



Reading Writing Hotline  
1300 6 555 06



7 April 2020

David Anderson  
Managing Director  
Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Dear Mr Anderson,

### **Request to broadcast two ABC TV adult basic education TV series**

Community Colleges Australia, Australian Council for Adult Literacy, Reading Writing Hotline and Adult Learning Australia are writing to request that assistance be provided on an urgent basis to the estimated 4 million adults who have literacy difficulties, many of whom are also the 2.5 million Australians with limited or no internet access. The ABC right now has two adult basic education instructional television series which could be broadcast immediately to meet the needs of adults with low levels of literacy and English language:

- [Reading Writing Roadshow](#), a 20 x half-hour series with drama, comedy and documentary elements for literacy instruction; and
- [English – have a go](#), 26 x half-hour series for people with English as a second language.

Last week brought the welcome news that ABC TV will recommence broadcasting educational television for both primary and secondary students through ABC Kids, following the shuttering of doors of schools as a result of the COVID–19 emergency.

We request that the next step is for the ABC to continue and extend this educational support by focussing attention on the needs of adult and post-secondary learners, who will also greatly benefit from broadcast educational television resources.

The Reading Writing Hotline has in recent weeks received many calls about lack of access to suitable literacy learning from the following three groups:

- parents with lower levels of literacy experiencing shame and embarrassment at being unable to assist their children with online learning at home, causing undue stress;
- older Australians, without access to online communication, who now need assistance to develop digital literacy skills to stay in contact with family members and support services; and
- workers with low levels of literacy who have found themselves out of work suddenly both having to apply for benefits at Centrelink and having difficulty completing forms as well as providing an ideal opportunity to do something about their literacy and numeracy skills.



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The COVID-19 outbreak over the past few weeks has highlighted the significant need to reach out to vulnerable and disadvantaged adults at risk of isolation due to their lower literacy, digital literacy, financial literacy and health literacy skills. The ABC is in the unique position of being able to provide accessible programming directly into the loungerooms of those wishing to improve their skills.

We request that you consider making these two series freely accessible through free-to-air ABC TV broadcasts in order to provide many of the most disadvantaged adult Australians with educational resources they can use at a time when so many other forms of education are closed off to them.

Yours sincerely,

**Community Colleges Australia ([www.cca.edu.au](http://www.cca.edu.au))**

**Australian Council for Adult Literacy (<http://acal.edu.au/>)**

**Adult Learning Australia (<https://ala.asn.au/>)**

**Reading Writing Hotline (<https://www.readingwritinghotline.edu.au/>)**