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Adult Literacy

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Adult Literacy: The Problem [Back to Top](#)

Most children who struggle with reading, spelling, and writing do NOT get the right type of help in school. So they grow into adults who don't read well.



Without the right type of reading instruction, most adults with dyslexia – no matter how smart they are – can't read or write above the third-grade level.

In the United States, that is considered functionally illiterate. At the third-grade level, they don't read well enough to fill out a job application, read a

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As a professional tutor already trained in the Lindamood-Bell LiPS program, I have to tell you that I absolutely LOVE the Barton System and have put it to immediate use.

Your color coding system is wonderful. And I love the physical aspect of your

aspect of your syllable division breaking process. The color coding of prefixes and suffixes makes it easy to see the baseword and derivatives, which is recommended by current research.

I liked the looks of your system, and I'm even more impressed now that I've worked with it for awhile. I'm trying to get the county literacy program to acquire this great system.

*Suzanne Coutchie,
Reading Coach
Davis, CA*

”

memo from their boss, pass the drivers license test, write a note to their child's teacher, or read their child a bedtime story.

Their job options – and earning power – are limited, their success in college is rare, and they drop out of high school at a much higher rate than the national average.

To see some shocking statistics, [click here](#).

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The Solutions [Back to Top](#)

The good news is that it is NEVER too late to improve the reading, spelling, and writing skills of adults with dyslexia.



Two types of organizations provide FREE tutoring to adults who read, write, or spell below an eight-grade level:

- Adult or Family Literacy Programs – based in public libraries
- Adult or Family Literacy Programs – through churches or synagogues

Both of these programs use volunteer tutors. In fact, Susan Barton started as a volunteer tutor in a library-based Adult Literacy Program.

She created the Barton Reading & Spelling System

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The Barton Reading and Spelling System is an Orton-Gillingham-based program. It is meant mainly for home use, so it can potentially save you a lot in clinician fees. There are training tapes for the parents.

Susan Barton, the author and creator of the system, is readily available to answer questions via email or phone. The personal attention and direction you receive is amazing!

(The Barton System was given a 5 Star Rating, their top rating.)

*from LDReview.com,
a consumer's guide
written by parents*

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with volunteer tutors in mind. To be effective with adult students with dyslexia, volunteer tutors need an Orton-Gillingham-based program that provides good and consistent training along with scripted lesson plans. So that's what Susan Barton created. Nothing in the Barton System will offend an adult student.

Many Adult Literacy Programs have discovered that the Barton Reading & Spelling System is an ideal way to quickly train volunteer tutors to work with adults who have, or may have, dyslexia – which is the most common learning disability.

If you are an Adult Literacy Coordinator and don't know how to tell which of your adult students may have dyslexia, ask the students how many of the [warning signs of dyslexia](#) they remember from childhood. Or ask them [these questions](#) during an information interview.

If your adult students have many of these warning signs, the Barton System is a great way to improve their reading, writing, and spelling. And our tutor training DVDs provide an easy and consistent way to train volunteer tutors. Plus we offer free unlimited support to every tutor using the Barton System.

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What Adult Literacy Program Coordinators & Tutors Say [Back to Top](#)

I marvel each day at the common-sense way this whole system is put together, and how easy it is to use.



*Sandy Graham
Project Director
Read To Live, Walnut Creek, CA*

I highly recommend the Barton Reading & Spelling System for library-based literacy programs. This system answers the need for accessible, expert guidance for volunteers teaching adults (and children) with reading disabilities.

It is easy for volunteer tutors to use because the lessons are fully scripted. Both volunteer tutors and learners feel successful using the Barton System.

This is the system that adult literacy programs have been waiting for.

*Molly Sandperl Black
Learning Disabilities Coordinator, Project READ,
Redwood City, CA
and founder, Learning Disability Program,
Stanford University*

We've now trained 50 inmates to act as tutors within the New Jersey State Prison using your DVDs. The training was so successful. It was an "aha" experience, a real eye opener. They immediately recognized what was missing in their tutoring program.

“

As a volunteer tutor, I particularly appreciate the fully scripted lesson plans. The Barton System books give me the words I need to explain the reading and spelling rules, and they remind me to encourage and praise my students. Most important, the program works! I have seen dramatic improvements in the reading and spelling skills of all the students I tutor.

*Sandy Gant
Saratoga, CA*

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*Lois Young, Coordinator of ABC Prison Literacy
Princeton, NJ*

I've gone through both the Barton and the Wilson system. I have found many benefits to yours over Wilson.

Your system incorporates a multisensory approach to sight words. Wilson does not have that.

Yours has a fluency and phrasing part in each lesson that Wilson does not have.

Students learn how to construct sentences as well as write dictated sentences.

Your scope and sequence goes to a higher level.

Although the Wilson System is strong, yours is much stronger.

Danny O'Donnell, Kintnersville, PA

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I can't believe that I am almost 50 years old and I've never known any of this. I didn't even know what a phoneme was until I looked it up in the dictionary.

When I started volunteering at the literacy program, I thought to myself, "This is something that I can do because I read really well." Well, it didn't take me long to figure out that doing and teaching are completely different.

Shocking Statistics [Back to Top](#)

The "Adult Literacy in America" study initiated by Congress in 1988 and reported upon in 1993 was a \$14 million 5-year study by the National Assessment Governing Board in conjunction with the National Center for



Now I understand what the struggling kids are dealing with. I had my doubts at the beginning whether or not I could teach this way, but I'm getting more confident. I can't tell you how impressed I am by your system.

*Joan Lehman
Copperopolis, CA*

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I was very impressed with the care you used in making sure that tutors are knowledgeable

Educational Statistics based upon lengthy interviews with 26,000 adults from 16 to 65 years old in a dozen states.

They reported in 1993 that 92 million Americans – **over 47 % of adults read and write so poorly that it is difficult for them to hold a decent job.**

To read this study, go to
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs99/1999470.pdf>

For a summary page of stats, go to
www.BartonReading.com/literacystats.pdf

High School Graduation Rate

In 1997-98, only 30.5% of students with specific learning disabilities graduated with a standard diploma. (U.S. Department of Education, pIV-17, Table IV-4)

According to the NIH, 80% of student with a specific learning disability actually have dyslexia.

An analysis of data from the National Adult Literacy Survey, 1992, found the following for adults with self-reported learning disabilities, ages 25-64:

The high school dropout rates were:

44.9% for women with self-reported learning disabilities, compared to 16.5% of women without self-reported learning disabilities; and

57.6% for men with self-reported learning disabilities, compared to 15.3% of men without self-reported learning disabilities.

Knowledge about the phonology of the English language when teaching their students. Your program is structured carefully with step-by-step instruction involving all the components of reading that are so crucial to student success.

*Dr. Carol Tolman
Spofford, NH*

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(Vogel, p55, Figure 3.6)

The consequences of low literacy skills:

Poverty

43% of adults at the lowest level of literacy proficiency live in poverty.

Among adults with strong literacy skills, only 4% live in poverty.

Adults with the lowest literacy skills earn a median income of \$240 per week, compared to \$681 for those with the highest skills.

In 1997, the poverty rate among children under age 6 whose best-educated parent had:

less than a high school degree was 62.5%;
a high school degree was 29.2%;
some college was 15.2%; and
a college degree was 2.8%.

Welfare

70% of mothers on welfare have reading skills in the lowest two proficiency levels.

This fact is particularly alarming considering that a mother's literacy level is one of the most significant predictors of a child's future literacy ability.

In the 1992 National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), the average annual household income for the total population was \$30,824, compared to \$10,138 for Aid to

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I highly recommend the Barton Reading & Spelling System

Opening system for library-based literacy programs. This system answers the need for accessible, expert guidance for volunteers teaching adults (and children) with reading disabilities.

It is easy for volunteer tutors to use because the lessons are fully scripted. Both volunteer tutors and learners feel successful using the Barton System.

This is the system that adult literacy programs have been waiting for.

*Molly Sandperl Black
LD Coordinator,
Project READ
Redwood City, CA*

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Families with Dependent Children or public assistance recipients, and \$9,732 for food stamp recipients.

Employment status

Adults at the lowest level of literacy proficiency work an average of 19 weeks per year, compared to 44 weeks per year for those at the highest level.

American businesses lose over \$60 billion in productivity each year due to employees' lack of basic reading skills.

Crime

In America's Prisons, 70% are illiterate

America's prisons are full of poorly educated men and women who come from deteriorating urban neighborhoods with failing public school systems.

Almost three-fourths of those incarcerated have not graduated from high school and a staggering 70 percent are functionally illiterate and read below a fourth grade level.

Inmates in American prisons have a four times greater percentage of learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, than the general public.

U.S. Department of Education figures show that **“75% of prison inmates and 85% of juveniles in correctional facilities are functionally illiterate.”**

This compares to 47% of all adults in the U.S.

who are functionally illiterate.

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs99/1999470.pdf>

Illiteracy is a prison within a prison.

www.bartonreading.com/nces.ed.gov.prisonliteracy.pdf

Statistics on the Corrections Educational System:

<http://www.nifl.gov/nifl/facts/correctional.html>

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I consider myself lucky to have discovered my passion. The Barton System has allowed me to serve my clients well, and their progress has been incredibly gratifying.

*Carol Aines, Learning Specialist
Livermore, CA*

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Canada has similar problems:

“When talking about illiteracy, we must also talk about poverty and unemployment. People with literacy problems in Canada have 2/3 the income of other Canadians, are twice as likely to be unemployed, and many times more likely to receive some form of social assistance. Jobs available to lower-literacy adults tend to be the lowest-paid, and the most insecure.”

National Anti-Poverty Organization:

NAPO Facts, October, 1992

<http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/lww/page07.htm>

How does literacy in the US compare with other countries?

The International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS), a 1997 survey similar in design to the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), compared the literacy skills of adults in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

The results showed that the US has more adults in Levels 1 and 2 than any of the other countries

except Poland.

For a more detailed report on the IALS, go to www.nifl.gov/nifl/facts/reading_facts.html#sadults

Important sites on Adult and Family Literacy:

National Institute for Literacy

www.nifl.gov

National Coalition for Literacy

www.national-coalition-literacy.org

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