

**November 9, 2006**

## **Struggling College Students Making Rapid Gains in Reading Reading Program is Transforming ABE Students**

Adult basic education instructor Lora Shinskie calls the adult learning program she coordinates the “other community college”. Her program addresses a growing dilemma in adult literacy: men and women who can’t read at a level sufficient to be successful in college or the rapidly changing world of work.

Shinskie and several teams of tutors hired by the Community Colleges of Spokane are changing that, she reported at the National Council for Workforce Education annual conference in Albuquerque in October. They are using highly structured methodology to rapidly improve the reading ability of their adult students. The results are impressive and important, she says, and worthy of further investigation by colleges seeking to address the growing epidemic of low reading ability.

Eighteen months ago, certified educators and instructional aides in Spokane began training in Read Right<sup>®</sup> methodology, an interactive constructivist approach to address reading problems. Rather than focus student attention on word identification skills, the methodology creates an environment in which small groups of students (one tutor to four students) use implicit procedural learning to remodel the neural systems that guide the reading process. Every minute of the Read Right program, tutors provide interactive guidance that causes students to produce oral and silent reading that always feels comfortable to the reader, sounds as natural as conversational speech to the listener (no breaks or pauses), and is always 100% comprehensible. There is no focus on awkward word-by-word reading. The focus of the program is not “What is that *word*?” The focus is: “What does *the text say*?”

### **One grade level gained for every 14 hours of tutoring**

Shinskie reported to conference attendees that her adult students make at least one grade level of gain for every 14 hours of tutoring, although, she said, the numbers indicate that most students progress even faster. The results have been achieved even though 46% of the approximately 230 students assisted last year are English language learners.

"I often refer to Read Right as providing the ‘skills trifecta’ for our ESL students,” Shinskie said. “While Read Right is a reading improvement program, the byproduct is that our students also practice their listening and speaking skills."

Shinskie has completed CASAS pre- and post-testing with 47 students. The 39 students who received the most tutoring (83% of all students tested) completed an average 38.6 hours of tutoring and gained an average 8.35 points. A gain of 3 to 5 points is considered significant for ABE students. Again, the average amount of tutoring was only *38.6 hours*.

For qualitative data, Shinskie shared the success stories of a half-dozen adult students in her program. The students said they are feeling more comfortable and confident with their reading,

reading is becoming easier, and improved reading ability is helping them be more successful at home and in other ABE and community college programs.

Nationally, Read Right methodology has been used by over 40,000 children, teens, and adults (including more than 5,800 adults). Data provided by program tutors to Read Right Systems, Inc. indicates that the average rate of improvement for all of the adults, including many English language learners, is one grade level of gain for every 11.5 hours of tutoring – or, an average of five grade levels of gain with 57.5 hours of tutoring.

The Community Colleges of Spokane is expanding the program this year to two additional program sites and investigating the possibility of introducing Read Right's early reading development methods to parents of Head Start children. The program offers new opportunities for pre-K through adult learning because it represents a new view of what the brain requires for excellent reading to develop.

The program was developed by Dee Tadlock, Ph.D., a past president of the national College Reading and Learning Association and a former classroom reading specialist. Dr. Tadlock's first book was written for parents of young children in order to prevent reading problems from forming in the first place. The Read Right intervention program was developed and refined over a 28-year period. The intervention program is presently used at more than 350 schools, community college programs, and industry sites.

**For additional information**

Dr. Tadlock's book, *Read Right! Coaching Your Child to Excellence in Reading* (McGraw-Hill 2005) is available through [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). A free downloadable academic monograph is available at [www.readright.com](http://www.readright.com). The paper explains the science underlying Read Right methodology in detail. The readright website also includes many articles and other information you might find helpful in considering whether this is a program that might be worth further exploration.

To obtain a college information packet, and to answer your questions please contact Maureen Mortlock at the Read Right corporate office, 360-427-9440 or [maureenm@readright.com](mailto:maureenm@readright.com).

Thank you.