

Adult Literacy and Numeracy Teacher interview questions

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What to expect

Interviews for adult literacy and numeracy teaching roles typically explore your understanding of the Australian Core Skills Framework, your ability to engage and support adult learners, and your experience with blended delivery. You may be asked to demonstrate a lesson or complete a practical assessment.

- **Process questions:** These ask you to explain how you carry out key tasks such as assessing learners or designing a learning plan.
- **Behavioural questions:** These ask for examples of how you have handled real situations, such as supporting a disengaged learner or adapting to a diverse group.
- **Scenario questions:** These present a hypothetical classroom or learner challenge and ask how you would respond.
- **Technical questions:** These probe your knowledge of the ACSF, assessment tools and reporting requirements.
- **Client-facing and empathy questions:** These explore how you build rapport and create a safe learning environment for adults who may feel vulnerable about their skills.

The interview process often begins with a phone or online screening, followed by a panel interview with the hiring manager and a peer. You may be asked to deliver a short teaching demonstration or complete a written scenario. The panel will usually include questions from several of the types listed above, and you may have the chance to ask questions at the end.

1. Walk me through how you assess a new learner's literacy and numeracy levels.

Why they ask

This question checks your familiarity with assessment processes and the ACSF, which is central to the role.

How to structure your answer

Provide a step-by-step walk-through: initial interview to understand goals and background, use of formal and informal assessment tools, mapping results to the Australian Core Skills Framework, and using that information to develop an individual learning plan.

Example answer

"I start with a conversation to understand the learner's goals, background and any previous learning experiences. Then I use a validated assessment tool, such as those aligned with the ACSF, to gauge their reading, writing, oral communication and numeracy levels. I might also use a short writing sample and a numeracy task. Once I have the results, I map them to the ACSF indicators and discuss the findings with the learner. Together we set realistic goals and I design a learning plan that targets their specific needs, whether that's filling gaps in foundational skills or preparing for further study."

2. Tell me about a time you helped an adult learner overcome a significant barrier to learning.

Why they ask

This behavioural question reveals your empathy, problem-solving and ability to adapt your teaching.

How to structure your answer

Use the STAR method: describe the Situation, the Task you needed to address, the Action you took, and the Result. Focus on the learner's outcome and what you learned.

Example answer

"In my previous role, I worked with a learner who had a negative experience at school and was very anxious about returning to study. She often missed classes and would not speak in group sessions. My task was to help her feel safe and make progress. I started by offering one-on-one sessions to build trust, and I used her interest in cooking to embed numeracy through recipe scaling and budgeting. I also paired her with a supportive peer for group activities. Over time, she began contributing in class and eventually completed a numeracy module that allowed her to apply for a job in hospitality. She told me that for the first time she felt capable of learning."

3. You are teaching a small group and notice one learner is consistently disruptive and another is withdrawn. How do you handle the situation?

Why they ask

This scenario question assesses your classroom management and ability to balance the needs of different learners.

How to structure your answer

Show judgement under pressure: first, assess the situation without making assumptions. Then, address the disruptive behaviour privately and respectfully, check in with the withdrawn learner, adjust your teaching strategies if needed, and follow up to ensure a positive learning environment for everyone.

Example answer

"I would first observe the dynamics to understand what might be driving the behaviour. I would speak with the disruptive learner privately, using a non-confrontational approach to find out if something is causing frustration or boredom. I might offer them a leadership role or more challenging work. For the withdrawn learner, I would check in individually to see if they need additional support or a different way to participate. I would also review my lesson plan to ensure it is inclusive and engaging. If necessary, I would refer either learner to support services. My goal is to create a safe environment where all learners can progress."

4. How do you ensure your teaching aligns with the Australian Core Skills Framework?

Why they ask

This technical question tests your knowledge of the ACSF and its application in planning and reporting.

How to structure your answer

Explain your approach: familiarise yourself with the ACSF levels and indicators, use them to map learner skills, design activities that target specific levels, and use the framework for reporting progress.

Example answer

"I use the ACSF as the backbone of my planning and reporting. When I assess a learner, I identify their current level in each core skill, such as learning, reading, writing, oral communication and numeracy. I then design activities that are pitched at the right level and that build toward the next level. For example, if a learner is at Level 2 in reading, I might use real-world texts like forms or timetables to develop their comprehension. I record progress against the ACSF indicators and use that to report to funding bodies and to guide the learner's next steps. I also keep up to date with any changes to the framework through professional development."

5. How do you make adult learners feel comfortable when they have low literacy or numeracy skills?

Why they ask

This client-facing question explores your empathy and ability to create an inclusive environment, which is critical for adult learners who may feel shame.

How to structure your answer

Focus on empathy and communication: build rapport, use non-judgmental language, normalise the challenges, celebrate small wins, and create a supportive classroom culture.

Example answer

"I always start by normalising the experience. Many adults have had negative experiences with learning, so I make it clear that everyone is here to improve and that there is no such thing as a silly question. I use plain language, avoid jargon, and check for understanding. I celebrate every step forward, no matter how small, and I encourage learners to support each other. I also make sure my materials reflect diverse backgrounds so that everyone feels represented. If a learner is particularly anxious, I offer one-on-one time and connect them with a mentor or support service if needed. The most important thing is that they feel respected and safe to take risks."

6. What experience do you have with blended or online delivery?

Why they ask

This question checks your digital literacy and ability to adapt to different delivery modes, which is increasingly common in this field.

How to structure your answer

Describe the tools you have used and the strategies you employ to keep learners engaged online. Give a specific example of how you adapted a lesson for online delivery.

Example answer

"I have delivered blended programs using Moodle, Microsoft Teams and Zoom. For example, in a numeracy course, I used Moodle to post short instructional videos and interactive quizzes, then held weekly Zoom sessions for group problem-solving. I also used Microsoft Teams for one-on-one check-ins. To keep engagement high, I made sure online sessions were interactive with polls, breakout rooms and real-life tasks. I provided clear instructions and offered extra support to learners who were less confident with technology. I found that the flexibility of online delivery helped some learners who couldn't attend face to face, and I made sure to maintain a personal connection through regular feedback and encouragement."