Supporting Adults’ Digital Literacy Learning: Exploring a Self-Paced Tutor Facilitated Approach

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Where We’re Heading Today

- **Part 1 (10 mins)**
  - Getting Acquainted

- **Part 2 (70 mins)**
  - Exploration and discussion

- **Part 3 (10 mins)**
  - Reflection
Resources for You

● **Slides**
  ✓ Available on the Summer Institute Webpage

● **Workshop Website**
  ✓ For self-exploration within and beyond workshop

● **Video Snippets**
  ✓ For demonstration and discussion

● **Reflection**
  ✓ Quick Write and Discuss
Getting Acquainted
Our Group

- Share a broad commitment to building literacy and language pathways to social and economic justice for underserved and vulnerable populations

- Partner with community based organizations nationally to help individuals acquire digital literacy skills

- Provide a platform for partnership around through Learner Web, a digital learning platform designed for adult learners
Research Supported By

- Grants from the Institute of Library and Museum Services (LG- 06-11-0340-11)

- Broadband Opportunities Technology Program (41-43-B10593) of the U.S. Department of Commerce
Getting to Know You

- What are your roles in adult education?
  - Teacher?
  - Program administrator?
  - Policy maker?
  - Researcher or evaluator?

- What settings/systems do you work in?
  - K-12?
  - Community college?
  - CBO?
  - Government?
  - University?
Why should digital literacy be an important focus in adult education?
Share Your Thoughts
Why Does Digital Literacy Matter?

There are a significant number of adults within our society who are unable to take advantage of online resources and participation (Pew and American Life Project, 2013).
Why Does Digital Literacy Matter?

- **Technology** has a growing importance in how people access information and communicate with one another.
- ICTs play a central role in our modern age, permeating every aspect of our social and workplace lives.
- Being online connects us to educational opportunities, public services, healthcare, civic engagement, and entertainment.
Why Does Digital Literacy Matter?

- Digital literacy skills are fundamental in a world that is increasingly dependent on digitally mediated activities.

- Without these vital skills, members of marginalized populations are at further risk for economic, social, and cultural exclusion.

- Society at large is diminished if these voices are lost.
National Trends in Internet Use & Skills

- 15% of American adults did not use the Internet (2013)
  - Relevance (34%)
  - Usability (32%)
  - Price (19%)
  - Lack of availability/access (7%)

- Digital inequality persists
  - Above factors sharply impact digital equity (Pew Internet Studies, 2014)
  - Economics, age, and background experience dictate who is and isn’t online (DiMaggio & Hargittai, 2011)
Context of this work

BTOP Service Project

Research: Digital Literacy Acquisition

Data Subset: Implementation & Partnerships
Wide Range of Implementation Settings & Partnerships

- Adult Ed Center Run by the Public Library
- Re-entry Program
- Urban Workforce Centers
Self-Paced and Tutor Facilitated Digital Literacy Learning
Learning Design: Key Ingredients

Structured Online Platform

Community Tutors

Self-paced, Learner Directed
Structured Online Platform

Web based learning platform

- Designed for adult learners
- Supports goal-setting
- Progress is saved
- Reports to learner and teacher/tutor
- Links with other online and offline resources and systems
Digital Literacy Learning Plans

- Learners Set Goals Based on what they want to learn

- Goal Clusters
  - Computer & Internet Skills
  - Introduction to Career Paths
  - Broadband Consumer Education
Why Self-Paced and Tutor Facilitated?

Longitudinal Study of Adult Learning (LSAL) Followed 1,000 high school dropouts for 9 years (Reder, 2009).

- Individuals have educational or occupational goals but lack realistic plans to reach them
- Adult education, social services, and occupational preparation are often poorly coordinated and are not wrapped around the individual
Why Self-Paced and Tutor Facilitated?

Self-paced
- Learners drop into and out of programs as life circumstances change
- Learners select goals (and resume) progress toward them flexibly
- Learner engage in review as needed

Tutor-facilitated
- Individuals receive customized support
- Patience was cited as the most important quality of tutors (not content knowledge)
Exploring Self-Paced & Tutor Facilitated Digital Literacy Learning

10 minute website exploration
Share Your Thoughts
What are the results/outcomes from this approach?
Video Snippet: Tutor & Learner Interactions
Discuss

✔ What factors appeared to be important to the learner?

✔ How did the tutor describe the support offered?

✔ How are the learning interactions described by these participants like those in your learning program?

✔ How are the learning interactions different?
Learner Path

Entry

Program Interaction

Skills Integration & Discovery

I’m not going to break it!

I can do it!

This is important to me!
Outcomes

• Empowerment
• Transformation
• Independence
• Self-confidence
Partnership Building

- Workforce Center
  - Digital literacy program
  - Overlapping Connections across church, farm, community businesses, and social networks
- Educational Support Services for GED
- School District
- Library
Partnership Building

- Workforce & Literacy Tutors
- Library & Community Based Organization
- Refer individuals to educational opportunities

Organizational Synergy

Shared Resources

Personal Relationships
Reflection Activity & Discussion
Share Your Thoughts
Thank you for your participation!

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For more information & resources
http://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/lltr/