

INTRODUCTION

What is in this guide?

Reading teachers are often guided by what they know about the stages and components of the reading process, but they may not share this information with learners.* By understanding how others become fluent readers, learners can reflect on their own process of improving reading skills. This guide offers a set of 13 lessons designed to help learners understand the components of reading that are part of becoming a more fluent reader, and to guide them as they work with the teacher to set their own goals for reading. The lessons can be used as an independent mini-course, or they can be integrated into an existing curriculum. The guide is not intended as a comprehensive reading course or curriculum; rather, it can inform teachers and students as they plan learning activities that address the goals and skill needs of learners. For example, some learners, particularly those at a beginning reading level, may benefit from a highly structured curriculum of direct reading instruction, and this guide can help point them in that direction.

Who is this guide for?

The guide is for teachers of adult basic education learners who read at a 0-6 reading level. Students can take the information they learn from the lessons in this guide and apply it directly to their own reading. It can also be adapted for use with ESOL learners. However, some activities are not appropriate or may need to be modified for beginning-level ESOL learners. The Center for Adult English Language Acquisition (CAELA) Brief, *How Should Adult ESL Reading Instruction Differ from ABE Reading Instruction?*, provides helpful information and research-based suggestions for helping ESOL learners learn the components of reading. It is available at: www.cal.org/caela/briefs/readingdif.html.

* Throughout this guide, we usually use the term “learner(s).” In some instances, for stylistic reasons, we use the term “student(s).” Readers should note that we use the two terms interchangeably.

For more information on the research on adult reading instruction, go to: <http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/publications/adult.html> From this web page, you can download the report *Research-based Principles for Adult Basic Education Reading Instruction* and review the web document “Adult Education Reading Instruction Principles and Practices.”

Why should I teach these lessons?

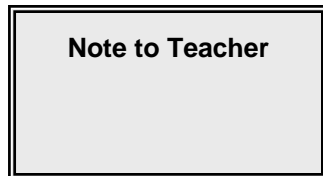
To many new readers, the process of learning to read is mysterious; some learners may think that reading is simply about being “intelligent.” These lessons will help demystify the process of learning to read; students can begin to understand that there are distinct but integrated skills involved in reading. By becoming more reflective about the components of the reading process, students can begin to analyze their reading strengths and needs, learn about strategies for increasing their reading proficiency, and articulate their purposes and goals for reading in their lives as family members, community members, workers, and lifelong learners.

How can I integrate these lessons into my existing ABE class?

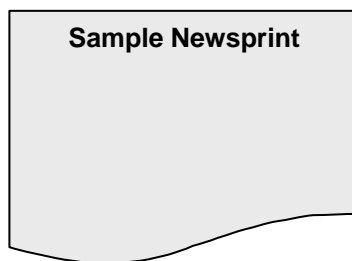
Use this guide in a flexible manner. Scan through it to see what seems practical to you. For example, you may use the first few lessons at the beginning of your own curriculum as a way to help learners set goals and assess their reading skills. You may wait until a later date to introduce other concepts, like sight words or vocabulary development. You can also teach the 13 lessons straight through, then move on to your own curriculum, using this guide as a foundation. Be aware that the lessons vary in length; you may want to combine some of them to fit your class schedule. These lessons introduce strategies, but do not go into them in depth. Some of the teachers who piloted these lessons found it helpful to devote more time to practicing strategies as they were introduced by using supplemental materials.

What do I need to pay attention to as I use this guide?

- The “Note to Teacher” boxes both explain and supplement the instruction in the guide. They look like this:



- You may want to provide a folder or loose-leaf notebook for each learner to keep goal sheets, handouts, vocabulary words, and any writing about reading that they do in these lessons.
- Many lessons have vocabulary words in **bold**. Teachers should write these on a black/whiteboard or a piece of newsprint for learners to copy down and keep.
- Reduced versions of handouts are represented in the text of most of the lessons, wherever reference is made to them. Full-size versions suitable for photocopying can be found at the end of those lessons. Before each lesson that calls for their use, you will need to make copies of the handouts listed under “Materials” for each participant.
- Newsprints that you should prepare beforehand will appear in the steps like this:



- As you teach these lessons, you may want to be sure that a variety of reading materials at various levels is available in your classroom to provide optional materials for learners.
- Lesson Thirteen is called an “optional” lesson because technically spelling is a writing skill, not a reading skill. However, spelling can play a role in alphabetic awareness, so we include a lesson on spelling for those teachers and students who want to learn more about it.