This factsheet was created through OER STEM, as part of American Institutes for Research. ­[](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)This factsheet was created through OER STEM, as part of American Institutes for Research.

[What are OER](http://youtu.be/7NH7vLzt9jY)?

**OER are teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits sharing, accessing, repurposing̵̶ including for commercial purposes̶ and collaborating with others. Watch this 3.5 minute** [**video**](http://youtu.be/7NH7vLzt9jY) **by** [**Nadia Paola Mireles Torres**](http://nadiamireles.blogspot.com/) **and her collaborators from the design firm Funktionell to see how OER works and why** [**Open Education Matters**](http://youtu.be/7NH7vLzt9jY)**.**

What are the benefits of using and creating OER for adult education?

Creating and using OER may improve student persistence because the materials can be tailored to their current needs and interests; increase student use of online tools; encourage educators to collaborate and share; save costs; and serve as a model for lifelong learning.

Where can I create and   
remix OER?

OER Commons Open Author

[www.oercommons.org/open-author-about](http://www.oercommons.org/open-author-about)

**Gooru Learning** <http://about.goorulearning.org>

WikiEducator

[wikieducator.org/](http://wikieducator.org/)

Open Tapestry

[www.opentapestry.com/](http://www.opentapestry.com/)

YouTube Video Editor

[www.youtube.com/editor](http://www.youtube.com/editor)

TedEd

<http://ed.ted.com>

## What is the value of OER in adult education (AE)?

Quality OER can be powerful tools to enhance learning and instruction in adult education. OER help students achieve their learning goals by providing flexible and accessible supplements to instruction. OER encourage life-long learning habits in students by providing them with personalized and readily available learning materials. OER also help educators by augmenting instruction, strengthening their content knowledge, and providing access to free online professional development.

## What is the difference between free and open?

Free resources serve a meaningful purpose in AE by providing teachers with tools to support teaching and learning. “Free” means that materials are free to access but not remix or revise. However, when a resource is open, a user can remix or revise with other open resources or self-generated content to produce new material that directly targets the adult learner’s needs.

## The 5Rs\*

Another way to think about OER is through the Five R Framework, developed by David Wiley. It supports a deeper understanding of what it means to consider an object (i.e., resource) an OER.

1. **Retain** – the right to make, own, and control copies of the content
2. **Reuse** – the right to reuse the content as verbatim or in its unaltered form
3. **Revise** – the right to adapt, adjust, modify, or alter the content itself
4. **Remix** – the right to combine the original or revised content with other content to create something new
5. **Redistribute** – the right to make and share copies of the original content, your revisions, or your remixes with others

# Open Educational Resources (OER): A Fact Sheet for Adult Education

## Classroom Scenario

You are teaching linear equations to GED students. Some students are struggling to apply the slope-intercept form to the real world so you decide to provide them with supplemental materials.

While searching for materials, you find an almost perfect OER. However, you do not feel the directions are clear enough and you do not want the students to struggle, since the material is already challenging. Because it is an OER with Public Domain Creative Commons license, you are free to rewrite the directions and provide an example for the students to follow without worrying about copyright infringement.

You also want to challenge the students to engage their technical skills, so you decide to add an online component with videos and virtual manipulatives. The video and manipulatives also are OER; however, they are more restricted and only allow for you to download and share the materials so long as you give credit to the original source. You decide that the resources are well-designed and would not need any adaptations from you, so you agree to the licensing terms, give credit to the original source, and share the links with your students.

## What is the future of OER?

OER are here to stay. The movement to increase open resources for teaching and learning is continuously growing because OER provide a means of addressing the cost of education and the need for more student-centered materials, particularly in adult education. It is important to ensure that this growing body of resources has a method of evaluation (see Achieve Rubrics found at [www.oercommons.org](http://www.oercommons.org)) to make sure that materials are high quality. Providing teachers with more training on evaluating, creating, and remixing OER has the potential to transform teaching and learning for adult education.

## What are the teaching and learning implications of OER?

* Personalized teaching and learning
* Development of high interest materials
* Greater ability to support various learning styles
* Teacher-directed professional development

What are some types of OER?

* Activities
* Lesson Plans
* Full course
* Online textbooks
* Interactive/simulations

Where to find OER:

OER Commons

[www.oercommons.org](http://www.oercommons.org)

Merlot

[www.merlot.org/merlot/index.htm](http://www.merlot.org/merlot/index.htm)

Creative Commons Search

<http://search.creativecommons.org>

National Science Digital Library

<https://nsdl.org/>

Where to find Creative Commons licensing info: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/>

To learn more visit:

OER Research Hub

[**http://oerresearchhub.org/**](http://oerresearchhub.org/)

OER in Action