variety of educational judgments. The explicit instruction model encourages us to watch for understanding through *modeling*, ask for understanding through *guided practice*, and ensure understanding through *application* assignments. Ongoing and deliberate observation is a built-in assessment tool that does not require a form. Teachers can simply note students’ progress into more advanced alphabets, fluent oral reading of higher-level text, knowledge and use of more Tier Two words, and silent reading of books or novels for enjoyment.

2. Diagnostic oral reading

Oral reading of unfamiliar text - not modeled, guided, or repeated (sometimes referred to as a “cold” reading) - can be used to diagnose continuing alphabets and fluency needs. As a student reads an unknown passage aloud, the teacher listens to whether he/she is decoding words accurately, reading text at an efficient speed, and chunking into meaningful phrases. Patterns of pronunciation and/or pausing and phrasing errors can be used to plan future alphabets or fluency instruction. Alternate passages (Form A or B) from *Quick and Easy Adult Reading Assessments* can be used for diagnostic oral readings.

3. Quizzes

Short matching quizzes can be used to monitor the effectiveness of vocabulary instruction. A Google search of "vocabulary quiz maker" resulted in the website <http://www.wordsmyth.net/?mode=qm>. There are only five steps to a printable quiz:

- a. Select from an Advanced, Children's, or Beginner's dictionary
- b. Type up to 15 words separated by a space
- c. Type in the quiz title
- d. Select the definitions (1st, all, or one)
- e. Proof and customize (if you want)

Sample Quiz for AWL Sublist 1

Created by Quiz Builder on 7/20/2011

Sublist 1

Name: _____

Instructions: Write the correct word in the space before its definition. There may be more than one definition for each word.

approach	income
benefit	method
concept	period
export	role
function	structure

1. _____ to come or go near to.
2. _____ a thing made up of a number of parts joined together in a certain way.
3. _____ the money received for work or from property that is owned.
4. _____ an object, action, or sum of money that improves someone's life; aid.
5. _____ a general idea or thought.
6. _____ a way of doing something.
7. _____ the purpose or role that an object or person fulfills.
8. _____ the character played by an actor.
9. _____ a section of time with a set beginning and end.
10. _____ to send to another country to sell.

Evidence-Based Reading Instruction (EBRI)

A website called "Create Quizzes" at <http://www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/> can be used to create online alphabetic quizzes.

Dictating taught sound and word patterns as a weekly spelling quiz is an easy way to monitor alphabetic progress. Surprisingly, ABE students often like spelling quizzes!

4. Rubrics

Rubrics can be used to numerically rate student performance of skills for reading (and writing). A recorded series of rubric scores can monitor the effectiveness of instruction (are students receiving improved ratings following targeted instruction?).

- A holistic rubric scores the overall skill or product according to specific requirements or descriptors.
- An analytic rubric is more involved; it scores separate parts according to descriptors and then sums the scores for a total.

Sample Holistic Rubric for Rating Oral Reading

Score	Descriptor
3	GOOD. Reads smoothly with efficient speed or rate; few to no errors in word accuracy; appropriate phrasing and some expression. Notes:
2	FAIR. Reads unevenly with some stops and starts; some errors in word accuracy; some phrasing, but little expression. Notes:
1	POOR. Reads with great effort or labor; many errors in word accuracy; little to no phrasing or expression. Notes:

Sample Holistic Rubric for Rating Multi-syllable Decoding in Context

Score	Descriptor
3	<p>GOOD. Applies knowledge of syllabication, prefixes, and suffixes consistently; most multi-syllable words are read accurately and smoothly.</p> <p>Notes:</p>
2	<p>FAIR. Applies knowledge of syllabication, prefixes, and suffixes occasionally; some multi-syllable words are read accurately and smoothly.</p> <p>Notes:</p>
1	<p>POOR. Does not apply knowledge of syllabication, prefixes, and suffixes consistently; few, if any, multi-syllable words are read accurately or smoothly.</p> <p>Notes:</p>

5. Story retells

Story retells can be used to monitor the effectiveness of vocabulary and comprehension instruction and the appropriateness of selected text levels. In a story retell (an alternative to asking and answering a set of comprehension questions), a student is directed to share as many details as he/she can recall after silently reading a passage or story (untimed). The teacher records all of the details in order.

- An accurate, orderly, and detailed story retell informs that the student understood the text at his/her instructional level.
- An inaccurate, rambling, or out-of-order story retell informs that the student misunderstood the text at his/her instructional level.

Further questioning of the student can determine: (a) Did he/she recognize and know all of the words? (b) Did he/she use any taught comprehension strategies? (c) Was the overall text level or text structure difficult? This combined information can guide the teacher in selecting future vocabulary, comprehension strategies, and text levels for instruction.

Sample Story Retell for Quick and Easy Adult Reading Assessments - 5A

The Story:

Last week, my family went to the county fair. My brother is a volunteer fireman, so he was working at the fair. My children and I went to meet him. I am very glad we did; it was a great night. When we arrived the fair was very crowded, and finding my brother was like finding a needle in a haystack. We finally found him because we heard the fire truck siren blaring and knew it was him. Showing off the fire truck is his favorite pastime; that truck is his pride and joy. There was a feeling of excitement at the fair. Everyone was happy and having fun, just like how the children feel on their birthdays.

First, my children went on a Ferris wheel that was over a hundred feet high. They said they could see the whole town when they were at the top. I was truly nervous when they stopped at the top because the car they were in swayed back and forth like a flag whipping in the wind. Shutting my eyes and pretending they were on the ground helped calm me down, but it felt like forever until they started down again. I was relieved when the ride was over, but, of course, they wanted to go again.

After that we each got something to eat. My son got bright blue cotton candy, blue like a lollipop, not like the sky. I don't know how he could eat it. It was so sweet it tasted like sugar straight from the sugar bowl, and it made his tongue turn blue. My daughter got funnel cake covered in sugar. She got so much powdered sugar on her face that she looked like a mime. I thought it was funny, but she didn't. We rode on several more rides and looked at lots of interesting stuff before we left. It really was a fantastic night.

Sample Story Retell (rated as "good"):

1. A family went to the [county] fair.
2. It was very crowded [busy] and they had a hard [difficult] time finding the brother.
3. He showed them the fire truck.
4. The children went on the Ferris wheel [but not the parent(s)].
5. Then they got something to eat: cotton candy and [funnel] cake.
6. They went on more rides.
7. They looked at stuff [things].
8. They all had a fantastic [wonderful] time.

6 Advice and Support for Using EBRI Practices with ELLs

The percentage of English Language Learners (ELLs) attending MN ABE programs is close to 50%; often higher in urban and suburban settings and sometimes lower in rural locations. Consequently, in *many* STAR programs, *many* STAR teachers are using EBRI practices with *many* ELLs. Four MN STAR teachers (two are also MN STAR trainers) were asked for their “expert advice” or “experienced support” for using EBRI practices with ELLs. Their valuable contributions are shared below with some editing by the author for clarity and consistency.



Penny Brown, Southwest Metro Educational Cooperative STAR Trainer & Teacher

Penny teaches a mixed ABE and ESL STAR class called “Academic Reading” in Shakopee and is a certified STAR trainer. Her intensive STAR class is being duplicated in both Chaska and Chanhassen by other STAR-trained teachers.

Diagnostic reading assessment determines which components of reading instruction are priorities for each student. At first, I had difficulty distinguishing between genuine reading errors and pronunciation due to accents, but this got easier with practice and experience.

Direct and explicit reading instruction is a sound practice for all academic levels and subjects. Although it’s tempting to give students an activity to do on their own while we tend to other tasks, skipping to application creates more work after. It’s harder to “unlearn” errors than to explain, model and give guided practice before.

Reading practice activities often involve a great deal of writing. Keep **students engaged** with a variety of pencil-free activities: oral discussion, words sorts, and combining sentence strips into paragraphs.

Try to avoid materials with graphics designed for elementary students. **Select relevant adult materials** focused on employment, finance, parenting, science, and social studies - content areas which build a foundation of knowledge for school, work, and life.

Reading classes with large quantities of guided practice provide opportunities for **monitoring the effectiveness of instruction**. Independent practice and formal tests are another source of monitoring, but should not be the only source of data.



**Kristine Kelly, Robbinsdale Adult Academic Program
STAR Trainer & Teacher**

Kristine and her co-STAR teachers serve many day and evening ABE and ESL students. Kristine is also a Developmental Reading Adjunct Instructor at Hennepin Technical College and a certified STAR trainer.

Conducting diagnostic reading assessment is a crucial step for ELLs who are assessed with CASAS or TABE. Typically for all Intermediate-level students, there is a wide range of levels across the four components of reading. Using a single, standardized test score to place students or plan instruction can result in misplaced students and blanket instruction that does not target specific areas of need.

My ELLs respond very positively to the steps of **explicit instruction** as shown by their excellent attendance, constant participation, eagerness to complete homework, and desire for more “explicitness.” Many of my higher-educated ELLs appreciate explanation as it provides the rationale of instruction and reinforces the seriousness of the lessons to follow. When working with students who battle issues with reading comprehension and the complexities of the English language, there can never be too much modeling, guided practice, or application!

As stated above, **student engagement** is reflected in my ELL’s attendance, participation, and homework completion. Because their specific reading weaknesses are being addressed, they feel as if their time is well spent and that they are truly learning and progressing toward their academic goals.

For ELLS who are planning on transitioning to post-secondary, it is very **relevant** to teach them proven reading comprehension strategies applicable to any text structure of level. This creates the automaticity necessary to become more independent readers.

My ELLs love to be quizzed – orally and on paper! The benefits of **continuous monitoring** are: (1) students can see their own improvement or need for further improvement and (2) teachers can tell what is needed: more modeling, guided practice or independent practice? Too often, we give some practice and move on without monitoring effectiveness OR make assumptions and push students to materials they are not ready for.



**Kathy Lundquist, Metro North Adult Basic Education
STAR Teacher**

Kathy has been involved in MN STAR since 2008 and was a member of STAR Leadership and Teacher Teams. She has used EBRI successfully with both ABE and ESL students at Anoka Technical College.

Since [EBRI] contains elements that have proven to be successful in teaching reading, it would naturally follow that these elements would bring success when teaching [ELLs]. The EBRI components help to ensure that learning takes place, no matter what type of student is being taught.

Diagnostic reading assessment provides valuable information as to a student's needs, which in turn helps the teacher know which concepts need to be covered or emphasized.

ELL students particularly appreciate receiving **direct and explicit instruction** in alphabets because it helps them to see and understand the patterns in our language and aids in their ability to pronounce words.

Engaging or involving students in activities at appropriate levels (as measured by diagnostic reading assessments) is a key to enabling them to understand and practice needed concepts.

Ensuring that students have mastered each concept presented requires a means of assessing whether learning has taken place. **Ongoing monitoring** can be in the form of checktests (written or computer), writing samples, demonstrations, student observation in class, etc.

Using all the components of EBRI helps to make you a successful teacher!



**Margaret Genereux, Adult Options in Education (AOIE)
STAR Teacher**

Margaret and her co-STAR teachers (with help from devoted volunteers) teach STAR classes in Hopkins and St. Louis Park. Margaret's STAR classes tend to be comprised of all ELLs and her advice is specific to this population. She was a member of STAR Teacher Team.

- Don't be surprised by diagnostic reading assessment levels as low as second grade for fluency or reading comprehension. Use the Marshall adult readings for lower levels.
- Be prepared to slow down and explain more.
- For alphabetics, expect lots of questions about meanings of even one-syllable words common in our language, which have typically not been introduced through survival/life-skills curriculum.
- For vocabulary, expect to take as much as 20 minutes for each academic word. They don't speak with an academic vocabulary and don't get much exposure to it.
- Give and elicit lots of examples for academic words. Even simple sentences can expand the vocabulary you are teaching beyond the academic vocabulary you want to target.
- Give lots of time for vocabulary sentence writing. For less accomplished writers, give sentence starters and be prepared to correct grammar (although not a focus of EBRI).
- Comprehension may have to take a back seat while you focus your time and energy on the other components.
- Don't give up. It's fun to see ELLs learn typical school skills and get the academic education they want.

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