



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA  
GRADUATE COLLEGE

Peace Corps  
Coverdell Fellows

# English Language Acquisition for Adults

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## Background

In 2011 a coalition of government, nonprofit, business, media, funding and educational organization came together to discuss the critical issues facing the region. This group identified increasing literacy levels as the single best way to ensure a prosperous economy and an improved quality of life for everyone in Tucson. Following on that, five longstanding organizations merged to become Literacy Connects. With nearly 100 years of experience providing quality literacy services to children and adults in Pima County and Southern Arizona, Literacy Connects became the largest nonprofit literacy provider in Arizona

## Programs

Literacy Connects offers learning opportunities from birth through adulthood – from reading to computer skills, English acquisition and artistic self-expression

### ***Reach Out and Read Southern Arizona***

We prepare children from birth through five years of age to succeed in school by partnering with doctors to prescribe books and encourage families to read together. Our pediatric partners provide new books to children and early-literacy coaching to parents so that their children grow up with books and a love of reading

### ***Reading Seed***

We recruit and train volunteer reading coaches to work one-on-one with students in kindergarten through third grade who are reading below grade level. We distribute free books to children and offer a leveled ending library for coaches, teachers and other literacy providers with books that match K-12 students' interests and reading ability

### ***Stories that Soar!***

We give voice to the original words and creative ideas of young people by sharing their stories through professional theatre productions, visual arts, handcrafted books and an arts integration K-12 curriculum. Each of our programs provides opportunity for young writers to experience the power of literacy and creative expression as their stories soar to life through the arts

### ***Adult Basic Literacy and English Language Acquisition for Adults***

We recruit, train and support volunteers to tutor adult students who are either learning to speak English or working to improve their reading, writing and math skills. Our programs offer an individualized approach to support each student's personal learning goals. We offer one-on-one tutoring, group classes, and personal help in our tutoring center and computer lab.

## Impacts

- Parents served by Reach Out and Read are up to four times more likely to read aloud to their children.
- On average, Reading Seed students improve their reading skills 30% faster than the general student population, important growth to get them caught up.
- 95% of teachers report student's attitude towards writing for the Stories that Soar! Magic Box as "Excited" or "very excited".
- Of adult learners who received 12+ hours of instruction, more than 90% report increases in life skills due to increased language proficiency.
- Of adult learners who receive 12+ hours of instruction, 60% report attending an employment-related goal.
- All of Literacy Connects' programs fight poverty by giving people tools to break the cycle, as children or in adulthood.