
Pre-GED Program

Program Handbook

Lake County Library System
Adult Literacy Program



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WELCOME

Lake County Library System is extremely excited to provide a Pre-GED program for learners enrolled in the Adult Literacy Program.

We have always worked with learners expressing an interest in obtaining their GED but it has been an informal process and dependent upon the tutors' tapping into existing materials and making them work for the learner. This is not new.

What *is* new is the recent upsurge of learners interested in enrolling in continuing education programs but unprepared to take the TABE test for entry into certification programs (CDL, CNA, TOEFL, etc...) and/or GED classes.

We felt we needed to provide a formal program component to help these learners reach their goals and prepare the tutors to create lessons focused on developing the skills needed for the learners to transition to their selected programs.

Fortunately, we didn't need to recreate the wheel but, rather, identify existing materials and select those that are the most appropriate to our goal — to provide the basics to promote the learner's successful transition to programs that provide the targeted learning and skills development.

Read on to learn more about this innovative program component and what your tutor peers have created to meet the needs of these learners!

BACKGROUND

When we started to plan this new program it was imperative that we identify the need and how we fit in.

- We did **NOT** need to offer what others are already doing and doing well!
- We did **NOT** need to offer what the learners didn't need.
- We did **NOT** need to reach beyond the mission of our program.

We decided that we wanted to:

- Provide appropriate lessons that would assist learners as they transitioned to a GED program.
- Continue to expand the Adult Literacy Program's literacy focus. *and,*
- Enhance recruitment efforts to more effectively engage learner's with continuing education goals.

Final steps:

1. The Lake Technical Center professionals educated us about literacy skills levels that will ensure success as learners' transition to GED classes.
2. The Literacy Team indentified the core components that we wanted the Pre-GED program to include (*see box below*).
3. A core team of tutors stepped forward and met as sub-teams to develop the learner placement tool, review materials, and create curriculum/lesson plans.
4. Sample workbooks were purchased and reviewed.
5. In July 2010, the City of Tavares Public Library stepped up as the first pilot site for the Fast Track Pre-GED classes and the Cooper Memorial Library and City of Leesburg Public Library were waiting in the wings!
6. A pilot group of adult learners were identified and began 'testing' the newly created program.

The end result was the creation of a Pre-GED program that focuses on providing basic math, reading, and writing skills to adult learners who are struggling to successfully transition to a GED or other certification program that requires a TABE test. Additionally, we realize that these same skills are useful to individuals interested in taking the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), a military entrance test. We know that we will not make them masters of each literacy skill but we *will* help them build their confidence, improve their study skills, and feel more prepared to begin to learn the more advanced skills they will need!

Pre-GED Components

Math-- addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, decimals, and word problems.

Reading--main idea, inference, purpose of passage, poetry, fiction, drama, maps, cartoons, and graphs.

Writing-- punctuation, grammar, spelling, sentence structure, organization, and essay.

PLACEMENT TOOLS

To ensure that the learner's skills are appropriate for the Fast Track classes, all learners must be assessed prior to enrollment, using the 2-part placement tool which consists of:

1. Language Arts (LA) – Voyager word list/reading comprehension *and* LA placement packet
2. Math – Math placement packet

All learners must be placed in Voyager level 4 or higher to be eligible to complete the LA and Math placement packets and then be enrolled in the Fast Track classes. **There are no exceptions.** Insufficient skills on the Math and LA placement packets will identify learning needs and might indicate the learner's need for tutoring prior to their participation in a Fast Track class. (*see Fast Track Classes vs Pre-GED Tutoring section*)

If the learner is only interested in participating in the Math class they still must meet the LA placement tool eligibility guidelines as it is imperative that their reading and conversation skills are sufficient to be successful. In addition, if the learner is only interested in participating in the LA classes they do not have to complete the math placement packet.

Placement Tool Process

A cover sheet should be used with both placement packets. It provides privacy as well as offers placement tool instructions.

The Voyager wordlist/reading comprehension component must be facilitated by a trained tutor. Only if the learner successfully scores in Voyager level 4 or higher would the learner be given the LA and Math placement packets. The learner will complete these packets on their own in the library – they do not take them home.

After scoring, a placement tool results cover sheet should be attached indicating the results per packet. It is not the responsibility of the facilitating tutor to inform the learner of their eligibility status. The literacy contact or coordinator will discuss the learner's scores with them.

The placement tool will be used to determine if the learner has the base level skills needed to participate in the Fast Track classes versus determining their specific skills (i.e. decimals, fractions, essay, inference, etc...).

LEARNER ENROLLMENT

As outlined in the Placement Tools section, all learners must be placed in Voyager level 4 or higher and indicate sufficient skills on both the LA and Math placement packets to be eligible to be registered in a Fast Track class. **There are no exceptions.**

If a learner does not meet the eligibility criteria, they will be offered an opportunity to work with a tutor (one-on-one or small group) and, if necessary, put on a waiting list, if there is one.

Once determined eligible, all learners must complete a learner information form, if they are not already enrolled in the LCLS Adult Literacy Program, indicating their current availability (existing learners must provide updated information).

In addition, all eligible learners will receive a Pre-GED program expectations form outlining time commitment & attendance; materials; participation in the Learning Lab as well as other components as needed to include extra practice outside of classroom time; and support resources.

Finally, all enrolled learners will receive a Pre-GED Learner Skills Chart that will track their progress. Facilitating tutors will initial and date each targeted skill as it is achieved.

If a learner completes the Pre-GED placement tool and is eligible to enroll in a Fast Track Class but the class has already begun, they will be allowed to enter the class if they can demonstrate sufficient knowledge to successfully participate from that point forward.

Learners must be registered for a LA and/or Math class before they can participate in the class. Learners **MAY NOT** audit or walk-in to any class – they must be registered for the class prior to their participation.

MATH CLASS

The selected books, resources, and materials that are available for the Math class have been researched and chosen as they target the skills needed for adults to transition into Lake Technical Center's GED program. (See *Background section*) Therefore, any new books, resources, or materials must be discussed with the literacy contact and coordinator prior to being introduced into a Pre-GED Fast Track Class.

The Math class will be held as one class incorporating Breakthrough to Math levels 1 & 2 workbooks. (See *Schedule section*)

The Math curriculum consists of:

1. Primary resources
Breakthrough to Math (BTM) series

Level 1 workbooks	Level 2 workbooks
Understanding Numbers	Understanding and Comparing Fractions
Adding Whole Numbers	Adding and Subtracting Fractions
Subtracting Whole Numbers	Multiplying and Dividing Fractions
Multiplying Whole Numbers	Decimal Fractions
Dividing Whole Numbers	Percents
Word Problems with Whole Numbers	

The above listed workbooks are the only books that will be given to enrolled learners. They will be distributed 'as you go' and not as a complete kit at the first Math class meeting. *BTM levels 1 & 2 must be completed by the end of the Fast Track Math class.*

Tutors will be provided with:*

- BTM teacher manuals for Levels 1 & 2
- BTM learner workbooks
- BTM workbook for Level 1 & 2

2. Secondary resources*
 - McGraw Hill: Pre-GED
 - Steck-Vaughn: Complete PreGED preparation
 - New Readers Press: Pre-GED Workbook Math
 - Websites
 - Casio Calculator
 - Flash Cards – addition, subtraction, multiplication, division

*These resources are available to tutors for reference, in-class use, and Learning Lab only. They are not to be distributed to learners. All copy requests must be submitted to the literacy contact or coordinator. Practice worksheets, examples, and homework activities may be obtained from these resources. Copying is limited to **no more** than 5 double-sided copies per learner, per class. In addition, due to copyright issues, we may not be able to authorize all copy requests.

LANGUAGE ARTS CLASS

The selected books, resources, and materials that are available for the Language Arts (LA) class have been researched and chosen as they target the skills needed for adults to transition into Lake Technical Center's GED program. (See *Background section*) Therefore, any new books, resources, or materials must be discussed with the literacy contact and coordinator prior to being introduced into a Pre-GED Fast Track Class.

The LA class will be held as two classes. LA Part 1 concentrating on Voyager/Endeavor levels 4 & 5 workbooks and LA Part 2 - Essay Writing concentrating on levels Voyager/Endeavor 4 & 5 and Timeless Tales. (See *Schedule section*)

The LA curriculum is obtained from (see *Language Arts Curriculum section*):

1. Primary resources

Voyager/Endeavor levels 4 & 5 - *must be completed by the end of the LA class.*

Student Book level 4

Student Book level 5

The above listed workbooks are the only books that will be given to enrolled learners. They will be distributed 'as you go' and not as a complete kit at the first LA class meeting.

Tutors will be provided with:*

Voyager/Endeavor teacher manuals for Levels 4 & 5

Voyager/Endeavor learner workbooks for Levels 4 & 5

Voyager supplemental learning tools, as available

2. Secondary resources*

- McGraw Hill: Pre-GED
- Steck-Vaughn: Complete PreGED preparation
- New Readers Press: Pre-GED Workbook Writing 1 & 2
- Timeless Tales
- Dictionaries
- Websites
- LA games – i.e. grammar bingo, etc...

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McGraw-Hill

Language Arts, Writing

- Chapters 1 – 6 (pp 45-137) – parts of speech & sentences*
 - Nouns
 - Pronouns
 - Verbs
 - Adjectives
 - Adverbs
 - Sentence fragments
 - Subject, predicate

Language Arts, Reading

- Chapter 1 (pp 189-213) – dictionary, syllables, prefixes & suffixes, synonyms & antonyms

**refer to the 'Parts of Speech Cheat Sheet'*

Pre-GED skill workbook – Writing 1

Topics covered in Writing 1 are grammar, spelling, and writing basics. The LA placement tool included questions on the following skills in Writing 1, with the exception of capital letters*:

Parts of a Sentence
Nouns and Plurals
Capital Letters
Pronouns
Possessives
Pronoun Agreement
Verb Tenses
Irregular Verbs
Subject-Verb Agreement
Spelling

Pre-GED Writing 1 workbook contains the following sections:

- Skill inventory (obtained selected LA placement questions)
- Skill builder (focused learning on above list)
- Test smart (provides testing ideas/tips)
- Skill review

**refer to the 'LA Placement Tool'*

Voyager/Endeavor levels 4 & 5

Reading Comprehension

Identify Main Idea & Details

Identify Facts & Key Facts

Sequence of Events

Problems and Solutions

Apply Information

Cause and Effect

Categorize Information

Recognize Problems & Opinions

Follow Steps in a Process

Compare & Contrast

Writing

Lessons include activities that require written responses that are not essay writing exercises. See *Voyager Essay Question* outline. They include:

- Short answers
- True/False
- Tables & Charts
- Short paragraphs
- Check lists
- Paragraph corrections

The writing skills addressed in McGraw-Hill and the Pre-GED workbook Writing 1 can be reinforced in the Voyager/Endeavor levels 4 & 5 through in-class activities. For example ask learners to:

- Identify a number of the following parts of speech – nouns, pronouns, and adverbs, for example.
- Answer a question in the workbook in a full sentence using correct punctuation and spelling.
- Insert a different adjective for a specific sentence.
- Provide a list of synonyms or antonyms for selected vocabulary in a story.
- Etc...

McGraw-Hill

Language Arts, Writing

- Chapters 7 – 8 (pp 139-174)
 - Combining simple sentences
 - Connectors
 - Conjunctions
 - Punctuating perfectly
 - Paragraph organization

Pre-GED skill workbook – Writing 2

Topics covered in Writing 2 are sentence structure, organization, and essay. The LA placement tool included questions on the following skills in Writing 2, with the exception of paragraph writing:

Complete Sentences
Compound Sentences
Complex Sentences
Run-on Sentences
Paragraphs
Topic Sentence
Relevant Ideas
Order of Ideas
Parallel Form

Pre-GED Writing 2 workbook contains the following sections:

- Skill inventory
- Skill builder (focused learning on above list)
- Test smart (provides testing ideas/tips)
- Skill review

Voyager/Endeavor levels 4 & 5

Learners will be instructed to bring their Voyager levels 4 & 5 workbooks to the LA Part 2 Essay Class. The paragraph writing exercises skipped in the Language Arts Part 1 class will be completed.

Lessons include activities that require paragraph construction and the creation of a draft that can be revised as new skills are learned. They include:

- Responses to stories read
- Personal experiences
- Personal goals
- Poems
- Rewriting and correcting paragraphs from the workbook
- Opinion writing

Timeless Tales

The Timeless Tales series is a collection that contains:

Adventures
Fables
Folktales
Legends
Love Stories
Myths
Tales of Wonder
Tall Tales

An overview:

- 70 engaging stories, which can be read in any order, grouped into eight different books (48 pages)
- Each book offers lessons that stimulate thinking and language skills, including pre- and post-reading activities, key vocabulary, comprehension and discussion questions, and writing practice
- Stories are divided into manageable sections following directed reading strategies, with post-reading activities emphasizing summarization and sequence of events
- Vocabulary exercises are designed to provide students with familiar words, new words, and idiomatic phrases

SCHEDULE

Math Class

- 12 weeks
- minimum of 1.45 hours once per week
- targeted goals per meeting adhering to the overall class objectives

Language Arts Class

1. LA #1 – reading comprehension, parts of speech, and basic sentence structure
 - 26 weeks
 - minimum of 1.45 hours once per week
 - targeted goals per meeting adhering to the overall class objectives
2. LA #2 – essay writing
 - 8 weeks
 - minimum of 1.45 hours once per week
 - targeted goals per meeting adhering to the overall class objectives
 - LA #1 is a pre-requisite for LA #2 unless the learner demonstrates knowledge equivalent to LA #1

Learning Lab

- ongoing
- minimum of 2 – 4 hours once per week

The Pre-GED class schedules will reflect the availability of space, tutors, and learners at each Fast Track library location. Scheduling of the room(s) will be coordinated by the literacy contact at each library. The days, times, space, and date ranges may vary from library to library and from class to class.

It is mandatory that the established schedule be strictly followed. This includes meeting dates, times, space, and overall class objectives. *(see Math Class and Language Arts class section)* Any changes must be discussed and approved by the literacy contact and/or coordinator prior to implementation.

When possible, Fast Track Classes and Learning Labs will have 2 tutor facilitators to cover illness, vacations, or other unexpected conflicts.

LEARNING LAB

The Learning Lab is an essential component of the Pre-GED program in that it will provide the additional support that learners may need to meet the demands of the Fast Track Classes. For that reason, a Learning Lab must be available at each of the three Fast Track Class locations – Tavares, Leesburg, and Cooper Memorial libraries.

It will:

- Be available, *at a minimum*, at the 3 Pre-GED Fast Track libraries;
- Be offered no less than 2 times per month for no less than 2 hours;
- Facilitated by volunteer tutors and, where available, volunteer learner lab assistant(s);
- Be a combined lab – Math & Language Arts;
- Be a required component of the Pre-GED program for struggling learners;
- Offer extra learning activities, exercises, and worksheets on targeted skills; homework assistance; computer-based learning on targeted websites; peer-to-peer studying; and tutor 'instruction'. The Learning Lab **will not** focus exclusively on one-to-one tutor support.;
- Provide a variety of learning tools for use in the Learning Lab ONLY to include flash cards; index cards; LA games; calculators; and copies of all Pre-GED books, resources, and curriculum.*;
- Be available to all enrolled learners actively working on a Pre-GED goal, either in the Fast Track Classes or with individual tutors. (*see Fast Track Classes vs Pre-GED Tutoring section*)

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FAST TRACK CLASSES vs PRE-GED TUTORING

There truly is no difference between Fast Track classes and Pre-GED tutoring other than the format that the learners receive the information. Both opportunities utilize the same curriculum, books, and materials and all learners will have access to the Learning Labs located at the three designated libraries – Leesburg, Tavares, and Cooper Memorial. The major differences are:

1. Fast Track classes
 - a. follow a formal, fast paced schedule with an enrollment period and 'graduation';
 - b. adhere to an overall class objective;
 - c. learners must be determined eligible before they can be registered for a class;
 - d. learners will work as a group with one or two tutors in the Fast Track classes;
 - e. learners must participate in class activities; complete homework; and demonstrate a knowledge of the information covered to continue in the Fast Track classes
2. Tutoring
 - a. there is no formal schedule with an enrollment period or 'graduation';
 - b. although all Pre-GED learners will complete the placement process, they do not have to score at a V4 or V5 level in Voyager to work with a tutor on Pre-GED skills;
 - i. placement results will provide an snapshot of the skills the learner needs to attain before they are able to either enroll in a Pre-GED Fast Track Class or transition to a GED or certification program
 - ii. if the learner is referred back to the Fast Track Classes, the placement tool will need to be completed again to determine if they meet the eligibility criteria
 - c. learners may work one-to-one with a tutor or participate in a small group;
 - d. the learner sets the pace and the tutor assists them as they build their skills

Learners may be enrolled in a Fast Track Class as well as be working with a tutor. Learners may also transition from working with a tutor to enrolling in a Fast Track class or vice versa.

LEARNER ATTENDANCE

All learners participating in the Pre-GED program will be enrolled in the Lake County Library System Adult Literacy Program and, therefore, will require tracking of attendance and performance.

Due to the fast-paced schedule of the Fast Track Classes, all learners must attend each class, complete homework, and be prepared to participate in the class to be allowed to continue. If a learner misses 1 class, facilitating tutor(s) must alert the literacy contact or literacy coordinator who will, on a case-by-case basis, determine if the learner may continue in the Fast Track Class. The learner is responsible to contact the library and, if they are going to return to the class, collect any missed materials and/or homework assignments. If the learner falls too far behind or misses too many classes they will be asked to step out of that class and they will be offered an opportunity to join the next scheduled class. (see *Waiting Lists section*)

Reporting process:

Fast Track Classes

Facilitating tutors will be required to maintain and submit an attendance sheet for Fast Track Classes and the Learning Lab. Not only will the tutor(s) track learner attendance but they will also be responsible to provide their preparation and travel time per class and/or meeting.

As the curriculum is pre-set, a monthly report will not be required for Fast Track Classes or the Learning Lab. But, the Learner Skills Chart must be completed as the learner progresses and this information must be shared with the literacy contact and coordinator. (see *Learner Enrollment section*)

Attendance sheets are due no later than the 10th of the month for the preceding month.

Tutoring

Tutors should treat individual and group classes in the same manner as they would for non-Pre-GED learners. Tutor monthly reports or class reports should be completed and submitted no later than the 10th of the month for the preceding month.

WAITING LISTS

Fast Track Class size will be determined by space, tutor comfort level, and learner interest. Therefore, a waiting list may be necessary. All learners must go through the Pre-GED placement process to be put on the waiting list. (see *Placement Tools section*)

Enrollment in a new Fast Track Class will be based on learner eligibility per placement process guidelines; first-come, first-served; and availability. There is one exception to this process, though. Learners who request an opportunity to repeat the class will be allowed to immediately enroll in the next scheduled class, bumping the waiting list. This option is only offered one (1) time. If they need to repeat the class more than one (1) time, they will need to go on the waiting list, if there is one, before they can enroll in another Fast Track Class.

Learners on a waiting list for the next Fast Track Class should be offered alternative options until they can enroll in the desired class:

- Pre-GED websites – *we have a list of appropriate sites*
- ANR collection materials
- Tutoring – individual, small group, and/or mini courses

TUTOR ROLES

The Pre-GED program offers many exciting ways for tutors to become involved!

A tutor can:

1. Be trained to implement the Placement Tool (*see Placement Tools section*)
 - All interested learners must complete the Placement process
 - The first component of the Placement process requires a facilitator to implement the Voyager placement tool
2. Facilitate/co-facilitate a Fast Track Class
 - Math
 - Language Arts
 - Part 1 – reading, comprehension, parts of speech, basic sentence structure
 - Part 2 – essay writing
3. Facilitate/co-facilitate a Learning Lab
 - Combined Math and Language Arts
 - Homework, targeted skills, and additional learning activities
 - Limited one-to-one tutoring
4. Work with an individual learner or a small group of learners
 - Learners unable to attend a Fast Track Class due to:
 - Scheduling conflicts
 - Desire to work with a tutor one-to-one
 - Did not meet the eligibility requirements
 - Unable to attend Fast Track library locations

All tutors participating in some form of the Pre-GED program will be responsible for:

1. Commitment to class or individual tutoring schedule(s)
2. Curriculum review and implementation
3. Lesson preparation
4. Reporting
5. Team meetings
6. Professional development
7. Consistent communication with literacy contact and coordinator

PRE-GED FORMS

1. Placement Tools
 - a. Language Arts
 - b. Math
2. Learner Information Form
3. Pre-GED program expectations flyer
 - a. Distributed at enrollment
4. Learner Skills Tracking Chart
 - a. Distributed at first class meeting
 - b. Tutor keeps master
 - c. Tutor initials and dates learner's charts
5. Attendance Sheets
 - a. Maintained daily and submitted on a monthly basis
6. Fast Track Class schedule
 - a. Distributed at first class meeting
7. Pop Quizzes/Tests
 - a. Materials provided
 - b. Tutor created
8. Pre-GED website list
9. Pre-GED program component evaluation
 - a. Distributed mid-way and at end of Fast Track Class