

Resources for the Adult Educator

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Technology



Reading



Visual Literacy



Exploring Resources



Student Profile



ProLiteracy®

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Editor's Corner

What word would you use to describe your experience teaching adult education so far in 2020? Challenging? Interesting? Invigorating? Frustrating? Maybe all of those words?

As we all continue to make sense of living in the world with COVID-19, there's one thing that's clear: Adult education teachers have shown their ability to be flexible and adapt to changing educational circumstances.

That's why much of this issue of *Notebook* will focus on how programs have fared while transitioning to online classes. By the time you read this, perhaps your program has gone back to face-to-face classes. However, many program leaders found online learning to be so effective, they have decided to continue it in addition to in-person options. Other programs, concerned about a second wave of COVID-19 this fall or winter, want to make sure their online learning skills stay sharp in case they use online learning again.

Our "Lessons from the Field in Distance Learning" article presents online teaching stories and tips from four different programs, so you can take their lessons and apply them to your program. Even if you have a well-honed schedule of online classes, we think you'll still find some valuable tidbits to refine what you already do.

Another big focus this year has been the presidential election. In our article "Taking a Closer Look at Political Campaign Ads," we present information on political campaign ads from the *News for You Voting Guide*. Use it to strengthen your students' ability to interpret what messages are truly behind campaign ads.

Next up is a topic that combines numeracy and visual literacy. In the COVID-19 news reporting, you've probably seen something called a bubble chart. A bubble chart shows how numbers can be represented with the use of smaller and bigger circles. Bubble charts often are used to show the number of COVID-19 cases around the U.S. or the world. "Teaching Students About Bubble Charts" helps explain bubble charts to students.

Exploring Resources is always a treasure trove of interesting ProLiteracy initiatives as well as other helpful weblinks. This issue, find resources for discussing race, staying healthy, and other current topics. You'll also learn more about the 2021 ProLiteracy Conference on Adult Education.

Please get in touch to tell us what you are doing in the classroom or what kinds of articles you'd like to read in *Notebook*. We always want to hear from you. Stay safe!

—The Editor

Lessons from the Field in Distance Learning

Purpose

To present lessons learned in several programs when they made the transition from in-person to online learning earlier this year.

Rationale

When COVID-19 shutdowns began in the U.S., many adult education programs made the transition to online learning. Some programs had previous experience with distance learning, while others had none. In both scenarios, distance learning presented new challenges. It also allowed for new opportunities as learners who may have had trouble attending an in-person class were able to attend an online class.

In this article, we share experiences from four different programs and include some tips that can help your program, whether you have decided to maintain online classes permanently or occasionally due to a temporary spike in COVID-19 numbers.

The experiences shared here come from a series of Distance Learning webinars sponsored early this year by ProLiteracy. To listen to these and other previous Distance Learning webinars, visit: <https://www.proliteracy.org/webinars>. See our sidebar on this page for additional webinar-related resources.

Orange County Library System, Orlando, Florida

Jelitza Rivera, PhD, ESL Specialist

The Orange County Library System offers about 10 ESL courses at 16 locations. The program does not use volunteers. When the program knew the in-person classes would stop, staff members surveyed students to see what they wanted to do. Many replied that they wanted to continue their studies and not sit idle.

Prior to a full shutdown, Rivera and other instructors started to help students sign up for accounts in Google Classroom. Additionally, the teachers in the program had already used Microsoft Teams to store their curriculum and lesson plans. The Teams site makes it easy for substitute teachers to find lesson plans and to keep the teachers at the 16 locations united, Rivera says.

The program began to remotely offer two beginning-level classes, two intermediate classes, and one conversation hour for various levels. Zoom was used for the live class sessions, and Google Classroom was used to post assignments. Rivera also has used Quizlet and Kahoot!, two online game platforms, to create other activities students can use.

On average, there were 15 students per Zoom class, although the popular English From Zero class had about 28 students. Typically, in-person classes are two hours, but remotely there was one hour live on Zoom followed by one hour



Technology

More Information

Here are various links used by the programs profiled in this article and by other instructors who are using distance learning. You can find links to the resources mentioned in the webinars on Education Network's Distance Learning Resources section. Find ProLiteracy's Education Network at: <https://proliteracyednet.org>

Actively Learn

<https://www.activelylearn.com/>

Actively Learn provides reading texts and videos for English language arts, science, and social studies. The curriculum platform will be free throughout 2020 to help meet the needs of distance learning, according to the website.



EdPuzzle

<https://edpuzzle.com/>

EdPuzzle allows you to take existing videos and make them interactive (such as by adding comprehension questions) and track that the videos have been watched by your students. Or, you can make your own videos through the site. Joining EdPuzzle is free for instructors, but there also are school plans.



(Continued on page 4)

More Information

(Continued from page 3)

ESL Library

<https://esllibrary.com/>

ESL Library has many resources and lessons available for \$7 a month. Students can also use the site.



Google

<http://www.google.com>

Several helpful and free Google resources used by instructors include Google Voice (to set up a free phone number), Google Docs, Google Slideshow, Google Classroom, Google Forms, and Google Email (Gmail).



Handouts Online

<https://handoutsonline.com/index.php>

Handouts Online is geared toward ELL and EFL online instruction. Some resources are available for free. For full access, there is a \$24 annual cost, and there are school memberships.

HyperDocs

<https://hyperdocs.co/>

HyperDocs allows teachers to create web-based tools for students to find information relevant to lessons. You can also get access to HyperDocs shared by other teachers.



of self-study, usually with Quizlet, Kahoot!, or something created on Google Forms. (Google has several free resources, that can help programs, Rivera says.) Rivera initially tried using Kahoot! during a class session but found there was too much switching between apps for students. She then adapted to have them complete Kahoot! work on their own.

To help students get set up with Zoom and any other technology, Rivera spoke on the phone or used WhatsApp to walk them through the process. “I’ll screenshot where to go and walk them through the process visually, so not a lot of language is needed,” she says. She also used Google Translate when needed. Rivera also recorded some short Zoom sessions in both English and Spanish that used a lot of visuals to help show students what to do. She made the directions as user-friendly as possible, with notes such as, “CLICK HERE” in capital letters. Staff also had access to various videos to help them with technical issues.

For the conversation class, Rivera sent out 7 to 10 questions a day in advance to give students time to think about their answers. Two teachers took part in the classes—one who facilitated and a second who could watch the Zoom chat or monitor for students raising their hands (which you can do electronically via Zoom) to speak. For larger groups, everyone was muted until they wanted to speak. For smaller groups, Rivera just asked everyone to turn off background noise as much as possible.

Rivera found that older students who may not be as tech-savvy still attended class but usually just used audio, not video. Rivera assisted with muting or unmuting as needed.

Rivera believes the transition to online classes was successful for Orange County Library for a few reasons:

- They used integrated tools and resources that were already familiar to the program.
- The tools they chose to use were mobile-ready (60% of students participated with their phones, not a computer). Students had little to no downloading to do, making it easy to participate without using data on their phones.
- Teachers reached out to students and encouraged them to spread the word about the online classes.
- Instructors and students stayed in constant contact.

Ozark Literacy Council, Fayetteville, Arkansas

Patty Sullivan, Executive Director; Mina Phebus, Program Director; Savannah Hadley, AmeriCorps Service and Instructor

Classes with Ozark Literacy Council are offered at several locations—a local library, a nearby Tyson Foods plant, and at the literacy council building. The majority of students are ELLs. The program has grown quickly, from only 80 students in 2007 to 400 students currently, Phebus says. There are 80 volunteer tutors and several teachers, both paid and volunteer.

Prior to COVID-19, the program did not offer any distance learning, but looking at the potential COVID and shutdown risk, the program proactively verified email addresses in January and February. “We even made email and online meeting tools part of the curriculum, just in case,” Sullivan says. This gave students who didn’t have email the chance to create an email account and

practice using it in class.

Program teachers piloted the first Zoom class in mid-March; by the end of March, they had an online class schedule set. Overall, the transition to online learning went smoothly, Sullivan says.

The number of students online remained stable and even increased, Hadley says. Students spread the word themselves about the classes, and some students who now live in other states or countries even attended sessions.

The program has open enrollment and used a modified approach to enrollment while online. During online learning, students and teachers spoke individually to help determine the right class level for new students.

Most students accessed classes from computers. To help get them used to Zoom, students received instructions on how to open Zoom along with visuals of how it would look when downloaded. There were some technical difficulties the first couple of classes, but those worked out by the second week. Students were good about helping each other, Hadley says. One barrier, Sullivan says, was reliable internet access. The program let students know about public access internet areas they could use, such as library parking lots.

Some tutors continued their one-to-one sessions with phone calls, as that was more comfortable technology-wise for both those tutors and students. During online learning, some students who were previously with tutors chose to participate in classes. However, these same students still often spoke with their tutors once a week just to check in.

Northside Independent School District, San Antonio, Texas

Sasha Luevano, Adult Education and Literacy Coordinator; Milena Garcia, Distance Learning Coach and Classroom Instructor

Northside's adult education program serves 1,200 ELLs and high-school equivalency students and has about 40 teachers. The program doesn't use volunteers. In-person, classes take place at one building with seven classrooms. All students must complete their weekly classes as well as three hours a week of self-directed online study. All teachers check out a Google Chromebook at the beginning of the year to access different data management systems and use other online tools, such as Skills Tutor. Having the Chromebook turned out to be useful for the transition to online learning, Luevano says.

Although the program already had two distance learning coaches before COVID-19 hit, their roles became more robust when classes had to transition to completely online. Coaches helped educate instructors on how to use Zoom, Remind, and Google Suite. The program also set up a distance learning Google telephone number so if teachers have technical issues, they could call one of the distance learning coaches for help.

Despite the technical challenges of going online, there was one feature that appealed to Luevano. "Online classes took away the walls. It allowed us to bring in students who weren't able to go to class before," she says. There were students who weren't able to attend classes before due to space limitations, but that was no longer the case online. Garcia had a similar thought. "When you're new with online teaching, sometimes you have expectations and you feel stressed. But if you're prepared and excited, you can relieve that stress," says Garcia, who began with the program 17 years ago as a student and has since

More Information

Icecream Screen Recorder

<https://icecreamapps.com/Screen-Recorder/>

Icecream Screen Recorder allows you to record any area of your screen for free and make it a screen shot.



Kahoot!

<https://kahoot.it/>

Kahoot! allows instructors to make fun and interactive games and activities for students. The competitive angle of Kahoot! makes it popular with students. You can have an individual account for free or a premium account through your school/program. The site here asks for a PIN to play a game, but there is also a link on the page to set up your own game on the site.

Padlet

<https://padlet.com/>

Users of Padlet can make online boards, documents, and webpages. Sign up is free. Memberships are also available for school programs.



Quizizz

<https://quizizz.com/join>

Use this site to create quizzes for students. You can also use previously created quizzes on the site, such as Revising and Editing, Converting Measurements, Paying for College, and many more.



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More Information

(Continued from page 5)

Quizlet

<https://quizlet.com/>

Quizlet lets you set up flashcard-based quizzes or reviews for students. Before creating your own set of flashcards, search Quizlet's archive to see if another teacher has publicly shared their creation of a flashcards that already match your needs.

Remind

<https://www.remind.com/>

Remind is frequently used by teachers to communicate via text or email with students. Messages can be sent while maintaining the privacy of your phone number.



Teach-This.com

<https://www.teach-this.com/>

Teach-This.com has more than 1,500 interactive and printable PDF worksheets, ESL games, and activities, some of which are freely available and some of which require payment. The activities help teach listening, reading, writing, pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar as well as specialized subjects such as Business English.



Teacher Training Videos

<https://www.teachertrainingvideos.com/>

Teacher Russel Stannard has many videos to help teachers understand how to teach online, such as how to teach using Zoom or on Skype.

held various roles with Northside. (See a profile of her on page 16.)

While Garcia taught classes, she aimed to maintain her dynamic, fun connection with students online. Here are some examples of what she did:

- Listened to students talk about how the virus or the economic downturn affected them. This was always part of the class warm up. “We aren’t just a class, we’re a team,” she says.
- Took a few minutes each class for dancing—a virtual dance party! “It’s easier to learn when you activate your brain and body,” Garcia says.
- Used breakout rooms on Zoom for speaking activities, discussions, and even writing activities.
- Worked together on song lyrics. Garcia used Remind (see sidebar) to send out song lyrics with blanks to be filled out. Remind was and still is an important tool for her to send out announcements, handouts, class reminders, and more. Students can use Remind even if they don’t have the app. They receive the messages as normal text messages.
- Before leaving class, each student had to tell Garcia what they learned in class that day.

Most of Northside’s online classes were two to three hours, Luevano says. For teachers not comfortable teaching online that full session, they shortened class time to 1½ to 2 hours. For a four-hour Saturday class, students met online for two hours, took a break, and then returned for another two-hour session.

Because the program had required three hours of weekly self-directed online study even before COVID, program staff had routinely asked students if they had online access. Students also were able to use the school’s computer lab—again, before COVID. At home, students used computers and cell phones. The software programs the school uses, including Burlington English, have been good choices for online work, Luevano says. Internet access doesn’t appear to be a problem for the majority of students, perhaps due to their urban location, she adds. However, for students who need additional technical help, the distance learning coaches set up individual sessions for them. Older students sometimes asked a child or grandchild to intervene and help set up the technology.

Literacy Council of Tyler, Tyler, Texas

Mary Springer, HSE Literacy Instructor; Ashly Winkle, Director of Distance Learning

The Literacy Council of Tyler, serves about 2,500 students in Tyler, Texas, and offers ESL, HSE, college transition and career pathways courses.

When realizing that the program’s classes would have to go online, Winkle used the spring break to research best practices in remote and distance learning as well as best technology tools to use. “I was used to a classroom with big, beautiful monitors and we could do a split screen and work on two things ... and then we went from that to a Zoom room,” she says.

Staff members realized how certain things they did in person would be hard to replicate in a virtual lesson. For instance, the use of HyperDocs, which takes students to various online links to find information, would involve opening up too many tabs on a cell phone. Although both Springer and Winkle realized that offering classes online would be challenging, they also wanted to give

students opportunities to continue learning.

Instructors spent the first two to three weeks of closings to get in touch with students and make sure that they were OK. Sometimes, this involved helping them figure out how to file for unemployment or find out where food banks offered food. “My mantra then was #survivetgether,” Springer says.

The first few weeks also gave the program a chance to see where students were with technology. “We had to figure out tools to use to accommodate students and teachers and not overwhelm anyone. It was constant problem solving,” Winkle says.

For the first two weeks in April, before doing lessons on Zoom, Springer offered virtual Zoom office hours at different times throughout the day. This gave both Springer and students the chance to practice on Zoom and receive any needed instructional help.

Next, Springer started doing lessons through Zoom. “I continued to tell students, ‘Do what you can, when you can’... If they could come, great. If not, we offered other things they could do,” she says. Some students had lost their jobs, and others were working overtime. To help accommodate students’ schedule changes, she started to offer the same math class online twice a week—once during the day and once during the evening. Springer also created a set of slides that students could access and review at any time. Lesson planning for an online class took longer than a traditional class, Springer says.

Digital lessons required some trial and error. An initial lesson done in Google Hangouts did not work at all, Winkle says. However, Google Classroom, Actively Learn, and Zoom turned out to be very helpful. Like other programs in this story, the staff at the Literacy Council also use Remind.

There were some students who weren’t able to take part in the online classes, often due to internet troubles or kids at home who were using devices. For those students, the Literacy Council offered a packet pick-up of material from GED Connect, a paper-based learning curriculum. The program hosted five packet pick-ups in April and May. “It was all drive through, with everyone social distanced,” Springer says. There was also a drop box for students to return their work. As of early June, a total of 186 distance hours were completed with the help of the paper-based packets. “Those hours show there was a real need,” Winkle says.

More Information

Think Aloud Checklist

https://www.readingrockets.org/content/pdfs/thinkaloud_checklist.pdf

Reading Rockets presents a checklist that teachers can use every time they hear students verbalizing certain parts of the reading process, such as predicting (“I predict...” or “In the next part I think...”), personal response (“I think...”, “I like/dislike...”), and more.

Time2Play

<http://www.time2play.game/>

Time2Play allows users to play a variety of games online synchronously.



WhatsApp

Popular among those living abroad, WhatsApp allows users to make free phone calls, send text messages or photos/videos, and share documents and user location. The Spring 2020 issue of *Notebook* had an article about using WhatsApp for teaching.



Zoom

<http://www.zoom.com>

At this point, the wunderkind of 2020 needs no introduction!

12 Best Jeopardy Templates

<https://www.lifewire.com/free-jeopardy-powerpoint-templates-1358186>

Want to create a Jeopardy game for students using your own content? Read this article from Lifewire.com about the best Jeopardy templates online.





Taking a Closer Look at Political Campaign Ads



More Information

News for You Voting Guide

https://www.newreaderspress.com/filebin/pdf/NFY/2020_NFY_Voting_Guide.pdf

The weekly newspaper *News for You* created a Voting Guide to help adult learners, particularly ELLs, learn more about the presidential election process and voting in general. Topics featured in the free 11-page guide include reasons to vote, what we vote on, choosing a president, and what to watch for in a debate.

“Deepfake” Videos May Be a New Election Threat

<https://tinyurl.com/ybb9k6at>

The article above, also from *News for You*, presents information about “deepfake” political videos. These types of videos alter what politicians have actually said but make it look real. The article gives specific ways that readers can detect if a video is deepfake. At the link above, students can read the article or listen to it. There is also a link on the same page to a Teacher’s Guide with an activity related to deepfake videos.

Stand Up for Real News

<https://www.newreaderspress.com/news-literacy>

News for You has several activities on its site that help students learn about news literacy. For instance, one activity at the link above has samples of real news and fake news articles. Students discuss which articles they think are real and which are not. Other sample articles from the site include “Checking the Truth About Photos” and “Comparing News Articles”.

Purpose

To educate students about the types of messages used in political campaign ads so they can watch or listen to them more critically.

Rationale

As you know, 2020 is a presidential election year. English language learners who are new to the U.S. need more guidance than ever to help understand the presidential election process, including the role of political campaign ads. On page 10, you’ll find two articles about political ads from the *News for You* Voting Guide (find more information about the guide in our sidebar on this page). Review the articles in advance to make sure the level is appropriate for your class.

The Basic Activity

- 1. Ask students if they know what political ads are.** Explain that they are ads done by candidates in an election. Ask students if they have seen political ads recently.
- 2. Introduce some of the vocabulary terms that students will read in the article.** These terms appear in boldface in the articles.
 - **candidate** – *n.* a person running for a political office
 - **fast-paced** – *adj.* used to describe something that moves quickly
 - **gloomy** – *adj.* causing feelings of sadness
 - **intent** – *n.* purpose; reason for doing something
 - **overwhelming** – *adj.* used to describe something that makes people feel very confused or upset
 - **sponsoring** – *v.* paying for an ad or event
 - **stretch the truth** – (idiom) say something that is not completely honest
 - **techniques** – *n.* ways of doing things using special knowledge
 - **upbeat** – *adj.* positive
- 3. Provide students with a copy of the reading on page 10 of this issue.** If you are teaching online, you could instead send out the *News for You* Voting Guide link (see sidebar) and direct students to page 7 of the guide.

4. **Give students time to read the articles.** Use the standard format your class usually follows when reading articles. Have students underline each vocabulary word or term in the article. Provide any additional vocabulary practice as needed.
5. **Ask comprehension questions.** The following comprehension questions could be done as a full class discussion, in pairs, or in writing:
 - What is "The Living Room Candidate"? (*Answer: It is an online exhibit of presidential campaign ads throughout history.*)
 - What is something that defines today's political ads? (*Speed. New ads come out within hours of a news event.*) What should you ask about who is in a political ad? (*Answer: Does the candidate speak or use someone else, like an opponent or actors playing "real people"?*)
 - What is something the article says is important for advertising? (*Sound or the lack of it is important.*)
 - What is a website you can use to check information from a political ad? (*The website is www.factcheck.org.*)
 - Why do you think it is important to look closely at political ads? (*Answers will vary.*)
6. **Let students know that they will study two political ads and apply what they have learned.** They can work in pairs or, if needed, you can complete this as a whole class. Let the class know they will watch one ad from Democratic candidate Joe Biden. The second ad is from President Donald Trump. Both are for the 2020 campaign, although the Biden ad is from before he added Kamala Harris as his running mate. Share the links with the class to watch or play them so that all students can watch them. Show the ads a second or third time as needed. Before watching the videos, show students the questions that appear in step 7 below.

Laughed At

<https://tinyurl.com/sgxa5j8>

Make America Great Again

<https://tinyurl.com/ychn832v>

7. **Have students write the answers to the following questions about each ad.**
 - Who is sponsoring the ad?
 - Who is in the ad?
 - What images are used?
 - What sound is used?
 - What text is used?
 - What facts are communicated?
 - Which ad do you think is stronger? Why do you think that?
8. **Discuss answers together as a class.** See which ad the class thinks is more effective. Answer any remaining questions students have after watching each ad.

More Information

Vote411

<https://www.vote411.org/>

The League of Women Voters Education Fund's website, Vote411, allows users to register to vote, check their voter registration status, and find out about local election issues. There are also updates related to COVID-19 and how it is affecting elections in each state. Another resource is a list of multilingual phone numbers to report election problems (i.e., problems on the day someone is actually voting).

Elections 2020

<https://www.usatoday.com/storytelling/election-2020-voter-guide/>

USA Today has a variety of information on its voter guide page, including short videos that explain the difference between a caucus and primary and information about the Electoral College. There is also information about where the candidates stand on various issues. There is also a video that explains the potential role of mail-in ballots for the November presidential election.

Civic Participation Curriculum

<https://cliniclegal.org/resources/citizenship-and-naturalization/civic-participation-curriculum>

Catholic Legal Immigration Network has created a civic participation curriculum for adult ELLs that is divided into four modules: Overview of Civic Participation, Elections, Preparing to Vote on Election Day, and Serving on a Jury/Government Board/Running for Office. Although the modules were developed for a classroom setting, they also could be adapted for one-on-one tutoring. The link above has links to both the Teacher Handbook and the Student Workbook. The curriculum is also helpful for those studying to become U.S. citizens.

POLITICAL CAMPAIGN ADS

The styles and techniques of campaign ads may change over the years. But the basic messages are still the same.

You can explore political ads from the last 60 years. “The Living Room **Candidate**” is an online exhibit of presidential campaign ads through TV history. You can find it at www.livingroomcandidate.org. The Museum of the Moving Image in Astoria, New York, created it.

Visitors to the exhibit can watch the ads by year. They can choose ads by issue, such as war or taxes. They can also choose types of ads they want to see. Those might include ads that feature children, or that use fear, or that tell candidates’ life stories.

There are some new **techniques**. For instance, many ads now use a candidate’s own words against



him or her. But what really defines today’s advertising is speed.

New ads may come out within hours of a news event. Many are posted instantly on the Internet before they are seen on TV. The number and speed of the ads can be **overwhelming** to voters.

With its exhibit, the museum tries to help viewers think about how they watch ads. When they see an old trick or technique, they can look past that to the real message. They can also check the facts in an ad by reading news reports and visiting websites such as www.factcheck.org.

POLITICAL CAMPAIGN ADS

Sometimes political ads can act as unfair attacks on candidates. They can **stretch the truth** to make a candidate look bad. Be sure to pay close attention to how an ad is being used. Here are some things to think about as you watch ads during the presidential campaign:

Who is sponsoring the ad?

Does the candidate “approve this message?” Or is another group acting for the candidate? If so, what is that group? What is its **intent**?

Who is in the ad?

Does the candidate speak? Or does the campaign use others—such as an opponent or actors playing “real people”?

What images are used?

Are the images light or dark? Are they still or **fast-paced**? How do they make you feel?

What sound is used?

Sound—or the lack of it—is important in advertising. Is music included in the ad? If so, what type? How do you respond to it? If voices are used, do they sound **upbeat** or

gloomy? Does the sound you hear match the message?

What text is used?

In addition to images and sound, an ad may also include text to make or emphasize a point. If it is used, what does the text say? What is the purpose of the text?

What facts are communicated?

Most campaigns make claims, either about their own candidate or the opponent. But such claims may or may not be true. What information is presented as fact? You can find out whether candidates’ statements are true at www.factcheck.org.

Teaching Students About Bubble Charts

Purpose

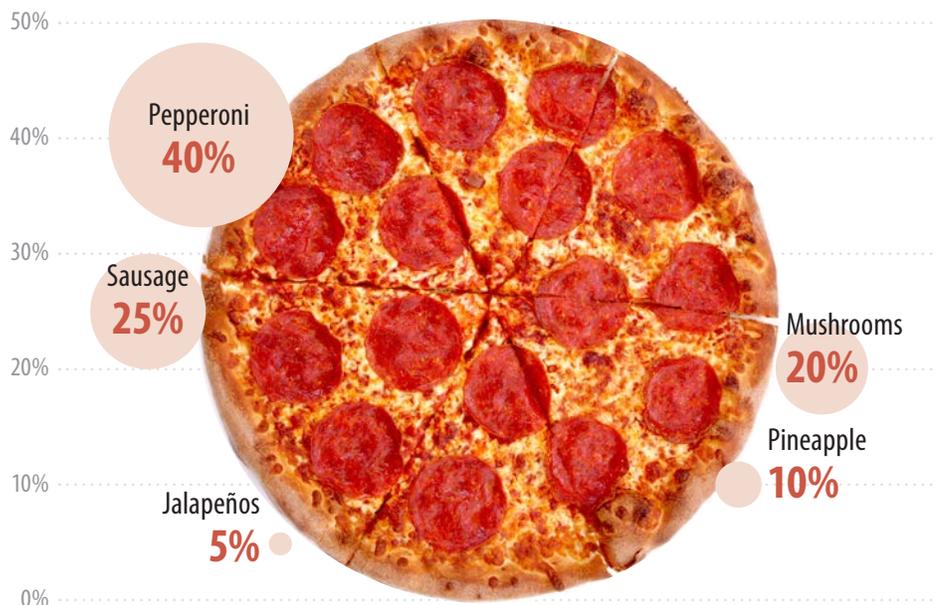
To introduce and explain bubble charts.

Rationale

One requirement of the GED® test is to be able to understand information in graphics, charts, and tables. This is important both for the Social Studies Test and the Science Test. One type of chart that your students may see more often now in news coverage is a bubble chart (see example below and on page 13). A bubble chart uses bubbles to show the size of something specific as it relates to another variable on the chart. For instance, if a bubble chart was showing coronavirus cases in the Northeast part of the U.S., there would be larger bubbles around New York City and New Jersey compared with other parts of the Northeast, which would be represented with smaller bubbles. In fact, bubble charts have been used frequently during COVID-19 reporting.

The following activity introduces the concept of bubble charts to GED and high-school equivalency classes. It gives students practice understanding a bubble chart and allows them to help create one. The chart on page 13 in the activity originally appeared this year in *News for You*.

Favorite Pizza Toppings in the Class



Example of a bubble chart.

Visual
Literacy

More Information

Here are several sites that provide explanations of bubble charts. The explanations may help you or students who want to learn more details about this type of visual tool. The explanations provided at the sites below are more technical than the description of bubble charts in *Notebook*.

How to Make Your Data Pop With Bubble Charts

<https://www.smartsheet.com/bubble-charts>

How to Design Bubble Charts

<https://visage.co/data-visualization-101-bubble-charts/>

Bubble Chart

<https://www.fusioncharts.com/resources/chart-primers/bubble-chart>

Why Bubble Charts Are Cool

<http://www.performance-ideas.com/2011/04/05/bubble-charts-cognos/>

A Guide to Bubble Charts

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fygi3mQY0Ag>

This is a video link.

More Information

Here are other resources that may be useful.

How to Read a Bubble Chart

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFWCPLBW4s4>

This is a video link.

How to Read and Explain Graphs and Charts

<https://www.englishhints.com/charts-and-graphs.html>

How to Read Scientific Graphs and Charts

<https://study.com/academy/lesson/how-to-read-scientific-graphs-charts.html>

This is a video link.

Tracking the Spread of the Novel Coronavirus

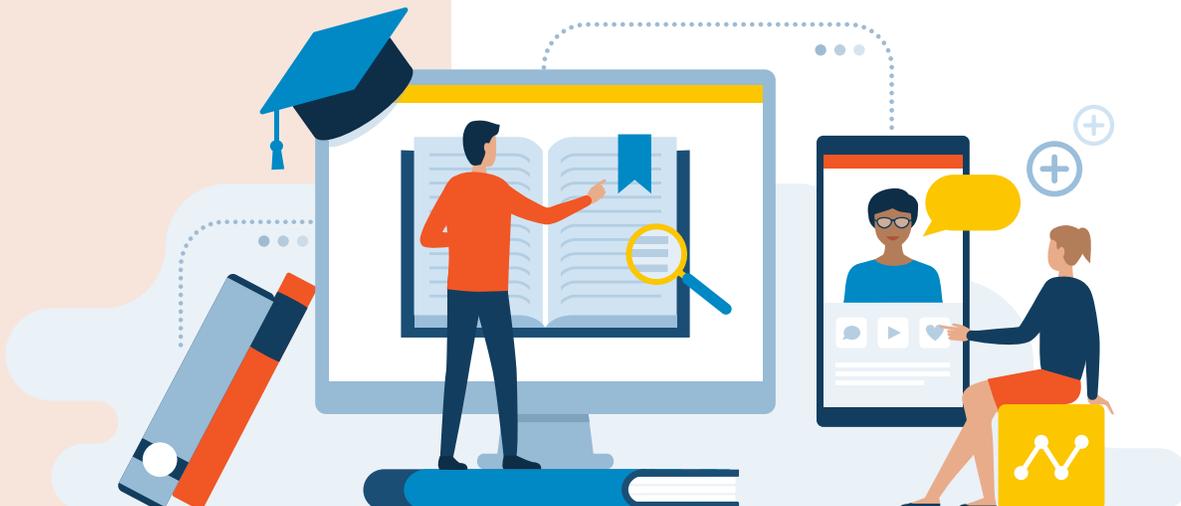
<https://graphics.reuters.com/CHINA-HEALTH-MAP/0100B59S39E/index.html>

This graphic from Reuters shows the latest coronavirus numbers from around the globe in the form of a bubble chart.

The Basic Activity

- 1. Ask students to think about how they learned about new cases, hospitalizations, or deaths from COVID-19.** Where have they seen those numbers reported? How are they reported? Are they on a graph or chart? Let students know that one way of showing numbers in a more visual form is with higher numbers appearing in bigger bubbles and smaller numbers in smaller bubbles. The numbers in a bubble chart aim to show something specific—for instance, the number of COVID-19 cases by state in the U.S., or the amount of money raised by team in a contest. Sometimes, the bubbles appear on a map. Other times, they appear on a more standard chart with an x and y axis.
- 2. Provide students with a copy of the handout on page 13.** Have enough copies for all students. If you are meeting remotely, you'll want to have a way to get the handout—particularly the graphic on the page—to students. Let students know that the graphic is a bubble chart showing the number of people who died from different pandemics and plagues around the world through 1900.
- 3. Have students take some time to look at the bubble chart.** Then they should answer questions about it. Check answers together as a class. (*Answers:* 1. It shows deaths from pandemic through the year 1900. 2. It was the Black Death. A total of 75 to 200 million people died. 3. The Great Plague of London was the smallest. A total of 75,000 to 100,000 people died. 4. The Antonine Plague was in 165 to 180 A.D. 5. The horizontal line shows the years when the pandemics happened. 6. There are nine pandemics on the chart. 7. Answers will vary.)
- 4. Discuss what might be some pros and cons of using bubble charts to show information.** For further practice, you can have students create a bubble chart. One example would be to have a map of a certain region of the world, such as Europe or South America. You could find out the population of each country in that region, and students would use bubbles to represent the number of people living in each country. Bigger bubbles should be used for countries with larger populations. Or, they could make a bubble chart related to class food preferences, such as the pizza example on page 11.

Bubble charts can be created in Excel, although that is not the focus of the lesson here. Some of the links in the sidebar on page 11 and this page give more details about using Excel for bubble charts.



UNDERSTANDING BUBBLE CHARTS

1. What is the purpose of this chart?

2. Which pandemic was the biggest? How many people died?

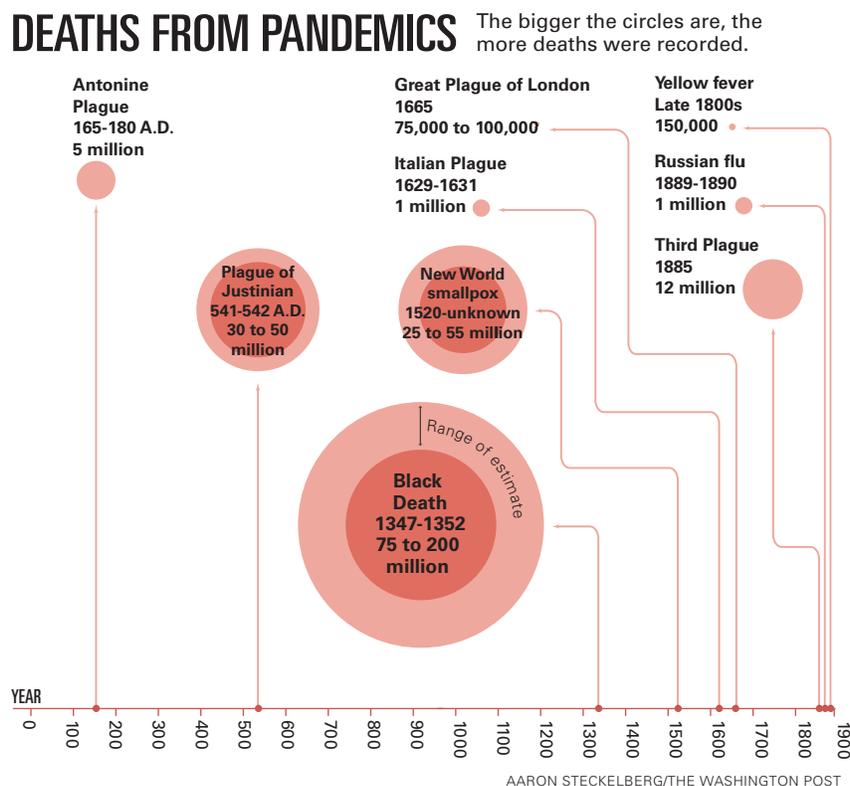
3. Which pandemic was the smallest? How many people died?

4. When was the Antonine Plague?

5. What does the horizontal line on the bottom show?

6. How many pandemics are on the chart?

7. Do you think this chart is easy to understand? Why or why not?



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Exploring Resources

Join the ProLiteracy Learning Upgrade Challenge

<https://www.proliteracy.org/What-We-Do/Programs-Projects/Learning-Upgrade-Challenge>

Education providers, instructors, and students can join the ProLiteracy Learning Upgrade Challenge to compete for rewards based on activity during each challenge trimester. The Challenge follows three 4-month long trimesters to match adult education calendars. During each cycle, new providers can sign up for the ProLiteracy Learning Upgrade Challenge and receive instructor training to get started. Instructors onboard adult learners into the smartphone app, and then learners work on lessons that meet their individual needs. Instructors track learner progress to monitor and motivate learners. Providers celebrate learner success, and the Challenge rewards the top providers, instructors, and learners each cycle.

After feedback is gathered to improve best practices, the Challenge cycle starts again with a new trimester. Join the Challenge cycle that started September 1. To join the challenge or to learn more, visit the website listed above.

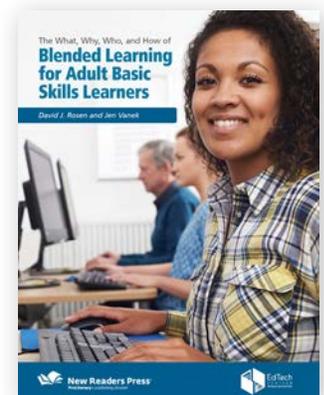


ProLiteracy's
LEARNING UPGRADE®
CHALLENGE

Blended Learning Guide

<https://www.newreaderspress.com/blended-learning-guide>

A valuable resource for instructors, the free, 43-page Blended Learning Guide, *The What, Why, Who, and How of Blended Learning for Adult Basic Skills Learners*, available on the New Readers Press website, is for teachers, tutors, and administrators who provide adult basic skills education and who wish to initiate or improve blended learning for their students. Discover tips and strategies for implementing a blended learning model in your classroom, and read case studies to understand how other programs have developed a blending learning curriculum that best meets their needs. Explore various online resources, and read about how to solve some of the challenges you may face as you work toward your instructional goals. The Blended Learning Guide will help you formulate a plan and achieve success with your blended learning instruction.



ProLiteracy's Education Network Provides Updated Financial Literacy Courses

<https://proliteracyednet.org/financial-literacy-resources>

ProLiteracy's Education Network now offers the following updated financial literacy courses:

How to Add Financial Literacy to Your Existing Program. This course will help program managers identify reasons to add financial literacy courses, examine various course structures, find the right curriculum, choose instructors, and evaluate if the course is working.

Financial Literacy Instructor Training. In this course, instructors learn the basic principles of teaching personal finance and money management. This course is great for teachers who are using *Control Your Money* from New Readers Press.



ProLiteracy®
Education Network

New Readers Press Online Learning

<http://www.newreaderspress.com>

Take your students from pre-HSE to preparation for the GED, HiSET, or TASC tests in an interactive, online learning environment. The online learning courses are available 24/7 on all devices for blended or distance learning and feature diagnostic pre- and post-tests, guided practice with answer explanations, alignment to testing standards, easy onboarding, progress reports, and more. New to the pre-HSE course is audio added to support lower-level readers and ELLs.



Resources to Teach About Racism

<https://tinyurl.com/y89da7sl>

<https://changeagent.nelrc.org/subscribe/>

The Change Agent, a newsletter for adult teachers and learners published by World Education, has links to several resources to help teach about race (see Packet 12 when you click on the link). Examples of the available resources include a worksheet for ELLs called “Existing While Black,” “Best Practices for Talking About Race,” and “Preparing My Students to Write About Race.” The resources at the link above are free. A subscription to *The Change Agent* is \$20 a year (see second link above). The publication was previously both in print and online but now will be available online only.

LINCS Learning Center: Staying Healthy

<https://learner.lincs.ed.gov/resources/health>

The Literacy Information and Communications System (LINCS) has several online learner centers that feature resources relevant to helping adults learn to read, learn math, become a U.S. citizen, and more. The link above is its online center called Staying Healthy. Web links are provided for COVID-19 information, the Choose My Plate nutrition plan, healthy choices while grocery shopping, and getting active. All of the resources feature websites from the federal government; LINCS is part of the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education.

National Literacy Directory

<http://www.nld.org>

<https://www.nld.org/register>

The National Literacy Directory has helped connect more than 50,000 potential students and volunteers to literacy services, community education programs, and testing centers since 2010. The directory provides listings for Early Childhood, Family Literacy, High School Equivalency/Adult Basic Education, English Language Learning, and Citizenship classes. Programs offering the aforementioned services can have a listing in the directory at no charge.

Help potential learners and volunteers become aware of your program by taking advantage of your free listing.

To add your program to the directory, simply visit the second link above to free Program Manager account. If your program is already listed but you don’t remember your account information, visit <https://www.nationalliteracydirectory.org/site-support> for instructions to access Site Support.

STUDENT PROFILE

MILENA GARCIA: INSPIRING STUDENTS IN PERSON AND IN REMOTE CLASSES

by Vanessa Caceres



In the early 2000s when Milena Garcia arrived in the U.S. from Colombia, she had an ambitious goal to learn English.

Despite only knowing some English basics, she wanted to take all class levels at the same time.

Naturally, the coordinators at Northside Independent School District, in San Antonio, Texas, hesitated at the idea, but they also could see how persistent Garcia was. She already had an undergraduate degree in business administration and a master's degree in human resources, and she had plans to build a better life in the U.S.

"I was taking English classes mornings, afternoons, and evenings," she says.

Although Garcia initially struggled in the advanced-level classes, she became comfortable after several months of intensely learning English. She worked with an "angel teacher" who helped her

to validate her professional credentials in the U.S. That same teacher had to leave class one day for an hour and asked Garcia to step in to help informally lead the class. Garcia, who always loved the idea of teaching, was surprised but had a great experience. So did her students.

That impromptu teaching led to other instructional work, and Garcia was hired by Northside as an instructor around 2008. She taught in several settings with the program. She also taught at a private school when she temporarily left the U.S. before returning to Northside.

Garcia always has the goal of gaining her students' trust and building a close but respectful relationship with students. "My philosophy is to be the teacher that I always wanted to have," she says. "I don't feel like I work. I just have fun."

She inspires her students as someone who has learned English and has been able to thrive in the U.S.

Garcia's dedication led her to be named Teacher of the Year by the Adult Education & Literacy Alamo Consortium in 2019, shortly after which she became both an instructor and a distance learning coach for Northside. She took on the distance learning coach role before COVID-19 because the program required students to complete some of their work online and independently. Her current goal is to earn a certificate to become a bilingual kindergarten teacher.

"Milena gives 100%. I love visiting her class. You're going to smile in her class," says Sasha Luevano, adult education and literacy coordinator for Northside. Find out more about Garcia's approach in our article "Lessons from the Field in Distance Learning" on page 3.