



# National Institute for Literacy

Literacy Information and Communication System (*LINCS*)

May 2010

## *LINCS* Resource Collections



### Basic Skills



### Program Management



### Workforce Competitiveness

## Welcome to *LINCS* Resource Collection News!

In this edition, we feature the [Workforce Competitiveness Collection](#), which covers Workforce Education, English Language Acquisition, and Technology. Each month, Collections News features one of the three *LINCS* Resource Collections – Basic Skills, Program Management, and Workforce Competitiveness – and introduces research-based resources that you can use in your adult basic education and family literacy programs and classrooms.

## What's New in the Workforce Competitiveness Collection?

Resources in the Workforce Competitiveness Collection – research-based products and materials, and research papers – can help you expand and improve work-based, basic skills classes offered to adults. Additional workforce education resources, organized by career clusters or occupational categories, can be found in the [Career Pathways Instructional Materials Library](#). Discussion lists also are available, providing a forum through which you can interact with experts, ask questions, and share ideas with colleagues across the country. For free subscriptions to the Workforce Competitiveness, Technology and Distance Learning, and Adult English Language Acquisition discussion lists, go to <http://www.nifl.gov/lincs/discussions/discussions.html>.

A recently added resource in Workforce Education is a guidebook, [Business Results Through Essential Skills and Literacy](#), which addresses the essential skills needed in the workplace to improve or maintain the skills needed to stay competitive. Both businesses and literacy providers can learn from this guidebook that includes assessments, checklists, and templates useful in planning work-based literacy programs. Although this resource focuses on incumbent workers, it also suggests that employers consider competencies that might be needed in the future for workers within their industries or businesses.

Not all adults are easily transitioned to work. A recent discussion on the Workforce Competitiveness Discussion List focused on this issue. From April 12–16, 2010, guest Chris Warland of the National Transitional Jobs (TJ) Network discussed TJs as a strategy designed to help people with multiple or substantial barriers to employment get and keep jobs. TJ uses

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time-limited, wage-paying jobs combined with support services to transition adults to the competitive labor market. Several list subscribers are continuing the discussion with a social networking group to support each other in planning TJ initiatives within their programs. Posts, beginning with post #2220, can be read in the archives at <http://www.nifl.gov/pipermail/work-place/2010/date.html>.

Resources in the Workforce Competitiveness Collection often focus on work-based learning; however, some resources are more general. For example, a recently added resource in the English Language Acquisition (ELA) Collection, [Teaching Grammar to Adult English Language Learners](#), provides an introduction to a research-based rationale for teaching grammar within a meaningful context. Experts who reviewed this resource reported that it gives “an extremely clear explanation of Focus on Form” as a strategy, strategies for integrating form and meaning, and several activities that incorporate explicit and implicit grammar instruction.

Adult English Language Learners with little or no previous education are a growing population in English as a second language (ESL) classes. The Adult ELA Discussion List hosted a discussion on “Literacy Development of ESL Beginners: Observations and Analyses from the NCSALL ESL Laboratory Classrooms” from April 12-16, 2010, addressing this issue. Guests, Kathy Harris and Dominique Brillanceau, discussed what they learned working with learners with emerging literacy at the ESOL Lab School at Portland State University (<http://www.ncsall.net/?id=987>). Videos of classes were made available online and provided examples of the challenges these learners – many without previous education – faced as they learned to “do school” while learning a new language.

You may want to explore resources in the Technology Collection when considering the use of technology or distance learning when planning instruction for learners. [Investigating the Language and Literacy Skills Required for Independent Online Learning](#), for example, reports on a study undertaken to investigate the levels of literacy and language proficiency needed for adult learners to undertake independent online learning. One key recommendation was that teachers should facilitate learners’ introduction to independent learning environments, explicitly teaching and modeling the skills they will need to use in self-directed learning. The author was a guest on the Technology and Distance Learning Discussion List last year and gathered much of the information included in the report’s section on learning from the field from subscribers’ comments.

## How can I learn more about the Workforce Competitiveness Collection?

Visit the [Workforce Competitiveness Collection](#) for additional resources. Contact the Workforce Competitiveness Collection content experts for additional information and to learn more about the resources, technical assistance, and professional development opportunities that are available at no cost: Workforce Education – Wendy McDowell, [wlm12@psu.edu](mailto:wlm12@psu.edu) and Priscilla Carman, [psc3@psu.edu](mailto:psc3@psu.edu); English Language Acquisition – Blaire Willson Toso, [bwt121@psu.edu](mailto:bwt121@psu.edu); and Technology – Tim Ponder, [tponder@literacy.kent.edu](mailto:tponder@literacy.kent.edu).

## What is *LINCS*?

*LINCS* is a service of the National Institute for Literacy, providing online information and communication networks for adult and family literacy practitioners. *LINCS*' offerings include Discussion Lists, Regional Resource Centers, the Collections, and training opportunities. Learn more about *LINCS* on the Web site <http://www.nifl.gov/lincs>

## What will I find in the New *LINCS* Resource Collections?

The three *new LINCS Resource Collections*, expanded this year, are comprised of items that have completed a rigorous internal and external review. Use these resources directly in the classroom or to guide development of customized programs and classes. You can find more information about the new Resource Collections on the Institute's [Web site](#).