

# Session 2: Theorists & Causes and Impacts of Unmet Literacy Needs

## Objectives of Session

Having completed this session, participants will have:

* Further explored theory relevant to adult literacy education
* Reflected on the impact of unmet needs on learning
* A heightened awareness of the causes and impacts of literacy difficulties

## Session Content

* Reflection on extension activity
* Exploration of theorists’ approaches to learning
* Exploration of an approach to learner-centred facilitation
* Impacts of unmet literacy needs on society and the individual
* Causes of unmet literacy needs

## Resources for this session

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| --- |
| * Hand-out 2.1 * Hand-out 2.2 * Hand-out 2.3 * Powerpoint * Session plan * Zoom and internet access |
|  |

## Slide 1:

***2 minutes***​

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Welcome participants back. ​

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Introduce session 2. In this session we will be looking at three more theories relating to adult education and the impacts and causes of unmet literacy needs.​

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Before delving into this week's content, we will first take some time to share our experiences and reflections from last week's extension activity.​

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## Slide 2: Menti – Extension Activity

***3 minutes***​

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Introduce the Menti, which should take the format of a ¨Scales¨ Menti, with the question: **"Slide the bars across on each line to show how stressful you found the task"**, and statements **(1) Physical task, (2) Emotional/stress level, (3) Asking for assistance**.​

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Share the Mentimeter.com presentation on screen so that all participants can: (1) see the menti code to enter, and (2) see the scales alter as participants submit their input.​

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Use the scale to rate how stressful you found the task under 3 headings:​

1. Physical​
2. Emotional​
3. Asking for assistance​

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Take a little time to observe the overall feelings of the group as submitted. The next slide will allow more time for everyone to discuss their experiences. ​

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## Slide 3: Extension Activity

***10 minutes***​

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Give participants the opportunity to discuss and share their experience of the extension activity. What approach did they take to the activity? Did they practice it during the work day or during leisure and family time?​

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Run through some of the questions on the slide as prompts to discussion. There won't be time to hear from everyone, but there should be a good opportunity to get a sense of shared or divergent experiences between participants. ​

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Allow space for participants to reflect and share without too much interruption from the facilitators.​

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## Slide 4: Overview of session

***2 minutes***​

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In this session, we will explore three more theories relevant to adult literacy education. We will also be delving into the impacts and causes of unmet literacy needs for individuals and their wider communities.​

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We will also begin to reflect on and discuss real-life experiences where we have been aware of individuals with unmet literacy needs.​

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## Slide 5:

***3 minutes***​

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Abraham Maslow is an American psychologist widely known for his Theory of Motivation, which he published in the 1940s. This theory introduces us to the very recognisable pyramid of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.​

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There are five needs that Maslow establishes as being required for a fully-rounded and healthy personality:​

1. Physiological​
2. Safety​
3. Love​
4. Esteem​
5. Self-actualisation​

## Slide 6: Breakout

***30 minutes***​

***3 minute Intro***​

***12 minutes in Breakout Room***​

***3 minutes / group x max 5 groups***​

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Introduce the Breakout Room.​

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**Task:**​

Consider someone you have encountered whose learning was impacted by unmet needs somewhere on this hierarchy. Discuss the impact it had on the person.​

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Group 3 or 4 participants to each room. It is useful to group participants differently for each break-out room to allow everyone the opportunity to get to know each other. Remind participants not to identify any individuals in their discussions. Groups should identify one person to takes notes and feedback from the task at the end.​

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Give 10 minutes for discussion, with 2 minutes countdown time for the breakout rooms. ​

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When the breakout rooms close, give 3 minutes to each group to share their feedback and discuss new learning. ​

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## Slide 7: Impact of Unmet Literacy Needs on the Learner

***3 minutes***​

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Following on from the Breakout Room, there should be plenty of real-life examples from participants of where impacts of unmet needs affected their learners. Take a few minutes to outline any items that may usefully be included. ​

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It is important to note that, in Adult Literacy Services, it may be sufficient for the learner to be in attendance. Learning may be secondary. The person may have to overcome other unmet needs, or begin to feel secure in the learning setting before addressing their literacy needs.​

Slide 8:

# Slide 8 : 5 minute break

## Slide 9: Paulo Freire

***5 minutes***​

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Paolo Freire was a Brazilian educator and philosopher. His book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* was first published in the late 1960s.​

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For Freire, adult education is always about raising consciousness, first transforming thinking, and then moving to action. This happens through dialogue between the teacher and the student, who are in an equal relationship with each other. His theory proposes that education should allow the oppressed to regain their sense of humanity and retaliates against the dehumanisation of people through systems of injustice, exploitation and oppression. ​

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\* Ref. Handout​

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## Slide 10: Paulo Freire

***3 minutes***​

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Freire rejects the "Banking" model of education, where the student is treated as an empty vessel that knowledge is simply poured into. This model is undemocratic and there is a power imbalance in favour of the teacher. The student is objectified and dehumanised.​

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\* Ref. Handout​

## Slide 11: Paulo Freire

***10 minutes***​

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Play this five minute video outlining Freire's Theory of Critical Pedagogy. It also explores Freire's early life, which greatly influenced his philosophy and practice.​

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Take time to discuss aspects of the video. ​

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The ethos and foundations from which adult literacy practitioners work with students is always grounded in the equal and mutually respectful relationship between the teacher and the student, as outlined in the video. ​

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Do any aspects of this approach resonate with participants, either from their own learning or in their teaching practice and delivery?​

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\* Ref. Handout​

## Slide 12: Discussion point

***8 minutes***​

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In discussing the differences between a teacher and a facilitator, encourage participants to share ideas and experiences they have had of good facilitation, as opposed to teaching.​

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The session facilitators should add any comments that may be important for inclusion and noting. ​

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Ideas for good facilitation may include:​

* Creates a safe space with healthy boundaries​
* Encourages students to open up and express themselves​
* Asks open questions and encourages shared learning from the group​
* Does not have all the answers​
* Patient​
* Positive​
* Encouraging​
* Keeps the aims of the exercise in sight​

## Slide 13: Carl Rogers

***5 minutes***​

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Carl Rogers was an American psychologist. He developed the "person-centred approach" that is widely used in areas such as psychotherapy and education.​

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It was Rogers' thesis that a person cannot teach another person directly, but can only facilitate another's learning.  He recognised that it can be difficult to take on board learning that will require us to change our worldview. He notes that gently encouraging open-mindedness helps the student to engage in this type of learning.​\* Ref. Handout​

## Slide 14:

***5 minutes***​

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Introduce the Menti, which should take the format of an ¨Word Cloud¨ Menti with the question **"Consider the impact of unmet literacy needs on the individual. What words come to mind?"**​

​

Share the Mentimeter.com presentation on screen so that all participants can: (1) see the menti code to enter, and (2) see other participants' submissions.​

​

Give participants the opportunity to talk about their ideas and to comment on similar or contrasting observations that have come up. Facilitators should add any comments that may be important for inclusion and noting. ​

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## Slide 15:

***5 minutes***​

​

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## Slide 16:

***3 minutes***​

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This slide looks at various ways in which unmet literacy needs impact on the individual, both practically, and on a social and emotional level. ​

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Participants may have come up with other impacts during the Menti discussion. ​

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Allow space for questions or observations.​

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## Slide 17:

***3 minutes***​

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This slide looks at various ways in which unmet literacy needs of the individual impact on their family, community, and wider society.​

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Participants may have come up with other impacts during the Menti discussion. ​

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Allow space for questions or observations.​

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## Slide 18:

***5 minutes***​

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There are such a broad and varied range of reasons why a person may have unmet literacy needs. The reasons outlined on this slide are just a few suggestions.​

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It is worth keeping in mind that learners often blame themselves or think that there is something wrong with them, even when they have missed out on their education for very important reasons, for example, to look after younger family members or to start working to bring money into the home. ​

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It is also important to note that some learners returning to education after a gap can put themselves under huge pressure to make up for lost time. This is particularly true of people in recovery from addiction. It is important to encourage these types of students to take their time and to put achievable goals in place, to ensure they start their learning journey with the best chance for success.​

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Given the increasing requirement for digital literacy, it is foreseeable that access to digital resources and skills within the home will become an emerging cause for unmet literacy needs in coming years.​

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## Slide 19:

***6 minutes***​

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By way of recap and in preparation for introducing the extension activity, spend a few minutes reviewing the six theorists covered in sessions 1 and 2. ​

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While there are elements of cross-over between the theorists discussed, note how the Knowles, Mezirow, and Rogers all speak to the internal process of learning for the individual, while Maslow, Lave & Wenger, and Freire look to the shared learning that takes place amongst social groups. All hold importance in informing our practice as adult education practitioners.  ​

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## Slide 20:

***4 minutes***​

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Introduce the Extension Activity to be practiced between now and the next session.​

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**Task:**​

Consider the theorists discussed in sessions 1 and 2. Take some time during the week to reflect on:​

* Any theories discussed that inform your current practice​
* How you might newly incorporate what you have learnt into your future practice​

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Remind participants to set aside some time for this practice. Suggest that participants may like to take some notes for sharing on our next session.​

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