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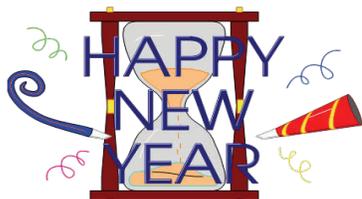
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Mark Your Calendar!

Watch for upcoming
BEST Plus
New Administrator
Training!

TABE Training
coming soon!

BEST Literacy
Pilot group
forming in January



CBT is the Future of the GED Exam

By: Vicki Bauer, State AE Administrator

You will recall that GED Testing Service (GEDTS) has delayed the 2012 introduction of a new series of the GED tests. Now, the 5th edition is expected to be introduced within the next 3-5 years. With the new series, GED Testing Service wants to improve the access and delivery systems with the introduction of computer-based testing (CBT).

In preparation for this new form of GED test delivery, various studies/test pilots are being conducted by GEDTS. One of those studies involves CBT and it is comprised of three phases.

Phase 1 was conducted in 2010 and consisted of two major parts. The first was a usability study to understand how students relate to CBT; determine the computer skills needed by the examinees; and observe examinees' interaction with sample test screens in order to identify any problems with the software program and user interface. The second part was to determine if the examinees' performance is similar in both the paper/pencil and CBT forms of delivery. The Official Practice Test (OPT) was used in this section of the study.

Phase 2 will begin in 2011 and will include the use of the actual 2002 GED test series in CBT delivery in the eleven states that participated in Phase 1 of the study.

Phase 3—After the pilot states have incorporated the actual CBT in their states, GEDTS will work with individual states/jurisdictions in the US and Canada at regular intervals to develop a customized transition plan. This phase is expected to last through 2013. (We do not yet know when Nebraska will incorporate the CBT.)

Following are some questions that were posed to GEDTS:

WILL THE ONLINE TESTING BE SECURE? Just like the paper/pencil version of the GED tests are now offered, the computer-based version will be offered only in a proctored environment and only at official GED Testing Centers. The tests will **NOT** be administered via the internet outside of the official GED Testing Centers. In fact, CBT offers increased security for the testing process. During this development and implementation of CBT, GEDTS is working with Pearson VUE, the world's leader in providing computer-based testing.

HOW MANY HOURS WILL THE ONLINE VERSION BE? Examinees will have the same amount of time to complete the computer-based tests as they have for the paper/pencil tests. However, most test-takers are able to complete the computer-based exam in less time because there are no test booklets and no answer sheets are needed to bubble in the answers.

WILL THERE BE AN OFFICIAL PRACTICE TEST (OPT) IN CBT FORMAT? Yes, the practice test materials will be available to coincide with the availability of CBT.

WILL THERE BE EXPLICIT INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO GIVE AND TAKE THE COMPUTER-BASED TESTS? A tutorial will be available at the testing center as well as online help to assist candidates to become familiar with the computer-based testing format. GEDTS is also preparing materials to help GED instructors and examiners become familiar with the CBT format. Much of this information will be shared and further developed with the states involved in each cohort of the CBT study, phase 3.

Watch for more information regarding the new 5th edition of the GED Tests!

Spotlight on...

Southeast Community College—Beatrice

By: Lorraine Jensby, Assistant Program Director—SCC-Beatrice



The Southeast Community College-Beatrice Adult Education program offers classes and tutoring in the 14 southeast Nebraska counties surrounding Lancaster County. The city of Lincoln and Lancaster county are served by the SCC-Lincoln Adult Education program.

There have been quite a few changes made to our program the past several years as we continue to serve students in the best way possible with the funding we receive.

In the past we offered regularly scheduled classes with a paid instructor in a number of smaller communities throughout our program area. Many of those classes were serving fewer than 10 students per year so we have dropped them as class sites and have concentrated our funding in offering classes in the larger, more populated communities and areas.

We currently offer AE/GED classes in Auburn, Beatrice, Fairbury, Falls City, Nebraska City and Seward. English as a Second Language classes are offered in Beatrice, Fairbury and Nebraska City and a citizenship class will be offered this winter in Nebraska City.

We have a volunteer coordinator and she helps our program continue to serve student needs in the smaller communities by placing students with volunteer tutors when the students cannot travel to one of the class sites.

For the current program year we began offering some managed enrollment sessions, so our classes are no longer available for drop-in enrollment whenever it is convenient for the student. This change, along with charging a \$20 registration fee, has added some value to our program and we have seen a positive response.

We also changed our information provided during orientation sessions this year to focus more on student commitment and accountability and less actual GED testing information. We want the students to focus on the commitment they will need to make to attain the GED credential or to improve their basic skills and not focus as much on the specific testing information which is the end result, but not the path they need to take to get there!

Our largest class site is Beatrice and we offer morning, afternoon and evening sessions. The day classes are in a classroom on the SCC-Beatrice campus and the evening class meets downtown at the Beatrice Public Library.

We have computer access in our classroom on campus and we are trying a new current events curriculum this year at this class site.



Tiffany Morris, an SCC-Beatrice GED student, uses the on-line version of NewsCurrents, a weekly current events program focused on national and international news, as part of her test preparation curriculum.

NewsCurrents, published by Knowledge Unlimited, is a weekly current

events discussion program focused on national and international news. It is designed to be used in grades 3 through 12 and each issue is written on three distinct vocabulary and concept levels.

All three levels are contained in one teacher's guide for maximum flexibility within a class. The subscription is for 34 weeks (September-May) and is available on DVD or online with images corresponding to five or six stories in that week's news.

There are some positive and negative aspects to most all curriculum materials, but for the most part our instructor and students at the Beatrice class site are enjoying using this material.



It has been requested that we include a feature in the newsletter each month that identifies useful websites, applications, and technology information for adult education classroom/student use.

Here at NDE we occasionally see or hear about something we think you might like to use. We will share this information as we can, BUT we need your help. If you find, see, use or like something in particular, PLEASE share with Jeanette for use in the newsletter.

Send us the information for accessing, any costs involved and how you have used it with your students for inclusion in the newsletter.

For this month, Shannon Schaben (Mid-Plains), has provided information for an ESL website that she uses with her classes. She is especially impressed with the Listening Activities for her ESL students. You can bookmark it for easy access anytime you want it: <http://fog.ccsf.cc.ca.us/~lfried/>

LearnerWeb.org

This site allows access to resources for working with students. One of the activities it highlights is goal setting and determining potential steps or a pathway to achieving the goal, (achieving the GED).

Dreamit-doit.com

This site is part of a national initiative

highlighting

careers built around manufacturing. Manufacturing companies are desperate to recruit new, young talent. Students often do not realize the new “meaning” of working in the manufacturing field. It seems to be a very positive and well structured career website.

izzit.org This website has been recommended by Susan Harder, NE Corrections Education. The site has resources and also a plan for educators to access a free video.

Some clips are very interesting. There is no cost to using the site, but there is expense if you opt to purchase videos.

The TEAL Team

By: Shannon Schaben, Adult Education/ESL Instructor—Mid-Plains Community College



The Teaching and Excellence in Adult Literacy (TEAL) team for Nebraska is accomplishing and learning many new and exciting things in the online classroom while connecting with other Adult Education instructors from all over the United States. The module we just completed was on goal setting. I found that I am not alone in my current goal setting strategies with students. I am hoping to improve my strategies to kick off 2011.

When we think about goals, it's helpful to think about the **ABCDs** of goal-setting or objective writing (described by Heinlich, Molenda, Russell, & Smaldino [1996] in *Instructional Media and Technologies for Learning*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Merrill).

Audience: The students that the objective is written for

Behavior: The verb that describes what the audience will be able to do

Condition: The circumstances under which the audience will perform the behavior

Degree: Acceptable performance

Example of objectives for our students: *When one of their children is ill (condition), ESL students (audience) will be able to phone the school office to report their child's absence (behavior) with 90% accuracy (degree).*

Be sure to watch the monthly newsletters for more TEAL updates! Happy 2011

Tutor: A Collaborative, Learner-Centered Approach to Literacy Instruction for Teens and Adults (8th Edition)

Curriculum Review

Reviewed By: Amy Tunning, Adult Education Instructor-Omaha Public Schools

Are you working with a low-level reader and feeling you are not equipped with the skills and/or the materials necessary to help this student improve their literacy? *Tutor: A Collaborative, Learner-Centered Approach to Literacy Instruction for Teens and Adults* by Ruth Johnson Colvin may be the book you have been looking for!

This 8th edition is for anyone who wishes to help improve literacy skills, whether it is a professional teacher or a volunteer without teaching experience. In this book you will find theory, demonstrations, and opportunities to practice the various skills of literacy.

There are five underlying themes:

- Respect for students as individuals
- Sharing of the teaching and learning
- Sensitivity to the adult need for immediate relevance
- Tutoring and learning as collaborative activities
- Integration of all language components (listening, speaking, reading and writing)

These themes make *Tutor* a valuable book for any adult educator to review, as these themes are standard in all adult education classes. Although the tips and lessons are literacy based, they are sound educational pedagogy, and worthwhile to consider.

Tutor uses a holistic approach in deepening the reader's understanding of literacy and tutoring. From the Language Experience Approach for non-readers, to teaching sight words, word patterns, and in comprehension and critical thinking skills, there are a variety of tips and lessons to help any student of literacy.

The lessons can be used to teach individuals or small groups. Step by

step instruction is given, with lots of scenarios using actual students with the sample lessons.

The appendix provides a wealth of resources, including word lists (sight words, word patterns, transportation signs, etc.) as well as lesson plan sheets and a checklist for evaluating adult education reading material.

Again, this resource would be valuable for any adult education teacher in both GED and ELL classes.

The eleven chapters in *Tutor* are separated to teach the various aspects of reading and writing. There is a chapter dedicated to goal setting with your student(s), and one in developing skills with reading maps, calendars, and computers. Another chapter is dedicated to assessment techniques the tutor can use and how to plan lessons.

A "Learner Profile" worksheet is included, and is followed up with page numbers of the targeted instruction skills to assist with remediation. That makes it very user friendly and helps to individualize for each student's personal needs.

Tutor would be a great addition to any adult education program. Volunteers working with low level readers/writers would benefit tremendously by having this book available to them. It is basic enough that a volunteer could become an effective literacy tutor by following the book.

The skills, theory, and resources the book provides make it a book that should be on the shelf of literacy books available. It could also provide a resource to use for staff development in literacy training or a book club discussion on any of the various chapter topics.

Check out this book and refresh your educational background, and feel a little more confident the next time you make the difference in the literacy skills of your students.

About the author:



Ruth Johnson Colvin

Colvin is the founder of Literacy Volunteers of America, now ProLiteracy Worldwide. An avid reader, she became aware the problem of illiteracy in her home city of Syracuse, New York when the 1960 census report was released. Working with reading specialists at Syracuse University, she developed materials to teach volunteer tutors motivation and instruction techniques.

The tutors she recruited and trained from her church women's group formed the first literacy volunteer program in Syracuse. Her initiative, Literacy Volunteers of America, was incorporated in 1967, and is now a national, educational, non-profit organization with national/state/local staff and volunteer board of directors.

The organization now has nearly 330 programs in 42 states and works in conjunction with correctional facilities, adult educational programs, schools, universities, libraries, industry, and other community service programs.
<https://friends.kappadelta.org/content.aspx?audience=students&item=Students/WhoWeAre/Famous/Colvin.xml>

2011 New Year's Resolutions

From: <http://kcnewyears.com/newyearsresolutions/>

The start of a New Year has always been a time for looking back to the past, and more importantly, forward to the coming year. It's a time to reflect on the changes we want (or need) to make and resolve to follow through on those changes. Did your New Year resolutions make the top ten list?

#1 Spend More Time with Family & Friends

Recent polls conducted by General Nutrition Centers, Quicken, and others show that more than 50% of Americans vow to appreciate loved ones and spend more time with family and friends this year.

#2 Fit in Fitness

The evidence is in for fitness. Regular exercise has been associated with more health benefits than anything else known to man. Studies show that it reduces the risk of some cancers, increases longevity, helps achieve and maintain weight loss, enhances mood, lowers blood pressure, and even improves arthritis. In short, exercise keeps you healthy and makes you look and feel better.

#3 Tame the Bulge

Fifty-five percent of adults in America are overweight, so it is not surprising to find that weight loss is one of the most popular New Year's resolutions. Setting reasonable goals and staying focused are the two most important factors in sticking with a weight loss program, and the key to success for those millions of Americans who made a New Year's commitment to shed extra pounds.

#4 Quit Smoking

If you have resolved to make this the year that you stamp out your smoking habit, over-the-counter availability of nicotine replacement therapy now provides easier access to proven quit-smoking aids. Even if you've tried to quit before and failed, don't let it get you down. On average, smokers try about four times before they quit for good. Start enjoying the rest of your smoke-free life!

#5 Enjoy Life More

Given the hectic, stressful lifestyles of millions of Americans, it is no wonder that "enjoying life more" has become a popular resolution in recent years.

#6 Quit Drinking

While many people use the New Year as an incentive to finally stop drinking, most are not equipped to make such a drastic lifestyle change all at once. Many heavy drinkers fail to quit cold turkey but do much better when they taper gradually, or learn to moderate their drinking.

#7 Get Out of Debt

Was money a big source of stress in your life last year? Join the millions of Americans who have resolved to spend this year getting a handle on their finances. It's a promise that will repay itself many times over in the year ahead.

#8 Learn Something New

Have you vowed to make this year the year to learn something new? Perhaps you are considering a career change, want to learn a new language, or just how to fix your computer? Whether you take a course or read a book, you'll find education to be one of the easiest, most motivating New Year's resolutions to keep. Challenge your mind in the coming year, and your horizons will expand.

#9 Help Others

A popular, non-selfish New Year's resolution, volunteerism can take many forms. Whether you choose to spend time helping out at your local library, mentoring a child, or building a house, nonprofit volunteer organizations could really use your help.

#10 Get Organized

On just about every New Year resolution top ten list, organization can be a very reasonable goal. You want your home organized enough that you can invite someone over on a whim, and your office organized enough that you can find the stapler when you need it.



NDE Library Materials Available for AE Staff to Check Out

The State AE Office of NDE has a lending library of materials for both AE and ESL. Some are for instructors and others are resources containing practical ideas and exercises to be used with students. <http://www.education.ne.gov/ADED/documents/AEResourceLibrary.pdf>. Many of the resources contain EXCELLENT material for students struggling in specific areas. Other materials would make WONDERFUL additions to, or a basis for staff development sessions. If you would like to preview or discuss any of the materials, just drop in or contact Jeanette. Materials can be checked out for 6 weeks (longer if not in demand). If you should decide you would like to peruse some, please call or e-mail Jeanette: 402/471-4806 or jeanette.evans@nebraska.gov

Transition to the Future

By: Jeanette Evans, Nebraska Adult Education Consultant

ABE conversations are often centered around transition—transition to work, transition to career, transition to some type of post secondary training. There are many things to consider and use with students in preparing them to live and work in the 21st Century.

For many of us, this whole process demands some mindset, philosophical and paradigm shifts. It is important to guide students in thinking “beyond” GED completion or acquiring basic survival English! Workplace skills can be imbedded and role-modeled in every classroom activity or lesson!

Technology available and the savvy of students need to be explored and applied in the classroom. Teachers don't have to have all the answers—stretch student thinking by challenging them to find an answer and defend it. The day of passing out workbooks and pencils or teaching fractions purely for the sake of teaching fractions is gone. We have to extend lessons as far as we can and challenge students to reach for the future.

Knowing how to learn for a lifetime is a basic characteristic of an information literate person—which is what adult education classes are/should be striving to do. There are created standards for what that might look like that will be shared here. These come to us from the American Association of School Librarians.

Common Beliefs

Standard One: Learners use skills, resources, and tools to inquire, think critically and gain knowledge.

What about asking students to write about their skills with prompts such as: What are your strongest skills? What skills would you like to have? How could you personally expand your skills? This incorporates critical thinking, analysis and is a relevant, work-related way to build writing skills that will serve the student in the workplace and in post-secondary settings.

The reflection necessary to develop the writing assignment allows the student to do some soul-searching and may even serve as a confidence

builder. It will definitely provide a challenge and the end product will aid resume writing and the job application process.

Standard Two: Learners use skills, resources, and tools to draw conclusions, make informed decisions, apply knowledge to new situations and create new knowledge.

A class discussion centered around a workplace situation or preparation for post-secondary training allows the students to build vocabulary, develop speaking fluency and confidence, learn from each other, “risk” sharing opinions, ideas and thoughts that will be necessary and useful in participating in workplace team meetings.

In doing so, professionalism, diplomacy and appropriateness become “bonus” learning for the future. Adult students have a wealth of prior knowledge to use and share, and it becomes a perfect opportunity to incorporate what they already know with new information/knowledge.

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Resource Materials Needing To Be Reviewed



NDE tries to add to the collection of resources available on a regular basis. A \$25 stipend is paid to individuals who provide a review for publication in this AE newsletter.

This month, the following books are available for review:

Dr. Stephen Brookfield, a professor in the Department of Higher Learning at Columbia University, has written several books around the themes of critical thinking and reflection on learning. *Understanding and Facilitating Adult Learning* looks like great background material for the adult education instructor.

Krista Kjeldgaard, also a presenter at the annual conference, recommended two books from Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). *Adult Language Learners: Context and Innovation* and *Authenticity in the Language Classroom and Beyond: Adult Learners*. Both are available for review and/or check out to Adult Ed staff members.

REMINDER: If you are looking for professional development materials or topics, the state resource library is the place to start! Materials available are listed on the NDE website and/or you may contact Jeanette for more information at 402-471-4806 or email: jeanette.evans@nebraska.gov

Transition to the Future, Continued

Continued from page 6

Student smiles and nodding heads come with this type of learning!

Standard Three: Learners use skills, resources, and tools to share knowledge, and participate ethically and productively as members for our democratic society.

Current events—do you get your news from your i-phone, internet, newspaper, radio? How do you decide if it is from a reliable source? How does the news impact your life, your decisions, your interests, spending, leisure activities?

Choose a topic or topics—go for it—what do the students know? What do they think? What could they research with the resources available in the classroom, their hand-held devices, the computer lab, the library? What a great way to learn how to express opinions, deal with opinions contrary to personal beliefs, gain new insights, debate. All of the above give students a leg up in the work world and /or the post secondary classroom. It also provides another opportunity to use technology.

Standard Four: Learners use skills,

resources, and tools to pursue personal and esthetic growth. Social skills, appropriate workplace appearance, grooming, leisure activities, health and wellness—the sky's the limit.

Have a “healthy snack” day. Compare cost of packing a lunch for work as opposed to eating out. Have a “dress for work” day in the classroom. Share hobbies and interests. All of this is an opportunity to assist students to build balance in their lives and possibly explore ideas never before considered.

Note that none of the classroom ideas involve great amounts of planning and preparation. Many are student-driven, all incorporate skills for the future and provide opportunities for reading, writing, math, communication, or technology use.

Each of the programs have **Workplace Essential Skills** curriculum that would be very useful and it's all planned out for the classroom. If you haven't tried out the various components, maybe 2011 is the time!

Nebraska Department of Labor has



EXCELLENT tools and information for you and your students. Check out the following websites and/or share them with your students:

NEworks.nebraska.gov
ndol.nebraska.gov

Students can job search, complete a self-assessment profile to guide them to career fields of interest, complete a Work Importance Profiler to create an awareness of what factors would/could/should be important to them as they seek out a job or a career.

The websites are new and improved. Time spent there is interesting and informative.

Teachers and students have countless new ways to look at the adult education classroom and the learning that takes place there. Explore, challenge, create and enjoy!!!!

NDE Speakers Bureau



NDE Adult Education has been asked, and Jeanette has promised, to develop some type of topic and speaker list to assist programs in developing local professional training sessions. These sessions could be program-specific, general, or something you think might make a good topic or presentation for the annual conference.

If you have ideas for topics, suggested speakers or any pertinent info to share, OR you would like to present on a topic in your area of expertise, please let Jeanette know jeanette.evans@nebraska.gov. It is always to our advantage to pool our talents and knowledge to share with each other and the AE programs of the state. We want to be able to assist in any way we can.

If you suggest a speaker, please provide the contact info so I can get in touch personally. As the list is developed, I will be sharing with the local program directors so everyone in the state may have an opportunity to benefit from our state's talent pool! Thanks for your help in making pertinent and necessary training available in the state. Please respond with your suggestions, questions, concerns, and decisions by **January 14, 2011** if at all possible. We'll be waiting for your ideas and suggestions!