SENIORS AND LITERACY:
An annotated bibliography

Produced by:
The Centre for Literacy of Quebec

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CONTENTS

PREFACE

This bibliography provides references and annotations of research articles, project reports, resource guides and other documents that address the issue of seniors' literacy levels and practices, and the challenges associated with program design and instruction. It includes a list of web sites, belonging to a range of governmental and non-profit agencies that serve, or otherwise respond to, the needs of older people in Canada and around the world.

The research strategy included online searches of the ERIC Database, the National Adult Literacy Database, the National Institute for Literacy's *LINCS* database, the Concordia and McGill University Library catalogues, as well as extensive browsing on the Internet and consulting of existing bibliographies on seniors and literacy. The focus of the search was the literacy and basic education of older adults, despite a wealth of material on secondary and post-secondary level learning opportunities for seniors.

Search keywords and subject terms varied from database to database, and were selected using each source's official controlled vocabulary or thesaurus. Terms included: Adult basic education, Adult literacy, Literacy, Learning, Old adults, Old old adults, Senior citizens, Seniors literacy, and others as required.

Annotations reflect the content, and do not analyse or evaluate. Most are abridged from abstracts provided in ERIC or by the authors themselves. If no abstract was available, one was written by the researcher. In each case, the original source is indicated in square brackets.

Keywords from The Canadian Literacy Thesaurus have been assigned and an index prepared to help readers identify articles of interest and/or relevance.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ANNOTATED REFERENCES

Aitkens, A. (1991). *A national literacy strategy for older Canadians*. **Toronto, ON: One Voice, the Canadian Seniors Network.**

Describes a national strategy to provide literacy education for older Canadians, in response to a 1989 survey finding that 64 percent of Canadians aged 55-69 experience some degree of difficulty with everyday reading material. The strategy includes a rationale, objectives, and a 3-year start-up plan to develop the commitment, the tools, and the impetus to work toward the achievement of "a society where low literacy is not a barrier to full participation of seniors." Five appendices list task force members, provide draft terms of reference for the proposed coalition and the secretariat, outline the elements of an awareness plan, list task force recommendations, and list publications on older adult literacy. [ERIC]

> Literacy policy; Literacy strategies; Objectives; Planning

Aksornkool, N. (2003). *Literacy as freedom: A UNESCO round table*. **Paris: UNESCO. Retrieved January 24, 2004 from http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001318/131823e.pdf.**

Examines the nature, role and significance of literacy as a fundamental tool of personal and communal empowerment, development, and freedom. Discusses the importance of local context to the shaping and valuing of literacy practices, as one of eight major themes for debate. Sets the stage for discussion leading into the United Nations Literacy Decade, and makes recommendations for appropriate and meaningful action in support of "Literacy for All." [CE]

> Cultural diversity; Developing nations; Empowerment; Human rights; Literacy decade; Women's literacy

Askov, E. & Forlizzi, L. (1989). *Assessing the educational needs and interests of students enrolled in a reading program at a center for older adults*. **University Park, PA: Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy.**

Offers insight into the diverse skills, values, needs, and educational interests of a small population of older adults, aged 60 to 80 years, enrolled in a reading program. Highlights the group's general desire for self-improvement and self-sufficiency, while stressing the crucial role of the tutor in providing motivation and encouragement. (Includes the survey instrument and the explanation of the study--which was read to the subjects.) [ERIC]

> Educational relevance; Independence; Individual characteristics; Interests; Needs assessment; Self actualization; Student tutor relationships

Brown, H., Prisuta, R., Jacobs, B. & Campbell, A. (1996). *Literacy of older adults in America: Results from the National Adult Literacy Survey***. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.**
http://nces.ed.gov/pubs97/97576.pdf

Details findings of the 1992 National Adult Literacy Survey with respect to the prose, document, and quantitative literacy skills of senior adults, aged 60 and above. Draws attention to the lower, assessed skill levels of this group compared to those of the under-60 population. Correlates variations in over-60 scores with variables such as employment status, educational attainment, language background and income. (Includes sixty-three tables/figures. Appendices contain: information on interpreting the literacy scales; 12 additional tables; overview of survey procedures; definitions of subpopulations and variables; and participants in the survey development process and information about the authors.) [ERIC]

> Dominant language; Employment education relationships; Literacy income relationships; Literacy levels; Schooling; Statistics

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*Celebrating older learners: Seminar report***. (2001). Retrieved January 17, 2004 from the Lifelong Learning web site: http://www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/cols/report.pdf.**

Discusses the aims and background of a 2001 *Celebrating Older Learners* seminar, and delivers statements and recommendations for good practice as developed by seminar participants. Provides the text of selected speeches, brief summaries of four innovative projects targeted to older adults, and includes a section of further readings and useful web sites. [CE]

> Community projects; Conference proceedings; Literacy projects; Program planning; Summaries

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Courtenay, B.C., Stevenson, R.T. & Suhart, M.P. (1982). Functional literacy among the elderly: Where we are(n't). *Educational Gerontology* **8 (4), pp. 339-352.**

Reviews and analyzes studies conducted on functional literacy among older adults. The results indicate conceptual confusion, an obviously undereducated older population, inadequate measurements, and samples with disproportionate percentages of older persons. Conclusions indicate the need for educational gerontologists to increase efforts at improving literacy education. [Author]

> Educational research; Environmental analysis; Functional literacy; Literature review; Research methods

Cusack, S.A. (1995). Developing a lifelong learning program: Empowering seniors as leaders in lifelong learning. *Educational Gerontology* **21(4), pp. 305-320.**

Describes the use of an emancipatory education model, wherein 9 older women (65-85) were trained as research associates to conduct needs assessments of their peers. Posttest and focus group results support the effect of learning on seniors' mental, physical, and social health; increased self-esteem; and ability to express ideas and be heard. [ERIC]

> Empowerment; Leadership; Literacy models; Peer instruction; Needs assessment; Research methods, Self esteem; Social skills

Fisher, J.C. (1990). The function of literacy in a nursing home context. *Educational Gerontology* **16, pp. 105-116.**

Examines the literacy use of 28 older adult nursing home residents in relation to life experiences and perceptions of retirement and aging. Focuses on the emergent themes of continuity and change between present literacy usage and that of earlier life stages, perceptions of the purpose of literacy, the role of need in motivating older adults to use literacy skills, and contextual support for their use. An understanding of functional literacy among those interviewed could be based on their level of skill or comprehension, physical ability, perceived need, and prior experience. [Author]

> Environmental analysis; Interviews; Personal experiences; Personal needs; Research projects; Self concept

Fisher, J.C. (1987). The literacy level among older adults: Is it a problem? *Adult Literacy and Basic Education* **11(1), pp. 41-50.**

Describes the low level of participation in adult basic education by older adults with minimal education, and invites consideration of the impact that illiteracy has on older adults. Argues that little evidence exists by which to assess of the severity of this problem, or to measure the degree to which low level literacy skills are detrimental to the well-being of older adults. The role of reading among members of this group, the adequacy of commonly-used definitions and measures of literacy for older adults are discussed, and recommendations for researchers and practitioners are offered. [Author]

> Definitions; Literacy rates; Literature review; Participation rates; Personal wellbeing; Research methods; Schooling

Fisher, J.C. & Wolf, M.A. (1998). *Using learning to meet the challenges of older adulthood.* **San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.**

Seven papers examine the nature, role and impacts of learning in the lives of older adults, as determined by existing research and best practices in the field of educational gerontology. Discusses past policy initiatives, the role of technology, new approaches, and implications for the future in light of a growing senior population. [CE]

> Anthologies; Demographic data; Educational research; Intervention methods; Learning outcomes; Literacy policy; Literacy strategies; Technological change

Fraser, J. (2002). *Determinants of health maintenance among older adults learning to use computers.* **Thunder Bay, ON: Confederation College of Applied Arts and Technology. Retrieved January 17, 2004 from the CATALIST web site: http://prometheus.cc.uregina.ca/catalist/research/Papers/no%20end.htm.**

Reports the findings of a survey of older adults who participated in a computer course, designed by the researcher using principles of educational gerontology research. Identifies positive statistical correlations, as reported by participants, between health maintenance variables and participation in the computer course. Concludes that participation in "learning…is an active choice, which opens avenues of coping and adjusting skills…" that will aid participants in their older lives. [CE]

> Computers; Educational research; Learning outcomes; Program evaluation; Social inclusion; Surveys

Freer, K.J. (1994). How the rural elderly view literacy in their lives. *Educational Gerontology* **20(2), pp. 157-169.**

Discusses the findings of interviews held with 10 rural elderly residents with less than elementary education. Describes factors contributing to an increased need for literacy in respondents' lives, such as a growing desire to satisfy coping and expressive needs, the reduced effectiveness of earlier coping and compensation strategies with advancing years, and the generally adverse effect of low literacy on quality of life. [ERIC]

> Behaviour change; Coping skills; Interviews; Rural literacy programs; Self concept; Self expression

Goettler, D.L. (1994). *Older adult literacy resource materials: An annotated bibliography.* **Regina, SK: Seniors' Education Centre, University of Regina.**

Lists twenty-five titles that focus on older adult literacy needs, issues, and programs. Includes current Canadian literature in the area, as well as pertinent U.S. documents. Materials cover topics ranging from older adult literacy program development and learning resources to titles of selected general literacy materials. Contents are divided into three sections: (1) older adult literacy resource materials, with a summary of contents listed alphabetically by author; (2) general resource materials; and (3) information on where to obtain the documents. [ERIC]

Annotated bibliographies; Instructional materials; Literacy resources; Project reports; Research reports

Hart, D., Long, E, Breslauer, H. & Slosser, C. (2002). *Nonparticipation in literacy and upgrading programs: A national study.* **Toronto, ON: ABC Canada.**

Details the findings of a national survey into individuals' reasons for not participating in literacy programs, despite widespread advertising and availability of services. Offers statistics based on the responses of a representative sample of 866 individuals across Canada, of whom 40% were over the age of 50 years. Thirteen (of sixty) tables present information about specific age groups, accompanied by brief analytical discussions of the data. Most frequent reasons cited for nonparticipation among older adults included work/family commitments, followed by lack of interest. [CE]

Access to education; Educational relevance; Environmental influences; Participation rates; Statistics; Surveys

Heisel, M.A. (1980). Adult education and the disadvantaged older adult: An analytical review of the research literature. *Educational Gerontology* **5(2), pp. 125-137.**

Offers an overview of existing research on older adults and education, and argues that participation in educational activities may provide relief from social isolation, illiteracy, or lack of information about health care and services, and be instrumental in preventing intellectual decline, increasing self-confidence and enhancing the quality of life. Cites evidence of increased participation when programs involve instrumental learning and take place in community settings, but highlights a need for further research. [Author]

Access to information; Educational relevance; Inhome tutoring; Interviews; Learning needs; Literature review; Quality of life

Jacobs, B. (1987). *Combating illiteracy among the elderly: A cost-effective strategy: Final project report*. **Washington, DC: Literacy Education for the Elderly Project (LEEP).**

Describes the final outcomes of the Literacy Education for the Elderly Project (LEEP), designed to target literacy education to the older adult. Implemented in 27 sites nationwide, the program sought to establish relevant and accessible senior literacy programs by linking existing aging services networks with local literacy networks, and providing specific training to administrators and tutors in the needs of older adults. Appendices include a list of project advisory committee members, a list of demonstration sites, case studies of sites, a follow-up survey, and reproductions of articles from various periodicals describing the program. [ERIC]

> Community resources; Literacy networks; Literacy partnerships; Literacy projects; Program planning; Project reports; Social agencies; Training projects

Kasworm, C.E. & Medina, R.A. (1989). Perspectives of literacy in the senior adult years. *Educational Gerontology* **15, pp. 65-79.**

Observes that literacy in the senior adult years has historically been defined by concepts created for youth and young adult literacy research and programs. Explores alternative perspectives and research on adult literacy and identifies key principles affecting literacy in the senior adult years. Principles highlight the relationship of literacy and its usage to the senior adults' frame of reference, their social context, their own self-education activities, and their age/life context. [Author]

> Definitions; Educational research; Environmental analysis; Learning activities; Literature review; Living environment; Social environment

Kenan, S. (1991). *Literacy for older adults: A how to manual for practitioners*. **Toronto, ON: The Office for Senior Citizens' Affairs.**

Offers tips and advice to groups and practitioners who wish to establish and run effective literacy programs for older adults. Outlines the elements of successful programming, including planning, recruitment, training, tools, content, and delivery. Bases findings on secondary research, open-ended interviews, and the participatory observations and experiences of the author. Includes profiles of learning partnerships, and useful facts about literacy and its purposes in the lives of older adults. [CE]

> Educational strategies; Guides; Learning materials; Program planning; Recruitment

Lemieux, A. (1995). The university of the third age: Role of senior citizens. *Educational Gerontology* **21, pp. 337-344.**

Universities of the Third Age are developing the research facet of their mission. In this model, the senior citizen is both the object and the agent of research, being involved in action research that transforms their subjective impressions and intuitions into objective knowledge with which to transform their environment. [ERIC]

Educational research; Participatory research; Personal development; Postsecondary education; Social change

Lothian, T. (1997). *Older adults & illiteracy: A bibliography***.**

Presents an unannotated list of references to articles, books, guides and papers that investigate and discuss the issues and realities surrounding seniors' literacy levels and/or their engagement in formal or informal learning activities in later life. [CE]

Bibliographies; Educational research; Guides; Formal education; Informal learning; Literature review; Research reports

Manning, M. (1993). *Education for the fourth age: Opportunities for older people.* **Melbourne, Australia: Council of Adult Education.**

Examines the educational needs and interests of older housebound adults, and identifies practical issues to be considered in the delivery of educational programs for this population, based on findings from interviews with seniors and a review of the research. Highlights the value of education for older adults, but stresses a need for appropriate content and flexible delivery systems. Outlines the 'challenges' faced by both adult educators and the Council of Adult Education in Australia, and makes recommendations for further research. [CE]

Access to education; Challenges; Educational relevance; Interests; Interviews; Literature review; Needs assessment

McCardle, L.A. (2002). *Seniors' literacy research project*. **Charlottetown, PEI: Women's Network of PEI.**

Reports the outcomes of a research project that investigated the role of literacy in the lives of seniors, to determine the best ways to attract those interested in joining a literacy program. Provides a summary discussion of the literature, a description of the interview methodology adopted with a sample group of seniors, and an analysis of interview responses from the male, female, and combined group of participants. (Includes 38 references). [CE]

Intervention methods; Literature review; Motivation; Needs assessment; Research methods; Project reports; Recruitment

Millar, P. & Falk, I. (2000). *Seniors online: Literacy and learning by senior citizens in rural centres*. **Melbourne, Australia: Language Australia Ltd.**

Reports the findings of a qualitative inquiry into the use of online technologies by older adults in rural Tasmania, Australia. Discusses key barriers to online access, including transportation costs, attitudinal factors, limited literacy, and lack of confidence. Documents positive outcomes, such as the extension of social practices, including literacy and numeracy practices. Supports the idea that online technology provides opportunities for seniors to improve their communication skills, become aware of their potential as learners, and engage in self-development. Promotes the importance of online access centers to the creation of social networks and capital. (Includes 36 references and the survey instrument is appended.) [ERIC]

Access to education; Communication skills; Computers; Project reports; Rural literacy programs; Technological change; Reading improvement; Social behaviour

Moore, K.A. & Askov, E.N. (1989). *Computer-assisted instruction in basic skills for older, low-literate adults: Final report*. **Philadelphia, PA: Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy.**

Discusses the findings of a six-month study designed to test the effectiveness of using computers to help older, low-literate adults improve their reading skills in a community-based senior center. Describes the attitudes of the 10 older, low-literate adults (and their tutors) who participated in the study. Reports generally positive changes in attitude toward computer-assisted reading and some gains in reading ability, as measured by pre- and posttests, but delivers no strong conclusions due to small sample size and the lack of a control group. [ERIC]

Attitude change; Computers; Project reports; Reading improvement

Mullen, D. (1992). *Saskatchewan older adult literacy survey: Final report*. **Regina, SK: Seniors' Education Centre, University of Regina.**

Offers an overview of the state of older adults and literacy in Saskatchewan, based on a survey of 16 literacy programs throughout the province. Identifies barriers to older adults' participation in literacy programs, such as: negative attitudes toward self and ability to learn, stigma, misconceptions of others about the learning abilities of older adults, and gaps in current literacy programming. Stresses the importance of accessibility and relevance to senior participation, and promotes the concepts of peer tutoring and lifelong learning. Offers recommendations for resource development, and teaching approaches. (Appendices include instruments, data tables and figures.) [ERIC]

> Access to education; Educational relevance; Environmental analysis; Needs assessment; Peer instruction; Research reports; Surveys

Murphy, P.W., Davis, T.C., Jackson, R.H., Decker, B.C. & Long, S.W. (1993). Effects of literacy on health care of the aged: Implications for health professionals. *Educational Gerontology* **19 (4), pp. 311-316.**

Argues that patients must be able to understand oral and written instructions and health care materials. Suggests that patients with low literacy levels need educational programs and materials designed to teach them how to manage their health needs. [ERIC]

> Access to information; Health education; Instructional materials; Literacy health relationships; Professional development; Written communication

NACA position paper on lifelong learning. **(1990). Ottawa, ON: National Advisory Council on Aging.**

Describes NACA's official position on learning in older adulthood. Delivers specific recomendations to all the sectors of society that have a mandate to inform, train and educate. Calls for an increase in the number and quality of information, education, and training programs and services targeted to seniors, and for the greater inclusion and consultation of seniors in their development and delivery. Touches on the needs of literacy-deficient seniors and older adult immigrants, arguing for the provision of basic literacy and language courses to promote and facilitate access to information and participation in Canadian society. [CE]

> Challenges; Educational planning; Immigrants; Social inclusion; Social policy;

Older people and learning: Some key statistics **[NIACE Briefing Sheet 32]. (2002). Leicester, UK: National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education.**
http://www.niace.org.uk/information/Briefing_sheets/Older_learners_stats.pdf

Provides a summary of recent key statistics relating to the participation of older people in learning. Provides evidence from the latest surveys of current participation, recent trends, the types of learning that older people are involved in, future intentions, and the correlation between learning in later life and initial education. Also raises some issues for consideration. [NIACE]

> Environmental analysis; Interests; Life planning; Participation rates;
> Schooling; Statistics; Surveys

One Voice. (1990). *Learning - that's life! A national conference on literacy and older Canadians: Conference report and recommendations***. Ottawa, ON: One Voice, the Canadian Seniors Network.**

Reports the outcomes and recommendations emerging from a national conference, that brought seniors, researchers, literacy project leaders, education professionals, community agencies and policy makers together to examine the senior literacy problem and its solutions. Discusses the research, experiences, and information shared by participants, and summarizes the historical, political and cultural roots of the issue. Outlines common ingredients for the success of project- and program-based solutions, and recommends that seniors be granted a leading role in the development of literacy education programs. [ERIC]

> Challenges; Conference proceedings; Environmental analysis; History;
> Literacy policy; Personal experiences; Policy formation; Research projects

Paul, M. (1997). *Lifelong learning in action: A report on seniors and literacy***. Waterloo, ON: Project READ Literacy Network.**

Discusses the issues surrounding seniors and literacy, with particular attention to implications for literacy training, program development and promotion. Details the findings of surveys, interviews, and discussion groups with both seniors and those who instruct or tutor them; and delivers ideas and suggestions to guide the development of literacy programs that are relevant and appropriate to the special needs, circumstances, and abilities of seniors. Includes a selected annotated bibliography. [CE]

> Access to education; Annotated bibliographies; Educational strategies;
> Environmental analysis; Program planning; Recruitment; Research reports

Perrin, B. (1998). *How does literacy affect the health of Canadians? A profile paper***. Ottawa: Health Canada.**
http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/howdoes/cover.htm

Discusses the significant impact that literacy can have on health, and explains why the health field and Health Canada should be concerned. Provides an overview of the literacy situation in Canada, outlines the direct and indirect influences of literacy as a determinant of health, and suggests some of the ways in which the health field can respond. [CE]

> Access to information; Challenges; Environmental analysis; Health education; Literacy health relationships; Literacy rates; Public policy

Rigg, P. & Kazemek, F. (1983). Literacy and elders: What we know and what we need to know. *Educational Gerontology* **9 (5/6), pp. 417-24.**

Reviews existing literature about literacy and the aged, and asserts a need for empirical research into the reading and writing needs and interests as expressed by the elderly themselves. Also recommends examination of the effects of societal expectations of the elderly with respect to their reading/writing behavior and interests. [ERIC]

> Educational relevance; Educational research; Interests; Literature review; Needs assessment; Social environment

Roberts, P. & Fawcett, G. (1998). *At risk: A socio-economic analysis of health and literacy among seniors***. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada & Human Resources Development Canada. National Literacy Secretariat.**
http://www.nald.ca/NLS/ials/atrisk/cover.htm

Explores the links between socio-economic variables, such as income and education, and health status, with a specific focus on implications for seniors. Compares the health-related characteristics of seniors with their literacy skills and practices, based on data from the 1994 International Adult Literacy Survey. Offers further support for claims that low literacy skills can impede good health care practices and decisions, and identifies literacy as an important policy issue for health promotion. [CE]

> Access to information; Health education; Literacy health relationships; Policy formation; Social policy; Socioeconomic environment; Statistics

Rutherford, J. (1989). *Illiteracy and older Canadians: An unrecognized problem: Literature review & summary report*. **Ottawa, ON: One Voice, the Canadian Seniors Network, Inc.**

Summarizes key points raised in the literature, discussing the learning capabilities of older adults, their interest in acquiring literacy skills, deterrents to participation in programs, and considerations for program design based on the special needs and interests of particular groups and age categories of seniors. Recommends that literacy programs be based on input from gerontologists, literacy experts, community needs assessments and older adults themselves. Provides suggestions for further study and action. (Includes 98 references). [ERIC]

> Access to education; Challenges; Educational relevance; Environmental analysis; Literature review; Needs assessment; Program planning

Seniors Canada on-line survey: 2001 senior survey results. **(2001). Retrieved January 17, 2004 from the CATALIST web site: http://dev.www.uregina.ca/catalist/research/Papers/Seniors%20Canada%20online%20Survey%202002.htm**

Delivers detailed findings of a three-part qualitative survey conducted by Seniors Canada On-line. Describes the survey methodology, which employed an on-line survey in addition to field consultations with clients and providers of 24 community and seniors organizations offering Internet and computer-based training in Ottawa and Vancouver. Offers a basis for discussion and action relating to best practices for training programs, and ways of overcoming common barriers faced by seniors. [CE]

> Program planning; Qualitative data; Quantitative data; Research reports; Surveys; Technological change

Something special for seniors. **(1991). Medicine Hat, AB: Medicine Hat College, Division of Community Education.**

Reports the outcomes of a demonstration seniors' literacy project developed at Medicine Hat College in Alberta. Describes the project's successes with a model for recruiting seniors to participate as both students and trained volunteer tutors. Key components rest on the engagement and consultation of seniors at all levels of program development and delivery, and the provision of 'read-to' services for those who cannot read for themselves. [CE]

> Literacy models; Peer instruction; Pilot programs; Project reports

Sussman, S.B. (2002). *Moving the markers: New perspective on adult literacy rates in Canada***. Ottawa, ON: The Movement for Canadian Literacy.**

Investigates the way Canadian adult literacy statistics are used in the development of adult literacy policies and programs, and discusses the technical and conceptual limitations of existing methods used to develop literacy statistics. Identifies demographic patterns within the literacy rate statistics that offer information relevant to the development of interventions for target groups. Delivers 26 recommendations to policy makers and the literacy community, five of which focus specifically on the issue of low literacy among seniors. [CE]

Challenges; Demographic data; Policy formation; Research methods; Research reports; Statistics; Target groups

van der Kamp, M. & Scheeren, J. (1996). *Functional literacy of older adults: The case of the Netherlands***. Groningen: University of Groningen, Department of Adult Education.**
http://www.literacyonline.org/products/ili/pdf/ilprocmv.pdf

Offers an overview of the literacy status of older adults in The Netherlands, based on IALS data and follow-up interviews with selected survey respondents aged 50-75. Discusses the variation in literacy skills among different senior age-categories, in relation to relevant background variables, and investigates particular areas of difficulty, as well as coping strategies and possible intervention strategies. [CE]

Coping skills; Environmental analysis; Intervention methods; Interviews; Schooling; Statisics; Surveys

Weinstein-Shr, G. (1993). *Growing old in America: Learning English literacy in the later years***. Washington, DC: National Center for ESL Literacy Education.**
http://www.cal.org/ncle/digests/GROW_OLD.HTML

Discusses the increasing contribution of new immigrants and refugees to the growing population of seniors in America. Argues the importance and feasibility of providing language and literacy instruction for this population, and describes the needs and resources of these learners. Highlights promising programs and practices, and outlines factors that influence language and literacy acquisition. [ERIC]

Environmental analysis; Immigrants; Learning needs; Literacy needs; Second language learning

Weinstein-Shr, G. (1995). *Literacy and older adults in the United States* **[NCAL Technical Report TR94-17]. Philadelphia, PA: National Center on Adult Literacy.**
http://www.literacyonline.org/products/ncal/pdf/TR9417.pdf

Examines the literacy needs and resources of older adults in the United States, based on individual profiles and information about demographic trends on aging that have implications for literacy education. Investigates the cognitive, physical, sociocultural, and motivational factors that influence learning and literacy acquisition among the elderly, and examines the availability and appropriateness of existing literacy services. Offers specific recommendations for research, policy and programming that address the special needs and resources of older adults. [Author]

Challenges; Demographic data; Environmental analysis; Learner profiles;
Literacy needs; Statistics

White, H., McConnell, E., Clipp, E., Bynum, L., Teague, C., Navas, L., Craven, S. & Halbrecht, H. (1999). Surfing the net in later life: A review of the literature and pilot study on computer use and quality of life. *The Journal of Applied Gerontology* **18 (3), pp. 358-378.**

Reports the outcomes of a project that provided Internet and electronic mail access to a group of older adults in a retirement community, with the goal of determining whether computer-based interventions could reduce social isolation and improve psycholocial well-being. Includes a review the literature underlying the project's conception, and documents trends towards decreased loneliness among seniors, as a result of participation. [Author]

Computers; Educational research; Literature review; Project reports; Research
projects; Social inclusion

Wolf, Mary Alice. (1994). *Older adults: Learning in the third age*. **Columbus, OH: Center on Education and Training for Employment, College of Education, the Ohio State University.**

Examines and synthesizes the literature about persons over 60 -- the Third Age -- particularly as they engage in learning. The discussion spans the literature of psychology, sociology, gerontology, education, and other fields, and relates to four main themes: the inner life, cognitive changes of aging, psychosocial development, and socioeconomic factors. Concludes with the author's speculations about the direction and structure of the field of educational gerontology. (Includes 256 references and a list of resources for program development.) [ERIC]

Cognitive ability; Educational research; Environmental analysis; Literature
review; Self concept; Social change; Socioeconomic environment

UN-ANNOTATED REFERENCES

Educational Gerontology, Volume 4, 1979 [Special issue on literacy and older adults].

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Jacobs, B. & Ventura-Merkel, C. (1986). *Organizing a literacy program for older adults.* Washington, D.C.: Literacy Education for the Elderly Project (LEEP).

Jarvis, P. (2001). *Learning in later life: An introduction for educators & carers*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Knowles, M.S. (1984). *Creating lifelong learning communities (conceptualizing all social systems as systems of learning resources)*. Paper presented at the National Adult Education Conference, Louisville, KY, November 6-10, 1984.

Lothian, T. & Jones, S. (1991). *Something special for seniors: An evaluation report on tutor training in an adult literacy program for seniors*. Ottawa, ON: Centre for the Study of Adult Literacy, Carleton University.

WEB SITES

Canada

Canadian Senior Years
http://www.senioryears.com/

> An online seniors community that serves as a source of information, articles, news, discussion and links to other sites of interest to Canadians age 50 and over.

CATALIST: The Canadian Network for Third Age Learning
http://www.catalist.ca

> A bilingual network of older adult learning organizations that promotes third age learning through the sharing of knowledge, expertise, research, and resources. It operates via the Internet, a listserv, e-mail, publications and communications by phone and fax.

Division of Aging and Seniors (DAS)
Health Canada
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/seniors-aines/

> The DAS offers federal leadership on issues pertaining to aging and seniors. It serves as a focal point for information and expertise, and promotes the participation of seniors in federal decisions and activities that affect them.

National Advisory Council on Aging (NACA)
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/seniors-aines/index_pages/naca_e.htm

> NACA is mandated to assist and advise the Minister of Health on all matters related to the aging of the Canadian population and the quality of life of seniors. It receives operational support from the Division of Aging and Seniors and consists of (up to) 18 representatives from all parts of the country and all walks of life.

Routes to Learning Canada
http://www.routestolearning.ca/home.html

> A not-for-profit, charitable organization that develops, coordinates and delivers educational travel programs for both Canadians and visitors. (Formerly Elderhostel Canada).

Senior Centre.ca
http://www.seniorcentre.ca

> An online community for seniors that delivers training resources, courses and learning activities through the web. Also offers seniors the opportunity to share their knowledge, ideas, hopes and dreams, through a *Creative Life Writing* e-zine.

Seniors Canada On-Line
http://www.seniors.gc.ca/index.jsp

> This web site serves as a single access-point to information about programs and services of relevance to seniors in Canada. It is an initiative led by Veterans Affairs Canada, in partnership with other Government of Canada departments.

The Canadian Seniors Policies and Programs Database (SPPD)
http://www.sppd.gc.ca/

> Profiles government policies and programs for which seniors are the primary beneficiaries. It was developed and is maintained by federal, provincial and territorial governments.

United Kingdom

Age Concern
http://www.ageconcern.org.uk/

> The UK's largest organisation working with and for older people: provides local services and influences public opinion and government. Keeps in daily contact with thousands of older people enabling them to make more of life.

Better Government for Older People (BGOP)
http://www.bgop.org.uk/pages/index.html

> A UK-wide partnership comprising BGOP Subscribers, Key Partners, Strategic Alliances, and an Older People's Advisory Group (OPAG). Established as part of the UK's 'Modernising Government Agenda', the BGOP (and OPAG) aim to ensure older people are engaged as citizens in decision making at all levels and in the development of strategies and services for an aging population.

Learning in Later Life
http://www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/older/index.htm

> An introduction and guide to the range of learning services and opportunities available to seniors via the national Lifelong Learning initiative of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in the UK.

Older and Bolder Initiative – NIACE
http://www.niace.org.uk/research/older_bolder/default.htm

> This initiative strives to promote and create wider learning opportunities for older people; build awareness and understanding of the learning needs of seniors; and influence policies affecting seniors and learning in the UK.

United States

Coalition of Limited English Speaking Adults (CLESE)
http://www.clese.org/

> A coalition of 40 community-based organizations, representing more than 26 different ethnic groups in the Chicago area, with the mission of improving the lives of limited-English speaking elderly by providing leadership, education and advocacy. CLESE has developed an innovative ESL curriculum model called *Bright Ideas*.

FirstGov for Seniors
http://www.firstgov.gov/Topics/Seniors.shtml

> This site is an initiative of the National Partnership for Reinventing Government (NRPG), and serves as a single access point to U.S. Government health and security information, and services of interest and benefit to seniors.

Senior Service America
http://www.seniorserviceamerica.org/

> A non-profit organization that helps provide training and community employment opportunities to older, low-income adults, with the aid of Title V federal funds distributed directly to non-profit, community-based organizations, and local government agencies across the U.S.

Europe/International

AGE: European Older People's Platform
http://www.age-platform.org/

> A coalition of national and regional older people's organizations with a mandate to voice and promote the interests of older people in the European Union, and raise awareness about the issues the affect them.

Elderhostel: Adventures in Lifelong Learning
http://www.elderhostel.org/welcome/home.asp

> Elderhostel is an international, not-for-profit organization that provides educational travel opportunities to people 55 and over.

International Federation on Aging
http://www.ifa-fiv.org/

> A non-profit, non-governmental, membership organization that links more than 150 older person's associations over 54 nations. The Federation facilitates the international exchange of ideas and concerns of older people, and advocates for their well-being around the world.

Third Age Learning International Studies
http://www.extension.usask.ca/Talis/

>An informal international network of adult learning organizations that focuses on learning and education in the later years of life. It promotes research in the field of third age learning, provides documentation on program experiences, and serves as a forum for the open exchange of knowledge and ideas.

U3A Internetwork: The International Network for Universities of the Third Age
http://www.worldu3a.org

>The U3A initiative is a global network of self-organized older adults who communicate and work together to promote, organise and deliver lifelong learning opportunities within their local communities.

KEYWORD INDEX