Citizen Literacy Prospectus

Reading and Writing for Everyone!

"Every citizen in society should have the right to be able to learn to read and write, as a matter of social justice."

What is Citizen Literacy?

It is an Adult Literacy programme to support Tutors to develop the reading and writing skills of adults who can already speak and understand English and features integrated digital and printed learning resources. It can also be used by **ESOL** tutors to develop reading and writing skills in their students. The programme is split into 3 parts each consisting of 30 lessons. For those who are new to the issue and scale of low literacy skills in the English-speaking world and the problems it poses for individuals and society please refer to our 'White Paper' on the subject, at this web link https://citizenliteracy.com/white-paper/.

Why Citizen Literacy?

This quote from a proposal for a national USA adult literacy programme eloquently and concisely sums up the situation in the English-speaking world. It explains why Citizen Literacy exists and why we seek to support the work and development of adult literacy tutors and supply them with good quality accessible learning resources:

> **"The work of teaching literacy skills to adults is overlooked and undervalued.**
> The field of adult basic education, which includes literacy instruction, receives far less attention in academia than early childhood, K-12, or tertiary education. Thus, there is not only a lack of data and research—which means a paucity of high-quality, evidence-based instructional resources—but also a lack of investment in professional

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development for adult literacy instructors, most of whom are part-time or volunteer and few of whom receive competitive compensation. The lack of competitive salaries and professional development opportunities deter many promising teachers from entering the field, as does the dearth of proven, accessible training materials.

For these reasons, access to adult literacy programs has not significantly improved over the past few decades, and the rate of low literacy has remained stuck at about one in five Americans"

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR ADULT LITERACY 2021

Barbara Bush Foundation

How Citizen Literacy Fits into the Education Landscape

Our programme is intended to help overcome the serious lack of resources and support for those who seek to help adults improve their literacy skills. It can also be used by **ESOL** tutors to develop reading and writing skills in their students. Feedback also suggests the programme may be of use for secondary school students who are struggling with their reading and writing skills – the non-childish content and interface can be a motivating factor for them. For primary and secondary school teachers who are interested in the use of structured phonics methods for teaching literacy, our Tutor Handbook and free Learner web app can provide a useful training and professional development resource with pointers to further readings. Our Tutor platform (subscription) also includes useful tools and resources to develop a working knowledge of phonics methods that can be used with a wide age range of Learners.

The Citizen Literacy programme helps to fill a major gap in current provision and starts with complete beginners in our Part 1 course and rapidly takes them to a good level of functional working literacy over 3 courses of 30 lessons each, simultaneously improving digital literacy and building confidence. By the end of the first 2 lessons of the Part 1 course students are starting to read and write simple sentences.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: Goal 4 Quality Education

The title of this goal is:

> "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."

The Citizen Literacy programme and its free Learner web app is our contribution to meeting this goal and its target of achieving universal literacy (https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal4)

Programme Content: Not Just Phonics a systematic approach to teaching adults to read and write English

Citizen Literacy takes students forwards simultaneously across a broad number of topics quickly to give confidence and provide practical applications useful skills. These are the skills we seek to develop in our learners:

- Phonics: Blending / Breaking Down (i.e., Phonological Awareness and Grapheme Correspondence)
- Reading
- Spelling
- Listening
- Writing
- Speaking
- Alphabetical Awareness

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- Punctuation
- Comprehension
- Composition / Narrative
- Grammar

Programme Description and Learning Resources

The first ten lessons of our Part 1 course and their associated resources are being released in 2022, with the rest of the Part 1 course being released by the end of 2022. Parts 2 & 3 will follow shortly thereafter. Please note the tutor platform subscription gives digital access to all future tutor resources, releases and updates for the entire programme i.e., Parts 1, 2, and 3.

A programme that is designed to be adopted, adapted, and delivered by others – not ourselves. it supports Tutors and their students to work through a face-to-face literacy course in a wide variety of settings. The rationale for our approach is simple. The scale of the adult literacy challenge in society is so big no single organisation can realistically tackle it alone. As a small organisation, we collaborate with the international community of literacy educators to create our resources. The Citizen Literacy programme, alongside the work of many other organisations and individuals, is our contribution to making things better.

An integrated set of digital and paper learning resources to support tutors and their students to work through a face-to-face literacy course in a wide variety of settings. These include Tutor Handbooks and Learner Workbooks.

The Tutor handbooks are suitable for both experienced and new literacy tutors and provides a useful and friendly introduction to the programme, lesson plans and tutor notes that are linked to the learner workbooks and the free learner web app. They provide a structured yet flexible educational design that can be delivered as it is or adapted to learners' needs and community settings (which we encourage). Each lesson is broken down into exercises that are clearly linked to a section in a learner workbook to make it easy for tutors and learners to find the related learning resources, with the relevant Learner App activities identified – to enable learners to practice in between classes.

For tutors who are new to adult literacy teaching and the use of structured phonics methods the handbook and the app provides a useful training and professional development resource. Tutors who subscribe to the Citizen Literacy Tutor Platform get access to web versions of all the tutor handbooks, training resources, plus a growing range of powerful digital tools to use with their learners.

Learner Workbooks, each one covers a set of 5 lessons with exercise resources that are linked to the lesson plans in the tutor handbooks. The workbooks provide a space for Learners to write, collaborate, record, reflect on their work, and for Tutors to examine. The workbooks are priced to make them an economic proposition for learning providers. Importantly, the workbooks offer an attractive well produced resource for Learners to work with – this is an important factor for maintaining and building the self-esteem and confidence of learners.

The revolutionary Citizen Literacy Learner web app; this is free to use, does not require user registration, has no adverts, no in-app purchases and takes no personal data. Featuring a voice driven interface suitable for low literacy learners with two virtual teachers that provide instruction and personalised feedback. Importantly, the design avoids looking like a children's learning resource – a strongly demotivating factor for older learners. There is multimedia interactivity and gameplay, together with voice and handwriting recognition, and instant personalised feedback. Enabling some

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of the first online independent learning opportunities for low literacy learners. From a standing start, by the end of lesson 2, learners are beginning to read and write simple sentences.

Tutor platform, for subscribed users.

- Tutor Handbooks (Web version) for the entire programme
  - Lesson Plan Bookmark and Edit Tools - sequencing
  - Learner App Bookmark and Edit Tools - sequencing
- Tutor Training Resources
  - Phonics Periodic Table
  - Word Blender / Decoder
  - Videos
- Custom Vocabulary Builder
  - Vocational vocabularies for the care, retail, construction, and hospitality sectors to support entry into work and progression for those in work (in progress)
- Tutor Resources – for use in class
  - Editable Word Docs
  - PDFs for printing
- Phonics Dictionary & Pronunciation Coach (useful for ESOL tutors**)**
  - A searchable phonics dictionary containing thousands of words. Each word is displayed as an interactive resource on screen that shows the relationship between the phonemes that make up the sounds of the word and the graphemes that represent the spelling of those sounds in the word. Each phoneme / grapheme pair also features the relevant IPA symbol. Each phoneme in the word can be heard by tapping on the associated grapheme. The whole word can also be heard by tapping on its 'play' button.
  - Returns words broken down into their sounds
  - Letter / Sound correspondence identified
  - IPA symbols attached to letters
  - Each component sound and mouth shape in a word pronounced by an actor on video
  - Each complete word pronounced by an actor on video
- A growing list of new lessons, tools, and features – please see our development roadmap below.

Development Roadmap: Advanced Tutor Platform
These ideas are all doable technically, but depend on feedback from the literacy community to see if they are actually of use and appropriate to support adult literacy learners and their tutors:
- The platform can be linked to individual learner's apps to support cohorts of learners remotely
- Tutors can send voice / text messages to learners – e.g. change of class times, feedback on activity in class and / or in the app
- A tutor dashboard to monitor and record learner activity in their apps and keep records (useful for evidence of learning activity)
- The ability for tutors to author custom content and deliver it to their learners,
- Tutor can control the learner's app, so they are all on the same page and lock it till they are all done – especially good for remote working and app assessment results
- Record assessments results in the app and export to a spreadsheet for record keeping
- Use AI and learning analytics linked to the course learning design to:
  - provide automatic personalised suggestions to learners based on their progress and behaviour in the learner app

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- o flag up in the tutor dashboard learners who may be progressing more rapidly or slowly and benefit from different activity options
- A customisable set of word / literacy games to engage learners
- Customising voice recognition for individual learner's accents and voices (prototype completed)

Programme Structure

The 3 Citizen Literacy courses have the same basic structure

- 30 Face to Face (F2F) lessons each of duration 2 hour (approx.)
- Each course is Split into 6 Units of 5 lessons
- In Units 1 – 5 every fifth lesson consists of a formative assessment
- In Unit 6 each of the 5 lessons consists of a summative assessment
- The Learner App supports each of the F2F courses with 30 lessons containing around 600 activities to support independent learning between F2F sessions.

Assessment Topics
- Listening
- Blending
- Reading
- Writing
- Speaking

Educational Levels – National and International

To help tutors and learning providers see how the Citizen Literacy programme may fit into their existing practice this section indicates what educational levels each of our courses are **roughly** equivalent to. We say 'roughly' because our course design and resources are based on rapid practical skills development and are not tied into any one national education system. In contrast, some national educational levels authorities for reasons of expediency may concentrate on more restricted measures of abilities e.g., word lists that can be recognised and spelled etc.

The programme is split into 3 courses each of 30 lessons and concentrates on rapidly building ability and confidence amongst learners. For instance, the Part 1 course starts with complete beginner readers and by the end of the third lesson they are starting to read and write simple sentences. By the end of the Part 3 course learners will have achieved a good working level of functional literacy for use in their daily lives and a solid foundation for any further training or education they wish to pursue. For instance, in the UK at the end of our Part 2 or 3 courses learners would be able to enter an apprenticeship scheme. Most training providers will not accept trainees with literacy skills below these levels.

The 3 Citizen Literacy Courses are approximately equivalent to these national / international educational levels

The Scottish Credit and Educational Qualifications Framework (SCQF)
(SCQF) More information about SCQF levels at this link

- Citizen Literacy Part 1: SCQF Level 2
- Citizen Literacy Part 2: SCQF Level 3
- Citizen Literacy Part 3: SCQF Level 4

European Qualifications Framework (EQF)
(EQF) More information about how the EQF maps to SCQF at this link

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- Citizen Literacy Part 1: EQF Level N/A
- Citizen Literacy Part 2: EQF Level 1
- Citizen Literacy Part 3: EQF Level 2

The Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF)

(RQF) For England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. More information about the RQF at this link

More information about how the RQF maps to EQF at this link

- Citizen Literacy Part 1: RQF Entry Level 1
- Citizen Literacy Part 2: RQF Entry Level 2
- Citizen Literacy Part 3: RQF Entry Level 3 / Level 1

Methods and Values,

- Citizen Literacy is based on a foundation of **phonics** methods for developing reading and writing skills in adults i.e., teaching letters and sounds correspondence in a systematic and structured way

- The programme has a major **influence** from the work of the Brazilian educator **Paulo Friere** and his emphasis on making learning relevant to people's lives. We expect our courses to be adapted to the needs and interests of students by tutors and to this end each course includes a Personal Learning Plan Template (PLP). Using the PLP tutors can work with their students to find out and agree what learning benefits students would like to achieve from the course for instance; read a story to my child, write a shopping list, apply for a job etc. and try to work that into the course.

- Citizen Literacy leverages the ubiquity of mobile phone use in society to enable **independent learning** opportunities for adult literacy learners via our App. One of the first to do so in the adult learning sector.

- The **Science of Reading** movement provides a more rigorous basis on which to conduct literacy training and tutor support. It provides a welcome move away from following entrenched, unquestioned methods of teaching reading and writing.

- Our work in creating the programme takes the form of **Action Research** and **Applied Research.** As we seek to find practical ways to improve adult literacy and solve problems in applying new digital tools and educational methods to the process. It is worth observing that, as far as we know, there has been very little primary research done into the digital habits of low literacy adults

- The programme seeks to redress the lack of effective **Digital** tools for tutors and their students.

- Citizen Literacy sees **Support for Tutor Development** as a critical element of the programme, especially for those new to using phonics methods.

- The Citizen Literacy team seek to be **Community Led** through their links to and interaction with the international community of literacy and ESOL tutors. In this way we can constantly test that what we are doing is of actual benefit.

- There are a wide range of other **influences** on our work besides that of Paulo Freire, to find out more please consult this web link https://citizenliteracy.com/influences/.

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Costs

Learner App free

Tutor Handbook £35 for every 10 lessons - Print (digital version included in Tutor Platform subscription)

Learner Workbooks £12 for every 5 lessons - Print

Tutor Class Resources – Digital / Print: Free editable Handouts and grapheme cut-outs etc., openly licenced

Tutor Platform - Annual subscription £60 + vat (£72 p.a.), monthly subscription £6 + vat (£7.20 per month, £86.40 p.a.)

Who We Are

Citizen Literacy is a wholly independent Community Interest Company – a non-profit organisation based and registered in Scotland (SC671958).

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