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Learning Materials

A quality adult literacy and basic education program uses a variety of appropriate learning materials.





Reading Resources for Adult Learners

Submitted By

Evelyn Tregidgo, Instructor ALBE, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Learning Materials
- Organizational Linkages and Partnerships

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Introduction to Computers

What You Need

- Publishing software such as MS Word or MS Publisher

How It Works

This activity was developed because of the lack of low vocabulary, high interest reading resources for adults. This project helped replenish our adult reading resource library. Learners were taught the writing process. Stories that the learners developed were made into booklets using Microsoft Publisher software. A cover was made with coloured paper using a format similar to published books.

Students were proud of their products. We now have a few more resources for low-level students.

*Evelyn Tregidgo
Instructor*



Best Practices in Action

Local artists illustrated the stories; one learner illustrated her own product. The instructor developed exercises for each booklet using the following format:

- Vocabulary
- Comprehension
- Inference, drawing conclusions
- Applications.

This was a joint project between Aurora College and the Soaring Eagle Friendship Centre, with the Friendship Centre contributing to the salary of the instructor.

The resources are an excellent example of community-developed resources that are relevant to the lives of learners.

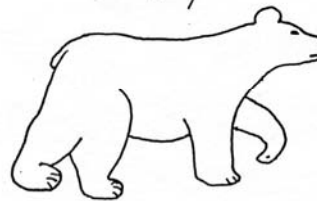
Web Link

The complete series of booklets and activities are available at www.nwt.literacy.ca



Running Scared was written and illustrated by Cheryl Mabbitt, an adult learner at Aurora College in Hay River.

Cheryl Mabbitt still recalls that fearful night a bear broke into her parent's cabin. That fear remains with her to this day.



Aurora College, Hay River, NT

Booklets in the series:

- Mr. Magoo's First Trip
- Running Scared
- A Night Without Television
- Living Off the Land
- Fishing on Great Slave Lake
- One Winter Night
- Sensational Science Fiction
- Our Adventurous Trip



Tuktoyaktuk Community Book

Submitted By

Karla Carter, Chair, Community Programs, Aurora Campus, Aurora College, Inuvik

Best Practices Supported

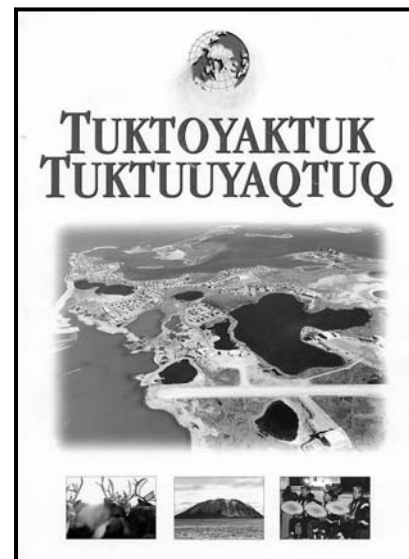
- Community
- Instruction
- Funding
- Organizational Linkages and Partnerships

Curriculum Links

- ALBE Social Studies
- ALBE English

How It Works

The Tuktoyaktuk Community book was a social studies project done by the Adult Basic Education class at the Tuktoyaktuk Learning Centre. The project started in September 1996 and ran until April 1997. Throughout the year, the learners gathered information about the hamlet of Tuktoyaktuk. Guest speakers from the community came to the learning centre and gave presentations to the learners.





The learners also went on field trips and received information in class. A lot of time and energy went into the making of this book. The learners wrote and re-wrote the material. The final product is one of which each learner was very proud.

Once the learners had written their book, it was published through funding provided by the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development's Community Initiatives Program and by the Inuvialuit Community Economic Development Organization. The money generated from the sale of this booklet goes towards providing educational products for the Tuktoyaktuk Learning Centre.



Internet Research and Bibliography

Submitted By

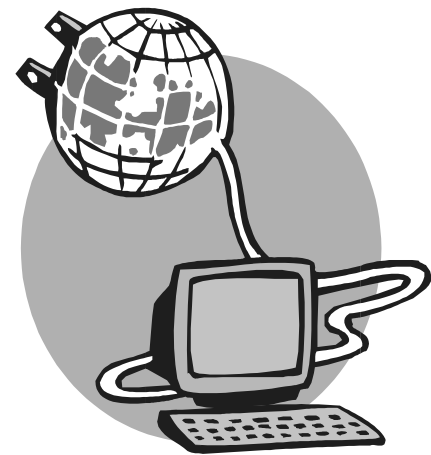
Liz Pope, Adult Educator, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Learning Materials
- Instruction

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Introduction to Computers
- ALBE Social Studies



How It Works

Learners will identify a Northwest Territories community. The instructor and the learners decide on the parameters for choosing a community to research, such as a community within a specific region, or a community within a certain population range.

The first task in the assignment is for the learners to identify and frame a definition of the community. The ultimate goal is to generate an organized list of all the information available about the chosen community. This should include materials from a wide variety of sources: government documents; archival materials; newspapers or magazines; academic journals; scholarly and popular books; and videos, film or television productions. The learners determine the most effective way to organize the list. They will



not be reading or evaluating all of this material. Their task is only to locate and list/organize the materials.

While the smaller communities may not have comparable library services to the larger towns, learners are given the opportunity to access and utilize the NWT Public Library, the Legislative Assembly Library, Northwest Territories RWED Library, and the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre. Internet research is the main component of this activity. Learners may utilize a spreadsheet program to organize and manipulate the data.



The Northern Edge: Online Literacy Newspaper

Submitted By

Donna Mulders, NWT Literacy Council, Yellowknife, NT

Best Practices Supported

- Learning Materials
- Culture

Curriculum Links

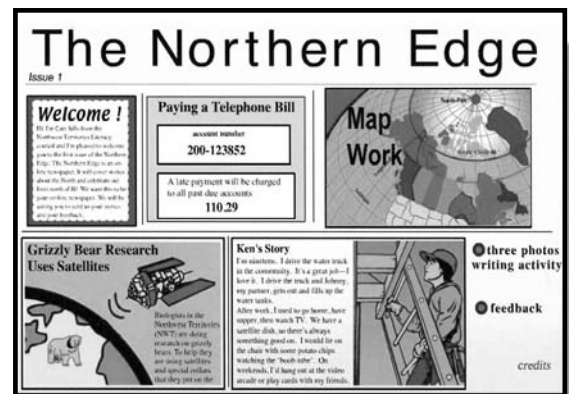
ALBE English

How It Works

The Northern Edge is an interactive online literacy newspaper that has articles and online language quizzes written at a level and in a style that is accessible to a range of learners and with a range of northern content. The newspaper allows the learner to be a “doer” and not just a consumer of information. The learners can hear the article read to them and they can read along following the text as it is highlighted in blue. The text can also be printed for use offline. All of the articles are followed by short online vocabulary and comprehension activities. The topics in *The Northern Edge* are mainly northern themes that will appeal to adult learners on such topics as northern wildlife, NWT elections, buying a big ticket item like a skidoo or using a chat room.

Web Link

The Northern Edge is online at www.nwt.literacy.ca





Learners and The Northern Edge

Submitted By

Karen Mercer, Adult Educator, Fort Good Hope CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

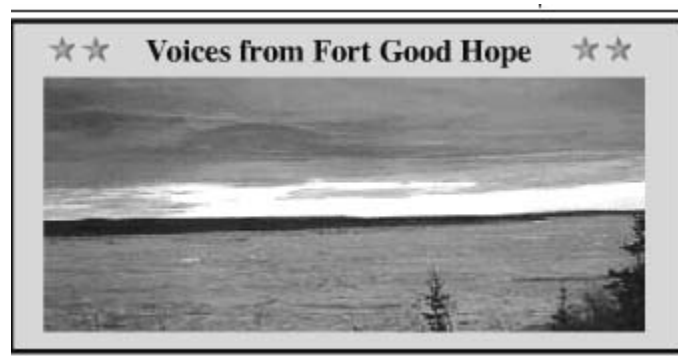
- Instruction
- Culture
- Learning Materials
- Transferability of Learning
- Organizational Links and Partnerships

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Social Studies
- ALBE Introduction to Computers

What You Need

- Willing and enthusiastic learners
- Access to computers and Internet
- Digital camera
- Email





How It Works

Learners at the Fort Good Hope Community Learning Centre did a project for *The Northern Edge*, an online newspaper for literacy learners. This was a multi-media project that involved writing, recording and taking photographs to go on *The Northern Edge* website.

Learners chose to write about life in Fort Good Hope and once the stories were done, they peer edited their work. The learners recorded the stories and took photos of the community. One learner also recorded a sound track to accompany the online text and photos.

Learners were very excited and very proud to see their work on the Internet. Once the issue was launched, announcements, faxes and posters were distributed throughout the community. The website is also the home page on the computers at the Learning Centre. This project was a great boost to learners' self esteem and confidence.



Web Link

Visit www.nwt.literacy.ca to view the online stories from Fort Good Hope.

This was a great opportunity for the learners to profile Fort Good Hope and showcase their literacy skills.

*Karen Mercer
Adult Educator*



Health Check

Submitted By

Helen Balanoff, Researcher, NWT Literacy Council, Yellowknife

Best Practices Supported

- Learning Materials
- Community
- Culture
- Organizational Linkages and Partnerships

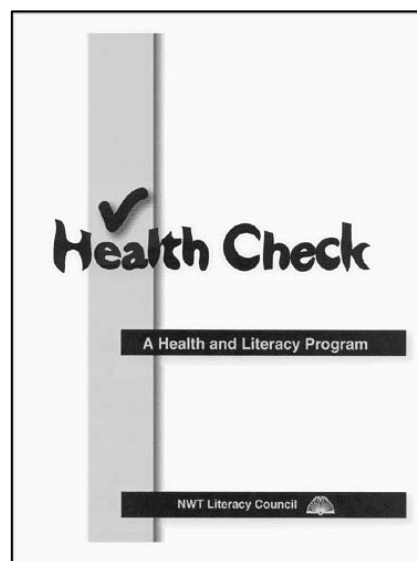
Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Science

How It Works

Health Check is a literacy and health manual developed for adult and teen learners in the NWT. Stories are at the heart of *Health Check*. The stories, by adult literacy learners from the NWT, are truly northern and make the resource more engaging and relevant for northern learners.

To be able to make healthy choices, people need:





Best Practices in Action

- Information on health topics that affect their lives, presented in a way they can understand.
- A greater feeling of control over their lives.

Health Check presents easy-to-read information on a number of health topics of specific concern to people in the NWT:

- Healthy eating
- Smoking
- Alcohol
- Active living
- Relationships
- STDs and AIDS.

Learners don't learn only facts about these topics. They explore the issues actively by reading about them and reflecting on their own ideas. Then they exchange their ideas with other people who may have different experiences from theirs. By participating actively in this way, they might be better able to see how they can take more control of their own lives—and their own health. All the activities involve literacy—speaking, listening, reading, writing—so as learners learn about health issues, they are also improving their literacy skills.

Each unit includes:

- An introduction for the instructor
- Learning objectives
- A list of resources
- A reflection for learners at the beginning of the unit
- A vocabulary list
- Two stories followed by comprehension questions
- Reflection/discussion on the issues in the stories
- A variety of learning activities related to the topic
- A selection of basic fact sheets about the topic.



Health Check is in clear language and is easy to understand and use. It suggests ways in which learners can go out into the community and explore parts of each unit in its context.

Web Link

Health Check is online at www.nwt.literacy.ca



Community Newspaper

Submitted By

Ken Latour, Instructor, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Instruction
- Learning Materials
- Community

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Social Studies
- ALBE Introduction to Computers



How It Works

The learners in the ALBE program in Fort Resolution published a community newspaper. They researched and wrote stories and took digital photographs to be included in the paper. They did the layout and design of the paper with the help of the adult educator.

The newspaper provided a forum for learners to actively engage in the community, and was an excellent way to cover ALBE English and Computer Studies objectives as well.

Since Fort Resolution does not have a community newspaper, community members responded very positively to this project.

A year and a half after the *Deninu Digest*,



learners are working on another community newsletter, the *Aurora Scoop*. Some of their writing assignments once again take the form of reporting on community events, and the community is again an extension of their classrooms. However, now, learners are doing the layout and graphic design themselves after training on the publishing program, Microsoft Publisher, was incorporated into the Computer Studies program. As a result of changing the approach to producing the newsletter, learners have developed additional computer skills in desktop publishing and word processing skills, the newsletter project is less labour intensive, and learners are able to share their learning with the community.



Free Resources

Submitted By

Ken Latour, Instructor, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Learning Materials

Curriculum Links

- ALBE curricula

How It Works

Program staff take advantage of the wide variety of free material that is available from organizations in the NWT and Canada. There are several places from which instructors can obtain free information such as:

- Resources Wildlife and Economic Development
- Health and Social Services
- Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre
- NWT Public Library Service – Books by Mail
- Libraries – Inter-Library Loans
- NWT Status of Women
- Veterans' Affairs
- Human Rights Commission
- Elections NWT
- Elections Canada



- Teaching and Learning Centres
- Alberta Learning
- NWT Literacy Council.



Best Practices in Action



Learner Assessment

A quality adult literacy and basic education program monitors learner progress on an ongoing basis through a variety of participatory assessment procedures.



Best Practices in Action



CARA

Submitted By

Paul Seargeant, Literacy Tutor, Fort Resolution CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Learner Assessment

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English

What You Need

- CARA – Canadian Adult Reading Assessment

How It Works

CARA is an assessment package that is used with learners in the Fort Resolution Community Learning Centre. CARA stands for the Canadian Adult Reading Assessment, and unlike standardized tests, it gives insight into how someone reads. Four types of reading patterns are identified with CARA:

- Print-based (PB)
- Meaning-based (MB)
- Integrative (I)
- Non-integrative (NI)

Once you know how a learner reads, you will know the type of reading strategies to use and how best to instruct the learner. For example, CARA can tell you how learners decode unfamiliar words.



When doing any assessment, it is important to make the learner feel as comfortable and relaxed as possible. Tell the learner that it is not a pass/fail test, but a test to see how they read. Explain the assessment, why you are doing the assessment and what you will do with the results. There are simple things that an assessor can do when administering CARA that can make a big difference in the comfort level of the learner, such as:

- Maintaining an easygoing style and appearing relaxed.
- Doing simple things, such as getting the learner a coffee before they start the assessment.
- Doing an informal and brief interview for background information.
- Outlining clearly and precisely what the purpose of the assessment is.

When the assessment is completed, the assessor shares the results with the learner. Grade scores do not have to be given, but show the learner their strengths and what they need to work on.



Oral Assessments

Submitted By

Joel McAlister, Instructor ALBE/Access, Inuvik CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Learner Assessment

Curriculum Links

- ALBE curricula

How It Works

In the science program taught at the Community Learning Centre in Inuvik, the learners are given the opportunity to do an oral assessment showing that they know the material covered in the science program. For example, they did a unit on wildlife trapping and learned about the various traps and how to set them. When it came time to do the evaluation, an oral test was given and the learners had to provide the instructor with the answers.



Best Practices in Action