

BEGINNING A LITERACY MISSIONS MINISTRY

This is an overview of the basic tasks involved in organizing a literacy missions ministry.

1. Enlist prayer support.

Prayer is vital. Small groups of concerned individuals should meet to pray for teachers and other leaders to work in the ministry, for students, and for the total ministry.

2. Determine which literacy missions ministry you need.

There are three types of literacy missions ministries.

- Adult Reading and Writing (ARW) for English-speaking, low-level readers or nonreaders.
- Conversational English (CE) providing English-as-a-second-language (ESL) classes for non-English-speaking people.
- Tutoring Children and Youth (TCY) helping school-age children and youth with their schoolwork.

See “Help, I’m Drowning in a Sea of Words!” for further details.

3. Obtain church or associational approval.

Meet with appropriate church or associational staff. Determine which church or associational organization the literacy ministry will relate to (Missions Development Council, Woman’s Missionary Union®, Brotherhood, education ministry, etc.) Get a vote of approval from the church or association. This helps the church or association view the ministry as part of its work.

4. Select a literacy missions program director or literacy missions committee.

This person or committee organizes and directs the ministry and enlists teachers and students. Guidelines for organization are discussed in basic training workshops. Selecting leaders before the basic training workshop generally assures follow-through after training.

5. Secure funding.

Funding will be needed for:

- Teacher training—A basic workshop to train new teachers and a program of continuing education events are essential. These expenses would include such things as travel, food, housing, and honorarium for workshop leaders, the initial cost of materials for a basic workshop (volunteers usually purchase their own materials, which have been preordered by the sponsoring church or association), nursery workers, refreshments, and so on.
- Classroom materials—Students generally pay for their own materials, which are preordered by the sponsoring church or association. Teachers usually purchase their own basic materials. However, a library of supplementary materials and resources for the ministry should be developed.
- Advertising—Costs for promoting the ministry and enlisting students could include flyers, posters, business cards, brochures, and any other printing.
- Bibles—Most ministries like to present a Bible or Scripture portions to students.
- Other—Other possible expenses may include the following for students: pencils, paper, and other materials, refreshments, and transportation.

6. Train teachers.

A basic workshop to train teachers is essential. There is a separate basic workshop for each type of ministry—Adult Reading and Writing, Conversational English, and Tutoring Children and Youth. The ARW and CE basic workshops require 16 hours of classroom instruction. The TCY basic workshop requires 14 hours.

The basic literacy missions workshop will equip you to:

- Organize an ARW, CE, or TCY ministry in your church or association
- Locate and place students
- Understand students’ needs and perspectives

- Use language teaching techniques
- Use teaching materials and resources
- Create witnessing opportunities
- Witness to your students
- Renew your commitment to God

For the names of NAMB trained and certified workshop leaders, contact your associational church and community ministries director or the person responsible for church and community ministries in your state convention. Obtain a copy of “How to Prepare for a Literacy Missions Workshop.” This provides detailed instructions on setting up the workshop.

**For more information about Literacy Missions Ministry,
call (770) 410-6360 or visit us at our Web site: www.namb.net/ccm**