

Beyond ESL: Teaching How English Works to Multilingual Caregivers

*A Family Literacy Case Study
from Readers 2 Leaders*

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Please
sign in
here.



Today We'll Explore

1. Why foundational reading matters for multilingual caregivers
2. How our program teaches "How English Works"
3. What we've learned through implementation
4. Entry points for structured literacy in your own program



Section 1: Why This Matters



Adult Literacy

28%

of U.S. adults perform at the lowest levels of literacy proficiency.

19% → 28%

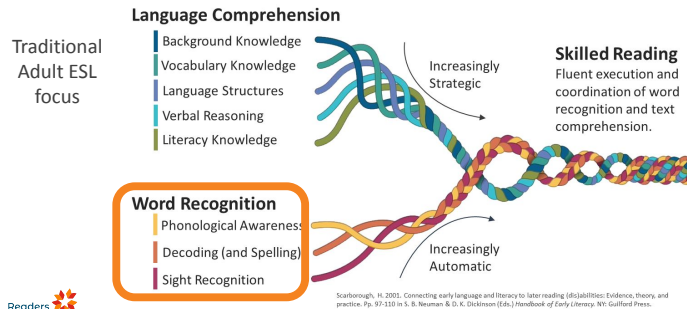
The percentage of adults with the lowest literacy skills increased between 2017 and 2023.

Multilingual Caregivers

are learning English while helping children learn to read English.



Reading Requires More Than Language



The Question That Changed Our Thinking

What if caregivers didn't just learn English....

What if they learned

how English works



The Missing Piece

Traditional Adult ESL

- ✓ Vocabulary
- ✓ Conversation
- ✓ Grammar
- ✓ Comprehension

Foundational Reading

- ✓ Speech Sounds
- ✓ Letter Patterns
- ✓ Decoding
- ✓ Word Recognition

Together they create confident readers.

Section 2: The Readers 2 Leaders Model



A Different Approach to Family Literacy

Why We Built It

- Many multilingual caregivers want to support their children's reading but have never been explicitly taught **how English works** as a written language.

Who We Partner With

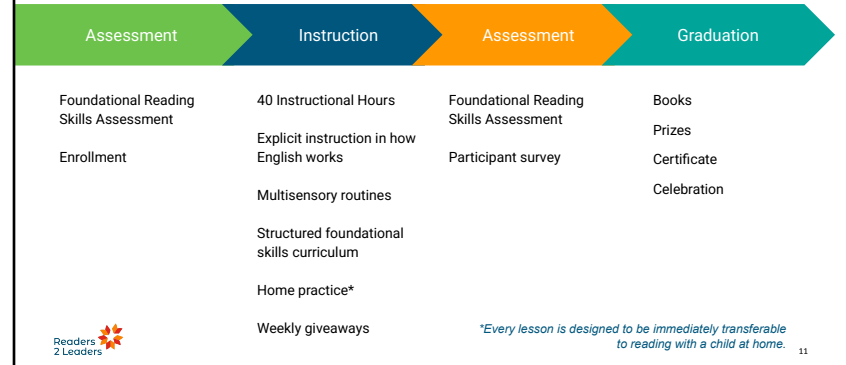
- Parents and caregivers of elementary-aged children
- Community Partners
 - Adult education providers
 - Schools
 - Libraries
 - Community organizations

Our Goal

- Build foundational reading skills, caregiver confidence, and family literacy routines that extend beyond the classroom.



What Does the Family Reading Cohort Look Like?



We Make the Structure of English Explicit

Hear Sounds - Map the Graphemes	Identify Syllables - Build Words	Read Connected Text - Independently

Adults Learn the Skills They Need to Read

- Letter-Sound Knowledge
- Word Building
- Decoding
- Reading Connected Text
- Dictation & Encoding
- Reading at Home

We make time to celebrate

-  Free books
-  Certificate
-  Recognition
-  Family celebration
-  A community of readers



Section 3: Results



We Measured More Than Reading Growth

Assessments

- Letter - Sound Knowledge Inventory
- Decoding Assessment

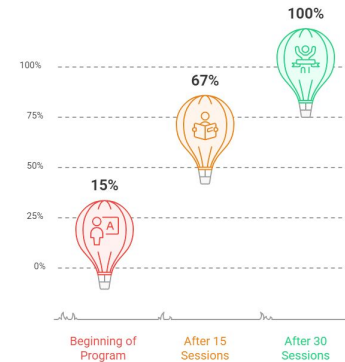
Participant Voice

- Confidence reading in English
- Confidence supporting children
- Program experience
- Family impact

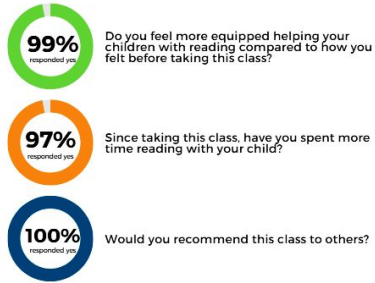
Attendance

- Daily Attendance
- Completion
- Ongoing Participation

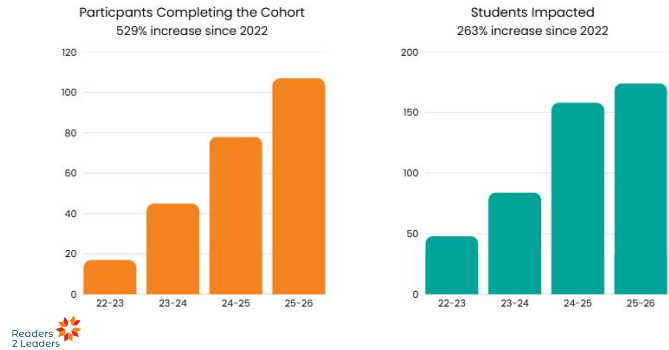
Foundational Literacy Skill Proficiency



Confidence Grew Alongside Reading Skills



Growing Community Impact



The Numbers Matter But the Stories Stay With You



"Everything I learned I can apply with my daughter at home and in day-to-day life because I too need to be able to read in English and communicate in English."

- Family Reading Cohort Participant

Section 4: Bringing This Back to Your Program



Every Program Has a Different Starting Point

1. Current Programs and Touchpoints
2. Reflect on Current Instruction
3. Know Your Learners
4. Take One Small Step
5. Measure Impact



Small changes,
implemented **with purpose**,
can make a lasting difference
for the learners and families you
serve.

Thank you for being here!