

Planning for and Reviewing Evidence-Based Practices in Adult Literacy Education – A Self-Study Guide

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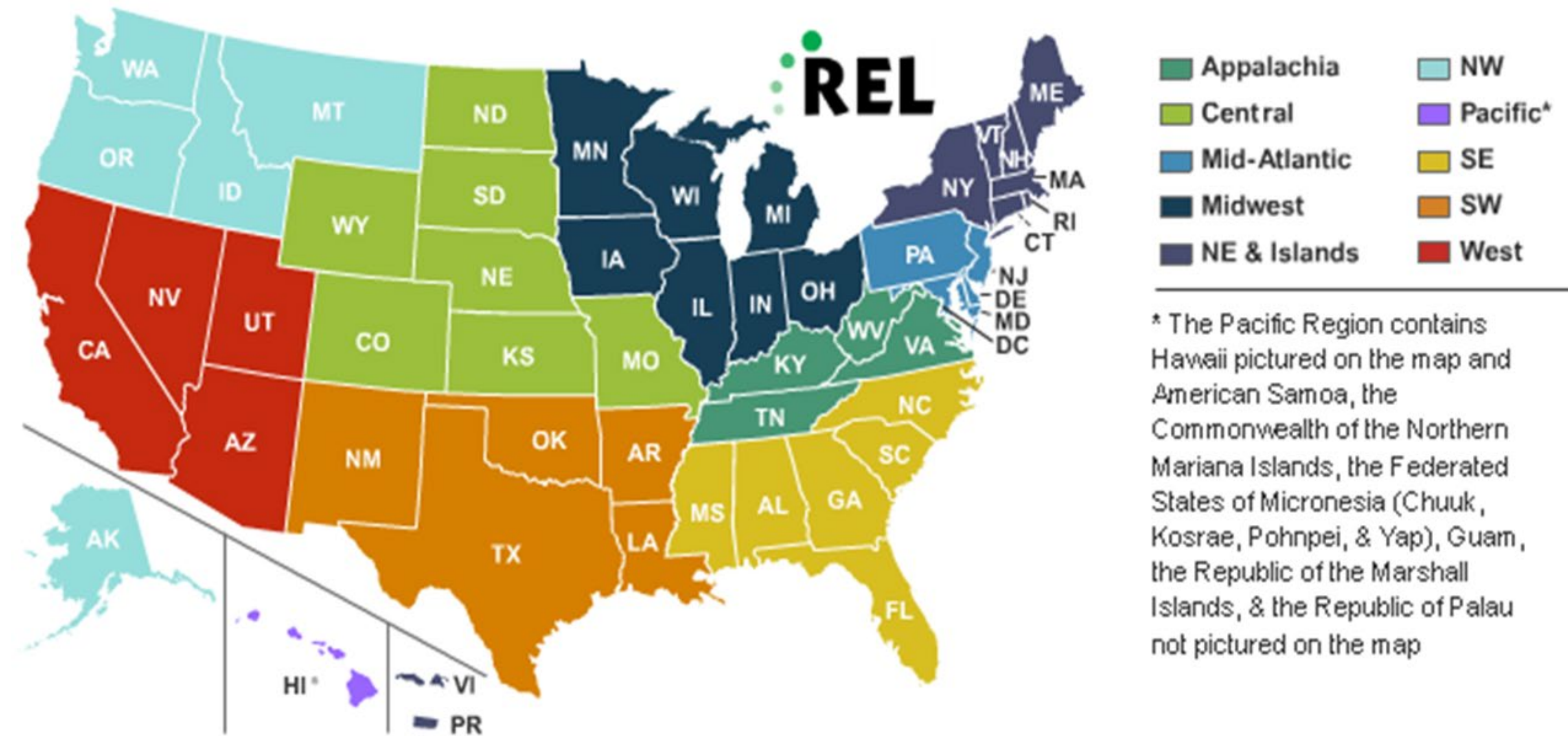
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Workshop Goals

1. Provide a brief overview of the REL Southeast
2. Review the Self-Study Guide for Evidence-Based Practices in Adult Literacy Education
3. Become familiar with the conclusions that may be drawn from research used to develop the guide
4. Begin initial discussions for planning/reviewing evidence-based practices in adult education literacy in your district/program

REL Southeast (brief) overview

The Regional Educational Laboratories



Introduction

The *Self-Study Guide for Evidence-Based Practices in Adult Literacy Education* was developed to help adult literacy education providers collect, organize, and analyze evidence that they can use to improve program performance. It was designed to help educators consider which types of evidence to collect and which components of adult education instruction may be important for evaluating implementation. Sources of evidence for this review include records and data such as lesson plans, rosters, and student results confirming that processes are in place to monitor teacher and student success.

Purpose and use of the self-study guide

The purpose of the Self-study Guide for Evidence-Based Practices in Adult Literacy Education is to help states, districts, colleges, institutions, schools, and programs:

- Collect information for developing an implementation plan for adult literacy education. A list of possible sources of evidence to consider on the status of current program implementation is provided for each component area. Sources of evidence may then be identified and discussed as the Planning and Implementation Scoring Guide is completed.
- Prioritize needs for improvement while developing the implementation plan for adult literacy education. Individual and group ratings allow colleagues to discuss and prioritize components for improvement.
- Collect data on program and student performance in different areas of implementation—referred to as progress-monitoring information—for continuous program improvement.
- Evaluate the implementation of adult literacy education through discussion with stakeholders and the development of an action plan.

Self-Study Process

Self-study is a process of using a guide to promote reflection on current strengths and challenges in planning or implementation, initiate conversations among staff, and identify areas for improvement. Teachers and others who deliver adult literacy education, along with advisors and program-based administrators, should participate in the self-study process.

Planning and Implementation Scoring Guide Area 1

Development and use of student data profiles:

“Assessing a student’s reading ability is important in programs where reading instruction is individualized or where growth in reading is monitored” (p. 35). “An important finding in the Adult Education research suggests that assessing several components of reading in order to generate profiles of students’ reading ability gives teachers much more instructionally relevant information than any test of a single component can” (p. 35).

Kruidenier, J. R., MacArthur, C. A., & Wrigley, H. S. (2010). *Adult education literacy instruction: A review of the research*. Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy.

Planning and Implementation Scoring Guide Area 1

Development and use of student data profiles:

Part 1.1 A data collection process, beginning at student intake, is in place to collect and share data on student assessment and planning for proper program and instructional placement

Part 1.2 Teachers/programs are able to track student progress through the use of valid and reliable assessments

Planning and Implementation Scoring Guide Area 2

Instructional methods and materials:

“Federal and state policy makers should move quickly to build on and expand the existing infrastructure of adult literacy education to support the use of instructional approaches, curricula, materials, tools, and assessments of learners consistent with (a) research on reading, writing, learning, language, and adult development; (b) research on the effectiveness of instructional approaches; and (c) knowledge of sound assessment practices” (p. 252).

Lesgold, A. M., & Welch-Ross, M. (2012). *Improving adult literacy: Options for practice and research*. Washington, DC: Committee on Learning Sciences: Foundations and Applications to Adolescent and Adult Literacy, National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences.

Planning and Implementation Scoring Guide Area 2

Instructional methods and materials:

Part 2.1 A plan is in place to use criteria for selecting interventions and curricula that have been shown to have a positive effect on student achievement

Part 2.2 A plan is in place that reflects instructional practices shown through empirical evidence to increase student achievement

Planning and Implementation Scoring Guide Area 3

Instructional time:

“One primary reason for limited progress may be that adults lack sufficient amounts of instruction and practice for improving skills” (p. 77). “Reasons reported for dropping out of adult education include... the pace of instruction (either too fast or too slow) ... and inconvenient class location or schedule” (p. 77).

Lesgold, A. M., & Welch-Ross, M. (2012). *Improving adult literacy: Options for practice and research*. Washington, DC: Committee on Learning Sciences: Foundations and Applications to Adolescent and Adult Literacy, National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences.

Planning and Implementation Scoring Guide Area 3

Instructional time:

Part 3.1 The school has established a schedule that will provide the appropriate frequency, consistency, and duration of instruction to meet adult learners' needs

Planning and Implementation Scoring Guide Area 4

Teacher preparation and training

Researchers note the importance of ensuring that adult literacy teachers are well trained and prepared for instruction and that they are offered ongoing professional development and coaching. Examples of evidence-based recommendations for teacher preparation include hiring experienced, full-time teachers (p. 110) and providing teachers with classroom aides (p. 97).

Kruidenier, J. R., MacArthur, C. A., & Wrigley, H. S. (2010). *Adult education literacy instruction: A review of the research*. Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy.

Planning and Implementation Scoring Guide Area 4

Teacher preparation and training

Part 4.1 A plan is in place to identify, hire, and retain faculty able to teach academic literacy skills effectively to adult learners

Part 4.2 A plan is in place to provide professional development and ongoing support for teachers providing adult literacy education

Planning and Implementation Scoring Guide Area 5

Communication

Researchers note the importance of communication and community building in ensuring that students receive assistance in transitioning to postsecondary training and careers. “Adult learners can face individual, institutional, and policy-related barriers to successful transitioning to postsecondary education. State directors of adult learner programs have discussed providing additional support services as a way to address these barriers” (p. 8).

Hector-Mason, A., Narlock, J., Muhisani, H., & Bhatt, M. P. (2017). *State strategies to facilitate adult learners’ transitions to postsecondary opportunities* (REL 2017–223). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Midwest.

Planning and Implementation Scoring Guide Area 5

Communication

Part 5.1 A plan is in place for communication and collaboration that will ensure successful startup and ongoing implementation of instructional programs

Part 5.2 A plan is in place that enables teachers, administrators, counselors, and others involved in delivering adult literacy education to collaborate regularly on students' growth and program success and improvement

Planning and Implementation Scoring Guide Area 6

Instructional environment and processes

Researchers note the importance of making the instructional environment conducive to learning for adult education students and of having processes in place to support student engagement and productivity. Examples of evidence-based recommendations for instructional environment include learner-centered classes (p. 100), community building (p. 125), and differentiated teaching environments (p. 125).

Kruidenier, J. R., MacArthur, C. A., & Wrigley, H. S. (2010). *Adult education literacy instruction: A review of the research*. Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy.

Planning and Implementation Scoring Guide Area 6

Instructional environment and processes

Part 6.1 A plan is in place to ensure a healthy and safe learning environment that is welcoming and conducive to learning

Part 6.2 The learning environment is adaptive to the social, emotional, and cultural needs of adult learners

POSSIBLE SOURCES OF EVIDENCE FOR CONSIDERATION

This list of possible sources of evidence for each Planning and Implementation Scoring Guide area provides facilitators and self-study team members with information to review when thinking about and discussing current implementation of practices in adult literacy education. After the team has reviewed this list, the facilitator should create a list of relevant types of evidence for the group discussion. Team members will review the evidence that they have collected and compare it to the guiding questions listed for each part of the Scoring Guide as they complete the Implementation Majority Agreement Rating Form (see next section).

Area 1: Development and use of student data profiles

Part 1.1 A data collection process, beginning at student intake, is in place to collect and share data on student assessment and planning for proper program and instructional placement

Possible sources of evidence

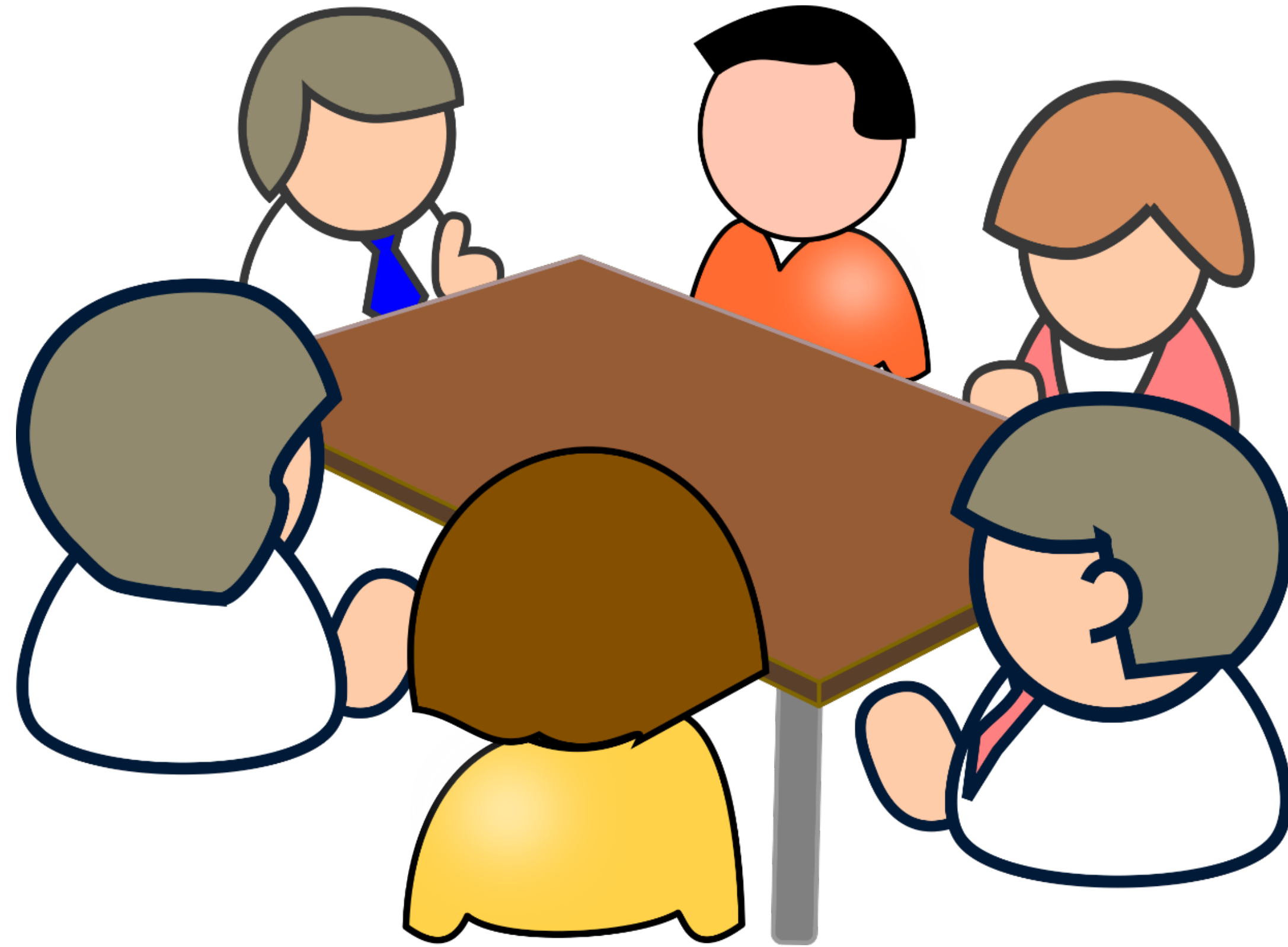
- Student program progression plan. Program progression plans are typically developed by local adult literacy education programs and align with state policies and recommendations to identify criteria (such as course mastery, attendance, and assessment scores) that students must meet to advance to the next stage or level or to exit the program.
- Program improvement plan with consideration for student outcomes.
- Documentation of assessments and other criteria used to identify students' literacy skills, including assessments such as GED, Test for Adult Basic Education, and Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System; attendance; enrollment; prior academic experience; learning assessments; writing samples; student interviews; and student program goals.
- Documentation of student grades in academic courses and prior assessment scores.
- Program schedule for administering assessments to monitor academic progress.
- Program evaluation/performance reporting and monitoring requirements.

Part 1.2 Teachers/programs are able to track student progress through the use of valid and reliable assessments

Possible sources of evidence

- Student program progression plan.
- Program improvement plan.
- Instructional implementation timeline or program master schedule.
- Instructional course schedule for adult literacy education teachers.
- Student placement policy for adult literacy education and evidence that this policy is being followed.
- Information provided to students on their progress and mastery of stated goals.
- Documentation of criteria used to select assessments.
- Documentation of assessments used to identify students' literacy needs.
- Documentation of timeline for regular (biweekly) student progress updates.





IMPLEMENTATION MAJORITY AGREEMENT RATING FORM

Rating key:

1 = Not currently feasible

2 = Feasible, but not implemented

3 = In process of implementing

4 = Fully implemented

State: _____

District/College/Institution: _____

Program: _____

The facilitator will complete this form by recording the results of group ratings and discussions from initial self-study results (see Planning and Implementation Scoring Guide), thoughts on priorities, and brainstorming ideas for next steps/activities for each area rated 2 or 3 (areas where development is most needed).

Planning and Implementation Scoring Guide area	Group rating (circle number)	Priorities	Ideas for next steps/activities
Area 1. Development and use of student data profiles	Part 1.1:	1 2 3 4	
	Part 1.2:	1 2 3 4	
Area 2. Instructional methods and materials	Part 2.1:	1 2 3 4	
	Part 2.2:	1 2 3 4	
Area 3. Instructional time	Part 3.1:	1 2 3 4	
Area 4. Teacher preparation and training	Part 4.1:	1 2 3 4	
	Part 4.2:	1 2 3 4	
Area 5. Communication	Part 5.1:	1 2 3 4	
	Part 5.2:	1 2 3 4	
Area 6. Instructional environment and processes	Part 6.1:	1 2 3 4	
	Part 6.2:	1 2 3 4	



PLANNING NEXT STEPS FORM

After completing the Implementation Majority Agreement Rating Form, the facilitator will begin completing this Planning Next Steps Form by leading a discussion on the priorities for action. Following that, the facilitator will lead a discussion on developing a detailed implementation plan for next steps and activities that are the most urgent and actionable. Finally, the facilitator will lead a discussion to identify potential challenges to the plan and resources available to help overcome those challenges.

List the top three priority areas to improve implementation of evidence-based practices in adult literacy education.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Priority Area 1

What are the next steps and activities to address the listed priorities for this priority area? Consider timelines and the person or people responsible for determining the strategies or providing the resources.

What are the general challenges the team anticipates?

Outline a plan to address the challenges and tentatively identify the people responsible for each step of the plan to address this priority area.

ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

Purpose: To create an Action Plan for an institution's implementation of evidence-based practices in adult literacy education.

Directions: Using this form as a template, develop an Action Plan identifying the action items your institution must accomplish to ensure that the priorities outlined in the Planning Next Steps Form are thoroughly addressed.

Action steps What will you do?	Responsibilities Who will do it?	Timeline By when? (day/month/year)	Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none">Resources availableResources needed (financial, human, other)Administrative support needed	Potential barriers <ul style="list-style-type: none">What individuals or entities might resist?How do we address this resistance?	Communications plan <ul style="list-style-type: none">Who is involved?What methods?How often?	Evaluation method <ul style="list-style-type: none">How will you determine that you have reached your goal?What are your measures?	Budget
Step 1:							
Step 2:							
Step 3:							
Step 4:							
Step 5:							



Implementing Adult Education Literacy Interventions

Implications from the Research

Implementing adult literacy interventions is a complex process that includes several areas for consideration. Adult educators are often unfamiliar with evidence-based literacy strategies, and adult students often have great needs in literacy instruction and intervention. Adult education students need extensive support due to their life circumstances (newcomers, lack of prior academic success, need credentials for job/career advancement). Positive outcomes for adult education students may lead to improved outcomes such as secondary and postsecondary credential attainment, employment, income, and family literacy. This issue is addressed in *Adult Education Literacy Instruction: A Review of the Research* (Kruidenier, MacArthur, & Wrigley, 2010).



There are six areas that leaders and educators could consider when planning or reviewing implementation of literacy interventions for their students. These areas include:



APPENDIX A. SUPPORT FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION SCORING GUIDE AREAS

This appendix describes key references that provide additional support for each of the Planning and Implementation Scoring Guide areas.

Area 1: Development and use of student data profiles

Kruidenier, J. R., MacArthur, C. A., & Wrigley, H. S. (2010). *Adult education literacy instruction: A review of the research*. Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED521229>.

The authors note the importance of using assessments to determine each student's reading ability, particularly to target instruction to meet individual student needs and monitoring progress. "Assessing a student's reading ability is important in programs where reading instruction is individualized or where growth in reading is monitored" (p. 35).

The authors also note the importance of using several data points to create student reading data profiles and develop specific instruction aligned with student reading goals. Student reading data profiles include results from all previous literacy assessments, enrollment information, and progress monitoring results. "An important finding in the Adult Education research suggests that assessing several components of reading in order to generate profiles of students' reading ability gives teachers much more instructionally relevant information than any test of a single component can" (p. 35).

Lesgold, A. M., & Welch-Ross, M. (2012). *Improving adult literacy: Options for practice and research*. Washington, DC: Committee on Learning Sciences: Foundations and Applications to Adolescent and Adult Literacy, National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED536344>.

The authors note that it is important to have assessments that are aligned with common goals for learning and that provide information that is instructionally helpful for guiding student placement and understanding student progress and program outcomes. "Good systems of assessment to improve student learning consist of (a) diagnostic assessment to inform instructors about skills the learner possesses and needs to develop; (b) formative assessment of skills being developed that need further improvement as instruction progresses; and (c) accountability assessment to inform administrators, policy makers, funders, and the public of how well the program and systems that serve adult literacy learners are working. The assessments need to be aligned with common goals for learning. Assessments of literacy need to be suitable for adults, assess all the important dimensions of reading, writing, and language, and assess a range of print and digital functional literacy skills that society demands and values" (p. 4). In addition, the authors note the importance of identifying specific student needs. "It is vital to use reliable methods to diagnose learning and reading disabilities and to adjust instruction accordingly" (p. 78).

The authors note the need for a systematic approach to using assessments in adult literacy education, with consideration for training and support. "A sound approach to assessment to support and monitor learning at the individual, program, and systems levels is systematic, with linkages among the various purposes of assessment and extensive professional training and supports needed to implement the assessments reliably" (p. 81).



Questions?

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