



**COLLEGE & CAREER
READINESS**

Where is the Reading Fluency?

COABE 2025 Session 3

January 22, 2026

Presented by Amy Van Oostrum-Engler, NCSU

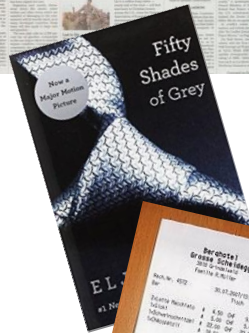
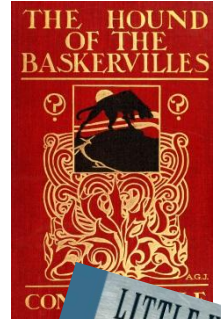
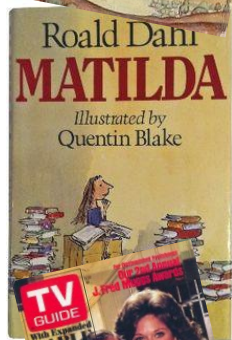
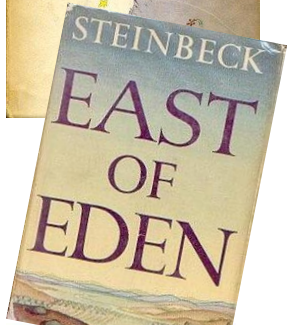
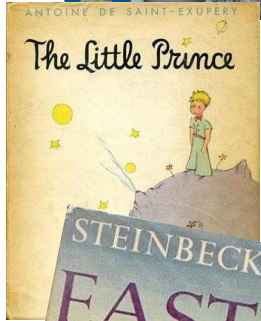
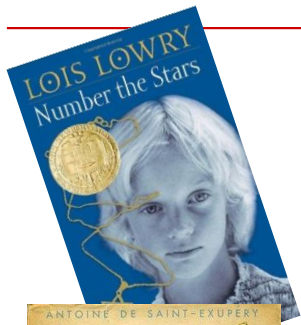
Welcome

Please introduce yourself in the chat and ponder these questions while we wait to start.

What does reading mean to you?

What does reading mean to your students?

What reading skills did you teach or practice with your class last quarter?



Where's the Fluency?

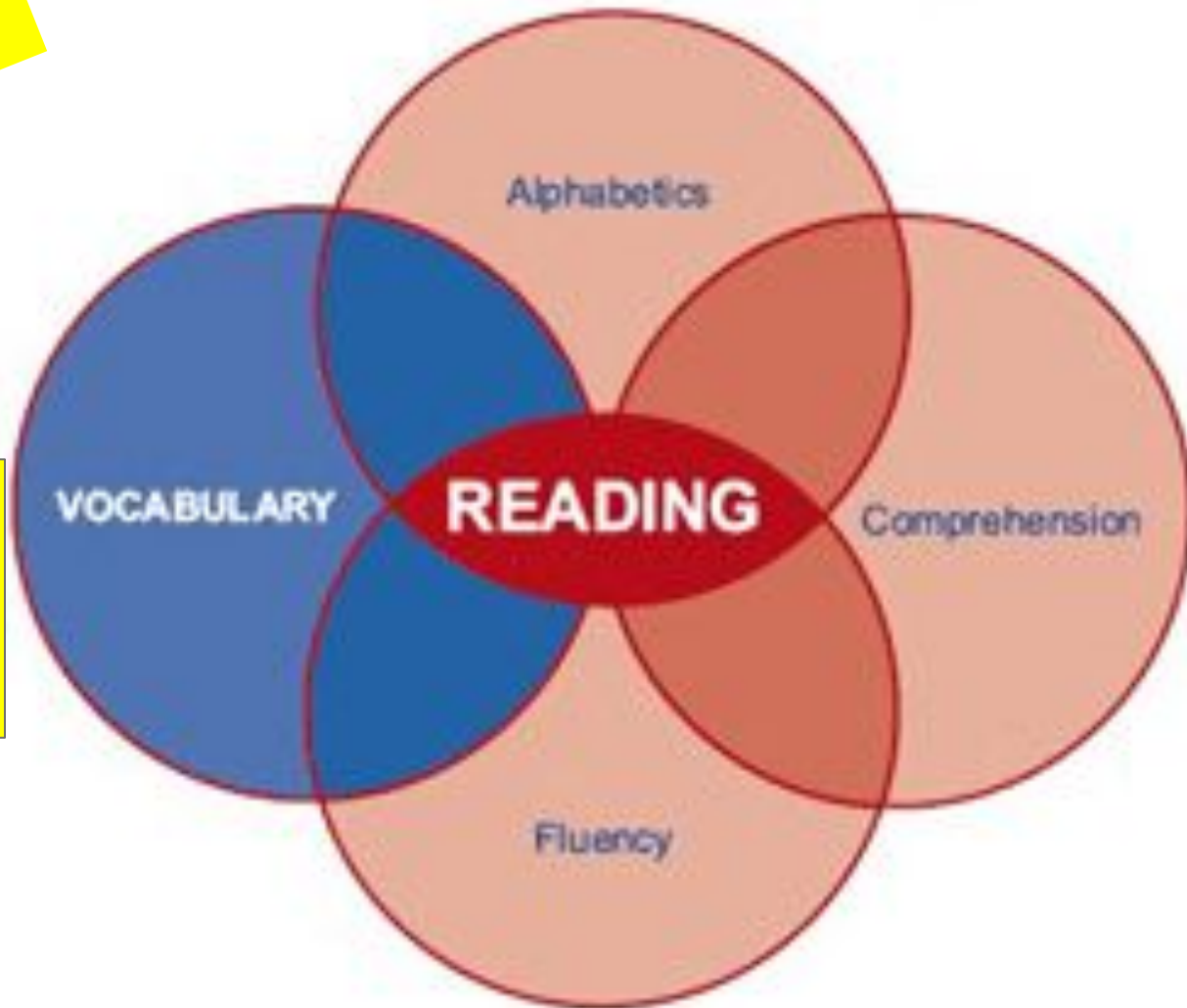
Addressing a Missing Piece in Adult Literacy Instruction



Amy Van Oostrum-Engler
PhD Student, Applied Social Psychology
January, 2026

STAR Reading Model

The Four Components of Reading



Have you or any of your teachers had STAR training?

Student Achievement in Reading (STAR) is a national professional development initiative for adult reading instruction created by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE)

ALPHABETICS

Phonemic
Awareness



Decoding



Word
Recognition

Phonics test

c a l i s t h e n i c s

Decoding test

cal i sthen ics

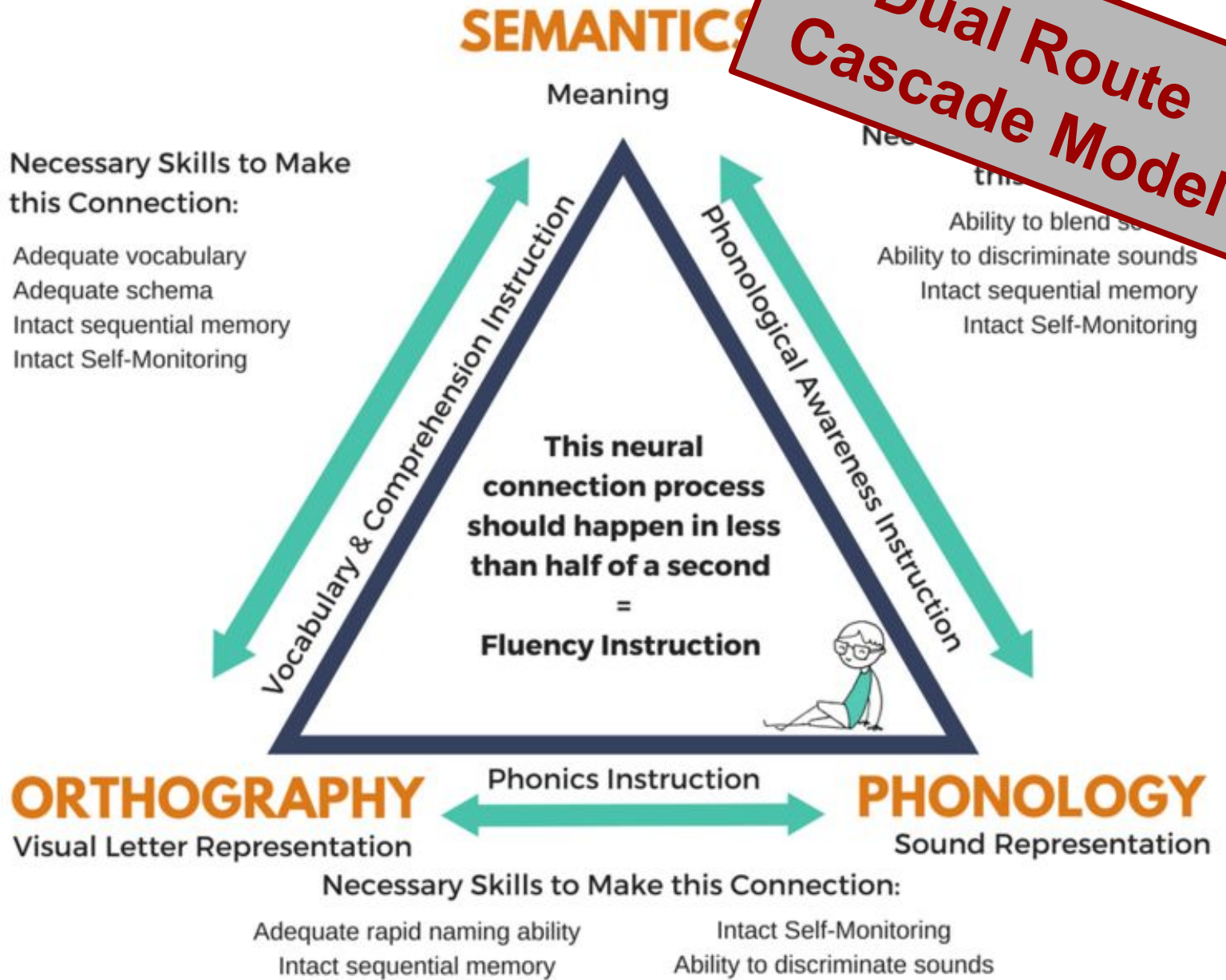
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Word Recognition

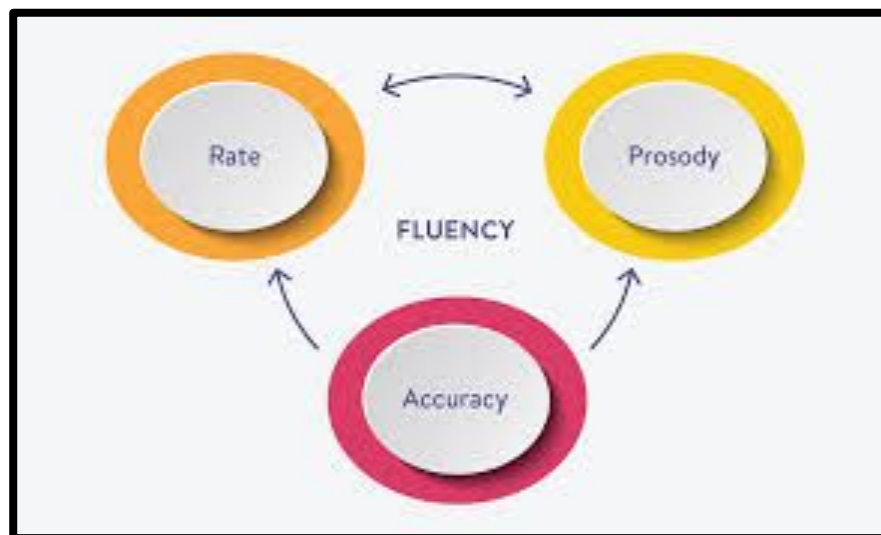
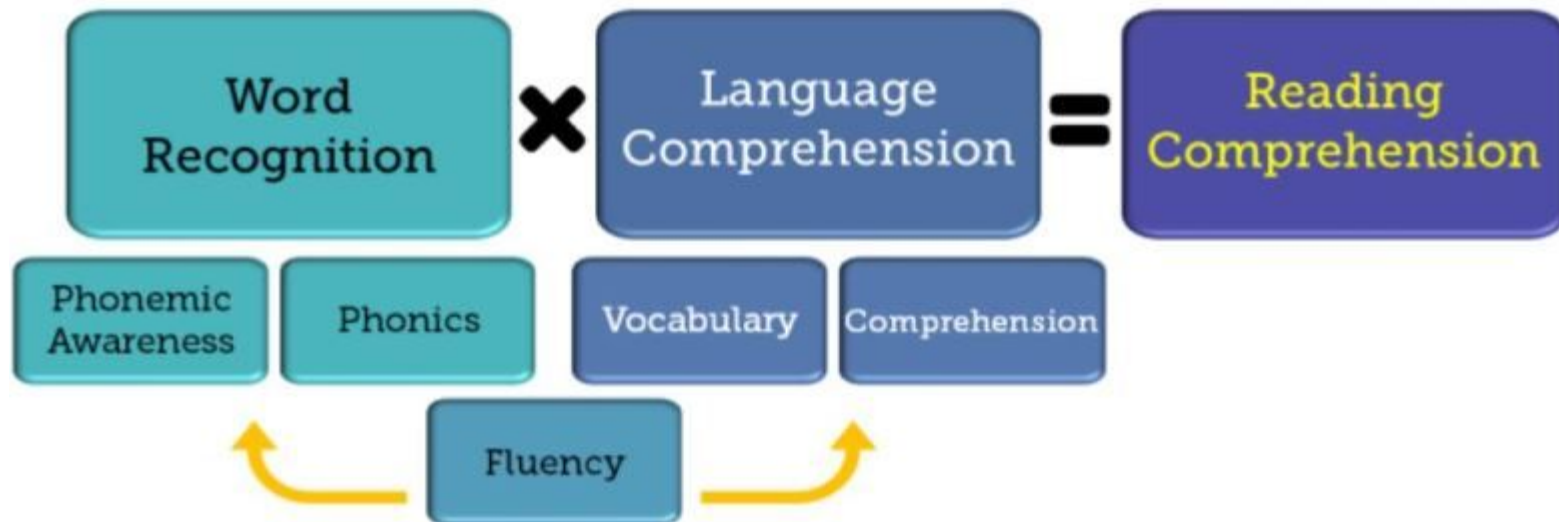
calisthenics



**Dual Route
Cascade Model**



THE SIMPLE VIEW OF READING



A Study of the HELPS Reading Fluency Intervention with Adult Students

The aim of this study is to advance knowledge regarding effective, evidence-based text fluency interventions for low-literacy adults by pairing trained undergraduate tutors with adult literacy learners for online tutoring using the HELPS Program.



- 1. What is the impact of HELPS with adult learners?**
- 2. How is the HELPS program perceived by the adult learner?**
- 3. How is the tutoring relationship perceived by the college student working with the adult learner?,**
- 4. What are the specific needs for vocabulary support during the intervention?**



**The Helping Early Literacy with
Practice Strategies (HELPS)
Curriculum: Instructional Passages**
Developed for Use with the
HELPS Program

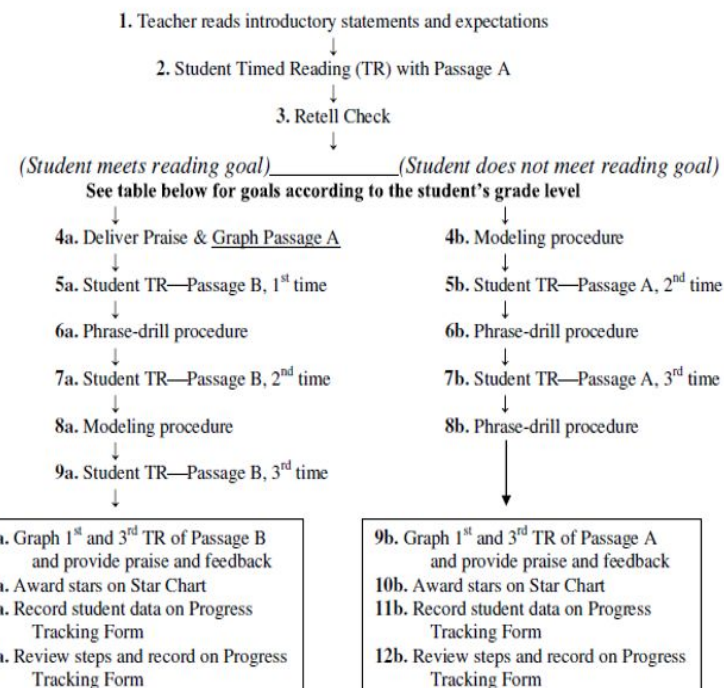
John C. Begeny
Courtney M. Mann
Matthew D. Cunningham
Ho Yan Tsuen

The
HELPS
Curriculum

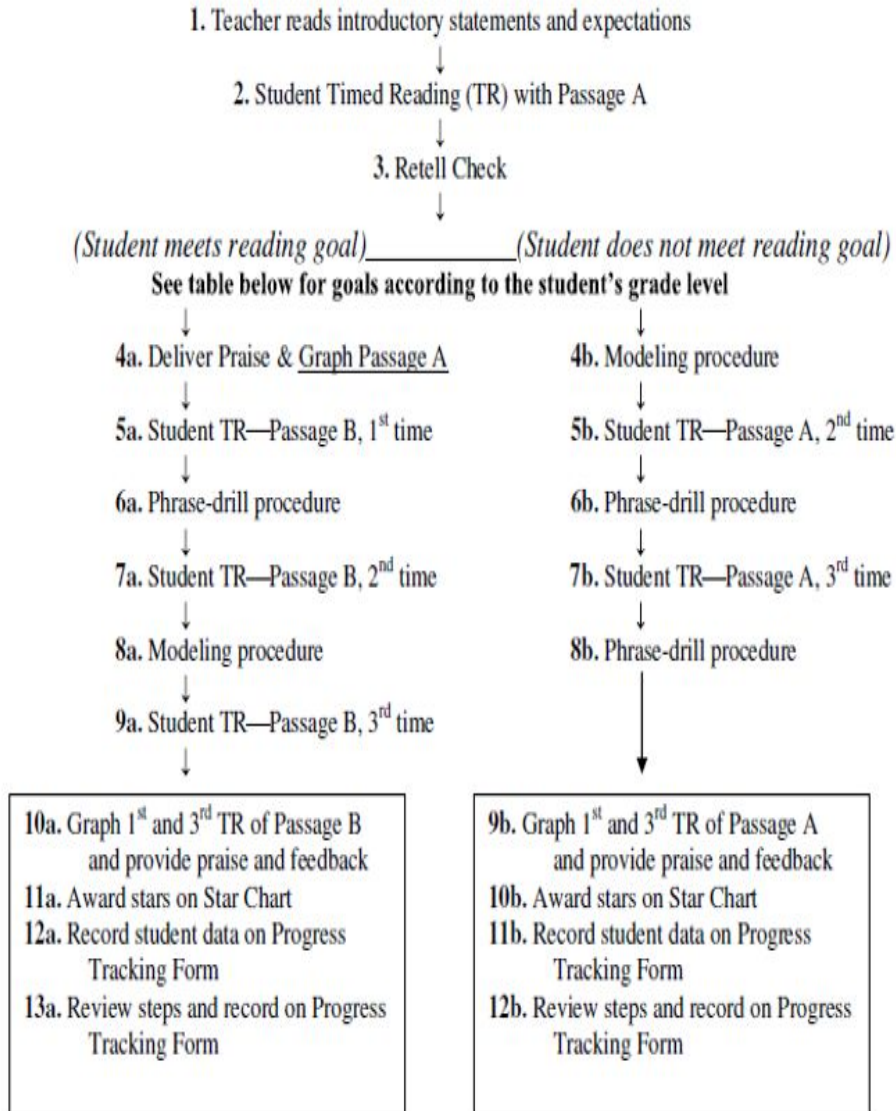
Student Passages

The Intervention

HELPS One-on-One Program Implementation Flow Chart



HELPS One-on-One Program Implementation Flow Chart



Key Elements

Repeated Reading

Model Reading

Phrase Practice (drill)

Timed Reading

Analysis & LOTS of
positive reinforcement

Data is graphed for the student to monitor their progress.



The Participants

To participate, an adult learner must be ...

- ✓ Enrolled in an Adult Basic Education program,
- ✓ Speak English well enough to be tutored in English,
- ✓ Have internet and computer access,
- ✓ Be willing to allow their ABE program to share standardized test scores with NCSU,
- ✓ Take additional short tests, and
- ✓ Be willing to participate in three 30-minute tutoring sessions weekly for 20-50 sessions (at least 8 weeks)!



**Assessment
Protocols**

- **DIBELS Oral Fluency Assessment, Beginning of Year Grade 3 - 5**
- **WIAT 4 Phonemic Proficiency**
- **WIAT 4 Word Reading**
- **WIAT 4 Listening Comprehension (Receptive Vocabulary, only)**
- **WIAT 4 Oral Expression (Expressive Vocabulary, only)**
- **WIAT 4 Pseudo Word Decoding**
- **Woodcock Johnson Reading Vocabulary subtests (Synonyms and Antonyms)**
- ***Secondary Data: TABE and CASAS scores***

What do you think?

1. Do you have students within this inclusion criteria that could benefit from tutoring in reading fluency?
2. If not, is it a problem with the criteria? What would need to change to meet your students' needs?
3. What do you consider to be the greatest academic literacy challenge for your ABE students?
4. What advice or requests do you have for me?
5. What outstanding questions do you have about the study and/or the intervention?



**Preliminary
Findings**

- 1. Recruiting adult learners is far harder than expected, but undergraduate tutors are lining up to participate.**
- 2. The one FALL tutor-learner pairing is going strong, and has completed 22 sessions to date. The other 6 started last week. One additional learner was enrolled just yesterday.**
- 3. All participating learners have low to extremely low foundational skills as assessed by subtests of the WIAT 4.**

An Evaluation of the Helping Early Learners with Practice Strategies (HELPS) Program with Adult Learners



Is reading difficult for you?

Do you have to read sentences more than once to understand them?

Do you feel like you read word-by-word instead of whole sentences?

Do you lose your place a lot when you read?

When you read aloud, do you feel like you sound like a robot?

If you answered yes to any or all of these questions, there is a research study that might be interesting to you. NCSU is studying a reading fluency intervention that is already well researched with children, works with adults, but has not yet been researched with adults. Participants will receive three 20-30 minute online tutoring sessions each week with a tutor from the college, at no cost. Participants will also earn up to \$200 (\$5 per session).



To participate, you must be

- Enrolled in levels 1, 2, 3, or 4 of an Adult Basic Education program,
- Speak English well enough to be tutored in English,
- Have internet and computer access,
- Willing to allow your ABE program to share your test scores with NCSU,
- Take some additional short tests, and
- Willing to participate in tutoring sessions for 20-50 sessions (at least 8 weeks)!

Are you interested? Do you think this might be helpful to you?

If so, please contact [Amy Van Oostrum-Engler](mailto:avanoos@ncsu.edu) to set up a private Zoom meeting to learn more about the study and get started.

[Amy Van Oostrum-Engler](mailto:avanoos@ncsu.edu)

avanoos@ncsu.edu

Cell number to text or talk text - 919-632-0361

Please be sure to share your name and school when you reach out.



Amy Van Oostrum-Engler

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