



Bridging Literacy Gaps: From K-14 to Workforce Success

Poor literacy skills are a concern across the educational spectrum. Without targeted interventions, they lead to serious challenges in adulthood and adversely impact economies. The best time to teach reading is early on, before problems compound. Since the problem can be inveterate, a personalized, multimodal toolkit can be indispensable.



Reading proficiency is declining, according to the [National Assessment of Educational Progress](#). In 2024, NAEP found that only 31% of US fourth graders and 30% of eighth graders scored at or above the proficiency level. That's two points lower than in 2022 and five points below 2019 scores.

Early reading struggles can worsen, making critical thinking and analytical writing challenging. Thus, high school and college graduation rates suffer. Beginning college students may need remedial reading and writing courses. As many as two-thirds of community college students enroll in remedial classes, according to the [Community College Research Center](#). CCRC research shows they [probably won't](#) earn a postsecondary credential. An [Australian study](#) found that university students who read poorly may have reading-related anxiety. Disengagement and difficulty with coursework across multiple disciplines may result.

31%
of US fourth graders and
30%
of eighth graders scored
at or above reading
proficiency level

Poor Literacy Skills in Adulthood

Eventually, workforces are impacted, which employers report is a growing concern. The US Department of Labor considers strong literacy skills critical for career advancement, particularly in technical and knowledge-based industries. Adults without them can lead to some harsh realities.

- Half of [chronically unemployed](#) adults are functionally illiterate, according to the US Department of Education.
- Workers without a high school diploma earn about \$708 weekly – a third of someone with advanced degrees, according to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#).
- Children of parents with limited reading and writing skills have a 72% chance of being at the lowest literacy level when they become adults, creating a cycle of illiteracy and poverty that can span generations, according to the [Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy](#).

Raising every American adult's literacy rate to a sixth-grade level could generate \$2.2 trillion annually for the US economy, according to a [Gallup study](#). Yet, improving literacy rates has proven difficult.



The Lincoln Content Bank for Literacy

To address gaps in literacy education, comprehensive pre-packaged digital courses have flooded the education market. They're often expensive and difficult to customize. To combat this, some educators turn to the Internet. However, teaching materials found there may not align with curriculum standards or be created – or even vetted – by education experts.

An alternative is a multimedia education repository available virtually, in-person or in hybrid or homeschool situations. [The Lincoln Content Bank](#) for K-14 students is a carefully curated resource toolkit. It provides teachers and faculty with easy-to-use resources to help students improve their literacy and set themselves up for long-term success. Available online, it contains 110,000 vetted educational resources, including worksheets, videos, interactive games and additional reading materials. The resources align with educational standards, offer diverse and customizable content, and are easy for teachers to search and add to lesson plans.

Don Lamison says that, with its videos and other customizable content, The Lincoln Content Bank transformed one of his partner schools. Lamison is the Director of Urban Green Education, a nonprofit organization with schools in Indonesia.





“Our struggling students desperately needed better materials. With The Lincoln Content Bank, students experienced remarkable breakthroughs. Simple differentiation and access was key,” Lamison says.

For Urban Green Education, so was the program’s cost. The nonprofit’s partner schools have limited budgets. The Lincoln Content Bank is unique in the education market when it comes to value, he says. In part, that’s thanks to the curriculum developers at Lincoln Learning Solutions who created The Lincoln Content Bank and provide its users support. Lamison calls them educational engineers, meaning they’re teachers driven by science and service.

“Literacy gaps cast a long shadow, impacting students at every stage of their educational journey. Addressing literacy can’t wait until young adults enter the workforce because it’s often too late by then. These issues must be tackled early, ideally in elementary and middle school,” Lamison says.



Addressing literacy can’t wait until young adults enter the workforce because it’s often too late by then. These issues must be tackled early, ideally in elementary and middle school.

DON LAMISON

DIRECTOR, URBAN GREEN EDUCATION



How the Lincoln Content Bank Helps Teach Reading

Lincoln curriculum developers agree, but Lincoln resources must remain fluid to be of most use. Content is designed to be grade-agnostic in appearance to meet any student's need despite the student's grade-level ability. Students come at different literacy levels, so Lincoln materials do, too, explains Sandy Marchant, Assistant Vice President of Business Development at Lincoln Learning Solutions.

"If a student is behind by a grade level, they are often presented with materials too advanced for them, which puts them at a disadvantage. The Lincoln Content Bank helps bridge that gap by providing leveled, academically aligned content so students can engage with skills at their level without falling further behind. If we think about what commonly happens in the classroom, this is huge," Marchant says.

Consider a third-grade student who reads at a second-grade level. Because the teacher doesn't have time to provide a textbook that meets each individual student's precise needs, a student might engage with literacy concepts prematurely before mastering previous content, which can lead to disengagement.

The Lincoln Content Bank's vast variety of assets lets teachers choose the best content for them and their pupils. It contains 23,000 vetted English language assets that are standards-aligned and designed by teachers. To help them, the Lincoln Content Bank integrates with a school or district's learning management system (LMS). Teachers can search by concept, standard or grade level to find activities, videos, games, interactives and worksheets that suit a class, group or individual.



The Lincoln Content Bank: A Game Changer for Educators

What it is

110,000 vetted and standards-aligned educational resources for grades K-14, created by teachers for teachers.

Key features

- Its many resource types support different modalities and reach different types of learners while easily integrating with a school's LMS.
- Materials have a consistent look and feel, so students can receive content above or below grade level, based on their individual needs, without being distinctly aware.

Who benefits

Teachers can easily search for assets by keyword, topic, standard, grade level and modality. Students receive customized lessons and support.

Why it matters

The Lincoln Content Bank helps students build critical reading and thinking skills for long-term success.



Also available are materials that support a child's particular learning style. For example, if a child is a visual learner, he or she might benefit most from watching a video or engaging with an interactive learning object. Assets include interactive games for spelling and grammar, videos that support phonological awareness, audio clips with reading passages to support literacy skills, and fluency assessments for extra reading practice.

"The art is in selecting the programs," says Brittany Janectic, Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs at Lincoln Learning Solutions. Teachers tell Janectic that The Lincoln Content Bank's comprehensive, easy-to-use collection of engaging standards-aligned resources has helped change students' educational paths. This positive user experience keeps motivation high, helping students improve literacy and change academic trajectories.

Lincoln Learning Solutions

Lincoln Learning Solutions is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 2005 and accredited by Cognia and WASC. Our digital curriculum, Lincoln Empowered, offers a wide range of core, elective, and specialty courses for grades EK-12. The award-winning The Lincoln Content Bank equips teachers with a comprehensive catalog of ready-to-use supplemental resources, catering to diverse learning styles. These solutions empower educators to personalize content to meet each student's unique needs. Additionally, we provide full support to our clients through custom implementation, training, instructional services, and ongoing customer support.

[Schedule a time](#) to talk with us about your needs or learn more at lincolnlearningsolutions.org.