



Introduction to Distance Education

Destiny Simpson
TIU 11 / World Education Consultant

Welcome and Introductions

- Name
- What is your role at your program?
- What is a favorite ed tech tool that you like to use with learners?



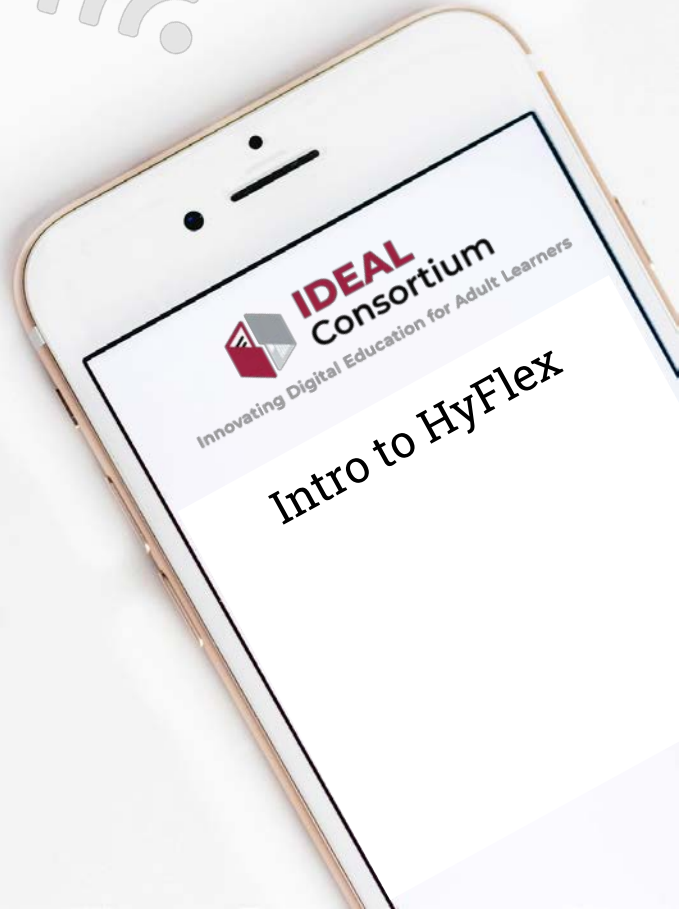
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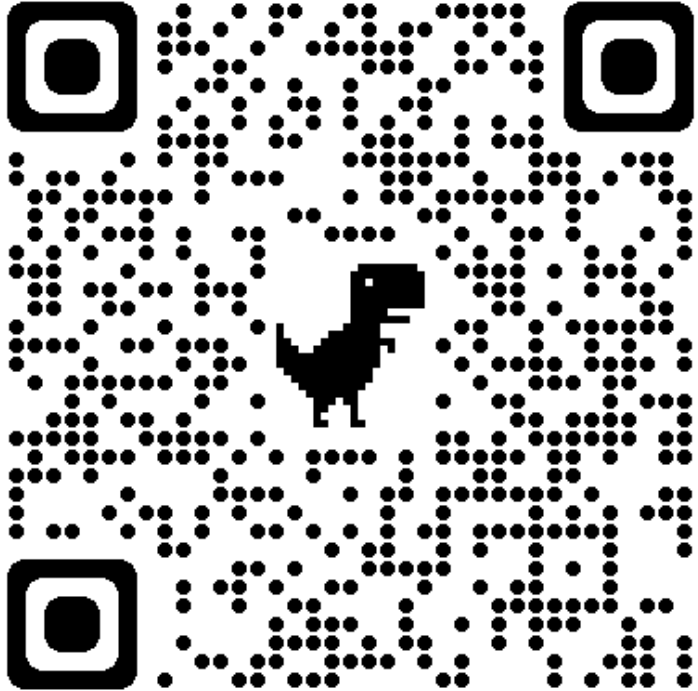
dlong.simpson@tiu11.org

717-723-9832 (call or text)

Let's get to
know each other
a little more.



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How long have you worked in adult education?

Less than 1 year

0%

1-3 years

0%

4-10 years

0%

11-15 years

0%

16-20 years

0%

20 years+

0%

What do you like about working in adult education (1-2 word answers are best)

Nobody has responded yet.

Hang tight! Responses are coming in.

How comfortable do you feel using technology in your work?



Objectives

By the end of the session, I will be able to:

- Describe distance education models for adult learners.
- State at least two benefits of distance education for learners and teachers.
- Describe how distance education can positively affect learning outcomes.
- State at least one program element to consider for distance education.
- List two resources that can be used to explore distance education further.

Agenda

**Distance
Education Models**

**Benefits of
Distance
Education**

**Distance
Education Impacts
on Learning
Outcomes**

**Distance
Education
Planning**

Resources

Developing Common Terminology

What does the term distance education mean to you?



What is Distance Education?

Formal learning activity where students and instructors are separated by geography, time, or both for the majority of the instructional period.

- Distance learning materials are delivered through a variety of media, including but not limited to, print, audio recording, videotape, broadcasts, computer software, Web-based programs, and other online technology.
- Teachers support distance learners through communication by mail, telephone, e-mail, or online technologies and software.

(National Reporting System for Adult Education, 2024, p. 48).



Distance Education models

Blended Learning

Hybrid Learning

Supplemental

HyFlex

Remove Live Instruction



Blended Learning

- Learners attend in-person classes and complete online instruction outside of in-person class time.
- The work in both modes is tightly integrated and blend together to make a cohesive experience for the learners.

Vanek, J., Simpson, D., Goumas, J., Riggs, R., Harris, J., & Stanislawski, E. (2024). IDEAL Distance and Digital Education Handbook, 10th Edition Updates: World Education, a division of JSI Research and Training Institute. https://edtechbooks.org/ideal_dl_handbook



Hybrid Learning

- Learners attend in-person classes and complete online instruction outside of in-person class time.
- The online work may not be directly aligned with what happens in the classroom.

Vanek, J., Simpson, D., Goumas, J., Riggs, R., Harris, J., & Stanislawski, E. (2024). IDEAL Distance and Digital Education Handbook, 10th Edition Updates: World Education, a division of JSI Research and Training Institute. https://edtechbooks.org/ideal_dl_handbook



Supplemental

- Optional online curricula outside of regular class time
- Learner is not required to do the work.
- May be aligned to the goals of the course.



HyFlex

- Learners can choose what mode of learning they want to participate in:
- In-person
- Online synchronous
- Online asynchronous
- All learners are working towards the same objectives.



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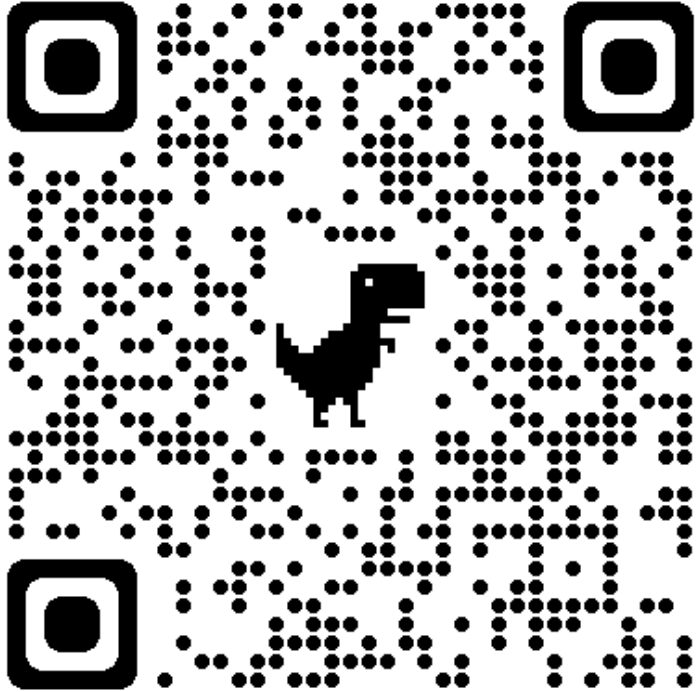
Remote Live Instruction

- Learners attend synchronous classes online using video conferencing tools such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet.
- The teacher may use breakout rooms as well for small group activities and discussion.



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Which of these models to you offer at your program? (Check all that apply.)

Blended Learning

0%

Hybrid Learning

0%

Supplemental

0%

HyFlex

0%

Remote Live Instruction

0%

None yet

0%

Many terms, options for learners

- States and even programs within a region may define their terms differently – which is ok.

Goal: is to provide learners with options that meet their needs so that they can participate in adult education services which helps them to reach their goals.

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**Distance
Education Models**

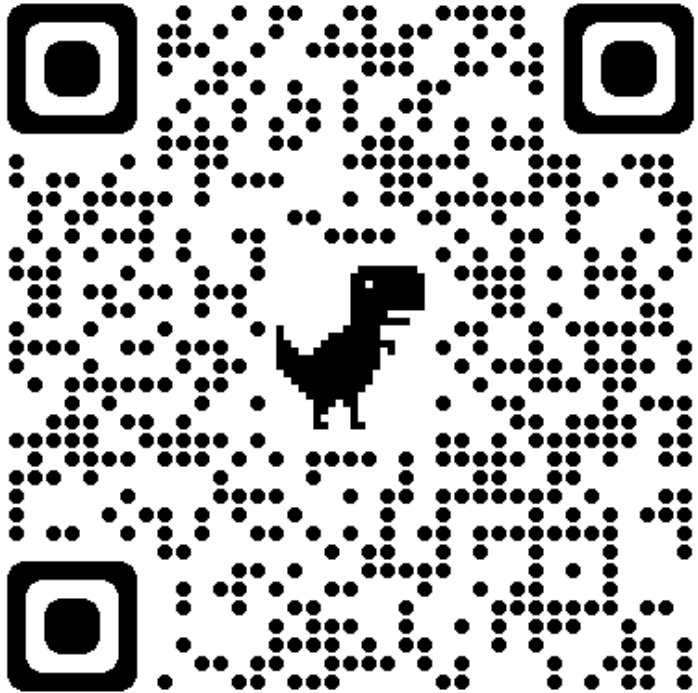
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Do you have experience with distance learning as...

A learner (taken a distance learning class)

0%

A teacher (taught a distance learning class)

0%

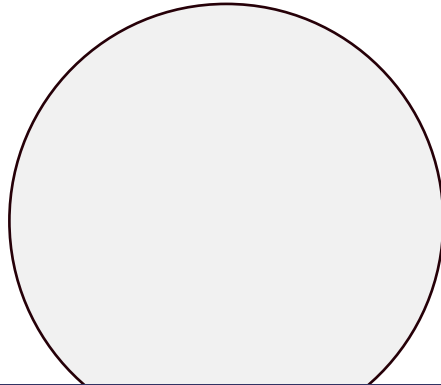
Both a learner and a teacher

0%

What do you see as benefits of distance education for...



Learners



Teachers & Staff



Programs

Benefits of Distance Education

- Reach learners who may not be able to attend in-person classes.
- Provides options for learners, including those who may work or have family responsibilities.
- Encourages continued participation in adult education.
- Meets learners' requests for online learning.
- Increases hours.
- Builds necessary technology skills.
- Building independent learning skills.
- Helps learners reach goals.
- Helps programs meet outcomes.

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Distance Education Outcomes by the Numbers

- **Access:** 1,261,601 Learners in PY 23-24 participated in adult education, a fraction of the 39 million adults in the US who have foundational literacy needs or lack a high school diploma (National Association of State Directors of Adult Education, 2024)
- **Increasing Instructional Hours:** In-class learners who also did distance learning had more instructional hours than those that did not (Texas, 2024)
- **Builds Digital Skills:** 92% of jobs today require digital skills (National Skills Coalition, 2024)

What is the evidence that it works?

Preliminary data from CASAS HyFlex Instruction

Kay Hartley, CASAS




Does the HyFlex Instructional model result in measurable continuity of participation and improvements in student learning gains?

- Merced Adult School
- Acalanes Adult School
- Vallejo Adult School
- Garden Grove Adult School

CASAS. (2023, August 30). *CASAS Promising Practices Presentation: HyFlex Instruction at Merced Adult School* [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/Hom8EuoJO9E>

What is the evidence that it works?


Year 1 – All HyFlex Classes in the study exceeded California NRS Goals



Agency 21-22	Level	CA NRS Goal	Agency NRS Perf
1 Acalanes	ESL Level 3	60%	85.37%
	ESL Level 4	49%	55.17%
2 Vallejo	ABE Level 2	54%	72%
	ABE Level 3	49%	50%
	ABE Level 4	40%	62.5%
3 Merced	ESL Level 2	54%	80%
	ESL Level 3	49%	85.71%
	ABE Level 4	40%	69.23%
4 Garden Grove	ABE Level 5	42%	58.82%
	ESL Level 2	61%	100%
	ESL Level 3	60%	78.79%
	ESL Level 4	49%	55.81%

What is the evidence that it works?

Year 2 – All HyFlex Classes exceeded CA NRS Goals, with several classes showing even higher learning gains.



Agency 22-23	Level	CA NRS Goal	Agency NRS Performance
1 Acalanes	ESL Level 3	60%	95.31%
	ESL Level 4	49%	55.17%
2 Vallejo	ABE Level 2	59%	86.36%
	ABE Level 3	35	64.10%
	ABE Level 4	40%	62.5%
3 Merced	ESL Level 2	54%	72.73%
	ESL Level 3	49%	72.73%
	ABE Level 4	40%	83.78%
	ABE Level 5	42%	85.71%

Distance education success

How has distance education impacted your learners and/or program outcomes?



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What are the program elements to consider?

- Recruitment
- Assessing Learner Readiness
- Orientation
- Instruction
- Assessment
- Supporting Program and Instructional Changes



IDEAL Distance and Digital Education Handbook

10th Edition | Revised August 2025

Jen Vanek, Destiny Simpson, Rachel Riggs,
Jeff Goumas, Jamie Harris, Eliana Stanislawski, and Jerry Yamashita

Technology



**Technology for
teaching**

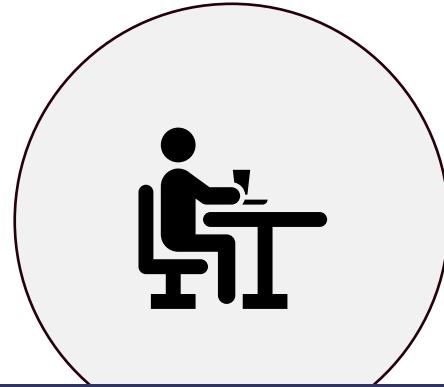


**Tech support for
teachers and
learners**

Strategic Recruitment



Teachers



Learners

Supports for Success: Teachers



Teachers

- Professional development
- Access to technology
- Access to online ed tech tools/curriculum
- Technology support
- Planning time
- Support and feedback
- Time to gain comfort and skills

Supports for Success: Learners



Learners

- Orientation
- Access to technology
- Access to online ed tech tools/curriculum
- Technology support
- Support and feedback
- Time to gain comfort and skills

Developing a distance education plan

Consider these program elements:

- Recruitment
- Assessing Learner Readiness
- Orientation
- Instruction
- Assessment
- Supporting Program and Instructional Changes

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IDEAL Consortium Website

<https://ideal.worlded.org/>



The Innovating Digital Education in Adult Learning (IDEAL) Consortium

The Innovating Digital Education in Adult Learning (IDEAL) Consortium, an EdTech initiative at World Education, supports quality technology-enriched instruction in adult education and literacy programs across the United States. For over 15 years, the IDEAL Consortium, previously Project IDEAL, has provided technical assistance, web-based tools, and publications to member states to help them design distance, blended, and HyFlex learning options. We help state and regional leadership train their staff, provide just-in-time technical support, and assess the progress of their efforts.

[Join IDEAL](#)

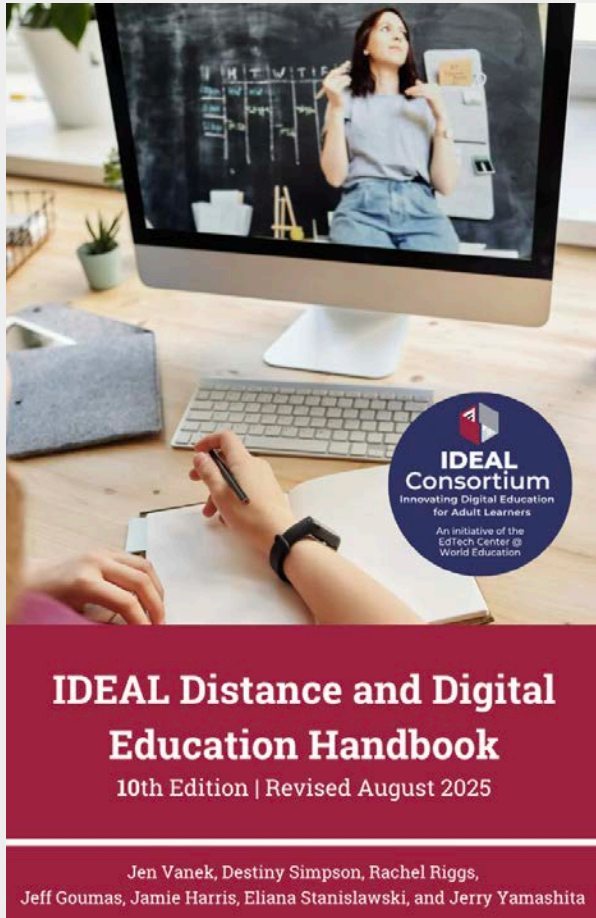
[IDEAL Community of Practice](#)

[EdTech Strategy Sessions](#)

Membership ensures opportunities for leaders from member states to meet, learn from each other, and access professional development materials. Technical assistance is available on data collection and analysis, reporting, educational program design, instructional strategies, and selection and use of online curricula. IDEAL Consortium workshop topics and ongoing discussions are shaped in response to the needs and interests of consortium

IDEAL Distance and Digital Education Handbook

- EdTech Books
- Written by adult educators for adult educators
- Focuses on important distance and digital education topics



[IDEAL Handbook in EdTech Books](#)

Distance Education Program Development Checklist

Assess program strengths and opportunities for growth

Distance Education Program Development Checklist



Distance Education Program Development Checklist

This checklist can be used by agencies developing a new distance education program or those looking to refine an existing distance education program. It doesn't follow the order learners typically participate in the program (recruitment, orientation, instruction), rather, it starts with a focus on the learners and their goals. Then staff can plan instruction based on the target audience and develop orientation and recruitment strategies once the specifics of the skills and technology needed to succeed in the instruction are more clearly known.

For more comprehensive information and support for distance program development, read the EdTech Center @ World Education's [IDEAL Distance Education and Blended Learning Handbook](#) and/or participate in the [IDEAL 501: Foundations of Distance Education and Blended Learning course](#) which includes a site plan that explores each of these areas in more detail or the on-demand [Transforming Distance Education course](#).

Setting the Stage

Task 1: Gather a team

A team approach can ensure that all stakeholders viewpoints are represented and build buy-in from the start. Team members should ideally include the program administrator, teachers, student support staff such as digital navigators, and staff that provide orientation.

- Team includes a diverse representation of roles that will be involved with planning and implementing the distance education program.
- Team members schedule regular meetings to discuss ideas, develop plans, monitor progress towards goals, and reflect on implementation.


Team member	Role

Remote Instruction Observation Tool

- Describe what good remote instruction for adult basic education learners looks like.
- Self-assess remote instruction and reflect on current practices.
- Identify professional development needs.
- Identify areas for program improvement

Remote Instruction Observation Tool

Remote Instruction Observation Tool




Overview

Purpose of the Observation Tool

This tool is designed to observe synchronous remote instruction. The tool is not meant to be used for evaluation purposes. Rather, it's a resource to:

- Describe what good remote instruction for adult basic education learners looks like.
- Self-assess remote instruction and reflect on current practices.
- Identify professional development needs.
- Identify areas for program improvement.

Suggested Process



Work that Informed the Development of This Tool


- [UNCS Adult Education Teacher Competencies](#)
- [Florida IPDAE Remote Teacher Observation Tool and Resources](#)
- [USC Center for Teacher Excellence - Synchronous Observation Tool](#)
- [College and Career Readiness Classroom Observation Tool for ELA/Literacy](#)
- [College and Career Readiness Classroom Observation Tool for Math](#)

Customizing This Tool to Meet Your Adult Education Program's Needs

This tool was developed for adult basic education programs to use when observing synchronous remote instruction. Programs can adapt this tool to meet the needs of the class structure and program demands.

Acknowledgements:

This observation tool and resources were developed by Destiny Simpson for World Education. Special thanks to Amy Poland and Kayla Sikora who shared their experiences, expertise, and resources to support its development.

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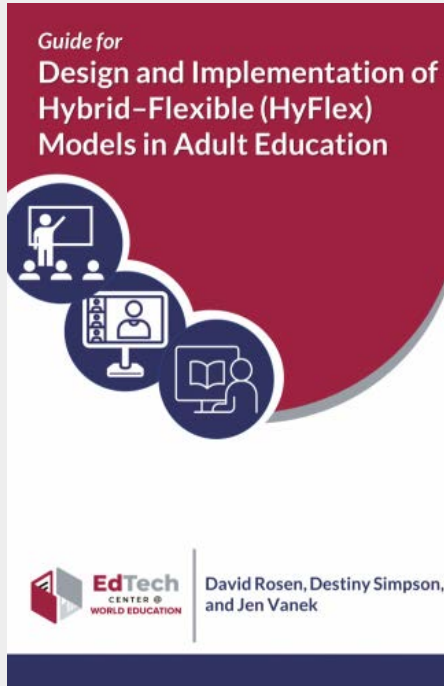
EdTech Strategy Sessions

- Recordings
- Register

- *All sessions take place on the 2nd Friday of the month* from 1 - 2:30 pm Eastern Time US.*



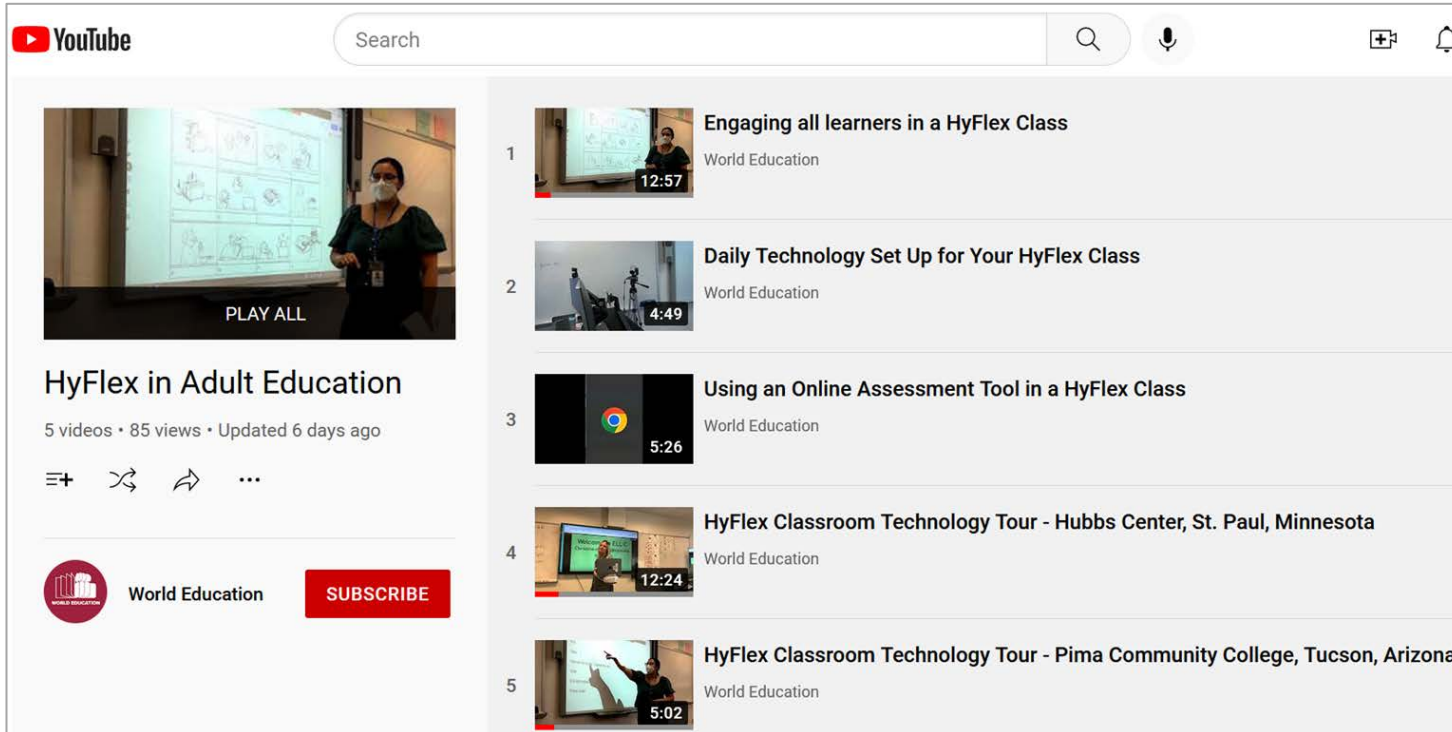
HyFlex Guide



- EdTech Books
- Interviewed 17 teachers and program administrators offering HyFlex classes for adult learners
- Features examples and vignettes from the field

[HyFlex Guide in EdTech Books](#)

HyFlex Video Series



The image shows a YouTube playlist interface. At the top left is the YouTube logo. A search bar is located at the top center. Below the search bar is a large video player showing a woman in a classroom setting with a large screen displaying diagrams. Below the video player is the title "HyFlex in Adult Education" and the text "5 videos • 85 views • Updated 6 days ago". There are icons for playlist, share, and more options. Below this is the "World Education" channel logo and a red "SUBSCRIBE" button. To the right of the video player is a list of five videos:

- 1 Engaging all learners in a HyFlex Class
World Education
12:57
- 2 Daily Technology Set Up for Your HyFlex Class
World Education
4:49
- 3 Using an Online Assessment Tool in a HyFlex Class
World Education
5:26
- 4 HyFlex Classroom Technology Tour - Hubbs Center, St. Paul, Minnesota
World Education
12:24
- 5 HyFlex Classroom Technology Tour - Pima Community College, Tucson, Arizona
World Education
5:02

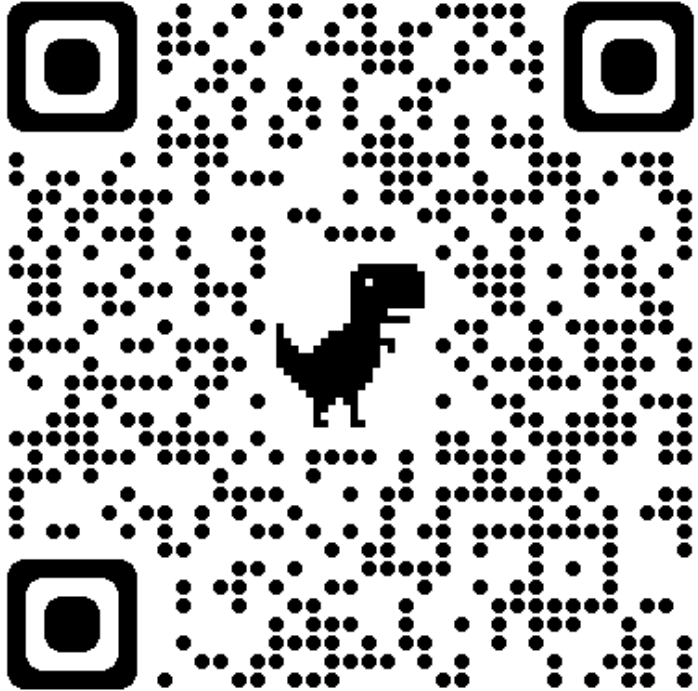
[YouTube Playlist](#)

Objectives

By the end of the session, I will be able to:

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- State at least two benefits of distance education for learners and teachers.
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How well did this session meet these objectives?



Questions?

Destiny Simpson

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