

Using TV411 at Home

A Pilot Test of Home View and Outreach Models

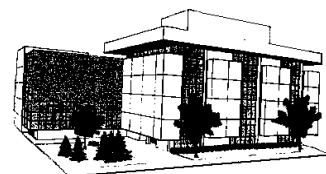
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***TV411—Multimedia Resources for Adult Literacy
from ALMA — the Adult Literacy Media Alliance***

**Jerome Johnston, Ph.D.
Leslie Isler Petty, Ed.D.
Shannon J. Young, M.A.**

*with the assistance of Sarah Crook,
Eric Groenendyk, and Donna Walter*

Teaching, Learning, & Technology Program
Institute for Social Research
University of Michigan



Abstract

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Jerome Johnston, Leslie Isler Petty, and Shannon Young
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Pilot studies were conducted to explore the use of the multi-media adult education program—TV411 (developed by the Adult Literacy Media Alliance)—in two different distance learning models: Home View and Outreach. These models represent two points on a continuum depicting different levels of support for adult learners using the TV411 materials. The feasibility of implementing and studying each model, and the impact on learner confidence, attitudes and knowledge, were examined.

A subset of eight of the videotapes and workbooks comprising the TV411 series was used in the studies. Participants were asked to do three things each week: watch one video, do some of the workbook activities, and maintain a portfolio of their work. Students in the Outreach pilot were also contacted weekly by a tutor and had the opportunity to set up individual tutoring sessions. Total time spent with the TV411 materials was significantly less than a student would have experienced in a traditional adult education class.

Pre and post measures examined the likelihood of students engaging in various literacy behaviors, their confidence in literacy activities, and knowledge of specific skills and information presented by TV411. In addition, participants' portfolio contents were examined.

Methodological issues and potential impact of each model on student learning are considered in detail. Primary methodological issues revolved around recruitment and retention of study participants, both of which are typically difficult when dealing with the adult basic learner population. These pilot tests showed that distance learning with adult basic learners presents some very real challenges. Successful distance learning requires that the learner be self-motivated and able to work independently. However, many adult basic learners require support to develop these skills. Thus, future research must address ways of providing adult basic learners with the appropriate guidance and support needed for them to become independent learners. The concept of distance learning is a good model; implementing it for the adult basic learner population requires fine-tuning to meet the specific needs of this population.

Overall, for those students who completed the studies, TV411 seemed to have a positive impact on their attitudes, confidence and plans for future schooling. It also had a slight positive effect on their likelihood of engaging in specific literacy behaviors once the study was over. Gains in the knowledge presented in TV411 were small. There was a direct relationship between the level of support (tutoring) that the student received and

their levels of confidence in performing math tasks and their scores on the “word work” test of TV411-related knowledge. Scores on the math knowledge test also varied depending upon the amount of tutoring, with those receiving low and moderate levels of tutoring showing the greatest gains. This suggests that distance learning programs for adult basic learners may do well to include a strong student support component. More research is needed to examine both the impact and cost-effectiveness of various types of student support.

Executive Summary

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The designers and underwriters of TV411, an adult education program developed by the Adult Literacy Media Alliance (ALMA), want to know the costs and benefits of using TV411 in various forms of informal education. TV411 is a unique set of materials for adult learners, consisting of television programs and workbooks aimed at helping adults learn by showing them how other adults have succeeded and by providing opportunities for students to practice the skills and strategies presented in the materials. TV411 is designed to be used in a variety of settings, ranging from traditional literacy programs and non-literacy social service agencies to viewing and studying independently in a home setting. There is considerable variation in the ways in which students can use the materials. Of particular interest are three models that represent a continuum of external support for student learning:

- **Home Viewing:** adult learners view and study at home with minimal external support.
- **Outreach:** learners work at home, but are supported by a tutor who makes regular contact with them and provides assistance when needed.
- **Facilitated Group:** a group of learners meet and study together, but in a mode less intense than a traditional school-based class. A facilitator (not necessarily a certified teacher) assists the group with its learning.

Each of these models provides a mechanism through which adult learners can engage the TV411 materials. The models vary in the demands they make upon the student to take responsibility for his or her own learning and in the amount of support they offer to students. All, however, represent possible ways for adults to learn from TV411.

While exploring the costs and benefits requires a formal research plan, studying television-based interventions in settings other than traditional classrooms is very difficult. Accordingly, small-scale pilot studies are being conducted to determine the feasibility of assessing the impact of each model. Also, while the pilot study has smaller

numbers of adult learners than needed to draw confident conclusions about each model's impact, the numbers are adequate to provide valuable insights into the benefits and costs of each model.

In the summer of 1999, the authors conducted a pilot study of the facilitated group model. The results were encouraging. After ten weeks of meeting for weekly 3-hour sessions, many learners showed increased confidence in their academic skills. In addition, they were more inclined to engage in the literacy activities promoted by the series, they learned many of the concepts taught in the series, and they were motivated to pursue other educational opportunities after the intervention was over.¹

Research Plan

The present report covers similar pilot studies of the Home View and Outreach models. In the Outreach pilot test, the efficacy of the TV411 materials was tested over an 8-week period between February and April, 2000. Students used 8 of the 20 TV411 video programs and corresponding print materials. Twenty-five learners were recruited from the New York City area. They were asked to do three things every week: watch one of the TV411 videos, complete at least one of the workbook exercises, and work on their personal literacy goals. Learners were contacted every week by a tutor who inquired about their progress, asked about difficulties they might be having, and encouraged them to attend a drop-in tutoring session if they needed help. Fourteen participants stayed with the project for 8 weeks and provided complete data on their experiences. They received \$100 for completing the study.

The Home View test was conducted in two phases. The first phase took place in communities located in Southeast Michigan; the second took place in New York City. Participants were promised \$100 if they completed the study requirements and participated in pre and post testing. For the Detroit-area study, 14 adults agreed to participate; five completed the study. In New York City, 11 were selected to participate and four completed the study. Attrition was quite high in both of these sites.

The Participants

The 23 adults who completed the Home and Outreach studies varied in age (18-58) and gender (half were females). Fifteen had some employment, but they were poor: 15 reported personal income of less than \$15,000 per year. None of them had graduated from high school or earned a G.E.D. All were lacking in the educational skills needed to improve their employment options. Most juggle multiple responsibilities and have families who depend on them. As such, making time to further their own education – even when they can see the benefits of doing so – places heavy demands on their already limited resources.

¹ See Johnston, J., Young, S.J., & Petty, L., (1999, September). An impact study of TV411: Facilitated group design—pilot test of procedures.

Learning Time

For both Home View and Outreach the average learning time spent at home was about 15 hours. Participants watched most of the 8 videos, some more than once (5 hours). They did about half of the exercises in each workbook (6 hours) and completed one or two additional tasks that they included in their portfolio (about 4 hours). In the Outreach model, tutoring added additional learning time. The range of tutoring hours was one hour to six hours, bringing the total for Outreach learners to 16 to 21 hours. This is a small fraction of the time a learner would spend in a school-like course.

Impact of TV411

TV411 hopes to encourage students to continue their education and provide them with some of the skills needed to succeed in doing so. The Outreach and Home View models, therefore, are being tested as possible ways to provide a positive educational experience to adults who are not currently committed to pursuing classes in formal literacy or educational settings. (In the pilot studies we recruited some of the study participants from waiting lists for G.E.D. prep courses; these people already had some commitment to further their education.)

To assess impact, measures were developed that are tied to ALMA's broad set of goals for learners and to the specific content of the videos and workbooks used in the studies. Each of the measures administered to the students was designed to tap the knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes promoted in the videos and workbooks. Before and after the study, participants were interviewed in a 45-minute face-to-face session. They also completed tests of mathematics and word skills. Prior to the intervention, students took reading tests to ensure their reading levels fell within the range for which the TV411 materials were designed (grades 5-8). In addition, participants were asked to maintain a portfolio—a collection of their TV411-related work—and these were examined for evidence of learning and growth.

What impact did exposure to the TV411 videos and workbooks have on the participants? We assessed impact by looking at changes in the participants over the eight weeks in five areas:

- Likelihood of engaging in the literacy activities modeled on TV411
- Confidence in the modeled literacy activities
- Plans for further education
- Portfolios
- Knowledge of the key concepts (math and “word work”) taught in the TV411 materials.

The first three areas measure whether the experience affected participants' "literacy life" and beliefs about their literacy skills. The fourth assesses whether their writing or math practices exhibited growth, and the fifth indicates whether they learned specific skills taught in the shows and workbooks. These are all areas where participants in the facilitated group study exhibited growth. The findings for Home View and Outreach are summarized below.

Likelihood of engaging in the literacy activities modeled on TV411. At both the pretest and posttest interviews, participants were asked how likely they were to engage in specific literacy activities. Home View participants showed an increased likelihood of writing a poem and a slight increase in doing *personal writing*, a collection of skills related to writing. They showed little change in the likelihood they would engage in any of the other literacy activities presented in TV411. Outreach participants showed a larger average increase in their expectations of engaging in specific literacy behaviors, with the largest gains noted on plans to *write an essay, edit their writing, and write a poem or song*.

Confidence in the modeled literacy activities. Viewing had a moderate impact on the confidence of participants in both the Home View and Outreach conditions—especially for activities where confidence at the baseline was quite low. It appears that watching other adult learners succeed at writing, editing, and doing math has a positive effect on the viewers' own confidence. This is probably enhanced when they do workbook exercises where the level of difficulty is moderate and success is likely. It was also enhanced more for those who took advantage of the tutoring.

Plans for further education. More than half of the participants in each group changed their educational plans to include further schooling. This suggests that viewing models of adults who have successfully returned to school may affect viewers' perceptions of their own abilities to also succeed in returning to school. Thus, TV411 may not only increase viewers' confidence in performing specific literacy activities but also provide them with the confidence necessary to consider more formal education.

Workbooks and portfolios. Workbooks included a variety of activities, including learning how to read a pay stub, improving spelling, writing a personal letter, reading food labels and figuring out percentages. Participants completed about half of the exercises in the workbook. In addition to workbook exercises, participants typically created one one-page entry in their portfolio each week. The entry was almost always in response to a suggestion in the workbook. Items included a letter, a short essay, a poem, or a page of math practice. Although these entries appeared to the researchers to be simple responses to an assignment, participants viewed at least some of them as important learning points. When asked at the end of the eight weeks, almost every respondent selected at least one item they said represented something they had never done before. Outreach and Home View portfolios showed similar patterns of content, focus, and developmental levels of student work. Portfolios consisted primarily of workbook activities and showed little evidence of reflection or evaluation of the work included. This is not surprising, however, given the extensive amount of modeling and practice required to successfully utilize portfolios as a reflective and developmental tool.

Knowledge of the key concepts taught in the TV411 materials. Prior to watching TV411, the Home View group knew most of the mathematics content focusing on numeric literacy and about half of the content focusing on averages and percentages. They also knew most of the word concepts (prefixes/suffixes, synonyms/antonyms, and how to use a dictionary). This group increased their scores very little—from 81% at the baseline test on both measures to 82% for math and 84% for word concepts.

The Outreach group had lower baseline scores. They scored 75% on the math and 66% on word work. They increased their scores much more. The average score on the math test increased from 75% to 83%; on the word work test the average scores increased from 66% to 85%. Improvements on the word work test were directly related to the amount of tutorial support students received.

Learner’s reading skills. The reading ability of most of the learners in these two studies was in the range that ALMA sees as its primary audience—adults reading at the 5th – 8th grade level. A small number of learners tested at levels below and above this range. There were no differences in the learning gains for these out-of-range groups. Indeed, those at the lowest reading level showed increased confidence in reading after the eight-week test.

Lessons from the Pilot Studies

The pilot tests provide information on the implementation and viability of two different distance learning models. They highlight the difficulties in both recruiting and maintaining a sample. In addition, they point out some difficulties in using distance learning with an ABE population. Distance learning is premised on the idea that students are capable of working independently with little external support. Many adult learners lack this skill. The pilot tests also suggest that while the tutor support provided in the Outreach model is effective, it comes at a cost. The use of a single tutor for up to 25 students is very labor intensive, because it deals with learners one at a time. It is a more expensive model than one where learners meet as a group with a tutor, even if the group meets informally and only for a few hours at a time. The pilot studies raise questions about the best ways to use portfolios in distance learning. One other lesson concerns the feasibility of doing research on learners who work at a distance. It is indeed possible, though it does require face-to-face interviews to measure many of the concepts assessed in these studies.

Recommendations

ALMA has attractive and compelling materials. When adult learners in the target audience engage the TV411 materials even for a relatively short period of time, their attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge are affected in positive ways. But TV411 is competing for the attention of an audience that is ill-equipped for independent home study and lacking in motivation to seek out what TV411 has to offer.

To successfully reach and support a larger audience that might be interested in non-classroom learning, the authors recommend additional research on new ways to reach and support this audience. Experiments are needed in promoting the series to its intended audience and to the community agencies that serve as gatekeepers for that audience. Experiments are also needed in ways to orient the audience to the essential elements of independent study—especially to the use of a portfolio as a learning device. Finally, experiments are needed in ways to support learners beyond the simple model of a tutor making weekly calls. These recommendations are elaborated in the concluding chapter.

Table of Contents

Chapter

	Executive Summary	i
1	Studying the Impact of TV411	1
2	Recruiting the Participants	15
3	Implementation of the Two Models.....	25
4	Impact of the Two Models.....	33
5	Lessons from the Pilot Study	63
	References.....	67
	Acknowledgements.....	69
	Appendix: TV411 Content Analysis	71

Chapter 1

Studying the Impact of TV411

The designers and underwriters of TV411, an adult education program developed by the Adult Literacy Media Alliance (ALMA), want to know the costs and benefits of using TV411 in various forms of informal education. TV411 is a unique set of materials for adult learners, consisting of television programs and workbooks aimed at helping adults learn by showing them how other adults have succeeded and by providing opportunities for students to practice the skills and strategies presented in the materials. TV411 was designed to be used in a variety of settings, ranging from traditional literacy programs, to non-literacy social service agencies, to viewing and studying independently in a home setting. There is considerable variation in the ways in which students can use the materials. Of particular interest are three models that represent a continuum of external support for student learning:

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While exploring the costs and benefits of each model requires a formal research plan, studying television-based interventions in settings other than traditional classrooms is very difficult. Accordingly, small-scale pilot studies are being conducted to assess the feasibility of assessing the impact of each model. While the pilot study has smaller numbers of adult learners than needed to draw confident conclusions about each model's impact, the numbers are adequate to provide valued insights about the benefits and costs of each model.

In the summer of 1999, the authors conducted a pilot study of a model in which learners attended weekly group meetings where a facilitator helped learners use the

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

materials and provided guidance when requested. This model provided a supportive instructional setting in which students were encouraged to interact with one another as well as with the facilitator. We refer to this model as the facilitated group model. While challenging, we found that the research on this model could be done and that the impact was promising, particularly from a motivational standpoint. After ten weeks of weekly three-hour meetings, many learners showed greater confidence in their basic skills, were more inclined to engage in the literacy activities promoted by the series, learned some of the concepts taught in the series, and were motivated to pursue other educational opportunities as a result of their experience. (See Johnston, J., Young, S.J., & Petty, L., 1999.)

The other two instructional models—Outreach and Home View—represent different types of distance learning. Distance learning typically involves using technology (e.g., television, videotapes, on-line resources) to provide instruction to students who work independently, although students may also have contact with a teacher. It is not uncommon for students and teachers in distance education programs to be separated by location or time. The examination of distance learning models for adult basic skills is of particular interest, as a majority of states are considering the implementation of some form of distance learning programs to help reach adult learners. Many state directors of adult education think that distance learning has the potential to reach learners that are not currently served by existing adult education programs (NIFL, 2000).

In the Outreach model explored in this study, students view the programs and complete workbook activities at home. In addition they receive instructional support from a tutor who contacts them weekly and arranges one-on-one learning sessions. In the Home View model, students work completely independently, with only minimal contact with the research staff during the course of the study. Both models encourage independent work, but the Outreach model provides students with another level of support not available to the Home study participants. This report chronicles the experiences of students who participated in the Outreach and Home View studies. It documents their responses to the TV411 materials, and assesses the impact of the materials and the tutoring vs. independent learning experience. It also reports on the most challenging aspect of distance learning with ABE adults: recruitment and retention in both of these models.

In the Outreach pilot test, the efficacy of the TV411 materials was tested over an 8-week period between February and April, 2000. Students used 8 of the 20 available video programs and the corresponding print materials. Twenty-five learners were recruited from the New York City area. They were asked to do three things every week: watch one of the TV411 programs, complete at least one of the workbook exercises, and work on their personal literacy goals. They were also encouraged to meet with their tutor on a regular basis. Fourteen participants stayed with the project for 8 weeks and provided complete data on their experiences.

Design Schematic for Evaluation of Outreach and Home View Models

Design		
Baseline interviews & testing with each participant	For 8 weeks, participants view a TV411 program, complete parts of the companion workbook, develop portfolio activities, and—for Outreach—work with a tutor as needed.	Follow-up interviews & testing with each participant

The pilot test for the Home View model utilized the same 8 video programs and corresponding print materials used in the Outreach study. In this model, students received copies of the videos. Throughout the study, students worked independently or with a partner to watch the videos and complete the print materials. The Home View study was conducted in Detroit in the winter of 2000 and again in New York in June and July. Nine people finished the home study: five of the 14 participants from the Detroit area and four of the 11 participants from New York.

The Concept of Efficacy Testing

Two types of studies are frequently employed in the evaluation of interventions: *efficacy* studies and *effectiveness* studies. The present study of TV411 is an efficacy study. An efficacy study seeks to understand the potential of an intervention when it is used under ideal conditions. An effectiveness study seeks to measure impact of an intervention under typical patterns of use. The efficacy study is useful because it permits isolating the potential of an intervention early in its development. Every innovation—no matter how good—requires time, money and effort to get it recognized, adopted and used sufficiently to have its impact felt widely in a community. It often takes years to get a target audience (or even service agencies) to become aware of a new intervention and use it on a regular basis. Doing an efficacy study early in the life of an innovation permits discovering the potential of the intervention before investing the money and effort in its promotion. It also helps identify factors that may influence how adopters respond and that help the designers plan their promotion efforts. The question being asked is this: what is the *potential* of this product to affect the lives of adult learners? The efficacy question can be answered by selecting a sample of the target audience and introducing them to the materials under conditions that ensure both intensive exposure and direct engagement.² Because the current study focused on student use of the materials outside of the classroom, every effort was made to provide the students with the *opportunity* for intensive engagement of the materials; however, the degree to which they took advantage of that opportunity varied.

² The efficacy concept is more fully developed in the following article: Johnston, J. (1981). Evaluation of curriculum innovations: A product validation approach. In Aslanian, C. B. (ed.), *Improving educational evaluation methods: Impact on policy*, pp. 79-100. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

The TV411 Curriculum

The TV411 curriculum is designed to be an integrated, two-part intervention comprised of videos and workbooks. A third element, developing a portfolio of one's literacy work, is encouraged in the workbooks and in the *TV411 Users Guide*. (Portfolios are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.) Ideally, learners view the videos on a regular basis, complete various workbook activities that spark their interest, and maintain a portfolio of literacy and life-skills tasks on an ongoing basis. The videos and workbooks are structured in a magazine format. This format was intentionally modeled on popular television programs and advertisements. Segment lengths run anywhere from 22 seconds to just under six minutes. The series has recurring characters (e.g., Question Man, who asks for information from people as diverse as a toll collector and a meter reader; and Laverne, a helpful sales clerk) and segments (e.g., Milestones, which profile adults who have succeeded in their education; Buzzwords, which teaches new vocabulary words; Dictionary Cinema in which viewers learn to use a dictionary; and, Sports Smarts in which math concepts are presented). The basic skills are presented in the context of real-life situations that are likely to be relevant and interesting to adult learners (see the *TV411 Teacher's Guide* for a fuller description of the ALMA curriculum and program content). Each video and corresponding workbook covers multiple topics. This strategy reflects a sampling approach in which learning is expected to occur based on viewers' individual needs. It is not anticipated that every viewer will engage all of the ideas in each segment or workbook.

The TV411 curriculum also presents information on specific skills (e.g., subject-verb agreement, how to figure out a percentage, how to use a thesaurus). It stresses attitudes and beliefs about learning, working from the premise that all adults are life-long learners. It hopes to provide adult learners with strategies they can use in their literacy activities and to encourage them to further their education. To meet these curricular goals, TV411 utilizes two instructional methods: direct instruction and modeling. The direct instruction component is used for teaching factual and procedural knowledge. In this type of instruction, students are provided with definitional and/or factual knowledge and are taught in a step-by-step manner how to apply that knowledge. For example, students are taught what a thesaurus is and how to use it; they are also taught what a mathematical average is and how to calculate it. There is direct instruction in both the video and workbook; the workbook provides opportunities to apply knowledge as well.

Modeling involves having a character in the video perform a behavior and be rewarded for it. The character must be someone with whom the viewer can identify by virtue of some shared or admired characteristic, such as similarity of features or circumstances. The reward can be intrinsic or extrinsic. The Milestone features mini-documentaries of adults successfully reaching their goals. Adult viewers who dropped out of school and are still reading at a sixth-grade level can easily identify with real-life adult learners such as Dallas Farmer. Dallas is hindered as an auto mechanic by his inability to read repair manuals. In addition, he feels guilty his 11-year-old son may follow in his footsteps and not learn to read. So he finds a tutor, learns how to read, and saves his auto repair business. His son responds to the model of his father and learns how to read as well. Dallas is rewarded in many ways for his efforts.

Another Milestone character, Sheila Greene, is unemployed. She discovers she lacks the reading scores necessary to qualify for the travel agent job she wants. Determined to qualify for the next training class for travel agents, Sheila contacts a local literacy center and begins to engage in literacy behaviors (e.g., reading a newspaper every day). As she reads the newspaper, she circles unfamiliar words and then later looks them up in a dictionary. Sheila also discusses the importance of setting aside a special place and time each day to work on her reading skills. Viewers are able to see how they could use these ideas as part of their own learning process. Sheila has the potential to serve as both a general inspiration for other adults to get further education, and as a model for strategies that can help any adult learner cope with reading and study problems.

TV411 Materials Used in the Field Test

Videos

ALMA and ISR staff discussed the components of the different videos to determine the eight videos to be used in the study. After completion and review of the content analysis of the TV411 curriculum, videos 1-4, 7-8, 11, and 13 were selected for the Outreach and Home View studies.

Workbooks

Many of the activities contained in the workbooks are either reflections or extensions of video segments. For example, in the Sports Smarts segment in Video #2, viewers are introduced to the concept of percentages. The accompanying workbook then provides a hands-on exercise calculating percentages, changing decimals into percentages, and rounding numbers. Workbooks are intended to serve as a companion to the videos. However, concepts presented in a particular video may or may not be covered in the corresponding workbook. ALMA's intent was for the workbooks and videos to complement each other, but also for each to be able to stand alone.

Each workbook follows a consistent format and includes six feature types: Super Models, How-to, Good Reading and Writing, Learn About, Brush Up, and People. Writing activities are predominantly focused on personal writing and are recommended for inclusion in an individual user's portfolio. Workbook exercises also focus on building readers' grammar, punctuation, and spelling skills.

Portfolios

In addition to viewing the videos and completing workbook activities, participants were asked to keep a portfolio of their literacy activities. ALMA views portfolios as a tool for student learning and provides instructions on keeping a portfolio in the *TV411 User's Guide*. Portfolio use in the study is explained in more detail in the Chapter 3.

Modeling the Effects

What is TV411 trying to accomplish? Examining the TV411 *Teacher's Guide* yields these ideas (ALMA, 1999).

“Our goal is to *incite* viewers to engage in literacy practices more frequently by creating opportunities, rewards and visibility for doing so.” (page 11, emphasis added)

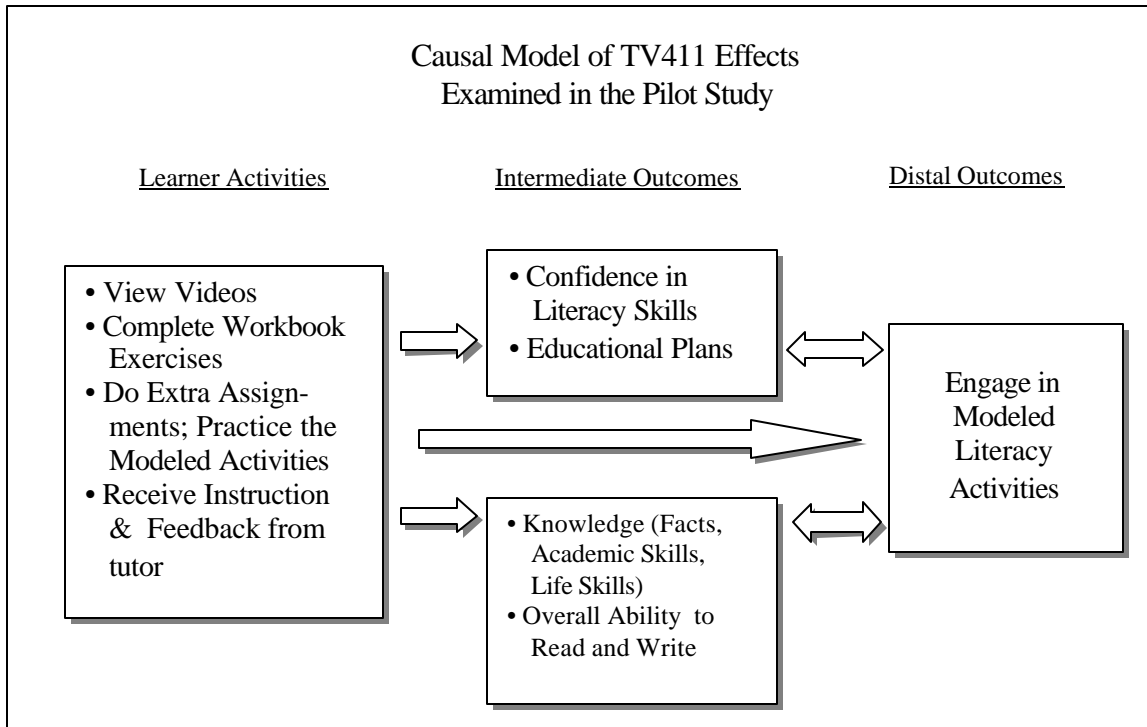
“By explaining and demonstrating the skills, strategies and literacy practices involved in these kinds of activities, the program provides learners with tools to *increase their effectiveness* as readers, writers and math-users in everyday situations.” (page 4, emphasis added)

“The curriculum models, explains and provides opportunities to practice how to:” (page 18)

- read to complete an action; read for information; read for pleasure; read for enrichment or inspiration; and read to learn new words
- write to get something done, write as social communication, write for yourself; and learn to proofread and edit your writing.
- improve skills in solving “how much” math problems; comparison problems; and assessing chances problems.

The TV411 materials are a mix of motivational messages and direct instruction. The TV shows contain engaging stories about adults who have turned around their lives. Many of these adults have learned how to read and write late in life and have had to overcome many obstacles to better their lives in this way. These learners' stories can, by themselves, affect the beliefs and attitudes of viewers about the value of engaging in literacy activities and the expectation that they might succeed in doing so. In addition, these segments demonstrate learning strategies that students can adopt. Both the shows and the workbooks are more than inspirational; they contain direct instruction about concepts (e.g., the definition of interesting words) and procedures (e.g., how to calculate the average of a set of numbers).

These instructional elements and their possible effects on learning are captured in the causal model diagrammed below.



Confidence. In the course of the 8 weeks, participants read many new things, practiced their writing, and tried math problems they formerly thought were too difficult. As a result of succeeding at these tasks, participants’ confidence in performing these tasks should increase.

Educational Plans. Viewing stories of adults who have succeeded, succeeding at various TV411 activities and receiving reinforcement from the tutor (in the Outreach model) should also result in participants gaining the confidence to go back to school to continue the learning begun during the intervention.

Engage in Modeled Literacy Activities. ALMA hopes to “incite viewers to engage in literacy practices more frequently.” This could happen in response to several factors: having a positive affective response to the modeling and testimonials on the video, trying and succeeding at the literacy tasks provided in the materials, and in the case of the Outreach model, receiving reinforcement and encouragement from the tutor.

Knowledge and Skill. Both the videos and workbooks provide direct instruction on a wide variety of topics in the areas of writing, reading, and life skills, as well as vocabulary. The workbook provides a chance to practice some of these skills, and in the Outreach model, the tutor provides direct instruction on topics of interest to each individual participant. Content Analysis of TV411.

Content Analysis of TV411

Prior to developing the measurement for this pilot study, researchers performed a content analysis of the TV411 materials to categorize the instructional, motivational, and behavioral elements of the curriculum (included in the Appendix). The chart below summarizes the analysis. ALMA also conducted their own content analysis. Both were used to determine show selection and guide measurement development.

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

Examples of TV411 Content Categories

Category	Description*(examples only, not a complete listing)
<i>Math and Finances</i>	Math (percents, averages) Personal Finances (understanding a pay stub, setting up a family budget)
<i>Genres and Literacy Resources</i>	Introduction to genres and types of texts: Content, structure, and use (poems, short stories, memoirs, etc.) Literacy resources and how to access them (library use, reference books) Use of texts and parts of texts (e.g., understanding how to use a table of contents or index)
<i>Reading Behaviors and Strategies for Engaging Texts</i>	Using context clues to figure out word meanings Circling or underlining unfamiliar words Using a dictionary or thesaurus Comprehension
<i>Writing Behaviors and Strategies for Creating Texts</i>	Freewriting, writing first drafts, editing, etc.
<i>Writing as Social, Business, or Personal Communication</i>	Greeting cards Business and complaint letters, memos, and messages Journal writing, personal letters, songs, poems
<i>Mechanics of Writing</i>	Spelling, , punctuation, subject-verb agreement, etc.
<i>Life Skills (they don't see this as a separate category)</i>	Family and self development Medical/Health Finance Job related skills
<i>Reading and Learning New Words</i>	Vocabulary Using context to understand words Synonyms and antonyms Prefixes and suffixes Compound words
<i>Modeling of Literacy Behaviors, Strategies, and Successes</i>	Milestones episodes of adult learners' successes and strategies for learning, student writers, Reflections segments about reading and writing strategies

The shows included in the pilot studies reflect the range of topics presented in TV411. The primary focus of the shows was on reading, writing, and math skills. However, in keeping with the TV411 approach, these topics were presented in real-life contexts. The selection of content is not designed to promote mastery of a specific area.

The math and finances content area includes such traditional math lessons as calculating an average or a percent. It also covers how to set up and use a family budget—a clear example of real-life uses of mathematics. Reading-related topics include reading behaviors, how to engage texts, an introduction to various genres, and how to access various literacy resources. Writing topics focus on encouraging students to write, the various uses of writing (personal, social, business), and on instruction in mechanics of writing.

Although Life Skills is listed as a separate content area in this content analysis, most Life Skills topics also fall within the more traditional literacy areas. For example, writing a cover letter is both a life skill and a writing skill, and family finances clearly involve mathematics. However, some topics covered, particularly those related to health and family issues, are somewhat outside the typical range of literacy activities. However, ALMA does not see this a separate category, arguing instead that the skills and strategies they teach are presented through these areas.

The content analysis reflects the nature of the TV411 curriculum, which includes both learning specific skills and learning how to be an independent learner. The curricular approach is iterative, rather than sequential, in nature. Thus, one concept may be presented in different ways in several segments and it is not necessary to see all related segments, or to view them in any particular sequence, to learn the material presented. This type of curriculum is appealing to an audience that has typically shunned school after failing repeatedly in textbook-based courses that emphasize mastery of extensive interrelated facts and procedures. Thus, the TV411 approach may provide adults with the confidence and skills needed to continue their education. The flip side of this, however, is that this curriculum does not equate to mastering a content *area* in the way that is required to succeed at high-stakes tests such as the GED. To reflect the focus of the TV411 curriculum, our evaluation will look at changes in learners' attitudes and confidence in addition to knowledge gains as a result of exposure to TV411.

Data Collection

Measurement Strategy

The Outreach and Home View studies used a pre-post design. Each learner served as his/her own control. Before the first regular meeting of the intervention, and again after eight weeks, each participant engaged in a 45-minute face-to-face interview. During interview sessions, participants also completed baseline and follow-up skills tests in the areas of mathematics and word work—i.e., vocabulary, grammar, and usage. These interviews, along with the skills tests, comprise the pretest and posttest for the study. In addition, participants were asked to maintain a portfolio with work completed either in conjunction with TV411 activities or stimulated by TV411 materials. Completed portfolios and brief reflective notes for portfolio contents also provided insight into

students' interests and their development as writers and thinkers. The array of measures is summarized in the measurement chart at the end of this chapter.

Measures

The impact of these distance-learning models is assessed in three ways. The first method is through an examination of the shifts (from pretest to posttest) in each participant's beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors regarding literacy activities in his/her life. The second way is through a pre-post literacy skills assessments tailored to the instruction offered in the videos and print materials. An analysis of the content of each participant's portfolio provides the third way to examine the impact of these distance-learning models. The measures are designed to capture what is taught by TV411. It is important to note that the amount of exposure to TV411 materials is significantly less than the exposure students would be expected to have in a traditional adult education class. Thus, the expectations are that any gains will be modest due to the limited engagement with the TV411 content.

These measurement categories were selected following well-established theories on the effects of video- and print-based interventions similar to TV411.³ Below are brief descriptions of the measurement categories.

- Beliefs: ...about the possibility for improving their lives in areas modeled on TV411: pursuing further education, finding a job, helping their family, expressing their feelings in writing, and managing the administrative aspects of their lives such as wise purchasing, budgeting, and managing consumer credit.
- Knowledge: ... of efficacious ways to reach their goals: using a library, seeking appropriate reference materials, using journals or medical records, etc.--the tools advocated on the shows and in the workbooks
- Attitudes: ...toward doing these activities
- Interest: ...in performing the enabling activities of being "educated": asking questions and seeking answers, writing for a purpose and for pleasure, etc.

³ See, for example

Johnston, J. & Ettema, J.S. (1980). Positive images: Breaking stereotypes with children's television.

Johnston, J. & Ettema, J.S. (1986). Using television to best advantage: Research for prosocial television. In J. Bryant and D. Zillmann, *Perspectives on media effects*, pp. 143-165. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Rogers, E.M. & Storey, J.D. (1987). Communication campaigns. In C. R. Berger & S. H. Chaffee (ed.), *Handbook of communication science*, pp. 817-846. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

- Confidence: ...that they are competent to do the literacy activities modeled in the materials
- Behaviors: ...use of the behaviors highlighted on TV411—writing different kinds of text, revising and editing the text they write, etc.
- Knowledge: ...of a variety of facts and skills taught in the shows—calculating averages and percentages, the meaning of particular words, reading a map, etc.

Reading Assessments

An earlier study of the impact of TV411 on reading levels indicated no change pre to post in participants' reading levels as a result of working with the TV411 materials. Given that one grade level advancement in a student's reading level often takes as much as 100 hours of focused instruction, participants in the TV411 pilot studies were not expected to make grade-level gains. Research on this topic conducted during the Facilitated Group pilot confirmed this expectation. As a result, reading assessments were used in the Outreach and Home View studies primarily for screening and informational purposes. The TABE was used during the Outreach as a means of prescreening study candidates to ensure their reading levels were consistent with the levels at which the TV411 materials were designed. A tailored TV411 test was used in the Detroit-area Home View study and the TABE for the New York area Home View study as means of prescreening potential candidates. The Mini-Battery of Achievement (MBA) was used as a baseline measure for both the Outreach and Home View studies to test the reliability of the other reading measures.

A note of caution regarding the use of reading tests as screening measures for study participants is needed. ALMA describes TV411 as being designed for the adult basic learner – that is, a student at approximately the 5th through 8th grade reading level. There are two issues to consider here. First, it is difficult to obtain an accurate assessment of adults' reading level. Although there are many widely used standardized tests, none is highly reliable. Because there is variance among tests (and even on test-retest with the same instrument), the reading test was used only as a general guideline for determining student reading levels. Second, ALMA's own materials cover a wide reading range. Reading levels calculated for the activities in the TV411 workbooks being used in the study ranged from the 4th grade to the 12th grade levels. As a result, a more liberal participant selection process was considered appropriate for this study. Students scoring at the mid-fourth grade level through the upper ninth grade level were included in the study; given the problems inherent in the reading tests and the variation in the reading levels of the TV411 materials, the authors are confident that all participants are an appropriate target audience for TV411.

Writing Assessments

A key element of literacy is the ability to effectively communicate in writing. In recognition of this fact, TV411 video and print materials place considerable emphasis on writing skills and encouraging people to write. However, because students were working

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

independently with little or no tutor or teacher support, researchers did not anticipate any pre-post change in participants' writing abilities. Thus, no formal writing assessments were conducted, although an examination of the content of participants' portfolios provides some insight into the writing students completed during the study.

TV411 Measurement Overview

	Instruction All Video and Workbook Content + Learner-initiated Instruction								
Week No. — view one show and one workbook each week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Show No.	1	2	3	4	7	8	11	13	

Baseline	Long Arc Measurement	Follow-Up
TV411-modeled literacy behaviors: frequency last mo.; intention for next month; confidence in literacy skills; educational plans Test: math & mechanics of writing concepts taught on TV411 Reading Level Test (MBA)		TV411-modeled literacy behaviors: frequency last mo.; intention for next month; confidence in literacy skills; educational plans Test: math & mechanics of writing concepts taught on TV411

Chapter 2

Recruiting the Participants

The target audience for TV411 is among the hardest to recruit to any form of educational intervention. By definition, the audience is made up of people who have not succeeded in attaining the education levels needed to compete with confidence in the U.S. workforce. Even those who graduated from high school failed to derive sufficient skills from that experience to cope with complex job demands. For those who dropped out, there is the sense of failure that comes from feeling they don't quite measure up.⁴ Despite the fact that the economy demands increasingly more education for even low-skilled jobs, many Adult Basic Education (ABE) learners are likely to avoid returning to a site of previous failure.

The target group faces logistical challenges as well. Many hold some form of employment, but for many the jobs are at odd or variable hours. Add to this family responsibilities that often include children and one can assume that the target audience for TV411 live such complicated lives that fitting in one more activity like regular home study is not an easy "sell." In addition, we were aware that the drop-out rate for students who enroll in adult education classes is quite high; it is not uncommon for 25% - 70% of adult basic learners to drop out of classes. With these considerations in mind, we approached the recruitment task with some trepidation. Because one of the primary goals of a pilot study is to address methodological issues, matters related to recruitment and retention are discussed in detail.

The Home View Sample

Recruiting for the home study was done in two phases. The first phase was done in the Detroit area in January of 2000. The results—both for recruiting and retention—were so disappointing that it was decided to repeat the process in New York City. In New York an attempt was made to recruit from different sources that might yield greater success.

Phase I: Detroit

Finding Organizations to Help Recruit a Sample

ALMA hopes that TV411 will be an effective method of reaching undereducated adults who have not yet made the decision to resume their education. It is hoped that the

⁴ See Bachman, J.G. (1976). *Dropping out—Problem or symptom?* Ann Arbor: Institute for Social Research.

program may serve both as an instructional vehicle and as a motivational force for this population. Therefore, one of the goals of the Home Study pilot test was to test the materials with this target audience: adults who were not actively involved in literacy training. We knew it would be difficult to recruit this population; what surprised us was how much more difficult it was than we anticipated. The recruitment strategy in Detroit was to approach a variety of literacy and community organizations and ask for their assistance in reaching the populations they served. In his book, *Illiterate America*, (1986) Jonathan Kozol argues that the most effective way to recruit people to participate in literacy programs is to go directly into the communities in which they live. Building those community relationships takes time; a luxury we did not have in this study. As a proxy, we chose to work with organizations that already had links with the community and offer them monetary incentives for their assistance.

Contacts (multiple phone calls, follow-up letters, explanation of the study requirements, etc.) were made with 35 organizations in the metro Detroit area. These organizations included literacy organizations, ABE programs, churches, small community based organizations, Head Start programs, union and union-related educational programs and large social service agencies. Although most of our contacts at these organizations felt the program was interesting, very few were willing to help us recruit qualified participants. In some cases, we were unable to make contact with the proper person at an organization; in others, the organization did not feel they had the resources to help us (despite the offer of financial remuneration). Unions and union-related educational programs also cited concerns about solicitations of their members. A total of five organizations agreed to recruit participants for this project:

- Literacy Volunteers of America (a literacy organization based in Detroit)
- Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation (a small CBO with a focus on Detroit's Hispanic community that provide alternatives to gangs for youth)
- Renaissance Head Start (a large Detroit program serving about 300 families in several sites)
- Melvindale Head Start (a small suburban program)
- Romulus Adult Education (a suburban adult ed program offering GED, but not ABE, classes).

Approaches to recruiting differed among the different organizations. Because we were looking for people not currently enrolled in literacy programs, literacy organizations and ABE programs were asked to refer people on their waiting lists. Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) in Detroit offered to provide us with names of people who were waiting to be matched with tutors. They also went back through their files to find people who had been interested in tutoring but had not followed up on that interest. They

contacted these people to see if they would allow LVA to provide their names to us. LVA gave us a short list of people whom we contacted and screened.

The Adult Education Program in Romulus felt that this project might benefit some of their students. Because they offered only GED classes and had no ABE program, they sent information about this project to students whose test scores indicated they were not ready for the GED classes. The flyer instructed interested people to call our toll-free number for additional information about the program.

Both Head Start programs sent flyers about the program home with all of the children in their classes. In addition, these organizations posted the flyer on bulletin boards where parents would be likely to see it.

The Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation agreed to take an active role in recruiting participants. They promoted the program heavily to their clients and encouraged them to attend. They also posted flyers about the project at their site.

The Selection Process

In an attempt to minimize the demands we were placing on the organizations, a multi-step recruiting process was implemented. The organizations would identify potential candidates for the study. Interested people would then call our toll-free number and answer a series of screening questions. Potential participants were asked a series of questions aimed at securing a sample comprised of adult learners who:

- Do not possess a GED (a high school diploma was acceptable),
- Have not taken any college-level courses,
- Are not currently enrolled in any literacy programs (e.g., classes or tutoring in an adult literacy center, GED course work, work-related literacy training, etc), and
- Speak English as their native language or are high functioning non-native English speakers reading between the fifth and eighth grade levels.

Because an earlier formative evaluation revealed no substantive differences in reaction to the materials by race or ethnicity, this characteristic was not included in the sample specifications.

Respondents who qualified were invited to a commitment meeting in their community. Reminder calls about the commitment meetings were made to help increase attendance. At the commitment meetings, the study was explained in more detail, a reading assessment was conducted and candidates had an opportunity to see TV411 materials.

Adults who qualified based upon reading scores, and who were interested in participating, signed a commitment form detailing the requirements of the study. They also selected a time for their baseline interview with a member of the research staff.

The Reality of Commitment Meetings

Commitment meetings were scheduled at each of the organizations recruiting for the project. The goal was to have groups of 10 – 20 adults learn about the project and make a decision about participating. The reality was quite different. It was not uncommon to have only one or two people show up for a meeting, despite reminder phone calls. In fact, at several of the meetings, none of the scheduled people showed up. Thus, instead of being group orientation sessions, the commitment meetings ended up being one-on-one explanations of the project. This was a labor-intensive and extremely inefficient way of recruiting a sample.

The entire process, from contacting organizations, arranging for assistance in recruiting, providing support for organizations doing the recruiting through holding the commitment meetings occupied the equivalent of more than three weeks of full time work for one person. This does not include phone work necessary to screen participants, make reminder phone calls or additional staff time for those assigned to assist at commitment meetings.

The Numbers

We experienced significant attrition at all phases of the project. Almost 50 people called the toll-free number and were screened. Of these, 22 came to a commitment meeting. Most of those who attended the commitment meetings were interested in participating: 20 of the 22 signed commitment forms. However, only 14 of those respondents showed up for their initial interview, despite receiving a phone call to remind them of the appointment. These 14 people came from a variety of contacts:

- 3 were recruited from the suburban Head Start program
- 2 were recruited from the urban Head Start program
- 3 were recruited from a suburban adult education program
- 6 participants were recruited from a small urban CBO.

Those Who Stayed...And Those Who Did Not

Of the fourteen people who started the TV411 Home Study project, only 5 completed the study. There were several important differences between those participants who stayed with the program and those who dropped out:

With one exception, all participants who stayed with the project were aged 30 or over, while most of those who dropped out were in their early twenties.

Four of the five people who stayed with the program are employed or hold a regular volunteer position. The one participant who is not employed has a history of employment. In contrast, virtually none of those who dropped out of the study has a history of regular employment or were employed at the time the study began.

Participants who finished the program had some type of structure in their lives. They understood the concepts of making and keeping appointments, keeping on a schedule, setting goals, etc. For the most part, people who did not stay with the program had very little structure in their lives. They worked irregularly – if at all – and frequently adhered to no regular schedule.

This suggests that home study may be more attractive for some populations than others. It may be that it is better suited to people who have a certain level of maturity and structure in their lives. This raises some questions about the program's ability to reach the audience who has yet to commit to further education. However, it was necessary to test the home study concept with a larger sample to more fully gain an understanding of its potential. Accordingly, at the conclusion of the Detroit Home Study, we recruited a sample in New York to supplement the disappointingly small Detroit sample.

Phase II: New York

The Detroit study was largely unsuccessful in recruiting and maintaining adult learners who had not yet made the decision to continue their education. We therefore decided to try a different approach in New York and recruit the sample from adults who had previously made some contacts with adult education programs. The teacher from the Outreach Study, Linda Cowsen, provided lists of students who had previously attended classes at Hostos Community College or at CCNY. ISR staff contacted people on the lists and described the study to them. Interested students were prescreened and asked to attend one of two commitment meetings held at the Bronx EOC.

As was done in Detroit, at the New York commitment meetings, the study was explained in more detail, a reading assessment was conducted and candidates had an opportunity to see TV411 materials. Those who qualified based upon reading scores and who were interested in participating, signed a commitment form detailing the requirements of the study. They were also scheduled to return for the baseline interview with a member of the research staff.

Those Who Stayed...And Those Who Did Not

A total of 17 people attended the meeting; 11 were eligible and agreed to participate in the study. All of them showed up for their initial interviews. A total of four completed the project. Women were less likely than men to stay with the study. We have seen a similar pattern in other studies of TV411. This may reflect the fact that women tend to be the primary caregiver for their families and may have more difficulty adding yet one more responsibility to their already busy lives. Additionally, older respondents were more apt to finish the home study than were younger students. This replicates our

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

experiences with the Detroit Home Study sample. The attrition rate for the Detroit and New York samples combined is 64%.

Sample Characteristics: Detroit and New York

The sample of those who complete the Home Study project included 5 women and 4 men. The average age of the participants is 38 years old. Almost half are single (n = 4, 44%) and many have children at home (n= 5, 56%). Five are employed full-time, one is employed or volunteers on a part-time basis and 3 do not work outside the home. The majority (5 of the 9 anyway) of respondents (55%) report incomes of \$15,000 or less. See the table below for additional demographic information.

Table 2.1 Demographics of the Pilot Study Home View Sample

Demographic	Category	Sample	
		Count	Col. Pct.
Total		9	100%
Reading Level: MBA Post-Assessment Measure	4 th grade and below	2	22
	5 th – 8 th grade	4	45
	9 th grade and above	3	33
Self Reported Education Level	9 th	0	0
	10 th	2	22
	11 th	3	33
	12 th	2	22
	Outside U.S.	2	22
Age	35 and under (18, 32, 33)	3	33
	Over 35 (37, 39, 41, 42, 47, 51)	6	67
Gender	Male	4	44
	Female	5	56
Children at Home	Yes	5	56
	No	4	44
Marital Status	Single	4	44
	Married, Divorced, Widowed	5	56
Working Status	Full time	5	56
	Part time	0	0
	Not working outside home	4	44

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

Job Status within past year	Currently employed	4	44
	Not working, but had job within last year	2	22
	Volunteer work	1	11
	Not employed w/i last year	2	22
Yearly Income	<\$5,000	4	44
	\$5,001 - \$15,000	1	11
	\$15,001 - \$25,000	2	22
	>\$25,000	2	22

Recruiting the Outreach Sample

One of ALMA’s partners, The New York City Technical College (NYCTC), served as a major resource for recruiting participants for the Outreach study. Kathryn Stewart, one of the program directors at NYCTC, provided researchers with a list of 75 names of students who were waiting to enroll in GED prep or other literacy-based courses. Researchers contacted as many of the students as possible, introducing them to the study and taking them through a phone-based pre-screening interview. Those who met the study’s criteria (listed below) and expressed interest in participating, were invited to attend a commitment meeting. Many of these students had already been assessed on the TABE reading test as part of NYCTC’s intake procedures. In addition, a flyer was posted around the college. Those students who expressed interest after seeing the flyer were tested using the TABE as well. Students whose reading levels fell within the desired reading range of 5th-8th grade, were invited to attend a commitment meeting. Screened candidates were notified either by postcard (inviting them to participate or thanking them for their interest but rejecting them) or by a phone call from ISR staff. Of the 75 people invited to attend one of the commitment meetings, 32 participated in the meeting. Of that group, 25 were selected to participate in the study. These individuals shared the following characteristics. They:

- Did not possess a GED (ISR staff contacted the state to confirm that potential participants had not earned their GED)
- Had not taken any college-level courses
- Were not currently enrolled in a literacy education program (e.g., classes or tutoring in an adult literacy center, GED course work, work-related literacy training, etc.)
- Speak English as their native language or are high functioning, non-native English speakers reading between the fifth and eighth grade levels.

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

Because an earlier formative evaluation revealed no substantive differences in reaction to the materials by race or ethnicity, this characteristic was not included in the sample specifications.

Commitment Meetings

The commitment meeting was designed to provide candidates with a clear picture of what was entailed should they participate in the pilot. Potential candidates were introduced to the TV411 materials as well as to the project's tutor, Linda Cowsen. Those selected (n=25) signed a participant agreement form indicating they understood the study requirements and were choosing to participate; they also selected a time for a face-to-face interview to be conducted prior to the first class.

Agenda for Commitment Meeting

Time	Activity
10 minutes	Introductions and abbreviated project overview
30	Sampler of TV411 video and workbook materials
10	Overview of format of the Outreach project; introduction of Linda Cowsen, project tutor; explanation of tutorial assistance and phone contacts
30	Review of study requirements: one-on-one activities with tutor, time spent working independently, portfolio requirements, a one-hour interview and a reading assessment before and after the project, and payment for participation
10	Explain how students are selected; \$20 to students not invited to participate; \$30 to students invited to participate; \$70 upon completion of all program requirements

Sample Attrition

The selection process yielded 25 participants ranging in age from 20 to 81. All are individuals of color; about half are women. Three quarters are over 25 years of age.

The Outreach study experienced a 44% attrition rate among participants. As noted earlier, this figure is not unusual in the adult basic learner population where a large proportion of students routinely drop out of courses prior to completion.

In a post-dropout survey, we were able to contact 7 of the 11 students who did not complete the study to determine their reasons for leaving the program. Responses to the question: *Why didn't you stay with the program?* largely focused on problems getting materials (the students were provided with copies of the videotapes and workbooks used in the project; it was necessary for them to pick these up at their initial interview and again at a mid-point meeting) or getting to the tutorials; students also mentioned financial (i. e., the need to work more hours) or work-based conflicts as reasons for not staying with the program. When asked what would have made the program better for them, all the

dropouts surveyed said they liked the TV411 materials and again referred to work or time issues as the main reasons for not staying with the study. The following table shows attrition levels by age and by gender.

Table 2.2 Sample Attrition by Age and by Gender

	Initial Sample	Final Sample	No. Lost/Pct Loss
Female	13	7	6 (46%)
Male	12	7	5 (42%)
TOTAL	25	14	11 (44%)
<hr/>			
41 and over	11	6	5 (45%)
25-40	7	6	1 (14%)
Under 25	7	2	5 (71%)
TOTAL	25	14	11 (44%)

Women and men were almost equally likely to stay with the program. Interestingly, students under age 25 and over age 41 were more likely to drop out of the study than were adults in the 25-40 age range. This differs from the earlier facilitated group pilot study, which suggested that adults over the age of 35 were more likely to stay in an educational program than were their younger peers. Few differences were evident among those individuals who stayed in the study and those who dropped. One exception involved working status. More than half of the students who dropped out (55%) were not working outside their homes compared with only 14% of participants who finished the study.

If a larger scale study is to be undertaken, modifications in the recruiting process will be needed. For example, it may be possible to work with an agency that is dealing with clients about non-literacy matters and encourage them to work as partners with the researchers. If the agency has a stake in seeing the people succeed, they may be able to more effectively facilitate recruitment. Another potentially effective option might be to , recruit through unions or workplace employee assistance programs.

The Study Sample

The sample of participants who finished this study was evenly divided between women and men. Educational attainment ranged from seventh grade to students who hold U.S. or foreign high school diplomas (but do not have a G.E.D.). The majority (10) reported being employed at the time of the intervention with 6 (43%) working full time and 4 (29%) working part time. See the table below for additional demographic information.

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

Table 2.3 Demographics of the Outreach Pilot Study Sample

Demographic	Category	Sample	
		Count	Col. Pct.
Total		14	100%
Reading Level: MBA	4 th grade and below	2	14
Post-assessment measure	5 th –8 th grade	8	57
	9 th grade and above	4	29
Self-Reported Education Level	7 th	1	7
	8 th	2	14
	9 th	1	7
	10 th	2	14
	11 th	5	36
	High School Diploma	1	7
	Specified level outside U.S.	1	7
	Diploma outside U.S.	1	7
Age	Under 25	2	14
	25–40	6	43
	41 and over	6	43
Gender	Male	7	50
	Female	7	50
Children at Home	Yes	6	46
	No	7	54
Marital Status	Married	5	36
	Single	8	57
	Divorced, Widowed, Separated	1	7
Working Status	Full time	6	43
	Part time	4	29
	Not working outside home	2	14
	Retired	1	7
	Other	1	7
Job Status within Past Year	Currently employed	10	71
	Not working, but had job in last 12 months	2	14
	Volunteer work	0	0
	Not employed w/i last year	2	14
Yearly Income	< \$5,000	4	31
	\$5,001 – \$15,000	6	46
	\$15,001 – \$25,000	3	23

Chapter 3

Implementation of the Two Models

In this chapter we describe what the participants in the two models did for eight weeks: what they watched, what they did in the workbooks and—for learners in the Outreach model—how they utilized the tutor. The chapter also discusses participants' use of the portfolio. To understand what students were asked to do, it is necessary to understand that both the Home View and the Outreach pilots were distance learning models. In a distance learning model, students are expected to do most of the work independently following a period of orientation; many distance learning models also provide for contact with a teacher at specified intervals. Overall, the Home View and the Outreach models were very similar; the biggest difference was in the availability of the tutor for the Outreach participants. After a brief orientation, the Home Study participants received little support from the research staff. In contrast, the Outreach pilot was designed to provide students with support during the entire course of the study.

What the Home Viewers Did in Eight Weeks

During the course of the eight week home study program, students were asked to watch one TV411 program and complete at least part of one workbook each week. They were also encouraged to build a portfolio of their work.

TV Viewing

The metropolitan Detroit area is served by several different cable television companies, which made arranging for viewing in multiple locations a challenge. The fact that recruiting took place in both city and suburban locations further compounded this difficulty. Moreover, researchers were reliant on cable, as the public broadcasting station in Detroit (WTVS) does not carry TV411 and did not have time slots available to accommodate the needs of this study. To reach the largest portion of the Detroit-area audience, researchers contracted with the largest Detroit cable company, Comcast Cable, to broadcast TV411. The TV411 videos were shown on Thursdays and Saturdays at 10 a.m. and 9 p.m. Participants living in Detroit were asked to watch the show at one of those times; they were also encouraged to tape the show if they would not be able to view it when it was aired. Reaching students in the suburbs was more problematic. Each community was served by a different cable company, which made the cost of contracting prohibitive. Instead, students in the suburban areas were provided with videotapes of the shows included in the study.

Students in the New York Home View study viewed on broadcast or cable television. The eight TV411 shows were broadcast, one show per week, according to the schedule shown below.

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

Station	Day & Times
WNYW – Channel 25	Thursday 7:00 a.m.
WLIW – Channel 21	Thursday 12 noon
Crosswalks – Channel 73 (cable)	Tu & Thu 6:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 5:30 p.m., 11:30 p.m.; Sat 12:00 midnight; Sun 12:30 a.m.

Workbooks

All students were provided with the workbooks that accompanied the shows they were asked to view. They were given the first three workbooks at their initial interview and provided with the remaining workbooks at a meeting held midway through the intervention (a “refresher meeting”). Students were not given specific assignments in the workbooks. They were asked to do at least one workbook activity each week and told that the more they did the more they would learn.

Portfolios

At the commitment meeting, researchers explained the concept of keeping a portfolio, following the directions in the *TV411 User’s Guide*. Students were shown a sample portfolio and instructed on how to create their own as part of the Home study. They were provided with a binder to use for this purpose. The binder contained tabs to help them organize their work: writing, math, other work. Students were asked to bring their portfolios to the “refresher meeting,” where research staff answered questions about the use of the portfolio and further encouraged their use.⁵

Contact with Students

The amount and type of contact between the research staff and the students was an issue that received a great deal of thought. On the one hand, allowing the students to use the materials with minimal intrusions or contact from the research staff would provide a more accurate representation of how people might actually use the materials on their own. This information would provide valuable insight into the potential of TV411 to reach an audience of adults working strictly on their own, at home, and at their own pace. On the other hand, contact between the research staff and the students would provide the researchers with a sense of what students were actually doing and might serve to encourage people to stay with the project. A compromise between no contact and extensive contact was reached.

In both Detroit and New York, students met with a member of the research staff after they had viewed the first three programs. At this “refresher meeting,” research staff

⁵ It should be noted that the ALMA description of a portfolio matches notions of a repository for one’s work (Farr, 1990; Olson, 1991). Those who advocate a portfolios as an instructional tool (Farr & Tone, 1994) usually require extensive conferencing over the contents of the portfolio—a difficult thing to implement in a distance learning project.

examined student portfolios, reviewed the portfolio concept, answered student questions, assessed student interest in the program and tried to resolve any problems students were having. This meeting provided the students with a support system midway through the study without overwhelming them with contact with the research staff.

Additionally, researchers attempted brief weekly telephone conversations with each of the Detroit-area participants. Each conversation was to have been a way for researchers to assess if students had watched the video that week and an opportunity for students to raise any questions. However, it was extremely difficult to get people on the telephone: not all participants had working telephones, students' work schedules often made it difficult for them to set a time for a phone call, and many simply forgot they should be home at the time of the scheduled phone appointment. Typically, repeated phone calls were necessary to contact each participant. More importantly, the calls yielded little useful information. Based upon this experience, no attempts were made to stay in regular phone contact with the New York sample. However, all students, in both New York and Detroit, did have the research project's toll-free telephone number and were encouraged to call if they had questions.

Certificate of Completion

At the final interview, students were presented with a Certificate of Completion, signifying they had successfully participated in a TV411 Home Study course. Most students said they were extremely pleased with the certificates; several commented that this meant more to them than the money they received for participating in the study.

What the Outreach Sample Did in Eight Weeks

The Outreach sample's activities were similar to those described for the Home View sample. During the course of the eight week program, students were asked to watch one TV411 program and complete at least part of one workbook each week. They were also encouraged to build a portfolio of their work. The expectation was set that they should work on TV411 for 3 hours a week. Once a week, the tutor contacted them by phone to see if they needed any assistance and to arrange a tutoring session if they so desired; it typically took the tutor several attempts to reach each student, even if they had pre-arranged a calling time

To facilitate exposure, participants were given videotapes of the shows—three at the time of the baseline interview and the remaining five at the refresher meeting three weeks later. They were allowed to keep the videotapes as part of the incentive for participating. Participants were given workbooks in the same fashion—three at the baseline interview and five more at the refresher meeting. While they had to turn in their workbooks at the follow-up interview, it was with the understanding that the workbooks would be mailed back to them after the research staff had looked at them.

Portfolios

The Outreach students—similar to the Home View students—received a quick introduction to the concept of a portfolio that was aimed at encouraging students to use the portfolios. During the study, the tutor, Linda Cowsen, reinforced participants’ understanding of the portfolio process (as outlined in the TV411 User’s Guide) and monitored their portfolio maintenance over the course of the eight weeks. At the refresher meeting, research staff answered questions about students’ use of their portfolio and further encouraged them to add things to their portfolio.

Table 3.1 Portfolio Work of Outreach Students

Use of Tutor	No. of Learners	Total Hours Spent on Their Portfolio
HI	5	13.5
MED	4	8.1
LO	5	6.0
TOTAL	14	9.3

Utilizing the Tutor

Linda attempted to make telephone contact with every student on a weekly basis. During these phone conversations she was able to answer questions, provide support as needed, and schedule face-to-face tutoring sessions. During the first few weeks of the study, Linda dropped students who failed to return her calls or who were unwilling to talk when she contacted them. Making contact with the students proved challenging. Because of the students’ demanding, and often erratic, schedules, it was difficult to reach them by phone. Approximately one-third of the tutor’s time was spent in attempts to contact students.

Linda maintained drop-in office hours at NYCTC. The regular hours each week were Wednesday, 12:00 noon – 8:00 p.m., and Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. After the refresher meeting she offered times on Saturday mornings every other week. The manner in which students utilized the tutor varied widely. Very little tutoring took place over the phone, with students preferring to work with the tutor in person. Some wanted weekly sessions with Linda, while others rarely came in for tutoring. One student would only do the work during the tutorial. Other students would have weekly or bi-weekly telephone contact with Linda supplemented with personal sessions (every 2-3 weeks) during which they wanted their work evaluated.

Table 3.2 Utilization of the Tutor by Students

Use of Tutor	No. of Learners	Asked for Help*	Hours Tutored	Times Attending Office Hrs	Total Times Tutored: Phone + Office Hours
HI	5	5.8	5.9	4.8	6.8
MED	4	3.8	1.2	2.0	4.0
LO	5	0.8	0.7	1.2	2.2
TOTAL	14	3.4	2.7	2.7	4.4

* The tutor called up to 9 times, each time asking if they wanted help with anything.

Table 3.2 summarizes how the learners utilized the tutor. The learners are divided here into three groups, based on how often they utilized the tutor and how much time they spent getting help. Five students (the HI group) asked for help six out of the nine times they were called and received an average of approximately six hours of tutoring. The LO group asked for help less than once, and were tutored an average of less than one hour.

Much of the focus of the tutoring was on math, as many of the students found math difficult. The students frequently needed more practice to master the mathematical skills and concepts presented in the program; Linda provided them with supplemental materials to meet this need. Other students wanted Linda to review and correct their workbooks or look at their writing during the tutoring sessions.

Certificate of Completion

Upon completing the final interview, students were presented with a Certificate of Completion, signifying they had successfully participated in a TV411 Outreach Study.

Portfolios: Outreach and Home View Pilots

What Students Did

Use of Portfolios

Project participants were also expected to maintain a portfolio of their work during the course of the study. While the portfolio concept was novel to all of them, it is accepted as an alternative method of assessing student work in both K-12 education and college writing classes (Elbow, 1991). Portfolios provide a way to examine the process students use in writing (not only the product), encourage students to become reflective about their own work and allow students to track their own development (Mills-Courts and Amiran, 1991). Typically, using a portfolio as an assessment tool requires both extensive training of students and extensive time and feedback from the teacher to the student. Because of the structure of the Home and Outreach studies, the implementation of a portfolio component here varied from this model. Yet, portfolio use has always been a central tenet of the TV411 experience. In the TV411 *User's Guide*, ALMA suggests the portfolio—along with the TV shows and the workbooks—comprise the three critical

elements of the TV411 learning approach. The *User's Guide* suggests learners use portfolios for dual purposes: (1) to organize and store their TV411-related work and (2) as a means of reflecting upon their work and gauging their progress. The *User's Guide* provides basic instructions on setting up and using a portfolio. In addition, throughout the workbooks, learners are instructed—"save this to your portfolio." No additional support or explanation for portfolio usage is provided in the TV411 materials.

Instruction in Using a Portfolio

As discussed earlier, participants in both studies were given instruction on how to use and maintain a portfolio.

Because the portfolio is an important concept in the TV411 strategy, we reproduce the script we followed at the commitment meeting.

To help you reach your goals you need to practice. A portfolio is a place to keep all of your efforts. By looking back over your work you can see whether you are making the kind of progress you want and reaching your goals.

- Introduce the portfolio notebook binder.
- Discuss sample pack of portfolio examples--three drafts of an essay on Being Afraid (developed by ALMA staff).
- Pretend you wanted to work on your writing. Here are three examples of the portfolio entries of someone who wanted to work on her writing.
- Note how simple it is; a one-page writing example written on a piece of paper from a spiral-bound notebook.
- The first draft gets down the ideas quickly, misspellings and all
- The second draft was done a few days later. Note that the organization has changed (there are some paragraphs now) and some of the misspellings have been corrected.
- The final draft is organized a bit better; the closing paragraph has changed. The author feels that this represents a strong essay about being afraid.

In an ideal situation, a portfolio is not simply a storage place, but provides a way for learners to reflect on their work. Thus, midway through the intervention, "cover notes" were introduced. These were presented to both Home Study and Outreach participants at the refresher meeting. If Home View students missed the meeting, the cover notes were explained when they picked up the materials for the rest of the study. The tutor introduced the cover notes to Outreach students who had missed the refresher meeting.

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

Cover notes, which were attached to portfolio entries, had a two-fold purpose: they encouraged learners to reflect upon the work included in their portfolio and provided the researchers with information useful in analyzing portfolio content. The cover note asked participants to provide the following information: a description of what the activity was, when they worked on it, and whether the idea for the work came from the workbook or another source.

Chapter 4

Impact of the Two Models

What impact did exposure to the TV411 videos and workbooks have on the participants? We assessed impact by looking at changes in the participants over the eight weeks in five areas:

- Expected frequency of performing literacy activities modeled on TV411
- Personal confidence in performing modeled literacy activities
- Plans for further education
- Portfolio behaviors
- Knowledge of the key concepts taught in the TV411 materials.

The first three areas indicate whether the experience affected participants' "literacy life" and beliefs about their own literacy skills. The fourth indicates whether the quality of their writing or math practice exhibited growth, and the fifth indicates whether they learned specific skills taught in the shows and workbooks. The first section of this chapter examines the impact separately for Home View and Outreach. Subsequent sections explore how the impact varies by level of support (amount of tutoring) and by reading level of the participants.

The Intensity of the Intervention

The impact of TV411 depends, in part, on how much of the materials students "experience." Because students did not view the shows or complete the workbooks in a controlled situation such as a classroom, it was difficult to assess how much exposure to TV411 a student actually had. In the Outreach study, the tutor kept a weekly log indicating which students had watched each show, but there were no comparable records for the Home study. For both the Home and Outreach studies, participants were asked in the final interview to estimate how many shows they had watched, how many workbooks they had worked in and how many portfolio entries they had made. While retrospective data are not always precise, such data do provide a sense of what students felt they accomplished during the course of the intervention. Most participants (80%), in both studies reported having watched seven or eight of the shows and worked in the same number of the workbooks. Outreach students (70%) were more likely than Home study students (44%) to report having 7 or more items in their portfolios. These numbers are likely to be somewhat inflated, given the nature of retrospective reports. (Having made a

commitment to perform in a particular way at the beginning of the study, people have a tendency to report adherence.) In fact, a weekly log of viewing by Outreach students indicates that only 8 out of the 14 (not 11 of 14 as indicated by the self-report) watched 7 or 8 shows. Thus, while most participants watched many of the shows, it is unlikely that most of them had the fullest possible exposure to the TV411 materials used in the study. As noted earlier, there was a balance between providing the *opportunity* for students to have the fullest possibility exposure and allowing them the free choice of how they actually took advantage of that opportunity.

Table 4.1 Number of Tapes Watched by Study Participants

# of Tapes Viewed	Retrospective Self-Report: Home (N=9)	Retrospective Self-Report: Outreach (N=14)	Tutor's Weekly Log: Outreach (N=14)
1 – 2	0	0	0
3 – 4	0	1	1
5 – 6	1	2	5
7 – 8	8	11	8

Literacy Behaviors

A major goal of TV411 is to stimulate the audience to engage in a variety of literacy activities that may not already be part of their daily repertoire. If the participants responded to the suggestions in the shows and to the intrinsic reward they received from engaging in the activities, then there should be a change in their literacy activities by the end of the test period. To assess this, participants were asked before the test period began and again afterwards about both their *actual behaviors* and their *expectations* for engaging in each of 23 literacy activities promoted on the TV411 shows included in this test. While expectations to behave and actual behaviors are not the same, they are a reasonable proxy for what people will do and a good indicator of this type of impact. Behavioral expectations can also be viewed as an attitude measure: if behavioral expectations increased over the eight weeks, then the experience has led to a more positive attitude and a *predisposition* to behave in new ways.

The baseline and follow-up interviews asked about literacy activities in two separate questions. The first question asked:

In life we have routines; we do many of the same things from week to week. I'm going to list a number of activities—like reading a newspaper or writing a letter—and I want you to tell me how often you did this in the last week.

There were three choices: (1) No-I didn't do this in the last week, (2) I did it once, or (3) I did it more than once.

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

The second question used the same list and asked:

For each activity I also want you to indicate how likely it is you will do this in the next week.

There were four choices: (1) Not at all likely, (2) A small chance, (3) Very likely, and (4) Definitely. The questions were asked in a one-on-one face-to-face interview, and participants were trained in the meaning of the scales before being presented with the actual items. (See the baseline interview in the Measurement Appendix for the training script.) In the list of literacy activities, eight were ones that it was reasonable to perform in the course of one week. For the other 15 the reasonable time frame was one month. The list is shown below.

Last week/next week

Read a newspaper
Write in a personal diary or journal
Read a book because the story is interesting to you
Read a book to a child (asked only of those who had a child living at home)
Read a book, or part of a book, to learn about something
Look up a word in a dictionary
Read the labels on a can or box of food to find out more about the contents
Read a magazine article

Last month/next month

Write a letter to a friend
Write a letter to a company asking them do something, explaining about something you did, or asking for information
Write an essay—a short paper—perhaps to describe an experience you had
Edit a piece of your own writing to make the words or sentences sound better
Write a poem or a song
Send or give a card to someone where you have written a special message in the card
Prepare a resume to help you get a job
Use a map to help you find your way
Buy a book to read for pleasure
Buy a book to read to a child
Read the details about a credit card offer
Go to the library to find a book to read
Check a book out of the library
Evaluate sale prices to find the best deal on something you want to buy
Use a budget to decide how to spend your money

Home View

The data for the shift in expectations for engaging in certain literacy behaviors for Home viewers are shown in Table 4.2. Some of the individual items are collapsed into indices of activities that are similar. Before the study began, expectations averaged 2.75 (out of a possible 4.00) across the 23 activities. Afterwards expectations averaged 2.77—a mere 2/100 of a point higher. This represents an average increase in expectations of two percent $((2.77 - 2.75) \div 2.75 * 100)$. Taking into account the error in estimates for such a small sample of participants this is tantamount to no increase at all.

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

Two items, however, are noteworthy. Before seeing TV411, *write a poem or song* was the least likely activity for Home viewers. This activity increased 46%—almost a full rating point. This may be a tribute to the power of several segments on Jimmy Baca and other poets and songwriters. The one other area of increase — though much more modest — is a cluster of activities around what we have called “personal writing”: *editing your own writing*, *looking up a word in a dictionary*, and *writing in a diary or journal*. This index showed an increase of 13%. Some activities also showed a decrease; for example, *write a letter to a company* dropped by 20%. This could occur if the respondent had very little experience doing the activity, but watching the video or doing the workbook exercise made the respondent realize that the behavior was much more difficult than s/he had thought.

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

Table 4.2 Shift in Expectations to Perform TV411 Literacy Activities
in the Next Week/Month (Home)

Literacy Activity	N	Pre Rating*	Post Rating*	Diff.	% Increase/ Decline**	Sig.†
Write a Poem or Song	9	1.63	2.38	0.75	46%	0.080
Read to a Child***	9	2.44	2.67	0.23	9%	0.347
Write an Essay	9	2.56	2.56	0.00	0%	1.000
Prepare a Resume	9	2.56	2.33	-0.23	-9%	0.645
Personal Communication (d)	9	2.56	2.72	0.16	6%	0.524
Personal Writing (a)	9	2.59	2.92	0.33	13%	0.160
Letter to a Company	9	2.78	2.22	-0.56	-20%	0.247
Obtain Books (b)	9	2.82	2.61	-0.21	-7%	0.423
Read a Newspaper	9	2.89	3.00	0.11	4%	0.760
Intrinsic Reading (c)	9	2.89	2.78	-0.11	-4%	0.665
Attention to Detail (e)	9	2.94	2.92	-0.02	-1%	0.894
Read a Magazine	9	3.33	3.44	0.11	3%	0.782
Read Food Labels	9	3.78	3.44	-0.34	-9%	0.282
AVERAGE		2.75	2.77	0.02	2%	

NOTES

Activity list is ordered by pretest rating

* SCALE: (1) Not At All Likely; (2) A Small Chance; (3) Very Likely; (4) Definitely

** Percent Increase/Decrease: (Post – Pre) / Pre * 100

† “Sig.” refers to the statistical significance of a paired comparison T-Test comparing pre and posttest scores. Technically, since the sample underlying the test is not random, statistical significance is not an appropriate measure. However, it does provide a useful measure of how tight the variance is around the two mean estimates, and therefore is a useful guide for evaluating the difference between pre and post scores.

***Asked only of those who had a child living at home

INDEXES:

- a. Personal Writing: Edit your own writing, look up a word in a dictionary, write in a diary or journal
- b. Obtain Books: Go to the library, check out a library book, buy a book to read for pleasure, buy a book to read to a child.
- c. Intrinsic Reading: read a book because it is interesting, read a book to learn something
- d. Personal Communication: Write a letter to a friend, send a card
- e. Attention to Detail: read credit card offer details, use a budget, evaluate sale prices, use a map

Outreach

As shown in Table 4.3, participants in the Outreach model showed a larger average increase in their expectations of engaging in specific literacy behaviors—9%. Individual activities with large increases include *write an essay* (42%), *write a poem or song* (24%), *write a letter to a company* (17%), and *prepare a resume* (15%). This suggests that the additional support provided by a tutor may increase the impact of viewing TV411 on adults’ expectations of participating in the behaviors modeled on the show.

Table 4.3 Shift in Expectations to Perform Literacy Activities in the Next Week/Month (Outreach)

Literacy Activity	N	Pre Rating*	Post Rating*	Diff.	% Increase/ Decline	Sig.
Letter to a Company	14	1.71	2.00	0.29	17%	0.104
Write an Essay	14	2.07	2.93	0.86	42%	0.001
Prepare a Resume	14	2.29	2.64	0.35	15%	0.355
Write a Poem or Song	14	2.36	2.93	0.57	24%	0.071
Personal Communication (d)	14	2.57	2.57	0.00	0%	1.000
Obtain Books (b)	14	2.73	2.71	-0.02	-1%	0.922
Personal Writing (a)	14	2.88	3.10	0.21	7%	0.189
Intrinsic Reading (c)	14	2.89	3.14	0.25	9%	0.187
Read a Magazine	14	3.00	3.21	0.21	7%	0.426
Read to a Child**	14	3.14	3.21	0.07	2%	0.720
Attention to Detail (e)	14	3.18	3.25	0.07	2%	0.605
Read Food Labels	14	3.43	3.36	-0.07	-2%	0.807
Read a Newspaper	14	3.50	3.21	-0.29	-8%	0.302
AVERAGE		2.75	2.94	0.19	9%	

* SCALE: (1) Not At All Likely; (2) A Small Chance; (3) Very Likely; (4) Definitely

** Asked only of those who have a child living at home

INDEXES:

- a. Personal Writing: Edit your own writing, look up a word in a dictionary, write in a diary or journal
- b. Obtain Books: Go to the library, check out a library book, buy a book to read for pleasure, buy a book to read to a child.
- c. Intrinsic Reading: read a book because it is interesting, read a book to learn something
- d. Personal Communication: Write a letter to a friend, send a card
- e. Attention to Detail: read credit card offer details, use a budget, evaluate sale prices, use a map.

Confidence in Literacy Skills

A content analysis of the eight shows and workbooks used in the pilot test identified 20 literacy skills that were modeled in the materials. It was reasonable that participants might have learned — from the messages in the video or from their own successes in the workbooks — that the skills were ones that they could perform better than they had thought previously. In other words, the TV411 experience could have affected participants' confidence.

To measure confidence participants were asked — both before and after the test period — to rate their confidence in performing each of the 20 literacy activities. Each of the activities in the list was read aloud during the face-to-face interview and participants were asked to respond on a four-point scale: (1) Not At All Confident, (2) A Little Confident, (3) Pretty Confident, and (4) Very Confident. As with the literacy behaviors, participants were trained in how to use the rating scale.

Home View

The data for Home view are shown in Table 4.4 below. Before the study began, confidence averaged 2.83 (out of a possible 4.00) across the 20 activities. Afterwards confidence averaged 3.11. This represents a modest 11% increase $((3.11 - 2.83) \div 2.83)$, indicating that participants expressed increased confidence in their own ability to perform the activities after watching the shows and doing the exercises in the workbooks.

There is a pattern to the increase. Table 4.4 orders the activities from lowest to highest confidence at the time of the baseline assessment. The activity list is divided into two groups: one group includes all items where the baseline confidence level was less than 3.0 (Not at All and A Little Confident); the other group includes items for which the baseline confidence ratings were 3.0 or higher (Pretty and Very Confident). For each grouping of items the average of various scores is shown—pretest, posttest, gain and percent gain. Looking at the data this way shows that participants' confidence increased most for the activities for which they had the lowest confidence before watching TV411. The average increase for those items where the pretest scores was less than 3.0 was 17% while the average increase for activities where the pretest confidence was 3.0 or greater was 0.0%. In other words, the materials and activities had a desired effect for the activities where the participants had the most need.

Among the 20 items there are seven activities with a 15% or larger increase. Five of them concern writing: *recognize correct grammar*, *figure out word meanings*, *edit your own writing*, *write an essay*, and *write a personal letter*. Another has to do with math: *calculate a percent or average*. One other item is a mixture of reading comprehension and math: *understand the small print in credit card offers*. All of these activities were prominent among the shows' story lines.

While there are differences in response among the 20 activities, it is perhaps less important *which* activities showed an increase than it is to note that it is possible to increase learners' confidence with a modest 15-hour intervention consisting of a weekly

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

diet of one half-hour video, one workbook with relatively easy-to-complete exercises, and a small opportunity to write something for inclusion in a portfolio.

Table 4.4 Confidence in Skills Modeled on TV411 (Home)

Literacy Activity	N	Pre Rating*	Post Rating*	Diff.	% Increase /Decrease	Sig.
Pre Rating < 3.00						
Recog Correct Grammar **	9	2.33	3.33	1.00	43%	0.040
Write Business Letter	9	2.33	2.44	0.11	5%	0.729
Calculate Avg/Percent	9	2.38	2.88	0.50	21%	0.170
Write Poem or Song	9	2.44	2.78	0.34	14%	0.282
Understand Small Print	9	2.44	2.89	0.45	18%	0.272
Figure Sale Item	9	2.44	2.56	0.12	5%	0.594
Edit own Writing	9	2.44	3.22	0.78	32%	0.023
Write Personal Letter	9	2.56	3.11	0.55	21%	0.214
Write an Essay	9	2.67	3.33	0.66	25%	0.081
Figure Word Meanings	9	2.75	3.25	0.50	18%	0.170
Estimate a Total	9	2.78	3.00	0.22	8%	0.347
Family Budget	9	2.89	3.00	0.11	4%	0.681
Use Map or Atlas	9	2.89	3.11	0.22	8%	0.169
AVERAGE		2.56	2.99	0.43	17%	
Pre Rating ≥ 3.00						
Evaluate Sale Prices	9	3.00	3.11	0.11	4%	0.347
Understand Pay Stub	9	3.11	3.00	-0.11	-4%	0.594
What to Include in Resume	9	3.22	3.22	0.00	0%	1.000
Figure out Spelling of Words	9	3.22	3.22	0.00	0%	1.000
How to Use a Thesaurus	9	3.33	3.44	0.11	3%	0.782
Fill Out Job Application	9	3.56	3.56	0.00	0%	
Use a Dictionary	9	3.78	3.67	-0.11	-3%	0.681
AVERAGE		3.32	3.32	0.00	0%	
OVERALL AVERAGE		2.83	3.11	0.28	11%	

SCALE: (1) Not At All Confident; (2) A Little Confident; (3) Pretty Confident; (4) Very Confident

**This is a broad category, encompassing specific instruction (e.g., subject-verb agreement, punctuation), opportunities to edit and revise writing and exposure to models using appropriate grammar, etc.

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

After responding to each of the 20 individual literacy activities, learners were asked about their overall confidence in the areas of reading, writing, and figuring out an average or percent. The data for Home viewers are shown in Table 4.5. Almost all learners expressed increased confidence in reading and writing; only 3 out of the 9 voiced increased confidence in mathematics.

Table 4.5 Overall Confidence at the Post Interview (Home)

As a result of spending the last 8 weeks in the TV411 study, would you say you are more or less confident about your ability...

	TOTAL	Less Confident	About the Same	More Confident
<i>...to read things you come across?</i>	9 100%	0 0%	2 22%	7 78%
<i>...to write clearly?</i>	9 100%	0 0%	1 11%	8 89%
<i>...to figure out an average or a percentage?</i>	9 100%	0 0%	6 67%	3 33%

Participants provided a variety of explanations for why they felt more confident. The reasons for increased confidence in *reading things you come across* fell into three categories: TV411 reintroduced them to learning, helped them gain understanding, or motivated them. Here are some examples:

The program has got me motivated. I'm getting up at 11 a.m. and watching [the broadcast].

TV411 caused me to read more, grasp vocabulary, and see the similarities between things I read.

Before I wasn't able to understand the material. [Now] I can understand. I know what it's about and who's who.

I have the patience to go through a dictionary. The tools were there; I just never used them. Now I know how to.

Explanations for increased confidence in writing were mostly about having learned to improve some of the mechanics of writing.

'Cause my spelling used to be really bad and no one could understand my writing. My mother noticed my spelling getting better.

Now I know how to use a thesaurus to get the words I want to say.

Outreach

The same data for the Outreach group is shown in Tables 5.6 and 5.7. The impact on confidence is quite similar. The average increase is 10%. Dividing the items into two groups based on the baseline ratings shows an increase of 14% for the items with pre scores below 3.00 and 6% for those with pre scores of 3.00 or higher. The items showing the greatest increase are similar to those for Home view: *recognize correct grammar*, *figure out the spelling of words*, *edit your own writing*, *write a business letter*, and *calculate an average or percent*. It's unclear why this should increase for both groups; why didn't the Outreach group increase more since they got individualized help in many of these very areas? A reasonable explanation is that it is due to two factors. Not everyone in the Outreach model sought out tutorial assistance, and many who did sought help in mathematics, and not in writing. Also, for those who did get help with their writing, the assistance may have been too limited—not sufficient to increase their confidence. Further exploration of the impact of varying levels of support can be found later in this chapter.

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

Table 4.6 Confidence in Skills Modeled on TV411 (Outreach)

Literacy Activity	N	Pre Rating*	Post Rating*	Diff.	% Increase /Decrease	Sig.
Pre Rating < 3.00						
Recognize Correct Grammar	14	2.00	2.64	0.64	32%	0.033
Calculate Avg/Percent	14	2.21	2.93	0.72	33%	0.003
Figure out Spelling of Words	14	2.43	2.79	0.36	15%	0.096
Edit own Writing	14	2.57	3.07	0.50	19%	0.047
Write an Essay	14	2.57	2.86	0.29	11%	0.218
Understand Small Print	14	2.57	2.50	-0.07	-3%	0.836
What to Include in Resume	14	2.64	2.93	0.29	11%	0.302
Write Business Letter	14	2.71	3.14	0.43	16%	0.189
Use Map or Atlas	14	2.93	3.21	0.28	10%	0.302
Estimate a Total	14	2.93	3.00	0.07	2%	0.793
Figure Word Meanings	14	2.93	3.00	0.07	2%	0.793
AVERAGE		2.59	2.92	0.33	14%	
Pre Rating ≥ 3.00						
Evaluate Sale Prices	14	3.00	3.50	0.50	17%	0.068
Write Personal Letter	14	3.00	3.21	0.21	7%	0.336
Write Poem or Song	14	3.00	2.86	-0.14	-5%	0.583
Figure Sale Item	14	3.08	3.31	0.23	7%	0.273
Family Budget	14	3.14	3.64	0.50	16%	0.003
Fill Out Job Application	14	3.14	3.43	0.29	9%	0.165
Understand Pay Stub	14	3.43	3.64	0.21	6%	0.459
How to Use a Thesaurus	14	3.50	3.14	-0.36	-10%	0.513
Use a Dictionary	14	3.71	3.93	0.22	6%	0.189
AVERAGE		3.22	3.41	0.18	6%	
OVERALL AVERAGE		2.87	3.14	0.26	10%	

*SCALE: (1) Not At All Confident; (2) A Little Confident; (3) Pretty Confident; (4) Very Confident

The measures of overall confidence for Outreach participants are shown in Table 4.7. Almost every learner reported being “more confident.” Unlike the Home View group, the Outreach group expressed increased confidence in math as well. This may reflect the fact that much of the tutoring requested by students focused on math skills. The additional practice they gained in this area may have resulted in an increased confidence in their ability to perform mathematical tasks.

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

Table 4.7 Overall Confidence at the Post Interview (Outreach)

As a result of spending the last 8 weeks in the TV411 study, would you say you are more or less confident about your ability...

	TOTAL	Less Confident	About the Same	More Confident
<i>...to read things you come across?</i>	14 100%	0 0%	1 7%	13 93%
<i>...to write clearly?</i>	14 100%	0 0%	2 14%	12 86%
<i>...to figure out an average or a percentage?</i>	14 100%	1 7%	1 7%	12 86%

The reasons for increased confidence in reading for the Outreach group fell into the same three categories as the Home view group: TV411 reintroduced them to learning, helped them gain understanding, or motivated them. Here are some examples for reading:

I'm getting back into [reading] after 10 years. I probably wouldn't if it weren't for TV411.

And my reading improved because you know you figure out to read better stuff.

Doing the workbook. I feel good I got through the workbooks.

I never thought about reading the labels and figuring out the cholesterol. My doctor said to watch it and I never could find out [where I could find the information]

Explanations for writing included statements that they learned the mechanics of writing and gained confidence. Unlike the Home view, some mentioned having a chance to write.

I improved that a whole lot! I learned how to use the correct grammar.

My writing has improved because I practiced.

I gained more practice in the writing and I did the writing most.

Because in reading and writing you learn more in how to present yourself to others. You have to write about yourself and think about yourself and think about who you are.

TV411 taught me how to free write (brainstorm) and organize my ideas afterward.

For math, the Outreach learners attributed the increased confidence to the videos, the workbooks, or the tutor.

Because they used certain angles that made it seem a lot easier; having it be visual, actually seeing it and having it done on video made a tremendous difference.

The exercises helped me.

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

I had a fear; the fear is gone now. The materials and tutor showed me how to get it together and learn more.

The fractions were difficult, but I got more into it. I kept at it and got into it.

Because I never realized how to use math in everyday life. In school I never thought about it.

Many ABE-level adult learners lack confidence in their abilities to succeed in school, and for this reason they resist further education. It is likely that increasing confidence is one of the important steps in helping them choose to go back to school. It appears that even a relatively small exposure to TV411 materials — especially when coupled with tutorial assistance — can boost confidence.

Plans for More Schooling

One of the things we were interested in examining was whether using TV411 in a Home study context influenced students' desires to continue their education in a more structured, formal setting. Based on self reports, as shown in Table 4.8, the answer is yes. Fifty-six percent of the Home viewers and 64% of the Outreach group said they wanted to return to school to work on their G.E.D. or high school diploma.

Table 4.8 Plans for More Schooling

As a result of studying TV411 have your plans for more schooling changed at all?

	N	Plans Haven't Changed	Work on a GED/HS Diploma
Home	9	4 44%	5 56%
Outreach	14	4 29%	9 64%

NOTE: Numbers/Percents are the number in each group that mentioned this plan in their open-ended response. The numbers may exceed the total because a respondent could mention more than one plan.

However, it should be noted that because the Outreach students were drawn from waiting lists for GED prep or GED classes, these students had already made the decision to further their education, and therefore, TV411 is likely to have less of an impact on their plans. Only one of the participants in the Home study had already reached that decision prior to starting the TV411 study.

Evidence in the Portfolio

All participants who completed the pilot studies submitted their portfolios at the final interview. For the Outreach study, the entire portfolio contents were copied and the originals returned to the students. Only selected examples of portfolio entries were photocopied for Home Study pilot participants.

Evaluating portfolios can be approached from different angles. One way is to simply count the amount of work included in a portfolio and categorize that work. Another, more subjective approach involves the reviewer making judgments about the contents of the portfolio and looking for evidence of progress. The researchers opted to combine these two approaches in hopes of providing a more comprehensive understanding of how students used their portfolios.

A quantitative analysis of the portfolios revealed the amount and type of work students placed in their portfolios. Each item in a portfolio was assigned to one of three categories and recorded on a Portfolio Data Form:

- *Workbook activities*: these were activities completed within the workbooks themselves. All possible activities within one workbook section (e.g., all exercises on a “How To” article) were counted as one activity. Only activities in which the student had done most or all of the work were counted.
- *Workbook-inspired activities*: this category encompassed activities presented in the workbooks but requiring work (usually writing) outside the pages of the workbook. Most of the items in this category stemmed from workbook instructions to “save this to your portfolio.”
- *Unique activities*: these were activities not prompted by the workbook in any way. Unique activities were differentiated from workbook-inspired activities through the use of cover sheets. If the assignment was labeled on the cover note as a unique activity, it was counted as such. If no cover note was attached to the assignment, the analyst would review the workbook assignments and content to decide whether the entry was a workbook-inspired assignment.

Table 4.9 presents details about the contents of the participants’ portfolios. It is interesting to note that there was little difference between the average number of workbook-based portfolio activities in the Home (24) and Outreach (22) portfolios. Both groups appear to have utilized the workbooks somewhat regularly, completing many of the suggested activities. This is not unexpected, as completing at least some of the workbooks, was one of the expectations – and a condition for receiving the incentive - set out at the beginning of the study.

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

In both the Home and Outreach studies, participants were less likely to engage in workbook-inspired activities than they were to complete exercises within the workbooks (an average of 9 for the Home participants and 10 for the Outreach participants). This finding is not surprising since most of the workbook-inspired activities involved more time-consuming exercises than did the workbooks. The majority of workbook-inspired activities centered on three different categories: writing, math, and personal dictionary. Participants wrote a variety of brief letters to family members and friends as well as business letters either requesting some sort of service or complaining about a problem. Participants’ poetry covered several themes, most notably, love. Their essays covered a wide range of topics and included responses to literature, autobiographical sketches, instructional pieces (e.g., how to fix something), and personal experiences. There were very few examples of unique activities in the participants’ portfolios. The few unique activities included were most likely to be GED-based math exercises and writing activities (essays, letters, poems, reflective writing). However, for the most part, students did not put anything in their portfolio that did not have TV411 as its impetus.

In both the Home View and Outreach pilots, student texts included in the portfolios were generally brief (1/2 to 1 page), reflected simple sentence structure, and dealt with a single idea. Almost all texts were hand written. Only a small portion of students chose to revise their texts, unless they were asked to do so (e.g., “First Draft” assignment). Students appeared to understand the revision process largely in terms of recopying for neatness and/or correcting spelling and punctuation errors. It should be noted that neither the TV411 videos nor the workbooks provide specific instruction on *content* revision and that the structure of the intervention did not provide for student training in this area. Thus, it would have been surprising to see students make anything more than the most basic of revisions of their work.

Table 4.9 Portfolio Contents by Type

Activity	Average		Range	
	Outreach	Home	Outreach	Home
Exercises in the Workbook (50 possible)	22 (44%)*	24 (48%)*	6–32	4–38
Not in the Workbook				
Workbook-Inspired	9	10	1–23	0–25
Unrelated to the Workbook	2	1	0–6	0–6

* Percent of the total possible: 50

Student portfolios were examined to determine whether each portfolio had a specific focus in the type of work that a student chose to include. Most students chose to focus on either writing or math in their portfolio activities. In the Outreach study, eight students chose to focus on writing and various forms of social, business, and personal communications; two students concentrated on math. The remaining student portfolios either covered a range of literacy skills and topics or were too brief to categorize. The Home View students’ portfolios were divided between those that revealed no particular

focus (for reasons mentioned above) and writing behaviors and communications. These findings suggest that most students used their portfolios as a means of honing specific skills or areas of interest to them.

An examination of the portfolios indicates that the TV411 series prompted participants to engage in activities they otherwise would not have done. In the exit interview, students were asked the question *Are there items in your portfolio that represent something you would not have done, or would not have done as well, before taking this course?* Eleven of the 14 Outreach study students (79%) and all of the Home Study students responded affirmatively. When asked to identify what that item was, all students selected either a workbook or writing activity. The largest proportion of both Home Study (63%) and Outreach students (46%) reported they had chosen that activity precisely because it was something they had not tried before.

Participants were also asked to identify the inspiration for the piece they selected. Learners in the Outreach study were almost evenly divided as to whether they had been inspired by the videos or by the workbooks. In contrast, slightly more than half of the Home study participant reported that the workbook was the impetus for the activity, while only 22% attributed the activity to the video or a non-TV411 related source.

Overall, the Outreach and Home View portfolios showed similar patterns of content, focus, and developmental levels (simple sentence structure, brief, dealing with a single idea) of student work. One surprising finding concerns the lack of difference in content and amount of work between student portfolios in the two studies. Researchers anticipated the Outreach student portfolios would generally be richer compilations, given the additional support and emphasis placed on the portfolios by the Outreach tutor. The reasons for the similarities in the portfolios are not clear, but may reflect a key difficulty in instituting a portfolio system—the need for extensive training in ways to reflect on one’s own work and learn from that reflection.

Knowledge of Concepts Taught on TV411

The content analysis identified the most prominent facts and skills taught in the shows and workbooks. A multiple-choice, short-answer test was constructed to measure knowledge of these concepts. Participants completed these tests both before they started the intervention and again at its completion. The complete data on test performance can be found at the end of this section. Tables 4.10 and 4.11 below summarize the data.

The mathematics content in these eight shows is quite small. There are three concepts: (1) numeric literacy as represented by a segment (and workbook exercise) on understanding the various entries on a paycheck stub, (2) how to calculate an average and (3) how to calculate a percentage. (The complete test can be found in the Measurement Appendix, bound separately). At the time of the pretest, Home View participants got 81% of the test items correct; at the posttest they got 82% correct. All the movement was accounted for by a small amount of learning regarding calculation of an average. Some of this may be attributed to a “ceiling effect,” that is, the Home View participants knew

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

most of the numerical literacy skills at the start of the study. However, even in cases when there was room for improvement (e.g., percentages), the Home View students did not post any gains. This suggests the difficulty of presenting complex mathematical skills in an informal instructional model. The Outreach students showed a slightly greater increase. Outreach participants averaged a total score of 75% at the pretest and 83% at the posttest—an 8% increase. The increase was accounted for by learning in both averages and percents.

Table 4.10 Summary of Pre-Post Mathematics Testing

	Home (% Correct)	Outreach (% Correct)
Total Score (20 items)	Pre 81% - Post 82%	Pre 75% - Post 83%
SUBSCALES		
Numeric Literacy (12 items)	no movement	no movement
Percents (4 items)	no movement	Pre 30% - Post 39%
Averages (4 items)	Pre 53% - Post 67%	Pre 63% - Post 77%

A second content area includes several structural aspects of words. These include prefixes and suffixes, as well as synonyms and antonyms. In the TV411 videos these are presented in the context of explaining how to decode words. One other topic is how to use a dictionary. Nineteen test items were developed to assess knowledge of these topics. The test was titled “Word Work.”

The test results are shown in Table 4.11. Home viewers knew much of the content at the baseline; their total score averaged 81%. On the posttest the total score averaged three percentage points higher: 84%. Looking at the components of the test, the movement can be attributed to learning more about antonyms and suffixes.

For those in the Outreach model the gains were much larger. They averaged 66% on the pretest and 85% on the posttest. This 19% gain can be attributed to learning across all of the sub-test areas except synonyms.

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

Table 4.11 Summary of Pre-Post Word Work Test

	Home (% Correct)	Outreach (% Correct)
Total Score (19 items)	Pre 81% - Post 84%	Pre 66% - Post 85%
SUBSCALES		
Prefixes	no movement	Pre 57% - Post 91%
Suffixes	Pre 81% - Post 89%	Pre 54% - Post 84%
Synonyms	no movement	no movement
Antonyms	Pre 64% - Post 78%	Pre 66% - Post 79%
Using a Dictionary	drop in score	Pre 70% - Post 79%

Generally speaking, participants knew much of the factual material and skills presented in TV411 before they began viewing. But there was still room for improvement. The Home viewers got one more item correct for suffixes and antonyms. Outreach participants showed greater improvement. They got one more item correct on each of the following topics: prefixes, suffixes, antonyms and how to use a dictionary.

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

Table 4.12 Math and Word Work Test Scores for Home View

Test	Total Items	N	Pretest Score	Post Score	Diff	Pre as % Tot	Post as % Tot	%Incr / Decr	Sig.
MATHEMATICS									
Total Score	20	9	16.11	16.33	0.22	81%	82%	1%	0.760
<i>Subscales</i>									
Numeric Literacy	12	9	11.89	11.56	-0.33	99%	96%	-3%	0.195
Percents	4	9	2.11	2.11	0.00	53%	53%	0%	1.000
Averages	4	9	2.11	2.67	0.56	53%	67%	14%	0.051
WORD WORK									
Total Score	19	9	14.56	15.11	0.55	77%	80%	3%	0.276
<i>Subscales</i>									
Prefixes*	4	9	3.56	3.44	-0.12	89%	86%	-3%	0.347
Suffixes	4	9	3.22	3.56	0.34	81%	89%	8%	0.195
Synonyms	3	9	2.11	2.11	0.00	70%	70%	0%	
Antonyms	4	9	2.56	3.11	0.55	64%	78%	14%	0.169
Dictionary	4	9	3.11	2.89	-0.22	78%	72%	-6%	0.169

Table 4.13 Math and Word Work Test Scores for Outreach

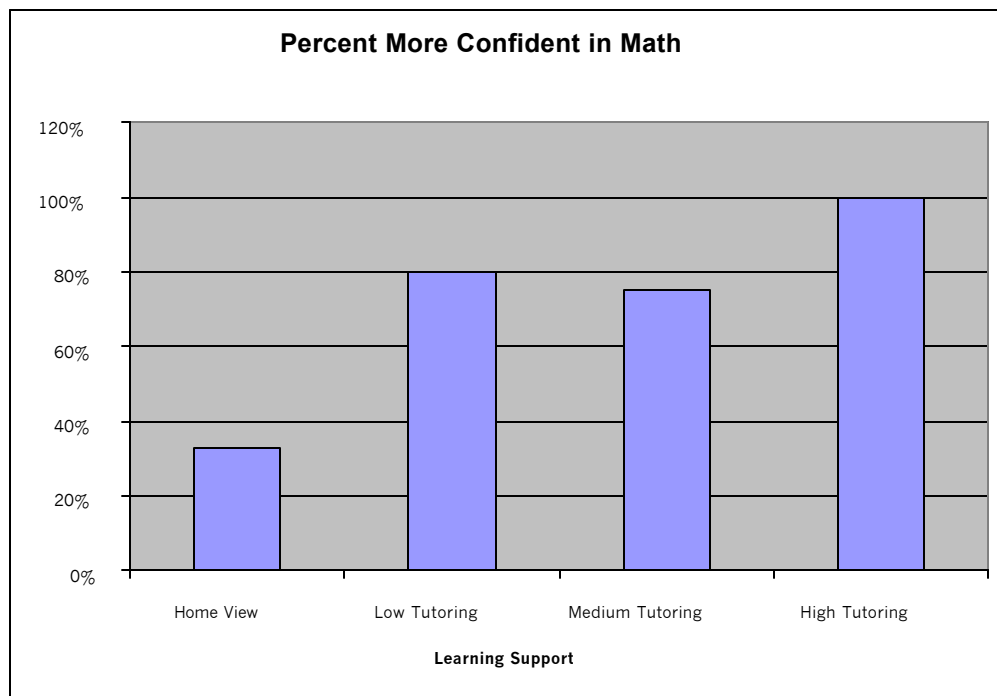
Test	Total Items	N	Pretest Score	Post Score	Diff	Pre as %Tot	Post as %Tot	% Incr/ Decr	Sig.
MATHEMATICS									
Total Score	20	14	15.00	16.64	1.64	75%	83%	11%	0.760
<i>Subscales</i>									
Numeric Literacy	12	14	11.29	12.00	0.71	94%	100%	6%	0.195
Percents	4	14	1.21	1.57	0.36	30%	39%	30%	1.000
Averages	4	14	2.50	3.07	0.57	63%	77%	23%	0.051
WORD WORK									
Total Score	19	14	11.79	15.29	3.50	66%	85%	30%	0.000
<i>Subscales</i>									
Prefixes*	4	14	2.29	3.64	1.35	57%	91%	59%	0.003
Suffixes	4	14	2.14	3.36	1.22	54%	84%	57%	0.002
Synonyms	3	14	1.93	2.00	0.07	64%	67%	4%	0.583
Antonyms	4	14	2.64	3.14	0.50	66%	79%	19%	0.131
Dictionary	4	14	2.79	3.14	0.35	70%	79%	13%	0.239

Differences By Learning Support

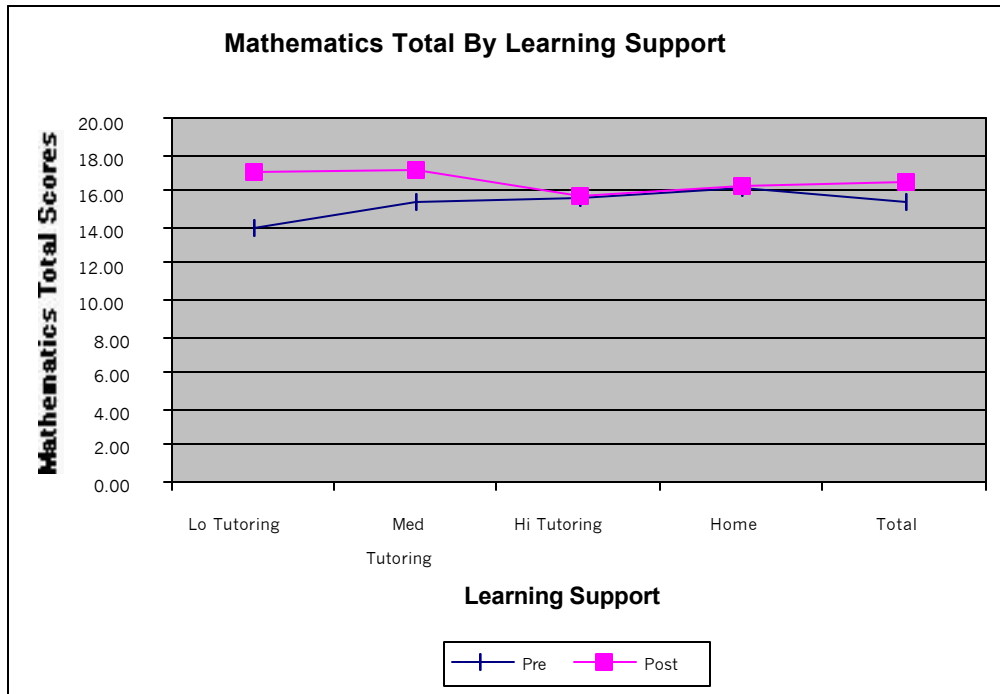
A central question in this research effort is this: Do the outcomes vary by the amount of support learners received? All of the Home View learners received virtually no support. Outreach students received varying levels of support according to the choices they made regarding using the tutor. In Chapter 3 we describe three different levels of tutorial use: low, medium, and high. The low group almost never asked for help, and never came to office hours. They did receive a small amount of tutorial support over the phone, and therefore received more support than those who simply viewed at home. The medium group asked for help four out of the eight weeks they were called and received an average of 1.2 hours of help. The high group asked for help six out of the eight weeks and received an average of six hours of help. For each of these four groups we repeated the analyses described earlier in this chapter. The results are summarized below.

Literacy Activities. There were no differences in the expectations to perform the many literacy activities modeled on TV411.

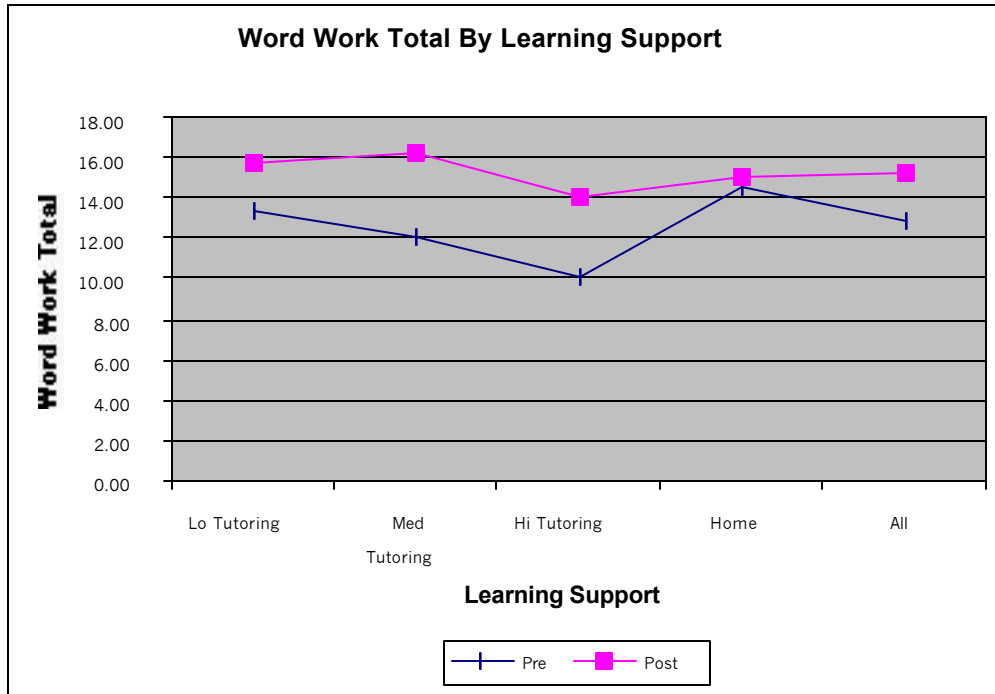
Confidence in Literacy Skills. To address this question we examined the response to the questions on overall confidence asked at the exit interview. There were no differences for confidence in reading or writing. But there was a difference for confidence in mathematics. This is reasonable, given the tutor's report that students most often asked for help in this subject.



Knowledge of Math Concepts. For mathematics knowledge, the biggest gains were for those in the low and medium tutoring groups (see the chart below). There was no improvement for those in the home-view group, but also no improvement for the high tutoring group. This could be because the tutoring of those in the high tutoring group was around different concepts than were in the test, while the low and medium groups got their help on those concepts with which were on the test. But this is simply speculation; the needed analysis to evaluate this hypothesis is more fine-grained than is possible with the available information.



Knowledge of Word Work Concepts. Performance on the Word Work test profited much more from tutoring, and in ways that one would expect (see chart below). Home viewers, with no support, showed very little improvement. Those in the both the medium and high tutoring groups showed large increases, while those in the low tutoring group showed an improvement of about half this amount.



All in all, the data supports the notion that level of support does influence the outcomes of participation in TV411. But the ways in which it works are not fully understood. Given the relatively low levels of support provided in this eight-week program a longer effort might show a larger effect.

Differences By Reading Level

How well does TV411 work for learners with different reading ability? In this section we analyze the outcome measures by reading level of the learners. Before presenting the results we need to consider two issues discussed earlier: the reading level of the TV411 materials and the reading level of the learners in the study. ALMA targets TV411 at learners reading at the 5th – 8th grade level. This is a very narrow range, and it is not possible to prepare materials that are consistently written at just this level. Indeed, our analysis of the print materials using the Flesch-Kincaid readability measure revealed that the text in the TV411 workbooks range in difficulty between fourth and twelfth grade reading level. An additional issue is that assessing student reading level is very imprecise. While we have characterized each of the learners in this study using what we judge to be the best available measure, we know that there is probably some error in our classification of learners.

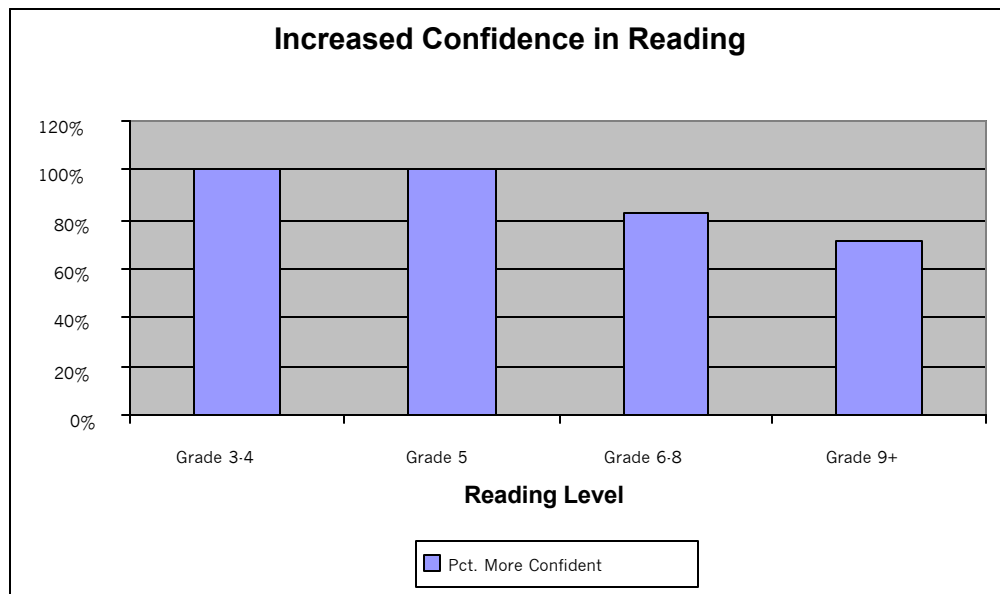
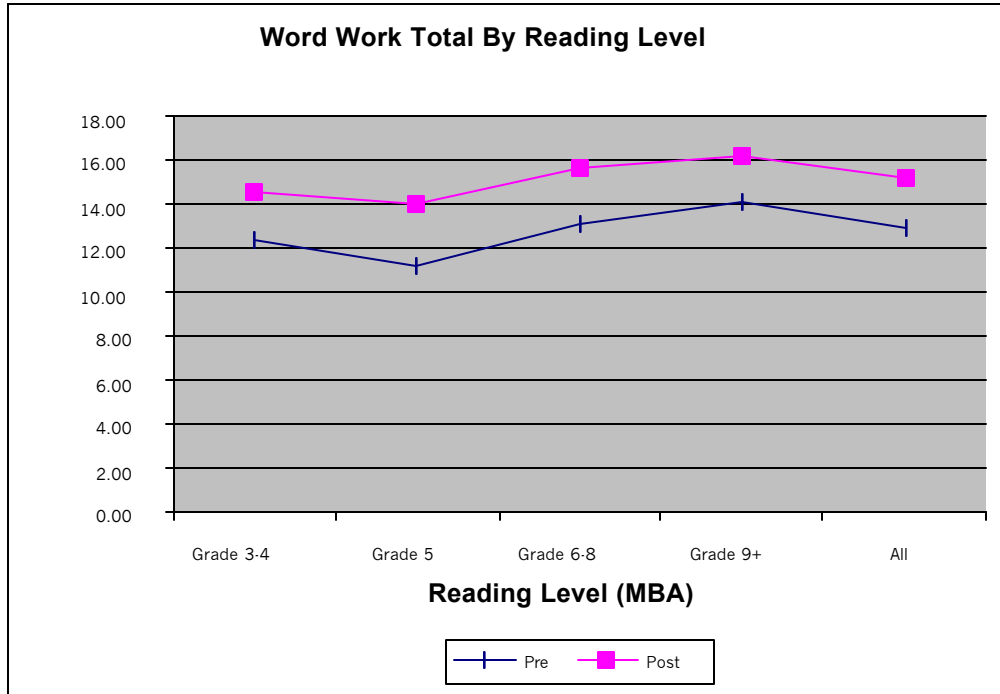
For these analyses learners were grouped into four categories as shown in Table 4.16 below.

Table 4.16 Reading Levels of the Combined Home and Outreach Samples

Category	Reading Level Range	No. of Learners
1	3 rd – 4 th Grade	5
2	5 th Grade	4
3	6 th – 8 th Grade	5
4	9 th Grade and Higher	9
	Total	23

The analyses show that those outside the target reading range do as well or better than those in the target range on the major outcome measures. The relevant charts appear below. Those above and below the target range improved as much on the Word Work test as did those in the target range. Of great interest is the fact that all of those reading at the Grade 3-5 level said their confidence in reading had improved over the eight weeks. Smaller proportions of the target range and above groups expressed increased confidence.

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study



Performance on the mathematics test was not associated with reading level, and neither were expectations to perform literacy activities after the project was over. In general it can be said that TV411 worked equally well for learners testing below and above the target specifications.

Summary of Findings

The following table presents a summary of the findings reported in this chapter. It shows that the TV411 Home View and Outreach interventions influenced students' confidence and their plans for further education. It also shows the gains they made in the areas of literacy behaviors, math knowledge and word work knowledge.

Table 4.14 Impact Summary

Impact Area	Home View	Outreach
Literacy Behaviors	Average increase pre to post: +2% Notable Write a poem (46%) Personal writing –(13%)	Average increase pre to post: +9% Notable Write a poem (24%) Letter to a company (17%) Write an essay (42%) Prepare a Resume (15%)
Confidence	Average 17% increase in items with low initial confidence: reading and writing yes; math no	Average 14% increase in items with low initial confidence: reading, writing, & math
Education Plans	> 1/2 added plans to pursue more education	> 1/2 added plans to pursue more education
Portfolios (Workbook Exercises Plus Independent Work)	Completed about 1/2 of the 50 workbook exercises. 11 independent pieces, about 1 page each. Participants say that one piece is novel for them.	Completed about 1/2 of the 50 workbook exercises. 11 independent pieces, about 1 page each. Participants say that one piece is novel for them.
Math Knowledge	High pretest score; slight gain for averages	High pretest score; small gain in percents; large gains in averages
Word Work Knowledge	High pretest score; very little gain. Only antonyms improve	Medium pretest score; large gain in all areas except synonyms

Table 4.15 Impact Summary by Learning Support* and Reading Level**

Impact Area	Learning Support	Reading Level
Literacy Activities	No differences	No differences
Confidence	Confidence in math higher for those receiving the most support	Confidence in reading increased most for those with the lowest reading scores at intake
Math Knowledge	No differences	No differences
Word Work Knowledge	Higher gains for those with most support	No differences

* Learning Support: Home View, no support; outreach, low use of tutor, medium use, high use

** Reading Level: Grades 3-4, 5, 6-8, 9+

Participant Profiles

To provide a more complete feel for the impact of TV411 on the participants' lives, brief profiles of many of the Home and Outreach study participants are included below. It is important to note that due to the nature of this study, ISR staff had little contact with these participants, so our knowledge of their lives is fairly limited. However, what we did learn from them, and about them, offers additional insight into their responses to the Home and Outreach approaches and to TV411.

Profiles of the Home Study participants are based upon the information participants shared with us during the baseline interview, exit interview and refresher meeting. In addition, an examination of participants' portfolios helped provide insights for composing these profiles. Profiles of the Outreach participants are based upon information provided in the two interviews, portfolio contents, records of tutoring sessions and phone contacts with the tutor, and the reflections of the tutor, Linda Cowsen.

Because there are so few Home Study participants (five in Detroit and four in New York), profiles were compiled on each student. Half of the 14 Outreach participants are profiled in this report. Names of all participants have been changed.

Detroit Home Study

All of the five participants who finished the Detroit phase of the Home Study had positive reactions to the program.

- Jackie is a 42-year-old African- American woman. She had contacted her local school district about taking GED classes, but testing indicated she was not yet at the level where she would likely succeed. The district referred Jackie to our program. She was unemployed at the start of the study, but has a history of employment. Her goal is to obtain both her GED and her cosmetology license. She has a strong extended family support, and in fact, encouraged her 19-year-old nephew to participate in the program. Jackie threw herself into the program enthusiastically and did a great deal of work in the workbooks, although she did very few of the writing assignments. After completing the TV411 course Jackie reported having much more confidence about pursuing her GED. At the exit interview, she asked if we could provide her with an extra set of workbooks because she wanted her niece to go through the program.
- Jamal is a 19-year-old African-American male. He was encouraged to join this project by his aunt. Jamal dropped out of school primarily because he was bored. He had not made any efforts to resume his education before starting the TV411 study. Jamal works full time as an unskilled laborer. He would like to get his GED and a better job. Jamal reported that the writing and

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

grammar aspects of TV411 were particularly useful for him. His portfolio included poetry that he had written and of which he was extremely proud. Jamal indicated that he had not written poetry before and was surprised to find that he enjoyed doing it.

- Mary is a 38-year-old Caucasian woman who participated in the study with her husband, Bobby, aged 41. They have three children. Mary works full time and is involved in her children's schools. She has her high school diploma, but qualified for this study on the basis of a TABE score that indicated she was reading at only the sixth grade level. She is frustrated at work because she is unable to get the promotions she wants. Eventually, she would like to go to college. She feels that she needs to make changes in her life soon, as she sees herself approaching 40. Mary did an extensive amount of writing in her portfolio. She reported that this study has given her the impetus to make some of the changes she has been contemplating.
- Bobby is a 41-year-old Caucasian male (married to Mary). He is employed and works a lot of overtime. He does not have a high school diploma. Bobby seemed somewhat skeptical of the program at the start. However, it appeared to have a profound impact on him. He began writing songs, something he said he has not done since high school. Bobby's attitude changed, and at the end of the program he seemed enthusiastic about continuing his education. He reported that the program has motivated him to make changes and convinced him that it is possible for him to succeed in doing so.
- Roberta is a 33-year-old Caucasian woman. She is a volunteer at the Head Start program her child attends. She lives with her mother and is a single parent (her writings talk frequently of struggles with her ex-husband). Roberta has multiple health problems and reports that life is difficult for her. She wants to improve herself and looks forward to better times. She used the TV411 materials conscientiously. Roberta did a great deal of writing in her portfolio and felt that she made progress in both reading and writing during the course of the study.

New York Home Study

Some participants in the New York Home Study had positive reactions to the TV411 project, but others felt it failed to meet their educational needs.

- Joe is a 33-year-old male. He is married and works full time. He was not satisfied with the Home study program. He indicated that

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

he needed someone to answer his questions and to talk to about what he saw. Joe claims he was unable to concentrate working on his own, at home. He has no plans to continue his schooling or look for a new job. He reports that his confidence in reading, writing and math was unchanged as a result of the TV411 Home Study.

- Diane is a 39-year-old single woman, who reports having been diagnosed with dyslexia as a child. Diane reports that the study helped her learn how to motivate herself more effectively. She reports increased confidence in reading and writing, but claims to still dislike math. She currently volunteers at a community organization and would like to get a job there. She realizes she will need her GED and some computer skills to get a position there, but was unclear on whether or not she would actively take the steps to achieve those goals.
- Janelle is a 51-year-old woman. She is divorced and was not working at the time of the study. She reports that the program helped her skills in reading, writing, math, as well as help build her confidence. She reports, with some surprise, that she is now writing poems. Among things she learned, Janelle lists keeping a journal, writing a letter, reading a map, and not putting herself down. She wants to continue with school and get her GED.
- Ling is a 46-year-old single woman. She liked the programs because they made the subjects fun to learn about. TV411 taught her the importance of writing a lot in order to improve your writing; her portfolio included many writing assignments. Ling reports that as a result of being in this study, she has made a commitment to studying and now wants to get her GED. She would like to eventually get computer training and get a job in the computer field.

New York Outreach

The Outreach approach appeared to be quite successful for many participants, but others seemed to have difficulty with the concept of tutoring combined with working on their own.

- Penny is a single woman; her husband had left her and taken all the furniture out of their apartment. She has 1 adult daughter, who was just released from jail, and two grandchildren. She did practically everything in workbook and had a large quantity of work in her portfolio. Penny took full advantage of the tutoring,

using it on a regular basis. The tutor reports that Penny took a very serious and diligent approach to the course. Penny commented that she learned to sit down and work on things by herself during this project. She currently works as bus driver for autistic children. She would like to work as residential staff member in a group home for autistic children; her goal is to get her GED so she can do that. She took the GED test during the summer, but she has not shared the results with the research staff.

- Julio is a young Hispanic man. He started the program with highest reading score of everyone in the group. Although he is the youngest child in his family, he has assumed responsibilities for his extended family. Julio owns a bodega in Manhattan. He was trying to go to school, run his bodega and be the support person for his family at the same time; these factors made it difficult for him to complete all of the workbook and portfolio activities. The tutor reported that at their last meeting he was quite upset about not having doing everything for the course. He called the tutor over the summer for advice in what steps to take next. She referred him City College's GED classes, where could take classes in the morning and work at his bodega later in the day; she doesn't know if he's enrolled this fall or not.
- Ed is a single man, who was working as a cashier at Wendy's. He seemed to have a great deal of trouble with the concept of the Outreach program. He didn't watch the videos before coming to tutoring, despite numerous attempts to explain the sequence to him. He did very little work in the workbooks and only one piece of writing during the course of the study. The tutor commented that his reading level was low and he would only do work when he was actually with her.
- Albert is a single father, raising 2 children, both of whom have learning disabilities. The tutor suspected that Albert might be dyslexic and referred him to Einstein for testing. Albert is an accomplished artist, whose work has been displayed in museum shows. However, he could not pass art classes because he was unable to do the required reading. As the program progressed, he realized that he needed less tutoring than he had anticipated. The tutor agreed, noting that he wanted feedback and attention but really didn't need much help. His current goal is to go to culinary school and become a chef.
- Malik is a 22-year-old man, recently released from prison for dealing drugs. At the time of the study, he was looking for a job to support his wife and preschool son. He reported that he was motivated to participate in this project both by himself and by his

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

wife. He reported that he liked the tutoring aspect of the program, although he attended only a few sessions. He wants to take the GED and eventually get a contractor's license. The tutor commented that he had good intentions but seemed to have trouble following through and making them a reality.

- Teresa is a 22-year-old single mother with two young children. She commutes from the Bronx to Manhattan to a menial job to support her family. She reports that she wants to get a better job and needs more education in order to do that. She felt that Outreach program was helpful to her. Teresa reported that the tutor was very good and records show she attended several long tutoring sessions. At her final interview she reported being more confident and noted that now she sees there is nothing to be afraid of in returning to school.
- Mark is a 21 year old who is employed full time at a low paying job. He recently moved back to the projects in order to help care for his mother, who is ill. He had very little work in his portfolio, did little in the workbooks and rarely attended tutoring sessions. Mark reported that he found TV411 boring, noting that it covered skills he already has. He indicated that he really didn't learn anything much from participation in this project.

The adults who participated in the Home and Outreach studies varied in age, gender and ethnicity. All however, were lacking in the educational skills needed for them to improve their lives and improve their employment options. Most have families who depend upon them and they often must juggle multiple responsibilities. As such, making time to further their own education – even when they can see the benefits of doing so – places additional demands on their already limited resources. Given the circumstances of their lives, it is not surprising that the TV411 profiles of adult learners (who faced odds similar to their own and succeeded) makes a strong impact on these participants: it provides them with the hope that they, too, can make these changes and improve their lives.

Chapter 5

Lessons from the Pilot Study

The pilot tests provided valuable information on the implementation and viability of two types of distance learning models. They have broadened our understanding of some of the issues related to recruiting and retaining adult learners in this type of study, and pointed out some of the issues to be addressed in using distance learning models with ABE students. They have also provided information on the benefits – and costs – of using a tutor in a distance education model, and insights into pragmatics of making the connections between the tutor and the student. Finally, the pilot studies have provided important lessons regarding the use of portfolios in the Home and Outreach models.

Recruiting and Retaining a Sample

The most striking element of these pilot tests was the difficulty in first recruiting and then retaining a sample. While this was particularly true for the Home View study, attrition was also an issue in the Outreach study. In part, this may simply reflect the nature of adult education; recruiting students and keeping them in the program is a concern for all adult education providers. However, distance learning provides some additional challenges to keeping students involved: it requires that the student be self-motivated, able to function independently, and willing to accept a great deal of responsibility for his or her own learning all of which may prove extremely challenging for many adult learners. Thus, the pilot prompted concerns about how well this population will function in a program that provides minimal external support, regardless of the appeal of the product. This suggests the need to more carefully select the sample. As we have seen, Home View was most effective for students who are somewhat older, who are employed, and who have structure in their lives. Outreach students were drawn from lists of students who were on waiting lists for adult education classes; thus these students tended to already be motivated to further their education. In addition, Outreach students reading at a sixth grade level or higher had greater likelihood of staying with the project than did those with lower reading abilities. Future recruiting efforts should be focused on identifying students who meet these criteria.

Another challenging aspect of working with these groups of adult learners revolves around enabling them to complete study activities independently. Many of the participants lacked the organizational skills and/or motivation to make the TV411 viewing and related work a priority in their schedules. The pilot test of both models suggests that this population of learners needs ongoing instruction, structure, and support in how to maintain an independent learning experience. While most distance learning programs include an intense period of orientation and many provide intermittent support throughout the program, they also assume that students possess the skills needed to work in largely independent fashion. Thus, this difficulty in structuring independent work is likely to be an issue in any distance learning program aimed at this population.

Using a Tutor-Supported Model

Offering a tutor to support independent learning, as was done in the Outreach model, was effective for the students, but labor-intensive for the tutor. To make this type of model work effectively for a group of 25 students, a tutor needs to spend 18 – 20 hours per week contacting and meeting with them. In this experiment, fully one-quarter of the tutor's time was spent tracking down students to arrange meeting times and get an update on their progress. Streamlining contact methods and meeting time arrangements would make this model more effective. It may be possible to have pre-arranged times for tutor-student contact to help make the best use of the tutor's time.

The amount of time the Outreach model requires from the tutor results in its being a costly model to implement. Our tutor spent 18 – 20 hours a week on the project. Six hours of that time was spent making phone contact with students. About 12 hours was spent providing tutorial services. In contrast, in the facilitated group model, a teacher was able to reach 15 students in about 4 hours of contact time per week. In addition, the facilitator was able to encourage students to help one another during the sessions, thus leveraging her role. The Outreach model is a significantly more expensive option.

Using Portfolios

The pilot studies raise questions about the use of portfolios in a distance learning model. The portfolio as a device to encourage people to collect and save their work is useful. But, for the contents of the portfolio to be a vehicle for learner reflection on the quality of one's work and the revisions necessary to improve a literacy product, students must receive extensive training in how to use a portfolio. They also need training in the metacognitive skills required to evaluate their own work, because the essence of the portfolio approach is to reflect on one's work and use the reflection for improvement. ALMA has envisioned portfolios as an integral element of their curriculum; indeed the *TV411 User's Guide* serves as the foundation for portfolio instruction in these pilot studies. Students in the pilot studies did indeed keep portfolios; that, in and of itself, is noteworthy, as is the fact that most students reported that at least one item in their portfolio was something they had never attempted before. These findings need to be tempered however, by the fact that the portfolios were used largely as storage repositories for workbook and workbook-inspired activities. There was little reflection or evaluation of the work included in the portfolios. Thus, the portfolio, as used in this study, had only limited effectiveness either an educational tool for the student or as a research tool for the evaluators. The concept of how a portfolio might best be utilized in an independent learning model requires additional consideration. It may be that despite the best intentions, portfolios are better suited to instructional models that provide more teacher-student contact.

Recommendations

ALMA has attractive and compelling materials. When adult learners in the target audience engage the materials even for a relatively short period of time, their attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge are affected in positive ways. But TV411 is competing for the

attention of an audience that is ill-equipped for independent home study. Many lack the motivation and skills to study on their own. They may not possess the independent study skills and reflective abilities that most distance learning programs assume students have. Many have a fear of failing at learning tasks because of their prior failure at school. They may work at multiple jobs to make ends meet and they may have children to care for. On top of this, TV411 is at a disadvantage when it comes to getting the attention of this audience in the home setting. While the program could compete favorably for an audience with many popular entertainment shows, it is not likely to secure the primetime broadcast slots when it would be easiest to attract the attention of this audience.

For TV411 to successfully reach an audience and be used more widely as a distance learning tool, additional effort must be put into new ways to reach and support the target audience.

Attracting an Audience

The learners in our studies were obtained through intense recruitment efforts by local people and the promise of a \$100 reward for participating. Experimentation needs to be done in ways to attract the attention of both learners and community service organizations who might bring TV411 to the attention of their clients. How do various advertising and community outreach strategies work to gain the attention and commitment of adult learners to view the TV411 series? ALMA could design a promotional campaign with multiple elements — e.g., billboards, radio spots, fliers and novelties for distribution in various community gathering places. A trailer segment could be produced for use with the broadcasts in this community. The segment would announce incentives to those who call a toll-free number. Those who call would receive the incentive in return for completing a brief phone interview designed to identify which of the promotional elements they recall having seen. The results of this study would be useful to ALMA, and to other agencies interested in reaching an ABE population.

Preparing ABE Learners for Independent Study

Experiments are also needed in ways to orient the audience to the essential elements of independent study—especially to the use of a portfolio as a learning device. Another experiment could be done in which learners participate in an orientation session before beginning to study at home. Here is an example of an orientation session. There might be three sessions, each two hours long. In the first session the audience would view one of the videos and complete the matching workbook. A facilitator would lead a discussion and help the audience become skilled at deriving lessons from the materials. In a second session the portfolio could be introduced and learners given a chance to practice a literacy skill of their own choosing and sent home with an assignment based on that skill. In the third session they would discuss the assignment and revise it as appropriate to strengthen it. They would then be shown how the writing and revision activities they had done form the beginnings of a portfolio. This design might be further refined, but it is an example of the type of training needed to make at-home learning work for this audience.

Supporting Learners at Home

Additional experiments are also needed in ways to support learners during the period they are using the materials. There are many possibilities ranging from encouraging learners to study with peers whom they see regularly to identifying volunteers in a community who would contact learners on a regular basis, providing encouragement and help as needed. A thorough analysis of the “circle of contacts” that exists for this population could identify agencies, volunteer organizations, and employers who play a role in these people’s lives. Most of these agencies do not see themselves as having a role in the type of education provided by TV411, but they might be enticed to play a role. If the roles can be carefully defined, then research could be done on the effectiveness of those roles in keeping ABE learners committed to the study.

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APPENDIX TV411 Content Analysis

The content analysis below covers the shows and workbooks included in the 8-week Home View and Outreach test of TV411. By mutual agreement of ALMA and ISR, shows 1-4, 7-8, 11, and 13 were an appropriate sampling of the first 13 shows.

This analysis is not intended to be a comprehensive deconstruction of TV411 materials. Rather, it served to identify the major content themes and details in TV411 to guide the development of measurement. The goal of the measurement is to assess understanding, beliefs and attitudes related to the content of the series.

After completing our own independent analysis of the content we referred to an independent content analysis done by the staff at ALMA and concluded that we were in agreement regarding the major themes of the shows.

Mathematics & Finances

This category includes a variety of basic math activities and problems. Segments rely on direct instruction in which readers are introduced to the topics, provided with “how to” instructions, and then asked to complete sample problems or activities. Some segments also provide modeling on uses of math in everyday activities.

V	Segment Type/Title	W	Topic
<i>MATH</i>			
2	Sports Smarts: Percentages	2	Percentages: Calculating; changing decimals into percentages; rounding numbers
5	Laverne: Triplets	5	Real Life Math: word problems using basic math (addition, subtraction, multiplication)
7	Sports Smarts: Averages	7	Averages
		8	Charts and Graphs: functions (chart, bar graph, pie chart)
10	Pop quiz: How many zeros in a million		
11	Pop quiz: How many feet in a mile		
13	Sports Smarts: Percentages & Fractions	13	Fractions
<i>PERSONAL FINANCES</i>			
1	Laverne: Pay Stub	1	Reading a Pay Stub: rounding, estimating percentages
10	Rip Off: Read the Fine Print	10	Advertisements and the Fine Print: determining costs with interest rates

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

10	Smartest Moves: Credit Card Offer	10	Banks and Credit Unions: comparing financial institutions; how to use an ATM
10	Lifelines: Family budget	10	Make a Household Budget
11	Smartest Moves: Leases		

Genres & Literacy Resources

Segments in this category introduce viewers to a variety of texts and genres. Using primarily direct instruction, these segments include definitional and procedural information. Segments explain how to use textual components, familiarize viewers with literacy resources, and model the use of genres.

V	Segment Type/Title	W	Topic
<i>INTRODUCTION TO GENRES & TYPES OF TEXTS: CONTENT STRUCTURE & USE</i>			
1	Q. Man: Thesaurus	1	Brush Up: Creating a personal dictionary & thesaurus
3	Lifelines: Medical Bible	3	Prepare for a Doctor’s Visit: information to compile prior to visit; day of visit activities; creating a medical bible /journal
		4	Read All About It: paging through newspaper. Discusses different sections of a newspaper.
		5	Reference Books: types of and their functions
		7	Dictionary: How to use
7	Q Man: Reading a Map	11	Reading a Road Map : structure, content, location of information, symbols
8	Q. Man: Using a Phone Book		
		10	Advertisements (also in M/F)
11	Agent Know How: Using an Atlas		
	All Book Club segments: different types of literature and literary forms		Segments titled “Good Reading and Good Writing” (poetry, song lyrics, short stories, novel excerpts, student writing, etc.)
	“Words Behind the Music” (Franti, Baca, Snow, Blades)		
<i>LITERACY RESOURCES AND HOW TO ACCESS THEM</i>			
2	Agent Know How: Library Cards		
2	Street Beat: Personal Dictionary		
5	Agent Know How: Ask the Librarian		
		11	Bookstores and Libraries: types of texts available at bookstores; types of materials available at libraries

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

13	Q. Man: Research in the Library		
<i>USE OF TEXTS AND PARTS OF TEXTS</i>			
7	Dictionary Cinema: Looking up a Word		
8	Dictionary Cinema: Looking up a Word	8	Using a table of contents and an index
13	Street Beat: Filling Out Forms	13	Business Letters
13	Laverne: Credit Card Application		
13	Lifelines: Citizenship Application		

Reading Behaviors & Strategies for Engaging Texts

These segments include both modeling and direct instruction in the strategies and behaviors good readers use to gain meaning and enjoyment from texts.

V	Segment Type/Title	W	Topic
3	Reflections: John Zickefoose	3	Understanding Hard Words: How to use parts of word (prefix, suffix, root) and context to figure out a word
4	Q. Man: Ambiguity	4	Develop a Reading Routine: highlighting and note-taking; comprehension questions
4	Milestones: Sheila Greene	4	Meet Sheila Greene
4	Book Club: <i>Like Water for Chocolate</i>		
4	Reflections: Kathy Bates		
5	Book Club: <i>I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings</i>	5	<i>I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings</i> : interest and comprehension questions, vocabulary
5	Reflections: Enrique Ramirez	5	Choose a “Good Read”: Tips for determining whether a text will be of interest
11	Q. Man: Taking a Test	8	Take a Test : get info; practice; time; study and test-taking tips; types of tests and test formats
10	Book Club: <i>Working</i>		

Writing Behaviors & Strategies for Creating Texts

Segments in this content area focus on exposing learners to a variety of genres and purposes for writing. Included in this area are segments exploring the writing process and reasons for writing. Both modeling and direct instruction are employed.

V	Segment Type/Title	W	Topic
1	Words Behind the Music: Michael Franti	1	Words Behind the Music: Michael Franti
2	Write Now: Getting Started with Writing	2	Writing First Drafts: strategies for beginning to compose including freewriting, topic lists, diagramming, possible opening sentences
		2	Making an Editing Checklist: components of— punctuation, spelling, grammar
3	Words Behind the Music. P. Snow	3	Meet Phoebe Snow
4	Write Now: Images and Details		
7	All Write: Student Writers	7	Stories by Student Learners
8	Write Now: Letters and Memories		
11	Words Behind the Music: R. Blades		
		13	Making Revisions: Adding to writing; editing; substituting words or phrases; changing the order; starting over; combining
		13	Proofreading
		13	Summarizing

Writing as Social, Business, or Personal Communication

This content area includes segments on using writing for personal or social reasons as well as for business purposes. Both modeling and direct instruction are used in these segments.

V	Segment Type/Title	W	Topic
1	Personal Portfolio: Job Search/Dossiers		
3	Personal Portfolio: Data Sheet		
4	Street Beats: Journal	7	Keeping a Journal : reflecting on your life, solving a problem, making a decision, setting a goal
		4	Writing Personal Letters; tone, content, structure
		5	Resume: description of components
7	All Write: Student Writers	7	Stories by Student Writers
8	Personal Portfolio: Cover Letters		
		13	Three Types of Business Letters: complaint, cover, and information

Mechanics of Writing

This content area includes “how to” and listing activities designed to help learners improve their spelling and punctuation, understand word origins and types, and expand their vocabulary.

V	Segment Type/Title	W	Topic
		1	Improve Your Spelling: ways to practice spelling
		1	Making a Personal Dictionary and Thesaurus
2	Q. Man: Apostrophes	2	Apostrophes : how to use
2	Street Beat: Personal Dictionary		
2	Pop Quiz: Antonyms		
3	Q. Man: Prefixes		
3	Word Up: Compound Words & Phrases		
4	Word Up: Transitions	4	Transitions : Definitions of and examples
5	Q. Man: Suffixes		
		7	Get the Connotations
		8	Where Do the Periods Go?
10	Q. Man: Pronouns and Verbs	10	Words that Are Often misspelled: List of words
		11	Subject-Verb Agreement: What Is It?
13	Word Up: Metaphors and Similes	13	Summarizing

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

Life Skills

This content area covers a variety of personal topics from medical issues to finances and family development. Segments focus on real-life issues and activities that are likely relevant to adult learners.

V	Segment Type/Title	W	Topic
<i>FAMILY AND SELF DEVELOPMENT</i>			
1	Personal Portfolio Data Sheet: compiling a dossier	1	Learn about Yourself: personal descriptors, accomplishments, areas for improvement, challenges, “do overs,” decision making (lists
2	Agent Know How: Library Card		
3	Personal Portfolio: Data Sheet: skills, interests inventory development	3	Personal Data Form: educational record; skills, interests and hobbies
		3	What’s Your Learning Style?: checklist to uncover which learning style(s) suit an individual
		11	Create a Family Album: tips for making an album; journal entries for album
		11	Keeping the peace: getting along w/children; list of 10 things to handle arguments; role playing
13	Lifelines: Citizenship Application		
<i>MEDICAL/HEALTH</i>			
3	Lifelines: Medical Bible	3	Prepare for a Doctor’s Visit: information to write down before visit; day of visit activities; creating a medical bible /journal
5	Agent Know How: Ask the Librarian		
5	Lifelines: Baby on the Way		
8	Lifelines: Diabetes		
8	Laverne: Food Labels	8	Food Labels
<i>FINANCE</i>			
1	Laverne: Pay Stub	1	Reading a Pay Stub and estimating percentages
10	Read the Fine Print (asterisks)	10	Advertisements and the Fine Print: figuring out costs w/interest rates. Is it really a bargain?
10	Lifelines: Family Budget	10	Make a Household Budget: steps
10	Smartest Moves: Credit Card Offer		
10	Street Beat: Saving Money	10	Banks and Credit Unions: comparing financial institutions; how to use an ATM
11	Smartest Moves: Leases		
13	Laverne: Credit Card		

TV411 Home Outreach Pilot Study

	Applications		
<i>JOB</i>			
1	Personal Portfolio: Job Search Dossier		
		5	Super Models: Resumes

Reading & Learning New Words

These segments introduce new vocabulary and ways of increasing vocabulary through learning about compound words, prefixes, synonyms, etc. Segments rely primarily on direct instruction.

V	Segment Type/Title	W	Topic
1	Word Up: Antonyms		
2	Pop Quiz: Antonyms		
3	Word Up: Compound Words and Phrases	3	Understanding hard words: prefixes, suffixes, context
3	Q. Man: Prefixes		
5	Q. Man: Suffixes		
		7	Get the Connotation: definition of
		10	Words that Are Often Misspelled
12	Dictionary Cinema: Multiple Meanings		
	All Buzz Words		

Modeling of Literacy Behaviors, Strategies, & Successes

These segments provide models of adults successfully employing a range of literacy behaviors. These segments provide both specific skills and motivation for the adult learner.

V	Segment Type/Title	W	Topic
1	Milestones: Dallas Farmer	1	People: Dallas Farmer
2	Milestones: Jimmy S. Baca	2	People: Jimmy Baca: poet
4	Milestones: Sheila Greene		People: Sheila Greene: travel agent
		5	People: Maya Angelou: writer
7	Milestones: Esperanza Corez	7	People: Esperanza Cortez: artist
7	All Write: Student Writers	7	Students: All Write
11	Milestones: Hilda Armendariz	11	People: Hilda Armendariz: parent
13	Milestones: Resonja Willoughby	13	People: Resonja Willoughby