

Language Training and Adult Literacy

ESL Intensive 3–7 Curriculum Framework

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V2.10

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Mission

This curriculum endeavours to strengthen communities through inspiring a passion for learning and empowering our learners.

Vision

The ESL Intensive BM 3-7 Curriculum lays the foundations for success in further education and in the workplace.

Our Learner Population

In recent years, the learner population in the ESL Intensive program has changed significantly. More and more learners enter the ESL Intensive program with limited or interrupted schooling, or with an education that did not include many of the Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) skills¹ required for success in the Canadian educational system. As a result, many are unable to reach their employment and/or training goals within the time available.

Changes in the Learner Population

The following information taken from NorQuest College's 2007 point of entry survey summarizes the significant differences between the LINC and the ESL Intensive populations.

		LINC	ESL Intensive
First Language – four largest groups		Chinese 32.9% Spanish 10% Russian 9.6% Farsi 6.3%	Chinese 17.4% Somali 13.3 % French 10.8% Farsi 10.3%
Education	University degree	47.1%	24.7%
	High School Diploma	83.5%	54.8%
	Some high school	8.9%	26.6%
	Junior high school	4.2%	9.6%
	Grade 6 or less	3.4%	9%
Home computer access	Access to a computer at home	93.6%	79%
Goals	Use training to get a related job	16.1%	28.7%

¹ Cummins, J. (1984). *Bilingualism and special education: Issues in assessment and pedagogy*. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.

The distributions of first languages show that the two populations are quite dissimilar. Based on the education statistics, it is reasonable to assume that **nearly half of the ESL Intensive learners do not have the academic language, concepts and study skills necessary to succeed in post-secondary education in Canada.**

Learner Goals

In a demographic study of the ESL Intensive learner population undertaken with the assistance of an intern from the Prairie Metropolis Centre, **learner goals** were one of the descriptors. The most common career goals reported by learners in the ESL Intensive program are administrative assistant, health care aide, licensed practical nurse, engineering technician, mechanic and related occupations². Access to post-secondary training for these occupations requires a combination of CLB levels 6–8, high school completion or equivalent or some high school. However, a significant number of our learners are unable to reach CLB scores high enough to access this training. Although many of the learners in this test group reported twelve years of first language education, they were not able to demonstrate in English many of the critical academic skills and competencies required for success in post-secondary training and/or employment. In particular, they were not able to demonstrate critical thinking skills or text handling and analysis. These skills are also an important component of the Workplace Essential Skills, indicating that these learners would also not be successful in the workplace, except at an entry level.

Research

In their 2004 report *Benchmarking Adult Rates of Second Language Acquisition and Integration*, Lake and Wood concluded that previous educational attainment was the primary factor determining the rate of adult language acquisition³. Newcomers with zero to seven years of education could be expected to progress 1.4 CLB levels per 1000 hours of instruction, while learners with eight to twelve years of education could expect to progress 1.2 – 2.0 CLB levels in 1000 hours of instruction. Learners in the zero to seven year category rarely, if ever, attain CLB levels above 5 in any skill area. The report also noted that CLB level gains in basic proficiency are acquired more rapidly than they are at higher levels; in other words, there is something of a plateau effect in the mid to higher CLB levels.

Following Cummins' ground-breaking work on developing CALP in school age ESL learners⁴, many studies have followed that confirm the need to combine content-based

² Murphy, L. (2008). Student Population Demographics of NorQuest College's ESL Program. Limited Release. Edmonton Prairie Metropolis Centre.

³ Lake, D. & Wood, D. (1994). *Benchmarking Adult Rates of Second Language Acquisition & Integration: How long and how fast?* Alberta Learning – Language Training Programs and Citizenship & Immigration Canada

⁴ Cummins, J. (1981). The role of primary language development in promoting educational success for language minority students. In California State Department of Education, *Schooling and language minority students: A theoretical framework*. Los Angeles: California State University,

instruction with specific attention to the vocabulary, concepts and skills associated with academic success (Troncate 2002⁵, Villar 1999⁶, Cummins 1994⁷). Most of the studies have focused on school age ESL learners; however, the consequences of the failure to acquire skills follow the learner through adult life. Where the skills are missing, they must be developed in order for the individual to function well in society.

NorQuest College previously responded to this need by developing two content-based special courses at the CLB 7 and 8 levels, namely Academic Enrichment and English for Careers as mentioned above. However, relatively few learners are advanced enough to take advantage of these two courses. Those who do, generally achieve their goals. The challenge now is to improve the outcomes for the learners at the **lower** CLB levels.

Staff

All of the instructors in the ESL Intensive Program have extensive, specialized training/experience in English as a Second Language.

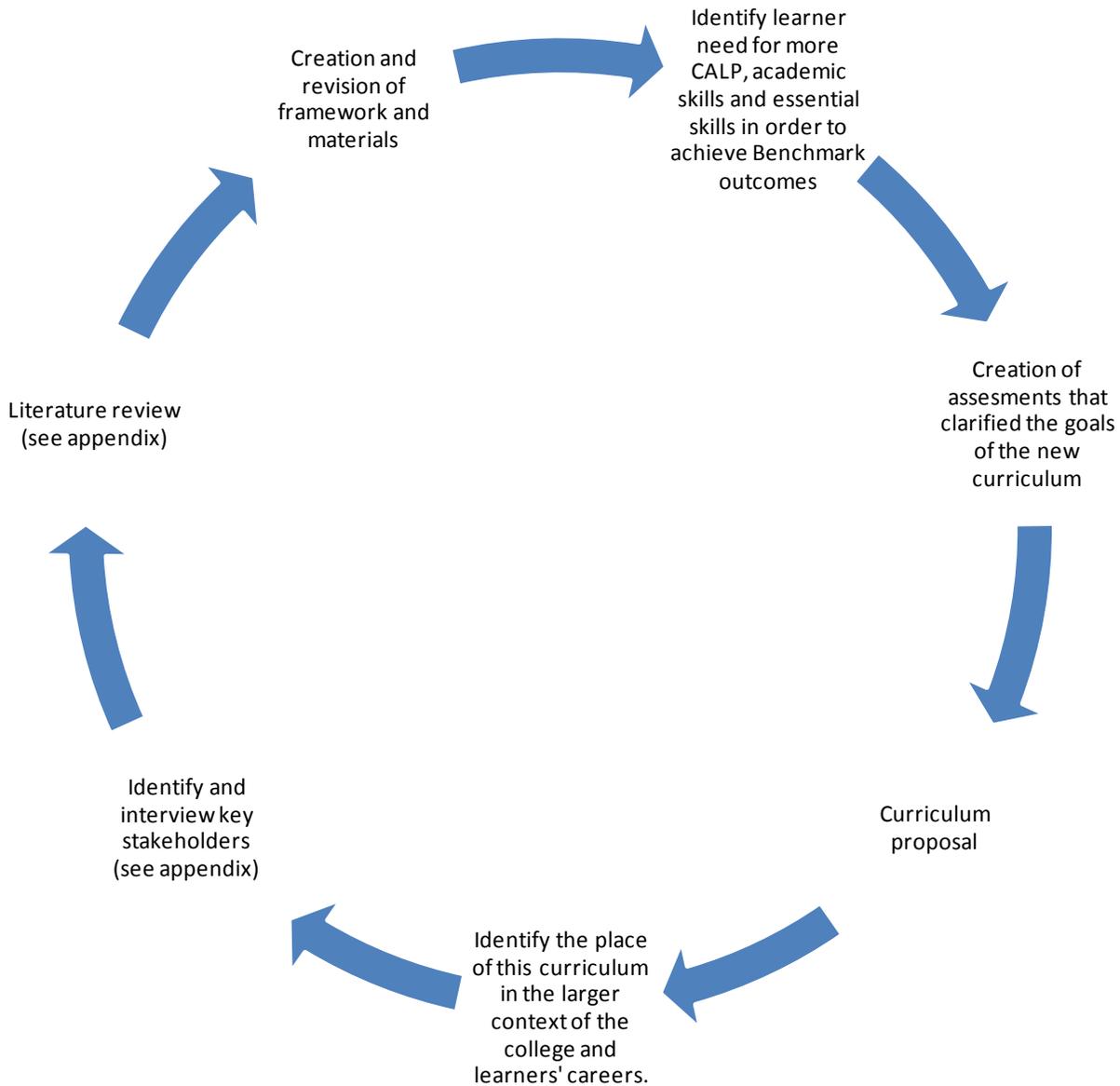
⁵ Troncale, N. (2002). Content-based Instruction, Cooperative Learning, and CALP Instruction: Addressing the whole education of 7-12 ESL. *Applied Linguistics* 2 (3).

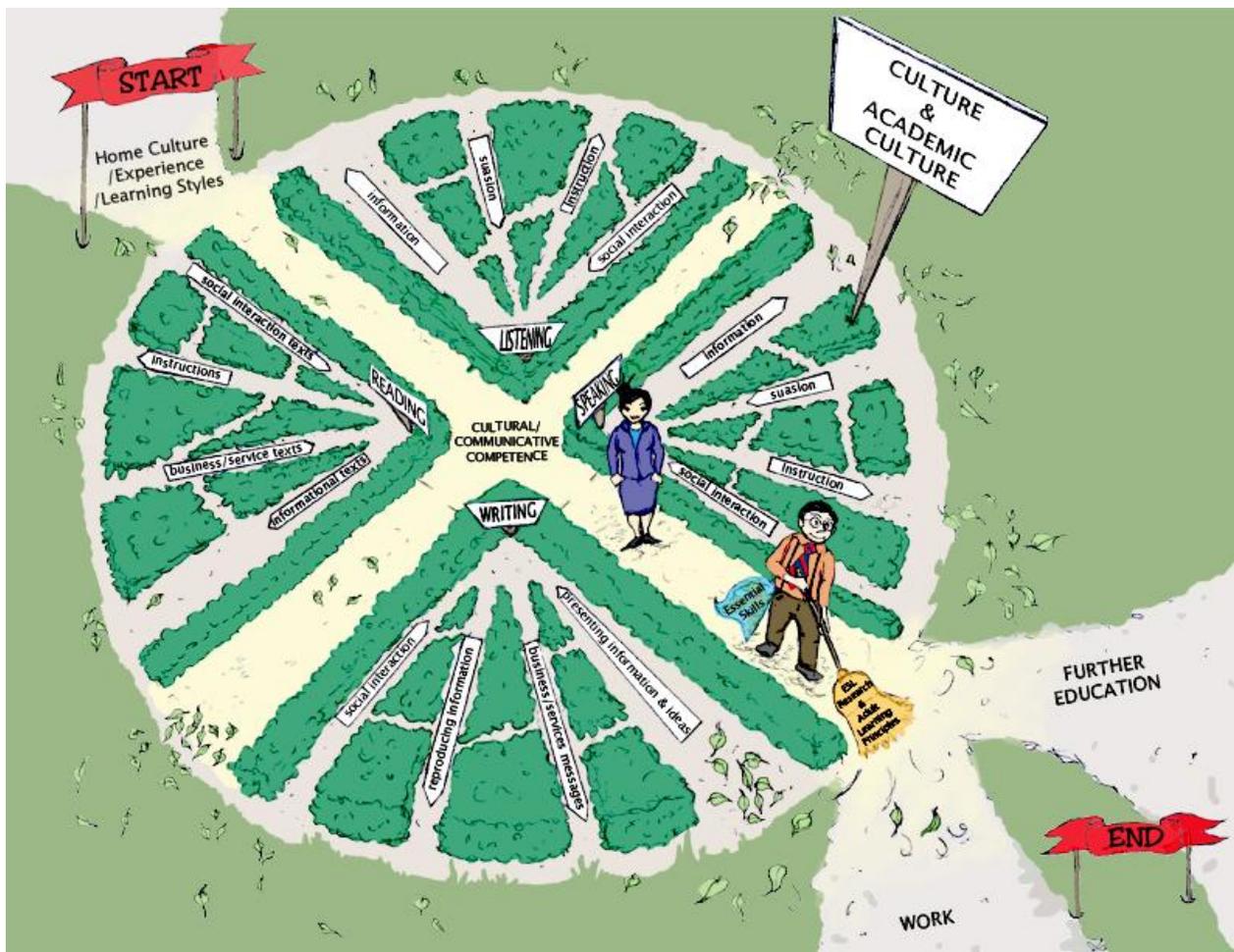
⁶ Villar, J. A. (1999). A Model for Developing Academic Language Proficiency in English Language Learners through Instructional Conversations. *Dissertation Abstracts International* 60 (4).

⁷ Cummins (1994). The Acquisition of English as a Second Language. In Spangenberg, Urbschat & Pritchard (Eds). *Kids Come in All Languages*. Newark: International Reading Association.

Curriculum Creation Process

Needs assessment: The needs assessment process went on throughout the curriculum development process. As each layer was revealed, new questions and the need for new solutions arose.





Unpacking the ESL Intensive 3–7 Curriculum Model

The garden

The shape of the new model is an adapted Renaissance garden. The garden is round as learning is a cyclical process with increasing levels of complexity and performance. It is divided into four quadrants to represent the four language skills and their component Benchmark bands.

The frame

The bushes in the garden represent the academic and cultural expectations that structure the expectations that learners will have to negotiate in our program as preparation to meet expectations in Canadian workplaces and institutions.

The means of travel

The path that will enable the learner to negotiate linguistic, cultural and academic expectations is laid with cultural and communicative competence. Communicative competence includes grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and graphology as well as other linguistic and textual elements (Pawlikowska-Smith, 2000). Cultural Competence describes an understanding of the way an utterance or piece of text will be perceived in the Canadian context. This understanding can be built on knowledge of the culture and cultural frame of reference as well as functional, sociocultural and strategic competence (as defined in Pawlikowska-Smith, 2000).

The teacher

Using English as a Second Language research and Adult learning principles, the teacher clears the path and facilitates the learner's learning. The teacher carries a map of Essential Skills which gives direction to the teaching and helps both the learner and teacher work toward authentic workplace responsibilities and tasks.

The learner

The learner enters the garden equipped with her own personality, experience, learning style and culture. While traveling through the garden she will use learning strategies and her own strengths to acquire the cultural and communicative competence that will enable her to move through the garden.

Canadian Language Benchmarks

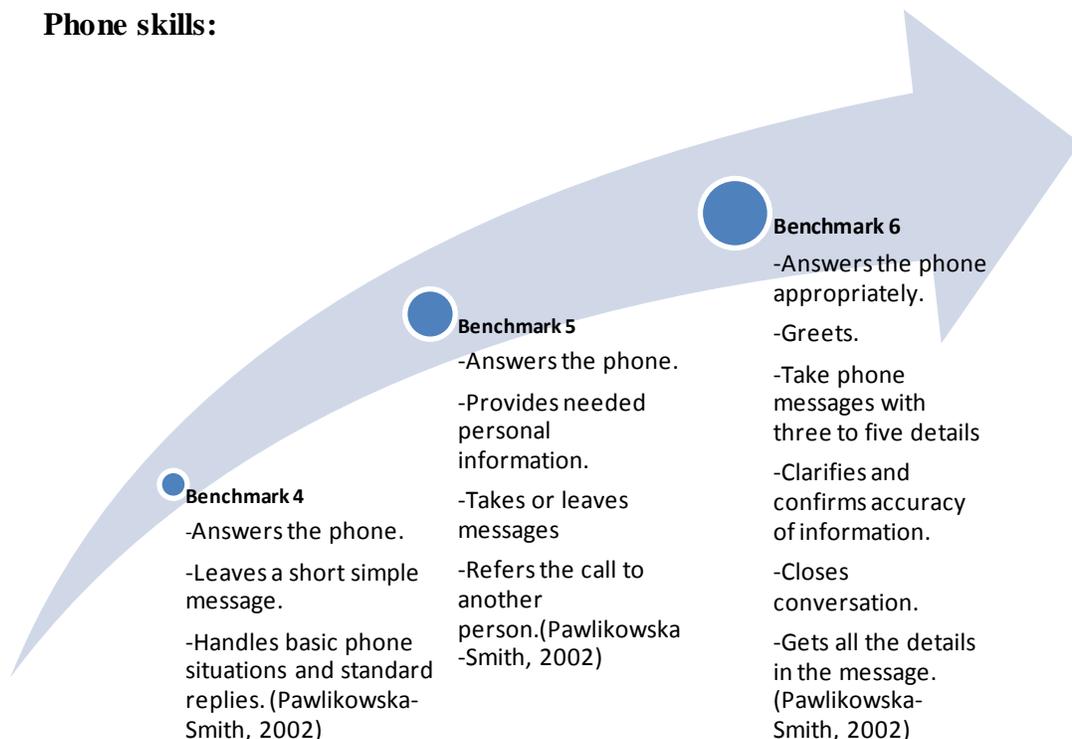
“The Canadian Language Benchmarks is based on a functional view of language, language use and language proficiency. Such a view relates language to the contexts in which it is used and the communicative functions it performs. The focus of the Canadian Language Benchmarks is thus on communication and communicative proficiency in English as a second language.” (Pawlikowska – Smith, 2002, p. 6).

The Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLBs) are an evolving set of standards to describe language. At times, these standards can be challenging to apply to practice; however, curricula that are based on these standards inherently have the following strengths:

1. Spiral Learning Process

Learners recycle previous learning as they increase in sophistication doing the same type of task. Each Benchmark level builds the same type of task's complexity.

Phone skills:



2. Transferability

Since the CLBs are a nationally recognized set of standards, learners from our program should be able to transfer between benchmark based programs across the country more smoothly.

3. Task-based

The CLBs are task-based which causes us to consider what learners can do with the language rather than teaching language for the beauty of language itself. The CLBs inspire a practical approach for learners who primarily need to use language as a means to career and educational advancement.

WHAT THE PERSON CAN DO	EXAMPLES OF TASKS AND TEXTS	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
<p>I. Social interaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convey personal messages in an informal or formal personal short letter or a note to express invitations, thanks, regrets, cancellations and apologies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a short letter to your friend to tell her or him about your new apartment, car, job or trip. Write a formal invitation for a special family function (e.g., housewarming party, graduation, wedding, special birthday, etc.). Write a personal note to thank your host for a dinner or a party. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conveys the message: reader can follow. Uses language and content that are appropriate to the occasion, intent and social context. Uses simple grammar structures, punctuation and spelling with few errors. Conveys main ideas and supports them with detail in a basic paragraph structure.
<p>II. Recording information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy short texts to record information for personal use, or to complete tasks, or to learn information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy definitions from two to three different sources (e.g., dictionaries or encyclopedias), and compare them. Copy information about a product or service from catalogues, directories, instructions and manuals for comparison purposes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competently copies information, including capitalization, lower case, punctuation, and phonetic and other notations. Has legible handwriting or printing. Makes no major omissions in copying information. There are only a few occasional copying mistakes or slight uncertainty in decoding.
<p>III. Business/service messages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fill out simple forms. Convey simple business messages as written notes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fill out an application form: car rental, direct deposit request. Write a short note to your child's teacher notifying her or him about an absence. Write down a message from one person to pass on to another. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fills out form with required information. Spells and follows punctuation conventions. Has legible handwriting or printing. Makes no major omissions in providing information. Conveys a simple message. Uses simple structures with few errors in grammar.
<p>IV. Presenting information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a short text about a personal or familiar situation, event, personal experience, future plans. Explain reasons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe an event or tell a story (e.g., write about coming to Canada). Write about your work experience in the past. Write about what you would like to do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes a situation: reader can follow. Conveys main ideas, supporting detail. Uses basic paragraph structure. Uses simple structures; few errors. Uses adequate vocabulary for the topic.



One of the key learnings we have received from this project is that more time needs to be spent on the information band (see the accompanying excerpt from *Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000*). Originally we allocated equal time and practice to each of the four bands. In some cases (e.g. recording information) this amount of time and practice was superfluous. The information band, however, requires more language complexity as well as understanding of social/academic conventions (e.g. paragraph structure). The information band applies to the traditional language learning tasks that ESL teachers, academic program instructors and employers use to judge learning in the classroom. This band also can be a foundation for further learning in the other bands, for example, good social interactions texts (i.e., letters and emails) also require clear, well structured paragraphs.

Academic Skills

The ESL Intensive BM 3-7 curriculum addresses academic skills to help learners bridge into Canadian academic culture. It models for learners that teacher expectations may be different from what they have experienced in their home countries (e.g. the need to synthesize and create in Canadian academic settings as opposed to the need to preserve and replicate knowledge in other cultures' settings). The curriculum also teaches core concepts of our academic culture (e.g. scientific method) and skills that Canadian instructors would expect from learners (e.g. reading a test question and finding the key words to respond to).

Essential Skills

“Essential Skills are the skills people use to carry out a wide variety of everyday life and work tasks.

Essential Skills are not the technical skills required by particular occupations but rather the skills applied in all occupations. For example, writing skills are required in a broad range of occupations. The complexity and frequency of writing varies, of course. Some workers fill out simple forms every day, while others write daily or monthly reports.

Essential Skills enable people to do their work. For example, repair persons may have to read and understand written work orders before they can do the repairs.

Essential Skills are **enabling skills** that:

1. Help people perform the tasks required by their occupation and other activities of daily life.
2. Provide people with a foundation to learn other skills.”
3. Enhance people’s ability to adapt to change.

The above excerpt and all other Essential Skills related excerpts are from the Human Resources and Social Development Canada’s *Readers’ Guide to Essential Skills Profiles* – first paragraph. Retrieved on May 27, 2010 from http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/essential_skills/general/readers_guide_whole.shtml

Essential Skills have been a helpful addition to the curriculum because:

- They are based on workplace competencies which are transferable and not occupation specific; they keep the focus on the workplace goals our learners are trying to achieve.
- They provide another lens with which to analyze a task. Essential skills were not developed for ESL learners and, therefore treat tasks differently. For example, when teaching how to read a medical form, a language orientation may focus on the vocabulary and grammar in the form, whereas, an essential skills orientation focuses on the format and structural cues within the format.

- They are analysed according to their level of complexity. These levels can be especially useful when planning instruction and the levels of support needed for the learners.

Essential Skills and Canadian Language Benchmarks have great areas of overlap⁸ but remain fundamentally different. The Canadian Language Benchmarks were created to describe English as a Second Language Speakers' *performance* in language tasks in all areas of life. The Essential Skills profiles were created to describe the actual *tasks* that native speakers perform at work. Rather than providing another set of outcomes based on the Essential Skills (which almost duplicate Benchmark outcomes), it is more fruitful to use Essential Skills complexity levels to analyze the authentic (or authentic like) tasks the learners are given.

Linguistic Competence

“Linguistic competence is “the knowledge of the formal code of language on how to combine the elements of grammar vocabulary and pronunciation to produce well-formed sentences.” (Pawlikowska-Smith, 2002, p. 10) It is the foundation of language teaching and builds the skills that allow CLB, academic and essential skill tasks to be performed. Critical elements include syntax, morphology, lexicon, phonology and orthography (Pawlikowska-Smith, 2002).

Content

Language, culture and essential skills are taught through our content themes. Learners have limited time in our classes and can maximize their time by learning useful and relevant information while studying language. The content themes were based on suggestions from our stakeholder interviews. Content that helps learners and their families navigate their way through Albertan institutions and expectations and may smooth the cultural transition process.

⁸ For example: Essential Skills Descriptor: “Follows and gives detailed multi-step instructions” Canadian Language Benchmarks Descriptor: “Follows clear and coherent extended instructional texts and directions”.

Outcomes

Reading and Writing Academic⁹ and Content Themes

Benchmark level	Course name	Themes/units
4	RW400	Travel Alberta Science in the Home Anne of Green Gables
5	RW500	The Mystery of the Frozen Brains Climate Change Plagiarism
6	RW600	A Story for Hope Unwrapping a Story – <i>Charlie and the Chocolate Factory</i>

Speaking and Listening Academic and Content Themes

Benchmark level	Course name	Themes/units
4	LS400	Social Interaction: Small Talk Shopping Finances PowerPoint and Instructions
5	LS500	Canadian Office and Intercultural Communication Skills Buying a House Living with Stress
6	LS600	Going on a Field Trip Police and Scams Tax Time

⁹ An excellent resource that describes the academic thinking skills that are valued in Canadian workplaces is the Thinking Skills section of the Readers' Guide to Essential Skills http://www.rhdcc-hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/essential_skills/general/readers_guide_whole.shtml

4. Outcomes

Reading and Writing

Writing				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Social interaction				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a greeting on an appropriate greeting card. Add a simple goodwill message. Address an envelope for postal delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write personal messages in an informal note. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write personal messages in an informal note. Write a personal message in a short formal letter. Write a personal message in an email. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a personal message in an informal note. Write a personal message in a short formal letter. Write a personal message in an email. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a personal message in an informal note. Write a personal message in a short formal letter. Write a personal message in an email with an attachment.
Recording information				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy numbers, dates, words, phrases and sentences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy short texts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make a list of 7–10 points from a handwritten or typed text. Make notes of 5–7 points from a pre-recorded audio prompt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make notes of main ideas with some details from handwritten or typed texts. Make notes of major points with some details from a pre-recorded audio prompt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make notes of facts from a pre-recorded audio prompt or live presentation. Make an outline of a reading. Write a summary of a reading.

Writing				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Business/service messages				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fill out simple forms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fill out simple forms. Write notes with a business message. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fill out forms. Write notes with a business message. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fill out moderately complex forms. Write notes regarding a business transaction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fill out unadapted complex forms. Write short letters regarding a business transaction or business relationship.
Information presenting				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete sentences in a simple guided text by filling in 1–3 blanks per sentence. Provide appropriate words or short phrases about familiar topics prompted by drawings or photos. Write 1–3 complete sentences to answer personal questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a short paragraph (including a topic sentence and 3–7 supporting sentences); using topical vocabulary, without visual prompts. (The short text is about a personal or familiar situation, event, personal experience, future plans or explain reasons.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write one to two simple paragraphs (including a topic sentence, 5–10 supporting sentences and a concluding sentence). Keyboard, edit and format such a paragraph. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write two paragraphs (including a topic sentence, 7–12 supporting sentences and transitional and concluding sentences). Keyboard, edit and format such texts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write an academic essay of three body paragraphs (including a topic sentence, 7–12 supporting sentences and transitional and concluding sentences); edit such an essay to focus content, clarify structure and improve mechanics. Keyboard, edit and format such texts.

Reading				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Social interaction				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read short personal notes and letters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read notes, email messages and letters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read moderately complex notes, email messages and letters. (Texts that contain compliments, invitations, likes, dislikes and preferences.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read moderately complex notes, email messages, letters and announcements that containing cancellation of arrangements and apologies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read moderately complex notes, email messages and letters expressing appreciation, complaint, hope, satisfaction, dissatisfaction.
Instructions				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow a short set of instructions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow common, every day instructions of up to 6 steps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow instructions of 7–10 steps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow instructions of up to 10 steps where the sequence and order must be inferred. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow instructions of 10–13 steps in both technical and non-technical tasks.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand moderately complex instructions in paragraph form. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow everyday instructional texts.
Business/service texts				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find specific facts in a simple notice, schedule or map. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skim for comparable or contrasting facts in forms, schedules, directories, tables, dictionaries, graphs, brochures, maps, notices, memos, form letters or flyers, or diagrams. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify purpose, key information and specific details in schedules, directories, tables, dictionaries, graphs, brochures, maps, notices, memos, form letters or flyers, or diagrams. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify details and some inferred meanings in business or formatted texts that have advice, requests and specifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify details and some inferred meanings in moderately complex texts containing assessments, evaluations, advice.

Reading				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Information				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get the gist, key information and important detail of simple one to two paragraph texts about familiar, every day topics. • Find a word in a dictionary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get the gist, key information and important detail of simple, explicit two to three paragraph texts (news articles, educational/content materials, stories). • Use standard reference texts: dictionaries, maps and diagrams, graphs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify main idea, factual details and inferred meanings of explicit two to three paragraph descriptive or narrative texts about a familiar topic. • Locate and compare information in basic maps, diagrams and graphs. • Locate information in tables of content, indexes and glossaries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies main idea and details and can retell a short descriptive narrative text on a familiar topic. • Interprets time related diagrams (cycle diagrams, flow charts, time line/schedule). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify main idea, details, organization of texts and discourse markers in a one or two page moderately complex extended description, report or narration on a familiar topic. • Skim up to two pages of prose for details. • Locate paper and electronic reference materials. • Skim for details in authentic schedules, directories, tables, maps, diagrams, graphs or flow charts.

Standards of performance: Writing				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
<p>Conditions for successful writing at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circumstances are informal; address is familiar. • Topics are of immediate everyday relevance. • Notes are short (e.g., three to five sentences). • Text to copy is equivalent to a paragraph, and with easy layout. • Text to copy is in legible handwriting or print. • Forms are simple in format, with 15 to 20 items. • Notes are short (e.g., three to five sentences), as a partially guided text with blanks/fragments to complete. 	<p>Conditions for successful writing at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circumstances range from informal to more formal occasions. • Addressee is familiar. • Topics are of immediate everyday relevance. • Letter is one paragraph long. • Note is three to five sentences long. • Texts to copy are one to two paragraphs, with easy layout, in legible handwriting or print. • Texts may come from various sources and may be of a more specialized or technical nature. 	<p>Conditions for successful writing at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circumstances range from informal to more formal occasions. • Addressees are familiar. • Topics are of immediate everyday relevance. • Letter is one paragraph long. • Note is short (four to six clauses). • Texts may be short oral texts on concrete factual matters with five to seven details. • Information to reproduce is up to one page long, with easy layout; is in legible handwriting or print. 	<p>Conditions for successful writing at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circumstances range from informal to more formal occasions. • Addressees are familiar. • Topics are of immediate everyday relevance. • Text is one or two short paragraphs. • Text to reproduce is up to one or one and one-half pages in legible handwriting or print, or may be a short oral text (10 to 15 minutes). • Texts are varied and may be of a specialized or technical nature. • Learner may fill out a teacher-prepared summary grid to aid note taking or summarizing. • Forms are moderately complex in format, 30 to 40 items long. 	<p>Conditions for successful writing at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circumstances range from informal to more formal occasions. • Addressees are familiar. • Topics are familiar with immediate everyday relevance. • Text is one to two short paragraphs. • Text to reproduce is one to two pages in legible handwriting or print, or may be a short oral text (10 to 15 minutes). • Texts are varied and may be of a specialized or technical nature. • Learner may fill out a teacher-prepared summary grid to aid note taking or summarizing. • Forms are about 40 items/pieces of information long.

Standards of performance: Writing				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Text is short (e.g., five to eight sentences), on a familiar and personally relevant topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forms are simple in format, 20 items long. Text is one paragraph long, on a familiar and personally relevant topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forms are moderately complex in format, 20 to 30 items long. Messages are three to five sentences long. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Messages are five to six sentences or one paragraph long. Text is one to two paragraphs long, on a familiar and personally relevant topic. Where necessary for the task, learners must include information presented to them from other sources (e.g., photographs, drawings, reference text/research information, diagrams). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Messages are one or two paragraphs long. Learner texts: a memo, a letter of request, a work record log entry. Learner text is two or three paragraphs long, on non-personal, abstract but familiar topics and issues. Where necessary for the task, learners must include information presented to them from other sources (e.g., photographs).

Standards of performance: Reading				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
<p>In order to read effectively, learners must be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text is one to two paragraphs long. • Language is concrete, factual and literal. • Most content words are everyday words, familiar to the learner. • Instructions are common everyday written instructions, often with pictures. • Context is predictable and personally relevant; text is sometimes accompanied by pictures. • Tasks require only short oral responses; circling, matching, checking items; or filling in the blanks. 	<p>In order to read effectively, learners must be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text length: two or three paragraphs. • Language is mostly concrete, factual and literal, with some abstract vocabulary items. • Most words are familiar to the learner. • Instructions are common everyday instructions without pictures. • Prose passages (narrative, biographical or descriptive) can be related to personal experience. News items are in plain language, with few idioms. • Context is often familiar and partly predictable; pictures occasionally accompany text. 	<p>In order to read effectively, learners must be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text is two or three paragraphs long and related to personal experience or familiar context. • Text is legible, easy to read; is in print or neat handwriting. • Tasks are in a standard format: with items to circle, match, fill in a blank, complete a chart, answer questions, etc. • Learner is adequately briefed for focused reading (has at least minimal knowledge to activate knowledge schemata for top-down processing). • Instructions are clear and explicit, for everyday situations, used with some visual clues, presented step-by-step. 	<p>In order to read effectively, learners must be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text is up to one page long and related to a personal or common experience, or a familiar context. • Text is legible, easy to read; is in print or neat handwriting. • Instructions are clear and explicit, for everyday situations, used with some visual clues, but not always presented in a step-by-step form. • Context is relevant and familiar. • Pictures occasionally accompany text. • Text has clear organizational structure. • Types of texts: forms, tables, schedules, directories, calendars, notices and announcements. 	<p>In order to read effectively, learners must be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text is one page, five to 10 paragraphs long and related to personal experience or familiar context. • Text is legible, easy to read; is in print or neat handwriting. • Instructions are clear and explicit, but not always presented step-by-step. • Context is relevant and usually familiar. • Pictures may accompany text. • Text has clear organization. • Text content is relevant for learners (e.g., public notices, business letters, form letters).

Standards of performance: Reading				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
	Handwritten text is legible, in print-like handwriting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pictures occasionally accompany text. • Text has clear organization. • Text is two or three paragraphs long, printed or electronic. • Language is mostly concrete and literal, with some abstract words. • Context and topic are often familiar and partly predictable for learner. • Content is relevant and can be related to personal experience. • Text types: newspaper articles, educational/content materials, stories, encyclopedia entries, short reports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text is three to five paragraphs long, with clear organization; is in printed or electronic form. • Passages are in plain language, with occasional idioms. • Language is mostly concrete and literal, but may also be abstract and technical. • Context and topic are often familiar; are sometimes related to personal experience; and are partly predictable to learner. • Text types: newspaper articles, educational/content materials, stories, encyclopedia entries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text is one or two pages, five to 10 paragraphs long, with clear organization; is in printed or electronic form. • Language is concrete and abstract, conceptual and technical. • Context and topic are partly predictable for learner. • Text types: newspaper articles, stories, encyclopedia entries and reports.

Grammar Outcomes

These are placed in the reading and writing courses but should also be reviewed extensively in the speaking and listening classes.

In order of importance, the outcomes for each benchmark that should be taught.

Verb tenses “It’s all about the verbs really” ¹⁰				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
<i>Be, have</i> , negative forms and imperatives	<i>Be, have</i> , negative forms and imperatives (review)	Review of simple present, past and future verbs	Simple and continuous tenses (review)	Simple and continuous tenses (review)
Simple present/present continuous	Simple present/present continuous (review)	Review ¹¹ of present continuous	Present perfect (review)	Present perfect and present perfect continuous (review)
Common simple pasts (in context ¹²)	Simple future (‘ <i>will</i> ’ and ‘ <i>going to</i> ’)	Past continuous	Present perfect continuous	Past perfect
Future tenses (limited and in context)	Present continuous to indicate future plans.	Future continuous	Past perfect (introduction)	
	Irregular and regular simple past	Present perfect		
	Present perfect (introduction, How long have you...)	Present perfect continuous (introduction)		
Common verb tenses as part of standard phrases like “I was born” (as situations arise in class; from context)				

¹⁰ Jim Critchley, 2007

¹¹ Review in this chart suggests that the learners have already been purposefully taught the grammar point but will require considerable practice before they naturally use it in their speech.

¹² In this chart, ‘in context’ means that the learners could learn grammar as part of a task. Eg. Learners may tell a story about the weekend and learn ‘was’ ‘went’ ‘did’ as part of their story “Yesterday I was busy. I went to the library. I did my homework”. The grammar is not overtly taught.

Logical connectors (Especially important for the information band in the benchmark outcomes)				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Simple sentences S +V (C,O)	Simple and compound sentences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinating conjunctions to compare and contrast (<i>and/but/or</i>) 	Simple and compound sentences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinating conjunctions to compare and contrast or show cause and effect (<i>and/but/for/or/so/yes</i>) 	Simple and compound sentences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinating conjunctions (<i>and/but/for/nor/or/so/yes, either...or, neither...nor</i>) 	Complex sentences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Subordinate conjunctions especially to compare and contrast (<i>even though, however, not only, but also, etc.</i>)
Time markers (i.e. Yesterday, this morning, this afternoon, this evening, tomorrow etc.)	Sequence markers (<i>In the beginning of, second, next, then, after that, lastly, in the end</i>)	Sequence markers (<i>In conclusion, finally</i>)	Additions (<i>so do I; neither is she</i>)	
	Complex sentences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May introduce subordinate conjunctions (<i>when, after and before</i>) 	Complex sentences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce subordinate conjunctions, especially words to show comparison and contrast: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be + Both + noun/ adjective ; on the other hand, ,whereas; also 	Complex sentences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subordinate conjunctions, especially to compare and contrast (<i>even though, however, not only, but also, etc.</i>) 	Complex sentences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subordinate conjunctions especially to show cause and effect (<i>therefore, consequently, etc.</i>)
		Discourse markers (<i>for example and for instance</i>)	Discourse organizers (expanded list)	Discourse organizers/ transitions

Modals (Successful completion of benchmark tasks requires many of these)				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Modals of ability and possibility (<i>can/could</i>)	Modals of request (<i>Can I, Could I, May I</i>)	Review modals of request, ability, possibility	Review modals of certainty/probability suggestion, advice and promise.	Review modals of certainty/probability suggestion, advice and promise.
	Modals of ability/possibility	Modals of certainty/probability	Habitual past (<i>would/used to</i>)	Past tense modals
	Introduce ¹³ modals of suggestion, advice, promise	Modals of suggestion, advice and promise		Advisability and past modals (<i>should have</i>)
	Introduce modals of necessity, obligation, permission, prohibition	Modals of necessity, obligation, permission, prohibition		
		Introduce habitual past (<i>would/used to</i>)		

Questions				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Common yes/no questions in context Common wh questions in context	Yes/no questions Wh questions	Review yes/no questions Wh questions Tag questions (introduction)	Review yes/no questions, wh questions, tag questions Reported speech – wh questions and embedded questions	Review questions (yes/no, wh, tag questions) Review reported speech

¹³ “Introduce” in this chart could be that the teacher points out the grammar point or overtly teaches it but does not evaluate or expect independent use of the grammar.

Questions				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
<p>Ongoing review and practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word order (S+V+O,S+V+C,S+V+DO+IO) • Subject–verb agreement • Word formation: prefixes and suffixes¹⁴ • Punctuation and capitalization • Spelling¹⁵ 				

Reported speech				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quoted speech 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of reporting imperative and quoted speech • Reported speech of wh questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review reported speech, wh questions. • Add reported speech of yes/no questions.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting imperative • He said to _____ • He told me to _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sequence of tenses in reported speech (<i>do-did, have- had</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sequence of tenses in reported speech including modals (<i>can-could</i>)

¹⁴ Suggested order – Benchmark 4: plurals, past tense, -ing and comparative; Benchmark 5: common negative prefixes and re-, -er, -ment, -tion; Benchmark 6: expanded list of prefixes and suffixes.

¹⁵ Suggested order – Benchmark 4: basic spelling rules; Benchmarks 4 & 5: frequently used word list; Benchmark 6: start using words from the academic word list.

Emphatic structures				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of ‘do’ for emphasis 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantifiers and hedges such as ‘a little’, very much in context 			

Prepositions				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Common and simple uses of prepositions of time, duration (<i>for</i>), place (<i>behind, under, on</i> , etc.) and movement (<i>to, from</i>) in context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time, place and movement prepositions [<i>in, at, on, for</i> (duration)]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and expand time, duration, place and movement prepositions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepositional phrases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and expand prepositions and prepositional phrases (in context).
Collocations with prepositions (from context)				
	Phrasal verbs (from context)		Introduce separable and non-separable phrasal verbs.	Separable/non-separable phrasal verbs (could tie into teaching the passive).

Gerunds and infinitives in present forms after common verbs				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
	5–10 of the most common as they come up in context (e.g., <i>I like swimming</i>)	10–20 common expressions as they come up in context	Introduce the distinction between verbs that are followed by gerunds, infinitives or an object before the second infinitive verb (<i>hire him to go</i>). Expand the list as much as possible as it comes up in class.	Expand the list of gerunds and infinitives after certain verbs (in context). Gerunds and infinitives as subject, object or complement

Adjectives				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Common possessive, demonstrative adjectives	Expanded common possessive, demonstrative adjectives	Review indefinite adjectives.	Review adjective order (three or more adjectives).	Review adjective order (strings of several adjectives).
Introduce comparison, superlative, intensifiers	Indefinite adjectives (<i>some/any/each/etc.</i> + noun)	Review adjective order (ordering 2–3 adjectives).	Present (interesting) and past participles (interested) as adjectives.	Review present and past participles as adjectives.
	Introduce adjective order (adjective before noun).	Introduce present (interesting) and past participles (interested) as adjectives.	Introduce passive verbs (in connection with past participles).	Defining and non-defining adjective clauses. Introduce reducing adjective clauses (leaving out the relative pronoun).

Conditional sentences				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
	Real conditionals: present, future	Real conditionals: present, future	Real conditionals (review)	Review unreal conditionals: present
			Unreal conditionals: present	Unreal conditionals: past Wish (<i>I wish I had a fancy car.</i>)

Adverbs				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Adverbs of frequency (<i>sometimes, usually, always, etc.</i>)	Review adverbs of time and frequency.	Review and expand adverbs of frequency, time, place and manner.	Review and expand adverbs of frequency, time, place and manner.	Adverb clauses
Adverbs of time (<i>yesterday</i>)	Review and expand adverbs of manner (<i>quickly</i>).	Equative and non- equative adverbs (<i>as quickly as</i>)	Introduce adverb clauses.	
Adverbs of manner (<i>quickly</i>)	Adverbs of place (<i>away</i>)			

Essential Skills Complexity Ratings

When designing exercises for learners, use the complexity rating levels as a guideline for structuring targeted practice. You may also want to refer your learners to the Essential Skills Profile¹⁶ for their profession (or planned profession). Drawing links between a complexity level in a task done in class and the same type of task performed at the workplace may help learners to see more relevance in their learning and increase positive transfer.

The following complexity ratings are taken from the Readers' Guide to Essential Skills¹⁷ but the examples are based on tasks our learners perform as part of the Intensive Program Curriculum.

Essential Skills: Reading

The reading material in these descriptors are in sentences and paragraphs in notes, letters, memos, manuals, specifications, books, reports or journals.

LEVEL 1:

- Read relatively short texts to locate a single piece of information or follow simple written directions.

Learners read and follow simple instructions on how to cure a common ailment.

Learners read a paragraph in a short novel/article and find one factual detail.

Learners read travel advertisements and find an answer to a question about a specific detail.

LEVEL 2:

- Read more complex texts to locate a single piece of information or read simpler texts to locate multiple pieces of information.

- Make low-level inferences.

Learners can put a set of 5–6 step instructions in order.

Learners can identify character traits based on actions or descriptions in a piece of literature.

Learners read a letter to determine the time, date, location and purpose of a meeting.

¹⁶ Google Essential Skills Profiles: http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/essential_skills/general/home.shtml
For your reference you may want to check the profile for college instructors.

¹⁷ Retrieved June 14, 2010 from http://www.rhdcc-hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/essential_skills/general/readers_guide_whole.shtml#a26

LEVEL 3:

- Choose and integrate information from various sources or from several parts of a single text.
- Make low-level inferences from multiple sources.
- Identify relevant and irrelevant information.

Learners research a topic from Canadian culture, synthesize what they learned and give a presentation to the class.

Learners read a variety of advertisements and websites selling office equipment.

Learners write a proposal to update office equipment and make recommendations on which brands and models to buy.

LEVEL 4:

- Integrate and synthesize information from multiple sources or from complex and lengthy texts.
- Make complex inferences and use general background knowledge.
- Evaluate quality of text.

Learners read a complex short story and give a personal response.

Learners read a guide to immigrating to Canada and make recommendations for the editors.

Learners research an academic or business related topic (e.g. the oil industry in Alberta) and create a research report.

LEVEL 5:

- Interpret dense and complex texts.
- Make high-level inferences and use specialized knowledge.

This level is beyond the scope of our programming.

Purpose of Reading

The following descriptors are taken directly from the Readers' Guide to Essential Skills. They list the same skills as the Canadian Language Benchmarks but stress the purpose of reading. Sometimes it is not necessary to be able to read a text in full, depending on the purpose (e.g. customer may just need to scan their computer manual for specific information to troubleshoot). The focus on purpose reminds us that we do not need to teach all of the reading skills for all types of text.

1. To scan for specific information and locate information: Finding specific information in the text by glancing over the text and using standard locative features such as the table of contents, index and glossary.
2. To skim for overall meaning and get the gist: Occurs when a reader “glances” through the text for its main features including headings, subheadings, highlighted words, diagrams, tables, etc.
3. To read the whole text to understand and to learn: Careful and meticulous reading of a text in its entirety with no effort to focus on only limited sections as occurs when scanning and skimming. The focus is on learning complete details of the subject matter in order to respond to a wide variety of needs.
4. To read the full text to critique or to evaluate: Occurs when a text is read with a critical eye in order to exercise judgment.

Essential Skills: Writing

Most of the Essential Skills description (e.g. purpose, length) for writing is the same as the Canadian Language Benchmarks. The style and structure component, however, may be useful for analyzing tasks.

LEVEL 1:

- Writing comes with preset formats or writing for which the format is unimportant.
Learners write a postcard to a friend.
Learners write a quick email to a co-worker.
Learners write in a greeting card.

LEVEL 2:

- More of a formal style for people who are not co-workers (not familiar).
- The writing sets a tone which is appropriate for the occasion; respectful, authoritative, friendly, etc.
- Standard spelling and syntax are expected.
- The tasks have templates or models (e.g. memos or formatted letters).
Learners write more formal emails with a specific purpose (e.g. apology, inquiry, etc.)
Learners write formal business letters requesting an appointment or job interview.

LEVEL 3:

- ❑ Writing comes in established formats (e.g. job descriptions, leases, contracts, etc.) and may have structural elements such as headings, footnotes or a table of contents.
- ❑ The content of the writing is extensive but comes from established sources.

Learners write business cases for specific purchases.

LEVEL 4:

Specific organization for a certain purpose, it may require modification of an existing format such as a proposal or report to fit the given information. The writing may involve the gathering and selecting of information. It may include specialized or technical vocabulary. Rewrite for a specific audience, for example, rewriting a report for an audience who is not familiar with the field and its technical language.

Beyond the scope of BM 3–7

LEVEL 5:

Writing may display complex, multi-part organization to accommodate varied content. The content must be created or it may be synthesized using information from multiple sources.

Beyond the scope of BM 3–7

Essential Skills: Document Use

Document use overlaps with Canadian Language Benchmark's formatted text band but is more comprehensive. The following is an excerpt that exemplifies its scope:

- Read signs, labels or lists.
- Complete forms by marking check boxes, recording numerical information or entering words, phrases, sentences or texts of a paragraph or more. The list of specific tasks varies depending on what was reported.
- Read tables, schedules and other table-like text (e.g., read work shift schedules).
- Plot/obtain information using graphs (e.g., line, pie, bar).
- Recognize common angles such as 15°, 30°, 45° and 90°.
- Interpret or make measurements from scale drawings (e.g., blueprints or maps).
- Read or create assembly drawings (e.g., those found in service and parts manuals).
- Obtain information from sketches, pictures or icons (e.g., computer toolbars).
- Interpret X-rays.

Essential Skills Document Use may be one of the most useful tools for examining language tasks. The analysis of documents is much more detailed and practical than the CLBs.

LEVEL 1:

- Document is very simple.
- Brief text combined with uncomplicated structure. E.g., simple signs, labels, lists.
- When trying to locate information, the learner does a limited search using key words, numbers, icons or other visual characteristics (e.g., line, colour, shape) to locate information.
- Minimal inference is required. Information found or entered in the document is a literal match (i.e., identical) to the information required.
- No knowledge of the content (i.e., substance) of the document is required to use the information.
- No analysis is required.

Learners learn common road signs as part of a unit on how to drive.

Learners look up words in a dictionary to find definitions.

Learners look at a simplified airline timetable to identify the next flight.

LEVEL 2:

- Document is simple with multiple pieces of information. E.g., simple tables (i.e., small amount of information, no subparts).
- One document or multiple documents of the same type.

Searching for information:

- When searching for information, learners locate one or more pieces of information using: one or two search criteria (e.g., using menu headings to find vegetarian choices);
- Or consecutive searches with the same one or two search criteria (e.g., using a phone list to find phone numbers for several people).

Thinking skills:

- A low level of inference is required.
- Information found or entered in the document(s) is a synonymous match (i.e., obviously related) to the information required.

- The information needed is fairly evident.
- Limited knowledge of the content (i.e., substance) of the document may be required to use the information.
- Limited analysis required.
- Information found in the document(s) may be rearranged to make simple comparisons. E.g., preparing a list of the top ten sales representatives each month to compare performance.
- Information available may be rearranged for entry onto the document. E.g., rearrange alphabetically listed contacts into a listing by province.

Learners compare prices from different grocery stores.

Learners compare information from a class survey.

Learners compare planned spending with actual spending for a line item.

LEVEL 3:

- Document is somewhat complex.
- Multiple pieces of information organized in sections with sub-headings or subparts. E.g., complex tables.
- In addition, multiple simple documents may include more than one document type (e.g., pie chart and bar graph).
- There may be specialized document types (i.e., familiarity with the document type is required for interpretation). E.g., Pareto charts, isometric drawings, Gantt charts.

Searching for information:

- When searching for information, learners locate one or more pieces of information using: multiple search criteria,
- Or the results of one search in a subsequent search (e.g., finding the chemical composition of paint from its label and then using that information to search Material Safety Data Sheets).

Thinking skills:

- A moderate degree of inference is required.
- The match between the information found or entered in the document(s) and the information required may be ambiguous.
- Some knowledge of the content (i.e., substance) of the document is required to use the information.

- Some analysis required involving selection and integration of information.
- Information found in the document(s) must be integrated. E.g., integrate information from two diagrams in a repair manual to troubleshoot the problem.
- Information must be combined for entry onto the document. E.g., completing a monthly quality control form by integrating information from several production lines.

Learners read a medical form and staff charts in order to organize appointments.

Learners read several different types of graphs that show trends in Canadian demographics and then write a paragraph about trends they see.

Learners read about particular safety hazards in a specific profession and then refer to safety manuals to give advice as part of a company's occupational health and safety committee.

Beyond the scope of this curriculum (for your reference only)

LEVEL 4:

- Document is complex.
- Multiple pieces of information organized in multiple sections with one additional component, such as colour coding, scale, perspective and symbols. E.g., complex paint charts, floor plans.
- Multiple documents and multiple types.
- Specialized document types (i.e., familiarity with the document type is required for interpretation). E.g., Pareto charts, isometric drawings, Gantt charts.

Searching for information:

- Locate multiple pieces of information using: multiple search criteria which may have to be developed by the user,
- Or the results of one search in a subsequent search.

Thinking skills:

- Considerable inference may be required.
- Match between the information found or entered in the document(s) and the information required is ambiguous. One or more distractors may hinder the process of finding and/or entering the correct information.

- The information needed may be mentally restructured into categories devised by the user. Specialized knowledge of the content (i.e., substance) of the document may be required.
- Multiple pieces of information from multiple sources are synthesized.
- The quality of information may be evaluated for accuracy and omissions.
- Information found in the document(s) is synthesized and possibly evaluated. E.g., weather forecasting using data synthesized from many sources and evaluated as to its accuracy.
- Information must be synthesized for entry onto the document. E.g., preparing tax returns using data from many sources.

LEVEL 5:

- Document is complex.
- Multiple pieces of information organized in multiple sections with two or more additional components, such as colour coding, scale, perspective and symbols. E.g., intricate aerial maps, isometric drawings.
- Multiple documents and multiple types.
- Specialized document types (i.e., familiarity with the document type is required for interpretation). E.g., Pareto charts, isometric drawings, Gantt charts.

Searching for information:

- When searching for information, learners locate multiple pieces of information using: multiple search criteria which may have to be developed by the user;
- Or the results of one search in a subsequent search, possibly based on criteria developed by the user.

Thinking skills:

- A high level of inference is required. The match between the information found or entered in the document(s) and the information required is ambiguous. Multiple distractors may hinder the process of finding and/or entering the correct information.
- The information needed is mentally restructured into categories devised by the user.
- Specialized knowledge of the content (i.e., substance) of the document is required.
- Information is evaluated to make judgments of quality based on criteria and/or to draw conclusions. E.g., critique research data to note methodological flaws.

Speaking and Listening

Speaking				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Social interaction				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicate and identify a problem in communication. • Use and respond to basic courtesy formulas with familiar and unfamiliar people. • Respond to introductions and questions on everyday topics by another speaker. • Speak in a limited way on immediate and personal needs in familiar situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greet, introduce self, respond to introductions and questions on everyday topics by another supportive speaker in short, casual small talk. • Take leave. • Speak on immediate and personal needs in short, informal conversations. • Answer a phone and take a message or make a phone call and leave a short message. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicate lack of comprehension; take turns and encourage group participation; identify and adjust the level of formality. • Participate in routine conversations on familiar topics with up to five people. • Respond to and express compliments, congratulations or invitations. • Use the phone to communicate personal information: answer, take or leave messages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicate partial comprehension; take turns by interrupting; add supportive comments; avoid answering a question; adjust level of formality. • Participate in short, routine, formal conversations including making a formal introduction of another person to a group. • Respond to or give an apology, regrets or excuses. • Make or cancel an appointment or arrangement. • Take phone messages with 3–5 details. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give a summary or report of the main points of another speaker’s oral presentation. • Tell a story, including a future scenario. • Describe, compare and contrast in detail two events, jobs or procedures. • Describe a moderately complex process. • Participate in small group discussions or meetings. • Express opinions or feelings [reservations, (dis)approval]. • Qualify opinions. • Ask for and provide detailed information related to personal needs, daily activities or routine work requirements.

Speaking				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Instructions				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give 1–2 clause everyday instructions or directions, both positive and negative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give sets of simple everyday, 3–4 step instructions or directions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give an extended set of instructions, in simple clauses, in sequence, for daily, routine activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give a set of instructions about routine, daily actions varying usage and placement of time clauses within complete sentences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give clear instructions related to moderately complex but familiar tasks, both technical and non-technical.
Suasion (getting things done)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask and grant permission. Express and respond to caution and warning of danger. Ask for, offer and accept assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request, accept or reject goods or services, assistance or offers in a service or sales situation. Respond to warnings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give and get permission. Give simple, informal advice. Call for emergency assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make simple, formal suggestions and provide a reason. Predict consequences. Request an item or service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give and respond to a warning; discourage others from doing a specific action. Request an opportunity to speak with someone; ask for and respond to advice. Make an extended suggestion of how to solve an immediate problem or make an improvement.

Speaking				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Information presenting				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide personal information (name, age, address, contact person) appropriate to the context. • Give a basic description of a person, object, situation or daily routine. • Tell a brief story about a personal experience (1–3 minutes). • Talk about health and feelings. • Express enjoyment, immediate and future needs, wants or plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give a description of a person, object, situation or daily routine. • Relate a story about an everyday activity. • Express preference. • Express satisfaction or dissatisfaction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relate a sequence of events in the past, present or future. • Tell a detailed story or report an incident. • Describe a scene or picture. • Describe a daily routine. • Participate in class discussions. Speak on relevant, familiar topics for 3–5 minutes to a familiar audience. • Express necessity, worry or concern. • Ask for and provide information related to routine, daily activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relate a detailed sequence of past events. • Tell a detailed story including reasons and consequences. • Describe and compare people, places, objects or situations. Speak on relevant, familiar topics for 5–7 minutes to a familiar audience. • Participate in small group discussions or meetings on non-personal, familiar topics. • Express opinions, feelings, obligations, ability or certainty. • Ask for and provide information in a one-on-one interview related to daily activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give a summary or report of the main points of another speaker’s oral presentations. • Tell a story, including a future scenario. • Describe, compare and contrast in detail two events, jobs or procedures. • Describe a moderately complex process. • Participate in small group discussions or meetings. • Express opinions or feelings [reservations, (dis)approval]. • Qualify opinions. • Ask for and provide detailed information related to personal needs, daily activities or routine work requirements.

Listening				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Social Interaction				
<p>Listening to short monologues or dialogues on familiar everyday topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify expressions and body language in greetings, introductions and leave-taking Recognize signals of problems in communication 	<p>Listening to a short, dialogue of small talk, introduction, leave taking and short phone calls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify specific words and details Infer simple details 	<p>Listening to a short, dialogue of small talk, introduction, leave taking and short phone calls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify specific words and details Infer simple details from the conversation 	<p>Listen to short, dialogues containing openings, closings, making and cancelling of appointments, apologies, regrets, excuses, problems in reception and communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and respond appropriately to the mood or attitude inferred by speakers Identify the situation and relationship between speakers Recall factual details and offer a plausible conclusion from inferences 	<p>Listen to longer (8–12 exchange turns or about 5 minutes) dialogues containing expressions of and response to gratitude and appreciation, complaint, hope, disappointment, satisfaction, dissatisfaction, approval and disapproval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the situation and relationship between themselves and other speakers Interpret inferences of gratitude, appreciation, hope, complaint, disappointment, (dis)satisfaction, (dis)approval Evaluate the relevance and credibility of an argument; take action to apply information to decision-making or problem-solving

Listening				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Instructions				
<p>Instructions are about basic, daily matters and may include positive or negative commands or requests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow directions of 2–4 clauses about movement or location 	<p>Instructions relate to movement and position in space, manner, frequency and duration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point to a written set of instructions when it is played from a recording Follow the instructions in each step of a 4–5 step procedure 	<p>Listening to simple sets of 8–10 instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point to specific steps in a written set of instructions when it is played from a recording Follow the instructions in each step of the procedure 	<p>Instructions are clearly spoken and have sequence markers or other linguistic clues to infer the order of steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand a set of instructions when not presented completely in point form (sequence/order must be inferred from the text) 	<p>Instructions are clear and explicit, used with some visual clues and sequence markers, but not always presented in a step-by-step format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow multi-step, technical or non-technical instructions
Suasion (getting things done)				
<p>Listening to short monologues or dialogues on familiar everyday topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond appropriately to expressions of permission, danger, required assistance 	<p>Listening to persuasive oral texts (public announcements, commercials, infomercials):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify details Make factual inferences 	<p>Listening to simple advice and suggestions, announcements and commercials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify details Make factual inferences Make inferences about the relationship between the speakers and the purpose of the interaction 	<p>Demonstrate comprehension of details and speaker’s purpose in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> suggestions advice encouragements requests 	<p>Determine a speaker’s purpose and predicts consequences and outcomes in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> directives requests orders pleas

Listening				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Information presenting				
<p>Listening to a story about a personal experience; a description of a person, an object, a situation, a scene or a daily routine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get the gist of a story or description • Recall specific details in answer to direct questions • Select visuals, words and phrases in answer to direct questions 	<p>Listening to a story about obtaining goods or services, a report or a forecast; a news item:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify details • Make factual inferences • Get the gist, detail, key words and expressions 	<p>Listening to a story about obtaining goods or services, a report or a forecast; a news item:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify details • Make factual inferences • Make inferences about the relationship between the speakers and the purpose of the communication 	<p>Listening to dialogues or monologues which are on concrete and familiar topics in familiar settings (dialogues are short and have 5–8 exchange turns):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify main ideas, supporting details, statements and example in a descriptive or narrative presentation or in a group interaction (e.g. meeting, discussion) • Suggest an appropriate conclusion to a story based on inference 	<p>Listening to dialogues or monologues on familiar general topics (the speech is clear and at a normal rate – approximately 5 minutes long):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall details from 10 to 15 minute recordings in which facts are presented out of sequence • Distinguish rhetorical signals of chronology, comparison/contrast and cause/effect • Summarize the main ideas of narrative, description or group discussion • Offer a plausible conclusion from inferences • Select written answers to direct questions • Write answers to direct questions

Standards of performance: Speech				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
<p>Conditions for successful speech at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction is face-to-face, with one person at a time. • Speech rate is slow to normal. • Verbal communication is strongly supported with gestures and visual clues. • Learner’s speech is guided by specific questions if necessary. • Interaction is empathetic and supportive. • Emergency call is to a trained supportive operator. • Topics are about common everyday matters. 	<p>Conditions for successful speech at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction is face-to-face, with one person at a time or in a familiar supportive group. • Interaction on the phone is rare and brief. • Speech rate is slow to normal. • Verbal communication is strongly supported by gestures and other visual clues. • Instructions and directions have only three to four steps and are sometimes supported with hand gestures. • Learner’s speech is guided by specific questions from the interlocutor if needed. 	<p>Conditions for successful speech at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction is face-to-face, or on the phone. • Rate of speech is slow to normal. • Context is mostly familiar, or clear and predictable, but also moderately demanding (e.g., real world environment; limited support from interlocutors). • Circumstances range from informal to more formal occasions. • Instructions have five to six steps, and are given one-on-one, one step at a time, with visual clues. • Length of presentation is three to five minutes. • Topics are of immediate everyday relevance. 	<p>Conditions for successful speech at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction is face-to-face, or on the phone, with familiar and unfamiliar individuals and small informal groups. • Rate of speech is slow to normal. • Context is familiar, or clear and predictable. • Context is moderately demanding (e.g., real world environment, limited support from speaker). • Circumstances range from informal to more formal. • Setting or content is familiar, clear and predictable. • Topic is concrete and familiar. • Presentation is informal or formal. 	<p>Conditions for successful speech at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction is face-to-face, or on the phone, with familiar individuals and small informal groups. • Rate of speech is slow to normal. • Context is mostly familiar and clear. • Context is moderately demanding (e.g., real world environment). • The steps in instructions are not always presented in sequence. • Length of presentation is 10 minutes. • Audience is a small, familiar or unfamiliar group. • Setting is familiar. • Topic is concrete and familiar. • Presentation is informal or semiformal.

Standards of performance: Speech				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction is empathetic and supportive. • Topics are about common everyday matters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience is a small familiar group. • Setting is familiar. • Topic is concrete and familiar. • Presentation is informal or semiformal. • Uses pictures or other visuals. <p>Interaction one-on-one</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction is face-to-face or on the phone. <p>Interaction in a group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group of three to five people is familiar. • Topics are familiar, non-personal, concrete. • Interaction is informal or semi-formal. <p>Leader or moderator is encouraging.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of pictures or other visuals. • Presentation is five to seven minutes long. <p>Interactions one-on-one</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactions are face-to-face or on the phone. • Interaction is formal or semi-formal. • Learner can partially prepare the exchange. <p>Interactions in a group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction occurs in a familiar group of three to five people. • Topic or issue is familiar, non-personal, concrete. <p>Interaction is informal or semi-formal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pictures or other visuals are used. <p>Interaction one-on-one</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction is face-to-face or on the phone. • Interaction is formal or semi-formal. • Learner can partially prepare the exchange. <p>Interaction in a group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction is in a familiar group of three to five people. • Topic is familiar, non-personal, mostly concrete but also abstract. <p>Interaction is formal or semi-formal.</p>

Standards of performance: Listening				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
<p>Conditions for successful listening at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening texts are short monologues and dialogues on familiar everyday topics. • Speech is clear and at a slow to normal rate. • Context strongly supports the utterances with visual clues: face-to-face, video-mediated or both. • Learner is adequately briefed for focused listening. • Instructions are mostly simple and compound clauses. • Some tasks require oral or physical response. • Some tasks are in a “guided” writing format (e.g., circle or match items, fill in blanks). 	<p>Conditions for successful listening at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening texts are short monologues, presentations and dialogues (several exchange turns) on familiar everyday topics. • Speech is clear and at a slow to normal rate. • Learner has been adequately briefed for focused listening. • Communication is face-to-face or video- and audio-mediated (e.g., tape). • Instructions are clear and explicit, used with some visual clues. They are mostly simple and compound clauses containing longer phrases of location, movement and manner. 	<p>Conditions for successful listening at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening texts are moderately short monologues/ presentations and dialogues (five to eight exchange turns, each turn three to five sentences long; or two to five minutes in length) on familiar everyday topics. • Speech is clear at a slow to normal rate. • Communication is face-to-face, or video- and audio-mediated (e.g., tape). • Instructions are clear and explicit, used with some visual clues and presented step-by-step. • Learner is adequately briefed for focused listening. 	<p>Conditions for successful listening at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner is adequately briefed for focused listening. • Communication is live, or video- and audio-mediated (e.g., tape). • Speech is clear and at a slow to normal rate. • Instructions are clear and explicit, used with some visual clues, but not always presented in a step-by-step form. • Listening texts are moderately short (five to eight exchange turns, each turn three to five sentences long, or two to five minutes), on familiar topics. 	<p>Conditions for successful listening at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner is adequately briefed for focused listening. • Communication is live, or video- and audio-mediated (e.g., tape). • Speech is clear and at a slow to normal rate. • Instructions are clear and explicit, used with some visual clues, but not always presented in a step-by-step format. • Listening texts are dialogues on familiar general topics. • Length of discourse: eight to 12 exchange turns, each turn three to five sentences long; or five minutes. • Learner may need one or two repetitions. • Topics are familiar.

Standards of performance: Listening				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learner may require some repetitions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some tasks require oral or physical response. Some tasks are in a “guided” writing format (e.g., circle or match items, fill in blanks). Learner may require an occasional repetition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some tasks require oral or physical response. Some tasks are in a guided writing format (e.g., circle or match items, fill in blanks, complete a chart, answer questions, etc.). Learner may need one to two repetitions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some tasks require oral or physical response; some tasks are in a “guided” writing format (e.g., circle or match items, fill in the blanks, complete a chart, answer questions, etc.). Learner may need one to two repetitions. Presentation or interaction is live, informal or semi-formal. Topic is concrete and familiar. Setting and context are familiar. Pictures and visuals are used. Length of discourse is up to 10 minutes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation is informal with the use of pictures/ visuals; 10 to 15 minutes long. Learner is adequately briefed for focused listening. Discourse is live, or video- and audio mediated (e.g., tape). Speech is clear, at a normal rate.

Pronunciation Outcomes¹⁸

This is a suggested organization of possible outcomes for each benchmark, if an outcome from another benchmark fits your learners or your materials, feel free to borrow it and let the teachers in the next level know. Naturally, pronunciation is an evolving skill in which breadth and depth of practice needs to be balanced with the placing too many cognitive demands on our learners at once.

Learners should be able to:

Develop awareness of English pronunciation				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Identify own areas for growth in pronunciation.	Identify own areas for growth in pronunciation.	Identify own areas for growth in pronunciation.	Learners identify their own areas for growth in pronunciation.	Learners identify their own areas for growth in pronunciation.
Define key terms for pronunciation (vowel and consonant).	Define key terms for pronunciation (vowel, consonant, consonant clusters, word stress and intonation).	Identify the position of the lips, teeth, tongue and mouth in different vowel sounds.	Name the possible consonant clusters at the beginning of words in English (as opposed to in other languages).	Notice the difference in the ways words are pronounced in quick, conversational speech vs. slow rhetorical speech.
Identify and use some of the symbols for pronunciation in the dictionary.	Identify and use some of the symbols for pronunciation in the dictionary.	Compare slow and quick speech – identify the way that words are pronounced; difference between slow and deliberate speech versus quick and conversational speech.		

¹⁸ These outcomes are adapted from issues identified in Hewings, M. (2004). *Pronunciation Practice Activities; A resource book for teaching English pronunciation*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. UK.

Sounds: Vowels, consonants and consonant clusters				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Identify the difference between simple minimal pairs.	Review the different consonant sounds and their symbols.	Recognize lip position for the vowels: /i/ (eat) /u/ (you) /æ/ ¹⁹ (am) /ɔ/ (more) /ɜ/ (fur) /ɑ/ (arm).	Review vowels in context.	Review all vowels and consonants in context.
Identify the different consonant sounds and their symbols.	Identify the different vowel sounds and their symbols.	Contrast vowel length: /i/ (eat) versus /I/ (in) /u/ (you) versus /ʊ/ (put).	Contrast strong consonants (more force and more air released) /p/,/t/,/k/,/tʃ/ versus weak consonants /b/d/g/ dʒ.	Classify words according to the initial consonant cluster.
Introduce the different vowel sounds and their symbols (in context).	Identify the difference between minimal pairs.	Become aware of tongue position in the different vowels ²⁰ so that they can identify when the vowel sounds are the same.	Identify the difference between fricatives – voiceless sounds /f/,/θ/,/s/,/ʃ/ versus voiced sounds /v/,/ð/,/z/,/ʒ/.	Classify words according to their first vowel.
		Separate vowels in a diphthong (e.g. eye / aɪ/ aaa-eee).	Position the lips for /w/ versus /v/ and /b/ versus /v/ (for a sample if not in regular speech).	Position the tongue for /r/ versus the front /l/ (for a sample if not in regular speech).

¹⁹ Pronunciation symbols are from Wikipedia.

²⁰ May also include fast speech – palatalization across word boundaries. See Dauer, R. M. (1993). *Accurate English* p. 213-215.

Connected speech				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Use contracted forms in regular speech (<i>it is- it's</i>).	Use contracted forms in regular speech (<i>it is- it's</i>).	Contracted forms of modals	Contracted forms of modals and past perfect	Contracted forms of modals, past modals and past perfect
Identify the loudest word in a string of speech.	Identify weak and strong forms of common grammar words.	Predict weak and strong forms of common grammar words.	Practise some weak and strong forms of common grammar words.	Use weak and strong forms of common grammar words.
	Use pauses in speech to show the placement of punctuation marks.	Identify pauses in speech before conjunctions.	Use pauses in speech before conjunctions.	Review pauses in speech before grammatical units such as phrases, clauses and sentences.
			Identify pauses in speech before grammatical units such as phrases, clauses and sentences.	/j/ /y/ and /w/ link between words that end in a vowel and the following word that begins with a vowel.
		Connecting the consonant of a previous word to the vowel in the following word, e.g., cook a meal – /k ʊ -k ə- mil/	Connecting the consonant of the previous word to the consonant in the following word – without releasing the consonant in the first word. If the consonants are the same, hold the same consonant a little longer.	Review the consonant of a previous word to the consonant in the following word – without releasing the consonant in the first word. If the consonants are the same, hold the same consonant a little longer.

Syllables, word stress and stress in phrases				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Identify the number of syllables in shorter words.	Identify stress and syllable markers in dictionaries.	Use stress and syllable markers in dictionaries.	Use stress and syllable markers in dictionaries.	Use stress and secondary stress markers in dictionaries.
Identify stressed syllables.	Identify the number of syllables in a word.	Identify the number of syllables in pairs of words.	Identify the number of syllables in words in which a syllable is reduced. E.g. comfortable (4) versus comftable (3).	Review the number of syllables in words in which a syllable is reduced. E.g. comfortable (4) versus comftable (3).
		Identify that some syllables are longer than others.	Identify the long and short syllables in words.	Continue to identify the long and short syllables in words.
	Identify primary stress in words.	Apply the rule that most (not all) two syllable nouns and adjectives have stress on the first syllable. Some two syllable verbs are stressed on the first and some on the second syllable.	Identify primary and secondary stress and reduced vowels in words.	Develop awareness of the following stress rules regarding suffixes: 1. Some suffixes do not change the stress pattern of root word -ment, -ness, -able, -ful, -ly, -age, -ise/ize, -er/or
			Develop awareness of the following stress rules regarding suffixes: 1. Some suffixes do not change the stress pattern of root word -ment, -ness, -able, -ful, -ly	Develop awareness of the following stress rules regarding suffixes: 2. Some suffixes are stressed themselves -ade, ivity, -aire

Syllables, word stress and stress in phrases				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
			2. Some suffixes put stress on the syllable before the suffix -ion, -ial, -ive,	3. Some suffixes put stress on the syllable before the suffix -ion, -ial, -ive, -ian, -ious, -ity
	Listen and identify the existence of different stress patterns in phrases and sentences.	Identify stress patterns in phrases and sentences (when heard).	Predict stress patterns in phrases and sentences (when read).	Predict stress patterns in phrases and sentences (when read).

Intonation				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
<p>Prominence: highlighting words and syllables.</p> <p>Listen to speech samples and identify stress because:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is new information 2. There is a choice and a choice is being declared. 3. The speaker wants to clarify a misunderstanding or answer a specific question. E.g. Where are my keys? Your keys are on the table. 	<p>Prominence: highlighting words and syllables.</p> <p>Listen to speech samples and identify stress because:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is new information 2. There is a choice and a choice is being declared. 3. The speaker wants to clarify a misunderstanding or answer a specific question. E.g. Where are my keys? Your keys are on the table. 	<p>Prominence: highlighting words and syllables.</p> <p>Listen to speech samples and give an appropriate response to stress because:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is new information 2. There is a choice and a choice is being declared. 3. The speaker wants to clarify a misunderstanding or answer a specific question. E.g. Where are my keys? Your 	<p>Prominence: highlighting words and syllables.</p> <p>Predict word and syllable prominence and start to demonstrate prominence because:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is new information 2. There is a choice and a choice is being declared. 3. The speaker wants to clarify a misunderstanding or answer a specific question. E.g. Where are my keys? Your 	<p>Prominence: highlighting words and syllables.</p> <p>Listen to speech samples and identify stress because:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is new information 2. There is a choice and a choice is being declared. 3. The speaker wants to clarify a misunderstanding or answer a specific question. E.g. Where are my keys? Your keys are on the table.

Intonation				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Are these my keys? Your keys are on the table.	Are these my keys? Your keys are on the table.	keys are on the table . Are these my keys? Your keys are on the table.	keys are on the table . Are these my keys? Your keys are on the table.	Are these my keys? Your keys are on the table.
Practise pronunciation according to the rule that wh- questions end with a falling tone and yes/no questions end with a rising tone.	Paraphrase and practise pronunciation according to the rule that wh- questions end with a falling tone and yes/no questions end with a rising tone.	Practise pronunciation according to the rule that wh- questions end with a falling tone and yes/no questions end with a rising tone.	Review the rule that wh- questions end with a falling tone and yes/no questions end with a rising tone but... in the cases when either type of question is used for finding out new information, the tone falls. In cases when either type of question is used to check or confirm, the tone rises.	Review question intonation.
Identify the falling tone when giving answers. E.g. Is your name Bob? Yes\ – not overtly but practised as part of exercises.	Identify the falling tone when giving answers. E.g. Is your name Bob? Yes\	Produce a falling tone when giving answers. E.g. Is your name Bob? Yes\ Identify a falling and rising tone when expressing doubt or reservation. E.g. Is your name Bob? Yes\ Who are you?	Produce a falling tone when giving answers. E.g. Is your name Bob? Yes\ Produce a falling and rising tone when expressing doubt or reservation. E.g. Is your name Bob? Yes\ Who are you?	Identify the tonic word (the word that stands out from others) in each intonation unit.

Pronunciation and spelling				
Benchmark 3	Benchmark 4	Benchmark 5	Benchmark 6	Benchmark 7
Review the sound to symbol connection between letters and sounds (including consonant blends).	Pronounce 's' (/s/ or /z/) in plurals, verbs and possessives.	Review and practise pronouncing 's' and 'ed' at the ends of words.	Review and practise pronouncing 's' and 'ed' at the ends of words.	Review and practise pronouncing 's' and 'ed' at the ends of words.
Differentiate between vowels and consonants.	Pronounce 'ed' (/t/, /d/, /ɪd/) in past tense verbs.	Pronounce consonant pairs: <i>ph, ch, sh, th</i> and <i>gh</i> .	Pronounce the letters 'c' and 'g' before 'e', 'i' and 'y' ('c' -/s/ and 'g' is /dʒ/ and before all other letters ('c' -/k/ and 'g' -/g/).	Pronounce the letters 'c' and 'g' before 'e', 'i' and 'y' ('c' -/s/ and 'g' is /dʒ/ and before all other letters ('c' -/k/ and 'g' -/g/).
				Identify all of the vowel sounds connected to each vowel letter.

Essential Skills

Numeracy

In English Intensive the learners are mostly required to perform “Money Math” – financial transactions, such as handling cash, preparing bills or making payments. Essential skills excerpt offers two dimensions that help analyze numeracy tasks:

1. *Operations required* refers to the actual math operations used. E.g., multiplication, division. It covers the number of different operations used, the number of steps of calculation and the difficulty of the operations used.
2. *Translation* refers to turning a work problem into a set of mathematical operations so that math may be applied to obtain an answer. For example, a waiter adding up a bill does not have to do much translation to set up the problem. In contrast, a roofer uses more translation (i.e., restating the problem as a set of mathematical operations) to determine how many packages of shingles are needed to cover an irregularly shaped roof. The roofer must think through and set up the problem before doing the necessary math operations.

Oral Proficiency

Much of the description for oral proficiency overlaps with the benchmarks. Below are the highlights from the Essential Skills that further expand our understanding of the complexity of tasks.

LEVEL 1:

- Everyday tasks in which the context and the responsibilities of the speaker are very clear and predictable.
- Failed attempts in communication only results in the embarrassment of the speaker.

LEVEL 2:

- Synthesizes information from a variety of sources.
- Language may be abstract.
- Participants’ roles are clearly defined and the audience is rarely challenging and is usually cooperative.
- There may be noise that interferes with communication.
- Failure to communicate may result in small losses of time or money, minor hazards or easily resolved hostility.

LEVEL 3:

Includes: providing, obtaining or exchanging detailed, complex information and opinions; providing or following complex directions and instructions; persuading (e.g., to sell a product or service); resolving non-routine conflict; entertaining (casually or with preparation); advising/counselling (e.g., career, employment); assessing/evaluating (e.g., job performance); leading routine meetings; coordinating work with and for others.

- The individual may have more than one role in the group.
- Situation and setting may be new and unfamiliar.
- Audience can be unfamiliar, include authority figures and occasionally be uncooperative or hostile.
- Exchange can be of medium to extended duration (30 mins or more).
- There may be significant noise that interferes with communication.
- Failure to communicate can result in failure to obtain a major objective; danger or significant hazard; public hostility, criticism or discreditation; or loss of considerable money and time.

Some of the group board meetings that occur at the upper levels could fall into this category but this complexity level is quite high for English Intensive 3–7.

LEVEL 4:

Very complex communication. For example, failure to communicate could result in loss of life. *This level is beyond the scope of our program.*

5. Suggested Teaching Resources

All Benchmarks

Writing

Millar, D. (2002). *Making choices: Teaching writing in the workplace*. Grass Roots Press. Edmonton. (IR 808.06665 MIL)

Speaking

Hewings, M. (2004). *Pronunciation practice activities: A resource book for teaching English pronunciation*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, U.K. (AV 428.34 HEW)

Math Skills

Clarke, P. & Gajdos, B. (2006). *Math dictionary & survival guide*. Rogue Media Inc.: Alberta.

Iwamoto, J. (2005). *Longman mathematics*. Pearson Education Inc. New York.

Reading Writing Benchmark 3

Theme: Renting in Alberta

Burke, B., Baron, G. & Price, P. (1994). *Laws for tenants in Alberta*. The Learning Centre Literacy Association, Edmonton, Alberta. ISBN 0-9698539-0-4.

English Everyday set of videos created by NorQuest College, Grant MacEwan University and ACCESS TV. Available in the library (AV428.3 ENG) or to order the video or DVD set or the digital files for streaming, contact the Western Distribution Centre at 1-800-665-4121. Especially useful units are: ‘At the bank’, ‘Apartment hunting’ and ‘Doctor! Doctor!’

Everyday Stories: A Literacy Workbook for Aboriginal Canadians (1988). Vancouver Community College Press, Vancouver, BC. Useful topics in this resource are: shoplifter problems, at the dry cleaners, bargain hunter, out of stock (ties to CLB speaking rain-checks), getting a drivers licence, Tony’s sore back, getting a ticket (John learns a lesson), Henry’s accident, rent check letters.

Theme: Volunteering

McGinty, A.B. (1999). *Guide dogs: Seeing for people who can’t*. PowerKids Press: New York. 362.4183 MCG.

Suen, A. (2002). *Habitat for humanity*. Powerkids Press: New York. 363.5 SUE.

In-House and Related Materials for Benchmarks 4–6

Benchmark 4 (as it is free and very appropriate to our program’s goals, it bears mentioning)

Bond, J. & Nicholson, G. ([Canada Works 2nd Edition - ESL Teacher's Resource Guide / Through the Looking Glass Workbook](#))

Author Organization: *Workplace Training & Services, Toronto District School Board*
The “Canada Works 2nd Edition” Resource Guide focuses on employability skills and knowledge and is designed to be integrated into an English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom curriculum – 2002. Downloadable from http://atwork.settlement.org/downloads/CW_Contents_Introduction.pdf

Reading and Writing Benchmark 7

Theme: Volunteerism

Mortenson, G. & Relin, D. O. (2009). *Three cups of tea*. Adapted by Sarah Thomson. Puffin Books. New York. ISBN 978-0-14-241412-5.

For more advanced readers:

Mortenson, G. & Relin, D.O. (2006). *Three cups of tea*. Penguin Books. New York. ISBN 0-670-03482-7.

Theme: Identity

Goyette, L. (2008). *The story that brought me here: To Alberta from everywhere*. Brindle & Glass, c2008. (819.301 STO) (some chapters may be too stark)

Samuels, B. (1997). *Multiculturalism in Canada: Images and issues*. Weigl: Calgary. Written for the “Canadian kid” most of it is not appropriate but some chapters like the description of the Charter of Human Rights and short descriptions of parts of Canadian history could be useful.

Warren, C.E. (1986). *Vignettes of life: Experiences and self perceptions of new Canadian women*. Detselig: Calgary. (305.4 WAR)

Theme: Literature

Hashemi, M., Johnston-Newman, A. & Zayat, J. (2008). *Famous Canadian authors: Developing English skills*. Pearson Longman: Quebec.

Theme: Academic Skills

Fava-Verde, A., Griffiths, P., Manning, A., Nukui, C., O’Cain, A., Russell, F. & Wilding, E. (2009). *Transferable academic skills kit: Course book*. Garnet Publishing Ltd: Reading, UK.

6. Implementation

Due to the limited numbers of ESL learners who are studying Benchmark/Essential Skills based curriculum, there are very few commercially available resources. As a result, the ESL Intensive program has produced its own resources for benchmarks 4–6.

Suggestions for implementation of new materials:

Implementation is the most difficult stage of any new curriculum. Learner funding, teacher schedules and classroom space, etc. may limit the opportunities to transition smoothly into a new curriculum. Regardless of the limitations, an environment of open and consistent communication is essential to any change in practice. The following are some suggestions for ideal practise:

1. As curriculum developers are creating materials, pilot small samples with the classes at the appropriate level. Sample piloting with feedback serves to ensure that the materials are appropriate for the level. Teachers also have the opportunity to invest in the new materials, become aware of some of the considerations in development as well as understand the topic and approach the curriculum developer has chosen.
2. Edit the teaching materials early so that teachers have one, well polished version to use from the beginning.
3. Tell teachers in as much advance as possible that they are to be piloting new material. Some teachers may have their course planned and ready to go before they receive word that they are to use new materials; this can disrupt their plans for the term.
4. The line between teacher choice/creativity and clarity/organization of thought in the materials can be difficult to balance. Materials' intended use must be transparent but not prescriptive.
5. Give piloting teachers an electronic copy of the teaching materials so that they can customize the materials for their classes.
6. In the first weeks of the pilot, the curriculum developer should be accessible by teachers and administrators so that details such as the correct texts or audio resources are found and used.
7. As the teachers are piloting, ask them to make comments and suggestions on **one** copy of the new materials. At the end of the term these comments can be added to the teachers' manual or used to edit the original material.
8. In the teachers' manual, provide space for teachers' comments and additions. Ideally, as the curriculum materials are passed from teacher to teacher they will benefit from the cumulative experience and expertise of the different teachers using the document.
9. During the course of program development and piloting, the curriculum developer should provide some staff training and information sessions on the new materials as well as any new approaches/techniques that are recommended for use with the materials.
10. Set aside some time for the curriculum developer and the production team to make adjustments to the curriculum and materials at the end of the first two pilots of a course.

Appendix

ESL Intensive 3–7 Curriculum Framework

Language Training and Adult Literacy

NorQuest College

Research that Laid the Foundation for ESL Intensive’s New Curriculum

Interviews

For this specific program we consulted

Experts on learning:

- Focus group of Benchmark 5 learners
- ESL teachers at NorQuest
- University of Alberta – Dr. Tracey Derwing – Pronunciation
- Coordinators of Academics for Careers and Employment – common places ESL learner struggle
 - Math – Corey Mushynsky
 - Science – Mary Ledding
 - Instructors of Academics for Careers and Employment
 - High school English – Kathleen Henderson
 - Communication – Lois Henderson

Experts on workplace culture:

- Two work placement instructors in the Health and Human Service Careers program²¹
- Lorene Anderson – Essential Skills
- Sarah Apedaile – Intercultural understanding

Experts on the interaction between newcomers and Edmonton:

- Edmonton Public Schools – Dr. Joyce Purdy, Linda Siu, Fadia Naaman, Aruna Kalra, Kathy Tran, Habiba Shurie – common miscommunications between immigrant parents and teachers
- Edmonton Financial Literacy Society – Nigel Kidd
- Edmonton Police Services – Common communication issues between the police and newcomers
- Jewish Family Services Topic: Jeni Adler-Magat – Identity transformation in Resettlement and employment
- Multicultural Health Brokers – Tigist Dafla and Yvonne Chiu – immigrants and the health system

²¹ I apologize that I do not know all of the names. This was a cyclical process over the past year and a half and sometimes I just followed the chain of call transfers until someone answered my questions without ever knowing the individual’s name.

- NorQuest Learner Counsellor – Primrose Igonor – Common stumbling blocks for learners which can be addressed through content
- Learner Advisors – Janice Maser and Jean Adams

Past interviews from other projects that have impacted this curriculum project:

- Learners and graduates
- Coordinator of the Communication Arts Program in Academics for Careers and Employment – Elaine McPhee
- Job placement counsellors at NorQuest and Bredin Institute
- Coordinator of Business and Industry Careers – Diane Ockerman

Print resources accessed to develop this curriculum:

Alberta Education – *Program of studies – Language arts, science, math and social studies especially grades 4–9*. Looked at academic outcomes, content and “thinking skills” teachers would expect learners in our basic education system to learn. Retrieved June 8, 2010, from <http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program.aspx>

Alberta Education – *Diploma exams*. To see the types of writing a proof required in the English and math exams. To understand the evaluation that ACE learners are building toward. Retrieved June 10, 2010, from <http://education.alberta.ca/students/exams/answers.aspx>

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Beckett, G.H., Gonzalez, V. & Schwartz, H. (2004). Content-based ESL writing curriculum: A language socialization model. *NABE Journal of Research and Practice*, 2:1 (161-175).

Berg, K. & Palladino, V. (2009). *Bridge to transit operators curriculum guide*. NorQuest College: Centre for Innovation and Development.

Brown, C.L. (2004). Content based ESL curriculum and academic language proficiency. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 10:2. Retrieved May 10, 2009, from <http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Brown-CBEC.html>

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- Grecki, S. (2005). *Numeracy rules*. SkillPlan BC Construction Industry Skills Improvement Council, Burnaby, B.C.
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