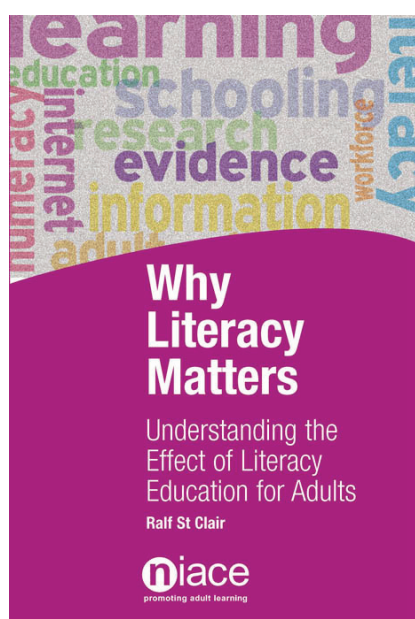niace
promoting adult learning

Why Literacy Matters
Understanding the Effects of Literacy Education for Adults

Ralf St Clair
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Why Literacy Matters offers a contribution to the continuing debate about both accountability in adult learning in general terms and the specific development of systems in adult literacy and numeracy. In recent years, a number of arguments have been advanced in support of adult literacy and numeracy programmes, such as suggestions that they contribute to a more productive workforce and address the inadequacies of schooling. There have been ever-increasing demands for such programmes to prove their worth, but a lack of hard evidence. Through a presentation of the wider outcomes of literacy and numeracy learning, discussing the complexities and potential of such work, this book is an attempt to address some of these questions, by firstly examining the research evidence, then looking at what would be a useful step in understanding the effects of literacy education, with strategic suggestions.

Dr Ralf St.Clair has worked in adult literacy in the UK, Canada and the United States. He currently teaches at the University of Glasgow, and works with partners around Europe, North America and Asia on understanding the effects and the significance of adult literacy programmes.

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