

Adult Basic Education Assessment of Digital Writing Skills

**ELINET Symposium on Lifelong Development of Literacy
Skills**
Slovenia, July 2026

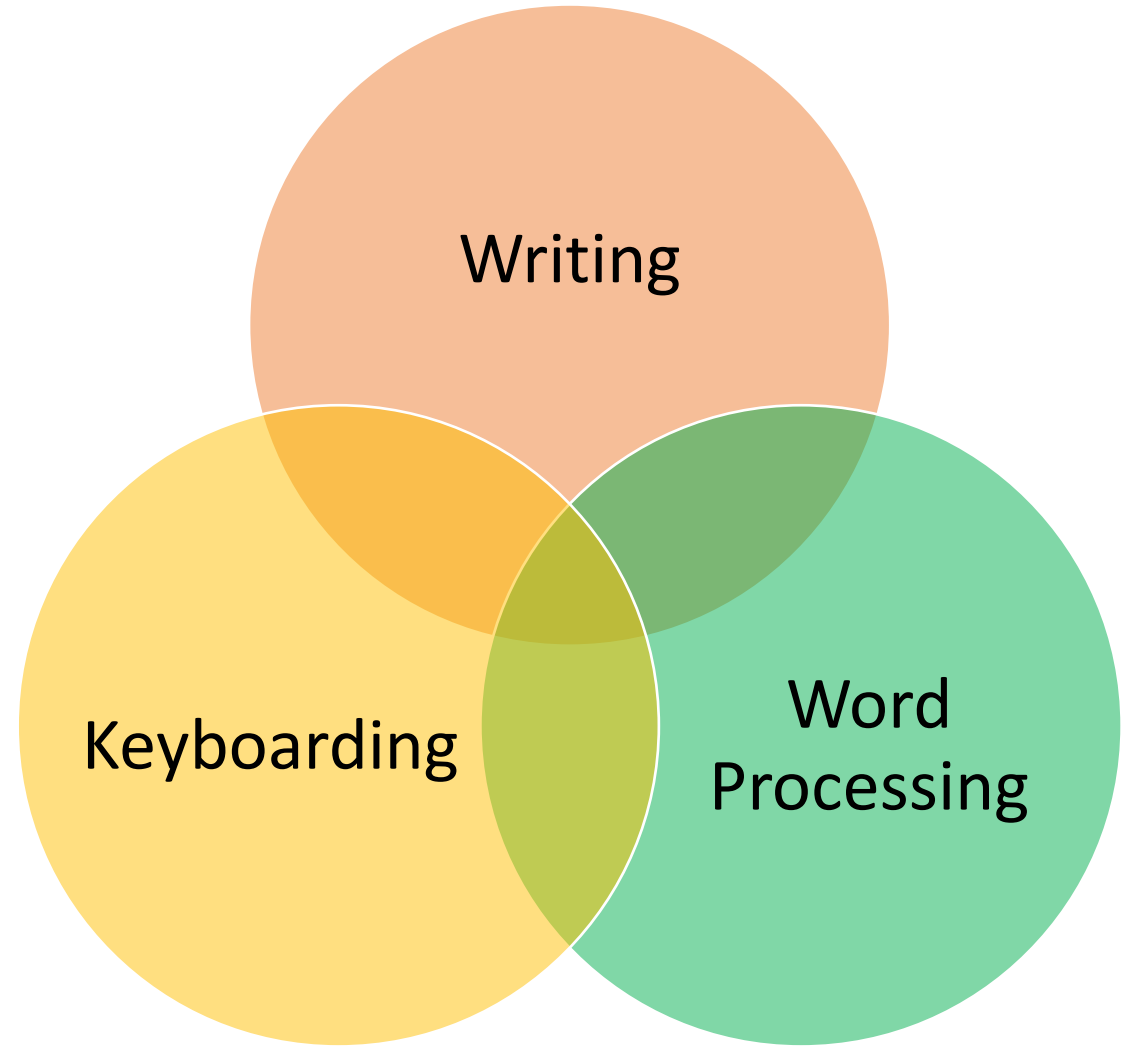
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This research project is supported by the Institute of
Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education,
through Grant R305N210030 to Georgia State University.
The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do
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W-ASE

Digital Writing Skills



Digital Writing Assessment

**86 ABE Students:
Southeastern United States**

**Gender
62% Female**

**Educational functional
levels:
2-6 (TABE reading scores)**

**Age Range
16-78 years
(mean age = 34; SD=16.75)**

**Median Ed Attainment
10.64**

**Race/ethnicity:
Black 43%
Hispanic/Latinx 19%
White 19%
Asian 11%
Mix/Other 8%**

Word Processing Skills



Values

76% of participants reported that learning to use a word processor was very important.

Goals

**Further education
Useful in personal life
Help get a promotion or a different job
Help at current job**

Digital Writing in Classes

**60% used a
computer to write
for classes.**

**75% wrote on a
computer less
than once a
week**

**48% Use
Microsoft Word
11% Use Google
Docs**

48% write essays

**48% Use computers
both in and out of
class for schooling.**

Digital Writing Outside of Classes

**81% have used a computer
to write in daily life.**

Device Use:

Smartphone 66%
Laptop 59%
Desktop 22%
Tablet 17%

Types of Writing:

Email 50%
Texting 33%
Personal 29%
Notes App/Lists 21%

Other Types of Writing:

Social Media 20%
Work-related Docs 17%
Resume 14%

Keyboarding Skills Test

It can sometimes feel as if we're always getting information about how we should eat. Eating well is easier to do than you may think. In fact, it can be easy and fun. It involves eating different types of foods. Here are some tips to eat better and feel better. First, try to eat different types of vegetables and fruits. Have apples or carrots around to snack on instead of potato chips or sweets. Second, eat less meat and more seafood, beans, eggs, and nuts. Third, do not eat a lot of foods that are high in sugar. It's all right to enjoy your favorite foods even if they are not very healthy. The key is eating them only once in a while. Now is a perfect time to learn simple ways to help your family eat well.

Keyboarding Skills

Typing Measure	Beginner (U.S. adult)	Expert (U.S. adult)	Current Study
Speed Words Per Minute (Mean)	45 WPM	65 WPM	22 WPM (<i>SD</i> = 10.59)
Accuracy	90%	100%	91% (<i>SD</i> = 12.61)

Typing Test Observation Notes

How many fingers used?

All 10	22%
A few fingers on each hand	58%
Index Fingers Only	20%

Eye Gaze

Mostly looks at fingers	14%
Split attention	80%
Mostly looks at screen	8%

Word Processing Skills

95% recognized the Word icon and opened the application.

94% could start a new document.

87% could type the word “introduction” on the first line and their participant number on the second line.

70% could name and save the document in the document folder.

Formatting Skills

70% could center their title.

65% could change the font style/size.

53% could indent their paragraph.

40% could change the line spacing of their paragraph.

Tips for Digital Writing in Adult Education Classes

Equipment and internet needs: computers, mice, headphones.

Skills: Measure your students' skills to plan instruction.

Accessibility: You can enlarge texts, add audio supports, let students dictate their writing, etc.

Practice the steps on how to do things like making documents, so that you can model them for your students.

Share your screen so you can model for your students while they try to follow the steps.

Plan for repetition and to provide technical support.

Challenges:
Programs often
lack
technological
infrastructure

Computers for teacher and
students

Internet access

Software

Professional development on
teaching digital skills

Increase Digital Equity for your constituents through Northstar Digital Literacy!

Northstar is a program of



Northstar Digital Literacy gives subscribing organizations the ability to increase access to digital equity by providing constituents with tools to master the digital skills needed to work, learn, and participate fully in daily life.



Assessments



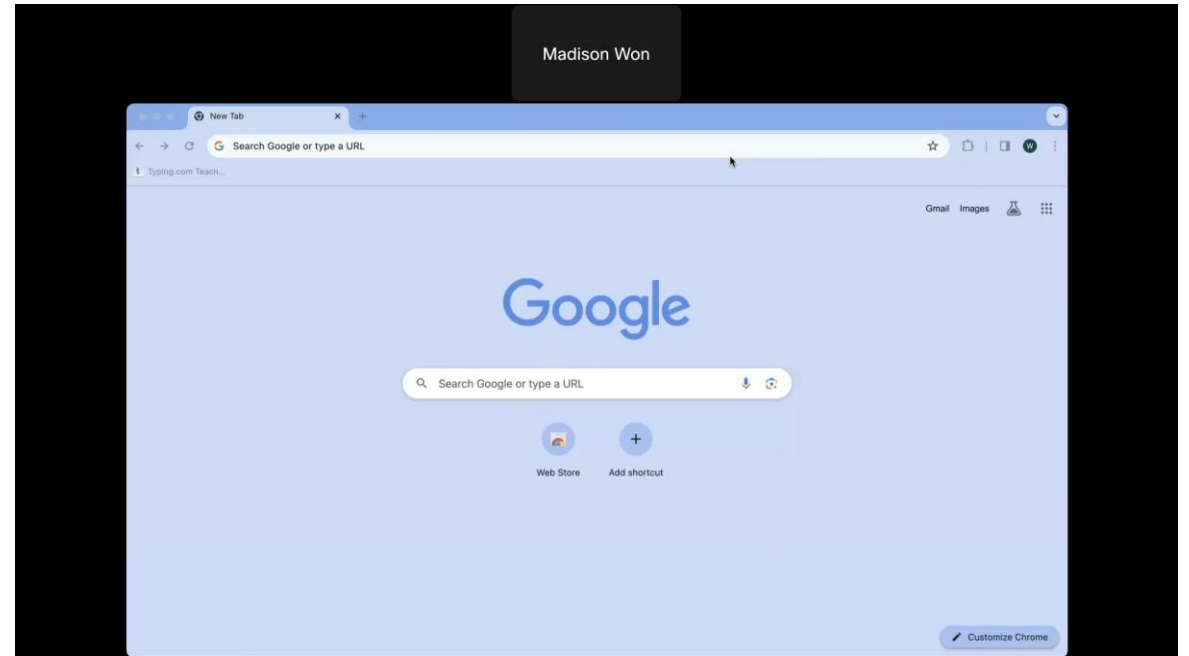
Education

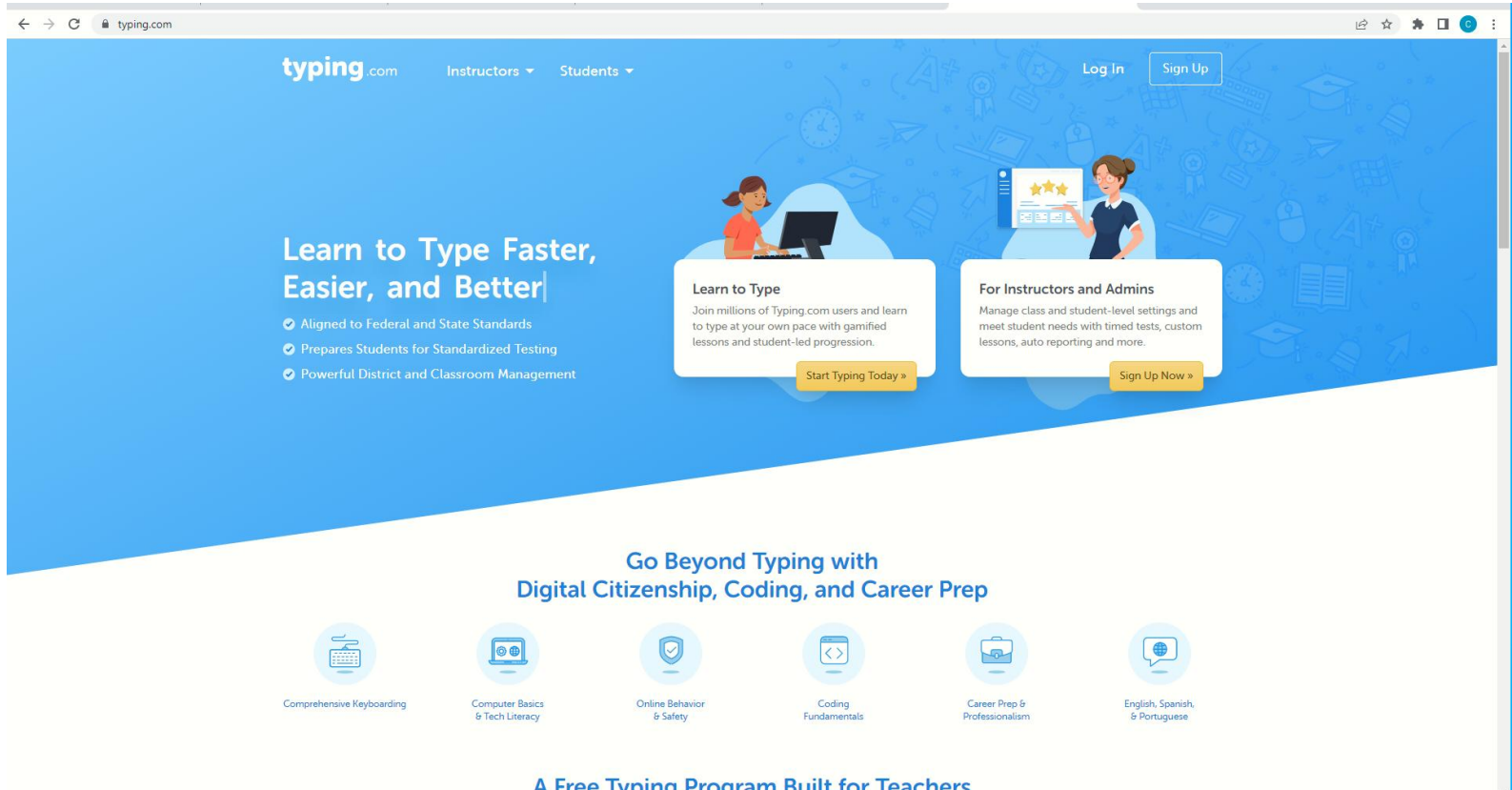


Reports

Measuring Digital Literacy

Google Docs





Typing.com

W-ASE Website @

<https://sites.gsu.edu/w-ase/>



Thank you for your time.

Questions?

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