

WE LEARN

(Women Expanding—Literacy Education Action Resource Network)

Project Questionnaire for literacy workers Resources and Curricula for Women Achieving Literacy

WE LEARN values and promotes literacy and literature for *all* women—especially those with lower-level English reading and writing skills. Education can become a liberatory opportunity for women disadvantaged by traditional schooling. Women and girls need and deserve access to a variety of creative educational opportunities, programs, resources, and materials at all levels of readability.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to discover what materials literacy workers currently use to meet the needs of women learners in a way that helps women understand their situation *as women*, and as people whose lives are further complicated by issues related to race, ethnicity, age, culture, sexuality, physical or learning disability, or class. *What* resources are currently being used by educators and literacy workers? *How* they are being used? What curriculums and reading materials have been developed ‘in the field’ by literacy and workfare educational programs serving the specific needs of women with lower-level English literacy skills?

HISTORY

A similar study in using a variation of this questionnaire was conducted in 1999-2000. Results of that study will be available on ERIC in the Spring of 2001. This newly edited questionnaire expands on that study and will strive to include more literacy workers in the conversation. The estimated time needed to complete this questionnaire is about one hour.

OUTCOMES

Portions of this research will be used in a dissertation for a doctoral degree in education. Additionally, the benefits of this study will be made available to literacy communities in the following ways:

- Results posted on www.litwomen.org/WLindex.html in the Spring of 2002
- Results provided in print format to those who participate by answering the questionnaire
- Summary prepared for publication
- Specific information about materials and resources will be compiled, annotated, and added to the preliminary resource listing already available at www.litwomen.org/Resources.html

This research also contributes to a process underway to establish WE LEARN as a non-profit organization—resource center / clearinghouse—dedicated to women-centered literacy publishing, review, networking, and distribution. What I hope will emerge is an on-going and vital community of learners, literacy workers, librarians, educators, and writers integrally committed to and involved in the process of creating women-centered (feminist) adult basic literacy materials.

Please distribute freely.

This questionnaire is also available at www.litwomen.org/litq.html.

Please return by September 15, 2001 to:

Mev Miller
1483 Laurel Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55104

Questions & replies can also be directed to:

Phone: 651-646-0097
Fax: 651-646-1153
mev@winternet.com

This research is being conducted by Mev Miller as a section of information for her dissertation for an Ed.D. in Critical Pedagogy (with emphasis on issues of literacy and adult women) at the Univ. of St. Thomas in Minneapolis, MN. Mev is also a co-founder of *Women Leading Through Reading* in Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN. More information can be found at www.litwomen.org/wltr.html.

Section A: Site Specifics

Please have this section filled out by someone in the organization familiar with this information. This person need not be the same person who responds to sections B & C. You may replace this section with organizational literature (such as an annual report to donors) if it contains this information—please send this information with completed sections B & C. The site questions are intended to provide an understanding of the places where certain types of materials are being used. These responses will be kept confidential.

Name of organization _____

Address _____

Phone # _____ Fax # _____

Email address _____

Website URL _____

Describe the general focus of your organization or your mission statement if you have one:

Type of organization (check all that apply):

- Learning center Free standing literacy program Workfare Investment Program
- Prison with educational options Social Service organization with adult ed./literacy component
- Adult Education / literacy located in a public library but not sponsored by the library
- Adult Education / literacy sponsored by the public library
- Adult Education / literacy connected to public school system
- Adult Education connected to— a) community college; or b) a university/ 4-year college
- Alternative/Transitional Housing facility with an adult education / literacy component
- Other (please be as specific as possible)

Who do you serve?

Please provide percentages if available or simply check off all that apply.

Education Levels:

- Completed 5th grade or lower _____
- Completed 5th -12th grade _____
- Graduated from High School _____
- Attend College or Tech School _____

Gender:

- Women _____
- Men _____

Current Program Enrollment:

- ABE (Adult Basic Ed) _____
- ESL (English as 2nd Language) _____
- Pre-Beginning or Beginning _____
- Basic Skills _____
- Pre-GED _____
- GED _____
- College Enrolled _____

Citizenship & Race or Origin:

- US Born
 - European-American _____
 - African-American _____
 - Hispanic-American _____
 - Asian-American _____
 - American Indian _____
 - Arab-American _____
 - Other: _____

Age Range:

- 16 -20 _____
- 21-31 _____
- 31-40 _____
- 41-50 _____
- Older than 50 _____

Immigrant

- East/West Europe _____
- African Countries _____
- Central/South Amer. _____
- East/South/Pacific Asian _____
- Indigenous non US _____
- Middle Eastern _____
- Slavic/Russian _____
- Other: _____

Economic Status:

- TANF ("welfare") _____
- Workfare Program _____
- Homeless _____
- Working Poor _____
- Disability Income _____
- Veteran Income _____
- Other: (Describe) _____

Language:

- English-speaking only _____
- Multilingual _____

Any additional information you'd like to add that you think is important for this study:

Section B: Specific Questions on Reading / Resource Materials

Which of the following published materials do you shelve in your collection how would you rate them? Please use open spaces on the form or additional paper if you need more room for your comments.

Title	Use it	Don't Use It	Don't Know It	Please rate this material:					How do you use this material:			
				1 = Excellent	2	3 = Average	4	5 = Poor	C = Classroom; L = Library;	RI = Recommend to Individuals;	O = Other (Circle all that apply)	
<i>Making Connections: A Literacy and EAL Curriculum from a Feminist Perspective</i> (CCLOW)				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
<i>16 Extraordinary American Women</i> Pub: J. Weston Walch				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
<i>Push</i> by Sapphire				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
<i>When I Was Puerto Rican</i> by Esmerelda Santiago				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
<i>Chicken Soup for a Woman's Soul</i> ed. Jack Canfield				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
"New Books for New Readers" Series (Univ. Press of Kentucky) 1) <i>Heartwood</i> 2) <i>Why Work?</i>				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
Seal Press: <i>You Can Be Free</i> by Ginny NiCarthy				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
Harper Row: <i>Beginning to Heal</i> by Ellen Bass & Laura Davis				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
Morning Glory Press <i>Breaking free from Partner Abuse</i> by Mary Marecek				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O

What additional comments do you have about any of the titles listed above (for example: reading level, general effectiveness, and so on)?

Title	Use it	Don't Use It	Don't Know It	Please rate this material: 1 = Excellent 3 = Average 5 = Poor					How do you use this material: C = Classroom; L = Library; RI = Recommend to individuals; O = Other (Circle all that apply)			
				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
From Laubach Literacy & New Readers Press... <u>"Quick & Easy Guides":</u> 1) <i>Women's Health</i>				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
<u>"Controlled Readers"</u> <i>Pat King's Family</i>				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
<u>"Writer's Voices Series":</u> <i>Selections from...</i> 1) <i>I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings/Heart of a Woman</i>				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
<u>"Today's World Series":</u> 1) <i>Domestic Violence</i>				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O
				1	2	3	4	5	C	L	RI	O

What additional comments do you have about any of the titles listed above (for example: reading level, general effectiveness, and so on)?

Title	Use it	Don't Use It	Don't Know It	Please rate this material: 1 = Excellent 3 = Average 5 = Poor	How do you use this material: C = Classroom; L = Library; RI = Recommend to individuals; O = Other (Circle all that apply)
Laubach continued.... <u>Miscellaneous Titles:</u> 1) <i>The Childbearing Year</i>				1 2 3 4 5	C L RI O
2) <i>A Good Beginning</i>				1 2 3 4 5	C L RI O
3) <i>When a Baby Is New</i>				1 2 3 4 5	C L RI O
4) <i>As a Child Grows</i>				1 2 3 4 5	C L RI O
5) <i>Your Home Is a Learning Place</i>				1 2 3 4 5	C L RI O
6) <i>You and Your Child's Teacher</i>				1 2 3 4 5	C L RI O
Distributed by Peppercorn Books 1) <i>Who Holds the Mirror</i> from the Breast Cancer Oral History Project				1 2 3 4 5	C L RI O
2) <i>Learning for Our Health & Women Getting Together</i>				1 2 3 4 5	C L RI O
3) <i>Welfare Rights & Change</i> (from Literacy South)				1 2 3 4 5	C L RI O
<u>"Black Leaders... Series"</u> 1) <i>Sojourner Truth</i>				1 2 3 4 5	C L RI O
2) <i>Harriet Tubman</i>				1 2 3 4 5	C L RI O
<u>"Our Lives Series"</u> <i>So Many Things I Could Have Written</i>				1 2 3 4 5	C L RI O
<u>Avanti Books Readers</u> <i>My Deaf Son</i>				1 2 3 4 5	C L RI O
<u>Spike Press</u> <i>A Woman's Work</i>				1 2 3 4 5	C L RI O

What additional comments do you have about any of the titles listed above (for example: reading level, general effectiveness, and so on)?

9) Do you create your own printed materials? Why?

If yes,

- When you create your own printed materials, how is this done? Are your learners involved in the process? If so, how?

- Who pays for the production costs?

- Do you use them with subsequent learners or classes? Why or why not?

- Do you make them available to other programs? How?

If your center develops its own materials, please send along sample copies or a list of titles for the purposes of adding it to the collection of resources being developed by this research. Please indicate whether this material is for in-house use only or if you are able or willing to make it available to others. If you would like to make them available for wider distribution, please be sure to include contact information and the price(s). Enclose a brochure or listing if you have one.

10) Would you use a resource/networking center dedicated to women-centered literacy materials? Please comment on what would work best (e.g., printed newsletter, website, mailing list) and what it should do or include.

11) If there are any additional comments you'd like to make about literacy resources or reading materials or curriculum packets and how they reflect issues of specific importance to women, please make them here. Please use additional pages if necessary.

12) What factors are important to you in choosing literacy materials for women or on women's issues?
How would you rate the following?

	Extremely important	Important	Not so Important	Doesn't matter	Comments on this?
Length (in general)and specifically 1-2 pages 3-4 pages more than 5 pages					
Content					
Quality of writing					
Reading level					
Comprehension questions					
Workbook format					
Overall size of book					
Price					
Accompanied by an audiotape					
Accompanied by a website					
Accompanied by a software program					
Accompanied by a teacher's guide or resource book					

Other considerations—please be as specific as possible.

Section D: List of Responders

Please indicate who in your organization responded to each section.

Section	Name of Responder(s) (please print) More than one person may answer each section. Please indicate by (*) who primarily handled each section.	Position in Organization	May I contact you for additional information or for clarification on responses?
A: Site Specifics			_____ no _____ yes by phone _____ email _____ fax _____ mail _____
B: Specific Questions on Reading / Resource Materials			_____ no _____ yes by phone _____ email _____ fax _____ mail _____
C: What Additional Feminist Resources Do You Use?			_____ no _____ yes by phone _____ email _____ fax _____ mail _____

Deadline: July 1, 2001.

Thank you for participating. Please return to:

Ms. Mev Miller
 1483 Laurel Ave.
 St. Paul, MN 55104

651-646-0097
 651-646-1183 (fax)
 mev@winternet.com