

Table of Contents

	Page
Acknowledgements	3
Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations	4
Section 1: Introduction and Overview	13
1.1 The Read Write Now project: background and context	13
1.2 Programme design, development and production	13
1.3 Aims and target group	14
1.4 Programme objectives and content	16
1.5 Format of TV programmes	16
1.6 Production and format of learner workbook	18
1.7 Transmission schedule	18
1.8 Promotion strategy	18
1.9 Freephone helpline	19
1.10 Evaluation strategy	19
Section 2: The Read Write Now Audience	21
2.1 Overview of audience	21
2.2 Television ratings for Read Write Now	21
2.3 Independent learners	23
2.4 Participants from adult literacy schemes and other groups	28
Section 3: The Impact of Read Write Now	37
3.1 Elements which contribute to learning	37
3.2 Learners' goals	37
3.3 Initial assessment strategy: Method	38
3.4 Initial assessment strategy: Purpose	38
3.5 What people wanted to get out of Read Write Now	39
3.6 What people actually got out of Read Write Now	44
3.7 Non-respondents and others	53
3.8 Participants' views of key aspects of the programmes	58
3.9 Did people meet their goals?	73
3.10 Future Developments	76

	Page
Appendices	79
1. List of learning objectives	80
2. Learner's Evaluation questionnaire	81
3. Initial evaluation form	88
4. Goal-setting checklist	90
5. Interview Schedule	92

Titles of Charts, Graphs and Tables

Figure 1	Ratings for Read Write Now	22
Figure 2	How people heard about Read Write Now	23
Figure 3	Packs requested by independent learners	24
Figure 4	Sex of independent learners	25
Figure 5	Age profile of independent learners	25
Figure 6	Educational history/qualifications of independent learners	26
Figure 7	Age left school	26
Figure 8	Employment status	27
Figure 9	Literacy scheme referrals	27
Figure 10	Summary of packs distributed	28
Figure 11	Age profile of literacy group participants	30
Figure 12	Age left school	31
Figure 13	Educational qualifications	31
Figure 14	Group type	32
Figure 15	Length of time with Adult Literacy Scheme	33
Figure 16	Regional location of learners	33
Figure 17	Number of programmes watched	35
Figure 18	Viewing format and time	35
Figure 19	Reading and writing skills which people learned from the programmes	45
Figure 20	Application of new reading and writing skills in daily life	48
Figure 21	Other benefits not already mentioned	49
Figure 22	Reasons for not following RWN 2	56
Figure 23	Did people meet their goals?	73
Table 1	Ratings for Read Write Now	22
Table 2	How people heard about Read Write Now	34
Table 3	Reading goals	41
Table 4	Writing goals	42
Table 5	Spelling goals	43
Table 6	Participants' ratings for the learner's story	51
Table 7	Participants' ratings for pace and level	54
Table 8	Viewer ratings and packs sent out, RWN 1 and RWN 2	55
Table 9	Reasons for not following RWN 2	57
Table 10	Participants' ratings of the drama	58
Table 11	Participants' ratings for presentation and structure	64
Table 12	Participants' ratings of the learner workbook	65
Table 13	Summary of callers to helpline	67
Table 14	Summary of comments to helpline	69

Acknowledgements

Many people gave their time and energy to help with this evaluation. I want to thank Helen Ryan of the National Adult Literacy Agency who supported the process every step of the way. The telephone tutors were key people in the evaluation team, maintaining the database and carrying out interviews. Other NALA staff helped with assessments and administration. Adult literacy organisers and tutors around the country returned questionnaires, organised contacts and facilitated meetings with learners. Their work is much appreciated.

Particular thanks are due to Bernie Grummell who processed and analysed the questionnaires, supplied the statistics and gave valuable advice. She also helped to write the participant profile in Section 2.4.

Inez Bailey helped with the background and the wider context.

Most important of all, are the learners who volunteered to participate in this evaluation and were so generous with their time and insights.

Liz McSkeane

July 2002

Copyright © 2002 National Adult Literacy Agency

ISBN 1-871737-21-4

Published by: National Adult Literacy Agency
76 Lower Gardiner Street
Dublin 1
Telephone: 01 – 8554332
Fax: 01 – 8555475
Webpage: www.nala.ie
E-mail: literacy@nala.ie

Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Description of Read Write Now series 2

Read Write Now series 2 consists of 12 half-hour TV programmes, which aim to provide a learning resource for people who want to improve their reading and writing, in the privacy of their own home. It is part of the Literacy through the Airwaves initiative which is funded by the Department of Education and Science, supported by Radio Telefis Eireann and co-ordinated by the National Adult Literacy Agency. The twelve programmes were broadcast three times each week from September to December, 2001. This is the second such TV series in the Literacy through the Airwaves project: the first was produced and transmitted in the autumn of 2000.

Each TV programme consists of three main elements which provide a vehicle for the learning points in reading, writing and spelling: (i) The learner's story: a profile of a former adult literacy student. (ii) Drama: In every programme, a mini-drama shows characters engaging in a light-hearted way with the demands of daily life in ordinary situations such as shopping, cooking and gardening. (iii) Learning points in reading, writing and spelling are built into each week's programme and feature in the workbook.

The format for Read Write Now was developed in order to provide a holistic approach to the teaching of reading and writing.

Production of a learner workbook was commissioned and monitored by NALA. This study-pack provided the focus for the development of the series, as its twelve sections cover all of the programme objectives using the twelve programme topics as a vehicle for delivery.

In addition to the reading and writing learning points, basic information about each topic is also covered. This strategy of weaving topic content together with literacy work reinforces the integration of reading and writing into real-life contexts.

2. Participants in Read Write Now

For the purpose of this evaluation, it may be useful to think of two types of viewers of Read Write Now: people who watched the programmes out of general interest; and those who followed the series in a more purposeful way, in order to work on their reading and writing. The second of these groups includes independent learners, who were following the series without the support of a literacy scheme or other group and for whom Read Write Now was the only structured resource available; and also, those learners who had already made contact with the existing literacy services and for whom Read Write Now was one resource among several.

The level of participation of these conscious learners can be estimated from the number of learner study packs which were sent out: 5,672 were sent to independent learners, 7,100 to 126 adult literacy groups and 7,279 to 595 other groups.

Almost 40% of respondents from schemes and groups were under 18 years old. This is well over three times the rate in the same age category of those independent learners who gave this information. This can be accounted for by the large proportion of schools that made use

of the materials. Although schools were not part of the target group for the series, these programmes and workbook were nevertheless perceived as a useful resource and were widely used by teachers in primary and post-primary schools.

One third of the respondents were learning within the structured, formal educational system, i.e. 37% in schools, 29% in adult literacy schemes and the others were in a variety of groups; 10% were with FÁS, 8% were in Travellers' groups, 6% were in different community or adult education groups, and a further 9% were in disability and health-orientated groups.

Read Write Now participants were located throughout the country. A large proportion, 20%, were living in Dublin. A further 12% were in the South Eastern region with 5% in the Midlands East area, 28% resident in the South West region of Cork and Kerry, and 22% in the Shannon area. Just 5% lived in the Ireland west area, with the remaining 8% located in the North/North West region. Very few people gave information about the age at which they left school, but of those who did, 62% had left before the age of 15 and therefore gained no qualifications.

Just under 3% of the independent learners said that they had had contact with an adult literacy scheme. Of the rest, when asked if they would like to be referred on to a literacy scheme only 8.8% agreed to this. This confirms that there is indeed a cohort of people who need help with their reading and writing, who are in principle willing to do something about it but who are not yet ready – and may never want – to leave the privacy of their own homes to do so.

Almost a quarter of the questionnaire respondents said that they did not actually watch the programmes at all, preferring to use only the workbook.

Just under two thirds of the respondents who watched the Read Write Now 2 series saw it on television and the rest watched it on video. A large proportion of these people, 41%, watched the programmes during the Wednesday time slot.



3. Ratings


The audience ratings for Read Write Now were high and were generally sustained throughout the series. Programme 1 was viewed by a total of 273,676 people, with by far the largest audience on Wednesday evening at 7.30 pm, which was almost 6% of the population and over 22% of the viewing public; and Wednesday's audience for Programme 6 attracted over 18% of the viewing public. According to the OECD International Adult Literacy Survey, one in four, or about 500,000 Irish adults “at best, can perform only relatively modest literacy tasks;” **An educational programme which can reach over 200,000 people in one night, is an important resource.**

The provision of three weekly slots, one of them a peak viewing time, contributed greatly to people's access to the programmes. The success of future series will be influenced by the availability of mainstream programme time.



4. Promotion

Most people heard about the series from either TV or radio promotions. The broadcast media, then, offer the most effective way of informing potential learners about the series



This is especially important for those who have not yet had any contact with the literacy services. More than half of the independent learners made contact in the weeks immediately before and then during, the first third of the series. This, then, is the key stage for intensive promotion and advertising. This should be kept in mind when promotional strategies are being developed for similar initiatives in the future. **It would be advisable to start devising a long-term promotion strategy, which involves all of the partners in the Literacy through the Airwaves project, as soon as confirmation of another series is secured.**


5. Learners' Goals

Many goals were work-related or otherwise functional. However, a lot of people wanted to have access to the enjoyment and satisfaction of reading for leisure and of writing creatively. Many people said that what they wanted most of all to achieve in improving their reading and writing, was to feel better about themselves. They wanted to improve in confidence and patience, gain courage to talk about the problem, become more independent and be able to join in with conversations and activities.

For some people the problem is not just one of skills but also arises from the stress which reading and writing provoke in certain situations. This means that some people's learning needs are not only technical but also – and for some people, perhaps even primarily - affective and personal.

In relation to specific literacy skills, the most important reading goal identified was reading for information, found both in commonly-used documents and in reference sources. More than half of all respondents identified information-seeking in these two contexts, as a priority for their learning. The highest priority in writing was form-filling. This was also the area where most people reported difficulty or at least, a need for revision.

The single most frequently-mentioned learning goal was spelling key words, which was identified by almost two thirds of respondents (63.8%) as a learning goal. Most people (75.6%) said that they had some degree of difficulty in this area.



It can be difficult for new learners to identify realistic learning goals which are properly connected to their life aspirations. **Future initiatives should build in a support structure, either as part of the programmes or in the form of tutorial support, to help people with this.**

6. Learning achieved

Of those 260 questionnaire respondents who watched the TV programmes, 60.8% commented positively on the impact of the series on their learning. The gains they reported fell into three categories: improvements in reading and writing; things which they were able to do in daily life which they had not done before or which had been difficult for them; and personal benefits which released their potential to improve aspects of their reading and writing.

In relation to reading, people achieved the following: an improved overall consciousness of reading in the environment; specific reading strategies; new sight vocabulary.

In relation to writing and spelling, respondents reported having gained: a greater inclination

to write; improved spelling; a knowledge of phonics; and strategies for handling unknown words.

Just under 62% of the questionnaire respondents said that they could identify new things that they had done in daily life, since starting to follow Read Write Now 2.

A large proportion of respondents, both independent learners and viewers from adult literacy schemes and groups, reported having achieved benefits of a personal nature. Some people said that they thought the programme had had a positive effect on their self-confidence and that they themselves identified with some of the issues which were dealt with in the programmes. Of the 260 people who returned questionnaires, just over 30% spontaneously mentioned gains of this kind; a much higher proportion, of the independent learners, over 80%, gave similar feed-back. People said that they had: increased confidence; higher self-esteem; more determination and focus.

Ways in which the programmes contributed to these personal gains included: knowing that they are not alone; seeing that other people have succeeded in overcoming their reading and writing difficulties; and finding out that help is available. In this regard, the 'learner's story' section of the TV programmes was very significant.

Ratings for the learner's story were very high: this part of the programmes was considered good or very good by a total of 84.4% of those who sent back questionnaires.

This indicates that 'personal gains' are a central part of literacy work, for some people even the main point of it; and that specific literacy gains are likely to go hand-in-hand with personal benefits and indeed, may even be dependent on them.


The personal gains reported here are therefore a major outcome of the series which is of considerable value and significance, especially for independent learners with no previous contact with the literacy services. To a large extent, this outcome was achieved by the simple provision of information, in the context of the story of an individual with whom viewers were able to identify. **The learner's story is a very effective element of the programmes which should be retained in future series.**

7. Targeting

Of the 262 questionnaire respondents who commented on the pace of the series, just under 80% found that this was quite good or just right for them. Responses related to the level of the programmes were quite similar. A total of 87.3% of these respondents found that the level was either quite good or just right. Therefore, less than one fifth of these participants found the level and pace unsuitable, either because they were at a more advanced stage themselves, or because they were just starting out.

The differential between the ratings of independent learners and people in schemes and groups which was reported following the first series, has not emerged this time around: both cohorts report roughly the same proportions of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the pace and level of the programmes. Furthermore, quite a high proportion, over 40% of questionnaire respondents who saw the programmes and over two thirds of independent learners, judge that the programmes are just right for them.

This indicates that Read Write Now series 2 catered very satisfactorily for its target




audience. The existing format caters successfully for a very wide audience, encompassing both learners and general viewers. **With some minor adjustments, it should be retained.**

8. Reasons for non-involvement

Although the audience ratings for Read Write Now 2 were even higher than the ratings for the first series, the number of learner study packs distributed was lower. A sample of participants in the evaluation of the first series was contacted and asked if they were still following Read Write Now. Of those who said that they were not, by far the most frequently-mentioned reason was lack of time, with just over 27% saying that they were too busy. Just over 20% said that they had found Read Write Now too easy; and a small percentage, 6.7%, indicated that they were still working through Read Write Now 1 from the video, which suggests that these people had found the first series difficult rather than easy.

Therefore, almost a third of those questioned were never truly part of the target group: some were at a more advanced stage than the series catered for, and some were beginners. Added to these were a small percentage of people who were not actually literacy students at all, who had initially not realised that the series was about adult literacy.

This indicates some of the limitations which a distance education context places on the accuracy of targeting. **It is likely that around 20% - 25% of people who start a TV distance education programme will find that the level is wrong for them. It should also be expected that some learners will be 'lost' to the second stage of this initiative,** for the positive reason of having got what they needed from the first stage: almost 10% of those interviewed here fell into this category.



At the same time, there is still a cohort of people who could be encouraged to prioritise their learning in the future. This group could be drawn from the respondents who said that they were too busy to follow the series this time around. Promotion and marketing strategies for future programmes should make a special effort to target this group in particular.

9. The integrated approach to literacy work

The format of the programmes was designed to support an integrated, holistic approach to literacy work. This was supported by the location of reading and writing points in situations from daily life, which were acted out as part of the drama section of the programmes.

Just under 78% of the questionnaire respondents gave this aspect of the programmes a rating of good or very good. Independent learners rated it even more highly, with 81% of responses falling into these two categories. Almost half of the independent learners answered 'very good' on this item.

Some people had reservations about the usefulness of the drama section or wondered what the point of it was. When pressed, some people indicated that they found some situations patronising because they identified with the characters in the drama slots.

This suggests that learners could benefit from guidance on how to 'read' the programmes, for example, the purpose of the drama section of the programmes, and the reasons why this approach was adopted.

Another aspect of the integrated approach to literacy work was the fact that programmes dealt with content of topics such as First Aid, Cooking and Accommodation, which covered information in these areas. Just over 90% of the questionnaire respondents who had seen the programmes, said that they had learned things in addition to reading and writing skills from the series.

A minority of viewers, especially from adult literacy centres, did not agree with covering reading and writing in other contexts. They would have preferred a skills-based approach to literacy. They did not want to waste time on things that were not an immediate need, they were highly motivated and in many cases, experienced learners.

However, the skills-based approach to literacy work in the context of a TV distance education project, would not work: firstly, what we know about how people learn reinforces the importance of context in learning; secondly, the degree of motivation, concentration and privacy which a skills-based TV programme would demand, would discourage many viewers; thirdly, the skills-based approach to teaching reading and writing reinforces the notion of literacy as the sum of a set of technical skills, when it is really much more than this.

The combination of concrete teaching, awareness-raising and human interest worked well for Read Write Now and so far has managed to retain an audience which crosses a number of different interest groups.

It would be interesting for committed learners, both in literacy schemes and those working at home on their own, to know something of the rationale underlying the design and format of the series. In the current Read Write Now series, a number of strategies for learning are covered in the course of the programmes, especially in the context of spelling. It may be useful, in future initiatives, to expand people's understanding of how to enhance their own learning by explicitly highlighting processes of learning and learning strategies as a major theme, for consideration in a literacy context.

10. Key aspects of the programmes

The presentation of the programme consisted of a voiceover by Teri Garvey. This was the part of the programme which foregrounded the reading and writing tasks which emerged in the course of the drama. This was rated very highly by both questionnaire respondents and independent learners. Responses from the questionnaires yielded 'good' or 'very good' from 89% of this group. A similar proportion of the independent learners, 87%, said the same.

Over two thirds of the questionnaire respondents gave the workbook the highest rating of 'very good' and if those who found it quite good are added, this gives a total of almost 96%. This is the highest positive rating of any of the elements of the Read Write Now project. An even larger proportion of the independent learners said that it was very good.

People following a distance education programme such as Read Write Now would benefit greatly for some instruction on how the support material and the TV programmes dovetail, and how they, the learners, can best use the book during the programme, and also, when preparing to watch it and reviewing it afterwards. Managing materials and learning in this context is a complex matter which some new learners especially, find difficult. There are indications that people in different settings were using the workbook in different ways.

The workbook was also used, and commented on very favourably, by people for whom it was not strictly intended. A lot of the orders that came in were from school-teachers at primary and post primary level and from special schools. Tutors working with groups of asylum-seekers and foreign workers who were learning English also used it, although it is obviously not an ESOL book. Telephone tutors also reported a substantial interest in the series and the workbook among school-teachers and parents who wanted to use the materials for children and young students, at post-primary and even at primary level



The workbook has a potentially much wider audience than the original target group. It would be useful to explore options for commercial publishing and distribution which would make it more widely available to students and educators in different sectors.

11. The freephone helpline

Trained tutors were available to answer people's questions about specific reading and writing points, to guide them through parts of the workbook and answer general, literacy-related queries. The helpline was not very widely used for this purpose, either by those in schemes and groups, or by independent learners.


The low level of use of the helpline for tutorial support is thought-provoking. In theory, this sounds like a very good strategy for complementing the learning resources provided by the TV and study pack. As well as this, a consistent finding in the research on distant education indicates the importance of providing some point of personal contact for learners, to keep them motivated and to help them over particular difficulties.

Helpline usage is greatly influenced by promotion. It is possible that some learners would benefit from a more structured use of the telephone, for example, telephone tutorials. Reactions to this idea were mixed. Some people do not like talking on the telephone, some are concerned with privacy

For the next stage of the project, it would be worthwhile exploring in some depth, the range of different options for providing telephone support. These could include:

1. Promotion which specifically highlights the availability of the helpline for general, unstructured support.
2. Set up a system of telephone tutors who are allocated to individual, independent learners, with the learner taking the initiative to make the call.
3. Set up a network of telephone tutors who are allocated to individual, independent learners, with the tutor taking the initiative to make the call.

It would be instructive to run the examples given in 2 and 3 on a small scale, one each in different parts of the country. This system could support independent learners, especially people who may have access difficulties or be reluctant to go to a literacy scheme.



The implementation of any of the options for telephone support described above would create operational demands. **Vocational Education Committees should be approached and invited to express an interest in experimenting with the idea and running telephone support systems on a small scale.**

12. Did people meet their goals

Goal-setting can be a difficult process, especially for people learning on their own. Nevertheless, more than a third of the questionnaire respondents said that they had met their goals. Some qualified this response in a note on the questionnaire by indicating that they had achieved some of their targets.

It is important to have realistic expectations of what learners following a 12-week adult literacy series can reasonably be expected to achieve. These would be realistic expectations of the gains people might make:

- (i) Information:
 - about the nature and extent of the literacy problem in Ireland.
 - about the help that is available to support people.
 - about education options available to people who want to improve their reading and writing.
 - about different ways of learning and different settings in which people can learn.
- (ii) Personal gains:
 - reassurance that if they have a literacy problem, they are not alone.
 - increased confidence in trying out new skills.
 - increased confidence in their ability to learn and to improve.
 - easing of the isolation and alienation which some people feel, because of reading and writing difficulties.
- (iii) Skills:
 - improvement in a range of technical reading and writing skills.
- (iv) Engagement with the learning process and culture:
 - through participation in the evaluation.
 - telephoning the helpline etc.
 - a willingness to express an opinion about the programmes.
- (v) Goal-setting:
 - If possible, assistance to clarify their own strengths and weaknesses and goals.

Learners in adult literacy schemes and groups already have a support infrastructure which is voluntarily connecting to the Read Write Now project. There is potential, with the agreement of Adult Literacy Organisers, tutors and the Vocational Education Committees to reinforce these links still further. Provision of videos and/or a day-time, week-day transmission slot could facilitate the schemes even more.

The learning process itself may be a fertile theme for the next stage in the project. The area of 'learning to learn' is one which is relevant to people learning at any level and could therefore have a very wide appeal. For example, learners may have a better insight into how to 'read' the drama sections, if one programme dealt with the significance of context and situation.

The specific sub-topics which together have come to be known as ‘learning to learn’, should be identified in consultation with the programme developers, NALA and learning experts. Here are some suggestions which emerge readily from the work done so far:

- Memory and how it works (e.g. spelling strategies)
- The way we learn (learning styles; multiple intelligences)
- Learning with other people (groups)
- Our learning environment
- Learning on your own (motivation)
- Using books and texts (handling programme support material; looking things up)
- Taking notes
- Planning learning and managing time
- Opportunities for second chance learning (literacy schemes, other projects).

The programme format could include profiles of both individual and groups of learners, who could be followed over a number of weeks, addressing different elements of the ‘learning to learn’ theme. These could include literacy students but could also feature others, such as a Back to Education group or a VTOS student. This element would correspond to the ‘learner’s story’ part of Read Write Now 1 and 2; the topics suggested above could correspond to the content element e.g. First Aid, Gardening; there could be a drama element with the same characters, but dealing with situations arising from these new ‘learning to learn’ topics; and the presentation could, in the same way, focus on literacy learning points, chosen to dovetail with the topic of the week.

The viewer ratings and learner feed-back confirm that there is an audience for an instructional adult literacy TV resource, for a very substantial cohort of people who need help with their reading and writing, but are not yet ready to approach the existing adult literacy services.

Read Write Now series 2 has successfully catered for a wide general audience and also, a rather wide group of learners who may be categorised as ‘improvers’.

There should be another series, catering for the same level of learners, this time addressing topics around the ‘learning to learn’ theme.

It will be important to maintain momentum and interest which the first two series have generated. This could be achieved by repeating one or both series, in the near future.

The partnership between DES, RTÉ and NALA has so far worked well and should be maintained. The links with other educational networks, such as the Vocational Educational Committees and adult literacy schemes, have been very important and should be strengthened. This would be especially important in facilitating the support of independent learners.

Section 1: Introduction and Overview

1.1 The Read Write Now project: background and context

Read Write Now is an educational broadcasting initiative which was developed jointly by the Department of Education and Science (DES), Radio Telefís Éireann (RTÉ) and the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA). It is part of a wider, long-term Literacy through the Airwaves project which began in November 1999 with the launch of a pilot local radio series aimed at adult literacy learners.

Since then, four separate but related components have been developed and transmitted on RTÉ TV and radio, funded mostly by the DES and partly by RTÉ, and co-ordinated by NALA. Between September 2000 and December 2001, the following series were transmitted on TV and Radio:

- September 2000: Read Write Now, 12-part adult literacy TV series
- March 2001: Read Write Now, 10-part adult literacy radio series
- September 2001: Read Write Now, 12-part adult literacy TV series
- November 2001: Time 4 Learning, 10-part adult numeracy radio series

This evaluation report deals with the second TV series, which was in preparation from June – September 2001 and was broadcast from September – December of that year. The report summarises viewers’ reactions to key elements of the programmes, evaluates the extent to which the project aims and objectives were accomplished and analyses the main issues emerging from the experience of the second TV series.

Section 1 of the report puts this series in context, provides background on its aims, objectives, target group and operation and also contains a summary of the evaluation strategy. Section 2 describes the series’ audience. This includes viewer ratings and also a profile of independent learners who followed the programmes and of other viewers who were already working with adult literacy schemes and training groups. In Section 3, the impact of the series is summarised. This includes an overview of viewers’ ratings of various aspects of the programmes and an analysis of the extent to which they achieved the programmes objectives and met their learning goals. A number of issues emerge from this analysis which relate to the provision of adult literacy in a broadcasting medium and also, to the evaluation of literacy programmes in general. Section 3 finishes with a summary of suggestions for future development of the Read Write Now project.

1.2 Programme design, development and production

The programme objectives and content for Read Write Now, series 2 were developed by NALA in consultation with AV Edge, the TV production company which produced the series; and with the DES. At all stages in the project there was continuous communication between all partners, especially between NALA and AV Edge, whose staff regularly circulated scripts, story-boards and exchanged comments on current work. Broadly speaking, NALA was responsible for selecting the literacy content, for choosing an educational strategy and for developing the workbook. AV Edge handled all aspects of

production including writing scripts for dramas and voice-overs, graphics and the programme structure.

The workbook was the first element of the project to be completed, during the summer of 2001. This is an A4 spiral-bound book of 183 pages. Each of its twelve sections corresponds to one programme in the series and each contains at least three literacy learning points and one spelling tip, the same content which is covered, week-by-week, in the TV programmes. The TV programmes were therefore built around the content of the learner workbook although, as we shall see in Section 3, rather than opting for a page-by-page match between content of the book and the TV programme, the correspondence between the two was fairly loose and creative.

The process of development and production was overseen by an Editorial Committee on which following sectors were represented: the Vocational Education Committees, which give significant support to adult literacy work in Ireland; the Department of Education and Science, as the main project funders; RTÉ as part-funders and providers of technical expertise and transmission facilities; and the National Adult Literacy Agency, as co-ordinators and providers of educational expertise. NALA also co-ordinated and organised promotion for the series. The production company, AV Edge, also sat on the Editorial Committee during the production process.

Work on the production of the TV programmes began in July 2001. Most contacts with adult literacy students and groups who were profiled in the series were supplied through the literacy movement, especially by NALA but AV Edge also used some contacts of their own. The first programme was transmitted on September 19th and the last, on December 19th, 2001.

1.3 Aims and target group

According to the original mission statement for **Read Write Now**, which was drawn up before TV series 1 was developed, the aim of the project was:

to develop and deliver a distance learning programme in adult basic education, consisting of a series of 12 television programmes supported by a printed study pack, which will help adults improve their reading and writing skills in the privacy of their own homes.¹

At that stage, the series was to be aimed mainly at independent adult learners. These are people who have not yet contacted the literacy services to get help with their reading and writing and who are not involved in any other training or community group which could support them in this. It was hoped that the TV programmes would reach those who, for reasons of access or preference, had no other help with their reading and writing.

Definitions and descriptions of literacy vary but for the purpose of examining the aims and content of Read Write Now, it should be noted that the term 'literacy' encompasses not only reading and writing, but aspects of numeracy also. The 1997 International Adult Literacy Survey (Morgan et al) identifies three domains:

¹ NALA mission statement for series 1

Prose literacy – the knowledge and skills that are required to locate and use information from newspapers, fiction and expository texts; document literacy – the knowledge and skills that are required to locate and use the information contained in official forms, timetables, maps and charts; and quantitative literacy – the knowledge and skills that are required to apply mathematical operations in printed materials.²

It is significant that the TV programmes were never intended to cater for complete beginners, that is, people who had very few or no reading or writing skills. It was expected that the optimum target audience at this stage in the project would be the learners who already had some reading and writing skills but needed help to improve. Having followed Read Write Now, some of these people might in the future decide to join an adult literacy scheme and seek a tutor; and some of these might improve to the level of the former NCVA Foundation Level Communications.

The evaluation of the first series (Grummell, 2001) confirmed that broadly speaking, the sample of independent learners who were consulted at that time were satisfied with the level at which the series was pitched. Reservations were expressed by about a fifth of these participants, who found the programmes either too difficult or too easy³. Reactions from people in literacy schemes and other groups were mixed. A higher proportion of these learners indicated that the level of difficulty did not correspond as closely to their needs which, given that they were already getting support from a tutor, is not surprising. At the same time, the experience of the first series showed that the broadcasts and the accompanying support materials were used very widely by these same learners and by tutors in adult literacy schemes and other groups where literacy work is carried out.

Given the success of series 1 in identifying and supporting its target audience, it was decided that series 2 should focus on the same group of learners: people who wanted to improve their reading and writing. However, this target group includes people with a very wide and varied range of strengths and weaknesses in reading and writing skills. The challenge for series 2 was therefore to convey a set of learning points which would be relevant and accessible to a broad learning audience, and to do this in an interesting way which would reinforce the ground covered in series 1, without excessive repetition.

Consequently, one of the questions which this evaluation addresses is the extent to which a target group was successfully selected and supported by Read Write Now, series 2. Having clarified this question, it will be easier to explore the outcomes which can reasonably be expected for this target group, from a 12-week distance education series in adult literacy. This discussion, which is covered in Section 3.8.2, should provide a context for any conclusions reached about what people actually gained from watching the series.

² MORGAN et al (1997) International Adult Literacy Survey: Results for Ireland Dublin: An Roinn Oideachais p vii.

³ Grummell, B (2001) Read Write Now TV Project Evaluation Report, p. 23, p.41.

1.4 Programme objectives and content

The programme objectives for Read Write Now 2, like those of the first series, covered a range of knowledge and skills which would enable people to deal with everyday life situations. These include different reading skills, spelling, form filling and letter writing. There are twenty-one of these behavioural objectives: that is, learning outcomes which should lead to the learner knowing or being able to do something new. A list of these programme objectives is given in Appendix 1.

It is worth noting that while these describe knowledge and skills which the learner might achieve, there is no direct mention of changes in attitudes or affective gains, such as improved self-esteem and confidence. However, as the following extract from the NALA mission statement shows, these personal and social benefits are an important element – perhaps the most important – of the overall aim of all adult literacy provision:

NALA defines literacy as the integration of listening, speaking, reading, writing and numeracy. It also encompasses aspects of personal development – social, economic and emotional and is concerned with improving self-esteem and building confidence. It goes far beyond mere technical skills of communication.⁴

Many of the learners who took part in this evaluation referred to less measurable outcomes, both when describing what they hoped to get out of the series at the start and when later reporting on what they actually did learn. Some of these comments are included in Section 3. The significance of learning achieved which is less predictable, which may sometimes be unforeseen and which can be difficult to assess, emerges as an important outcome of the project.

In the first series, the programme objectives were covered in the context of realistic situations such as work, shopping and going out. A similar approach was adopted for series 2 and a new set of situations or topics was chosen. These were:

- | | | |
|--------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. First Aid | 5. Wedding | 9. Healthy Lifestyle |
| 2. Cooking | 6. Accommodation | 10. Interview for a Job |
| 3. Football | 7. Information Technology | 11. Pets |
| 4. Gardening | 8. DIY | 12. Trip Away. |

These topics provided the thematic context within which the reading, writing and spelling learning points were delivered.

1.5 Format of TV Programmes

Each TV programme consisted of three main elements which were woven together to provide a vehicle for the learning points in reading, writing and spelling:

⁴ NALA Mission Statement

(i) The learner's story This is a profile of a former adult literacy student. A different individual each week tells their story to camera, explaining how they came to embark on literacy work and how improving their reading and writing has affected their lives.

(ii) Drama In every programme, a mini-drama shows characters engaging in a light-hearted way with the demands of daily life in ordinary situations such as shopping, cooking and gardening. These situations show characters dealing with literacy tasks or learning points.

(iii) Learning points in reading, writing and spelling are built into each week's programme and feature in the workbook. The learning points emerge from the interaction between the characters in the drama and these points are then highlighted explicitly by the programme presenter.

The rationale for this format is underpinned by the definition of literacy expressed in the NALA mission statement quoted above, which 'goes far beyond mere technical skills of communication.' This is consistent with

the growing awareness of literacy as social practice, rather than a set of skills which a person does or does not have These new approaches to literacy suggest that literacy is always contextualised or situated within, a particular socio-cultural setting.⁵

The format for Read Write Now was developed in order to provide a holistic approach to the teaching of reading and writing, on the grounds that

The literacy practices of the participants and literacy teaching programmes must be situated in real contexts rather than being generalised.⁶

Thus, the technical skills which make up reading, writing and spelling should be addressed in meaningful, familiar situations, rather than being presented as a series of separate skills. Good literacy practice avoids presenting fragmented skills in isolation from each other and from the real world. It also facilitates the development of literacy in settings which are both purposeful, and informal: purposeful in that learners are engaged in activities which are meaningful to them; and informal in that these activities may or may not be explicit teaching and learning situations. For these reasons, work on specific reading and writing skills is located in contexts which are familiar and useful to the learner.

⁴⁵ REDDI, U. and DIGHE, A. (2000) Literacy and adult education through distance and open learning in YATES, C. and BRADLEY, J. (Eds) World Review of Distance Education and Open Learning Vol 2 p. 156

⁶ *ibid*

1.6 Production and format of learner workbook

Production of the workbook was commissioned and monitored by NALA. This study-pack provided the focus for the development of the series, as its twelve sections cover all of the programme objectives using the twelve programme topics as a vehicle for delivery.

In addition to the reading and writing learning points, basic information about each topic is also covered. For example, the programme on First Aid gives instructions on how to deal with burns; the gardening programme explains how to make a compost heap; information about mortgage options is included in the programme which covers accommodation. This strategy of weaving topic content together with literacy work reinforces the integration of reading and writing into real-life contexts. The effectiveness and impact of integrating literacy work into everyday topics and drama is one of the questions which learners were asked to comment on and their feed-back on this is given in Section 3 below.

1.7 Transmission Schedule

Read Write Now TV series 2 was transmitted three times each week, between September 19th and December 19th:

- Wednesdays, 7.30pm
- Sundays, 10am
- Tuesdays, midnight

There was a break of one week when another programme had to be scheduled in.

It is not easy to find a slot which would be convenient for everyone who might want to follow a series such as Read Write Now. The first series, which was transmitted from September – December 2000, was shown twice each week. Transmitting the programmes three times during the week naturally increased the number of viewers who had access to the series. The result of this strategy is most visible in the programme ratings, which are given in Section 2.1 below.

1.8 Promotion strategy

The series was widely promoted to the general public, to adult literacy practitioners and other educators and in other community education settings. NALA took responsibility for developing and implementing a promotion strategy. Several methods were used, including: a media launch, paid advertising and direct mail.

Promotion began about two months before the start of the series, with the launch in July 2001, by Minister Willie O’Dea in the Gresham Hotel in Dublin of the evaluation report for the first series and an announcement that work had started on series 2. This was accompanied by press release which was distributed to all the print and broadcast media. The initial launch generated a substantial amount of coverage in national and local media including the RTÉ Guide, the Irish Times, the Irish Independent and on RTÉ TV and radio.

In addition to the summer launch, a number of other measures⁷ were taken closer to the start of the series:

⁷ Source: NALA

- (i) Paid advertising worth €32,937 (IR£25,940) on
- Today FM, 24 slots over a period of one month, starting the week beginning August 20th
 - 16 local radio stations, 35 slots, five days per week for three weeks, beginning August 27th
 - HMG Airtime, on 8 stations, each giving 18 – 21 slots over a 5-day period, starting October 9th
 - Regular promotions on RTÉ television.
- (ii) Direct mail consisting of:
- a personalised mailshot to 126 local Adult Literacy Organisers around the country, accompanied by an A4 poster/leaflet
 - A mailshot of 500 A4 leaflets/posters to community and other education and training organisations such as Youthreach, community training workshops, Local Area Partnerships, libraries, Travellers' workshops and centres catering for people with disabilities
 - An A4 leaflet/poster which was sent to 32,000 homes in marginalized communities in Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Galway.

The detail of the promotion strategy was determined by the target audience which had been identified for the series.

1.9 Freephone Helpline

A freephone helpline was open from August 20th to December 20th, five days each week, Monday to Friday from 10am – 4pm. An answering service operated outside these hours and people who left contact numbers were called back on the next working day.

This telephone line was staffed by three and later, four trained adult literacy tutors. Their general functions were:

- To take orders from the public for study packs to be sent out.
- To answer questions from viewers about reading and writing learning points covered in the programmes and any other literacy-related queries, including referrals to literacy schemes.
- To conduct evaluation interviews with a number of volunteer evaluation participants.

Ways in which the helpline could be further developed are discussed in Section 3.

1.10 Evaluation Strategy

The purpose of this evaluation was to find out to what extent the second TV Read Write Now series accomplished its overall aim of helping people to improve their reading and writing, and to make recommendations for future development. In order to do this, a number of questions are addressed:

- How did viewers respond to the main element of the programmes?
- Did viewers learn from the programmes and if so, what did they learn?
- How effective were the implementation and support structures, in working towards the programme aims?

Participants' views on these questions were gathered in several different ways from a variety of sources, reflecting the wide range of people who were using the series as a resource.

- (i) **Independent learners** These were reached
 - through a series of telephone interviews conducted by telephone tutors and the evaluator, over the duration of the series. A total of 42 people participated in this sustained process.
 - at two focus group meetings which were held near the beginning and close to the end of the series.
- (ii) **Learners in literacy schemes and other groups** These were reached
 - through face-to-face group interviews conducted by the evaluator in eleven different institutions, comprising 38 people and 18 tutors.
 - through questionnaires distributed by post and returned from a total of 340 learners and tutors.
- (iii) **Tutors and organisers** These were reached
 - through telephone and face-to-face conversations.
 - through written comments provided directly to the evaluator.
 - through a short questionnaire, completed by 21 organisers, probing the level of perceived use of the series.
- (iv) **Documentary evidence and statistics** were consulted, to give evidence of trends and to provide audience and participants' profiles. These included:
 - television ratings for the series.
 - analysis of the database of independent learners who ordered study packs.
 - analysis of the database of groups who ordered study packs.
- (v) **The freephone helpline** also served as a comment-line throughout the duration of the series. This was accessed by learners, tutors and members of other groups. Comments made here also provided a useful source of information about people's reactions and priorities. Some of the comments recorded here are quoted in Section 3.8.5.

Section 2: The Read Write Now Audience

2.1 Overview of Audience

For the purpose of analysing the impact of Read Write Now on its audience, it may be useful to think of two types of viewers: people who watched the programmes out of general interest; and those who followed the series in a more purposeful way, in order to improve their reading and writing. Information on the general audience is confined to statistical data on programme ratings. Detailed learner profiles and feedback about the series are drawn from the more focussed sub-group of the audience who were conscious learners, rather than casual viewers. Among them are independent learners, who were working without the support of a literacy scheme or other group and for whom Read Write Now was the only structured resource available; and also, people who had already made contact with the existing literacy services and for whom Read Write Now was one resource among several.

Information about these groups was compiled from

- Statistics summarising viewer ratings.
- Statistics summarising the number of learner packs distributed to individuals and to learners in different types of groups and schemes.

A more detailed profile was compiled which draws on information supplied by the sub-group of people who took part in this evaluation. This includes both independent learners and people already working with a literacy scheme or other group. These are:

- The group of 340 people from literacy schemes and groups who returned questionnaires.
- The group of 42 people who were interviewed on the telephone or who took part in a focus group meeting.
- The 38 people who took part interviews held in the course of visits to literacy schemes and other groups.

2.2 Television Ratings for Read Write Now

The audience ratings for Read Write Now were high and were generally sustained throughout the series. Programme 1 was viewed by a total of 273,676 people, with by far the largest audience on Wednesday evening at 7.30 pm. That night's audience comprised almost 6% of the population and over 22% of the viewing public. Programme 6 was viewed by a combined audience of 316,888 over the three nights: Wednesday's audience for that week was 6.4% of the population and over 18% of all those who were watching television at that time.

The highest audience figures reported were for the penultimate programme, which was watched by 320,489 people. Wednesday night's audience that week amounted to 7.5% of the population and almost a quarter of the entire viewing public at that time. The audiences on Tuesdays (midnight) and Sunday (10am) were much smaller, at between 5% and 10% of the total audience for the week. For seven of the twelve weeks, the Tuesday transmissions were seen by more people than Sunday's but with the exceptions of weeks 1 and 3, the differences in viewing figures on these two nights were not very large. Considering the

Figure 1 Ratings for Read Write Now

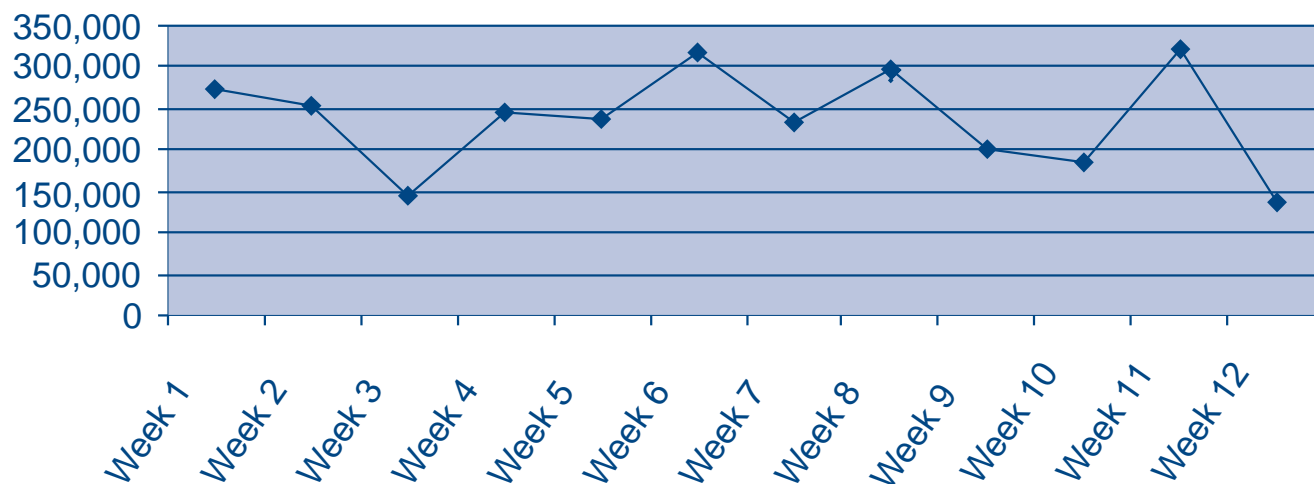


Table 1 Ratings for Read Write Now * Total population=3,601,000.

Date/ Week	Total viewers this week	Wednesday 7.30pm	Sunday 10.30am	Tuesday midnight	*% of pop.	**% of viewing public
19 th Sept Prog 1	273,676	208,858	25,207	39,611	Wed – 5.8 Sun – 0.7 Tues – 1.1	Wed – 22.4 Sun – 7.9 Tues – 10.4
26 th Sept Prog 2	252,070	201,656	21,606	28,808	Wed- 5.6 Sun – 0.6 Tues – 0.8	Wed- 18.5 Sun – 6.7 Tues – 7.8
3 rd Oct Prog 3	144,040	104,429	7,202	32,409	Wed – 2.9 Sun – 0.2 Tues – 0.9	Wed – 8.7 Sun – 4 Tues – 9.5
10 th Oct Prog 4	244,868	208,858	21,606	14,404	Wed – 5.8 Sun – 0.6 Tues – 0.4	Wed – 18.6 Sun – 7.9 Tues – 5.6
17 th Oct Prog 5	237,666	183,651	36,010	18,005	Wed – 5.1 Sun – 1.0 Tues – 0.5	Wed – 15.2 Sun – 10.9 Tues – 7.8
24 th Oct Prog 6	316,888	230,464	54,015	32,409	Wed – 6.4 Sun – 1.5 Tues – 0.9	Wed –18.6 Sun – 16.2 Tues – 10.4
31 st Oct Prog 7	234,065	205,257	28,808	No TX	Wed – 5.7 Sun – 0.8 Tues – no tx	Wed – 20.3 Sun – 9.2 Tues – no tx
7 th Nov Prog 8	298,883	234,065	28,808	36,010	Wed – 6.5 Sun – 0.8 Tues – 1.0	Wed – 17.5 Sun – 9.6 Tues – 14.4
14 th Nov Prog 9	201,656	140,439	28,808	32,409	Wed – 3.9 Sun – 0.8 Tues – 0.9	Wed – 11 Sun – 9.2 Tues – 10.5
28 th Nov Prog 10	183,651	136,838	21,606	25,207	Wed – 3.8 Sun – 0.6 Tues – 0.7	Wed – 10 Sun – 8 Tues – 8.6
5 th Dec Prog 11	320,489	270,075	18,005	32,409	Wed – 7.5 Sun – 0.5 Tues – 0.9	Wed – 23.4 Sun – 5.9 Tues – 10.5
19 th Dec Prog 12	162,045	136,838	25,207	-	Wed – 3.8 Sun – 0.7	Wed – 10.5 Sun – 7

Wednesday programmes as a group, half of these were viewed by 18%-23% of all those who were watching television at that time.

Bearing in mind that according to the OECD International Adult Literacy Survey⁸, one in four, or about 500,000 Irish adults “at best,,,can perform only relatively modest literacy tasks,” an educational programme which can reach over 200,000 people in one night, is an important resource.

2.3 Independent Learners

2.3.1 Pattern of requests for packs

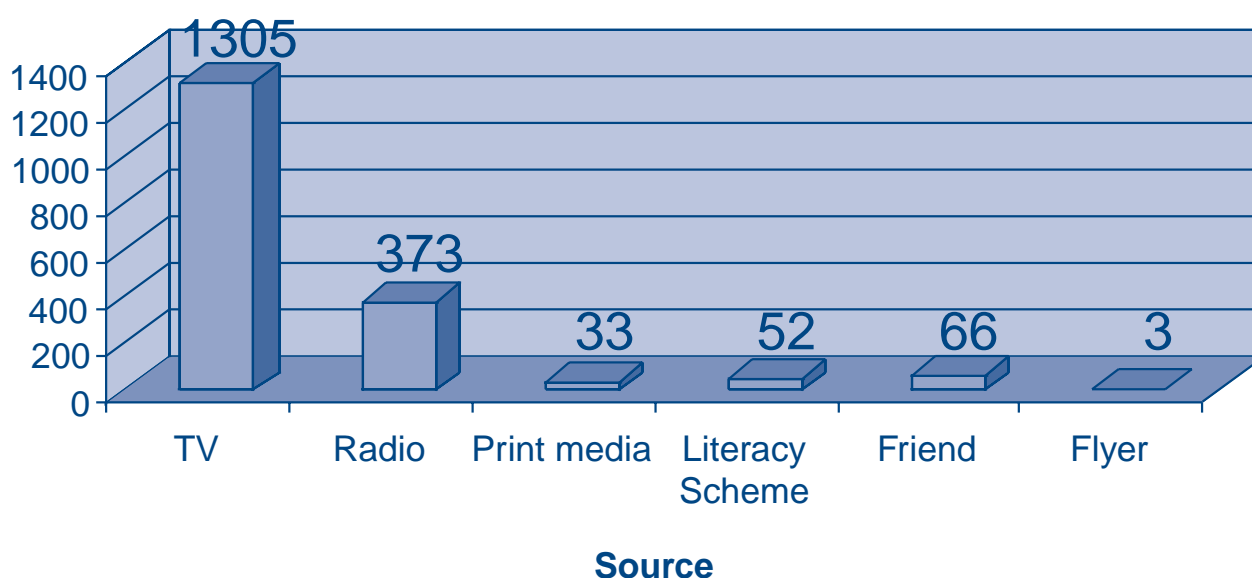
It is likely that among the 136,000 – 320,000 plus viewers who watched the Read Write Now programmes each week, there were people who were following the series in a purposeful way, hoping to improve their reading and writing but who did not make the telephone call to request a study pack. Unfortunately there is no information available about these learners and currently no way of gaining access to them or finding out about what they think or need.

All of the information we have about independent learners on Read Write Now draws on information supplied by people who telephoned the free-phone line on their own initiative to ask for a Read Write Now study pack.

Some of them heard about the series from friends, others from advertising or from the TV and radio promotions.

Figure 2 below shows that for independent learners, the most frequently-mentioned sources of information about the series were the television promotions, followed by those which were broadcast on radio. Not surprisingly, very few people were informed by newspapers or the RTÉ Guide or by other printed material, such as promotional flyers. As most of these learners had not yet made contact with the literacy services, they would not have had access

Figure 2 How people heard about Read Write Now N=1,832



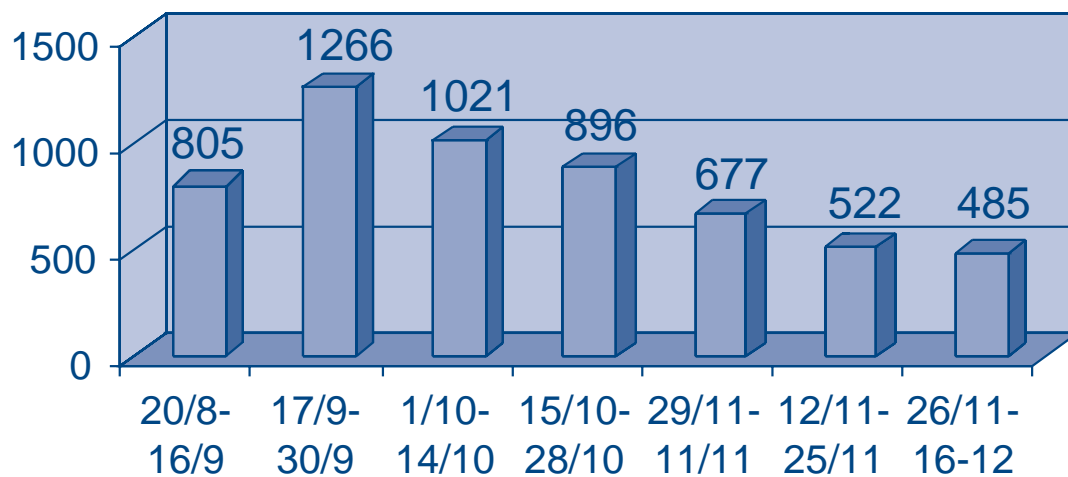
⁸ MORGAN et al (1997) op. cit. p.42

to information about the series through this route.

The broadcast media, then, clearly offer the most effective way of informing potential learners about the series, especially those who have not yet had any contact with the literacy services. This experience will be significant when promotional strategies are being developed for similar initiatives in the future.

The fact that people make the call to ask for a learner's study pack indicates, at the very least an intention to follow the series with the aim of improving their reading and writing. When they first made contact with the Read Write Now helpline, these learners for the most part were not associated with an adult literacy scheme or any other group where they could get help. The telephone tutors who took their call offered to refer them on to a literacy scheme

Figure 3 Packs requested by independent learners N=5,672



straight away but few took up the offer. These learners were therefore working completely on their own.

Between 20th August when the promotion for the series began and the final programme in mid-December, a total of **5,672** people telephoned the freephone line to ask for a study pack. A sizeable proportion of these requests were made in the month before the start of the series: 14% came in between 20th August and 16th September.

During the next two weeks a further 1,266 requests came in, which amounted to an additional 22% of the total number of requests from independent learners. And in the two weeks after that, a further 1,021 people, or 18% of the total, telephoned to ask for packs. Taking into account those who rang in before the series began, 36% of the independent learners had contacted the Read Write Now freephone line by the time the second programme was transmitted at the end of September and 54% had been in contact by mid-October, just after programme 4.

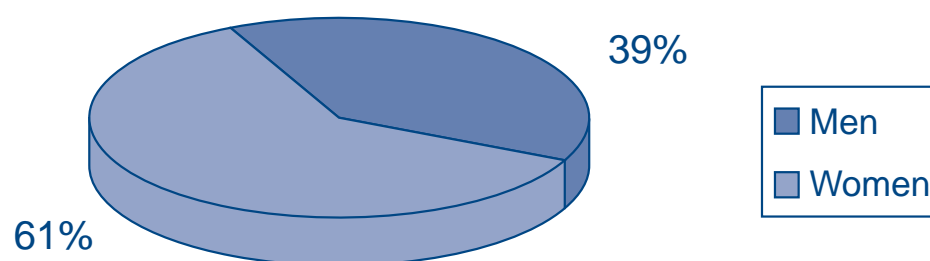
However, independent learners were still asking for study packs during the next eight weeks of the series: 896 requests came in between 15th –28th October; 677 from 29th October – 11th November; 522 from 12th –25th November; and 485 from 26th November – 16th December.

This pattern shows that more than half, that is, 54% of these independent learners made contact in the weeks immediately before and then during, the first third of the series. After this there was a falling off but still, a steady flow of requests came in until the series ended. The advance promotion and the first two weeks of transmission were the key stage in getting the message across that this series was available to people. As it is easier to follow the series with the study pack than without it, the sooner that potential learners ask for it, the better. This, then, is the key stage for intensive promotion and advertising.

2.3.2 Personal Details

When they made their call to the freephone line to ask for a Read Write Now study pack, independent learners were asked to give some basic personal details. Not everybody answered all of the questions. Some people would only give their name and address and then quickly rang off. Others were willing to engage in conversation but the questions, which probed age, educational history, age at which the person left school and their employment status, had to be handled carefully, in order not to intimidate people. In the profile of independent learners which follows, percentages given refer to the percentage of people who answered that particular question, and therefore not always of the total sample.

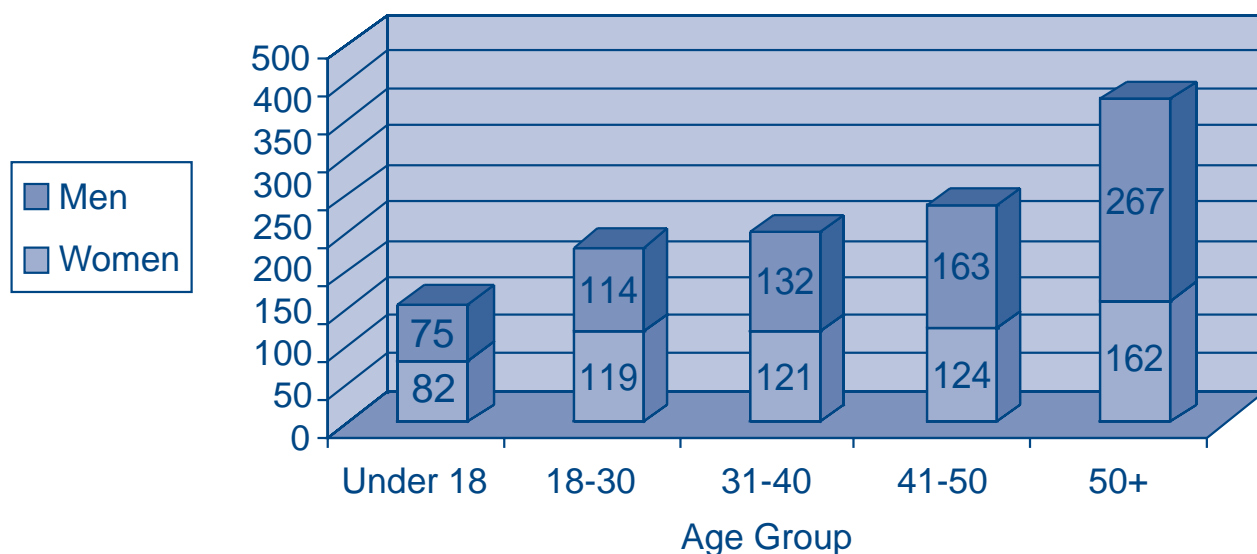
Figure 4 Sex of independent learners



2.3.3 Profile of Independent Learners

Just over 61% of the independent learners were women; 39% were men.

Figure 5 Age profile of independent learners N=1,359

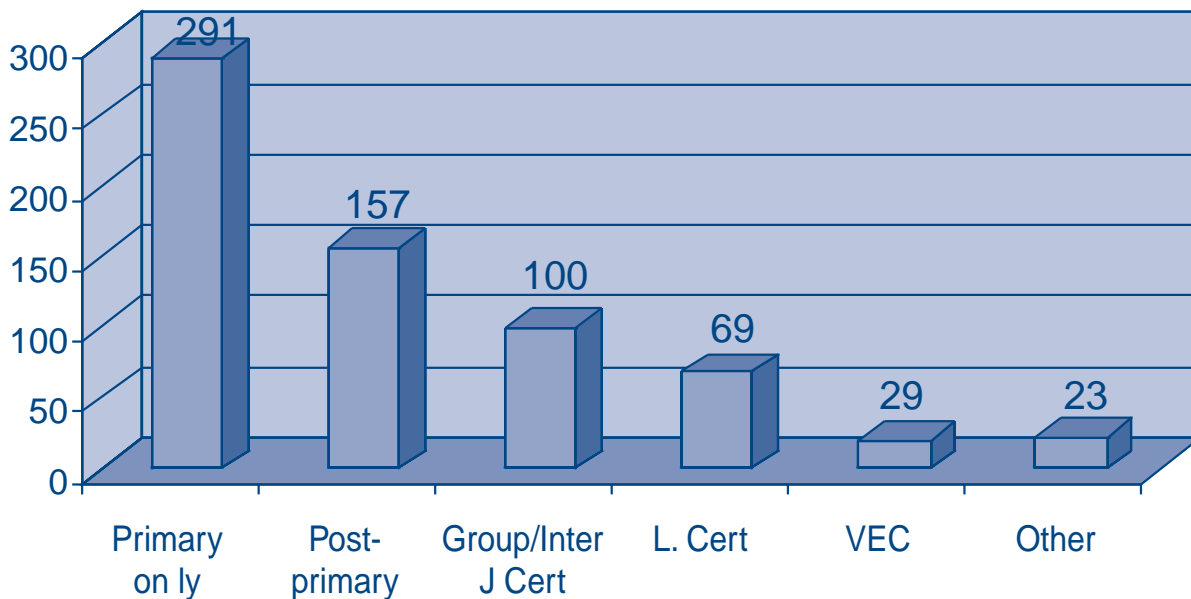


Less than a quarter of all callers (23.5%) gave their age. Of those who did, the largest proportion (31.6%) were in the 50+ age group. Just over 21% were in the 41-50 age range, 18.6% were between 31-40 and 17.1% were aged 19–30 years. A small percentage, 11.5%, were aged 18 or younger.

Still fewer people, just over 11%, gave information about their educational history and just over 16% gave the age at which they left school. Of those who did answer:

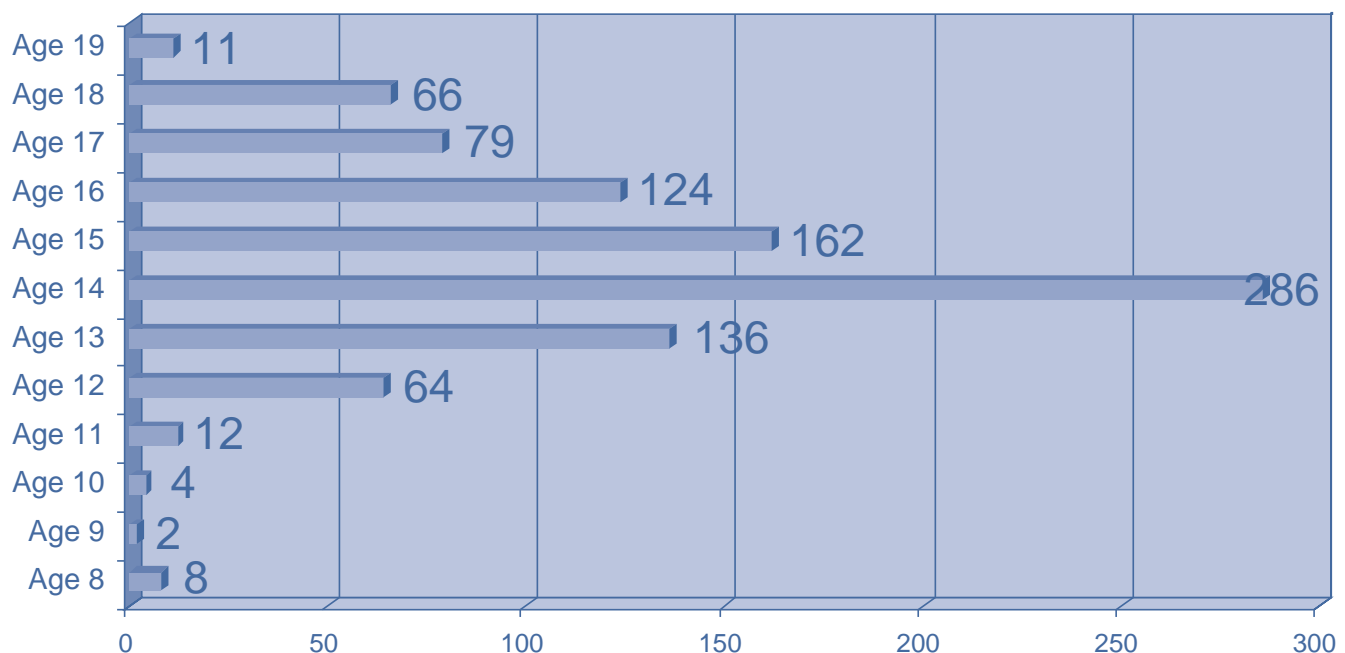
- almost 44% had had only primary education.

Figure 6 Educational history/qualifications of independent learners



- a further 24% stayed on for the Junior Cycle but without gaining a qualification.
- over 9.5% had left school at aged 12 or younger.

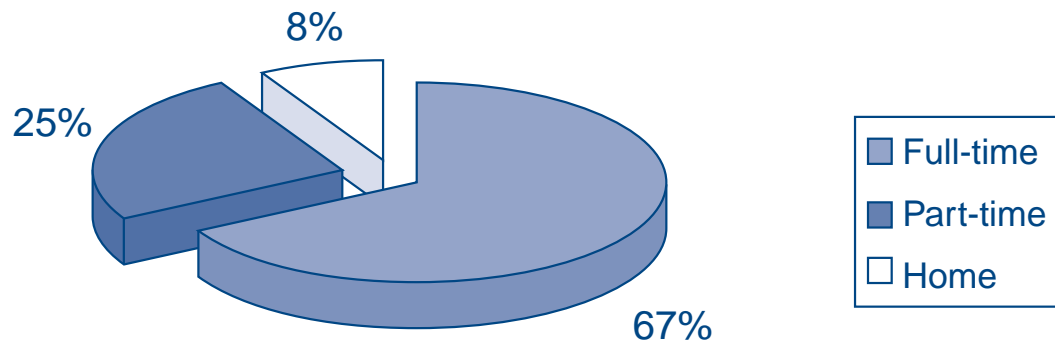
Figure 7 Age left school N=954



- a further 44.2% left school when they were 13 or 14.

Therefore, a very high proportion of those who answered, amounting to 68%, left school with no qualification; and almost 54% of them were younger than 15 when they left school. Very few people gave information about their employment status and this makes it

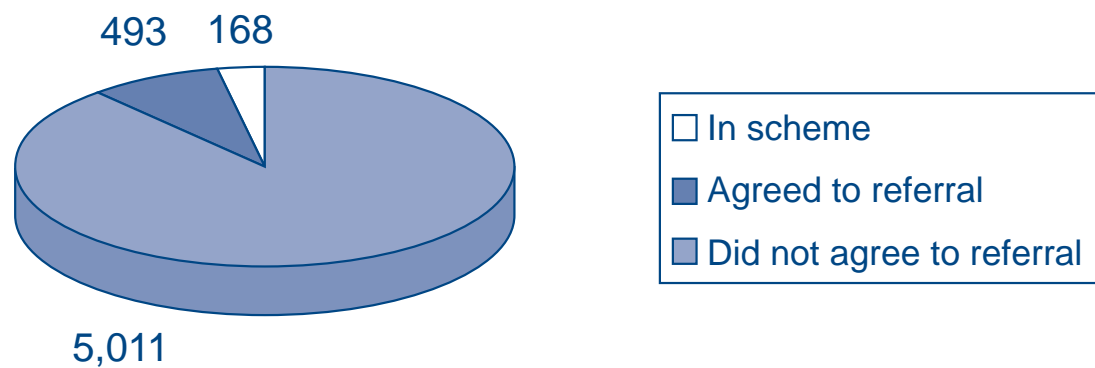
Figure 8 Employment status N=525



impossible to generalise from this group to a wider population. For the record, just over 63% of the 525 people who did answer were in full-time employment, 24% were working part-time and 7.8% were working in the home.

Everyone was asked whether they had already had contact with a literacy scheme and just under 3% said that they had. Of the rest, when asked if they would like to be referred on to a literacy scheme only 8.8% agreed to this. These 493 people were in fact given contact telephone numbers immediately but the remaining 5,011 were unwilling, at least at that time, to take that extra step. This confirms that there is indeed a cohort of people who need help

Figure 9 Literacy scheme referrals N=5,672



with their reading and writing, who are in principle willing to do something about it but who are not yet ready – and may never want – to leave the privacy of their own homes to do so.

In this context, it is worth noting that just over 4% of Irish adults⁹ who have problems with reading and writing, currently make use of the service provided by adult literacy schemes, although this does not include people who may be improving their reading and writing in other training and adult education situations. However, it does give an indication of the

⁹ Source: NALA

scale of the problem and the proportion of those who are making use of existing services. The Irish experience is typical of trends in other countries: to date, no country has managed to increase the figure of participation in the literacy services beyond 7%-10%.

When asked if they would be willing to participate in the evaluation of the series, 120 of these callers said that in principle, they would. This was the pool of people from which the interviewees for telephone interviews and focus groups were eventually gathered.

2.4 Participants from adult literacy schemes and other groups

2.4.1 Distribution of packs to schemes and groups

There are 126 adult literacy schemes throughout the country which offer individual and group tuition in reading, writing and numeracy. These are funded by the local Vocational Education Committees and are often the first point of contact for people who want help with literacy. All of these adult literacy schemes were sent advance details of Read Write Now series 2 by NALA. Before the starting date, 7,100 study packs were sent out to tutors and organisers for use with their learners.

There is also a wide range of other education and training settings for different target groups where people can follow a variety of activities and where some of the work is related to literacy. These settings include: Youthreach centres, Community Training Workshops; Education Units in prisons, Travellers' groups, groups under the Youth Service, Local Employment Services, centres catering for people with disabilities, libraries, Vocational Training and Opportunities Schemes, including special schools and mainstream schools at both primary and post-primary level.

A total of 7,279 packs were sent out to these groups, on request.

Just under 30% of those requests came in during the month before the series began; a further 27% were received in the first two weeks and 18% of the total requests were made in the two weeks after that. Therefore, by mid-October, almost three quarters of all requests from these groups were received.

Figure 10 Summary of packs distributed N=20,051

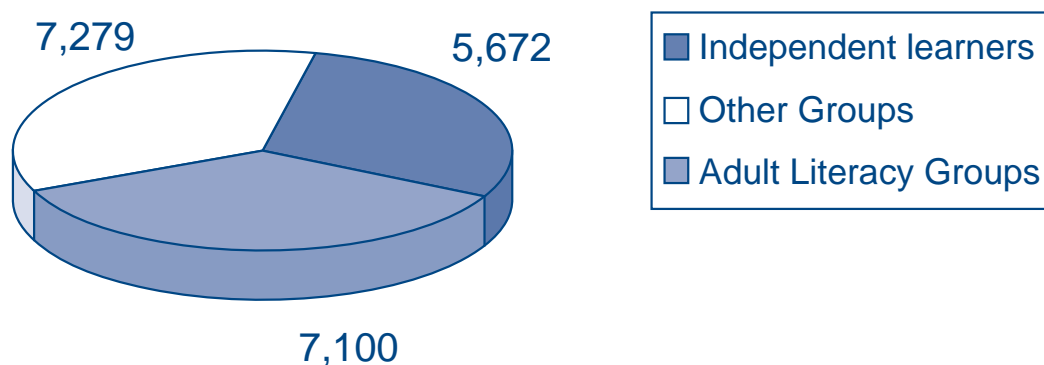


Figure 10 below shows the proportion of study packs which were sent out to the three distinct sectors already mentioned: 5,672 to independent learners, 7,100 to 126 adult literacy groups and 7,279 to 595 other groups.

2.4.2 Initial profile of evaluation participants from schemes and groups

As requests for study packs came in from schemes and groups, detailed evaluation questionnaires (see Appendix 2) were sent out which were designed to be returned at the end of the series, in order to summarise people's views on the programmes. However, the evaluation team decided to try also to form an early impression of the people who would be following the series. The detailed questionnaire was therefore accompanied by a simpler form (see Appendix 3) which centres and groups were asked to return immediately, summarising the number of people in their group, whether male or female and how many were at the three levels of literacy as defined by the Department of Education and Science.

Not all groups and centres received these documents. It was agreed that only those who made contact by the first week in October, that is, people who would be following the series from the beginning or no later than programme 3, would be surveyed for the evaluation.

The initial evaluation form shown in Appendix 3, was returned by 52 groups which represented a total of 725 learners. Of these, 61% were female and 39% were male, which is exactly the same male/female proportion of the independent learners.

A large proportion of these 52 groups – 19.2% - were schools. Some requests came from special schools but resource teachers in mainstream primary and post-primary schools were also using the pack and series as a resource for their students. Centres catering for people with disabilities were another important group: 17.2% came from this sector. A further 17.2% were VEC groups of different kinds, 9.6% were adult education or community groups and 7.7% of the groups were catering for members of the Travelling community.

On this initial evaluation form, tutors or organisers were asked to specify how many of their learners were at three defined levels¹⁰. This was intended to provide a rough guide to the characteristics of the Read Write Now learners, an estimate made by someone who knew their work, rather than a definitive assessment of their skills and abilities.

Not all learners were identified by literacy level, as requested. Of those 666 individuals whose level was estimated in this way, 47% were said to be at level 1, 43% were thought to be at level 2 and 10% at level 3.

2.4.3 Learner Profile from Adult Literacy Schemes and Groups

More information about learners' personal details was obtained from the detailed questionnaire shown in Appendix 2, of which 340 were returned from adult literacy schemes and groups at the end of the series. A total of 141 questionnaires were completed by

¹⁰ **Department of Education and Science**

Level 1 'Those without reading and writing skills, or with very poor skills.'

Level 2 'Those who have an acceptable reading standard but whose writing/spelling skills are not adequate to enable them to participate effectively in social and economic life.'

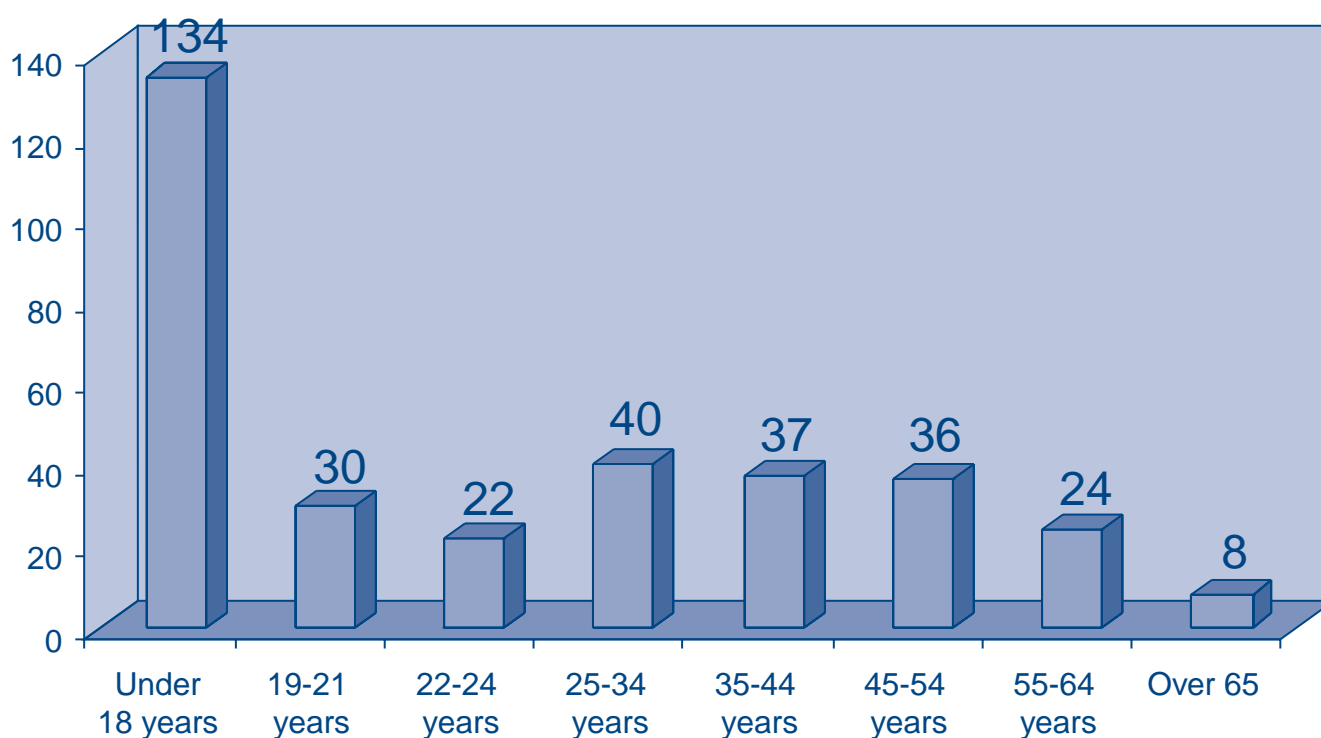
Level 3 'Those whose skills were adequate on leaving school but now need up-dating to facilitate a return to further education and training.'

individual learners and the remaining 199 questionnaires were completed by the organiser or tutor of the group on behalf of the group, reflecting their learners' views of the Read Write Now 2 Project.

Of these respondents, 59% were female and 39% were male; the remaining 2% did not answer this question. This is very close to the male/female breakdown of the larger group who had earlier returned the initial evaluation forms and also corresponds to that of the independent learners.

Unlike the independent learners, most of these respondents did give their age. Surprisingly, almost 40% of them were under 18. This is well over three times the rate in the same age category of those independent learners who gave this information. This can be accounted for

Figure 11 Age profile of literacy group participants N=331

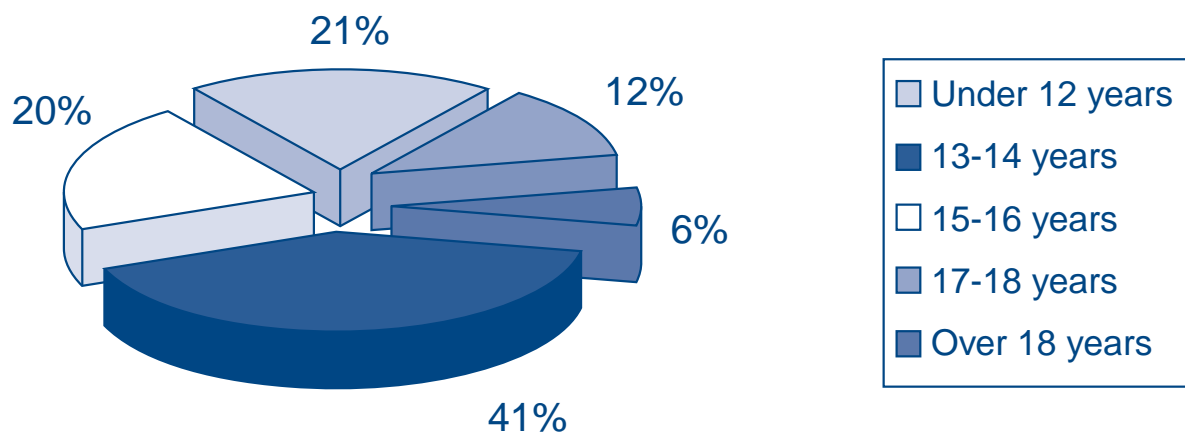


by the large proportion of schools that made use of the materials. It is worth noting that although schools were not part of the target group for the series, these programmes and workbook were nevertheless perceived as a useful resource and were widely used by teachers at both first and second level.

The other learners were scattered across the different age groups, with 9% falling into the age range of 19-21 years and 6.5% who were between 22 and 24 years. Around 10% – 12% of participants featured in each of the middle brackets of 25 - 34 years, 35 – 44 years and 45 – 54 years, while 9.5% were over 55 years.

Many participants did not give information on the age at which they left school: 142 people, which is over 41% of the total number of respondents, have either not answered this or entered 'not applicable'. Bearing in mind that almost 40% of respondents were under 18, this very large group is probably accounted for at least in part, by young people still at school.

Figure 12 Age left school N=198

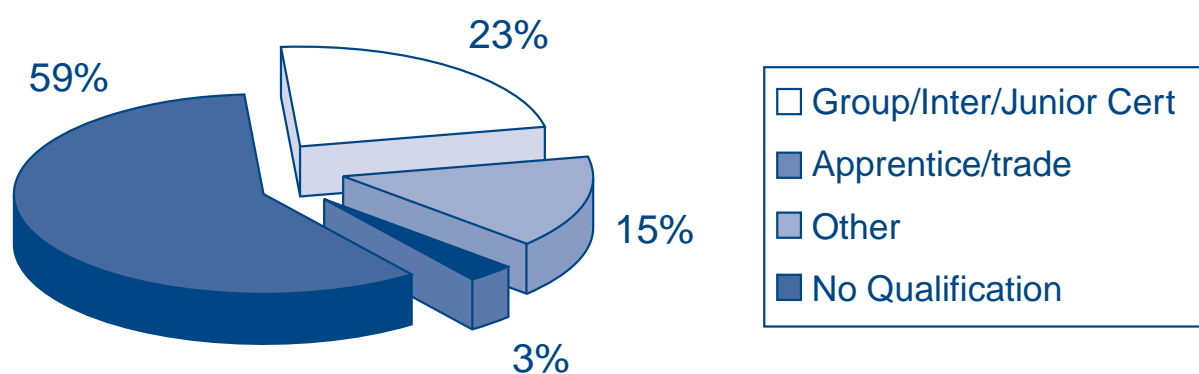


Leaving this group out of the picture,¹¹ figure 12 shows that 21% left school before the age of 12; and 41% left when they were either 13 or 14. Therefore, 62% had left school before the age of 15 – somewhat higher than the 54% of independent learners in the same category but given the large number of missing cases, close enough to support the notion that a very substantial proportion, amounting to more than half of the Read Write Now target group, left school before the age of 15.

Of the remaining respondents, 32% had left school between the ages of 15 years and 18 years with only 6% staying in the school system past the age of 18 years.

A similar picture emerges in relation to qualifications. Over 60% of respondents gave no answer to this question and 23% said that they had no qualifications. Many more of the independent learners, amounting to 68%, left school with no qualifications. However, the large proportion of non-respondents from both independent and scheme-based learners,

Figure 13 Educational qualifications N=134



makes it difficult to compare the two groups. Normally, it might be assumed that some people who withhold a response on this item may do so because they have no qualifications and prefer not to state it explicitly. However, if a large proportion of the questionnaire respondents are still at school, it is possible that they really have no qualifications yet.

¹¹ Valid percentage=percentage of those left after missing cases are removed.

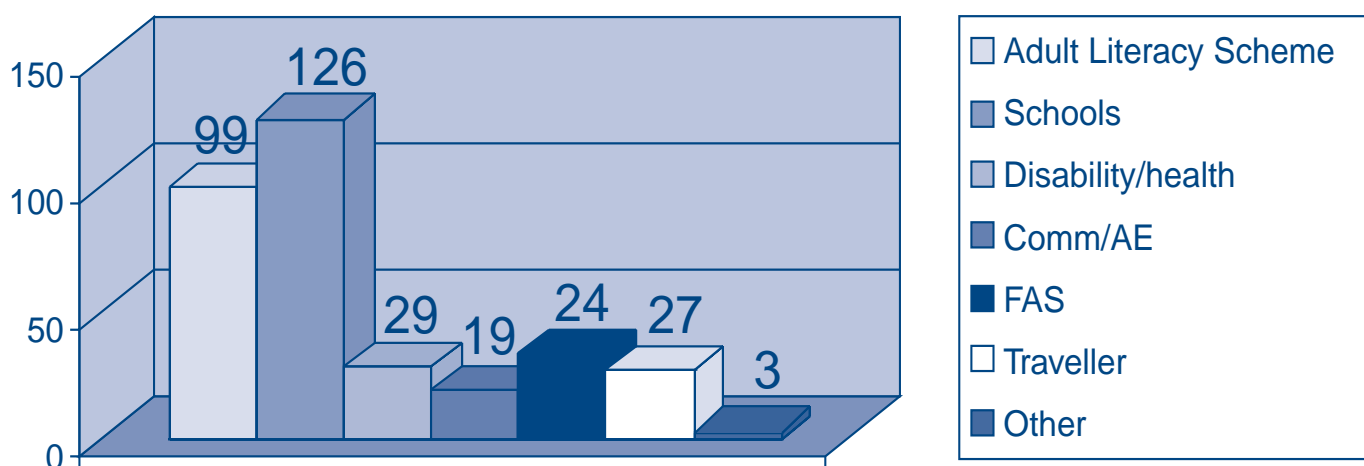
If those who chose not to answer this question are excluded, 23% of the remaining participants had gained their Group, Intermediate or Junior Certificate, 15% had gained other qualifications, mainly in adult education, community education or other training certificates, while the remaining 3% had completed training for an apprenticeship or trade.

For a variety of reasons 60% of the respondents were not in the labour market. Of these, 3.2% described themselves as students and another 3.2%, probably also students, said that this question was ‘not applicable’. A further 47% said that they were not in the labour force: some of these were working in the home, while others were retired or not able to work for other reasons. A further 6.2% gave no answer.

While it is likely that many of these respondents are adults who are not in the labour force, the large proportion of under 18-year-olds in the sample needs to be borne in mind here. It may well be that up to 40% of the responses given on the questionnaires represent answers from young people in different types of schools. Of the remaining participants, 12% were working full-time, 14% working part-time and 14% were unemployed at present.

Below, figure 14 shows the type of educational setting or learning environment where respondents were studying. Two thirds of the respondents were learning within the structured, formal educational systems: i.e. schools, which accounted for 37% of respondents; and literacy schemes, where 29% of these respondents were situated. The others were in a variety of groups: 10% with FÁS, 8% in Travellers’ groups, 6% in different

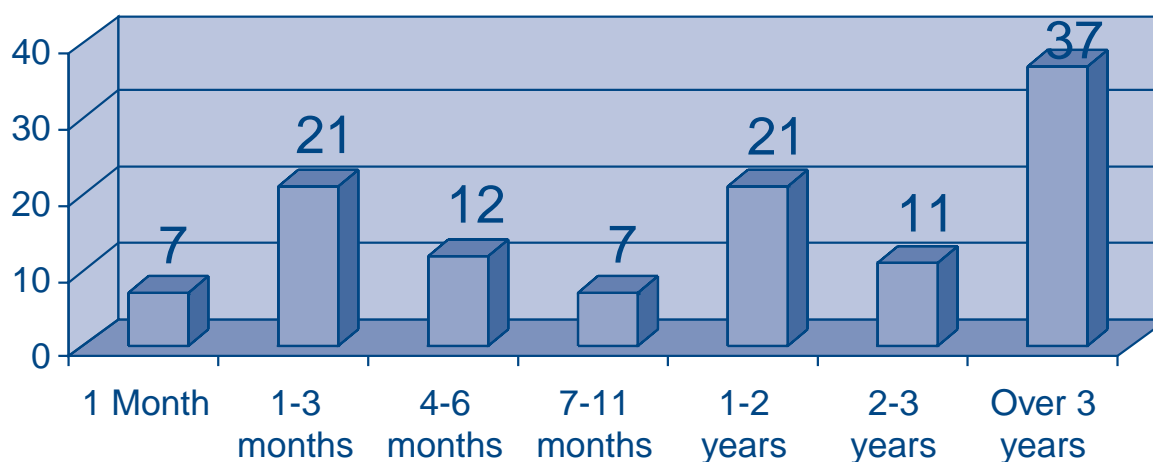
Figure 14 Group type N=337



community or adult education groups, a further 9% in disability and health-orientated groups. Included in the category of ‘other’ were responses from one Youthreach or CTW respondent, one from a prison, and one from an unspecified VEC course.

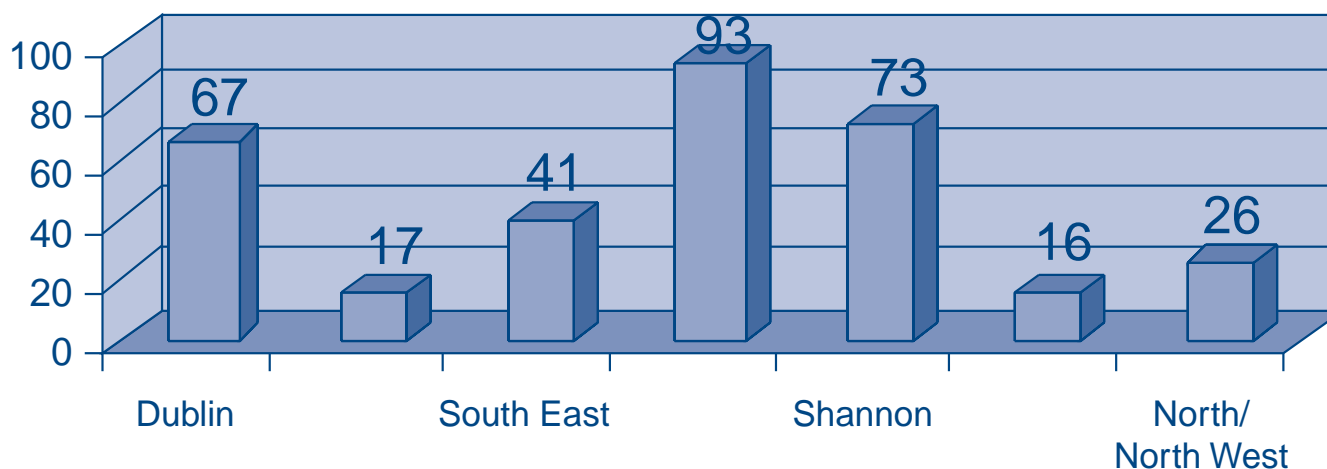
The 99 respondents from adult literacy schemes were asked about the type of tuition and length of time that they had been with that scheme. Of these 99 learners, 29% were receiving 1:1 tuition and 57% were learning in a group context, while 3% were learning through both means. Some people, 11% of these literacy scheme respondents, did not answer this question.

Figure 15 Length of time with Adult Literacy Scheme N=116



In relation to time spent with a scheme, 40% of participants had joined that group within the past year, many of them in the past six months while 18% had been with their scheme for 1 –2 years, 9% had already spent 2 – 3 years there, and one third of this group had been with a literacy scheme for over 3 years.

Figure 16 Regional location of learners



Read Write Now participants were located throughout the country although not surprisingly, a large proportion, 20%, were living in Dublin. Figure 16 below shows that a further 12% were in the South Eastern region with 5% in the Midlands East area, 28% resident in the South West region of Cork and Kerry, and 22% in the Shannon area.

* Regional division is based on the Irish Tourist Board's seven-part structure (www.ireland.tourism.ie)

Just 5% lived in the Ireland west area, with the remaining 8% located in the North/North

Table 2: How people heard about Read Write Now N=113

	Number	%
Radio Ad	33	10
TV Ad	51	15
Press	29	8.5
Literacy Group/scheme	101	30
Friend/Relative	12	3.5
NALA	33	10
Other	36	10
Multimedia	3	1
Media + Literacy Group	13	4
Media + Friend/Relative	9	2
No Answer	20	6

The next most important source of information was the TV advertisements, which informed 15% of respondents. This was followed by the radio advertisements, which let 10% know about the series.

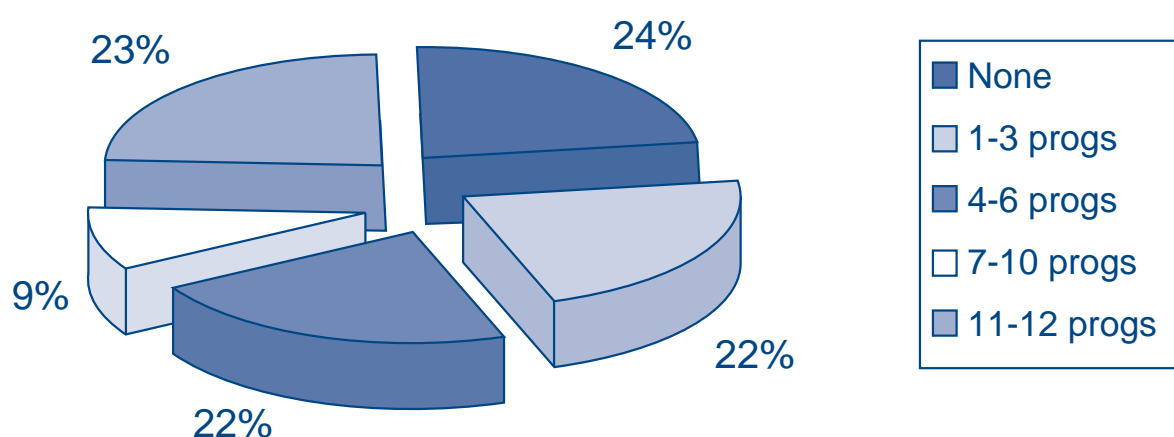
A further 10% heard about the series from NALA and another 10% heard of it from other sources such as work or a training organisation, with 8.5% who saw the advertisements in the press and 3.5% who were told about it by a friend or relative. The remaining 9% of respondents had learnt about the project from a combination of these sources.

Allowing for the fact that these literacy scheme learners had a natural line of communication with tutors and organisers who were a source of information about the series, this pattern reinforces the importance of TV and radio advertising in promoting the Read Write Now project. Overall, word-of-mouth seems to be a relatively weak source of information. The print media are useful for some people, but of course only for those whose reading skills are sufficiently developed to glean information from newspaper articles and leaflets.

People varied in the number of Read Write Now programmes they had watched by the time they completed the questionnaire.¹²

¹² The questionnaires were returned at different stages in late 2001 – some before the series was finished and others after the series had ended.

Figure 17 Number of programmes watched N=260

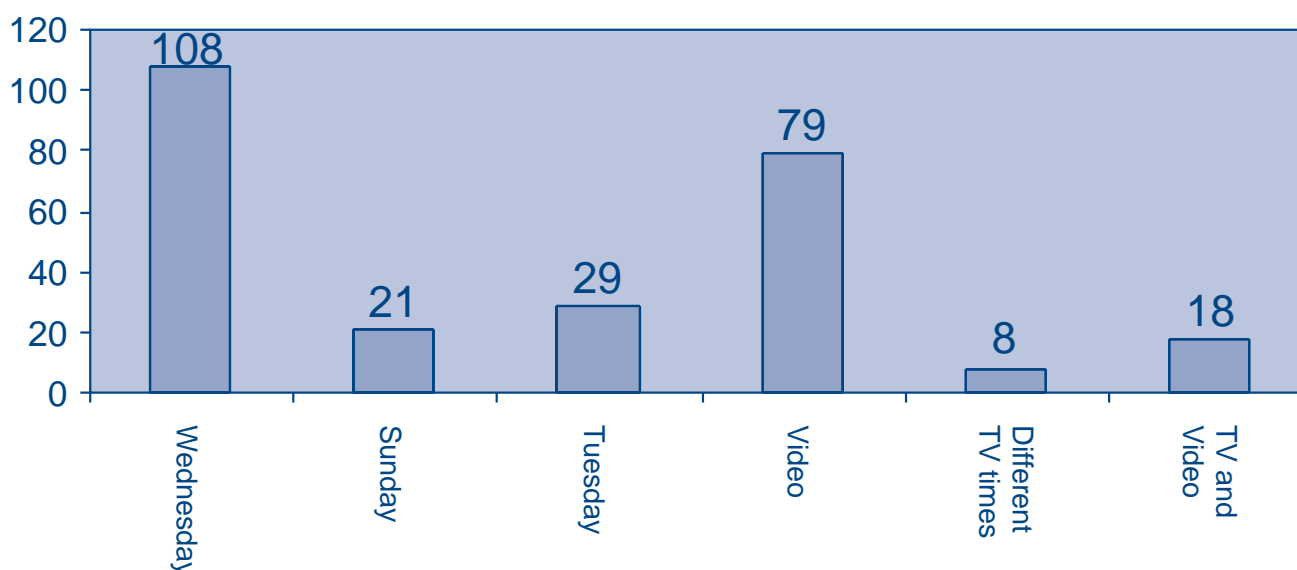


Interestingly, 24% of these respondents said that they did not actually watch the programmes at all, preferring to use only the workbook. It is important to bear in mind that these were people who already had a tutor in a literacy scheme or training programme. Interviews with learners in literacy schemes and groups indicate that many of these learners thought that their tutor provided enough support and that they did not therefore need the TV programmes as much as the independent learners did. These people, naturally, had nothing to say about those aspects of the TV programmes which were raised in the questionnaires. In the learners' ratings on these items, which are reported in section 3 below, the percentages given, where appropriate, exclude this group. All tables and charts show the number of people who responded to each item.

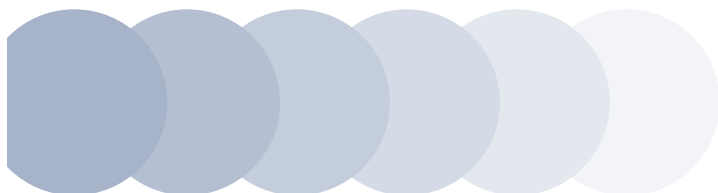
As for the rest, 22% had watched between 1 and 3 programmes in the series of 12, a further 22% had watched 4 – 6 programmes, 9% had watched 7 – 10 programmes and most of the remaining 23% had watched the entire series.

Learners following series 2 had a good choice of viewing times and some people even video-taped the programmes and watched them at their leisure.

Figure 18 Viewing format and time N=260



Just under two thirds of these respondents watched the Read Write Now 2 series on television and the rest watched it on video. A large proportion of these people, 41%, watched the programmes during the Wednesday time slot, and this was followed in popularity by the Tuesday slot which attracted 11% and last, Sunday with 8%. Some 3% of these people said that they watched it at more than one of these times on television and 7% changed between television and video, depending on their availability.



3

Section 3: The Impact of Read Write Now

3.1 Elements which contribute to learning

This section explores the effectiveness of Read Write Now as a resource for learning. What people learned from the series and the progress they made in their reading and writing, were influenced by a number of factors.

Firstly, the aims and content of the programmes, which were summarised in Section 1, describe the range of technical literacy skills which people could, in principle, gain by following the series. Characteristics of the learners themselves, their previous experience and their current skills, are a second contributing factor. In relation to this, the learner profiles contained in Section 2 give some personal information, such as age left school and qualifications, which provides a general indication of where these learners were starting from.

In order to get a clear picture of what people learned and how much progress they made, two other, inter-related questions need to be examined: a more detailed picture of participants' strengths and weaknesses in reading and writing; and what they themselves perceived as priority areas for learning.

3.2 Learners' goals

When people first approach a literacy scheme to get help with their reading and writing, it is usual to start off by finding out what motivated them to take that step. Adult literacy students are often prompted to seek help for their reading and writing difficulties by a change in their life circumstances or by an opportunity: children getting older and needing help with homework, or a new job offer.

These life goals in turn translate into more specific learning needs: spelling, filling in work rosters and so on. In the early stages of their work in the literacy scheme, students get help to identify in detail what their specific learning needs are: what are the things they need to learn, in order to do what they want to do in their daily life. With the help of their tutor or literacy organiser they can then prioritise the things that will help them achieve their life goals.

In a distance education context where there is no tutorial infrastructure to support learners' work, it is obviously not possible to go through this process of discussion and goal-setting. For this evaluation, however, an initial assessment strategy was devised which aimed to establish the literacy needs and goals of the Read Write Now learners who had agreed to participate in the evaluation.

3.3 Initial Assessment Strategy: Method

The methods used for finding out about people's existing skills and interests were determined by the level of access which the evaluation team had to different Read Write Now learners. There were three ways of contacting evaluation participants:

- Focus group meetings or individual interviews
- Telephone interviews
- Questionnaires.

People who attended the focus group meetings or who were interviewed face-to-face agreed to participate in a systematic initial assessment, which included an informal chat with one of the evaluation team, plus a range of reading and writing tasks. Interviewers matched participants' view of their own strengths and weaknesses against their performance on the tasks and recorded this on a supplied checklist (see Appendix 4). This summarises the twenty one Read Write Now programme objectives in reading, writing and spelling and includes a rating system, where 1 indicates that the person finds that 'this is difficult', 2 indicates 'I can do this but need revision' and 3 indicates that 'this is easy.' People then select those objectives which they particularly want to improve.

Evaluation participants who did not come for interview or attend a focus group meeting were, of course, not able to do the tasks from the initial assessment pack. In these cases, their strengths and weaknesses were determined in the course of the first telephone interview. The outcome of this discussion was recorded on the same checklist.

This checklist was also included in the questionnaire which was returned by learners in literacy schemes and other groups. Tutors were asked to fill this in with or for their learners at an early stage in their work on Read Write Now, to help students to set their goals for the series.

3.4 Initial Assessment Strategy: Purpose

It is worth noting at this point the rationale for embarking on this initial assessment process, and to reflect on the purposes which such information can and cannot effectively serve in a distance education context.

This initial assessment process was designed to determine participants' strengths and weaknesses in specific reading and writing skills, with a view to helping them to decide which areas they could most effectively concentrate on during the series. It is therefore essentially an instrument of individualised goal-setting. If this were a traditional, mainstream programme, it would not be unusual to administer a similar, post-programme test and thereby estimate the learners' progress and from this, make inferences about the success of the programme.

In a distance education context where there is no infrastructure to support people systematically during and after the process, this would be both inappropriate and for assessment purposes, not very revealing. In the first place, people who had had little or no previous experience of adult education, who had approached the Read Write Now project with some uncertainty, were not sure what to expect of the initial assessment process and in some cases, were rather anxious about it. It was very important for the interviewers, both face-to-face and on the telephone, to emphasise that this process was not meant to judge or define the individual. To put in place a similar assessment at the end of the series, would

have reinforced the notion of this process as a test, rather than a supportive exercise in goal-setting. As well as this, it is important to bear in mind that all of the participants were taking part voluntarily.

Furthermore, it is difficult to see what definitive statements could be made as a result of a pre- and post assessment process, in a distance education context such as the twelve-week Read Write Now project. Other research into the evaluation of distance education projects, points out the disadvantages of this ‘classic approach’:

..that when interventions do not take place in the controlled conditions of a laboratory, but in the real world, there is little control over extraneous events, conditions, contexts, methods of operationalising the treatment and so on. Thus there is considerable likelihood of causes other than the one being measured intervening in the experiment.¹³

A further practical limitation of this approach is that it fails to ‘provide any explanation or context for the outcome measures.’¹⁴

It is important therefore, to view the initial assessment process which was carried out at the start of the Read Write Now evaluation as a supportive dialogue designed to help learners to identify their own needs and goals.

3.5 What people wanted to get out of Read Write Now

This section draws on comments made by people in the course of face-to-face and telephone interviews and also, on the responses channelled through the questionnaires. Where there was a two-way dialogue, it was possible for people to explain their motivation in detail and in turn, get guidance from the interviewer, which could help them to clarify how to go about meeting their aspirations. Questionnaire responses do not yield the same depth of insight but they do provide a general overview of participants’ needs and goals, across the whole group. Comments from the interviews can complement the information shown in Tables 3, 4 and 5.

Some people started off explaining their motivation for getting involved in Read Write Now in terms of a general sense that life would somehow be better, if they could learn to read and write well:

I don't want things to be a problem any more.

I feel the world is your oyster if you can read and write.

More specific goals were mentioned which related to everyday life, such as the wish to:

- Write to relatives abroad
- Help children/grandchildren
- Improve situation at work

¹³ CALDER, J. and PANDA, S. (2000) Evaluation and Quality in Yates, C. and Bradley, J. (2000), op.cit., p. 118

¹⁴ ibid., p.116.

- Deal with changing demands of work
- Get new job
- Make it possible to engage in training or further training
- Put thoughts on paper
- Develop strategies to handle the unknown
- Refresh memory of things forgotten
- Read for enjoyment
- Write for enjoyment.

Many of these goals are work-related or otherwise functional. However, some are not. Several people longed to have access to the enjoyment and satisfaction of reading for leisure and of writing creatively:

I saw the film 'Hannibal' and I thought, now there's a book I'd love to read!

I always had an ambition to write a short story.

General or everyday aspirations need to be linked to particular learning needs. Sometimes, these needs encompass dimensions which are more subtle than specific gaps in their reading and writing:

I'd have loved to be able to help out at my daughter's dancing class but I couldn't write down the names, not with everybody there looking. I'd have been ok at home but with other people watching, I'd just freeze.

This is an interesting comment because it describes a certain kind of difficulty: not so much the inability to read or write, as the public setting. Several people described how they had to take forms from the bank or post office to fill in at home, how they would not use credit cards or cheque books, not only because of the literacy skills involved in these daily life tasks, but because they tended to panic if they had to read or write in front of other people. In these cases, the problem is not just one of skills but also arises from the stress which reading and writing provoke in certain situations. This means that some people's learning needs are not only technical but also – and for some people, perhaps even primarily - affective and personal.

In fact, many people said in one way or another that what they wanted most of all to achieve in improving their reading and writing, was to feel better about themselves:

I'd like to get over this lack of trust in other people that comes from the writing problem. I'm always watching myself.

It'd be great to feel that you belong – it's like living in a foreign country. It was great on holiday, everyone was in the same boat, nobody knew what anything said. It's like that for me all the time.

Other explicitly personal goals which people identified at an early stage in their work on Read Write Now were:

- Confidence
- Patience
- Courage to talk about problem
- Independence
- Be able to join in with conversations and activities
- Not be stressed.

All evaluation participants were invited to specify particular literacy needs and goals. The frequencies with which different skills were mentioned by the questionnaire respondents are shown in Tables 3, 4 and 5.

It should be noted that there is not always a direct correspondence between identified needs and goals. It is true that once they have noticed a particular gap in their reading or writing, people often decide they want to work on this. However, this is not always the case. They may have very specific priorities, or they may identify several gaps and feel able to address only one or two of these at a time. Conversely, some people who feel reasonably confident with certain skills may nevertheless decide that they want to revise them, and therefore state these as a learning goal.

Table 3: Reading goals N= 340

Objective	1	2	3	N/a	Goal
1. Getting information from documents used in daily life	32.6%	35.3%	20.3%	11.8%	51.6%
2. Looking up information e.g. telephone book, dictionary	25%	37.7%	27.6%	9.7%	55.9%
3. Following written instructions e.g. recipes, labels etc.	19.1%	47.9%	21.4%	11.5%	50.8%
4. Getting information from tables e.g. bus timetable	20%	37.9%	23.2%	18.9%	50.8%
5. Understanding abbreviations e.g. in small ads, recipes	30%	37.9%	18.8%	13.3%	51.4%
6. Finding places on the map of Ireland	24.7%	25.8%	29.7%	19.8%	43.8%
7. Following a street map	29.4%	31.8%	19.1%	19.8%	49.7%

1=This is difficult

2=I can do this but need revision

3=This is easy

The most important reading goal identified by these respondents, was reading for information, found both in commonly used documents and in reference sources. These are items 1 and 2 on Table 3.

More than half of all respondents identified information seeking in these two contexts, as a priority for their learning. Almost a third of the whole group said that they found it difficult to extract information from the kind of written material encountered in daily life. If we add to this those people who felt that they would benefit from revision on getting information from different types of documents, the proportion of those who have some need or gap in this area, rises to just under 68% of the group. Of these 231 individuals, two thirds set information seeking from documents as a learning goal.

Almost half of the whole group expressed uncertainty about following the type of written instructions found in recipes, for example, or on labels and just under a fifth said that they found this difficult, which together amounts to two thirds of the 340 respondents. In fact, half of the group identified this as a learning goal.

Getting information from tables or maps was identified as a difficulty by a rather smaller proportion of these respondents and fewer people specified these skills as a learning goal. However, the rate of non-response to these items is considerably higher than the others, which may suggest some uncertainty about what these skills involve.

The highest priority in writing was form filling. This was also the area where most people reported difficulty or at least, a need for revision: 68.5%, if these two categories of responses ‘difficult’ and ‘need revision’ are combined and 60% saw this as a learning goal. Writing letters was considered a learning goal for over half of the respondents, 54.1% and almost two thirds of them, or 66.5% reported finding this difficult or in need of revision.

Table 4: Writing goals N=340

Objective	1	2	3	N/a	Goal
1. Writing full sentences using capitals and full stops	24.2%	43.6%	22.3%	10%	51.8%
2. Writing notes of about 50 words	32.1%	34.4%	16.2%	17.4%	51.2%
3. Writing postcards	21.7%	31.2%	29.7%	17.4%	43.8%
4. Writing letters	30%	36.5%	16.1%	17.4%	54.1%
5. Filling in forms	24.4%	44.1%	20%	11.5%	60.3%
6. Writing cheques	31.2%	29.8%	13.3%	25.9%	31.9%
7. Making notes, e.g. in diary	18.8%	36.8%	20%	24.5%	35.3%
8. Writing instructions e.g. leaving a 'how to' message	23.8%	38.5%	13.9%	23.9%	35.3%
9. Writing a report or story of about 150 words	55%	19.4%	5.9%	19.8%	39.4%

1=This is difficult

2=I can do this but need revision

3=This is easy

Writing cheques, making notes and writing instructions were difficult or in need of revision for up to two thirds of the group. However, only about half of these people identified those particular skills as learning goals for the series.

The most difficult aspect of writing for most people was writing continuous prose: more than half of the group said that they would find it difficult to write a piece of around 150 words and almost 20% said that they would need to revise this. Interestingly, almost 40% of the whole group said that they wanted to work on writing longer pieces.

The single most frequently-mentioned learning goal was spelling key words, which was identified by almost two thirds of respondents (63.8%) as a learning goal. Most people (75.6%) said that they had some degree of difficulty in this area. Interestingly, this was also identified as the key priority in the major adult literacy campaign carried out with the BBC in the 1970s.¹⁵

Table 5: Spelling goals N=340

Objective	1	2	3	N/a	Goal
1. Using alphabetical order	23.8%	40.3%	24.7%	28.3%	52.9%
2. Spelling key words	23.2%	52.4%	14.4%	16.8%	63.8%
3. Using spelling rules	35.8%	38.2%	7.5%	18.3%	55.8%
4. Using capital letters	15.3%	30%	40.9%	13.8%	40.3%
5. Using punctuation	31.8%	34.4%	22.6%	11.2%	55.3%

1=This is difficult 2=I can do this but need revision 3=This is easy

Other aspects of spelling including the use of punctuation and particular spelling rules, were seen as an important priority.

Responses from the independent learners were gathered in the same way. But this information, as it was gathered by interview and over a period of time, is more amenable to analysis of combination of skills which individuals wanted to acquire. Learning goals specified by the independent learners, which were recorded using the same mechanism, followed a broadly similar pattern. Reading for information, form-filling and spelling emerged as their most important priorities. Independent learners were also keen to improve certain other writing skills such as writing notes, letters and lists.

Because there were fewer independent learners than questionnaire respondents, and we have the benefit of their verbal explanation as well as what is recorded on the checklist, it is possible to examine the range of goals indicated by individuals. From this brief analysis it is possible to say:

- Most people identified a mixture of reading, writing and spelling goals, rather than concentrating on one particular area

¹⁵ HARGREAVES, D. (1979) *Adult Literacy and Broadcasting* London: Pinter p. 143

- Reading alone was not stated as a goal by anyone
- Spelling was specified by all but 4 people
- For a small number of these learners, improved spelling was their **only** perceived need.

Some people identified many goals, covering all three areas of reading, writing and spelling. These people fell into two groups: those who were almost beginning their literacy work and who probably fell into the DES Level 1 group; and those whose standard was much more advanced than this but who had a range of different gaps.

3.6 What people actually got out of Read Write Now

About two thirds of the questionnaire respondents from schemes and groups who watched the series said that they had made identifiable gains in their reading and writing as a result. These benefits are examined here under three headings:

- Improvements in reading and writing;
- Things which people are able to do in daily life which they had not done before or which had been difficult for them;
- Personal benefits which released their potential to improve aspects of their reading and writing.

3.6.1 Improvements in reading and writing

Figure 19 below shows that of those 260 people who watched the TV programmes, 60.8% commented positively on the impact of the series on their learning. Just over 17% of these learners made positive remarks of a general nature about the impact which the series had had on their reading and writing: that they had learnt a lot, that they had enjoyed the series, or that they had acquired a combination of reading and writing and spelling skills.

There were similar comments from independent learners:

It's a great help – you're learning something every time you look at it – it's a learning experience.

Other general comments also referred to the entertainment value of the programmes and the encouragement which they provided for the learner:

I enjoy watching the programmes. I actually look forward to them, I feel I am learning a lot from them.

I've been encouraged to read.

Some people reported a range of more specific gains in reading. Some of these improvements indicated an increased awareness of the reading content in their environment and an ability to handle this:

I understand adverts with writing more and I can read billboards more easily.

I'm walking along looking at words in shop windows and noticing how they're spelt!

Other people described specific reading strategies that they had started to use since watching the programmes:

When I'm ready I come to a word I can't read. I go on and get the gist and sometimes then I can fill in the missing word.

Word-building skills, where people break down unfamiliar or difficult words, were mentioned and some people clarified that knowing about syllables and how they work was an important step in understanding how words are put together:

I'd never heard of syllables before or vowels either. It helps.

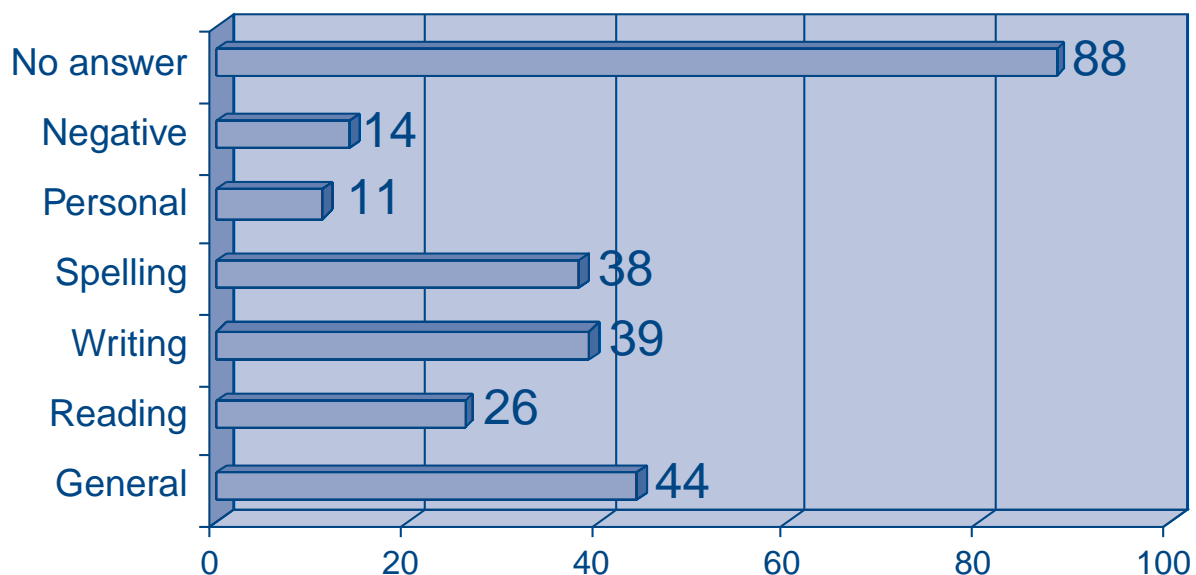
Other comments suggested that for some people, their sight vocabulary was starting to improve:

I'm becoming familiar with signs in everyday situations.

Therefore, in addition to the 17% whose general comments mentioned gains in reading, a further 10% referred to the specific reading skills described above. These may be summarised as:

- an improved overall consciousness of reading in the environment;
- specific reading strategies;
- sight vocabulary.

Figure 19 Reading and writing skills which people learned from the programmes N=260



Writing and spelling are shown on Figure 19 in two categories but in practice, they are obviously connected. Around 15% of the group referred to improvements in their writing. Some people who had previously tended to dash off any writing they had to do without particular care or attention, indicated that this had changed:

It's been very interesting. It's made me stop and think before writing down a word I'm unsure of now.

When I'm writing, I'm more conscious of punctuation.

Some people reported an increased inclination to write or at least, less of a tendency to avoid it:

I'm not afraid to put something on paper now.

I'm writing a lot more than I was before and it's not now the chore that it was. Also, my writing is smaller, neater.

A further 14.6% of the questionnaire respondents who saw the TV programmes mentioned improvements in spelling. Interestingly, a much larger proportion of the independent learners referred to the significance of the gains they had made in spelling: all but 4 of the 42 interviewees (90.5%) mentioned this as something important which they had learned from the series.

Like other aspects of literacy, spelling involves a combination of different knowledge and skills. People may have particular gaps which, if addressed, can have a substantial impact on the accuracy and presentation of their writing. When probing the impact of the TV programmes on participants' reading and writing, three types of improvements in spelling were mentioned, some by questionnaire respondents but mostly by the independent learners: particular sounds (phonics); spelling rules; and spelling strategies.

Sometimes, people who missed out on learning certain phonic conventions started to pick these up during the programmes, for example, the woman who said:

I compiled a list of words ending in '-tion'.

For accomplished spellers, rules are often 'caught' at the stage of learning to read and write and many of us would find it difficult to explain the rules for doubling the consonant in the gerund, for example (swim, swimming; put, putting) or for dropping the e (live, living), even if we would naturally write the words correctly. When people have not internalised these conventions at an early stage, there are gaps. However, it is possible to fill these by explicitly teaching the rule, which is why Read Write Now had a 'spelling tip' every week. Learners were interested in these tips and some pointed out that to be able to handle these rules explicitly, they needed to know about vowels and consonants as well. For some people this also was new ground which the programmes helped them to cover.

Learners said also that they had discovered strategies to handle unfamiliar spellings, for example breaking up words and using a dictionary:

*I'm able to spell a bit better, I'm able to break up words.
Instead of substituting words which are hard for me to spell I'm
trying to spell or find the spelling for the word I want to use.*

Some people, because of the work done on the uses of alphabetical order in the series, were now able to use a dictionary to look up spellings:

I'm using alphabetical order to help me with spelling.

One significant aspect of the improvements in spelling which were mentioned is that spelling seems to be relevant for people with a very wide range of literacy needs. Work on spelling can be beneficial not only to beginning learners but to people whose skills are more advanced:

*I feel I'm above the level of the programme but I'm using it for
spelling practice.*

*I've started to break down words in spelling – I've picked up a lot on
spelling, even if the programmes are too easy for me.*

3.6.2 Participants' ability to do new things in daily life

One of the questionnaire items asked respondents to mention any new things which they could now do which they had previously found impossible or would not have considered before. All of the independent learners were asked the same question in the telephone or face-to-face interviews.

The purpose of this question was to try to pin-point what practical differences, if any, their new literacy skills have made to their lives in the few weeks since they started following the series: that is, how they have applied what they have learned. This is a rather demanding question for respondents, as it asks them to make the link between new reading and writing skills and practical activities in daily life, a connection which may not be immediately obvious to the learner.

Even so, just under 62% of the questionnaire respondents said that they could identify new things that they had done in daily life, since starting on Read Write Now. Figure 20 shows that almost a quarter of the comments (23.1%) made in answer to this open question were more general than specific: for example, that the person had learnt a lot or had learnt a variety of reading and writing and spelling skills.

Some examples given by independent learners helped to put the specific literacy skills they had learnt, into a daily context:

*I never had a credit card before – I'm going to the bank this week to
get one. I feel the programmes have given me the confidence to
move in that direction.*

I've joined a computer class.

Almost a fifth of the people in schemes and groups referred to new activities which involved reading in particular. Getting information from documents in daily life was mentioned by 46% of those who had quoted gains in reading as being influential on a day-to-day basis.

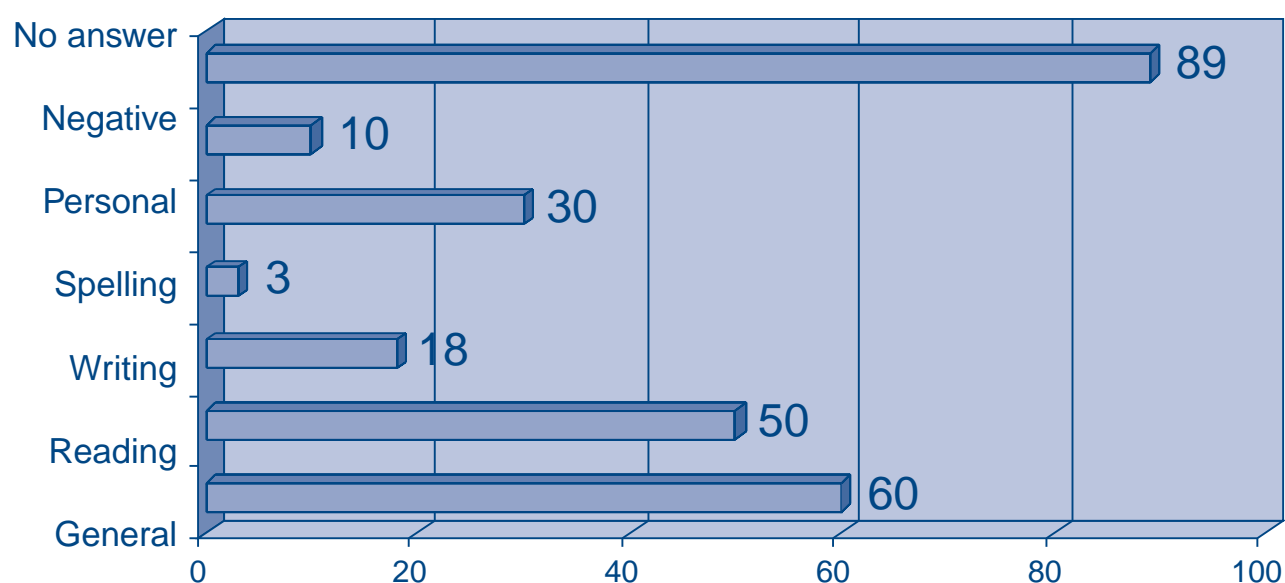
The independent learners reported similar benefits:

I'm taking in more information by reading, rather than relying on verbal information.

I helped a girl to read instructions on a packet. That was encouraging!

I got the Northside News through the letter-box – now I'm able to handle the paper, read it through and I get stuck only on a couple of words.

Figure 20 Application of new reading and writing skills in daily life N=260



New activities involving writing or spelling were mentioned much less frequently by learners in schemes and groups. Just under 7% said that they had done something new which involved writing, such as filling in forms and writing notes. Only 1.2% said that they had noticed better spelling making a practical difference in their daily lives.

Bearing in mind that 15% of the same group already said that their writing skills had improved (see Figure 19) and that almost the same proportion reported gains in spelling, it is puzzling that most these respondents from schemes and groups do not report much in the way of practical, concrete benefits from these improvements. Perhaps people find it easier to manoeuvre around tasks which involve writing, than those which demand skill in reading. Indeed, one of the strategies which people use to overcome the practical difficulties which arise from problems in writing and spelling, is to rely on relations and friends to help out.

Answers from the independent learners suggest that there may be something in this. A larger proportion of this group reported practical, concrete benefits from the writing and spelling gains they had made in the programmes.

I did my Christmas cards myself this year.

I've been writing letters and lists – things I'd have got someone else to do for me before.

I've been writing covering notes in work.

This echoes one of the general aims expressed by learners at the start of the series, the desire for increased independence in their daily life.

Two other factors may be worth considering. Firstly, independent learners were contacted by telephone or in a face-to-face interview. This meant that interviewers could discuss what they had learned in depth, over a period of weeks, and find out how they had managed to apply this learning. Questionnaire respondents gave a once-off response in writing and may have been hampered by this.

As well as this, the people who sent back questionnaires were working on their reading and writing in an adult literacy centre or other education or training setting, with the help of a tutor and all of the institutional support that goes with this. There are therefore many possible in-puts into the learning which they achieve.

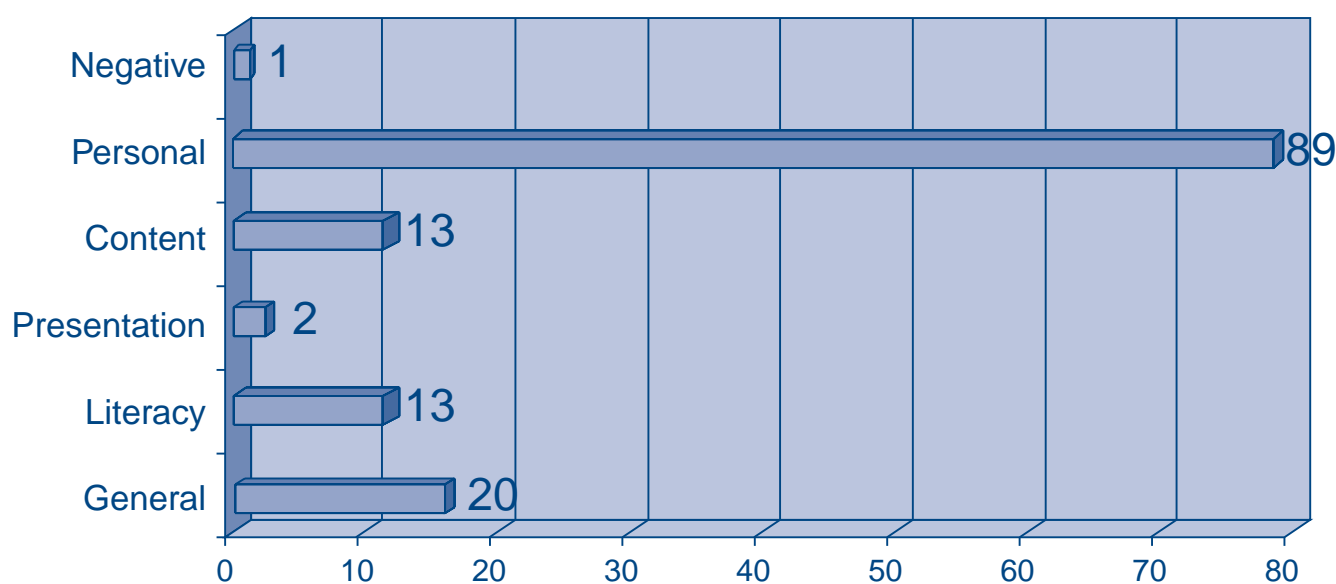
These factors may account for the differences in the practical, concrete impact of reading and writing skills reported by the two groups of learners.

3.6.3 Other benefits not already mentioned

One of the open items on the questionnaire invited people to report any other benefits they had gained from following Read Write Now, which they had not already mentioned. This item may be considered as an optional extra, and was answered by almost half of the group (49.3%).

Just over 15% of the additional comments made were general remarks about how much people had enjoyed the series and how much they had learned from it. A further 22% mentioned particular literacy gains (10.2%) or commented favourably on the programme content (10.2%) and presentation.

Figure 21 Other benefits not already mentioned N=128



However, the most striking feature of the distribution of these additional, optional comments is that 61.7% referred to benefits of a personal nature. For example, people said that they thought the programme had had a positive effect on their self-confidence, that they themselves identified with some of the issues which were dealt with in the programmes.

It is worth noting that although the responses reported in Figures 19 and 20 were addressing the specific literacy gains and their application, and did not invite comment about more personal benefits, nevertheless 4.2% of the group counted these among their literacy gains; and 11.5% mentioned personal benefits in relation to application in daily life. All of these comments were spontaneous and unsolicited.

It will be important to clarify what exactly is meant by the shorthand category, ‘personal gains’ or ‘personal benefits’, its frequency of occurrence and its significance in a distance education literacy context.

3.6.4 Personal Gains

Given that the original aim for Read Write Now was to help learners improve their reading and writing, the questions which investigated people’s goals and the learning generated by the series, referred to specific literacy skills: there was no item, either on the questionnaire or on the interview schedule, which asked about goals or benefits of a personal nature.

This is entirely appropriate. It would not be acceptable to probe, uninvited, the personal difficulties which a lack of reading and writing skills might have caused people. Similarly, it would be tactless to ask directly whether people feel in any way better about themselves as a result of the literacy gains they have made.

However, in the course of telephone and face-to-face interviews and even in written answers given on questionnaires, people often volunteered such information. As well as this, it is possible to infer such gains from some of the details they give us in response to other questions, especially when they describe new activities. The woman who said that she had done her own Christmas cards for the first time is one example of this. Another is the man who was now able to write his own cheques on the spot, because he had just learned how to write numbers out in words.

To clarify what we mean by ‘personal gains’ it may be useful to revisit learners’ goals, when people said at the start what they wanted to get out of Read Write Now. As well as the functional and technical benefits which have already been discussed, in Section 3.5 above it was stated that people also wanted to gain more confidence, patience and courage; to become more independent, to feel included in all aspects of social and working life; to feel generally better about themselves.

These aspirations are consistent with the extract from the NALA mission statement which was quoted in Section 1 and which emphasised that literacy is not just a set of technical skills, but also,

encompasses aspects of personal development – social, economic and emotional and is concerned with improving self-esteem and building confidence.¹⁶

¹⁶ NALA mission statement, *ibid.*

According to the questionnaire responses given by the learners in schemes and groups and also, the independent learners who were interviewed, people did achieve personal benefits, as a direct result of following the series. Of the 260 people who returned questionnaires, just over 30% spontaneously mentioned gains of this kind; a much higher proportion, of the independent learners, over 80%, gave similar feed-back.

Improvements in self-esteem and self-confidence are not easily measured. However, it is possible to describe them and to analyse what factors contributed to such gains. Judging by the comments made both on questionnaires and in the interviews, three significant elements emerge, which appear to have been very significant for a substantial number of learners:

- Knowing you are not alone;
- Seeing that other people have succeeded in overcoming their reading and writing difficulties;
- Finding out that help is available.

One of the greatest sources of distress for people with reading and writing difficulties who have not yet made contact with the literacy services, is the sense of isolation. Many people genuinely believe that they are the only one with this problem and it can therefore be a revelation for them to know that others are in the same position.

In this regard, the ‘learner’s story’ section of the TV programmes was very significant. Table 6 below shows the ratings which questionnaire respondents and independent learners gave to this element of the series. Independent learners’ ratings are shown in brackets.

Table 6: Participants' ratings for learner's story*

%	Poor	Fair	Quite good	Very good
Learner's story	1.8% (5.1%)	13.8% (6.8%)	40.2 % (28.8%)	44.2 % (59.3%)

* Questionnaire respondents: N=224

Independent learners: N=42

Ratings for the learner’s story are very high, being considered good or very good by a total of 84.4% of those who sent back questionnaires. This was close to the ratings given by the independent learners who were interviewed and asked the same questions. Of this group, 88.1% said that they thought the learner’s story was either good or very good although a greater proportion (59.3%) gave it the top rating.

Some questionnaire respondents jotted down written comments which referred to the bravery of the people who appeared on television to talk about their experiences; or how much they identified with their stories and how these helped them to see that there are many people in the same position as themselves.

Independent learners made similar comments:

Knowing that there are other people out there with the problem makes life easier.

It was also very significant for people to see that these learners had overcome their reading and writing problems and done well:

Knowing that other people have the problem, knowing that the problem can be solved....

Seeing people and hearing their story and being made aware of how they've progressed is very encouraging.

Some of the independent learners said that not only had they not known that other people had difficulties with reading and writing, but that they had not realised that there was a network of literacy schemes there to help them. Even though most of them were not yet ready to accept a referral to a scheme, the fact that the service was there was important. Other people were very appreciative of these TV programmes and of the fact that the study pack was available free of charge:

This is the best thing that's ever been on TV, for me.

As a result of this new information, learners described personal gains which included:

- Increased confidence;
- Higher self-esteem;
- Determination and focus.

Here are a few of the comments made by independent learners which illustrate these gains:

It's bringing me out and giving me confidence.

It has helped my confidence greatly.

I'm more confident speaking.

It's good to know you don't need to be shamed because of this.

I've gained in determination.

I'm hopeful now.

It may be tempting to suggest that people's confidence and self-esteem start to increase as a result of improvements in their reading and writing. However, it is just as likely that the reverse is the case: that improved self-esteem helps to remove the barriers created by stress and expectations of failure, and releases people's potential for learning and self-development. The section on learners' goals (3.5) reported how some learners described their difficulties not only in terms of gaps in technical literacy skills but also, in terms of the stress generated by particular situations and settings. These comments are supported by the

substantial body of research literature¹⁷ which documents the adverse impact of certain affective factors such as anxiety and stress, on learning.

All of this has considerable significance when estimating the impact of Read Write Now and when considering the aims and focus which similar initiatives should take in the future. It points to the conclusion that what have been called ‘personal gains’ are not an optional extra which arrive as a by-product of improvements in spelling or reading; but rather, that these gains are very much a central part of literacy work, for some people even the main point of it; and that specific literacy gains are likely to go hand-in-hand with personal benefits and indeed, may even be dependent on them.

If this is true, it elevates the significance of the personal gains reported here as a major outcome of the series which is of considerable value and significance, especially for independent learners with no previous contact with the literacy services. To a large extent, this outcome was achieved by the simple provision of information, in the context of the story of an individual with whom viewers were able to identify.

3.7 Non-respondents and others

Figures 19 –21 above, which summarise the range of reading, writing and personal gains reported by people following Read Write Now, show also another cohort: those people who either did not answer these items, or whose response was negative rather than positive.

When asked to specify learning they had achieved in reading and writing, (see Figure 19) just over 33% of those who saw the programmes did not answer. A further 5.4% gave a negative response, for example that they did not like some aspect of the series or that they did not particularly benefit from it. In response to the question which probed people’s application of their new skills, (See Figure 20) a similar picture emerges: just over 34% did not answer and 3.8% gave a negative response.

Looking at the overall pattern of responses to these items, it seems that for those people who returned questionnaires, learners in schemes and groups, just over 60% reported definite gains, in saying that they had actually learned from the programme. Although the remaining 39% of respondents did not specifically state that they made no such gains, neither did they take the opportunity to report any. It is always difficult to gauge the reasons why people do not answer particular items and a certain proportion of non-response is to be expected. Even so, for the purpose of identifying the factors in Read Write Now which support the target group, it may be instructive at this point to probe possible reasons for people’s non-response to this question.

There are two possible explanations for this which are not mutually-exclusive and which both merit consideration:

- Targeting
- Room for improvement.

¹⁷ for example see Abramson,, Seligman and Teasdale (1978), *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 87 on learned helplessness.

3.7.1 Targeting

Two of the questions which were put to questionnaire respondents and also to the independent learners, were designed to find out whether the series was pitched at a level which was suitable for the target group of learners. Table 7 shows what people said about the pace or speed, and about the level of the series. Ratings for independent learners are given in brackets.

Table 7: Participants' ratings for pace and level*

	Too slow	Quite good	Just right	Too fast
Pace/speed	5.7% (7.5%)	37% (10.1%)	40.9% (72.3%)	16.4% (10.1%)
Level	5.8% (11.7%)	39.4% (14%)	47.9% (66.1%)	6.9% (8.2%)

*Questionnaire respondents: N=262 for pace; 256 for level. Independent learners: N=42 for both

Of the 262 questionnaire respondents who commented on the pace of the series, just under 80% found that this was quite good or just right for them, whereas 22.1% said that the programmes either went too fast or too slowly for them. A very slightly higher proportion of the independent learners, 82.4%, found that the pace was either quite good or just right; however, many more of the answers from this group were in the 'just right' category.

The picture in relation to the level of the programmes is quite similar. A total of 87.3% of these respondents found that the level was either quite good or just right: a very high degree of satisfaction. Just over 80% of the independent learners gave a similar response though once again, a far greater number of these people said that the level was just right for them.

From these figures it is possible to draw some conclusions about the accuracy with which Read Write Now catered for its audience. Up to one fifth of these participants found the level and pace unsuitable, either because they were at a more advanced stage themselves, or because they were just starting out.

This pattern bears comparison with the feed-back given on the first Read Write Now series: in that case, a much larger proportion of the learners from schemes and groups, upwards of 40%, found those programmes either too hard or too easy for them.¹⁸ Independent learners who followed that series fared better, with just 20% expressing reservations about the level.¹⁹

It seems, therefore, that the differential between the ratings of independent learners and people in schemes and groups which was reported following the first series, has not emerged this time around: both cohorts report roughly the same proportions of satisfaction and

¹⁸ Grummel, B. (2001) Read Write Now TV Project Evaluation Report Dublin: NALA pp 41, 42.

¹⁹ *ibid*, p23.

dissatisfaction with the pace and level of the programmes. This has settled down to about 80%/20%, which indicates that about four-fifths of the learners are being adequately catered for. Furthermore, quite a high proportion, over 40% of questionnaire respondents who saw the programmes and over two thirds of independent learners, judge that the programmes are just right for them.

A ‘quite good’ or ‘just right’ rating from four-fifths of these participants on the key questions of pace and level, amounts to a very good degree of satisfaction, especially considering that the original target audience (see Section 1) covered a very wide range: ‘people who want to improve their reading and writing’. This target audience was therefore catered for even more effectively in this second series of Read Write Now, than in the first.

Backtracking to the 40% of respondents who did not report improvements in their reading and writing, either by not responding to these items or by giving a negative response (see Figures 19-21): half of these can be accounted for if we consider that one-fifth of the cohort has said that the programmes were too fast or too slow, too easy or too difficult, for them. In other words, this 20% are outside the middle-range target group for whom the programmes were designed. This may explain their lack of response when asked to specify particular gains in reading and writing.

That still leaves a further 20% who declined to report such gains. It may be that this represents a group of people who simply did not take to the series or for a variety of reasons did not like it. However, there may be other factors at work here. Some of these may emerge from the experience of people who were involved in Read Write Now during the first series, but now no longer are.

3.7.2 Probing reasons for non-involvement

During the course of the second series, it emerged that while the viewer ratings were very much higher for Read Write Now 2 than the ratings which had been reported for the first series – and these were already very high - the number of study packs which had been

Table 8: Viewer ratings and packs sent out, RWN 1 and RWN 2

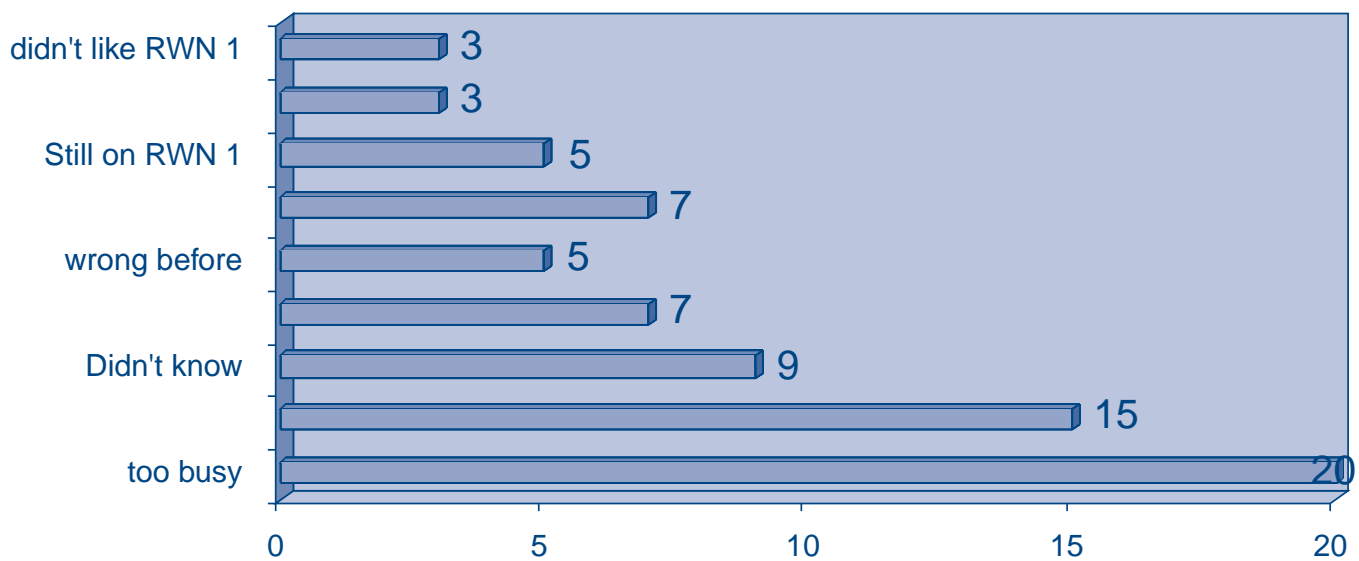
	Read Write Now 1	Read Write Now 2	Difference number	Difference %
Ratings- highest	221,000	320,489	+ 99,489	+ 45%
Packs sent out	28,171	20,051	- 8,120	- 28.9%

requested and sent out to learners was considerably lower than before.

The programme with the highest ratings for this series (Week 11) were almost 100,000 more than the best rating for Read Write Now 1 (Week 1), a dramatic increase of 45%. Because of this, the drop in the number of packs sent out was puzzling: this amounted to a decrease of more than a quarter on last year's requests. This pattern might seem to suggest that the series was gathering an even wider audience of general viewers, but that the committed learners were falling off.

In order to probe the reasons underlying this change, the evaluation team decided to go back to the people who had followed Read Write Now 1 in a reasonably systematic way, that is, the independent learners from the last series who had participated in the evaluation, and to find out about their current involvement with Read Write Now 2. The database from the Read Write Now 1 evaluation was consulted and as many people as could be contacted from

Figure 22 Reasons for not following RWN 2 N=74



Only 14 of these 88, or 15% of the people who had followed the first series, were currently following Read Write Now 2. The rest were not.

The reasons which these 74 people gave for not continuing on with series 2 are very informative. Figure 22 above shows that by far the most frequently-mentioned reason for people not continuing on with Read Write Now 2 was lack of time, with just over 27% saying that they were too busy. Just over 20% said that they had found Read Write Now too easy; and a small percentage, 6.7%, indicated that they were still working through Read Write Now 1 from the video, which suggests that these people had found the first series difficult rather than easy.

Two other categories of responses are relevant here: the small number of people, who said that their original involvement with Read Write Now 1 had been a mistake, that when they rang in to get the learner pack they had thought the series was about something else; and those people, 9.4% of this group, who said that having followed Read Write Now 1, they had filled the few gaps in their reading and writing skills and had now caught up or else had moved into a literacy scheme.

Table 9 summarises the figures for these four categories:

Table 9 Reasons for not following RWN 2 % of 74



RWN 1 too easy	20.3%
RWN 1 too hard	6.7%
Error first time	6.7%
Now caught up	9.4%

According to these responses, 33.7% of those questioned were never truly part of the target group: some were at a more advanced stage than the series catered for, and some were beginners. Added to these were a small percentage of people who were not actually literacy students at all.

If we add to this figure those people who moved on from Read Write Now 1, precisely because they succeeded in accomplishing what they needed to, either to manage in their daily lives or by joining a literacy scheme, this amounts to just over 43% of the group.

These figures suggest that one of the factors which contributes both to the degree of learners' satisfaction about the pace and level of the programme and also, to the number of learners who can report improvements in specific aspects of their literacy skills, is the limitations which a distance education context places on accuracy of targeting. These interviewees reinforce the suggestion that somewhere around 20% - 25% of people who start a TV distance education programme will find that the level is wrong for them. In the case of an initiative which covers related ground at the same level, it may also be expected that some learners will be 'lost' to the second stage, for the positive reason of having got what they needed from the first stage: almost 10% of those interviewed here fell into this category.

There are four other categories of responses which, taken together, add up to a group of people for whom Read Write Now was simply not a major priority in their lives: those who said they forgot about it; those who did not know it was on, some of whom had tuned in but mistaken the new series for a repeat of Read Write Now 1; those who said it was on at an inconvenient time or that they were too busy to watch. It is possible that among these respondents are people who could be amenable to particular promotion and targeting strategies in the future.

The views of the people who did not gain from an experience provide important information which can be useful in the future. At the same time, it is important not to overstate their meaning: the impact of the series should be judged by the progress made by the 60% of learners who were able to report concrete literacy gains, and by the 80% plus who found the pace and level right. In a distance education programme, in literacy, over a relatively short period of time, this is a very acceptable outcome. Section 3.8.2 explores in some detail the kind of outcomes which might reasonably be expected from a distance education programme

in this context.

A small number of people simply did not like the programmes. Of those participants, who were involved with Read Write Now 1 but not with this series, just over 4%, said that they had in fact dropped out for this reason. Perhaps there were specific aspects of the programmes which presented a barrier to their learning. Perhaps it was a matter of personal taste. Before looking into the concrete suggestions for improvements which people made, it may be interesting to find out what they did and did not like.

3.8 Participants' views of key aspects of the programmes

Participants were asked to rate key elements of the Read Write Now series on a four-point scale where 1 indicated 'poor' and 4 indicated 'very good'. The tables below summarise the ratings given, shown as percentages of the number of people who answered each question. Ratings given by independent learners are shown in brackets.

3.8.1 The drama element of Read Write Now

The drama element of Read Write Now refers to the every-day scenes from what is almost a mini-soap opera, where characters are shown dealing with activities in daily life such as cooking, decorating and shopping. These activities provide a focus and context for the

Table 10 Participants' ratings of the drama*

%	Poor	Fair	Quite good	Very good
Drama	7.8% (8.8%)	14.3% (10%)	44.4% (37.5%)	33.5% (43.7%)

* Questionnaire respondents: N=230 Independent learners: N=42

literacy learning points, which are highlighted by the presenter.

Most people liked this element of the programmes, and some people liked it a lot:

It's very entertaining, it was funny.

It kept me watching.

Just under 78% of the questionnaire respondents gave this aspect of the programmes a rating of good or very good. Independent learners rated it even more highly, with 81% of responses falling into these two categories. Almost half of the independent learners answered 'very good' on this item.

Some people thought that the drama had a function, apart from entertainment:

It gives you a bit of a break.

It would be hard to take it all in if it was just work and more work.

In fact, these comments illustrate one aspect of the rationale for including an element of drama in Read Write Now. It allows the reading and writing skills to be dealt with in a context and also provides some time for people to process the learning and, as the respondent above said, take a break.

Some people did not like the drama. These respondents were in a minority but if we combine those who rated it 'fair' and 'poor' it is a rather large minority, of around 20%. Furthermore, in comparison to the other elements of the programmes on which learners gave ratings, it attracted the largest proportion of reservations.

People who did not like the drama gave different reasons for this. In some cases it was a matter of personal taste:

I found it annoying, really predictable.

Others could not see the point of it:

It's a waste of time, get rid of it. Just stick to the reading and writing.

This is an interesting comment because it challenges the idea of delivering literacy work in a context and favours the skills-based approach instead. This view, which was expressed by a small but vehement minority of people, especially from literacy schemes, is explored in more detail in the next section where there is another element to add to the question.

Yet another set of comments which deserves attention, are those which said that the programmes were condescending:

They're talking down to you as if you were stupid.

I found it quite patronising.

This same criticism was made in the early stages of Read Write Now 1 and the series producers made great efforts then to avoid a condescending tone in the later programmes. Feedback on the first series indicated that learners were happier with this as the series progressed and this criticism has not arisen, to the same degree, in relation to the second series.

How one interprets the tone is, of course, extremely subjective. It is true that the characters behave in a light-hearted way and the situations they find themselves in are slightly comic, rather than serious – and people’s taste in comedy is very individual. However, it is interesting that when pressed, some people indicated that they found some situations patronising because they identified with the characters in the drama slots:

When your man was going for his job interview and he forgot everything – that was just ridiculous, I’d never get caught like that. If I was going somewhere important I’d have everything ready the night before. That annoyed me.

A few people – not many - even thought that these were meant to be adult literacy learners.

This is striking because there is nothing in the story lines or characterisation which suggests that the characters are people who have problems with reading or writing: rather the reverse, as in many shots they are shown reading books or other printed material. These are meant to be people dealing with ordinary situations in a light-hearted way. Furthermore, the fact that they make mistakes and are sometime slightly scatty is meant to be a source of humour, not an invitation to identify with them.

Perhaps the fact that they were in a programme about adult literacy was enough to create this impression. Perhaps the format and context reinforced it. The drama segments are interspersed with sections of the learner profile, where people tell their story, describe what their literacy problems were like and the impact that seeking help has made on their lives. This was a very powerful part of the programme which people found very moving and with a strong emotional appeal. A lot of people praised the courage and achievements of people in telling their story for the benefit of others who may have the same problem.

Most significantly, it is very clear that we are being asked to identify with this person, and not only to consider him or her a sympathetic character. In every profile, the speaker at some point actually says something along the lines of, ‘ if I can do it you can, don’t be afraid, don’t hesitate.’ So perhaps the juxtaposition of these different points of view – one to identify with, one to keep a distance from – caused confusion for some viewers which led them to take offence in the way they described.

It is important to emphasise that this was a minority view-point. This analysis of the reasons which might underlie it should not be taken to suggest that because of this, the format or tone of future programmes should change. However, it does suggest that learners could benefit from guidance on how to ‘read’ the programmes for example, some indication of what the purposes of the drama section of the programmes are, and the reasons why this approach was adopted.

There are other aspects of the programmes on which people might need similar guidance.

3.8.2 Integrating reading and writing with other topics

Read Write Now was organised around twelve topics and, as well as covering at least three learning points and a spelling tip, each programme also contained basic information about the topic of the week. The programme on gardening, for example, explained how to start a compost heap and the programme on first aid described how to treat burns. The rationale was that this approach, along with the drama format, reinforces the merging of literacy work with real-life situations. It is another strand of the integrated approach to literacy teaching.

The importance of contextualising work on reading and writing in social practice has already been mentioned above (see section 1.5). A further dimension to this is the view of the learner as being not merely a passive recipient of knowledge and skills provided by the teacher or the teaching materials, but as a critical adult with their own values and existing knowledge and skills. Thus

The literacy practice, as cultural action for freedom, is an act of knowing in which the learner assumes the role of knowing subject in dialogue with the educator.....Learning to read and write ought to be an opportunity for men [sic] to know what speaking the word really means: a human act implying reflection and action.²⁰

Providing a range of social contexts in which to locate the work on reading and writing encourages learners to bring their own knowledge and opinions on a range of topics, to the process.

One of the questions which all of the evaluation participants were asked, was whether they had found this additional topic content useful. Of course, people found some of the topics more interesting than others and significantly, many people already had a lot of prior knowledge about some of the topics. The purpose of this question was to find out whether people had learned anything as well as reading and writing and if so, what the effect of this might have been. People who were interviewed on the telephone and in groups were also asked directly what they thought about combining literacy with other types of learning.

Just over 90% of the questionnaire respondents who had seen the programmes, said that they had learned things in addition to reading and writing skills from the series. Furthermore, on the open questions, about 15% of the respondents mentioned specific things they had learned. This is not to suggest that all of these respondents learned everything about the programme topic covered each week but rather, that they learned something new, some of the time, which was alongside the learning which took place in relation to reading or writing.

Among the independent learners, there was a similar pattern. Just over 83% said that they found the topic content of interest.

From a first aid point of view it was very useful. I learned what to do and what not to do with burns.

²⁰ FREIRE, P. (1972) *Cultural Action for Freedom* Harmondsworth: Penguin

The programme on computers generated a lot of interest and the section on the helpline records that there was a surge of calls after this programme looking for more information about courses and books.

I didn't know before that .ie in an email address stood for Ireland.

The content of the healthy lifestyle programme also proved to be useful in its own right:

The food pyramid, that was good – I'm trying to lose weight!

Information about healthy diet and making it a family thing.

The impact of this new learning on areas of their own lives, was mentioned by a few people:

When I was doing the garden recently a local child asked me if she could help. I was able to answer a lot of her questions – from what I'd heard about gardening on that Read Write Now programme. It was great.

One of the benefits of having twelve different topics is that over the course of the series, there is more likely to be something of interest for a very wide audience, than if the range of topics were more limited. However, in another respect this can be a drawback, for it also means that it is equally likely that some of the topics will include material they have no interest in at all. The optimum solution to this dilemma would be to find a generic topic, which can easily be broken down into discrete topics and which is of wide general interest.

Some people were not interested in the topic content at all.

I knew most of it.

I have different DIY tips, my own ways.

While most people did favour the integrated approach to literacy work, there was a small but very committed minority, particularly from literacy schemes and groups, who did not agree with it:

If I want to know about DIY, I'll watch a programme about DIY that goes into it properly, not this. The time should be used on literacy instead.

There's these people going on about stuff you're not interested in, what's the point of it?

These learners would have preferred if Read Write Now had concentrated on literacy and nothing else.

Forget about the drama and the DIY and the gardening and all that stuff, it's a load of rubbish. Just concentrate on the reading and writing.

The people who held this point of view argued it well. They did not want to waste time on things that were not an immediate need, they were highly motivated and in many cases, experienced learners. They were committed advocates of a skills-based approach to literacy work.

However well-considered their views – and not because they were in the minority – it must be concluded that this approach to literacy work in the context of a TV distance education project, for a number of reasons would not work.

In the first place, what we know about how people learn, tells us that the situation in which learning takes place is very significant:

The social context in which cognitive activity takes place is an integral part of that activity, not just the surrounding context for it.²¹

When we need to use literacy skills, this is almost always in a real-life context and hardly ever in a situation which matches a learning environment which handles reading and writing in isolation from anything else. We also know that learners ‘hook’ new material on to existing knowledge; therefore, the more of these connections there are to other contexts, the easier it is for the learner to deepen their understanding.

Secondly, a television programme which consisted of half-an-hour of solid literacy work would be extremely boring for all but the most dedicated literacy students, and probably even for them. It would require much harder work, a much greater degree of motivation, concentration and probably also, privacy, than most of us are used to committing to our television viewing.

Thirdly, the skills-based approach to teaching reading and writing reinforces the notion of literacy as the sum of a set of technical skills. The references to the NALA mission statement and the section on personal benefits above, have already argued the incompleteness of this view. The fact that someone knows the alphabet, or knows the format and enough correct spellings for a letter, does not necessarily mean that they know how to use the alphabet to accomplish their tasks, or what kind of letter to write in different situations. As one independent learner put it:

I could take an article in the newspaper and I could read it out for you perfectly, word for word and if you asked me what it was

²¹ RESNICK, L.B., LEVINE, J.M., TEASLEY, S. (Eds.) (1991) Perspectives on socially-shared cognition Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association

saying, I wouldn't have a clue. I'd have been too busy reading the words.

Literacy is so much more than the sum of its parts and any strategy which threatens to reduce it to a list of skills, is probably counter-productive for the learner in the long term.

Finally, it is likely that the thematic and integrated approach adopted for both Read Write Now series, contributed to the very high audience ratings. There is evidence that there was a cohort of viewers who had no connection with literacy at all, either as potential consumers of the literacy services or through contact with someone with a reading or writing problem. Some people just found the programmes generally interesting. Some of their comments are discussed in section 3.8.5, which describes the use of the helpline. The learner's story, in particular was a revelation for some people who previously had had no idea that literacy problems were so prevalent, or that these had such far-reaching effects. The combination of concrete teaching, awareness-raising and human interest, therefore, seems to work well for Read Write Now and so far has managed to retain an audience which crosses a number of different interest groups.

Perhaps it would be interesting for committed learners, both in literacy schemes and those

Table 11: Participants' ratings for presentation and structure

*%	Poor	Fair	Quite good	Very good
Presenter	1.3%	9.7% (13%)	58.2% (40.6%)	30.8% (46.4%)
Mixture of 3 (structure)	1.5% (2.7%)	13.2% (5.4%)	57.9% (37.4%)	27.4% (54.5%)
End summary	0.4% (2%)	7.5% (6.6%)	41.2% (38.6%)	50.9% (52.8%)

Questionnaire respondents: presenter: N=227; mixture: N=197; summary: N=228
Independent learners: N=42

working at home on their own, to know something of all of this. In the current Read Write Now series, a number of strategies for learning are covered in the course of the programmes, especially in the context of spelling. It may be useful, in future initiatives, to expand people's understanding of how to enhance their own learning by explicitly highlighting processes of learning and learning strategies as a major theme, for consideration in a literacy context.

3.8.3 Participants' ratings on programme presentation and structure

The presentation of the programme consisted of a voiceover by Teri Garvey explaining the

literacy learning points with the help of graphics. This was the part of the programme which foregrounded the reading and writing tasks which emerged in the course of the drama. Selected learning points were related to the relevant pages in the learner’s study pack. Participants’ ratings on this element are therefore significant in that these are a response to the way in which the reading and writing learning points were explained and illustrated.

This aspect of the programmes was rated very highly by both questionnaire respondents and independent learners. Responses from the questionnaires yielded ‘good’ or ‘very good’ from 89% of this group. A similar proportion of the independent learners, 87%, said the same.

Table 12: Participants’ ratings of the learner workbook

*%	Poor	Fair	Quite good	Very good
Workbook	1.2%	3.1 % (4.2%)	29.4 % (11.2%)	66.3 % (84.6%)

* Questionnaire respondents: N=255; Independent learners: N=42

Participants’ views of programme structure were probed in two questions: one which asked what people thought of the mixture of the three elements discussed above – in other words, the balance between drama, learner profile and explicit teaching - and one which referred to the summary of learning points given at the end of each programme.

From the group of questionnaire respondents, 85.3% said that the structure was good or very good. From independent learners, the response was even more positive, with 91.9% giving responses in these two categories.

Similarly, the summary at the end was well received. Just over 92% of the respondents from schemes and groups said that this was either quite good or very good and 91.4% of the independent learners gave the same ratings.

3.8.4 The learner workbook

A substantial proportion of the people in schemes and groups who returned questionnaire, that is, just under 23%, said that they had not watched the programmes at all but had made extensive use of the learner workbook. This substantial support pack, which was the first element of the Read Write Now project to be designed and which provided the basis for the programmes, attracted very high ratings and very positive comments from learners, tutors and other groups, including teachers and parents.

Over two thirds of the questionnaire respondents gave the workbook the highest rating of 'very good' and if those who found it quite good are added, this gives a total of almost 96%. This is the highest positive rating of any of the elements of the Read Write Now project. An even larger proportion of the independent learners said that it was very good. This is extremely important because people who are working at home without the support of a tutor, need to have resource material which is manageable for them. It seemed that the Read Write Now workbook fulfilled this need.

Specific aspects of the workbook which people found helpful were:

- The content, which was relevant to learners' interests.
- The lay-out, which made the learning points easy to follow.
- The overall structure, which was well planned and easy to follow.
- The spelling tips.

Interestingly, in relation to the way the book was actually used by viewers of the TV programmes, there was no page-by-page correspondence between the pacing of the TV programmes and the book itself. In any case, given that the programmes also contained two other elements, the drama and the learner's story, this approach would not have been possible. Instead, at appropriate stages, specifically during the presentation section of the learning points, viewers were directed to certain pages. However, this was not a traditional text- book where learners were taken through each chapter in its entirety during each programme. Sometimes, the same learning point was covered in a slightly different context. Therefore, the workbook acted as a support for people to work through and refer to, when the programme was over.

A small number of learners found this confusing. They would have liked a more explicit link between all aspects of the book and the programmes, a more direct, minute-by-minute, page-by-page association. Some other learners needed practice in handling a book while they were following a TV programme at the same time. For these people, a very close correspondence between pages in the book and steps in the TV programmes, would have been difficult, especially for those working at home on their own.

There were a few suggestions for improvement: some proofing mistakes were pointed out and there were ideas for changes in type-face and lettering which would clear up a small number of ambiguities: for example, in one case there was some confusion between the letter 'l' and the number 1. In general, however, it drew an enthusiastic response.

It is likely that people following a distance education programme such as Read Write Now would benefit greatly for some instruction on how the support material and the TV programmes dove-tail, and how they, the learners, can best use the book during the programme, and also, when preparing to watch it and reviewing it afterwards. Managing materials and learning in this context is a complex matter which some new learners especially, find difficult.

There are indications that people in different settings were using the workbook in different ways. Some literacy schemes and groups worked through it systematically, with or without the TV programmes. Tutors reported it as being an excellent resource to help them structure

the work they were doing with individuals and groups. Others said that they used it on a more piece-meal basis, dipping in and out of it to supplement whatever they were working on at the time.

The workbook was also used, and commented on very favourably, by people for whom it was not strictly intended. A lot of the orders that came in were from school teachers at primary and post primary level and from special schools. Some even offered to pay for it. Tutors working with groups of asylum-seekers and foreign workers who were learning English also used it, although it is obviously not an ESOL book. Nevertheless, a great many people from different groups found it extremely helpful.

Some people commented also on the fact that it was supplied free of charge. This was an expensive resource to distribute and it was noted and appreciated. If it proved impossible in the future to give this book out to all of the people who might want it, there could be a commercial opportunity for publication and sales. However, this would greatly increase the demands on distribution and an expanded system would need to be put in place first, to support this.

3.8.5 Use of the freephone helpline

The freephone helpline was a major element of the support system available to Read Write Now learners. It was open from August 20th to December 20th, five days per week, Monday to Friday from 10am – 4pm. An answering service operated outside these hours and people who left contact numbers were called back at the earliest opportunity.

The helpline, which was used for a range of purposes at different stages in the project, was staffed by three and later, four trained literacy tutors. Their general functions were:

- To take orders from the public for study packs to be sent out.
- To answer questions from viewers about reading and writing learning points covered in the programmes, and deal with any other literacy-related queries, including referrals to literacy schemes.

Table 13 Summary of callers to helpline

Learners	Tutors/adult educators	School teachers	Parents	Other interest groups*
136	12	6	16+	24

*This includes people who were not the specific target groups of the series but who used the resource e.g. people with disabilities, non-nationals and general viewers

- To conduct evaluation interviews with a number of volunteer evaluation participants.

Telephone tutors were therefore the first point of contact with members of the public who wanted to follow Read Write Now or to find out what help was available for reading and writing. They also maintained a database of orders and of these callers' basic personal details. This information provided the basis for the profile of independent learners contained in Section 2 above.

Telephone tutors also kept a log of comments which people made during the twelve weeks of the series. Sometimes these comments were made when the individual called to request for a pack or to ask a question. Sometimes the individual rang up just to make their point.

The analysis of the use of the freephone helpline contained in this section draws on three different sources.

- The log of calls received from Read Write Now viewers during the series, including the number of these calls and the nature of the query.
- Responses from the people in literacy schemes and other groups who returned the evaluation questionnaires.
- Responses from independent learners who agreed to be interviewed for the evaluation.

Between September 20th and December 6th, a total of 200 comments were logged. This does not include all of the calls which were received but rather, those which included a specific comment or query. The following two tables give a breakdown of the source and the nature of the comments.

Although this is a rather general categorisation of comments, nevertheless it yields some interesting observations. In the first place, Read Write Now obviously attracted the attention not only of potential learners but also, of adult educators. Here is a selection of observations which are typical of the general tone:

I've been watching for the past few weeks. The programmes are very clear and very easy to follow and to understand.

LEARNER

Read Write Now is the best resource I've ever come across for adults returning to learning. It's got all the elements I'd be looking for, for my groups.

Table 14 Summary of comments to helpline

General positive comment, congrats etc. from learner	General positive comment, congrats etc. from tutor	Positive with specific suggestion for improvement	Admin. query	Query not literacy-related*	Negative
--	--	---	--------------	-----------------------------	----------

* this category includes people who requested information about topics covered in the series but not specific to literacy e.g. DIY.

TUTOR

The learners' stories are excellent. Very encouraging.

LEARNER

Very good programmes. Keep up the good work.

LEARNER

I'm tutoring two learners at home using Read Write Now and I'm very impressed by how much their confidence has been boosted by following the series.

TUTOR

Telephone tutors also reported a substantial interest in the series among school teachers and parents who wanted to use the materials for children and young students, at post-primary and even at primary level. This is confirmed in the summary of participants from schemes and groups, which quantifies the large proportion of respondents from schools. Although this suggests that the series was acceptable to at least some young people, it was not actually aimed at children or school students.

Nevertheless, one teacher suggested:

Why not advertise the workbooks for sale to teachers – they'd be happy to pay!

A lot of calls came in from parents although, as this was an unexpected development, these were only recorded separately some time after the trend was noticed.

Clearly, the Read Write Now approach to work on reading and writing met a need which was identified by teachers and by some parents. This may be worth bearing in mind, when future targeting and the range of dissemination of the material are reviewed at the end of this stage of the project.

Other interested audiences who were not from the intended target group also rang in. These included people whose first language is not English and there is some evidence that such groups around the country, for example foreign workers and asylum-seekers, were working with tutors who used the material on a fairly systematic basis.

People with disabilities were another important audience who were represented among callers to the comment line. The general participant profile in Section 2 showed that the NTDI and other centres catering for people with disabilities were among the most numerous participants and some of the callers to the helpline suggested ways in which particular needs could be catered for. The mother of one learner, for example, said:

Could you get a tutor's fax line so that deaf people who can't use the phone could have a quick communication with a tutor?

The range of comments recorded may be summarised under the following headings:

It will be clear from this summary that the overwhelming majority of comments from members of the public was very positive. Many people expressed appreciation that this initiative had been taken to support people with reading and writing difficulties. At the same time, some people had suggestions to make about how the programmes could be improved in specific ways, or tailored to particular needs:

I can read fine but I need to see people doing the writing. There could be more about writing.

Would you do a signed version for the deaf?

Some queries related more to the administration of the project, rather than to the programme content, for example:

- People finding it hard to get through on the freephone number
- People who had not yet received their packs
- People who had not known the series was on and were wondering about publicity
- People wanting to know when the next series will start, will there be another series
- People enquiring why the programme was not broadcast last night.

One interesting aspect of the pattern of calls which has been mentioned already, was the surge of queries which followed programmes covering topics of particular interest. For example, after programme 6 on Accommodation, one of the tutors logged a call from a woman who

...doesn't have reading and writing difficulties but could she have the information from Programme 6 on getting a Home Loan, and do the 'Corpo' rules apply countrywide!

A lot of people rang in with the same question. Similarly, after programmes 7, 8 and 9 many people telephoned to ask for 'the book on IT/the leaflet on DIY/ the information about healthy eating.' This supports the conclusion made in Section 3.8.2 above that for many people, the lifestyle topics which provided a context for the literacy work actually were intrinsically interesting, quite apart from their reading and writing focus.

A few people did ring in to express frustration or annoyance. Two or three were eccentric enough to qualify as crank calls. There were also a few querying the accuracy of particular items. From time to time there were mischievous calls which the tutors recorded as 'messers' and thought were probably children or young people amusing themselves, an annoying, if harmless enough hazard which can only be expected of a freephone line.

Another reason for having a helpline, was to provide a source of support for people following the series, especially independent learners but not excluding those who were already with a scheme or a group. The trained tutors were available to answer people's questions about specific reading and writing points, to guide them through parts of the

²² See for example, Bate's (1984) summary of the importance of co-operative ventures involving difference agencies to support learners in *Broadcasting in Education: an evaluation* London: Constable and Co. p.94, p.137

workbook and answer general, literacy-related queries.

The helpline was not very widely used for this purpose, either by those in schemes and groups, or by those independent learners who were participating in the evaluation. Just 5% of the questionnaire respondents, that is, people with schemes and groups, said that they had called in to ask a question. All of those who did said that they had found the support useful. Among the 42 independent learners who were interviewed for the evaluation, just three said that they had called in for help. One of these people called in six times, and all three found it helpful.

It is perhaps not surprising that the helpline should be used so little by these two groups. Some of the respondents from schemes and groups pointed out that they already had a tutor to help them; others said they did not have the privacy to make such a call from home. A few people did not have a phone. However, most people said that they did not call because they did not need to.

A similar range of reasons was given by the independent learners. Other reasons which people gave for not using the helpline included the following:

I don't really like to ask for help in case I sound stupid.

It didn't occur to me.

I didn't know that I could.

I'm trying to work this out for myself.

Bearing in mind that independent learners participating in the evaluation were already in regular contact with telephone tutors, it is to be expected that they would have little need to ring the helpline. These independent volunteers had been told at the start that when the interviewer rang them to get their feedback about the series, they should feel free to check out any uncertainties and ask for any help they might need, arising from the programmes they had seen most recently. Some of them did take up this offer. Therefore, although those telephone interviews were not primarily intended as a formal learning support structure, in practice they did perform this function, at least in part.

Some general viewers who were not involved in the evaluation or connected with a scheme or a group, did telephone to ask for help on specific literacy points. However, this was a trickle of calls rather than a flood and amounted to an average of one or two per day. The fact is, among the many uses to which the helpline was put, the provision of learning support for viewers was the least significant.

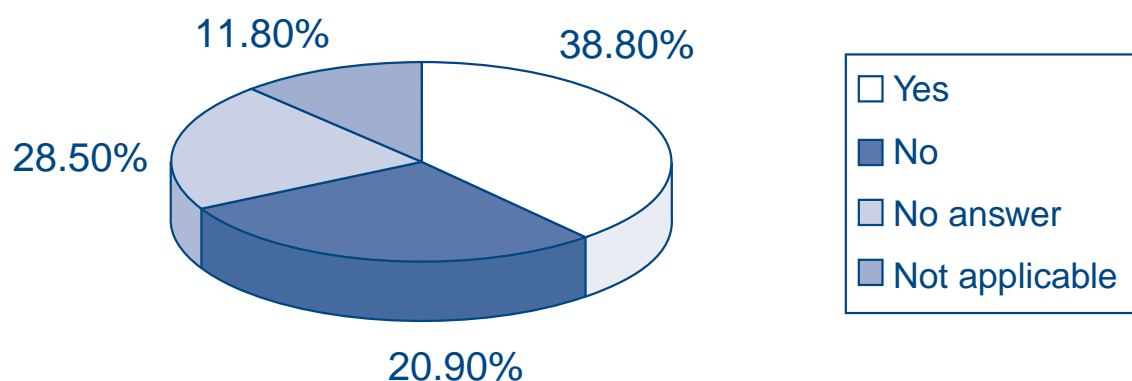
It may be useful at this point to revisit in more detail, the various purposes for which the helpline was used in this stage of the Read Write Now project, and explore ways in which it may be used in the future.

The initial point of contact with members of the public who telephone to ask for packs has two important functions: administrative and interpersonal. Accurate collection and recording of caller information is clearly essential to ensure that people get their copy of the study pack and also, for analysis and tracking. However, this conversation also has a personal dimension which is just as important. It really amounts to a mini-interview, not only getting but also, giving information and providing reassurance to people who may never have confided their reading and writing difficulties before.

For these reasons, it is probably necessary for this administrative function to continue to be centralised and also, to be carried out by trained literacy staff who are accustomed to communicating with potential literacy students in a sensitive and encouraging way. The second use to which the helpline was put, as a comment line, should equally be staffed by people familiar with literacy students and issues. The importance of having a helpline to fulfil these three functions – administrative, interpersonal and comment-line – was demonstrated during this stage of the project.

The low level of use of the helpline for tutorial support is thought provoking. In theory, this sounds like a very good strategy for complementing the learning resources provided by the TV and study pack. As well as this, a consistent finding in the research on distant education²² indicates the importance of providing some point of personal contact for

Figure 23 Did people meet their goals? N=340



learners, to keep them motivated and to help them over particular difficulties. Indeed, those who did get this support on a fairly systematic basis, the evaluation interviewees, were very enthusiastic about it and even said that it helped them to maintain interest.

There are different ways of providing learner support by telephone. The least structured, where people ring in anonymously on a random basis, as a question arises, seems to be influenced to a large extent by promotion and advertising, and also, by people's current needs and also, significant events. The Euro Changeover Board, for example, had a helpline which was widely used in the lead-up to the introduction of the new currency.

As well as this, it is striking that several of the Read Write Now learners said that they did not phone in with a question because they did not realise that the helpline was there – and

this despite the many times which it was mentioned in the course of the programmes, highlighted in the workbook and mentioned before and after the programmes.

It is possible that some learners would benefit from a more structured use of the telephone. Evaluation participants were asked whether they would in principle agree to a system of telephone tutorials, where they would be allocated a tutor on ordering their pack and with whom they would stay in contact throughout the series, either on their own initiative or at the tutor's instigation.

Not surprisingly, reactions to this idea were mixed. Some people do not like talking on the telephone, some are concerned with privacy. Others thought that it would be a great help and motivation to have a tutor call them periodically. It is important to remember that using telephone support for learning purposes draws on a whole range of skills which should not be taken for granted: the need to be properly prepared, for example, the ability to identify what the problem is exactly and to formulate it coherently; the ability to listen effectively. For the next stage of the project, it would be worthwhile exploring in some depth, the range of different options for providing telephone support. These could include:

1. Promotion which specifically highlights the availability of the helpline for general, unstructured support.
2. Set up a system of telephone tutors who are allocated to individual, independent learners, with the learner taking the initiative to make the call.
3. Set up a network of telephone tutors who are allocated to individual, independent learners, with the tutor taking the initiative to make the call.

It would be instructive to run the examples given in 2 and 3 on a small scale, one each in different parts of the country. This system could support independent learners, especially people who may have access difficulties or be reluctant to go to a literacy scheme.

The implementation of any of the options for telephone support described above would create operational demands, for example in the training of tutors and the management of the system. Some of the Vocational Education Committees might be interested in experimenting with the idea and running telephone support systems on a small scale. The use and impact of this support could be monitored and provide the basis for recommendations in relation to the future development of telephone support.

This is not to suggest that telephone tutorials are a solution to people's literacy needs. However, if properly developed and managed this could provide yet another tool in the range of available support strategies.

3.9 Did people meet their goals?

All of the elements of the Read Write Now project which were described and assessed in this section, clarify the impact of the series on a group of people who followed it in a reasonably systematic way. In this part of Section 3, a significant question is addressed: 'Did people

²³ MOSER, C (1999) *Improving Literacy and Numeracy: a Fresh Start: the Report of the Working Group*, London

meet their goals?'. This is considered firstly, in relation to the achievement of individual learners' goals, and then explored in the wider context of the kind of goals which might reasonably be accomplished as a result of following a distance education programme in adult literacy, and the range of factors which would influence these.

3.9.1 Learners' assessment of the goals they met

All of the evaluation participants were asked directly whether they had achieved the goals they had hoped to accomplish at the start of the series.

At first glance, this may appear to be a simple enough question and one which, moreover, should provide an indication of the overall impact of the series. However, as the section on goal setting above describes in some detail, the process of uncovering what these goals are in the first place, is a complex matter. Some learners, especially those who are returning to learning after a long gap, may need help in clarifying this question. Some people may have unrealistic goals or too many goals for their current level or for the length of time they have available to spend on the work.

Nevertheless, more than a third of the questionnaire respondents said that they had met their goals. Those who had either not set goals (not applicable) or who gave no answer to this question, amounted to just over 40% of the group and, as we have seen, a large proportion of these were students in schools. About 20% said that they had not met their goals. Some of these qualified this response in a note on the questionnaire by indicating that they had achieved some of their targets.

The independent learners, who answered this question verbally, were in a better position to express such nuances. Coincidentally, the proportion of this much smaller group who said that they had achieved their goals is identical to the answers given by the questionnaire respondents, 38%. Only one person (2.3%) said that he had not got what he wanted from the project and just over 59% did not answer.

Those who said that they had been successful, did not necessarily mean that they had achieved all of their expectations:

I've got ahead with some of them.

I'm getting there.

I've made progress on certain things, that's for sure.

Furthermore, telephone tutors who conducted the evaluation interviews report that in later weeks, some learners spontaneously mentioned that they were noticing areas where they had made progress, even if they had not reached total competence in the specified task.

3.9.2 Learning goals in a distance education context

This may be an appropriate point at which to consider what can and should reasonably be expected of learners who are following a distance education programme.

Clearly, Read Write Now is a far less structured programme than those provided by established educational institutions with an academic infrastructure and accreditation mechanisms: for example, Oscail and the Open University. Although Read Write Now provides a systematic resource for literacy learners, the support networks such as individual tutors, tutorials and summer schools which often complement other distance education programmes are so far, not part of the project structure. Therefore, the teaching input to which learners are exposed amounts to half an hour per week.

Research quoted in the Moser Report²³ may help to put this in perspective:

Between 550 – 600 hours of instruction are needed to become fully literate and numerate.

It should be noted that this does not refer to 600 hours of work but rather, of actual teaching time. Of course, this statement gives no background about the starting level of a learner with such needs or the amount of additional, non-contact time which s/he would need to put

in to their literacy work to achieve full literacy and numeracy. Nor are these concepts defined.

However, this does at least provide an indicator of the amount of work involved in achieving literacy goals. According to this estimate, a learner who had three hours of instruction for fifty weeks of the year would take four years to 'become fully literate and numerate'. Once again, this does not include time given to individual study.

This creates a background from which to view the achievements of Read Write Now learners. It also suggests a direction for the future: rather than creating a major infrastructure to back up the independent learners taking part in the project, it would be preferable to maintain expectations for this group at a reasonable and realistic level.

The experience of Read Write Now and the gains reported by learners at this stage in the project, provide some indication as to what a learner following a 12-week literacy series, for half an hour a week might reasonably expect to get out of it. Naturally, people who give extra individual study time to their work will learn more, faster. In general, however, these would be realistic expectations of the gains people might make:

1. Information:

- about the nature and extent of the literacy problem in Ireland.
- about the help that is available to support people.
- about education options available to people who want to improve their reading and writing.
- about different ways of learning and different settings in which people can learn.

2. Personal gains:

- reassurance that if they have a literacy problem, they are not alone.
- increased confidence in trying out new skills.
- increased confidence in their ability to learn and to improve.
- easing of the isolation and alienation which some people feel, because of reading and writing difficulties.

3. Skills:

- improvement in a range of technical reading and writing skills.

4. Engagement with the learning process and culture:

- through participation in the evaluation.
- telephoning the helpline etc.
- a willingness to express an opinion about the programmes.

5. Goal-setting:

- If possible, assistance to clarify their own strengths and weaknesses and goals.

This approach does not exclude the possibility of experimenting with supports such as the potential uses of the helpline suggested above. It does guard against the notion that a television series can substitute for face-to-face literacy teaching. People in schemes and groups already have a support infrastructure which is voluntarily connecting to the Read Write Now project. There is potential, with the agreement of Adult Literacy Organisers, tutors and the Vocational Education Committees to reinforce these links still further. Provision of videos and/or a day-time, week-day transmission slot could facilitate the schemes even more.

3.10 Future Developments

In the course of gathering feedback on people's experience of Read Write Now 2, several suggestions were made for ways in which the series could be improved next time, and also, for other topics or elements which could be included in future programmes. As well as this, the process of analysing people's comments and their estimate of what they have learned from the series, gives rise to some suggestions for future directions which could be considered for the next series.

3.10.1 Suggestions for improvements

Suggested improvements fell into three categories: those which referred to the project structure; other topics which could be covered in the future; and more detailed aspects of format and content. Some of these suggestions were more relevant to the current stage of the project than others. For the sake of clarity, these are summarised below, under three headings: structure, topics and format/content.

It should be noted that these suggestions should not be read as recommendations for action, but rather, as general ideas put forward by evaluation participants and noted here for the record. Formal recommendations arising from the evaluation process are contained in the Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations.

Structure

Appendices

1. List of learning objectives
2. Evaluation questionnaire
3. Initial evaluation form
4. Goal-setting checklist
5. Interview Schedule

Appendix 1

Programme Objectives for Read Write Now TV 2

Reading

1. Getting information from documents used in daily life
2. Looking up information e.g. telephone book, dictionary
3. Following written instructions e.g. recipes, labels etc.
4. Getting information from tables e.g. bus timetable
5. Understanding abbreviations e.g. in small ads, recipes
6. Finding places on the map of Ireland
7. Following a street map

Writing

1. Writing full sentences using capitals and full stops
2. Writing notes of about 50 words
3. Writing postcards
4. Writing letters
5. Filling in forms
6. Writing cheques
7. Making notes, e.g. in diary
8. Writing instructions e.g. leaving a 'how to' message
9. Writing a report or a story of about 150 words

Spelling

1. Using alphabetical order
2. Spelling key words
3. Using spelling rules
4. Using capital letters
5. Using punctuation

Appendix 2

Learner's Evaluation Questionnaire

Section A Setting Goals – October 2001

Give yourself a rating of 1 or 2 or 3 on these reading and writing skills.
1=this is difficult. 2=I can do this but need revision. 3=this is easy.

Tick the **Goal** box ✓ if you want to work on this skills during Read Write Now.

EXAMPLE Writing letters.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

Reading

1/2/3 Goal

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Getting information from documents used in daily life. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Looking up information e.g. telephone book, dictionary. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Following written instructions e.g. recipes, labels etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Getting information from tables e.g. bus timetable. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Understanding abbreviations e.g. in small ads, recipes. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Finding places on the map of Ireland. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Following a street map. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Writing

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Writing full sentences using capitals and full stops. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Writing notes of about 50 words. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Writing postcards. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Writing letters. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Filling in forms. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Writing cheques. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Making notes, e.g. in diary. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Writing instructions e.g. leaving a 'how to' message. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Writing a report or a story of about 150 words. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Spelling

1. Using alphabetical order.
2. Spelling key words.
3. Using spelling rules.
4. Using capital letters.
5. Using punctuation.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have any other goals, list them below.

Section B The Programmes

1. How many programmes did you watch? _____

2. When did you watch them? ✓

Wednesday

Sunday

Tuesday

On video

3. How did you hear about Read Write Now TV2 ? ✓

Radio ad

TV ad

Newspaper/
RTÉ Guide

Literacy
Scheme

Friend/
Relative

NALA

Other (How?)

4. Was the content of the programmes (on First Aid, Cooking etc) useful to you?

✓

Yes

No

5. If 'yes', what did you learn?

5. What did you think of the following parts of the programme? ✓

1=poor 2=fair 3=quite good 4=very good

(a) The learner's story

(b) Drama

(c) Presenter/guide

(d) Mixture of these 3

(e) Learning summary at end

(f) Workbook

6. What did you think of the pace or speed of the programmes for you? ✓

1=too slow 2=quite good for me 3=just right 4=too fast

7. What did you think of the level? ✓

1=too easy 2=quite good for me 3=just right 4=too fast

8. What did you think of the Learner Workbook?

Please comment:

Section C What you learned

1. What reading or writing skills, if any, did you learn from the programmes?

2. What new things, if any, have you done in your daily life, as a result of what you learned from the programmes?

3. Have you met the reading and writing goals you set at the start? ✓

Yes No

4. What other benefits, if any, did you get from watching the programmes?

5. Did you use the Helpline? ✓ Yes No

6. If 'yes', how many times? _____. Was it useful? ✓ Yes No

7. If 'no', why not? _____

8. Any other comments about the programmes?

Section D Personal Profile

We need this information for statistical purposes only.
You do not have to give your name.

1. Gender ✓ Male Female

2. Age ✓

18 or under	19 – 21	22 – 24	25 – 34	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
35 – 44	45 – 54	55 – 64	65+	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

3. Age left school ✓

12 or under	13-14	15-16	17-18	18+
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Qualifications ✓

Group/ Inter/Jun	L. Cert Traditional	LCA/ LCVP	Apprentice/ Trade	Other (What?)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

5. Employment ✓

Working f/t	Working p/t	Not in labour force	Unemployed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Work on reading and writing: are you ✓

(a) With a literacy scheme	(b) With a group (not a scheme)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you ticked (a) ✓ please answer questions 7 and 8.

If you ticked (b) ✓ please answer question 9.

7. If you are in a literacy scheme , are you ✓

In 1-1
tuition

In group
tuition

8. If you are in a literacy scheme, how long have you been with scheme? ✓

Less than
1 month

1 - 3
months

4 - 6
months

7- 11
months

1 - 2
years

2 - 3
years

3 years +

9. If you are in a group (not a literacy scheme) is this group: ✓

VEC

VTOS

Y'reach/
CTW

School

NTDI/
Rehab

Community/
Adult Ed.

FAS
Group

Youth
Service

Other (what?)

10. Name of scheme or group _____

11. Location of scheme or group

(a) County _____

(b) Dublin/ Greater Dublin Urban (not Dublin) Rural

Appendix 3

Initial evaluation form

Read Write Now SERIES 2 Literacy Scheme Participants

Name and Address of Scheme

Telephone _____

Email _____

Contact Name (tutor/organiser) _____

Number of learners following Read Write Now Series 2 _____

Number at Level 1 _____ Number at Level 2 _____

Number at Level 3 _____

Number of women _____ Number of men _____

Department of Education and Science

Level 1 'Those without reading and writing skills, or with very poor skills.'

Level 2 'Those who have an acceptable reading standard but whose writing/spelling skills are not adequate to enable them to participate effectively in social and economic life.'

Level 3 'Those whose skills were adequate on leaving school but now need up-dating to facilitate a return to further education and training.'

Read Write Now SERIES 2 Group Participants

Name and Address of Organisation			

Telephone _____			
Email _____			
Contact Name (tutor/organiser) _____			
Number of learners following Read Write Now Series 2 _____			
Number at Level 1 ____ Number at Level 2 ____ Number at Level 3 ____			
Number of women _____ Number of men _____			
Is this group: ✓			
VEC <input type="checkbox"/>	VTOS <input type="checkbox"/>	Y'reach/CTW <input type="checkbox"/>	School <input type="checkbox"/>
NTDI/Rehab <input type="checkbox"/>	Community/Adult Ed. <input type="checkbox"/>	FAS Group <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Service <input type="checkbox"/>
Other? (please specify) _____			

Department of Education and Science

Level 1 'Those without reading and writing skills, or with very poor skills.'

Level 2 'Those who have an acceptable reading standard but whose writing/spelling skills are not adequate to enable them to participate effectively in social and economic life.'

Level 3 'Those whose skills were adequate on leaving school but now need up-dating to facilitate a return to further education and training.'

Appendix 4

Goal-setting checklist

Setting Goals – October 2001

Give yourself a rating of 1 or 2 or 3 on these reading and writing skills.
1=this is difficult. 2=I can do this but need revision. 3=this is easy.

Tick the **Goal** box ✓ if you want to work on this skills during Read Write Now.

EXAMPLE Writing letters.

Reading	1/2/3	Goal
1. Getting information from documents used in daily life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Looking up information e.g. telephone book, dictionary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Following written instructions e.g. recipes, labels etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Getting information from tables e.g. bus timetable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Understanding abbreviations e.g. in small ads, recipes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Finding places on the map of Ireland.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Following a street map.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Writing	1/2/3	Goal
1. Writing full sentences using capitals and full stops.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Writing notes of about 50 words.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Writing postcards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Writing letters.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Filling in forms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Writing cheques.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Making notes, e.g. in diary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Writing instructions e.g. leaving a 'how to ' message.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Writing a report or a story of about 150 words.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Spelling

1. Using alphabetical order.
2. Spelling key words.
3. Using spelling rules.
4. Using capital letters.
5. Using punctuation.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have any other goals, list them below.

Appendix 5

Interview Schedule

Learner's Name _____

Personal Profile

Get some of this information (a) from the existing database (b) during the first interview. More details can be added in later interviews.

Try to complete the profile by week 12.

1. Gender ✓ Male Female

2. Age ✓ 18 or under 19 – 21 22 – 24 25 – 34

35 – 44 45 – 54 55 – 64 65+

3. Age left school ✓ 12 or under 13-14 15-16 17-18 18+

4. Qualifications ✓

Group/ Inter/Jun	L. Cert Traditional	LCA/ LCVP	Apprentice/ Trade	Other Trade	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Employment ✓

Working f/t	Working p/t	Not in labour force
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Work on reading and writing: as you are an independent learner

(a) Have you ever been with a literacy scheme? ✓ Yes No

(b) Is yes, were you ✓

In 1-1
tuition

In group
tuition

N/A

(c) If yes how long were you with scheme? ✓

Less than
6 months

6 - 12
months

More than
12 months

N/A

7. If no would you consider joining a scheme? ✓ Yes No

8. How did you hear about Read Write Now TV2 ? ✓

Radio ad

TV ad

Newspaper/
RTÉ Guide

Literacy
Scheme

Friend/
Relative

NALA

Other

ONLY COMPLETE THIS SECTION FOR LEARNERS WHO HAVE NOT DONE AN INITIAL ASSESSMENT.

Setting Goals – October 2001

Ask the learner how well they can manage the skills listed below.
Give yourself a rating of 1 or 2 or 3 on these reading and writing skills.
1=this is difficult. 2=I can do this but need revision. 3=this is easy.

If s/he wants to work on this skill during Read Write Now, tick **Goal** ✓

Reading	1/2/3	Goal
1. Getting information from documents used in daily life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Looking up information e.g. telephone book, dictionary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Following written instructions e.g. recipes, labels etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Getting information from tables e.g. bus timetable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Understanding abbreviations e.g. in small ads, recipes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Finding places on the map of Ireland.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Following a street map.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Writing		
1. Writing full sentences using capitals and full stops.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Writing notes of about 50 words.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Writing postcards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Writing letters.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Filling in forms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Writing cheques.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Making notes, e.g. in diary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Writing instructions e.g. leaving a 'how to' message.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Writing a report or a story of about 150 words.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Spelling

1. Using alphabetical order.
2. Spelling key words.
3. Using spelling rules.
4. Using capital letters.
5. Using punctuation.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have any other goals, list them below.

Interview Number _____ About Programmes _____

Date _____

1. How many programmes did you watch? _____

2. When did you watch them? ✓

Wednesday

Sunday

Tuesday

4. Was the content of the programmes (on First Aid, Cooking etc) useful to you? ✓

Yes

No

Please Comment:

5. What did you think of the following parts of the programme? ✓

1=poor 2=fair 3=quite good 4=very good

(a) The learner's story

(b) Drama

(c) Presenter/guide

(d) Mixture of these 3

(e) Learning summary at end

(f) Workbook

6. What did you think of the pace or speed of the programmes for you? ✓

1=too slow

2=quite good for me

3=just right

4=too fast

7. What did you think of the level? ✓

1=too easy

2=quite good for me

3=just right

4=too fast

8. What did you think of the Learner Workbook?

Please comment:

References

ABRAMSON, SELIGMAN and TEASDALE (1978), Learned Helplessness in Humans: Critique and Reformulation, *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 87

BATES, A. (1984), *Broadcasting in Education: an Evaluation*, London: Constable and Co.

FREIRE, P. (1972), *Cultural Action for Freedom*, Harmondsworth: Penguin

GRUMMELL, B (2001) *Read Write Now TV Project Evaluation Report*, Dublin: NALA

HARGREAVES, D. (1979) *Adult Literacy and Broadcasting*, London: Pinter

MORGAN et al (1997) *International Adult Literacy Survey: Results for Ireland*, Dublin: An Roinn Oideachais

MOSER, C (1999) *Improving Literacy and Numeracy: a Fresh Start: the Report of the Working Group*, London:

REDDI, U. and DIGHE, A. (2000) *Literacy and adult education through distance and open learning in* YATES, C. and BRADLEY, J. (Eds) *World Review of Distance Education and Open Learning Vol 2*

RESNICK, L.B., LEVINE, J.M., TEASLEY, S. (Eds.) (1991) *Perspectives on socially-shared cognition*, Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association

Notes

Notes
