

**The following are quotes from an article entitled  
A Conversation with FOB (Focus on Basics)...  
“What Works for Adult ESL Students”, September 2003**

- One of the key findings (of the "What Works for Adult ESL Literacy Students" study) for reading development was that students learned more, as measured in movement on standardized tests, in classes where the teacher made the connection between life outside the classroom and what was learned in the classroom than in classes that did not.
- People who had higher scores (on standardized tests) to start with, tended to read more because it was easier for them.
- Students need practice and they need variety. I think in our emphasis on communicative competence we sometimes forget how much practice is needed before literacy and English take hold and become internalized or "automatized".
- The findings speak for building a rich curriculum that makes a connection between the language and literacy used inside and outside of the classroom and lets these students see that they are gaining skills that reflect what's needed in daily life.
- There needs to be focus, engagement, and practice if language and literacy learning is to take place.
- The study also points toward the need to provide a sufficient focus on structure and practice.

“What Works for Adult ESL Literacy Students” is a study funded by the U.S. Department of Education and carried out jointly by the American Institutes for Research and Aguirre International. As of the September 2003 publication of Focus on Basics, the report was still under review by the Department of Education.