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ABSTRACT

This manual, the final document in a series, is intended to help adult education teachers help learning disabled (LD) students function in the world of work. The need for adults to develop personal-social and daily living skills along with the ability to adjust to the pluralistic nature of society is stressed. An approach to identifying strengths and weaknesses in LD adults is described and implications for vocation selection and job performance are noted. Job search strategies are outlined, including finding a position availability announcement, making an application, interviewing, and surviving on the job. Relevant federal agencies and general non-federal resources are listed along with information on materials available from five commercial publishers. (CL)

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ED285357

Academic Assessment and Remediation
of Adults with Learning Disabilities:

A Resource Series for Adult Basic Education Teachers

OCCUPATIONAL AND CAREER INFORMATION

Five County Adult Education Program
(Barrow, Clarke, Jackson, Oconee, and Oglethorpe Counties)
Clarke County Board of Education
Athens, Georgia 30601

1985

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Office of Educational Research and Improvement
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PREFACE

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All adults who have not completed high school are potential clients for our Adult General Education Program and are aggressively recruited. Most of them with motivation proceed normally through our instructional program until they reach their goal. While following the progress of our students, we observed that some of them made slower progress and gained lower than expected achievement levels. These students did not reach their goal or our goal for them, although many had good motivation, seemed alert and bright, and occasionally made excellent progress in one or more skills. An awareness grew that a significant number of the students might be learning disabled.

Assistance was at hand from the University of Georgia, Department of Special Education, in the persons of Dr. Cheri Hoy and Dr. Noel Gregg, who met with the staff of the project for planning, worked with our adult education teachers in workshops, as well as wrote our project publications. Our appreciation is also expressed to the teachers of the five-county program for their participation, to Mrs. Betty Westbrook, Athens, for her extra-hours typing of the manuscripts, to Ms. Shelby Johnson, Snellville, for editorial assistance, and to Dr. Edward T. Brown, Stone Mountain, for facilitating the development and production processes.

Dr. Janie Rodgers
Project Director

Developed and printed under an Adult Education Section 310 grant from the Adult and Community Education Unit, Georgia Department of Education, Dr. Helen M. Earles, Director.

Project Title: Adult Basic Education Teacher Resource Materials
For Use With Learning Disabled Students.

Publication Authors: Dr. Cheri A. Hoy, Assistant Professor
Director: Special Education Children's Clinic

Dr. K. Noel Gregg, Assistant Professor
Director: Learning Disabilities Adult Clinic

PRE-OCCUPATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research concerning the occupational needs of learning disabled adults is difficult to find. However, one facet that remains consistent throughout the literature is that the social and academic problems of the learning disabled adult do not go away. Unfortunately for many learning disabled individuals, preparation in post-secondary education is limited. Many are reluctant to challenge the academic environment and many cannot meet the admission requirements. Few institutions make special provisions for admission or provide the special services a learning disabled adult might need. The alternative is to enter the job market without special training. Vocational potential suffers when the individual must experiment in the job market to find the best employment for which he or she can qualify.

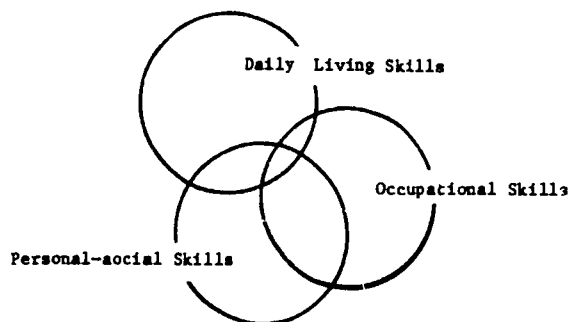
The purpose of this booklet is to help the adult education teacher provide the supplemental help needed by the learning disabled student to survive in the world of work. Since the population differs in I.Q., sociocultural background, quality of instructional opportunities, and the nature and severity of learning disorders, the suggestions are necessarily tentative and general. Also, they are supplemental in that the learning disabled adult needs the same basic vocational information as any adult but it must be followed by an accountability based on their disabilities and their compensatory skills.

Interrelationship of Skills

Problems are not restricted by environment; family and fiscal problems, like Mary's little lamb, often follow wherever you go, including the work place. Conversely, maladjustments from the job can affect the family routine and life style. Daily living and social skills influence job performance. Similarly, the variety and contradictions in our culture demand a tolerance and understanding frequently denied to the learning disabled. The adult education teacher can provide help in these areas.

Daily living and personal-social skills

Daily living and personal-social skills are pre-requisites for breaking into and succeeding in the job world. People are hired because the employing person is convinced that they can do the job; and people are fired because they cannot get along with co-workers or the boss, or cannot conform to the routine. Although all three competency areas are equally important to the individual, their interconnection is not equal. Personal-social skills greatly influence the quality of occupational and daily living skill performance



The daily living skills that require a fair degree of efficiency include:

1. Managing finances
2. Organizing and maintaining a home
3. Caring for personal needs

4. Getting around the community

3

5. Using recreation and leisure time

The personal-social skills that require a fair degree of efficiency include:

1. Developing self confidence
2. Maintaining socially responsible behavior
3. Utilizing good interpersonal skills
4. Achieving independence
5. Using appropriate social problem solving skills

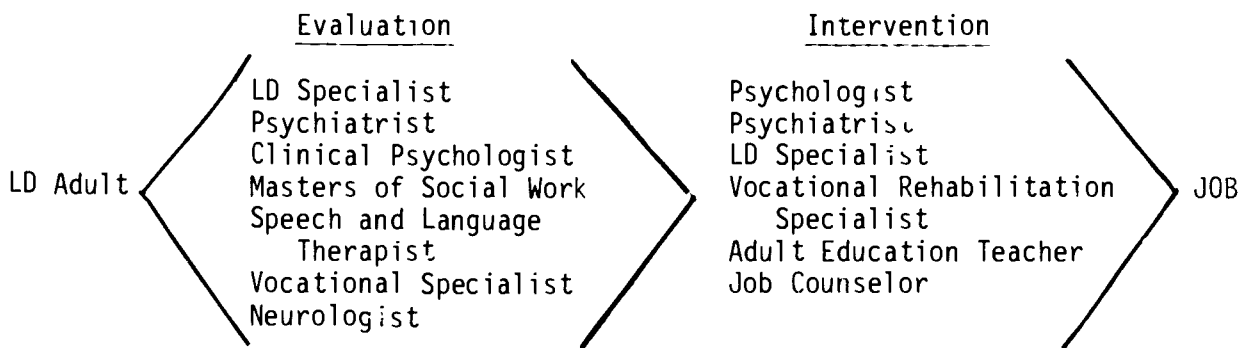
The adult education teacher has learning materials in these areas for use with all students. These same materials can be used with the learning disabled, if the dysfunction does not prevent it. In this case, and in all cases where the skills in either personal-social or daily living are significantly low, it would be advantageous to refer the student to a learning disabilities specialist or a psychologist for specific guidance.

Cultural Pluralism

Every community harbors a wide range of values, morality, attitudes, viewpoints, and beliefs. Individuals must learn to accept and adjust their behavior to accommodate others and, indeed, must generate and adjust to pluralism within themselves. The working community, however, often does not provide the guidance and feedback the learning disabled need as they attempt to adjust and survive in a pluralistic world. The learning disabled adult often feels alone and different; failure or inability to conform leads to isolation. At this stage in the development of the learning disabled adult, he or she requires not less support, but more -- and of a particular type. The learning disabled adult needs both models to emulate and the experience

of community with other adults. Yet as McDaniel (1969) observed: "The behavioral incapacities and social rejection place the disabled in subordinate positions where many goals seem inaccessible." (p. 12).

Helping the learning disabled become successful in the job market requires a joint effort and cooperation between various professionals and agencies. Expertise may be needed from many fields but on a selective basis. Frequently, the adult education teacher can be the agent for initial referral to specialists for either the evaluation or intervention stage.



Identifying Strengths and Weaknesses

It is important that the learning disabled adult know his or her learning deficiencies and understand how these can affect vocational performance and the interim goals that must be established in order to succeed in a desired occupation. The strength and weakness chart and the interim goal chart used in the University of Georgia Learning Disabilities Adult Clinic are presented here. Although these are for use by LD Specialists, they can provide guidance to the adult education teacher.

Items in each of the charts can be reviewed and discussed with the student and pertinent items can be extracted and given to the student in a style and language more understandable and appropriate. As each item is discussed, the implications for vocation selection and job performance should be highlighted, immediately followed by consideration of potential compensatory skills or behaviors.

A sample strength/weakness chart:

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Learning Disabilities Adult Clinic

Assessment Summary

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

ACADEMIC AREAS INVOLVED

Mathematics
Written Language

L.D. Specialist:

Noel Gregg, Ph.D.

VOCATIONAL AREAS INVOLVED

Jobs requiring speed
Jobs requiring nonverbal skills
Jobs requiring time & spacial skills
Jobs requiring organizational skills
Jobs requiring written language
Jobs requiring mathematical skills

STRENGTHS		WEAKNESSES	
1. Understanding (<u>receptive</u>) and using (<u>expressive</u>) vocabulary.		1. Solving <u>nonverbal problems</u> requiring abstract and logical thinking skills.	
2. Processing <u>relationships</u> and <u>ambiguities</u> in spoken language (<u>abstract language</u>).		2. Processing verbal and nonverbal information with speed (<u>perceptual speed</u>).	
3. Discriminating between similar words presented orally (<u>auditory discrimination</u>).		3. Perceiving the positions of two or more objects in relation to each other (<u>spatial relationships</u>).	
4. Pronouncing multisyllabic words in the correct sequence (<u>auditory sequencing</u>).		4. Analyzing the components of an equivalency statement and reintergrating them to determine the components of a novel equivalency statement (<u>ability to learn mathematical concepts</u>).	
5. Recalling specific facts in a paragraph presented orally (<u>listening comprehension</u>) if given enough time to respond.		5. Identifying rules for concepts when given instances and noninstances of the concepts (<u>categorical reasoning and organization</u>).	
6. Remembering facts and/or information learned in the past (<u>long term memory/fund of information</u>).		6. Forming anticipations from the parts to the unknown full pattern puzzle (<u>visual production and organization of nonverbal information</u>).	
7. Comprehending word meaning in silent reading (<u>reading vocabulary</u>).		7. Discriminating among similar numbers, letters, and/or words presented visually (<u>visual discrimination</u>).	
8. Understanding and remembering information from passages read silently (<u>reading comprehension</u>).		8. Scanning nonverbal information presented visually.	
9. Generating <u>creative ideas</u> with <u>verbal material</u> .		9. Recalling series of pictured objects following brief presentation (<u>visual memory for objects</u>).	
10. Generating <u>creative ideas</u> with <u>non-verbal material</u> .		10. Recalling series of letters presented visually (<u>visual memory for letters</u>).	
11. Willingness to try new and difficult tasks.		11. Associating new visual symbols (<u>mathematic symbols, rebuses, foreign language, nonverbal symbols</u>) with familiar words in oral language and then translating these symbols into verbal sentences (<u>translation</u>) and learning new symbol system.	
12. Motivation and desire to succeed.			
13. Conscientiousness			

Strength/weakness chart, cont'd:

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

STRENGTHS

WEAKNESSES

12. Reproducing series of words presented orally (auditory memory for unrelated information).
13. Reproducing sequences of numbers presented orally (auditory memory for digits).
14. Analyzing words by letter sounds for reading and spelling (phonetic analysis).
15. Applying rules of syllabication to analyze words for reading and spelling.
16. Understanding principles of organization in written language.
17. Rewriting and proofing.
18. Recognizing the correct spelling of a word in a multiple choice situation (spelling recognition).
19. Spelling to dictation.
20. Applying rules of punctuation and capitalization in written language.
21. Solving applied mathematical problems.
22. Utilizing calculation skills to solve math problems.
23. Understanding the symbol system and vocabulary used in mathematics.
24. Solving problem situations requiring social judgement and knowledge of conventions of behavior due to difficulty interpreting nonverbal gestures.
25. Utilizing and understanding time concepts.

Comments:

A sample interim goal chart: _____

Page 3

NAME: _____

DATE: 1/23/85

LONG TERM GOALS

1. To improve the ability to organize and solve problems with nonverbal information.
2. To develop organizational strategies needed for a job.
3. To develop compensation strategies for rate of processing deficits.
4. To further develop compensations strategies for short term memory deficits.
5. To improve organizational skills in written text.
6. To improve spelling skills.
7. To improve written language skills.
8. To improve ability to apply mathematics for realistic problem solving situations.
9. To improve mathematical knowledge.
10. To improve arithmetic calculation skills.

* _____ will be working with vocational Rehab. on a job skill training program.

Learning What To Communicate

When the student accepts and understands his or her abilities, the concerns of how and what to communicate to the employer or potential employer should be considered. The decision to communicate any information at all belongs to the individual but some thoughts should be given to the decision before it has to be made.

Learning skill strengths and weaknesses are personal and private information. How much of these to communicate to the employer is a personal decision. Obviously, the important consideration is not to be placed on a job or task that the disability prevents accomplishing. Also it is important not to be placed on tasks that focus attention on a learning disability.

A good activity for understanding the implications of providing or withholding information can be role playing in the student's vocational interest area. For example,

- (a) The student is a good and experienced mechanic. His disability is reading although given time he can decipher much of what he has encountered so far. New car dealers get modification orders and specialized repair instructions on newly designed mechanical units. Pose the question: What would be your response if you are asked "Can you handle modification orders?"
- (b) The student has been cleaning off tables in a large cafeteria and seems happy in her job. Her disability is an inability to process verbal information quickly. She becomes flustered when work instructions are given too rapidly. The manager is likely to ask if she would like the higher paying job of serving food behind the counter. This job requires quick response to customer

orders, frequently two or three items long. Pose the question: What would be your response if you are asked "Do you want the counter job on vegetables?"

How To Communicate

Communication skills, both verbal and non-verbal, are frequently very difficult for the learning disabled to learn. This problem is compounded for this group when the information to be communicated is negative, ego destructive, and potentially damaging to an immediate goal. The primary solution is the establishment of open communication by the student with the professional persons with which he or she is involved, including the adult education teacher. This can be followed by the recommendation that an open communication atmosphere be established at home and that in both situations ideas, feelings, and knowledge be deliberately exchanged.

SELF-STRATEGIES DURING THE JOB SEARCH

The population of learning disabled adults is a heterogeneous one. While some may share similar characteristics, often the combination and severity of deficits result in a unique profile for each individual. These characteristics frequently become apparent in academic settings. However, the impact of the deficits can also be seen in social and vocational settings. When this happens the adult may require extra support and instruction in order to obtain and maintain some type of gainful employment. The adult education teacher can provide the educational support that the learning disabled adult may need as well as help the adult develop some strategies which will help him or her undertake a successful job search. This task will not be easy because some characteristics and compensating behaviors of the learning disabled adult can interfere with the job search process or negatively influence the results. The teacher can be especially alert to the following:

1. Difficulty monitoring, that is difficulty checking the accuracy or appropriateness of their responses, interactions, and dress.
2. Perseveration, that is continuing an action or conversation longer than necessary.
3. Disinhibition, that is difficulty inhibiting an action or response which may not be appropriate for the situation.
4. Difficulty attending to directions for work related tasks.
5. Difficulty anticipating problems which might arise on the job.

When working with a learning disabled adult one of the first steps is the identification of processing strengths and weaknesses, followed by matching them to occupational demands. Next, the adult and his or her teacher

should consider whether any of the factors listed above are also present and interfering with occupational success. Then the adult and teacher can begin developing strategies for the job search activities which the adult can use to increase his or her chances for success.

Finding a Position

Some adults have trouble becoming employed because they don't know where to look for a job. These adults may lack basic reading skills or have trouble searching for information. They may need help in identifying places where job opportunities are listed or knowing how to inquire if a position is available. During this period of the job search the adult should be encouraged to compare his or her list of strengths and weaknesses with the job requirements. If he or she is uncertain about the job requirements, this information can be obtained from the occupational indexes in the local library. Depending on the adult's reading and reference skills he or she may need help with this task. Doing this type of background work will assist the adult in applying for positions in which there is a good probability for success.

With the help of the adult education teacher the adult can develop a standard letter of inquiry and a script to be used when making a verbal inquiry as to the availability of a job. This type of preparation can insure that all the information is obtained that is relevant to or necessary for the adult to judge the desirability of pursuing the job.

Making an Application

Once a potential job is located the adult must complete the job application. For those with poor reading, writing, or memory skills this can be a very anxiety producing situation. However, the anxiety can be lessened with a little advanced practice. During reading instruction the vocabulary typically

found on job application can be introduced. Lessons can be structured around reading and following the directions found on application forms. Students can also be encouraged to make a small reference card which can be carried in a wallet or purse. Information about references, personal data and dates, previous employers, and words which might pose spelling problems can be listed on this card.

Interviewing

Under the best of circumstances interviewing can be stressful. The stress can be reduced if the adult knows what to expect and understands some of the unwritten rules about interviews. The following factors can be integrated into material used for academic instruction in adult education classes; these may need additional emphasis for the adult with a learning disability.

1. Being on time. For adults with deficits affecting time orientation being on time for an interview can be a problem. The first step in dealing with the problem is making the adult aware of this difficulty. To compensate for this problem, the adult should plan extra time for travel to the appointment. Similarly, if the adult has trouble following maps or using public transportation, he or she should allow extra travel time or make a practice trip prior to the interview date.
2. Dressing. Some adults may need guidance on what is the appropriate dress for an interview. The importance of a neat and clean appearance should be stressed. The appropriateness of the attire can be judged by the appropriate dress for everyday performance of the job. A three-piece suit would not be appropriate for an interview for an assembly line job. In most cases faddish or provocative clothing

is not appropriate. These unwritten rules can be reviewed with individual students or in group discussion. Some students may be encouraged to develop one or two all-purpose "interview" outfits so that selecting the appropriate dress is not left to the day of the interview.

3. Interviewing. Adults who have difficulty expressing themselves clearly, responding quickly or thinking on their feet may feel more comfortable about interviewing for a job if they have had a chance to rehearse. Role playing situations can be used to develop oral communication skills and build confidence. The teacher can begin preparing students for role playing by having them listen to audio taped or view videotaped interviews of "good" and "bad" applicant performance. Such exercises can heighten awareness of potential bad habits.
4. Dealing with rejection. Being turned down for a job is difficult for everyone. For some adults who have experienced academic difficulties a rejection from the work world can be devastating and significantly interfere with future attempts. Discussing the possibility of rejection ahead of time can lessen the impact. During these discussions the teacher can help the students develop coping strategies and brainstorm those external reasons (i.e., reasons not related to the individual's abilities) why he or she was not successful.

Survival on the Job

Many of the points discussed in the previous section can also be applied to teaching the student how to survive on the job. If the student has had a history of unsuccessful job experiences, he or she may need the help of a

vocational counselor or psychologist. At this point the adult education teacher can be of assistance by helping the student locate help through another agency. If the student has not yet developed an employment history, the adult education teacher can help the student develop survival skills through role playing and hypothesizing solutions to work related problems. In these situations the teacher can be the most help by developing problem solving skills using work situations. The following skills should be developed.

1. Recognizing a problem exists or reacting appropriately if a problem is pointed out.
2. Defining the problem.
3. Brainstorming several solutions or seeking and requesting help.
4. Systematically trying the solutions.
5. Evaluating the results.

The adult education teacher should not have difficulty identifying potential job problems. Students in the class, personal experience and the experiences of friends and colleagues can be used in preparing realistic situations.

GENERAL RESOURCES - FEDERAL AGENCIES

Clearinghouse on Adult Education
 Division of Adult Education Services
 Office of Vocational and Adult Education
 U. S. Department of Education
 400 Maryland Avenue, S. W.
 Washington, D. C. 20202-3583
 (202) 472-5860

The ERIC clearinghouses are responsible for collecting all relevant unpublished, noncopyrighted released materials of value in their subject areas. The following areas of adult education are covered by ERIC:

- A. Adult and continuing education.
- B. Career education.

Competency-Based Adult Education Network
 Division of Adult Education Services
 U. S. Department of Education
 Room 5610, ROB #3
 7th and D Streets, S. W.
 Washington, D. C. 20202-3583
 (202) 245-0636

This agency was established in early 1982 to assist self-help activities among adult educators and organization interested in Competency-Based Adult Education Development.

National Council on the Handicapped
 Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
 U. S. Department of Education
 330 C Street, S. W.
 Washington, D. C. 20202
 (202) 245-3498

The Council is composed of fifteen members appointed by the President. By law, at least five members of the Council must be handicapped or parents of handicapped individuals. The Council is interested in the needs of all handicapped individuals including the adult basic education student. The Council publications will be of assistance to the adult educator in planning and developing programs serving the disabled.

Office of Handicapped Citizens
 U. S. Department of Education
 400 Maryland Avenue, S. W.
 Washington, D. C. 20202-3583
 (202) 245-0893

The Office mission is to improve educational services for disabled individuals through: (a) identification of educational programs of interest to handicapped Americans; (b) dissemination of information on Department policies which relate to handicapped citizens; and (c) national, regional, and local meetings with organizations and individuals interested in the education of handicapped citizens.

President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped
 1111 20th Street, N. W.
 6th Floor
 Washington, D. C. 20210
 (245) 653-5044

This committee provides information primarily in the area of employment, and has published pamphlets on architectural accessibility and education for handicapped youth. There are a number of free publications which will be of assistance to the adult educators:

Affirmative Action for Disabled People
Architectural Barriers Checklist
Resources for the Vocational Preparation of Disabled Youth
Learning Disability: Not Just A Problem
Children Outgrow

GENERAL RESOURCES - NON FEDERAL

Accent on Information
 P. O. Box 700
 Bloomington, IL. 61701
 (309) 318-2961

Accent on Information is a computerized retrieval system containing information on products and devices which assist disabled person and other "how-to" information.

American Association for Adult and Continuing Education
 1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Suite 301
 Washington, D. C. 20016
 (202) 822-7066

Any adult educators interested in the educational needs of the adult learner with disabilities, AAACE has a program unit, "Adult Learners with Disabilities" which is working on issues, concerns, and educational needs of the disabled adult.

B'nai B'rith Career and Counseling Services
 1640 Rhode Island Avenue, N. W.
 Washington, D. C. 20036
 (202) 851-6532

B'NAI B'RITH CAREER AND COUNSELING SERVICES offers counseling to youths facing career choices and to adults who face vocational adjustment problems, second-career choices, or retirement. BBCCS has 20 facilities across the country which offer individual and group counseling services. A catalog of publications includes literature and directories for counselors, parents, and students.

Learning Resources Network
1221 Thurston Street
Manhattan, Kansas 60512
(913) 539-LERN

The LEARNING RESOURCES NETWORK is a national technical assistance center in adult learning, and an association for learning networks.

National Rehabilitation Association
8136 Old Kenne Mill Road
Suite A-305
Springfield, VA. 22150
(703) 451-7981

The National Rehabilitation Association is an organization for professionals and consumers interested in the advancement of rehabilitation services to all handicapped persons.

Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities
4156 Library Road
Pittsburgh, PA. 15207
(412) 341-1515

Atlanta Chapter
Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities
P. O. Box 29492
Atlanta, GA. 30359
(404) 633-1236

The Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities is a membership organization for professionals, adults with learning disabilities, and parents of children with learning disabilities.

Orton Dyslexia Society
724 York Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21204
(301) 296-0232

The Orton Dyslexia Society is an international membership organization for professionals and parents of dyslexic children.

Time Out To Enjoy
115 Garfield Street
Oak Park, IL. 60304
(312) 383-9017

TIME OUT TO ENJOY is a nonprofit group of LD adults. This is an advocacy organization for learning disabled adults focusing on the educational and vocational needs of the post-secondary learning disabled individual.

Learning Disabilities Adult Clinic
 Department of Special Education
 University of Georgia
 Aderholt Hall
 Athens, GA 30602
 (404) 542-1685

The clinic provides diagnostic, counseling, and referral services to Georgia adults.

MATERIALS

Professional literature and publisher's catalogs do not identify any career orientation or job search materials especially designed for use with learning disabled adults. Adult basic education programs, however, generally have materials available (such as the following examples) which can be beneficial.

Cambridge, Adult Education Company, New York, N. Y.

Follett Success Skills Series: Career Guidance

McGraw-Hill Book Company, Highstown, N. J.

Choice or Chance: Guide To Career Planning
 Occ-U-Sort
 Career Change: A Planning Book

Science Research Associates, Inc., Chicago, IL.

Keys - Career Exploration
 Occupational Exploration Kit

Scott, Foresman Company, Lifelong Learning Division, Glenview, IL

Getting and Keeping A Job
 Effective Employment Interviewing

Steck-Vaughn Company, Austin, TX.

Finding A Job
 How To Get A Job And Keep It

Titles in this series:

Description and Definition of Learning Disabilities

Appraisal and Assessment of Learning Disabilities

Assessment and Remediation of Oral Language

Assessment and Remediation of Written Language

Assessment and Remediation of Reading

Assessment and Remediation of Mathematics

Occupational and Career Information