

Defining the Topic Focus Areas



The Skills That Matter are the foundational skills needed for an adult learner to function effectively within the workforce and civic and community life. Here are the main focus areas.

Civics Education Skills
Civics education skills means “achiev[ing] competency in the English language and acquir[ing] the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States.... [S]ervices [helping adults to gain these skills] shall include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, and may include workforce training” (WIOA, Pub. L. 113-128, July 2014).
Digital Literacy Skills
Digital literacy skills means “the skills associated with using technology to enable users to find, evaluate, organize, create, and communicate information; and developing digital citizenship and the responsible use of technology” (Museum and Library Services Act of 2010, Pub. L. 111-340, 22 Dec. 2010).
Financial Literacy Skills
Financial literacy skills means the confidence, knowledge, and skills needed to make financial decisions that promote financial self-sufficiency, stability, and well-being. These skills include the ability to effectively locate, evaluate, and use information, resources, and services and to make informed decisions about financial obligations, budgeting, credit, debt, and planning for the future.
Health Literacy Skills
Health literacy skills means the knowledge, skills, and ability to ask relevant questions to obtain and apply information, evaluate information for credibility and quality, communicate effectively, and make critical decisions to promote one’s own health and well-being and that of one’s family and community.
Workforce Preparation Skills
Workforce preparation skills means the knowledge, skills, and competencies that, when developed and demonstrated, prepare individuals to obtain or retain employment or to advance in the workforce. These skills include interpersonal and communication abilities such as teamwork, collaboration, and customer service; and workplace competencies including demonstrated professionalism, critical thinking, and systems thinking within their specific work setting.