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The *KET Adult Learning Quarterly* is produced by KET, The Kentucky Network, Enterprise Division and is distributed nationwide to adult educators and those with related interests.

Articles examine methods and technologies; explore locations and applications; and feature leaders who find successful, innovative ways to reach adult learners using KET materials. Unless otherwise noted, the material in this publication is not copyrighted. Please feel free to use it in the cause of adult education.

If you have comments, questions or story ideas, please send them to Margaret Norman or Phyllis Youngerman, by mail: KET Enterprise, 560 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502-2200; by phone: (800) 354-9067; by fax: (606) 258-7396; or by e-mail: AdultEd@ket.org. Visit us on the web at: www.ket.org/adulted/



WINTER '00

Business/Education/Broadcast Improving the Odds in Reno

The new *Workplace Essential Skills (WES)* series is a multidisciplinary tool: Its appeal is not to the educator alone, but to the business owner and the economic development planner as well. One of the best ways to use the new tool may be through a partnership involving private-sector, non-profit service and governmental facets of the community.

Patricia Miller, Vice President for Programming, Promotion and Education at PBS member station KNPB in Reno, Nevada, says that, "this kind of real-world-based programming is really needed." People who begin studying for the GED often have low skills and need a job at the same time. Combining a focus on pre-GED math and literacy skills with job-hunting tips "is really powerful," says Miller, a former adult education instructor.

KNPB is moving into its second broadcast cycle for the series, and also helped to field test *WES* during production, as part of the PBS LiteracyLink® initiative.

"For the general audience, we first broadcast two 30-minute programs back to back at noon, Monday through Friday," she notes. "We will probably keep airing it for a year, so that people have access." The station also supplies an overnight feed that includes *GED ON TV* as well as *WES*, so that adult education providers who purchase a license can tape and use the materials in classrooms, fitting episodes into their individual curricula.

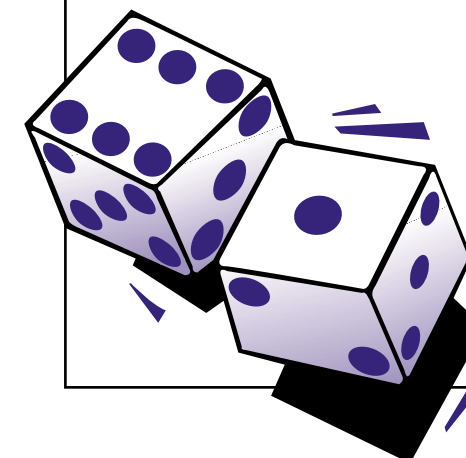
One of the nice things about the series, she notes, is that it is crafted in modules, "so you don't have to start with Program #1." Another benefit is that *WES* "was actually designed with adult learners in mind... We're realizing that it really isn't practical simply to 'adapt' K-12 materials for older learners. It's important to the learners to know that the materials have been designed with their needs in mind. That is something else that *WES* does and does well."

But airing the series is only the beginning. *WES* can be of little use until the public and education providers know about it. To facilitate awareness, KNPB held focus groups with representatives from casinos (Nevada's largest employer of entry-level workers and in need of people with basic literacy skills); the state Department of Adult Education; the Northern Nevada Literacy Council; and the International Professional Development Center, working with entry level immigrants and focusing on economic development, and others. "Together, we made a plan," she says.

Beginning in January 2000, the Council began using each *WES* episode as a basis for two lessons in its classes.

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"This kind of real-world—based programming is really needed. Combining a focus on pre-GED math and literacy skills with job-hunting tips 'is really powerful'."



WINTER '00

Winter 2000

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BILL ANTHONY
SYNSOL – Synergetic Solutions
6416 Kiko Street, Diamondhead, MS 39525
Phone: (228) 255-0369, Fax: (228) 255-0169
E-mail: synsol@msn.com

CAROL ATKINS
1020 East Pearl Street, Monticello, FL 32344
Phone: (850) 997-6145, Fax: (850) 997-6145
E-mail: cगतkins@webtv.net

CHERYL GOTTLIEB
10700 NW 7th Court, Plantation, FL 33324
Phone: (305) 364-3200, Fax: (305) 364-0085
E-mail: globaltraining@usa.net

RON GRIFFIN
National Sales Manager, KET
560 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502
Phone: (800) 354-9067, Fax: (606)
E-mail: rgriffin@ket.org

ANN & GARY LEAR
Resource Development Systems
P.O. Box 3185, Lake City, FL 32056-3185
Phone: (904) 754-0920, Fax: (904) 754-0920
E-mail: gelear@rds-net.com (Gary)
adlear@rds-net.com (Ann)

BILL MCVEY
730 S. Fairview, Park Ridge, IL 60068-4748
(847) 825-0830, Fax: (847) 825-6878
Jwmcvey@aol.com

JAMES USITALO
Innovative Education, Inc.
212 West 10th Street, Suite A260
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3007
Phone: (317) 917-9770, Fax: (317) 917-9773
E-mail: justitalo@innovativeEducation.com

If you'd like to represent KET, send an e-mail message to Ron Griffin (rgriffin@ket.org).

Transportation Can Make the Difference

Mobility is crucial in any discussion of jobs, education or access to health care.

The Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) focuses on mobility and its benefits to adult learners, older citizens, the disabled, transient labor and other groups whose educational, social or work activities are hindered by lack of access to reliable transportation.

Associate Director Scott Bogren explains that CTAA is both a resource for local transit organizations or community groups struggling with transit issues; and a lobbyist, seeking funding to develop mobility choices and educate citizens about available services. "We don't often initiate (contact with individuals or local agencies)," Bogren notes; "typically, someone comes to us." For those who contact CTAA, the non-profit agency provides technical resources, linking them with "the right people in their state" and advising on steps to take in order to establish a projected service; perhaps suggesting greater coordination among existing programs; and, occasionally, funding a demonstration project. CTAA is not primarily a funding source, however; its purpose is to teach and to guide.

Buses may provide an answer in some areas, rail in others. Moving away from stereotypes helps, too. Bogren recalls one system that allows riders to pay the fare in currency or in recyclable goods; another system has set start- and end-points for each route, but is "flexible in between"; riders may call and request pick-up. That system delivered 60,000 rides in one year. "We want people to have alternatives—not just the auto or nothing," Bogren says. "Each answer is unique to the community. It works best when people are willing to look at transit problems in an innovative way."

A community college in Arkansas, for example, sought help in launching a transportation system where there was none. The college wanted this not only for students, Bogren notes, but also for area seniors, whom greater mobility would enable to

live at home rather than in a group setting; and for general economic development. The rationale: Public transit provides a way to get TO jobs; businesses stop worrying about an adequate supply of labor and remain in the area; and more tax revenue flows into the community. Bogren cites one national study, focusing on transit systems of all sizes and revealing that for every dollar going into public transit, \$6 comes back in taxes.

In another case, CTAA was invited to the Zuni Pueblo in New Mexico, Bogren says. "We helped them launch a transportation system within the reservation and also up to Gallup, New Mexico. Thirty people on the reservation got jobs just by being able to go to Gallup, and another dozen or so got further education at Gallup Community College." Statistics show that 80% of those on the reservation are unemployed, and 50% have no cars. "The mobility option made a huge difference."

In Massachusetts, CTAA helped residents coordinate services for the disabled and other riders that already existed, but were not formally working together. Through coordination, a system was established, initiating hundreds of rides a month to jobs, where none had been before.

Bogren notes that "30% to 40% of the nation's rural counties still have no public transportation." Yet, when services exist, people's lives change.

Bogren recalls visiting rural Missouri as an observer. "I rode a (new community transit) system to talk to the passengers," he says. "One lady was in her 70s; she was a volunteer and had helped raise money for the system. Before that, she had been stuck in her house. Now, she was able to shop for groceries, visit friends, and do volunteer work. A lot of seniors are woefully isolated—they can't drive, their family has moved away, they can't get out. (With public transit) they can live normal lives."



community transportation ASSOCIATION

Membership in CTAA is open to groups and individuals. For more information about membership or assistance on transit issues, visit the web site at www.CTAA.org, or call the Resource Center at 1-800-527-8279.

"The people of this country are aging. In the future, these types of alternatives will not be just suggestions—they will be demanded," Bogren says. Today's group of seniors has been the most mobile in history, and they won't stand for being stuck at home. "We can give them a real role in society, and we will all benefit."

People with disabilities have similar needs. Federal law mandates that certain services be available to them, Bogren says; "but we go beyond the mandate. We need to realize that people with disabilities are CUSTOMERS" and systems must meet their needs as any business strives to meet the needs of its customers. "We want to get away from segmentation—the idea of a 'special group'—and regard seniors and the disabled as we would any other customer"; to make them—even in the way they are regarded—part of the main stream.

And who can best target customer needs? The riders, themselves. "Politically, the riders—the people who need the service—are the best advocates for it," Bogren says. "We can be a resource to them, as well. We can educate as to what's possible," from printed materials and phone conversations to referrals to their own local transit company or to political contacts. In some cases, CTAA may even visit a local community to offer on-site assistance.

"Transit really does translate into so many areas of life," Bogren says. "It's not just an issue of convenience for commuters. We're real fortunate here (at CTAA), in the important role we can play. We feel strongly about what we do."

Improving the Odds in Reno
continued from page 1

The station helped to "write curricula and train instructors in using the video. We taught them to use a particular piece of the video to make a point, and make it over and over. Then, students may move to another room to watch the (entire episode). We...trained instructors to use the video interactively and creatively," she says. "This is not a program to sit and watch, and then ask a few questions."

The Development Center also will begin focused use of the series later in the spring, with a game plan still being devised.

KNPB and others also are considering WES as part of School to Work, a program with adult education components designed to help high-school-age students for whom regular school is not working. "WES could be a good resource, not necessarily for all high schools, but for some that straddle the fence between the academic and the vocational," she notes. "This is still in the talking stage."

Another proposed use involves prisons, where Miller believes WES and print support—adapted to correctional system needs—could prove beneficial.

WES also could foster economic development. Nevada is "not just casinos," Miller points out. Tourism, including skiing, and distribution operations like Amazon.com contribute to the state's economy. "And we're just a couple of hundred miles from Silicon Valley." All of these businesses require literate—and/or technology-proficient—workforces. Miller sees WES as a tool to help the state expand and diversify its economy.

The series features an online component, and "the use of the computer in studying transfers well to other skills," Miller points out. "One teacher had a terrible time getting students to write anything. So she set up sites where they could have personal journals on the computer... At first, she had to lead them to it; now, students are in line to use the two computers at that center. The ability to communicate in writing carries so much

"This is just one example of how public television contributes to the economy of a community; it's not just another TV station. We do a lot more than that."

baggage, and to see adults get beyond that... it's one of the side effects beyond the lesson plans of WES."

Implementation is not always easy. For example, Miller cites Nevada's rural—in some areas "frontier"—character. Arranging

Internet access can be a problem in a small town where adult education is conducted in a "mobile building in the middle of a playground." At one site, it took a year just to lay lines to the structure. But the potential benefits outweigh any such problems.

Once WES usage by the Literacy Council and Development Center is "up and running," Miller notes, "we can invite people from the community." With an emphasis in many centers and classrooms across the state contributing to the creation of a literate workforce, the state can "attract new industries; other business."

"This is just one example of how public television contributes to the economy of a community; it's not just another TV station. We do a lot more than that." So often, Miller notes, both the profession and general public regard station staff as "media"; in fact, educational stations "employ educators; we have the ability to help teachers use resources and the knowledge of pedagogy behind that. We function with the background of professional educators."

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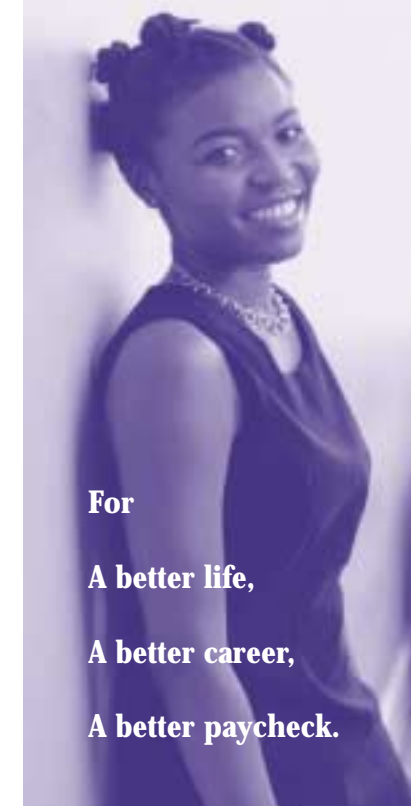
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New video and online workplace-readiness series from PBS LiteracyLink®

New GED Test Takes Effect January 1, 2002

Current candidates for a GED high school equivalency diploma must successfully complete all five tests by January 1, 2002. After that date, all GED Testing Centers will be administering the 2002 edition of the tests. Scores from the current version of the GED tests cannot be combined with or “converted to” scores on the new tests, according to the American Council on Education’s ACEnet web site.

New tests will continue to measure the major and lasting outcomes of a four-year high school course of study in English language arts, social studies, science and mathematics. Widely used curriculum standards and standardized assessment practices will be incorporated; and graduating high school seniors will continue to set the benchmark by which passing scores are determined.

Originally scheduled for September 1, 2001, the new test distribution date has been changed for several reasons:

- Many local programs close for the summer, rendering delivery in time for a Sept. 1 start date difficult.
- Holiday season “down time” offers an excellent opportunity for transition from the 1988 series to the new series.
- Starting in January facilitates tracking the number of individual testing opportunities within a contract year.
- Annual Statistical Report findings for 2001 would otherwise require “mixed” reporting of testing data from the 1988 series and the 2001 series.

Specific questions may be e-mailed to www.gedtest.org. More information is available at that site; or by writing to the GED Testing Service, One Dupont Circle NW, Suite 250, Washington, DC, 20036; or calling (202) 939-9490.

Here is a brief overview of some of the changes:

The Language Arts, Writing

- Spelling is no longer tested, except for homonyms, possessives, and contractions. Commas will be tested only when they are used to eliminate confusion.
- In addition to the informational documents (previously called “passages”), the test will include letters, memos, meeting notes, reports and similar business-style correspondence; as well as texts that provide instructions or directions.
- In addition to sentence structure, usage and mechanics, organization will be tested. This will involve transition within paragraphs, topic sentences, and other items.
- The length of the essay on an expository topic will expand to 250 words, and instructions for writing the essay will change.

Social Studies

- The percentage of history questions will increase, with more clearly defined content in world history.
- The test will contain a greater percentage of civics and government questions.
- The test will have a more clearly defined sampling from major subtopics on the geography, civics and government, and economics content outlines.
- The test will measure an understanding of a combination of concepts from different social studies content areas within the same question set.
- A greater percentage of the questions will test the ability to analyze.
- More of the questions will be based on graphic or visual source materials.
- Some questions will test visual processing skills based on graphic or visual source materials.
- Photographs will be among source materials used.
- A greater percentage of questions will be in the single item format.

- The test will include at least one “practical” document — a voter’s guide, tax form, survey, etc.
- The test will include at least one excerpt or adaptation from the *U.S. Declaration of Independence*, the *U.S. Constitution*, the *U.S. Federalist Papers*, and landmark Supreme Court cases.

Science

- One dimension of the new test incorporates the National Science Education Content Standards of physical science, life science, and earth and space science (NRC).
- The content area of earth science has expanded and is changed to space science.
- Both physics and chemistry will be grouped into the content area of physical sciences.
- A second dimension of the test includes the National Science Education Content Standards of Unifying Concepts and Processes, Science as Inquiry, Science and Technology, Science in Personal and Social Perspectives, and History and Nature of Science. The areas of comprehension, application, analysis, and evaluation used in the 1988 series of GED Tests have been integrated with the national Science Education Content Standards.
- The foci in environmental and health topics (recycling, heredity, climate, etc.) and in science relevant to everyday life have increased.
- There will be more single questions and fewer passage sets, although the total number of questions will remain approximately the same.
- 50% of the new test will feature conceptual understanding questions; and 50%, problem solving questions.

Mathematics

- Although it is important to recognize when there is not sufficient information to solve a problem, emphasis on this type of question will decrease from 12% to 4%.
- This test will be presented in two booklets: Part I permits calculator use; Part II does not. Both parts of the test must be completed to receive a single mathematics score.
- A scientific calculator will be provided with Part I, and several sample questions will allow the examinee to “practice” before taking the actual test. Permitting calculator use opens the door to increased realism in the types of problems, to multi-step problems, and to technology that is more common in the workplace.
- Approximately 20% of the items on each part of the test are not multiple-choice.
- Item sets (several items corresponding to one graphic or other stimuli) will play an increasingly important role.

The Language Arts, Reading

- The content areas labeled Popular Text (1950-present) and Classical Literature (pre-1950) are now defined as time periods: Pre-1920, 1920-1960, and 1960-present. Similarly, Comment on the Arts is now integrated into Nonfiction Prose.

- The distinction in comprehension questions between inferential and literal has been revised. Questions currently labeled “literal comprehension” will be named “comprehension”. Inferential comprehension questions are, for the most part, defined as synthesis questions.
- *Test 4: Interpreting Literature and the Arts* will become *Test 4: Language Arts, Reading*. The Writing and Reading Tests will be preceded by “Language Arts” to indicate that the two tests belong to the same academic subject and are interrelated.
- Some of the Literary Text passages will include at least one comparison/contrast question.
- One of the Nonfiction passages will be a business-related document.
- One of the Nonfiction Prose passages will use a selection from articles, editorials and so forth about visual representation, to address viewing in a textual manner.
- Besides redefining comprehension, the percentage allocations for the cognitive levels using Bloom’s taxonomy are: 20% comprehension; 15% application; 30-35% analysis; and 30-35% synthesis.

ACE/GEDTS: A Resource for Educators, Learners

GED Testing Service (GEDTS) of the American Council on Education (ACE), is responsible for the design and overall standards for the GED Tests. Founded in 1918, the American Council on Education defines its mission as “the nation’s coordinating higher education association” and is “dedicated to the belief that equal educational opportunity and a stronger higher education system are essential cornerstones of a democratic society.” To that end, ACE provides a forum for discussion; leadership and advocacy on important issues; and many other services to its members.

The ACE family has included, since the 1940s, publication and dissemination of the GED Test. First developed in 1942 to assist those who left school to serve in World War II, the test was primarily a “reading test, with a workplace emphasis,” explains ACE Director of Test Development Lyn Schaefer. Areas like science and social studies were covered, but with an emphasis on the ability to read and correctly interpret information in those subjects. In the early ‘60s, the test and certificate became available not only to members of the military but also to civilians

who had not completed traditional high school. Major revisions have included the 1978 series; 1988 series; and the soon-to-be-unveiled 2002 Series GED Tests.

Schaefer notes that individual states — not GEDTS — are responsible for operational aspects of GED services. However, GEDTS establishes national policy and a minimum passing standard that all states must meet or exceed. GEDTS also stipulates that an individual cannot take the same form of the tests within a year. GEDTS makes three forms available each year.

GEDTS provides many services to the adult learner, including ways to locate area GED Testing Centers (civilian or military, around the world); information about accommodations for the learner with a disability, and much more. There is assistance even for the individual request — someone who passed the tests years ago and now needs documentation, for example. “We can get people to the right office in their state,” Schaefer says.

The GED program truly has become a major factor in educational life. Nearly one of every seven people who receive a high school

diploma each year earn that diploma by passing the GED Tests, according to the GEDTS web site. Moreover, sixty-eight percent of GED candidates plan to enter a college, university, or trade, technical or business school during the next year. Yet, there are popular misconceptions about the GED diploma — that holding the certificate somehow represents “less” work than would be performed by a traditional student. In fact, Schaefer says, “if you have three high school seniors walking across a stage to receive a diploma, one of them could not have earned a GED Tests diploma.” The test is rigorous, and the adults who study for and take it are, typically, A and B students who dropped out for financial or other personal reasons. “Those are the people who come back for a GED diploma,” Schaefer says.

For more information, visit the GEDTS website at www.gedtest.org; write to the GED Testing Service, One Dupont Circle NW, Suite 250, Washington, DC, 20036; or call (202) 939-9490.

Ron Griffin
outline

KET Welcomes New National Sales Manager

On February 1, Ron Griffin joined KET as National Sales Manager for the Enterprise Division.

With 20 years’ experience in direct sales, Griffin “can be instrumental in helping the Enterprise Division expand its sales force and establish a strategic position as the leader in educational tools and services,” said Milli Fazey, KET Director of Marketing.

Griffin looks forward to working with KET’s field representatives. “I take great pride in and enjoy providing the support, tools and direction necessary to help others accomplish and exceed their goals — being available and stressing the importance of team work, the ‘we’ versus ‘I’ mentality,” he said. Griffin added that he is eager to couple his experience with the goals of KET, “enabling us both to help others upgrade and ultimately improve their standard of living through the utilization of our products and services.”

A graduate of Eastern Kentucky University, Griffin holds a BS degree in Marketing. He began his career with the 3M Corporation and later served as an Account Executive and Agent Sales Manager with the Xerox Corporation before joining the sales team at WDKY-Fox 56 in Lexington, Kentucky.

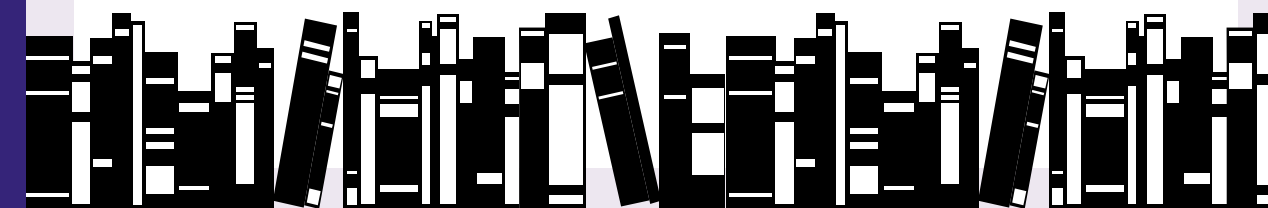
He is a member of the Board of the Asbury College Pace Committee; the Fayette County School Board — Community Task Force Committee, and the Lions Club; and a national and local board member of the YMCA.

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Our Website Had a Facelift



Next time you go to the Internet and type in www.ket.org/adulted, you may be surprised to see a new home page for KET's Enterprise Division. In fact, the whole web site has been completely redesigned to make it easier for you to get the information you want.


Newsletter GOES ONLINE

Please visit our website at www.ket.org/adulted, to see this issue of the *KET Adult Learning Quarterly* online. It's only a text version for now, but if readers like it and let us know they'd like to see in its original layout, we'll put the whole newsletter on our site as pdf files to be read in Acrobat Reader.

To get information on a specific series, you can click on the familiar logos of our best-known five adult education series. If you remember the name and want to get to it quickly, you can click "Products" on a bar across the top of the site. If you know that you're looking for a particular type of program, but can't remember the name, try exploring by category. You'll find the parenting and children's programs in Family Literacy; you'll find the series on learning disabilities in the professional development section.

We encourage you to check out our comprehensive list of links to other adult education sites. If you'd like for us to add your organization to our Links list, please send us an e-mail message (adulted@ket.org) and let us know.

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Call KET at (800) 354-9067 to request a free preview.

COMPUTER ACCESS


Is 'Out There' for LiteracyLink® Learner Without Home Equipment

Concerns have been expressed that *Workplace Essential Skills* could be "less useful" to learners who do not enjoy ready access to computers.

We asked Jacqueline Korengel, Ed.D., Director of Training and Workplace Development for KET, to speak to this issue.

"WES is composed of three modules: video/broadcast, print and online," Dr. Korengel replies. For the learner with low literacy skills, the videos alone are rich in content and can be of tremendous help. For those at higher literacy levels, WES print materials are "very good at reinforcing the skills learned in the video," she adds. "So even if we 'subtract' the online component, we still have the video and print."

Subtracting online elements may not be necessary, however: Access is out there. Local learning centers often have computers available; housing authority offices may offer terminal use to residents; public libraries, friends and other community resources can help, as well. More and more, public schools and their computer labs are staying open at night to serve parents of the student body. "There are so many locations to which a learner can go. Learners may have to do some searching, but access is there." For students who have computers and Internet access, but have slow connections that would make it difficult to download video clips, help is on the way. A CD-Rom is being produced to remedy that problem. The CD-Rom, soon to be available for \$5.00

from KET, will contain the video clips to all 24 online lessons. Call KET at (800) 354-9067 to find out more about the CD-Rom. 

For more information about the *Workplace Essential Skills* online component, call the PBS literacy number, 877-548-3722; or log on to www.pbs.org/literacy.

