

**From Assessment to Practice: Research-Based Approaches to Teaching Reading to Adults Part 2: Specific Instructional Strategies for Fluency and Vocabulary**

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Sandra Baxter: Good afternoon and thank you for joining us for part two of the very important discussion we began in September, "When teaching adults to read." My name is Sandra Baxter and I am the Director of the National Institute for Literacy. The Institute is hosting today's webcast that is being brought to you live from the nation's capital. The Institute is a Federal Agency and we are charged by Congress to provide national leadership on the issue of literacy for adults, youth and children. An important part of our mission at the Institute is to serve as the National Clearing House for resources on reading research, reading instruction and on adult literacy. Today we are pleased to host this forum that is titled, "From Assessment to Practice, part II, Research based approaches to teaching adults to read."

In this 70-minute segment our presenters will focus on specific instructional strategies for two other components of reading, fluency and vocabulary. Those who participated in our September webcast on reading may recall that word analysis and comprehension were discussed and used as examples to illustrate research-based practices. Our presenters today will show how all four components of reading provide a framework for assessing the reading ability of adult learners and how assessment results can lead seamlessly to a program of instruction to improve student reading. We look forward this afternoon from hearing from our national panel of experts.

Returning to our studio today is Susan McShane, a Reading Initiative Specialist at the National Center for Family Literacy. Welcome Susan.

Susan McShane: Glad to be here.

Sandra Baxter: Susan has more than 20 years of experience in adult education and family literacy. She is the author of "Applying Research and Reading Instruction for Adults, First Steps for Teachers." She has taught reading students and adult education reading programs, a private community-based organization and a community college developmental reading program. And again Susan I welcome you.

We also have with us today Dr. John Kruidenier, a researcher and author and a long time consultant to the National Institute for Literacy. Dr. Kruidenier convenes and manages the Institute's Adult Literacy Research Working Group. And he has produced several publications for the Institute including a report of the findings of rigorous research on teaching adults to read, a summary of that report, and as well several newsletters on the uses of research and teaching adults to read. Welcome John.

Dr. John Kruidenier: Good to be here.

Sandra Baxter: Good, thank you.

We also have with us this afternoon Dr. Rosalind Davidson, also a leading reading researcher and author. Dr. Davidson who has taught reading to children, youth and adults for more than 40 years is the principle developer of the Adult Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles website, an online assessment tool adult educators can use to assess student's skills and reading. She has also served as Co-Director of the Adult Reading Component Study. And she has taught a course in reading at the Harvard University. Welcome Back today, Ros.

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: Thank you Sandra.

Sandra Baxter: And again, welcome to you, our viewers. To get us started, John, can you take us through some of the highlights of Part I of our webcast on teaching adults to read?

Dr. John Kruidenier: I'd be glad to.

Sandra Baxter: Thank you.

Dr. John Kruidenier: As Sandra mentioned, today's presentation is a follow-up to the presentation we gave in September. During that presentation Ros, Susan and I laid out what we hoped was practical and compelling rationale for the use of research-based principles for adult reading instruction. I want to spend a little time now reviewing what we covered during the first webcast to refresh your memory if you were with us for that first webcast or fill you in if you were not.

First of all, we showed how the four major components of reading provide a framework for assessing your student's reading ability and how assessment results really can, as Sandra said, lead seamlessly to a program of instruction to improve your student's reading. We focused on just two of the four components of reading, word analysis and comprehension. We used these as examples to show how research is directly related to practice. We hadn't planned to talk about the other two components, fluency and vocabulary, but as Sandra mentioned several viewers requested that we come back and talk about them as well. The definition of reading we presented is a practical definition because it provides teachers with an overall framework to use for assessing and teaching reading.

Most of our time during the first webcast was used by Ros and Susan to show how teachers can use this framework to apply research to practice, focusing on alphabets and comprehension. They presented some very practical ideas for reading assessment and instruction that come directly from the research. We are going to repeat that format today but we will focus on fluency and vocabulary instead of alphabets and comprehension. As before, all of the information being presented here today comes from three resources that were developed by the Institute, and these resources are all listed on this last PowerPoint slide.

Let's start by reviewing the definition of reading that we used during the first webcast. Cognitive psychologists and other researchers have come to agree that the aspects or components of reading listed on this slide are essential to reading. This is true, whatever the larger context or purpose for reading is. These four components are not meant to describe all that there is to literacy of course, but these components are always present whenever reading takes place.

During the last webcast we demonstrated how these basic components of reading can provide a very useful framework for adult reading, assessment and instruction. You can return to our last webcast for more information about two of the components, Alphabets and Comprehension. As we said, we will be talking more about Fluency and Vocabulary today. And fluency in reading is the ability to read with speed and ease. When readers are fluent they read accurately without making mistakes in pronunciation and with appropriate [rate], intonation and rhythm. They read a text the way the writer of the text intended for it to be read.

Vocabulary is a term used to refer to our knowledge of word meanings. One person's vocabulary consists of all the words the person understands or knows the meaning of. Vocabulary words in reading instruction are usually those words that a person is

studying in order to learn their meaning. And here is the rope metaphor again that we used during the last webcast. We like to think of the components of reading as the strands that make up a rope. All of the individual strands in the rope, the basic components of reading, are essential for skilled reading. Alphabets and fluency go together to make up the print-based strand. These components are mostly concerned with decoding the words in a text. Vocabulary and comprehension go together to make up a meaning-based strand. All of these components are needed for skilled reading whatever the situation or purpose for reading is. We can focus on each individual strand when we talk about reading or teach reading, but we have to remember that they are all essential for skilled reading. A weakness in any one of these strands can weaken the whole process.

Another important concept we presented during the last webcast is Growth in Reading. It is important to remember that we were all beginning readers at some point and that it takes a considerable amount of time to become proficient readers. With good readers each basic component of reading develops at roughly the same rate. With poor readers as we will see this is not necessarily the case. The framework involving components that we are using today is one that was used by the Adult Literacy Research Working Group. We talked more about this group last time but basically this group of experts in reading in adult education identified emerging principles for adult reading assessment and instruction. The group's work forms the basis for the research-based practices we will be focusing on today.

Here is an important assessment principle that we presented last time. The research on which the principle is based clearly shows that assessing all aspects of reading is important. Good readers typically are good at each aspect of reading. Adults in literacy programs are not good readers; they can be at just about any level in each aspect of reading. This is an example that we used last time to illustrate this principle. There are two simplified profiles that you will see in a second that show two student's grade level scores on tests of four components. These are the components of reading comprehension, word

analysis, or decoding, fluency as measured with a test of oral reading accuracy and then oral vocabulary. As you can see both students scored at the six grade level on a reading comprehension test. And if we were just to look at the student's reading comprehension scores the students would look the same.

However, when you look at the results from tests of the other components of reading you can see that they have different patterns of strengths and weaknesses and are really not at all alike. Each of these students will need a different program of instruction based on their individual needs in reading. As I have mentioned, today we will be focusing on just two of the components of reading, fluency and vocabulary. To introduce Ros and Susan's presentations on fluency assessment and fluency instruction I am going to briefly present a summary of the fluency assessment and instruction principles derived from the research.

Remember, fluency is the ability to read with speed and ease, with proper phrasing, rhythm and intonation. If you are struggling with individual words as you read, hesitating and stopping your understanding of what you read will suffer.

First of all it is clear from the research that reading fluency is a problem for beginning adult readers just as it is for all beginning readers. In fact, fluency can be a problem for readers at any level. We can all imagine texts that would cause us to read much more slowly with lots of stops and starts. The explanations actually that come with prescription drugs are examples of texts that really slow me down. We know that fluency can be a problem so what do we know about teaching fluency from the researcher? First of all we know that it is possible to teach fluency to adult beginning readers. The research indicates that teaching fluency can increase reading achievement. From research with both adults and children we know that there are several ways to teach fluency and that all

of the methods include repeated oral readings of text with guidance from a teacher to improve accuracy, rate and rhythm. The relatively small body of adult findings is supported by a large body of K-12 research. The effective K-12 strategy is called Guided Repeated Oral Reading. Guided Repeated Oral Reading is useful for all readers including those with reading problems. It can also be motivational because it leads to quick increases in reading rate and accuracy. This may be especially important for your adult learners. They can experience improvement in their fluency on the text used for instruction right away. There are several variations to repeated readings, but basically it is just reading the same text out loud over and over again. Guided means a teacher monitors the oral reading to keep track of speed to help out with difficult words, decided how many times to read and so on. Susan is going to present this technique in more detail later after Ros presents some practical information about fluency assessment. Ros?

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: Thank you, John. The three components of oral reading fluency, Accuracy, Rate and Prosody can be assessed informally just by attending to a reader's oral reading during instruction. Or we can more formally judge a reader's ability on each of the three components by applying commonly accepted criteria of a learner's oral reading ability. The first component is reading accuracy. When evaluating accuracy in reading connected texts, reading rate or evidence of comprehension is not considered. All that is monitored is word reading and the reader's attention to punctuation. Use the criteria for mastery indicated by the test you use, that is the number of errors that are allowed for each passage read. But determining which word reading errors that should be counted as real errors are the same for most assessments and we will look at those now.

The mispronunciations, substitutions, insertions, omissions and supplied words. Write out the mispronunciations, substitutions and insertions above the words where they occur. Put a line through words that are omitted and underline words that you supplied. With mispronunciations, count only the first time the

error is made. Where you supply words you would have to do that where the word reading error distorts the meaning of a passage. You have to supply the correct word because that will support the reader's recognition of the words that follow.

Right, now even though these mistakes are not counted as real errors for purposes of scoring, we mark them during an assessment so that we have a full picture of the reader's difficulties with fluency. The second component of fluent reading is reading rate or how quickly the reader can say the words. A good reading rate is necessary for optimal comprehension. Accomplished readers read fast enough to [chunk] words and phrases, to hold the meaning of a sentence together from beginning to end. As such, rate is an indicator of word recognition automaticity or effortless decoding. The average rate for the best readers who had comprehension between grade equivalent 10 and 12 from the [ARC's] reading component study was 160 words per minute. Use a graded paragraph at the reader's accuracy rate level for determining words per minute.

Now, to get a sense of different reading rates, we are going to be a little interactive here. Here is a small passage with different colors that show different rates of reading. I will time you know for ten seconds as you read this passage from Frankenstein aloud. Okay, ready? Go.

Stop. Well, how far did you get? Through the black, red, blue, or maroon type? Do you see your level of words per minute? Adult good readers read orally, now comprehension isn't tested, between 250 and 300 wpm.

If you have readers who have difficulty learning to decode and read slowly even passages with words they can decode, the test of Rapid Automatized Naming may show that they have a word processing problem that can affect memory and reading comprehension. The problem is that it takes too long for the

visual perception of a word to go through the channels and out through oral expression. To administer this test, first make sure the learner knows the names of the letters by pointing once at random to each of the 5 repeated letters and asking for the name of that letter. The reader then begins at the top of the left letter and reads as fast as can across and down as he would read a page of text. Normal rate for a young adult is below 21 seconds; 18 is optimal.

The third component of fluent reading is prosody, that is bringing speech patterns to reading written passages. You have to see, does the reading sound like speech? Well good prosody shows that the reader is familiar with the patterns of speech and the way speech is represented in written form. And it is necessary for comprehension. It is only an indication that the reader understands what she is reading. We know that accomplished readers can read with good prosody written materials they do not understand and they really just sound good. But there is no comprehension. So that if your reader reads smoothly don't take it for granted that they understand what they are reading.

How close is the learner's oral reading to speech? That is what you are going to assess when you assess prosody. Good prosody requires reading accuracy, adequate reading rate plus experience with written language; that is with reading. Now we have these are the degrees from 3 to 0, and they are from the best to not very good at all or absolutely no indication of prosody, so that the smooth reading, with pauses and so on - that is usually at the reader's independent reading level. There is no problem with accuracy. Remember, fluency has both of those components. And with prosody you have to be able to read the words quickly. And the second is the fairly steady reading with pauses occurring sometimes. That can be at the independent to instructional reading level with less than 90 to 95% word reading accuracy. Then, the very choppy reading that we often have with beginning learners, that is reading with 85 to 90% accuracy. And then the labored word-by-word reading is below accuracy, and that is the frustration level.

That is a prosody scale that you can just assess every time your reader starts reading. It doesn't have to be formal and if you note it sometimes, alright this person is reading, having Oral Reading today. I think that is at about level 3 or level 2, and I will check to see the grade level that they are reading at. Okay, well maybe I can increase the grade level and see how they do at the next one. Or, this one is having much too much trouble with fluency; I'm going to have to look at some other component. It is a scale to keep in mind. But Susan is going to now tell us about what to do about all of this.

Susan McShane: So, what happens when you do one, or several of the assessments that Ros was mentioning there, and you do find some fluency problems? What exactly can you do? Well, of course, since fluency has the three aspects we have discussed you would need to consider the nature of the problem. Which aspect or aspects of fluency are you seeing a need in? And so let's review one more time what those three aspects of fluency are. We obviously had speed or rate, accuracy and word identification and then phrasing and expression or prosody as Ros and John all mentioned.

Let's think again about why fluency is important. Fluency is absolutely required for comprehension. As Ros said it is possible to be a pretty good fluent reader and not understand. So it may not be sufficient but it is absolutely necessary. We have heard of that necessary but not sufficient before. But we know that it is absolutely required. It is absolutely necessary. Accurate and efficient word identification is going to allow the reader to pay attention to meaning. If you think about it, if you are having to work hard on each and every word, or every third or fifth or tenth word and your focus is there, we only have so much attention. We can't pay attention to the big picture. We can't pay attention to comprehension.

And as has already been noted here, fluent reading is comprehensible probably because it sounds like speech. So even silent reading that is fluent is something that is going to roll along like speech in our minds. So it is absolutely vital and in fact, I have had interesting experiences in training where I have given examples of dysfluent reading, I have read dysfluently and I have had teachers very frequently say if I didn't have that text in front of me I would not have had a clue about what you read. I would not have understood it. So I have continual examples in my own life of how important it is. So we know that it is very important. We also know who needs it. As John and Ros discussed earlier, most adult beginning readers simply because many of them have trouble with word identification; that's a big part of it. But also many others as well. And others, you would be surprised to discover need it. If you begin to do, you begin to hear people read aloud and do some of these formal or informal assessments, you will discover that many more need work on fluency.

Now, so what? So what exactly does the research say? As John said, it is really in some ways kind of simple. Just guided repeated oral reading techniques. Now there are a number of them; there are various ways to approach this guided repeated oral reading, so let's just look at a few of them.

One, simply involves having a learner read to the teacher or the tutor. Usually then the student would be again reading aloud and the teacher would be helping as needed, perhaps with word identification, perhaps with phrasing, providing whatever guidance is needed. Echo reading is another possibility and that involves the teacher doing some modeling beforehand. So the teacher might read a sentence or more than a sentence perhaps with long sentences, might even be phrases or clauses. The teacher would read ahead to the teacher or tutor and then the student would repeat afterward. That, you could do that echo reading approach all the way through a passage or you might use it for specific parts of a longer passage that the student has completed. For instance, if the student has completed a paragraph or two, and you might go back then and say, look back

here. Let me show you how this part will sound better and I'll bet you will understand it better. Why don't you put these words together this way and model it that way, and then have the student echo you.

Then of course there is dyad or choral reading. As you can imagine, dyad involves two people reading. In this case it would be the teacher or the tutor and the student reading simultaneously. Sometimes the teacher drops out after awhile if the student is doing well; might have to get back in to the reading process at another point. But at any rate they are reading together and repeating the reading. Choral reading of course would involve then more than two, and this would be typically a few students reading aloud together.

An interesting kind of guided repeated oral reading involves preparing for performances. One thing that is kind of neat about I think performance reading, I don't know how many teachers have tried it in adult education, but I do know that often teachers are reluctant to ask adults to re-read. They don't feel comfortable doing that. However, if you give them a real reason, an authentic reason to re-read, for instance we are preparing for a performance, then you get some fluency practice there. So if a student or a group of students are preparing dramatic reading or poetry reading, then they need to re-read and that is an authentic reason. So that is performance reading.

A sort of variation on that, cross-generational reading is something that usually involves a parent or several parents practicing to read something to children. And that is something that you might see more often in a family literacy program but could see in any adult education program where parents have said that is one of their goals - I want to help my children. So parents might prepare by re-reading and practicing the book or the poem they are going to read to their children. As you can imagine, listening to dysfluent reading isn't much fun. So if

by reading to your child you want to encourage that child to want to read himself, herself, then you want to be a fluent reader and you might need some practice. The only thing to consider there is if you are talking about providing opportunities for adults to practice repeated reading to improve their own fluency, if that adult is an intermediate or perhaps more advanced reader and has a very young child and would be reading very simple material, it may very well be of course that re-reading very simple material may not have a significant impact on that reader's fluency.

Now, after we have looked at those and we have said it is guided repeated oral reading, yes it is. But remember that since one of the primary aspects of fluency is accurate and fairly speedy word recognition then any kind of word identification work is going to be helpful. If that is part of the fluency problem then phonics instruction and sight-word practice may also make a difference in fluency.

Now I think let's talk a little bit about some of the other issues to be considered in fluency development and fluency instruction. Ros mentioned the difficulty level of materials. That is something that you as a teacher are going to have to think about quite a bit when you are selecting materials for those guided repeated oral readings. Which aspect of fluency are you working on? If you are working on speed and phrasing then you don't want the material to be so difficult that the learner is having to stop and figure out the words. So you probably want to work there with relatively easy text at that independent reading level that Ros was talking about.

On the other hand, if your focus is accuracy you want to work on giving people practice decoding words in context, then you might need slightly more difficult text, so then we are probably then looking at maybe material at the instructional level. So that is pretty much what we have got to say about the difficulty level.

There are other issues, however. I think it is a big issue in adult education, how do you manage this kind of thing. How do you make guided repeated oral reading happen in an adult classroom? If you've got students at different levels, if you've got people doing different things at the same time, how do you manage that if people need to be reading aloud? It can be tough. One answer I think is the use of audio tapes or CDs for more independent practice. It may be that a student could go into the computer lab, out into the hall, sit in a corner with a computer, or perhaps even work at home, at the library, wherever else there might be a computer or a place to play a tape to listen to recordings of appropriate level texts, use that as a model and then do repeated reading with both. That is one way to provide independent practice.

Now again, that assumes that you can get recordings of appropriate level text, and that may not be easy. You might need to ask a volunteer to help you with that to develop some tapes of appropriate level text. Another possibility - in many communities the organization called Reading for the Blind and Dyslexic might be a very good partner for you to identify because you might find that you can get lots of books on tape, other kinds of text on tape at various levels. However, all that being said, there is yet another wonderful resource, a free fluency resource right online. It is called "Reading for Today's Adults" and it was developed by the Marshall Minnesota Adult Education Program, and we have given you the web address there. It is a wonderful resource for students who can literally work independently to have opportunities to do guided repeated oral reading. All kinds of wonderful resources on that site. There are a number of passages, many passages. The passages range from actually a little below first grade level all the way up to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level; and there are as many as 20 passages at say first grade level, 1.5, second grade level, 2.5 - 20 at each one. And they are all different kinds of subject matters so I can't imagine a student who couldn't find something of interest. There is history, there is biography, all kinds of life skills content, raising children, job-related

issues, all kinds of very practical adult interest materials. A lovely site with many, many options.

And since the texts are recorded the learner can listen to each one, the chosen one, listen to it being read three different times actually, so he can listen to it read, then read it aloud himself. He can time himself because you can download a timer if don't happen to have one in your back pocket. So you download a timer and time yourself. Then you can listen to it read a second time at a slightly faster rater, and read it again and then a third time and then you read it again. And keeping track of your time will show you that you have improved, that you have speeded up. And the site even has a neat little table or graph where the student can write down and keep track of his speed and you can then really see in a concrete way how just a little bit of repeated reading can make a difference. So I think that is a good beginning for us, and I think we are ready to move on to vocabulary?

Dr. John Kruidenier: Great, well thanks Susan and Ros. That was really very informative; I'm always - we have talked about this before, but I am always very encouraged whenever I hear you talk about it because there are so many quality approaches to teaching that we can take. So far today we have talked about fluency assessment and instruction. And during the last webcast we presented alphabetic and comprehension. The last of the components we will be talking about today is vocabulary. Unfortunately there are no emerging principles related to vocabulary instruction with adults. There is also relatively little K-12 research. There are however a few important trends for adult basic education. First of all, we would expect adults' vocabulary to be better than children reading at about the same level simply because adults have much more experience. Surprisingly, this may not be true when reading ability gets above the beginning level for adults. Actually for adults and children who are learning to read. When we look at the vocabulary instruction research we find that there is some evidence that vocabulary can be improved in general literacy settings although teaching vocabulary in a specific setting such

as the family literacy or workplace setting may be more effective.

This trend is at least compatible with the limited K-12 research which also suggests that engaging contexts may be more effective. Combining adult and K-12 research, we can suggest that vocabulary be taught in multiple contexts that provide an opportunity for repeated exposure to a concept. The K-12 research also suggests teaching students how to find information about new vocabulary words and encouraging extensive reading and exposure to new words. Ros is going to talk about specific vocabulary assessment practices and then Susan will present more detail about vocabulary instruction now. Ros?

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: Thanks, John. We are going to look at the Edgar Dale's Degrees of Knowing Word Meanings. It is meant to give a framework for judging a learner's understanding of a word. It is not an overall test. The scale is important for a teacher to keep in mind when introducing new vocabulary or when diagnosing a learner's reading comprehension problems. Because it is often the case that poor comprehension is a result of not knowing the meanings of the words in the passage well enough. That is to Dale's Stage 3 or 4. The first couple of stages, "I never saw or heard it before; I know there is such a word but I don't know what it means," are not terrible helpful. 3 and 4 are solid. "I've heard it, I've seen it, I know what it has to do with. But I don't think I can tell you specifically." 4 is the ultimate, "I know what it means, I'll recognize it whenever I see it or hear it, I can use it, it's mine."

Alright, those are the stages. Receptive vocabulary are the words we know well enough to understand when seen or heard in context. Therefore it is referred to as our listening or reading vocabulary bank. These words in that bank are known to Dale's Stage 3, familiar with words but can't say what it means, and 4, I know it, I can use it, and maybe 2, I know there is such a word but I don't know what it means. That maybe then,

only if the context of a reading passage or conversation gives enough clues to the word's meaning.

Productive vocabulary are words we know well enough to use in writing or speaking. And as I said, you own them. That is where we are aiming. This graphic shows the relationship of the two word banks - the productive bank is a small component of the all encompassing receptive. We teach vocabulary toward increasing the productive store of word meanings. Certainly when we teach suffixes and such we are teaching more to also to the receptive vocabulary because knowing word parts when someone comes across a word they don't know, they know how to attack it so they are increasing the receptive vocabulary. And whenever we do that it may increase the receptive but we are always teaching for use. Words that can be used in speaking and writing.

Let's look at the different kinds of vocabulary assessments. Elicited word meaning tests, oral elicited word meaning tests give you a great deal of information. You just ask what does X mean, what does this word mean? These are tests of productive vocabulary since examinees have to know the meanings well enough to talk about them at Dale's level 3 or 4. The Diagnostic Assessments of Reading in the ARCS that we use in the ARCS and the Davidson & Bruce test of word meaning which we will talk about later are examples of elicited word meaning tests. Then there are the multiple choice tests. They test a small number of words, they are selected at different levels and we all know them because we are familiar with the ABLE and the TABE where they appear.

Then there are the Multiple Choice Oral Pictures test and there are two comprehensive tests of receptive vocabulary. The examinee is presented with four pictures of each word spoken by the examiner. He or she selects the one picture that best tells about the word. Both the PPVT and the Woodcock are highly respected tests. The PPVT gives an estimate of a person's

verbal power and is therefore used in a great many research studies.

Fourth, tests that are embedded, embed target words in the reading comprehension passages. These are limited tests of receptive vocabulary because there only can be a few words given in each passage. The knowledge of the meanings of the embedded words is tested by multiple choice questions. The Davidson & Bruce test is an oral elicited word meaning test of productive vocabulary similar to the word meaning tests on the diagnostic tests of reading. The examinee again is asked "What does X mean?" All forms for administering and scoring responses are given on the assessment strategies and reading profile's website. It is a free test to download and reproduce and you will find the URL on our final slide.

Take a look at the scoring, how we score. I'm going to the final two slides are on the scoring at Level 6 on the Davidson & Bruce. The scoring is very generous. Examinees can define, give a synonym, describe, use the word in a sentence, or even use gestures as long as the concept of the word is made apparent.

And then we have, that's right, you have the final slide there, Decline, Consume, Dismal. There we go. Alright Susan, let's hear it again about instructions.

Susan McShane: Ah, alright. Well, I think what Ros and John have been saying, even though as John said the research is somewhat limited, we know how terribly important vocabulary is. And I will tell you that if you begin to do any of the assessments that Ros talked about, once again you are going to discover that many of our adult learners have limited vocabulary, surprisingly limited in many cases. I know in a couple of projects that we did at the National Center for Family Literacy we had considerable data which backed up a lot of the

ARCS data and so many, many adult learners need work in this area and it is terribly, terribly important, isn't it? As John suggested for beginners your oral vocabulary is frankly the basis of your reading. You identify the word in print and then you go, oh yeah, because you already know the meaning of it. But, once you get past being a beginning reader, if you've got adults who are needing to improve their reading, what begins to happen is they start running into words they don't know the meaning of. And so in order to build your reading skills you are going to have to develop vocabulary.

Who needs it? You can imagine of course those non-native English speakers, we think of them immediately, our English language learners, but also as I said and we have all said, many intermediate and higher level readers will benefit from vocabulary instruction as well.

So let's just review then in general some of the research-based tips. I know John said that the research is a bit limited here but there is a suggestion that it can be helpful to pre-teach unfamiliar words in instructional text. We will talk about how you identify those. But this is just going to be our sort of general overview. In other words you get in the habit of looking at material that the students are going to be reading and saying, "Are there any problem words in here that they won't know the meaning of; maybe we should pre-teach them." Then of course you want to pay attention to the fact that we need multiple exposures, don't we. Multiple exposures before we own it, before we get to that Dale's level that Ros was talking about where it is really ours and we own it. We need multiple exposures and one way to do that is by teaching useful words that they will encounter many times in the subject matter texts that they are studying or whatever. So we definitely need multiple exposures. In addition again, as John mentioned, we need to engage the learners in using and working with the words in several ways. Some of us may remember in school when you were learning new words, you looked it up in the dictionary, you wrote the definition, you wrote a sentence, you stopped, you moved on. That's not multiple exposure, and that is not how we

build ownership of a word. That is not how it becomes a real part of our productive vocabulary. We need to engage the learners in using and working with the words in several ways. So we need to make sure that we as teachers are using them in our oral language, using them in our written language. We need to encourage and find ways to get the learners themselves to do that as well and we need to build in plenty of reviews so that there are lots of different ways that we work with the words.

Then the next one is interesting, on the slide there, Word Learning Strategies. We talked strategy instruction in the first webcast. The importance of strategy instruction. And I may have used the example of teaching a man to fish. You probably remember that old one, if you give a man a fish he eats today, if you teach a man to fish he and his family will eat tomorrow and the next day. So what we are talking about is teaching learners strategies that they can use on their own, word learning strategies, and we will look at those in a minute to identify the meanings of words. And then of course, of course, encourage wide reading. And some of us chuckle over that last one, oh, yeah, so as adult learners, wide reading. If you don't enjoy reading, if you struggle with reading, you are busy taking care of your family, you don't have time, you weren't a successful student, wide reading may be not realistic. But the better they get and the more we encourage them - so it is always worth considering that that indirect kind of word learning is extremely important as well.

What we are going to focus on here over the next few slides is looking at direct instructions. Now you need to stop and think, after looking at the assessments that Ros was talking about, realize that vocabulary tests are not exactly diagnostic in the same way that phonics test; it is really not. They are not going to tell you exactly where the need is. Oh wow, we need to work on those multi (inaudible) words, if he can decode those we are all set. No, it is not going to give you that kind of specific information necessarily. It is going to show you whether there is a need, whether there is a great need, whether there is some kind of a need - yes. But they are not quite as

diagnostic as those assessments of decoding skills or phonic skills.

So if there is a need, what exactly are you going to do? How are you going to identify the words to teach? Well remember that we talked about the fact that you need to use, you need to teach words they are going to encounter frequently. That means those useful words. So you are going to think about, if I am going to decide on which are going to be the words of the week that we are going to focus on this week, consider how useful they are, and how frequently they will be encountered. And one way to think about identifying useful words is to consider the three tiers of words that were identified by and described by Isobel Beck. Let's look at the three tiers of words.

She says Tier One, those most basic words that pretty much everybody is going to know. If you sound out Car, Sad or Man, you know what those words mean, and so do most of our adult learners. Where instruction probably needs to be is with those Tier Two words. Notice how she has defined them as High-Frequency words for mature language users. They are the ones that you will run into in print, but many of our learners will not encounter them often in just everyday conversation with their friends, families, neighborhoods. So look at those words, those examples there. Coincidence and insistent and reluctant. Most of us would not consider those to be particularly difficult words, but they are not necessarily words that are commonly used by our learners in their everyday lives. But they are high frequency words that occur in all kinds of text. So that is an important focus - that is where you go, you should look at those Tier Two words.

The Tier Three words are the lower frequency words that might have to do with a detailed look in a very specific kind of domain perhaps academic language, maybe science like "isotope" and "entomologist" and "late" - those examples on your slide there. Those are probably a little lower priority for most of

our adult learners. So that is one way to think about identifying the words to teach.

Now if you want to look for those high-frequency words, how do you decide among that large group of words which ones to teach. Well, one suggestion is think about the signal words and phrases because those are used in all contexts, aren't there? Look at the examples there. Those words, however, in contrast, in conclusion - are those used regularly by our learners in their everyday conversations? No. And there are many, many signal words and phrases. And what is neat about them is that they give the reader clues, don't they, to the relationship between facts, ideas, events in whatever they are reading. So they are very important words. But in many cases not real concrete. So that is one important place to start. Those are some good Tier Two words.

Another thing to consider if you are looking at multiple exposures, what kinds of words are they going to encounter, if they are, especially if they are looking at studying for the GED test or going on to higher education, then there is a good reason to look at what might be called the "Subject Matter" words. These are folks who did not complete high school and so maybe they could use some work on science vocabulary and social studies vocabulary, especially in preparation for the GED test. So that is an important way of identifying words to teach.

Now remember that when we were looking at the general approaches we said that one good way to handle vocabulary development is to look at the text that they are going to be working with and say are there any words that we should teach up front, because pre-teaching can be useful. How do you decide which ones? You are going to look at some of those texts in your GED practice books and if you start looking at them with a different frame of mind which you will have after you begin doing assessments, believe me. Some of the teachers we have worked with have said, "Wow, I stopped assuming so much about vocabulary." So you are going to

look at some of those passages in those GED workbooks and think, oh gee there are a lot of words I bet they don't know. How do you decide which ones should you pre-teach? Maybe the ones that you think are absolutely vital for the understanding of the text and that are not definable using context clues so that you pull out a few rather than teaching 15 new words in the first couple of minutes.

Now, so that is certainly one possibility. Looking at, considering the words that should be pre-taught. However we also, if you will recall, talked about word learning strategies and how important it was to teach a man to fish, to give that adult learner strategies that might be used to identify, to figure out the meanings of words. One approach is structural analysis or what is sometimes called morphemic analysis. A morpheme is a meaningful word part. So we are talking about prefixes and suffixes and roots. You can teach those to learners and you need to. Why should we assume that semi, pre, post, you can find some examples and words that they do know and begin with those, but then you can give them lots more examples and focus on prefixes and suffixes and those Greek and Latin roots - a very helpful thing to do. Will it solve all of the problems? When you put that prefix together with a given root that you think you know the meaning of do you always have the exact meaning of the word? No, it won't always work, but a strategy is a lot better than a wild guess. And it will often work and it will often help.

And then of course there is teaching people how to use the dictionary. Dictionaries are tough and their definitions are complicated. You will have to work with them certainly. And I would encourage you to share with each if any of you are watching know of some very good user-friendly, reader-friendly dictionaries, please share with each other what those are. I have been told that some of the ones intended for English language learners are pretty reader friendly dictionaries. So dictionary use. And then finally, teaching learners how to use context clues. Context clues are very interesting because I think most of us sort of figure it out on our own to do that and

those of us to whom reading came easily, we did in fact do that. But if you didn't, if you just guess or just go on and bluff your way through it then maybe it would help if somebody taught you about the different kinds of context clues there are.

So let's look at a few examples of the kinds of context clues. This may be something you haven't really even thought about. For instance, there are in some cases, you have an actual restatement or synonym. For instance, look at that first one. What do you think robust means? Well, hey, right after the comma, very strong and sturdy, that sounds good. Same thing with cantankerous. Not a word that our students would necessarily know but if you read on, "She was grumpy and difficult." Well, that gives us a clue. Then of course there are sometimes it is an antonym or a contrast. In other words you have to know that what is coming next is different from that word. Look at that sentence there, that example. "I'm usually gregarious." Oops, what does gregarious mean. Well, I am usually gregarious, but - that but is a clue, isn't it, that what is coming is different. "After I lost my job I kept to myself." So we may not know exactly what gregarious means but we know that it probably doesn't mean hanging around with our friends, being outgoing, wanting to be with people. It means sort of the opposite of that, doesn't it.

And then of course occasionally you do get perfect definitions right in the text. Now once again this is a wonderful strategy. We don't mean to say that it will always work because it will not. Sometimes there are not a lot of good context clues in a text, but a strategy is better than no strategy. A strategy is very much better than a wild guess. I would like to conclude my piece however with one additional point that I think we need to consider, and that is that it is more than background knowledge, I'm sorry, it is more than vocabulary; it is really a matter of that bigger issue of background knowledge. Words live inside huge bodies of knowledge. And our folks didn't finish school. Our folks struggled with school. We cannot make up for all the classes they didn't finish, all the books they haven't read, but we can at least understand that it is a bigger issue than that

and we can understand that we may need to help build a little of that background knowledge from time to time as well as doing that direct vocabulary instruction. Because limited knowledge of a subject matter will make all kinds of - it will make it hard for you to use the context clues that are there and it will make it hard for you to make inferences, so dealing with that means maybe also remembering to think about that broader issue - background knowledge. So with that little reservation in mind, maybe we are ready to move on. That's about it for vocabulary. Back to John.

Dr. John Kruidenier: Thank you Susan. Thank you. I agree with you by the way that the Isobel Beck resource is a good research-based resource. And I think it is also pretty readable, isn't it?

Susan McShane: Oh, I was really impressed with how readable it is. That is definitely something I would recommend. I think it is not one of those academic texts, no, it is very readable and lots of practical suggestions. Yes, very good.

Dr. John Kruidenier: That's great. We hope that we have convinced you over these two webcasts that research provides some very practical and useful approaches to adult reading instruction. The basic components of reading, just as a review, provide a very useful framework for assessing and teaching reading to adults.

We know, for example, that we need to assess each component of reading in order to create a complete program of reading instruction for our students. Assessment results should be used to guide our choice of research-based practices, and how much we focus on each of the components of reading during instruction.

Now that we have concluded our presentation I want to remind you that everything we have talked about today is contained in these three resources on the slide that is coming up. This slide, along with the other slides is downloadable from the webcast. And I am going to turn things back over to Sandra now who will lead our question and answer session.

Sandra Baxter: Okay, thank you John and thank you Susan and Ros for really a great explanation of what is in the research, beginning discussion of how we can use it in practice. And in fact we are already receiving questions. So for our viewers I want to remind you that you can send us questions by email - you type them in at the bottom of your screen and we are going to jump right in with some questions now. Let's see.

From Hilda at the Hudson Valley/Catskill Partnership we have a question. And she would like to know if you can briefly explain what independent, instructional and [frustrational] reading levels are.

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: Yes, we use that kind of a scale to figure out what kind of reading material to give our learners. And we peg it at their level of reading accuracy, their word reading accuracy. So that to be at an absolutely independent level it is the kind of thing that - what kind of a magazine or a book would the learner pick up if they had a couple of minutes just to sit and read something. That level. That is independent reading level. They don't need any help. And for that it means that they know at least 95% of the words to decode them, at least. But many people peg it at 98% -- 98% to 100% of the words they can decode. So that is independent.

The next level down which takes us down to 90%, let's say to 95% of the words in a passage is called instructional and that is the level you want to be at when you are teaching because that

helps the learner stretch in their reaching. You don't want to teach at their independent reading level.

But the last one is the frustration. If they don't know words, they are missing 15% of the words in a passage, that is too many. So 85% is a cut-off. And that is the one that you don't use.

Dr. John Kruidenier: And I think sometimes these levels are based on comprehension questions as well as accuracy. Or a combination of the two as well.

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: A combination of the two, right.

Susan McShane: And once again though, in order to get at what Ros is talking about you will have to hear that person read aloud.

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: That's right.

Susan McShane: And that is typically what is not often happening in classrooms. You may have people working in material that is in fact too difficult for them and you don't know it.

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: That also means that materials you use for your learners should be graded. And maybe a volunteer in your center can take time and do a readability on some of the books in your library or wherever and just mark on the spine what grade level they are. That makes it easy.

Susan McShane: Yeah, so you need to know the level of the text as well the learning level.

Sandra Baxter: That's a really important point so I'm glad you got to mention that. Okay. We have a question from Christie at MATC. She would like to know how can guided oral reading be used in a multi-level adult classroom.

Susan McShane: Well, that is I think what I was getting at when I tried to acknowledge the management problems there. Again, if there is any chance, depending on where you are situated and I know that sites vary hugely. But if you happen to be in a setting where there is - maybe you are in a Community College and you have got students who could go to the Learning Lab. Have you got any room where there might be a computer? In that case, then that learner could work independently for instance on that Marshall Minnesota site.

Otherwise, I think you need to just schedule, you need to schedule so that for those who needed work on fluency there was at least a few minutes available. You are just going to have to be a little more structured about the way you manage your time. And I acknowledge that it is a difficult thing to do and in some of your setting it would be very hard to find much in the way of privacy. Can you go around a corner? Can you go out into a hall if that is the best you got? Some of you are in very good settings where you can go into another room, I know. But in a multi-level classroom it is just plain tough.

Dr. John Kruidenier: I think this may have implicit in your responses in using peers, once - and I think also getting adults comfortable with reading aloud. It can happen. We are all, I think, a little nervous to read aloud in front of people we don't know. But I think over time with enough practice, with enough [repeated] reading exercises, with enough reading out

loud you become more comfortable and you can work with peers as well as a teacher -

Susan McShane: Absolutely, and the other thing is that it is okay to read it silently first. We would all prefer to read it silently first. And another thing that I hear from teachers all the time is, we never used to read aloud but now we have been trying this. And the first time you ask for a loud reading, two or three people will read. And then the next time another person will read, and then pretty soon, it is [as though] the others are saying, "Oh, I can do that."

Now there may still be one or two folks who are not comfortable doing it and that is fine. But you are right, even getting to that point and what we have discovered is that sometimes they can get to that point where they are willing to read aloud; it is that repeated reading that they are still a little reluctant. So look around for some products and some resources that will make it easier for you. It is tough.

Sandra Baxter: The next question really goes to a central theme of our talk today which is individualized focus on particular needs, individualized instruction. But it also touches on a topic we didn't talk about -technology. And Rob at the Santa Ana College would like to know if all components of reading are assessed then effective developmental instruction needs to focus on individualized needs. Therefore are computerized individualized programs the best?

Dr. John Kruidenier: I think it is the same question whether you are talking about computer programs or print materials. You have to make sure, and you are the only one as the teacher who will know. You have to make sure that the material you are using to teach matches the student's needs. That it is teaching to the components that need instruction, that it is at the right

level. And it meets the other needs of the student. I'm sure there are computer programs that do.

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: There are very few, I really don't - the one that you mentioned, this website for timed reading I think is extraordinary, but that is just one component. I don't know of a program of the computerized programs or any online that are independent so that it doesn't need teacher or some supervision.

Susan McShane: Yeah -

Dr. John Kruidenier: Well there are these things called - and it depends --

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: Phonics things.

Susan McShane: Yes, there are some things.

Dr. John Kruidenier: There are actually some comprehension ones as well. They are called Integrated Learning Systems. And these are large programs, they are usually quite expensive as well, but they do present material at a lot of different levels. They give you an assessment when you go in. But they are not flexible necessarily.

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: That's right.

Dr. John Kruidenier: [And up] all the time. They may not fit the needs of students you have, but there are some programs out there that do that kind of thing.

Susan McShane: Yes, and I think they vary considerably but I think that question that Ros has raised is whether anything, any machine-based program is going to be sufficient without human - a teacher.

I think there are some that a lot of people think are pretty good with regards to building decoding skills and maybe you could plug that student in so that he could work individually for a little bit and you could go on and do something else. But not with the idea that that is all he needs necessarily. I think I would have a little bit of -

Dr. John Kruidenier: And I think it is a good question, too. And there have been some Meta analyses with the use of technology, computer-based programs. And overall they suggest that using programs that are using good - comparing a good computer-based program to a good print-based program for example. The computer-based programs are at least as good overall in general. It may not be true of an individual program, but just overall. And the nice thing about them sometimes is that they can be a little more efficient because you don't necessarily have to have the teacher there as much.

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: But you have to have a teacher.

Dr. John Kruidenier: But you still do need to have and still do.

Susan McShane: On site, yes.

Dr. John Kruidenier: But you might for example be able to have someone at the computer while you are working on -

Susan McShane: Oh yes.

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: Oh yes, and using it that way of course is very reasonable. But to say that they are independent for a learner to use without -

Susan McShane: But the other nice thing is they allow a little bit of privacy for the learner to be working the same way that workbooks do only-

Dr. John Kruidenier: Are we still answering the question or have we moved on to something else?

Sandra Baxter: We may have moved on! We have about ten minutes left so we have a couple of more questions that we can address before we have to end. And Mary Lynn from College of Lake County would like to know what kind of work can you give outside of class to students to reinforce the principles that we have been talking about here today.

Susan McShane: So material, that would be homework in other words.

Sandra Baxter: Yes, essentially.

Dr. John Kruidenier: I'll start because I've got the easy one, and that is read a lot. "Read a lot." Books. Encourage outside reading. If you know what level they are able to read to read at, you encourage them to read books at that level. For a number of reasons we have mentioned already, for example to

help with vocabulary and fluency but - so I had the easy one, now it is your turn.

Susan McShane: I think it's tough. One thing that we have said over and over again for years is don't give anybody any sort of at-home assignment unless you are sure that they can do it independently. Which means if you are doing strategy instruction and you have worked on it and you have introduced this and you have modeled it and you have given them some practice - not until you are absolutely sure they can - we don't want them practicing wrong. That, is a no - no. So, that is kind of what not to do.

But other than that, maybe there is something that could be done with vocabulary for instance. If you have got any sort of structured program, if you've got any sort of curriculum that you have either purchased or you are developing on your own, how many new words a week. Wouldn't it be a good idea for that person to be told "Look for that word in the newspaper." Look for that word, find different ways that it is used, bring those in to share with us. Write sentences using those words.

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: That is a technique that Mary Beth Curtis used in the Boys Town program. See if you can see that word. Can you find it anyplace in a newspaper? Where have you seen it and bring it in to focus them. The point is to focus on the word. We had one learner coming in at the School of Education, we have learners there paired with our Masters students, and he came and he said, "You know, I sit on the T now and I am reading the signs on the T."

Dr. John Kruidenier: The T for people who don't know -

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: I'm sorry the T, the subway. I'm reading the signs and he said, "I decided maybe that is all the

reading I can do because I am so busy, but I just sit there and I read every sign on the subway." So, --

Susan McShane: And interestingly enough when it comes to the vocabulary one of the things that we have heard from teachers is that as many of you know I'm sure, lots of folks who come to adult education would consider themselves to be readers. "I don't need reading." That's not something they necessarily want to work on, but that vocabulary was easier to sell than some of the other components. In other words it might be a way to - so if you did start with something like that and give them something to do at home, because that is what has happened to him is suddenly he has become more conscious of it, and that's what they do. And that could be a little bit of a turnaround for maybe some learners.

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: And I think homework is not a bad word. I think it is important. And as the point is as Susan said, work that they can do and do independently. That is an important point.

Sandra Baxter: Well, one more question related to that issue we just talked about. Could you please address the types of materials that are appropriate for adult learners? Would it be acceptable for instance to use children's books?

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: Well I think you have to be careful about children's books just because they are for children; it doesn't mean that the word attack and the word meanings - the word meanings may be okay - but the words are long and to be able to decode them isn't easy. Unless you just start with "Hop on Pop" or some of those [CVC] words, once you get into really children's books, appropriate yes, if they have help with them and guided reading with them before as Susan was talking about. But we can't assume just because they are for children they are easy. If they are children's reading books, that's one thing.

Dr. John Kruidenier: The questioner may have been thinking about appropriate in a different way, I'm not sure; we can't ask I guess. But they may have thought, should you give things that are childish to adults when you are teaching them. Will they be insulted if you give them a children's book.

Susan McShane: You don't want to do that unless you were looking at very low-level readers. But I think there are adult materials at very low level and -

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: There are, there are.

Susan McShane: And certainly once you get to those intermediate level readers, some of the things that were developed for secondary school kids, for adolescents, the material is, some of it at least, is appropriate. Some of it is fine. It is about subject matter.

Dr. John Kruidenier: Right, and we have all had this experience where we have had the adult come into the reading class and we ask what he or she wants to learn. It's not uncommon to hear, "I want to be able to read to my children."

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: Absolutely.

Susan McShane: Absolutely.

Dr. John Kruidenier: And if that is the case then it is certainly appropriate to use those during instruction.

Susan McShane: But at the same time, once again as I said, depending on what level reader they are. It may be challenging for them to read something that they are going to read to their 5-year old but it may not be depending on what level they are.

But certainly -

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: Absolutely.

Susan McShane: But it may not be. "I've got a 3-year old and these little primarily picture books are not a big challenge for me," but at the same time that is a way to get at those who are beginning readers and using children's material that is appropriate for them. And that is a fairly common goal I believe.

Dr. Rosalind Davidson: Appropriate for adult learners.

Sandra Baxter: Well I really hate to end our conversation here, but we are ending on a good point. We have received many more questions than we are able to answer right now but we look forward to responding to your questions online so you can check our website maybe next week, let's shoot for next week, and put our answers up then.

Remember that today's webcast will be archived and saved at the National Institute for Literacy's website. And we are at [www.nifl.gov](http://www.nifl.gov). The slides from today's presentation and from the September presentation as well can be downloaded from the Institute's website.

The exchange of information on adults and reading doesn't end here nor should it. You can learn more about today's topic at the ASRP website which is located on the Institute's website, or you can access it directly at [www.nifl.gov/readingprofiles](http://www.nifl.gov/readingprofiles).

Also available from the Institute are two free books, "Applying Research in Reading Instruction for Adults" and "Research-Based Principles for Adult Basic Education Reading Instruction." Learn more about these books on our website and how to order them. And again they are free so you can order them either through our 800-number or online.

John, Ros, Susan, thank you so much for joining us back here in Washington today to talk about this topic. You have done just a fantastic job. Command performance. And the expertise that you have been sharing with our viewers is so important so we do seriously thank you for being here.

I want to thank you, our viewing audience, for taking time out of your busy schedule to join us today for this very important discussion on Instruction. And as well I want to thank you for your commitment to the nation's adult learners. We really need the services that you are providing and we commend you on the work that you are doing. For the National Institute for Literacy I am pleased to have been part of this program. We encourage you to share your questions, your comments and your ideas with us on the Institute's discussion list. Thank you so much for joining us today. From Washington, DC, I'm Sandra Baxter.

