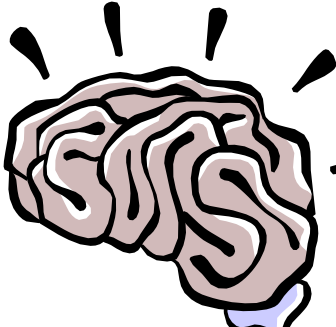


Effective problem solving: make it a habit

Research has identified some characteristics of effective thinkers — and they’re found not just where you might suspect (in scientists, artists, and mathematicians), but in people from all walks of life (such as mechanics, salespeople, parents, and teachers!

Efficient, effective problem-solvers practice these 14 “habits of mind:”

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Practice persistence 2. Manage impulsivity 3. Think flexibly 4. Think interdependently 5. Take responsible risks 6. Find humor 7. Learn continuously |  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Use creativity, imagination, innovation 9. Listen to others with understanding and empathy 10. Strive for accuracy and precision 11. Apply past knowledge to new situations 12. Gather data through all senses 13. Respond with wonderment and awe 14. Question and pose problems |
|---|--|--|

Source: Costa, A.L., and Kallick, B., eds. 2000. *Discovering and Exploring Habits of Mind*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Education pays — no matter how you look at it

Recent research by the Washington, D.C.-based Alliance for Excellent Education showed the economic payoffs for graduation and postsecondary education. For example:

- \$ The average high school dropout earns \$19,000 a year.
- \$\$ The average high school graduate earns \$26,200.
- \$\$\$ The average associate’s degree graduate earns \$33,400.
- \$\$\$\$ The average bachelor’s degree graduate earns \$42,200.

Previous statistics (*Digest of Education Statistics*, 2002) show similar disparities: A male with a high school credential or equivalency earned \$13,514 more annually than a male with less than nine years of education. For females, the difference was \$8,992.

Median Annual Income for Year-round, Full-time Workers			
	Less than 9 years of education	9–12 years of education, no diploma	High school diploma or equivalency
Men	\$20,789	\$25,095	\$34,303
Women	\$15,978	\$17,919	\$24,970

NCSALL publishes results of ABE teacher studies

Editor's Note: Both of the following publications are products of the NCSALL (National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy) Professional Development Study. They can be downloaded from NCSALL's Web site (<http://ncsall.gse.harvard.edu>). Click on "Publications" and then on "By Title" under "NCSALL Reports". Print versions can also be ordered on-line.

How Teachers Change: Study of Professional Development in Adult Education (NCSALL Reports #25, Cristine Smith, Judy Hofer, Marilyn Gillespie, Marla Solomon, and Karen Rowe)

This study investigated how a sample of 106 adult education teachers in three New England states changed after participating in one of three models of professional development — multi-session workshop, mentor teacher group, or practitioner research group — all focused on the topic of learner persistence.

The authors also examined three broad groups of factors that interacted either to support or hinder change:

- Individual factors included teachers' level of experience, background, and their motivation for taking part in the professional development.
- Professional development factors included the quality and amount of professional development attended.
- Program and system factors included the structure of and support offered by the program, adult education system, and professional development system in which teachers work, including their working conditions.

In light of the findings, the authors recommend that professional developers should advocate for teachers to spend more time taking part in well designed professional development. Program directors are encouraged to:

- provide their teachers greater access to professional development,
- allow teachers to participate more in program decision-making, provide teachers greater opportunity to interact with each other, and
- create well-supported jobs for their teachers.

The Characteristics and Concerns of Adult Basic Education Teachers (NCSALL Reports #26, Cristine Smith and Judy Hofer)

Based on data gathered for the study on *How Teachers Change*, this in-depth exploration documents what is commonly known (but not well researched) about adult education teachers, including the challenges they face, the training and preparation they receive, and the conditions in which they work.

Some findings:

- Adult education teachers receive limited formal preparation geared specifically to teaching adults, and they have limited opportunities to take part in professional development and continued learning.
- Most teachers do not play a role in the broader field of adult basic education, either because they are unaware of opportunities to do so or they are not inclined, prepared, supported, or even expected to extend their activities beyond their programs.

The main implication of the study's findings is that ABE teachers require better preparation, but even this is not enough: teachers feel they need to be better supported.

Nevada offers free, CD-based training on how to teach adults

This self-paced, interactive training provides information common to all AEFLA-funded programs in Nevada so that new hires and volunteers can work independently to become acclimated to teaching and tutoring adult ABE/ESL students in Nevada. For more information, contact: Sharyn Yanoshak, saylv@cox.net, 702/253-6280.



Editor's Note: We continue our series on key administrative assistants with a shining example of how serving students often circles back through the program in service to more students!

There's a warm and sunny Beach in Reno

In October 2002, Elizabeth Beach was referred by Welfare to the Northern Nevada Literacy Council, where she began to study for her GED. Three months later, NNLC hired her under CWEP (Community Work Experience Program) as an afternoon receptionist. In May, NNLC Director Vicki Newell brought Elizabeth on full-time as her executive assistant. "She showed such great initiative and such a willingness to learn and do more," said Vicki, "that soon my piles shrunk to mole hills instead of mountains!"

Putting similar energy into her studies, Elizabeth, who had dropped out of school in the ninth grade, got her GED last May and most recently, still thirsty to learn more, took on the role of Facility Manager at NNLC.

Elizabeth's warmth and desire to help shine through everything she does. When asked whether she wanted this profile to include her pre-NNLC background, she said, "Whatever will help our students – do what's best for our programs to help our students."

Her colleagues see her as outgoing and friendly — another example of Elizabeth's focus on the "greater good," as she is most comfortable in small groups (versus "huge social settings"). The 21-year-old likes spending time with her three-year-old son Michael, their two cats and 14 fish, ideally outdoors.

"I love being outside," she reminisces. "The one thing I really miss about Chico (California) is being able to spend time in Bidwell National Park, one of the largest national parks in the world. You can walk for days there and not see anyone!"

Elizabeth plans to continue her schooling so that she can be certified to work with children. "I'd especially like to work with the six- to ten-year-olds," she mused, "and with what I'm learning about learning disabilities, I'm thinking I could really be of help in that area."

From student to staff member (and probably to teacher, some day), Elizabeth is a shining example of ABE in Nevada — she is who we are and what we do!



More additions to Nevada's literacy Web site



Visit Nevada's literacy Web site (www.literacynet.org/nevada) and click on the "[Student/Learner](#)" button (along the left). The student/learner page contains links to resources that students can use on their own, such as Easy Voter and GED preparation.

We seek submissions for both the [Student/Learner](#) and [Teacher/tutor](#) pages: Resources that have been created by Nevadans, or especially applicable to Nevadans, or recommended by Nevada's experts as being particularly useful. Help your colleagues and their students by sharing your expertise!

Submission is easy! Click on the [Submission Guidelines](#) link from either page, or contact Sharyn Yanoshak, 702/253-6280, saylv@cox.net.

According to the Census Bureau, nearly one in five Americans speaks a language other than English at home. Most speak Spanish, followed by Chinese, with Russian rising fast.

Free workshops in March and April

These workshops are available at no cost to all adult education teachers and tutors in Nevada on a space-available space. Contact the host to reserve your spot!

<u>Title/date/place</u>	<u>Host (contact)</u>	<u>Presenter and objectives</u>
Goal Setting and Retention Strategies 3/20/04; Carson City	Teri Zutter Western NV Comm. Coll. 775/445-4451 tzutter@wncc.nevada.edu	Janell Baker. Familiarize teachers with the NRS requirements that involve students setting goals. Give teachers the tools and resources to help students set realistic goals. Assist teachers in getting their students involved in their own academic planning and monitoring of their goals.
Math For ABE Literacy Students 4/09/04; Las Vegas	Connie Barker C.A.L.L. 702/507-3530 barkerm@lvccld.org	Myrna Manly. Become familiar with the actual demands of the GED Math Test. Experience strategies that add meaning and relevance to the fraction fundamentals. Explore concepts (rate, slope, and measurement conversion) that depend on understanding the fundamentals.
Goal Setting and Retention Strategies 4/17/04; Las Vegas	Nita Russell-Latham Catholic Charities of So. NV 702/693-6761 jlatham@catholiccharities.com	Janell Baker. See objectives for 3/20/04 above.
Learner-Centered Teaching Strategies For ESL Classrooms 4/23/04; Reno	Claudia Bianca-DeBay Truckee Meadows Comm. Coll. 775/824-8604 cdebay@tmcc.edu	Maxine Frauman-Prickel. Provide participants with a bank of strategies from which to draw in lesson design and implementation. Provide teachers and tutors an understanding of the student's role and teacher's role in learner-centered instructional design. Model, experience, and practice effective instructional strategies for individual and cooperative learning environments.

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