WPA Literacy Classes To Enroll Millionth Adult This Term

Adult illiteracy in the United States will be reduced nearly one-fourth in five years as one feature of the adult education program now entering its fifth year of operations, according to plans announced today by Harry L. Hopkins, Works Progress Administrator.

The millionth adult to learn to read and write in these classes is expected to enroll during the term outlined for the coming months. The Works Progress Administration, carrying on the work begun under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, has brought the total who have been taught the fundamentals of reading, writing and arithmetic to 700,000 in four years and has agreed to co-operate in teaching an additional 300,000 during the next year. The 1930 census revealed 4,283,753 adult illiterates in the United States.

The literacy program is only one feature of the WPA adult classes which have reached a total enrollment of more than 2,000,000 during each of the last two winters, according to reports from Dr. L. R. Alderman, Director of the Division of Education of WPA. A comparable enrollment is expected next winter, he added, despite a reduction in the teaching staff from 42,000 to 30,000, in line with the general curtailment of WPA rolls. The classes remained open during the summer with more than 1,000,000 attending.

Approximately 25,000 classes will be offered in vocational training, economics, government and public affairs, family relationships, child development and care, homemaking, music, art, dramatics, handicrafts, literature, languages, public speaking, health, first aid and numerous other subjects. In each community the classes, supplementing but not duplicating the regular public school system, are under the supervision of public school officials and the majority of them meet in public school classrooms.