

Digital Literacy: Annotated Instructional Resources and References



Instructional Resources

One focus of the Teaching Skills That Matter (TSTM) in Adult Education project is identifying high-quality, evidence-based materials and training to support teachers in integrating transferable skills development in the areas of civics education, digital literacy, health literacy, financial literacy, and workforce preparation skills into adult education and literacy instruction. The following selection of easy-to-use instructional resources have been recommended by subject matter experts in digital literacy for teaching the skills that matter. Please note that these only are intended as a starting point to support teachers' important work in this area and exploration of existing instructional resources.

GCF Global. (2019). Technology. Retrieved from <https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/subjects/tech/>

This resource provides comprehensive information that teachers can use to support learners in developing digital literacy and increase their own digital literacy as educators. The website includes printable materials, videos, and screenshots. Teachers can download documents and share links with students.

Some pages contain a link to a corresponding YouTube channel that has many video demonstrations, but the page does not explain the purpose of the YouTube channel. The website gives teachers limited guidance on how to use the videos in instruction. In addition, the reading level of this resource might be too difficult for lower level ESL learners.

Google. (n.d.). Applied digital skills. Retrieved from <https://applieddigitalskills-beta.withgoogle.com/s/en/home>

This web page provides resources for both teachers and students. The main resource for teachers is a printable resource kit that includes a quick-start guide, suggestions on which lessons to start with, and lesson overviews. Seven "teacher spotlights" feature brief overviews of how different teachers use the materials in their classrooms. The web page contains videos and activities that help students learn digital literacy skills.

As of June 2019, there are 55 lessons, and 19 of them are tailored for adult learners. The lessons for adults focus primarily on workplace settings. Teachers can assign lessons to individual students or have students work collaboratively. Each lesson indicates how long it should take to complete.

The language used in the videos is easy to understand for proficient English speakers and English language learners at a high-intermediate ESL level or higher. Teachers will need to provide scaffolding for students below High Intermediate ESL. Several lessons

focus on specific TSTM skills. These lessons explicitly teach skills related to communication and processing and analyzing information.

Northstar. (2019). Take an assessment. Retrieved from <https://www.digitalliteracyassessment.org/>

Northstar is a digital literacy assessment that teachers can take to evaluate their digital skills and identify areas that need improvement. Teachers also can assign Northstar assessments to students to help them identify skills they need to develop. The assessment is functional; it requires that the test taker demonstrate the skill being assessed rather than self-reporting the skill level. Teachers can see examples of digital skills in action, providing a model for them to use in their classes. Northstar assessments are appropriate for all levels of literacy and language proficiency.

Quann, S. (2015). *Integrating digital literacy and problem solving into instruction*. Washington, DC: Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS). Retrieved from <https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/digitalaccess-problemsolving.pdf>

This resource contains a set of two lesson plans for teachers to use in their classroom. The lesson plans include notes on how to adapt each lesson for more or less advanced students. The lesson plans include everything a teacher needs to implement them. This resource is written for students with at least intermediate-low literacy proficiency (adult basic education) or at least high-beginning English proficiency (English as a second language).

Vanek, J. B. (2017). Using the PIAAC framework for problem solving in technology-rich environments to guide instruction: An introduction for adult educators. Commissioned Paper. Washington, DC: Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies. Retrieved from https://static1.squarespace.com/static/51bb74b8e4b0139570ddf020/t/589a3d3c1e5b6cd7b42cddcb/1486503229769/PSTRE_Guide_Vanek_2017.pdf

This article describes how to teach problem solving in a technology-rich environment. It provides clear instructions and well-developed examples for teachers; pages 26–30 provide concrete examples specifically for intermediate and higher language and literacy proficiency levels. This resource includes activities to implement in the classroom along with suggestions for differentiating instruction. Teachers can use this resource with students of all levels of language and literacy proficiency.

Additional References

The following is a selection of additional resources recommended by subject matter experts in digital literacy for adult educators to learn more about the topic area addressed in the *Teaching Skills That Matter* project. Please note that these only are intended as a starting point to support teachers' important work in this area and exploration of existing references resources.



Castek, J., Jacobs, G., Pendell, K., Pizzolato, D., Reder, S., & Withers, E. (2015). *Language learners: The role of online material*. (Digital Literacy Acquisition in Brief) . PDXScholar. Retrieved from https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1014&context=dla_research_briefs

This resource provides important background information for teachers on how to select and design appropriate materials for teaching digital literacy skills to adults.

Digital Promise. (2016). *Designing technology for adult learners: Applying adult learning theory*. Digital Promise. Retrieved from <http://digitalpromise.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/designing-for-adult-learners.pdf>

This report describes how to design, implement, and use learning technologies for adult learners. It is not about digital literacy acquisition but, rather, designing learning experiences with technology for adults.

Harris, K. (2015). Integrating digital literacy into English language instruction: Issue Brief. LINCS ESL Pro. Retrieved from https://lincs.ed.gov/sites/default/files/ELL_Digital_Literacy_508.pdf

This resource helps teachers integrate digital literacy into adult English language instruction. The TSTM project skills addressed are communication, processing and analyzing information, and problem solving. The resource suggests the use, and provides examples, of problem-based and project-based approaches to instruction.

Jacobs, G., Castek, J., Pizzolato, D., Pendell, K., Withers, E., & Reder, S. (2015). *Community connections. Digital literacy acquisition policy brief*. Retrieved from <http://archives.pdx.edu/ds/psu/16518>

This resource explores the role that partnerships can play to maximize the resources available to individual partners and increase their reach in providing digital literacy learning programming to adults in the community. Partnerships increase opportunities for technological integration and the development of digital literacy skills. This resource is designed for program administrators and others who are responsible for digital literacy programming; the material is not recommended for teachers.

Murphy, R., Bienkowski, M., Bhanot, R., Wang, S., Wetzel, T., House, A., & Van Brunt, J. (2017). *Evaluating digital learning for adult basic literacy and numeracy*. Menlo Park, California: SRI International. Retrieved from https://www.sri.com/sites/default/files/publications/evaluating-digital-learning_1.pdf

This study provides important background information for program administrators, state education offices, and teachers who are interested in learning how to implement technology-based programs to extend opportunities for learning in adult basic education settings. It does



not provide information for teachers to implement immediately in their classrooms but does contain direction from research about how to effectively implement blended/hybrid programs to maximize learning. The report is not about adult digital literacy acquisition.

Reder, S. (2015). *Digital inclusion and digital literacy in the United States: A portrait from PIAAC's Survey of Adult Skills*. Retrieved from https://static1.squarespace.com/static/51bb74b8e4b0139570ddf020/t/551c3e82e4b0d2fe6481f9/1427914370277/Reder_PIAAC.pdf

This resource contains important background information for understanding equity in digital literacy acquisition and does not include guidance for teachers or recommended instructional approaches. This material is useful for teachers, program administrators, state-level education leaders, workforce board officials, and other policymakers who want to understand the issues related to digital inclusion and equity.

Zielenzinki, M., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2016). *Promising practices: A literature review of technology use by underserved students*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education. Retrieved from <https://edpolicy.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/publications/scope-report-promising-practices-v1.pdf>

This research review provides guidance for teachers in designing learning experiences using technology. Although this resource focuses on K-12 populations, there are implications for adult learners as well. The report does not provide materials that teachers can immediately implement in their classroom; however, it does provide important guidance for teachers in designing instruction.

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