

JANE ADDAMS RESOURCE CORPORATION

We definitely need a better way to assess the skill levels of adult learners. I had a learner come in and assess on the TABE at a 1st grade level. Then, she and her tutor felt confused when she worked in a 1st grade book, and the work was too easy for her. She ended up feeling like the 6th grade book was the best fit for her.

The consequence of learners getting low scores that don't accurately reflect their skills and knowledge is that it demoralizes them. I recently had another learner tell me that she was proud of what she's accomplished with her tutor so far. She divulged to me that when she came into the program and TABE'd at a 3rd grade level she was crushed. She had never before shared with me that her low TABE score affected her that way.

Honestly, I feel like an oral interview with an instructor who is familiar with the learner is a much better measure of their skills and knowledge. I know that this is way more time-consuming than giving everyone the same standardized test, but the standardized test doesn't always accurately reflect their skills.

Also, we are a small program with a small budget, so we use the paper TABE, which unfortunately, does not provide any diagnostics.