

# **Demystifying Adult Literacy for Volunteer Tutors**

## **A Reference Handbook and Resource Guide**

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# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>PERMISSIONS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>I CAN READ.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE: VOLUNTEER LITERACY TUTORS.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERACY FACTS.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>CHAPTER THREE: HEART OF THE LITERACY MATTER.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: BARRIERS TO LITERACY.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: WORKING WITH ADULT LEARNERS .....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>CHAPTER SIX: DEVELOPING THE TUTOR/LEARNER RELATIONSHIP .....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>CHAPTER SEVEN: DEVELOPING THE LEARNING PROGRAM .....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>CHAPTER EIGHT: ARE YOU LITERACY LITERATE? .....</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>Appendix A: WHO'S WHO IN LITERACY .....</b>	<b>147</b>

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"BC", Johnny Hart

# I CAN READ

By Dave Koontz and Bill Snyder  
(C.E.F.S. Literacy Program, Chris Boyd, Director, 1989)

When you can't work the magic of letters in a line  
And you can't read what's written on your heart  
When you can't solve the mystery of things missing in your  
life

Or know the answer to what's tearing you apart  
Then you go find your own special place to hide  
And make excuses and find reasons not to show  
The awful secret you keep bottled up inside  
In fear that comes when you think someone knows

You can't read! You can't read!  
Do you know what that means?  
All the tears and the fears constantly  
You feel like your life is one long, losing fight  
'Cause you can't read, you can't read, you can't read

Oh, but this nightmare can end, you won't have to pretend  
Once you just give in to the truth  
There are people out there who really do care  
Who can make life worth living for you  
They'll plant the seeds that will nourish your needs  
And the harvest will be yours to reap  
Then look the world in the eye and shout to the sky  
I can read! I can read! I can read!

I can read! I can read!  
Do you know what that means?  
From the tears and the fears I'm set free  
On my new page of life thank God I can write  
I can read! I can read! I can read!

# INTRODUCTION

When I began tutoring, I received an excellent orientation to the program, the philosophy, and the teaching strategies we would use. But as I continued, I found that I was missing a lot of background knowledge about adult literacy as an issue, and as a field of practice.

For example, I began to learn that the term 'literacy' itself meant different things to different people, and that the number of adults with literacy difficulties was much larger than I had anticipated. I began to wonder why five million adults in Canada are functionally illiterate, and why, with all the literacy programs around, more adults aren't enrolling in them.

I also began to wonder about the implications of not being able to read, write and use numbers. What is the impact of low literacy on the daily life of an adult who is a parent, an employee, a consumer of goods and services, a medical patient, a renter or homeowner, a potential voter, a UIC or social assistance recipient, a legal client, etc? How does it feel to be an adult non-reader? How does one's life change when they do begin to read as an adult?

I also heard a lot of terms being thrown around as if they were understood by everyone involved with adult literacy. But as a new volunteer tutor, I wondered: just what are those 'principles of adult education', and how do adults learn differently than children? What is 'ABE', and how is it different from 'literacy', or 'upgrading'? What exactly is this 'whole language' approach, and if it's so bad to teach 'phonics' or 'spelling', why are workshops on 'strategies for teaching spelling' being offered?

Asking all these questions, I became a bit overwhelmed, and wondered: exactly what is my role as a volunteer tutor? Do I have what it takes to be a good tutor? What will learners need from me? What kind of resources are available to help me?

*Demystifying Adult Literacy For Volunteer Tutors: A Reference Handbook and Resource Guide* is a compilation of some of this background information gathered from a variety of different sources. Each section ends with a list of references from which the information is obtained.

This *Reference Handbook and Resource Guide* is intended as a 'tool' for new and more experienced tutors, to provide background information about:

- literacy itself, how widespread it is and why;
- volunteer tutors - roles and responsibilities, and what personal characteristics are helpful in your role;
- working with adult learners, what they need, how they feel;
- developing the tutor/learner relationship and learning program.

Also provided are: a glossary entitled "Are you literacy literate?" which outlines various types of literacy programs, and clarifies many common terms within the literacy field; and an extensive Annotated Bibliography of resources available through Literacy Partners of Manitoba.

Your comments and suggestions for improvement to future updates of the handbook are welcome.

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# **CHAPTER ONE:** **VOLUNTEER LITERACY TUTORS**

- **WHY TUTOR?**
- **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**
- **TUTOR CODE OF ETHICS**
- **TUTOR SELF ASSESSMENT GUIDE**
- **WHAT MAKES AN EFFECTIVE TUTOR?**
- **REFERENCES**

## **Why Tutor?**

After reading the Introduction, the prospect of tutoring may seem quite overwhelming. So wouldn't it be a lot easier to just forget about tutoring? The answer for many tutors would certainly be NO! Aside from all the personal qualities and responsibilities involved in tutoring, there are many valuable things you will gain from it. For example, tutoring:

- allows creativity in learning and communication;
- provides access to professional development through training, in-service workshops, conferences and newsletters;
- promotes personal growth and social functions;
- provides recognition and feedback which build self-esteem (Hladik, 1991: p. 97).

Tutoring also:

- allows for the development of a variety of skills and experience: teaching, interpersonal, communication, organizational, helping and study skills, planning and goal setting, reading, writing and math;
- provides the satisfaction of helping others gain more control in their lives;
- provides the opportunity to help others learn how to help themselves;
- provides a chance to help someone set goals and grow in the process of learning;
- provides a chance to participate in a mutual learning experience;
- offers a chance to have fun while learning a new skill and meeting new people;
- offers access to a group of people who share a common concern for literacy;
- improves community spirit as tutors and learners begin to understand and accept each other;
- allows flexible hours (Winnipeg Core Area Initiative, p. 4) .

***"[As a tutor] you will give support to build a solid, successful learning environment. You will establish a base for improved self-confidence by helping an adult-learner define and reach his or her literacy goals. By helping another human being, you will provide an invaluable gift. Your time and talents will shape another's destiny!" (Baker, p.2)***

## Roles and Responsibilities

Volunteer literacy tutors come from a wide variety of backgrounds, and become tutors for many different reasons. They may:

- wish to explore teaching as a new career area;
- need to gain the volunteer experience as a prerequisite for something else;
- feel a need to help people;
- wish to meet other people and make new friends;
- be fulfilling a community service sentence for an offence;
- need to be needed;
- be deeply committed to literacy;
- seek the adventure or challenge of the area;
- need to fill their time.

Whatever your background, and whatever your reasons for tutoring, you are volunteers who give generously of your time, energy and talents. Programs and program coordinators must recognize that your needs must be met if you are to remain committed to the program. (They also have a responsibility to the learners to recognize if someone is unsuitable, for whatever reason, for a tutoring position.)

Likewise, adult literacy programs provide a service which is critical to the lives of many people. These **programs must be able to depend upon their volunteer tutors** to fulfil the commitments they make to the learner(s) and to the program.

The following are some basic assumptions about the roles and responsibilities of program coordinators, volunteer tutors, and adult learners in literacy programs. (Adapted from Watson and Bate, 1991: p.75-76)

### **What can volunteer tutors reasonably expect of their program coordinator?**

- to receive the same consideration and respect given paid employees
- to receive an orientation to the program
- to receive initial training and in-service training
- to receive a volunteer tutor job description
- to receive teaching materials
- to receive information on other training opportunities and literacy events
- to receive guidance and support
- to have access to and regular contact with the coordinator (in person/by phone)
- to have their time well used
- to be involved in planning
- to feel part of a "team"
- to receive feedback on performance (evaluations)
- to be granted some flexibility
- to receive recognition

### **What can reasonably be expected of volunteer tutors?**

- to attend training sessions, in-service workshops and recognition events
- to attend volunteer tutor meetings and sharing get-togethers
- to plan the course of study with the learner(s)
- to devote some personal time to preparation as required
- to meet regularly with the learner(s)
- to assume the role of tutor/facilitator rather than counsellor
- to communicate regularly with the coordinator on learner's progress
- to discuss learner and/or program concerns with the coordinator
- to assist in the planning and evaluation of the program
- to return books/materials
- to make and keep a specific time commitment

### **What can reasonably be expected of adult learners?**

- to give their attention to the lessons during class time
- to attend classes or sessions regularly, as agreed upon at the outset
- to complete homework as agreed upon
- to let the tutor know if they expect to be late, absent or unable to do homework
- to participate in planning the course of study with the tutor
- to let the tutor know when they don't understand something
- to respect the tutors role as a facilitator, not as someone to do the learning for them
- to respect the limits of the tutors responsibilities (ie. they are there to tutor, not to provide counselling, transportation, etc.)

## **Tutor Code of Ethics**

Because tutors place high value on objectivity and integrity in the service they offer, they uphold this Code of Ethics:

- The tutor has chosen to help by teaching reading and keeps that the primary activity of tutoring.
- The tutor displays an attitude of shared adulthood and respect for students.
- The tutor protects the confidence placed in her/him by students. The tutor keeps any personal information offered by a student confidential.
- The tutor is bound to respect the confidentiality of the other tutor-learner relationships.
- The tutor refers a student to appropriate... program personnel when that student requests help beyond the tutor's training, or skills.
- The tutor does not speak on behalf of the... program without prior approval of appropriate... personnel.
- The tutor keeps the commitment of interest and time made to a student and to the program.

(Adapted from Watson and Bate, 1991: p. 82)

# **Tutor Self Assessment Guide**

(Baker, D., p. 9)

You may wish to ask yourself the following questions to determine whether tutoring is for you. It may also be helpful to identify ways in which you may be able to strengthen the relationship you have with your learner(s) or to improve your tutoring skills. Used intermittently throughout your tutoring experience, this can be a useful tool for assessing your growth and a guide to strengthening your tutoring skills over time.

- Do I enjoy meeting and working with people?
- Am I really committed to tutoring?
- Do I have perseverance even when I confront problems?
- Do I enjoy challenges?
- Am I patient?
- Am I motivated to learn? (If not, how can I motivate anyone else?)
- Do I enjoy reading? (If not, how can I inspire that enjoyment in others?)
- Do I enjoy writing or is it a chore?
- When did I last write a poem, a verse, a letter?
- What are my attitudes toward reading and writing?
- Do I really believe that everyone has a right to read and can read or do I think it's a mysterious, difficult process only to be taught by "experts"?
- Am I empathetic and do I respect my pupils for what and who they are?
- Am I able to communicate clearly and effectively? (Communication means both speaking and listening.)
- Am I able to listen and learn from my student?
- Am I able to offer praise and encouragement to my student for small successes?
- Am I able to adapt my learning style to address my student's needs and abilities?
- Am I creative and flexible so that I can plan and present a variety of approaches?
- Am I understanding of other problems in my student's life that may be compounded by their low literacy?
- Am I able to establish a comfortable/non-threatening atmosphere so that my student won't feel anxious and afraid?
- Am I able to respect my student's confidences?
- Am I able to be a facilitator and model behaviour that will encourage my student to view learning as a life-long experience?
- Am I honest about myself and my own strengths and weaknesses? Can I share these openly with my student?
- Can I teach? Can I learn? Can I change?

## **What makes an effective tutor?**

(Butler, 1990; Colvin and Root, 1987; Winnipeg Core Area Initiative)

In order to be effective, tutors must be able to establish a good relationship with the learner(s) they work with. Tutors must have a commitment to tutoring. They must have time in which to take training, prepare lessons, and meet with the learner. They must also demonstrate certain attitudes, personal qualities, and skills, such as those outlined below. While a tutor may not be expected to have all of these characteristics, the willingness and commitment to develop them is most important.

**Acceptance** - of a person for who and what they are, their past experiences, current circumstances, future dreams.

**Adaptability** - to different ways of doing things, expectations and changing needs and circumstances.

**Belief** - in the person's ability to learn.

**Caring** - the ability to consider the learner, his/her special situation and needs.

**Communication skills** - the ability to explain and demonstrate things clearly so that the learner can understand without additional frustration.

**Commitment** - to make and keep a commitment to the learner, the program and its philosophy and approach.

**Concern** - for the learner's needs, interests, goals and abilities.

**Creativity** - tutors should be creative and eager to try new ways to teach. By experimenting with different teaching techniques, you will avoid becoming repetitious and stale. Because people learn in a variety of ways, it is important to stimulate as many senses as possible.

**Empathy** - the ability to 'put yourself in someone else's shoes', to understand the fear a learner feels.

**Encouragement** - praising each small success and keeping a positive attitude during the learning process helps relieve learner frustration.

**Enthusiasm** - Tutors must be enthusiastic about what they are teaching and about their own and their learners' learning. Your enthusiasm can be infectious and can foster positive attitudes to the subject and to the process of learning itself.

**Flexibility** - to put aside planned lessons in the interests of more immediate needs (ie. helping to make a doctor's appointment, deal with a housing need or any other urgent matter); and is able to teach in more than one way.

**Interest** - in the learner(s), and what they want to learn.

**Listening skills** - show the learner that what they say is important; also helps you to better understand the learner and their needs.

**Non-judgemental** - the ability to listen to and empathize with the learner without making value judgements.

**Openness** - to new ideas and approaches, and to receiving feedback. Learners need to receive sensitive and constructive feedback on their progress. Likewise, tutors must be able to receive feedback from the learner and coordinator in order to grow in their tutoring abilities. They must also be open to learning from the learner.

**Organization** - An organized tutor has a clear understanding of lesson objectives, plans to meet those objectives, carefully prepares the teaching materials needed and arrives early for each lesson.

**Patience** - ability to persevere without becoming frustrated when gains seem small.

**Perseverance** - the learning may seem very slow at times, and many adult learners become frustrated and drop out. Learning - and helping to learn - requires perseverance. Tutors can also become very important role models for adult learners, who may be motivated to continue trying when they see their tutor willing to persevere during difficult times.

**Reliability** - makes a commitment and sticks with it, lets learner know if unable to keep an appointment, reschedules missed appointments, and fulfils responsibilities taken on.

**Respect** - treating adult learners as equals who are learning something new. Genuine respect and regard for your learner's growth are sources of help and pride.

**Sense of humour** - laughter, the sharing of a good joke, cartoon, etc., are good ways to ease tension, to make the time seem shorter, and to make the learning process more enjoyable and less threatening.

**Sensitivity** - Adult learners will often have very fragile feelings regarding their skill levels, and the difficulties they have in learning new material. Be aware of your learners' behaviour at all times, offering clues so that success is always possible. Be prepared to change lesson plans if the learner becomes too discouraged.

**Understanding** - because, for a variety of reasons, lessons don't always go as planned, tutors must be understanding.

**From one tutor to others starting out:**

***"Go slowly. Keep your sense of humour. Throw out any preconceived ideas of how the relationship is going to work, and, most importantly -- take it one day at a time!" (Thomas, A.,1990.)***

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## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERACY FACTS**

- **DEFINING LITERACY**
- **IS LITERACY REALLY AN ISSUE IN CANADA?**
- **LITERACY STATISTICS**
- **NUMERACY STATISTICS**
- **REFERENCES**

## Defining Literacy

According to the Manitoba Literacy and Continuing Education Branch (April, 1990), it is important to be aware of the following important points when reading and interpreting statistics on literacy:

- Definitions of literacy vary and change over the years;
- Grade completion figures are misleading;
- Surveys are not necessarily representative of the total population in Manitoba and/or Canada;
- The majority of adults surveyed have not been totally illiterate;
- Literacy is self defined;
- There are misconceptions about adults with literacy needs.

The following is just a sample of the many definitions of literacy/illiteracy which you may encounter:

"Traditionally, the number of completed grades of school has been used as an indicator of level of literacy. (Individuals with less than Grade 5 were classified as 'basically illiterate'; those with more than Grade 5, but less than Grade 9, were classified as 'functionally illiterate'.) ...Most literacy advocates now believe that grade levels are an unreliable measure of individual literacy. Many people with limited formal education are literate, while a significant number of people with high school and even post-secondary education have problems with everyday reading and writing." (NAPO, 1992: p.15)

Literacy means the "information processing skills necessary to use the printed material commonly encountered at work, at home, and in the community." (Statistics Canada, 1991: p.15)

"[Rather than focussing on levels of reading and writing]...the real issue is whether people possess the education and skills necessary to function fully and productively in the life of their society.... In the context of Canadian society, literacy means a relatively high level of reading, writing and calculating ability." (Pike, 1991: p.4)

"**Illiteracy** is best defined as a lack of skills perceived by individuals or groups as being necessary to fulfil their self-determined objectives as individuals, family and community members, consumers, employees and members of social or religious organizations. ...**Literacy** is the ability to read, write, comprehend and use mathematics adequately to satisfy the requirement the learner sets for him or herself as being important for his or her own life." (Manitoba Education and Training, 1989: p.2)

"A person is **functionally illiterate** if he or she cannot engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning in his or her community, and also for enabling him or her to continue to use reading, writing, and calculation for their own and for the community's development." (UNESCO, as quoted in Butler, 1990: p.4.)

"Illiteracy should be viewed as a continuum of undereducation, stretching from those who cannot read at all at the low end, to those who have less than high school education at the high end. People at different points along this continuum have different needs, which may differ greatly from the needs existing literacy programs are trying to meet." (Fox and Baker, 1990: p. 83)

"To be literate means to be able to fulfil one's own goals as a family and community member, citizen, worker, and member of churches, clubs and other organizations you choose. This means being able to get information and use it to improve your life, being able to use reading and writing to do the things you decide to do, and being able to use literacy as a tool to solve problems you face in everyday life." (Gillespie, 1990: p.16)

"Adult learners view literacy as increasing their independence and personal power to act on the world. It means a level of reading and writing at which they can communicate with the competence they define as necessary to deal with situations and opportunities within their environment." (Ennis and Woodrow, 1992: p.9)

"Literacy is a matter not of honing skills but of increasing confidence, familiarity and understanding, all consequences of meaningful use." (Frank Smith as quoted in Davies and McQuaid, 1992: p. ii.)

"Literacy extends far beyond the acquisition of specified skills. Students cannot hope to participate in any meaningful way in any social or democratic process without the ability to express themselves, to comprehend and respond critically to issues that are presented. Our job as instructors is to provide an enabling environment that can nurture those communication skills. This is a broad definition of literacy which extends far beyond the technical ability to read and write." (Davies and McQuaid, 1992: p.7)

"[Literacy] is a political endeavour in which one consciously participates in cultural action to promote the liberation of oneself and others." (F. Kazemek as quoted in Davies and McQuaid, 1992.)

## **Is Literacy Really an Issue in Canada?**

The most recent literacy statistics are derived from the "Survey of Literacy Skills Used in Daily Activities" and published in the 1991 Statistics Canada Report, Adult Literacy in Canada: Results of a National Study. This was a survey of functional reading, writing and numeracy skills of Canada's adult population. It was conducted through in-home interviews with a representative sample of 9,500 people between the ages of 16 to 69, and was limited to English and French. Like previous surveys, it consisted of tasks based on the kinds of literacy and numeracy skills needed in daily life. The following skill levels were identified by the survey ( p.17-20.):

### Reading Skill Levels

Level 1 - difficulty dealing with printed materials. People most likely identify themselves as those who cannot read.

Level 2 - can use printed materials only for limited purposes such as finding a familiar word in a simple text. People would likely see themselves as having difficulties with common reading materials.

Level 3 - can use reading materials in a variety of situations, provided the material is simple, clearly laid out, and the tasks involved are not too complicated. While these people generally do not see themselves as having significant reading difficulties, they tend to avoid situations requiring reading.

Level 4 - meets most everyday reading demands. This is a diverse group which exhibits a wide range of skills.

### Numeracy Skill Levels

Level 1 - very limited numeracy abilities which enable individuals to, at most, locate and recognize numbers in isolation or in a short text.

Level 2 - can deal with material requiring them to perform a simple numerical operation such as addition and subtraction.

Level 3 - can deal with material requiring them to perform simple sequences of numerical operations which enable them to meet most everyday demands.

## Literacy Statistics

*By the year 2000, 70% of Canadian jobs will require college-level reading skills. Today, less than 50% of the workforce can function at this level. (Statistics Canada, 1991, p.9-10)*

(Unless otherwise indicated, literacy statistics are from Statistics Canada, Adult Literacy in Canada: results of a national study, 1991, p.9-10.)

Sixteen per cent (2.9 million) of **Canada's adults** have reading skills too limited to allow them to deal with the majority of written material encountered in everyday life (Levels 1 and 2). This includes those having no abilities in English or French (2%). Of this 2%, 3 out of 4 (320,000) are **women over 35 years of age**.

Twenty-two per cent of **adult Canadians** can only handle very simple, clearly laid out reading material that is familiar to them (Level 3). Unfamiliar or complex written materials (like health and safety or environmental regulations, or company memos) may be too complex for them to read.

Only 62% of the population **aged 16 to 69** have reading abilities sufficient to deal with most everyday reading requirements (Level 4). Their skills are adequate to enable them to acquire further knowledge using written material.

Thirty-eight per cent of the **adult population** is at risk of being functionally illiterate in many situations.

Only about 6% of **Canadian youth** (aged 16 to 24) are at the lowest levels of reading proficiency, but 30% of **high-school students** drop out of school before grade 12.

Eight per cent of **adults with high school completion** have limited reading abilities (Levels 1 and 2), while 70% have skills that permit them to meet daily demands (Level 4).

Twenty-two per cent of **adults who have completed high school** can use reading materials in a variety of situations, depending upon the complexity of the task and the text (Level 3). These adults are at risk of losing their abilities as they tend to avoid situations requiring reading.

Over one million people in the **55 to 69 age group** have trouble reading such materials as labels on medicine bottles or using the yellow pages

About 65% of **those entering correctional institutions for the first time** could not read or write well, according to Correctional Services Canada. (Pike, 1991: p.6)

Seventy per cent of **prison inmates** are functionally illiterate.

Between 50% and 80% of **women using services of the Elizabeth Fry Society** have literacy needs. (Pike, 1991: p.6)

**Rural areas** have the highest rates (17%) of low literacy (Level 1 and 2).

"The Assembly of First Nations estimates that Native peoples have illiteracy rates of 45%." (NAPO, 1992: p.28)

Over 50% of **Native peoples living on reserves** are functionally illiterate.

Twelve per cent of **adults born in Canada** had skills assessed at Levels 1 and 2, compared to 28% for **immigrants** whose mother-tongue is often neither English nor French.

Nearly one-third of **foreign born women** have extreme difficulty dealing with printed material or can use printed words only for limited purposes (Levels 1 and 2), compared to over one-fifth **foreign born men** and approximately one-tenth **Canadian born women and men**.

Only 36% of **immigrants with a mother-tongue other than English or French** had assessed abilities to deal with most everyday Canadian materials (Level 4).

There are significant differences in reading and numeracy skills between English and French speaking Canadians. Seven per cent of **Anglophones** were at Level 2, compared to 13% of **Francophones**; and 70% of **Anglophones** were at Level 4, while only 58% of **Francophones** were at the same level.

#### Reading skill levels for Manitoba:

Level 1 (5%), Level 2 (7%), Level 3 (23%), Level 4 (65%).

*"Less than 2% of "functionally illiterate" Canadians are enrolled in literacy programs, and only one in 10 would ever consider taking classes." (Calamai, 1988: p.9)*

## **Numeracy Statistic**

(Statistics Canada, 1991: p.11)

Fourteen per cent of **Canada's adults** have limited numeracy skills (Level 1). These skills enable them to, at most, locate and recognize numbers in isolation or in a short text. Their skills do not permit them to perform numerical operations consistently.

Twenty-four per cent of **Canada's adults** do not possess the necessary skills to meet most everyday numeracy requirements but can deal with commonly encountered documents and forms requiring them to perform a simple numerical operation such as addition or subtraction (Level 2).

Only 62% of **Canada's adult population** have numeracy skills sufficient to handle the numerical tasks normally encountered in everyday life. These skills enable them to deal with printed material requiring a simple sequence of numerical operations (Level 3).

Ten per cent of **adults with high school completion** have limited numeracy abilities (Level 1).

Twenty-five per cent of the **55 to 69 age group** have limited numeracy abilities (Level 1) compared to the national figure of 14%.

**Rural areas** have the highest rates (18%) of low numeracy skills (Level 1).

Numeracy skill level for Manitoba:

Level 1 (13%), Level 2 (26%), Level 3 (61%)

## **Manitoba Statistics**

150,000 to 180,000 adult Manitobans are considered illiterate or functionally illiterate, depending on the definition of literacy that is used.

The 183,000 illiterate or functionally illiterate Manitobans often quoted is extrapolated from 1986 census data.

The Southam Survey (1987) indicates that 19% of the population in Manitoba is illiterate or functionally illiterate. This figure may be low.

The John Howard Society estimates that 39% of inmates in provincial jails are illiterate or functionally illiterate.

"The illiterate and functional illiterate rates estimated for reserves average between 50% to 70%. ...On reserves, many adults are considered totally illiterate, especially those 50 years of age or older. Many of these adults also speak English as a second language. However, these are statistics often obtained from informal surveys and are therefore relatively unreliable."  
(Manitoba Education and Training, 1990, p. 4-5)

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## **CHAPTER THREE:**

# **HEART OF THE LITERACY MATTER**

- **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE LIMITED LITERACY SKILLS?**
- **HOW DOES LOW LITERACY FEEL?**
- **PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF NON-READERS**
- **ILLITERACY**
- **WHY LEARN TO READ AND WRITE AS AN ADULT?**
- **HOW ADULT LEARNERS FEEL ABOUT LEARNING TO READ AND WRITE**
- **REFERENCES**

## What does it mean to have limited literacy skills?

Imagine the many things which require your signature in daily life, such as:

- job applications
- registration forms for services, health benefits, events, courses
- permission for your children to participate in activities and events
- informed consent forms for medical procedures
- permission to release personal information about you or your family members
- applications to receive social assistance, UIC, Worker's Compensation
- insurance application forms and reports (vehicle, accident, life, house, etc.)
- statements to police or other officials

Now try to imagine what might happen if you signed some of these forms without being able to read them. Many people will sign forms without understanding them because they are told they have to in order to receive the service or benefit, and they are ashamed to admit that they are unable to read.

People with limited literacy skills "cannot easily gain **access to the information and services which others take for granted**.... [They] have more difficulty in gaining information about their rights which , at times, may be infringed upon. People with no literacy skills must rely on others to gain access to daily services and information in telephone books, newspapers, maps, schedules and special instructions on medication, etc. People with low literacy skills have fewer opportunities to have input in [to] their children's education." (Winnipeg Core Area Initiative, p.8)

"...lack of easy-to-understand information materials on health issues and medical care is [a] **major health barrier**. [There is] a need for plainly written health materials, including information about: prenatal and infant care; birth control methods, sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS; assistance with Medicare premiums; and consumer protection and consent forms. Plain writing is also needed for signs in health centres and for all public health materials sent to people's homes." (NAPO, 1992: p.51)

"Legal language is a barrier for everyone, but particularly for the undereducated. ...People **may get into trouble because they are unaware of laws** or the implications of legal agreements they have signed. If a person facing charges gets a subpoena, cannot read it and fails to show up for a court date, she or he now faces an additional charge. Many know little about the workings of the legal system." (NAPO,1992: p.52)

"Children of parents with low basic skills are less likely to finish school or to see the value of education, and are therefore also at risk of having low literacy skills as adults. The cycle of "Intergenerational illiteracy" once established can rarely be broken through schooling alone." (Baker, D., p. 2)

"Social workers are often too overworked to take the time to explain the material to people seeking assistance. As a result, many people sign forms they don't understand with consequences that may range from the loss of welfare payments to charges of fraud...

...The result of difficulties with the social assistance system is that people who lack literacy skills - those people usually most in need of assistance - often end up unable to access benefits they are entitled to." (NAPO, 1992: p.46)

## **How does low literacy feel?**

*"[Poor and poorly educated people] live with the constant pain of being treated as second-class citizens and they long to fully contribute to, and be recognized by, society." (NAPO, 1992: p.3)*

Many illiterate people often have feelings of inadequacy, hopelessness, and helplessness.

### Hopelessness

- they may not see a way out of their situation
- they may not be able to afford re-training because of family obligations, etc.

### Helplessness

- they have to depend on other people and social services, therefore, they often have little control over their lives
- this dependency becomes a way of life

### Isolation

- they have difficulty accessing information (newspapers, news about what the rest of the community is doing, educational programs, self-help opportunities)
- for many, few contacts outside of home are made, leading to isolation and loneliness.

### Low Self-Esteem

- they may feel they cannot learn ("I feel stupid.")
- they may not feel good about themselves because they cannot support their family, provide proper nutrition, help with homework, or provide adequate "housing"
- they can't obtain suitable employment
- they feel like "failures" in society

(Winnipeg Core Area Initiative, p. 8)

## **Personal Experiences of Non-Readers**

(Unless otherwise indicated the following quotes are taken from Clarke, M. 1991. Goodwill Literacy Tutor Handbook. The name of the speaker is indicated after each quote.)

*"I felt sad because I didn't know how to read. If you don't know how to read, you can't have a good job. You have to get the dirty job. That's what you have to get, cleaning floors, just being a janitor."* (Susiel Johnson)

*"You're just held back on a lot of things. You just can't do a lot of things that you'd like to. You don't want to go up to someone and say, "I can't read that," because they'll say, "You're nothing but a dummy," or you'll get teased. That is the hardest thing. There's a lot of people come up to me and say, "You look very intelligent," but deep down inside I know I'm not very intelligent. I might talk big, but I know I'm not because when it comes down to reading, I can't do it. That's the whole ball game right there."* (Tim Hicks)

*"It's most embarrassing when your daughter asks you something and you can't answer or read. That's when a person should consider trying to go get some help. Shopping - sometimes I used to try to hide it from my wife - say I couldn't find some things. Finally, I told her that I wanted to find a class where I could get some help. If I had known this class had opened in '85, I'd have been here sooner."* (Jesse Hopson)

*"The scariest thing was when you walk by a sign and the person you're with says "Read that over there, that's funny." Sometimes, you might not know the word or even know what sign they're pointing to. Then you laugh anyway because you don't want them to know that you don't know what's on that sign. Just going out...just going out is hard. It hurts when you can't read. It just hurts walking down, knowing you can't read certain things, you don't know the word for certain things."* (Shawn Bradford)

*"The scary thing is being embarrassed and thinking that people are going to laugh at you. This is crazy, but it's blinding - not being able to see anything. It was a mental block. It's like building a wall around you and boxing yourself in. For instance, when we're in a meeting at work, I have a fear that someone would ask me to read in the meeting and knowing I can do it silently, but to do it out loud is the fear. The fear of being embarrassed and maybe my co-workers won't understand if I miss a few words. Maybe they would, but I'm afraid to take a chance. Because fear can hold you back or you can use it to push you forward."* (Cleo Coleman)

*"To me it's scary reading medical forms and releases because I'm afraid that I'm signing my life away."* (Carl Furioso)

*"When I was visiting my oldest brother in Chicago several years ago, I also wanted to go see a friend of mine who was in the hospital. Since I wasn't able to write and she couldn't hear, I needed someone to go with me. The only one I knew who could read and write broke their leg. So I couldn't see my friend. This made me so unhappy, I cried for three days."* (Bertha Barnes)

*"No one knows the anger that people who can't read go through. You can't pick up a paper and learn the latest news. You can't carry on a conversation because you don't know what's going on in the world. You're left in the dark. You just try to carry on the best you can. We're living in a different world than other people who can read." (Ron, literacy learner, Ottawa, in Calamai, 1988: p.41)*

*"You want to experience what illiteracy is like? Go into a restaurant and ask a waitress to read the menu to you. Go to the supermarket and ask for a particular brand when standing right next to the display. Go to any government office and say you can't fill out the form. Ask the phone company for a waiver on directory assistance charges because you can't read the phone book. That will give you some idea. But you can never feel the frustration, the anxiety." (Rick Parsons, former "illiterate", Toronto, in Calamai, 1988: p. 25)*

*"Many people think you're stupid. If we could get rid of the prejudices, life would be a lot easier." (Pike, 1991: p.3)*

*"A woman inherited a bit of money and did not report it, which created an overpayment [in social assistance]. The social assistance office deducts a sum from her monthly cheque in compensation. She asked if her overpayment has been paid back yet, but staff tell her they're too busy to check. She's afraid that she is still paying when she shouldn't be." (NAPO, 1992: p.45)*

## **ILLITERACY**

A dark way of life  
with unbearable despair  
...total illiteracy

Shame-loneliness-frustration  
and struggles through life  
...with a masked secret

Screaming silently  
for the passion of expression  
...a sad situation

Family-employers-friends  
hiding  
...from society

A fact that's held inside  
a hard life  
outside the front door

Helplessness-confusion-embarrassment  
depending on only  
...sights and sounds

A wild and wayward problem  
flushed with pressures  
...and dread

Colleges and teachers  
hold a new lease on life  
...with vast rewards

A leading barrier  
for personal quest  
...to learn how to read and write.

By Jacki Matvichuk, June'1983,  
A new Canadian poet(As found in Baker)

## **Why learn to read and write as an adult?**

There are many practical and functional goals for learning to read and write as adults. Some common ones cited by learners themselves are: to be more independent, to cope better with everyday challenges of filling out forms, getting around town on their own, managing money, getting a driver's licence, being able to read the Bible, the newspaper, or AA materials, deaf learners wanting to use a telecommunications device for the deaf. ... Some young prostitutes and young offenders hope literacy will lead them to a different lifestyle. ... Some for general self-improvement, to overcome feelings of inferiority. ... But the most common motivation is financial: to get off welfare, get a job, have a chance at better-paying jobs, or protect existing jobs.

## **How Adult Learners *Feel Learning to Read and Write***

(Unless otherwise indicated, the following quotes are taken from Clarke, M. 1991. Goodwill Literacy Tutor Handbook. The name of the speaker is indicated after each quote.)

*"Learning to read is a wonderful thing to know. I know because it is happening to me."* (Prentis Wiley)

*"I feel a lot better talking to my grown children now. I am doing something special and they are proud of me. I have some goals and we talk about them."* (Bertha Barnes)

*"Reading made me feel better. Knowing that I can read better makes me feel good about myself. I can pick up a book and I can read it when I couldn't before. I improved my reading a lot. I began to understand the messages in Sunday school."* (Susielor Johnson)

*"No longer do I fear filling out job applications and things now. I have a better outlook on life. Now my mind has a clearer point of view."* (Lionel Hall)

*"I notice more now. Everything I see, I read. I read the sports in the paper. Most of the things I understand now. I understand my bills more. Once you start to read better, you notice things. You'd be surprised. Safety signs you notice, you didn't notice before. Like at work, like if you're on the street, they have a safety sign. If you can't read, you don't notice those signs. To me, the most important thing I've gotten from this program is a better understanding of what's going on in the world. You know, reading the paper, watching the news, listening to people talk to one another. That's another thing I've noticed, how people speak. I can understand them better. I really pay attention to how people say words. You'd be surprised at how much more I pay attention to things now."* (Shawn Bradford)

*"From time to time, I have much more confidence in my abilities to function as a literate person. That is changing my life in a positive way. To me it is very important that I function as a literate person. The reason I am doing these classes is so that I function on an even footing with everyone else in society. This is the hallmark of my program."* (Carl Furioso)

*"Thanks to Goodwill Literacy and to a teacher by the name of Joyce, I can read better. I'm not ashamed to tell people I go to the Goodwill Program. I'm proud of myself. I am now able to read with other people. I read out loud in Bible class now. If I make a mistake, I don't feel they will jump all over me or hurt my feelings. I don't feel threatened anymore or like I'm stupid. I no longer fear these things."* (Elizabeth Gross)

*"I feel a lot better about myself. I feel more confident since I started to learn to read. I went home the other day and there was a note on the door from my daughter and I read it. I felt wonderful because I could read a note from someone. I didn't think I could read."* (Lee White)

*"I read so many books, I can't remember them all. Now I can read my Bible. Anything I pick up, I can read. My wife writes a grocery list and I can read it and go to the store for her. I could never have done that before."* (Henry King)

*"Almost everyone who had taken a program said they felt better about themselves. They said they were more hopeful, understand themselves better, enjoy greater independence, enjoy life more and have healthier lifestyles. They blossomed in an environment where they were accepted and invited to participate in spite of not being able to read and write." (NAPO, 1992: p.69)*

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## **CHAPTER FOUR:**

# **BARRIERS TO LITERACY**

- **LITERACY AND POVERTY**
- **PAST EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES**
- **BARRIERS TO RETURNING TO OR STAYING IN SCHOOL AS ADULTS**
- **UNEQUAL TREATMENT OF "MINORITIES"**
- **A NOTE ON LABELLING**
- **REFERENCES**

## Literacy and Poverty

Research conducted by the National Anti-Poverty Organization (NAPO), 1992 suggests:

*"It is poverty and other forms of inequality that create the barriers to good education for many Canadians." (p.1)*

*Its study entitled Literacy and Poverty: A View from the Inside links literacy and poverty as follows:*

*"Low-income earners and the long-term unemployed, Native people, seniors, prisoners, people with disabilities, racial and cultural minorities -- all have higher than average rates of both undereducation and poverty. They speak of the difficulties of growing up in poor, disadvantaged homes, of beginning life with few opportunities. They describe how their opportunities dwindled further in schools biased against children from poor families, against people receiving social assistance, against minorities. They pinpoint their main problems today as unemployment, lack of money and inadequate housing -- the same problems their families faced." (p.2)*

"Literacy is usually only one of many problems for learners, with poverty, racism and other forms of systemic injustice being the greatest obstacles to a better life. [Literacy workers] saw literacy as a possible first step over these barriers, but added that these barriers themselves can block the way to literacy acquisition." (NAPO, 1992: p.13)

"Poor children face a high risk of growing up illiterate or of not receiving an adequate education. This is because family poverty can negatively affect every aspect of a child's physical, emotional and intellectual development. While some people manage to do quite well despite difficult circumstances, many are held back throughout their lives because of poverty experienced during formative years." (NAPO, p.21)

### Barriers Related to Poverty

(Adapted from NAPO, 1992: p. 20,31)

**Hunger:** Poverty produces hunger, which interferes with education because it affects one's ability to concentrate on learning.

**Inadequate Housing:** A stable, comfortable home, with a quiet space for homework, is crucial to one's education. But low family income often means poor housing, including overcrowding, and perhaps unhealthy and unsafe conditions.

**Disruptions in Family Life:** Poverty can cause worry, tension, stress and instability which can make it difficult or impossible either to make time for or to concentrate on studying. For example:

"I was worried about whether I was going to get hit, about my mother getting hit, and I never cared about school. Well, it's not that I didn't care, I just couldn't learn so I just got frustrated and I didn't realize that it was the problems at home that were causing the school problem." (adult learner)

"Low-income families may move frequently in search of better or cheaper housing, or because of evictions. Frequent moves disrupt both school work and social relationships, which are the foundation of a child's successful school integration. The child who is reluctant to bring friends home feels cut off from others, and self-esteem suffers."

**Systematic Inequality at School:** Children from low income families are often steered into dead-end courses:

"Poor children, and children from minority groups, are often mistakenly labelled as having limited ability, primarily because teachers do not understand and value the skills and knowledge they do have."

"Children deemed less able or less mature are very often those who, because of their less advantaged family background and early experiences, arrive at school with less prior learning, a more limited vocabulary, and less advanced intellectual development. Grouping them with other similar children and expecting less of them quickly becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. There is powerfully persuasive evidence, from a variety of research studies, that ability grouping seriously restricts the education of children in the lowest tracks..." (Radwanski, 1987: p.132)

**Parents Feel Powerless:** Poor, undereducated parents often lack the confidence to challenge the school system and schools are often unresponsive when parents do seek better treatment for their children.

"Lack of connection between schools and parents is a crucial factor in the educational disadvantage of poor children. Many...adults... feel alienated from and threatened by their children's schools."

**Lack of money for special expenses** such as eye glasses, hearing aids, the 'right' clothes, school photographs and activities, create functional disadvantages as well as visible inequality between poor children and their not- so-poor classmates.

## **Past Educational Experiences**

**Limited school opportunities** because in the past, schools, particularly high schools, were either unavailable or inaccessible in rural areas due to lack of transportation. In some cases children did not want to leave home to attend the only schools available to them, and so did not attend.

Many low-income people drop out of school before reaching high school, because:

- they have to support themselves or help support their families;
- women, because of pregnancy;
- if in special educational institutions, their program ends or they become too old, and they have nowhere else to go;
- they are failing, feeling frustrated and humiliated, and don't see any point in continuing, so they give up.

According to Jereann King et al (1993: p.I-16/17) the major causes of low literacy cited by adult learners are:

- They experienced conflict between working and going to school;
- They received little or no encouragement and support from parents or the broader community to attend;
- They didn't get all the attention and help they needed in school and/or at home;
- School was difficult for them, they didn't learn as fast as others, they were labelled "learning disabled";
- They had physiological problems such as poor eyesight or hearing, physical/mental disabilities;
- They had emotional and/or psychological problems that affected their learning.

"In the 1950's when farming and agricultural work was the primary source of income ... school operated within the framework of the existing economy; they opened after the harvest and closed before the planting season. Even when schools were open, many children's attention had to be focused on farm activities; they went to school when weather didn't allow for any farm work. In many cases, older children took care of younger siblings while parents or grandparents worked on the farm or elsewhere." (King et al, 1993: p. I-16)

Sometimes parents felt that if children became educated they would think they were too good for farming. And often, rural farming communities were simply not able to afford high quality schools.

More recent high school dropouts may be dealing with unsupportive educational environments, peer pressure, drug and substance abuse, a dysfunctional family or community situations.

Gordon Nore et al (1991: P.14) also suggest that adults may have low literacy levels because:

- They didn't like school or felt out of place;
- They were unable to finish school due to personal circumstances;
- They did not get the same chances in school as others.

# **Barriers to returning to or staying in school as adults**

The National Anti-Poverty Organization (1992: p.59-67) identifies **four major barriers** to returning to or staying in school as adults:

## **1. Financial problems and bureaucratic roadblocks**

No money means people can't afford the fees, supplies, child care, bus fare, etc.

Many people don't know there are learning opportunities available, or how to find them.

Many of the people most in need of literacy programs never find out about them, because programs don't have money for outreach, and social agencies rarely know about the range of literacy programs available for their undereducated clients.

Recipients of social assistance or other government programs often have no choice in the programs they can attend. They may receive lower benefits if they do not attend, but community based adult education programs are often not 'approved' by those programs.

Under social assistance or Unemployment Insurance programs, 'employable' persons are usually expected to be looking for and available for work, or attending 'approved' job training courses, which usually do not include literacy programs.

"...Lives filled with struggles that stemmed directly or indirectly from poverty. Poor people, whether employed or unemployed, are often stretched beyond their limits simply trying to get by, and cannot contemplate the additional challenge of upgrading their education." (NAPO, 1992: 60)

Inflexible program schedules often cause difficulties for parents or other working people; learners may need full time study to qualify for a study allowance, but only part time tutoring is available.

## **2. Lack of good, affordable child care**

Women are most often responsible for children and can only come to programs if they have child care. "Child care must be safe, easy to get to, and close to the program. The cost of child care can prevent many women from getting an education." (Atkinson, et al, 1994: p. 79)

## **3. Transportation difficulties**

Many people, particularly women, cannot afford the bus fare to get to a literacy program. Where there is no public transportation, they may have no way to get to a program.

#### **4. Inappropriate programs**

Programs often are too advanced for adults just beginning to read and write.

The duration of many programs are not realistic for adults to meet their literacy needs, but they cannot return to the program, and must leave when a certain period of time has elapsed.

"Programs for Native learners may not provide Native tutors or appropriate learning materials." (NAPO, 1992: p. 67)

Few first language literacy programs are available in other than English or French, despite the knowledge that "people have little chance of becoming literate in a second language if they do not acquire these skills in their first language." (NAPO, 1992: p. 67)

Programs are often inconvenient or inaccessible (ie. times, location, wheelchair access, childcare, etc.)

**Other barriers** which prevent people from returning to school as adults are:

##### **1. Personal Feelings**

Low self-confidence

Fear, feelings of shame, and low self-esteem

Isolation, feelings that one is alone with their limited literacy skills

Negative attitude toward school

Giving a low priority to personal goals

*"[Adult learners] may require a lot of individualized attention to restore self-confidence before attending classes." (Colvin and Root, 1987: p.5)*

##### **2. Social disapproval**

Family/peer/community pressure or lack of acceptance

" Family Dynamics. Men sometimes discourage female partners from improving their education because they perceive it as a threat to family stability or their own status in the family." (NAPO, 1992: p.65)

"It is difficult to find volunteer tutors to work in prisons or to work with mentally handicapped learners." (NAPO, 1992: p.67)

### **3. Limiting personal situations**

Cannot attend classes regularly or at all due to home/work responsibilities

### **4. Privacy**

Women who bring children with them need time on their own to learn. They must have access to private space for learning. This may mean a separate space for women to meet.

"Women who have survived abuse need to talk about their experiences before they can concentrate and learn." (Atkinson, 1994: p. 81)

The majority of sexual abuse survivors are women, and may need to meet privately with other women survivors in order to feel safe. (Atkinson, 1994)

### **5. Violence**

"Violence, and the threat of violence, keeps many women from getting an education, it affects their concentration and ability to learn, and their attendance." (Atkinson, 1994: p.79)

### **6. Isolation**

Isolation can keep people from coming to literacy programs. People need to be listened to when they say they need to talk. Women's needs can be very different than the needs of men. They may need to meet in small women-only groups to talk about their lives and the changes they are going through. (Atkinson, 1994)

### **7. Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment can happen anywhere, including literacy programs.

" When a woman is sexually harassed, she feels uncomfortable and may not know what to do. She may not feel safe in the program. This is not acceptable. Women have a right to safety at school. Women need to know that they will be taken seriously if they complain about sexual harassment. Men need to know that if they harass women they could be expelled. People will know what to expect if programs have a policy about sexual harassment. The policy should be very clear. Everybody must be told about it." (Atkinson, 1994: p. 81)

### **8. Discrimination**

"Discrimination keeps people from learning. Native [people], [people] of colour, [people] with disabilities, [gays] and lesbians live with discrimination every day. Programs must make sure that everyone is treated with respect. They must take action when discrimination happens between people in the program.

People will know that they are welcome if programs have a policy against discrimination. The policy must be written in clear language and should be posted around the program. All new students, volunteers, and staff should be told about the policy." (Atkinson, 1994: p. 81)

People will also feel welcome if they see things which tell them they are welcome, such as other people like themselves, full wheelchair accessibility, posters representing a diversity of people in learning and everyday activities, materials promoting respect and understanding of diverse peoples and cultures. (Atkinson, 1994)

## **Unequal Treatment of "Minorities":**

(NAPO, 1994: p. 20-31)

"From the 1890's to the late 1960's, **Native children** were mainly educated in a system of residential schools. They were taken from their families at an early age and placed in institutional settings where their language and culture were systematically suppressed...

...Residential schools are gone now, but the legacy lives on among many Native people in the form of self-hatred, substance abuse and child abuse. The damage cannot be overstated. People lost their pride, their hope, the chance to learn from the Elders. An entire generation of adults experienced the pain of losing their children to residential schools. Those who grew up in the schools often have frightful memories which may prevent them from getting involved today in their own children's schooling.

Native children... still do not have equal educational advantages. Those who attend public schools [today] often encounter prejudice from teachers and other children."

People of **visible ethnic minorities** or **learning English as a second language (ESL)** are often treated differently, segregated from the "regular" students, and taught down to, as if they were less intelligent, rather than simply learning from a different language base. Even second- or third-generation members of visible minorities are sometimes assumed to be less able to function in a regular classroom on the basis of their ethnicity!

"**[People] with physical disabilities** as children were placed in special schools or classes which often had lower academic standards. For instance,... graduates of Ontario provincial schools for the deaf or special high schools had received in the past an education equivalent on average to a regular Grade 5. Even people with special ability who are deaf are being held back." (NAPO, 1992: p. 30)

Likewise, children labelled as "learning disabled" may still be treated differently, and placed in separate classrooms where academic expectations are lower than in mainstream classrooms. As a result, they do not receive the encouragement required in order to learn to their full potential.

## **Note on Labelling**

"Labelling people according to their differences can create the impression that there is something 'wrong' with them. Often our intentions are good, but the results can damage the quality of learning." (Nore, et al 1991: 25) Some labels encountered in literacy might be: illiterate, learning disabled, dyslexic, slow, unmotivated, handicapped, lazy, those people, them and us, etc.

Not all of these terms are necessarily negative all the time. But there are dangers in talking about people in this way, for the person being labelled and for the person doing the labelling. **Many adults are 'functionally illiterate' as a result of being labelled in their childhood.**

To bring this closer to home, "...think of a weakness of your own - a skill you wish you had, or an area in which you feel uninformed. Imagine what your world would be like if that was the only way people saw you, if job opportunities, friendships, your status in the community were determined by this skill you lack. Imagine if no one recognized the other talents you possess. What would your world be like?" (Nore, et al, 1991: p.25).

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## **CHAPTER FIVE:**

# **WORKING WITH ADULT LEARNERS**

- **CHARACTERISTICS OF ADULT LEARNERS**
- **HOW ADULTS LEARN**
- **CONDITIONS OF ADULT EDUCATION**
- **PRINCIPLES OF ADULT EDUCATION**
- **STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS**
- **REFERENCES**

## **Characteristics of Adult Learners**

(Baker, D.; Colvin and Root, 1987; Ennis and Woodrow, 1992; Steck-Vaughn, 1989; Winnipeg Core Area Initiative.)

Confidence: Adults often come into a learning situation with fear and apprehension, following a long history of failure. It takes a great deal of courage to admit their needs and ask for assistance. Once in a program, some may exhibit negative attitudes because of their past failures.

Competence: Each adult learner has unique talents and has succeeded in some area of life: church, neighborhood, family, job, hobbies, sports, as part of a network of friends. They are mature people who deserve to be treated as such.

Energy: Adults are sometimes tired when they attend classes as a result of their other responsibilities. They may be working full-time, looking after a family and attending classes.

Goal-Oriented: Adult learners usually have definite goals when starting an educational program. These goals may include self-improvement, getting a driver's licence, reading to their children, improving job skills, getting a job or a promotion, getting a high school diploma or equivalent.

Learning Styles: Different people have different preferred styles of learning. Some will learn more easily if they can *see* or *feel* what is to be learned, while others may have to *hear* it to know it. Most adult learners know how they prefer to learn if the right questions are asked.

Life experience: Adults have a wealth of personal, family, work and life experiences which provide unlimited possibilities for the creation and understanding of lessons.

Motivation: Adult students are usually highly motivated when they begin. The motivation can quickly lessen if they become discouraged, if progress is slow, or as time passes and other responsibilities affect the amount of time and energy they can give to their learning.

Motives: Adults often attend classes with a mixed set of motives: education, social, recreational, and sometimes out of a sense of duty or because they are required to (ie. by their employer, to receive certain benefits, or by law).

Needs Change: Needs of the adult learner will change over time. The goals identified by the learner at the beginning may become more realistic, evolve as learning takes place, or change with one's life circumstances. For example, wanting to read with one's children may become secondary to learning to read messages from the school and write messages to the teacher if a child is sick or having problems at school.

Reaction time: Increased age or poor health can affect the reaction time, vision and hearing of adult learners. However, they do not lose their capacity to learn.

Responsible: Adult learners, like all adults, have many responsibilities. They are busy earning a living, taking care of a home and family, often just trying to survive. As a result, many students

have little time to review and absorb large amounts of material at one time, or to waste on things which they don't perceive to contribute directly to their learning.

Results: Adult students need to see immediate change and growth. They may be intolerant of anything that does not help them achieve their goal. Often, as adults, student's goals are overly ambitious.

Self-conscious: Many adults develop strategies to conceal their lack of education. These strategies may show up as excuses for non-performance.

Self-Motivated: Many adult learners are strongly motivated towards studying as they see education as a way to improve their self-image, and reach other personal goals.

Uneven Learner: Adult learners will not necessarily learn at an even pace. It may simply be because some things are more challenging for the learner than others. Or there may be external factors affecting their ability to concentrate.

## How Adults Learn

*"When psychologist David Kolb studied how adults learn he found that when they undertook to learn something through their own initiative, they started with a concrete experience. Then they made observations about the experience, reflected on it and diagnosed what new knowledge or skill they needed to acquire in order to perform more effectively. Then, with the help of material and human resources, they formulated abstract concepts and generalizations from which they could deduce what to do next. Finally, they tested their concepts and generalizations in new situations. The experiential learning theory which Kolb developed from this research sees learning as a cyclical and lifelong process." (From M. Gillespie, Many Literacies, p.37.)*

(The following quotes are taken from Ennis and Woodrow 1992: p.12)

"Effective [adult] learning requires the provision of opportunities for taking risks and making mistakes."

"[Adult] learning is fostered by moving from the known to the unknown; from the concrete to the abstract."

"Adult learners have many different ways of learning. It is important to stimulate as many senses as you can whenever possible."

"Adult learning is enhanced when educators demonstrate the strategies they use in approaching the unknown."

"[Adult] learners attach great importance to the ability of their tutors to communicate well."

Adult learners need "appropriate opportunities for independent work to decrease the sense of dependency that some learners may feel."

Adults learn by being with people who are enthusiastic about learning. "Enthusiasm about learning can be contagious."

"A critical factor influencing successful learning is the relationship between learners and tutors."

(The following quotes are taken from Cypress Hills Regional College, 1994: p. 2-3)

**"Adults quickly learn things that are meaningful and that they can immediately use.** The use of learner-centred materials will ensure that the information is meaningful to the learner and that he will use it."

**"Adults must be able to relate the new information to what they already know.** Adults have a lot of knowledge and life experience. They just have to learn the printed symbols for the words and concepts they already know."

**Adults learn best if they are actively involved** in making decisions about their learning.

**"Adults do not want to spend time going over what they already know.** Find out what they do not know and fill in those gaps."

**"Adults must be motivated to learn the material.** They must have a need to learn something before they will bother to learn and remember it. Find out what they need to learn and make it a goal to reach."

**"Adults will remember something if it is important to them, if it is presented in a memorable way and if it is repeated.** We must teach information that will help a learners reach his goals. It must be taught in a way that suits him. Enough practice must be given to ensure the new knowledge is over-learned and therefore, remembered. This practice will be supplied naturally if he is learning things he will use in his daily life."

**"Adults will maintain interest if tasks are challenging but not overwhelming.** We must divide the new learning into chunks that are the right size and at the right level. We will know the dimensions of these chunks if the learner tells us what he needs to learn. We can take his goals (what he needs to learn) and do a task analysis on it. This will give us the exact chunks he has to learn so the new learning will be challenging but not overwhelming."

**"Adults learn best when they have immediate feedback on the task."**

**Adult learning may be influenced by the social networks of the learner.** These networks may change over time, becoming more or less supportive of the adult's efforts to learn. (Gillespie, 1990)

# **Conditions of Adult Education**

(Knowles, M. 1980: p.57-58)

Malcolm Knowles, a leader in the field of adult education, developed this framework describing how adults learn differently than children. The Conditions of Adult Education (in **bold print**) are followed by corresponding Principles of Teaching.

## **The learners feel the need to learn.**

- The facilitators expose the learners to new possibilities for self-fulfillment.
- The facilitators help the learners clarify their own aspirations for improved performance.
- The facilitators help the learners diagnose the gaps between their present level of performance and their desired level.

## **The learning environment is characterized by physical comfort, mutual respect and trust, mutual helpfulness, freedom of expression, and acceptance of differences.**

- The facilitators provide physical conditions that are comfortable (as to seating, temperature, ventilation, lighting, decoration) and conducive to interaction (circle or small groups at tables).
- The facilitators accept the learners as persons of worth and respect their feelings and ideas.
- The facilitators build relationships of mutual trust and helpfulness with and among the learners by encouraging cooperative activities and refraining from inducing competitiveness and judgmentalness.

## **The learners perceive the goals of the learning experience to be their goals.**

- The facilitators expose their own feelings and contribute their resources in the spirit of mutual inquiry.

## **The learners accept a share of the responsibility for planning and operating the learning experience.**

- The facilitators involve the students in a mutual process of formulating learning objectives in which the needs of the learners, of the facilitators, of the institution, of the subject matter, and of society are taken into account.
- The facilitators shape their thinking about the options available in designing learning experiences and the selection of methods and materials and involve the learners in deciding among these options jointly.

## **The learners participate actively in the learning process.**

- The facilitators help the students organize themselves (project, teams, field projects, and so on) to share responsibility in the process of mutual inquiry.

- The facilitators help the learners exploit their own experiences as resources for learning through such techniques as group discussion, case method, and projects.

**The learning process is related to and makes use of the experience of the learners.**

- The facilitators gear the presentation of their own resources to the levels of experience of the learners.
- The facilitators help the learners to apply new learnings to their personal experiences and thus to make the learnings more relevant and integrated.

**The learners have a sense of progress toward their goals.**

- The facilitators involve the learners in developing mutually acceptable progress toward the learning objectives.
- The facilitators help the learners develop and apply procedures for self- evaluation according to these criteria.

# **Principles of Adult Education**

(Steck-Vaughn Tutor Training Manual, 1989: p. 13.)

**Achievement:** Realistic standards of student achievement should be jointly developed by teacher and student.

**Adult:** The vocabulary, themes, and language of all adult learner materials must be clearly written for this audience.

**Apply:** Give your students opportunities to apply newly-acquired skills as quickly as possible in real-life situations.

**Experience:** Capitalize on the adult's past experiences wherever possible in the learning situation.

**Goals:** Organize each lesson around specific learning goals. Tell students what objective they will achieve with each lesson.

**Independence:** Materials should allow adults to make discoveries on their own with limited teacher supervision. Adults need independence and are capable of assuming responsibility for their own learning.

**Integrate:** Combine several skills and teach them concurrently. Reading materials should supply information and develop ideas while developing new reading skills.

**Meaningful:** All learning materials should be vital and meaningful to an adult learner. The vocabulary must be adult-oriented.

**Progress:** Provide adult learners with progress reports at frequent intervals. These can serve as an important stimulant to adult learning.

**Steps:** Develop skills for the adult learner in small, sequential steps so that students are not overwhelmed with too much information at one time.

**Stimulate:** Make learning stimulating but not too demanding. These adults are already threatened by school, so don't give them materials beyond their ability.

**Success:** Make sure adult students consistently experience success in learning. Don't allow them to fail.

**Time:** Because students and teachers feel the pressure of limited learning time, make the most efficient use of each lesson.

## **STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS**

- \* I have the right to learn at my own pace and not feel stupid.**
- \* I have the right to ask whatever questions I have.**
- \* I have the right to need extra help.**
- \* I have the right to ask a teacher for help.**
- \* I have the right not to understand.**
- \* I have the right to say "I don't understand".**
- \* I have the right to feel good about myself.**
- \* I have the right to be treated as a competent adult.**

(From The Manitoba Literacy Star 1994, Fall, Vol. 4, No. 4: p. 1.)

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## **CHAPTER SIX:**

# **DEVELOPING THE TUTOR/LEARNER**

# **RELATIONSHIP**

- **FACILITATOR VS. TEACHER**
- **HOW TO START?**
- **INITIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**
- **METHODS OF MOTIVATION AND REINFORCEMENT**
- **INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS**
- **SOME ADVICE TO TUTORS FROM ADULT LEARNERS**
- **MAINTAINING BOUNDARIES**
- **APPRECIATING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES**
- **A QUICK CULTURAL QUIZ**
- **EXPLORING CULTURAL TRADITIONS - AN EXERCISE**
- **REFERENCES**

## **Facilitator vs. Teacher**

Traditionally, the educational process has placed learners in a passive position. They were seen as "empty vessels" to be filled with knowledge held by the teacher. **Adults, however, are people from whom we can also learn a great deal.** Seeing adult learners in this way will help you to overcome differences in background and life experiences between yourself and the learner.

Rather than a traditional teacher, the tutor is a facilitator and a resource person, someone who engages the learner in dialogue, or two-way conversation. Learners must feel free to express their ideas and opinions, and to make mistakes. They should be challenged to actively participate in shaping their own learning, which requires developing a critical awareness of themselves as learners. Likewise, tutors must be open to challenges from the learners. (Arnold, et al., 1991)

## How to start?

*"Begin by finding some common ground as a meaningful relationship with the tutor is often cited by learners as the reason they remain in literacy programs." (Ennis and Woodrow, 1992: p.130)*

Both you and your learner(s) are likely to feel a bit (or a lot!) nervous at the first meeting. The learners may have anxieties about their ability to learn, be ashamed of their level of literacy, and have a history of negative learning experiences. They will likely lack self-esteem, and be fragile placing themselves in this vulnerable position. You may be questioning your own ability to tutor, and wondering what exactly you're supposed to do now! And you're both wondering what you'll think of each other.

Let the learner know that the purpose of the first meeting is to relax and get to know each other, to find out where the learner is at with literacy and set some goals (ie. to conduct an initial interview), and to establish a time for your work together. Make the session relaxed, comfortable, informal. Have a coffee or tea. Talk about how you feel. If you admit being nervous, the learner will begin to see you as "human", and may feel more comfortable to talk about their feelings with you.

Show genuine interest in the learner. Exchange information about your background, work, families, interests, hobbies, etc. Over time, find out everything you can about the learner. Be prepared to share information about yourself, and not to expect the learner to do all the work. It's important to show learners right from the beginning that you are willing to take the same risks you ask them to take. This will set the tone for developing a **mutual** relationship of sharing, trust and respect.

Ask about what they like to do, and what they feels they're good at. You can later go back to some of the things they mention, ask how they learned it, from who, why they think they were able to learn it, etc. This will give you an immediate opportunity to praise them for their accomplishments, and begin to build up their confidence right from the beginning by showing that they do have the ability to learn. It will also give you and the learner some insight into their preferred learning style, and the conditions under which she learns best.

"Explain that learners' experiences with education and their attitudes and ideas about reading and writing will affect the way you work together. Their perception of the problem, its origins, and any insights they have on the ways they learn best are some of the important contributions they bring to the program. This interview should assist you in selecting appropriate materials and activities, and provide learners with an opportunity to raise questions or to state their concerns about the program." (Ennis and Woodrow, 1992: p.130)

Ask learners about their past schooling experiences and why they think they didn't learn. This is a good way to gain some insight into the learners' background, to acknowledge that it is not their "fault" that they didn't learn, to empathize with them and show your understanding that there are

many reasons why one may not have become literate as a child, and that you don't think it's because they are stupid.

You will also need to have the learners identify their goals, so you can begin lesson planning. Some learners may already be very clear about their goals, while others will need some help figuring out what the options are, and what their goals will be. You may want to just ask the learners what kind of things they are comfortable reading and writing, and what kind of things they would like to be able to read and write. Or you may want to have a variety of materials available and ask them to select some which they are comfortable reading, that they would like to be able to read, etc.

They will likely have both long-term and short-term goals. Encourage them to be specific about her needs. The long-term goals may be very broad (ie. to learn to read and write) and will need to be broken into manageable pieces. This will help prevent both of you from becoming too discouraged. In identifying short-term goals, focus on immediate day-to-day interests or needs, such as grocery shopping, filling out job applications, reading to the children, writing letters, reading and writing for work.

You may feel comfortable conducting the interview very informally, or you may wish to choose a set of questions from the list on the next page. If you use written questions, allow the learner to sit with you, and point to the words as you read the questions. This will help learners to practice identifying the words they already know, and make them feel more in control of the process.

Do some reading and writing in the very first meeting in order to give the learner an immediate sense of accomplishment. You could have learners write or dictate a few lines about themselves - using the language experience approach of writing it down for them, if necessary - and read it back with them. This can be an excellent tool to refer back to, to expand upon, delving deeper into the learner's background, further developing your relationship with them, and providing an endless variety of material for future lessons. It will also be the first item in the learner's work file, for comparison later on.

#### *SAMPLE OBJECTIVES OF A FIRST MEETING*

- 1. Spend some time getting acquainted**
- 2. Talk about learning goals**
- 3. Set tone of sessions**
- 4. Establish commitment**
- 5. Complete and sign tutor/student agreement (if applicable)**
- 6. Review student handbook (if applicable).  
Read together.**
- 7. Have some possible plans for activities**

**(Clarke, Mallory. 1991: p. 71)**

# **Initial Interview Questions**

(Ennis and Woodrow, 1992: p. 132-3)

## **Ideas About Reading**

- What do you like to read? (Possible answers: comics, TV guide, information pamphlets, obituaries)
- What kinds of reading do you not like?
- What kinds of material would you like to read that you are not reading now?
- How were you taught to read?
- When you are reading and come to something you don't know, what do you do? (possible answers: skip the hard parts, sound it out, give up)
- Who do you know that is a good reader? What makes them good?

## **Ideas About Writing**

- What kinds of writing do you do? (Possible answers: letters to family, grocery lists, notes to school teacher)
- What would you like to be able to write?
- Do you ever run into problems writing things down? What kind of problems?
- Who is a good writer than you know? What makes them good at writing?

## **Past Learning Experiences**

- What kind of memories do you have of school?
- When you were in school, did you ever receive any extra help in reading? What did the teacher do?
- When did you leave school?
- How do you think you learn best? (Possible answers: experience, demonstration, trial and error)
- Have you attended any other adult upgrading or literacy programs? How were they?

## **Concerns About This Program**

- Do you have any questions about this program?
- Do you have any medical problems that might affect your work in the program? (This would be the time to find out about problems with vision and hearing.)
- What do you hope to get out of this program?
- Do you have any special interests that we could explore in our sessions?
- Do you have any other concerns?

**"Have fun and Encourage Learning. Enthusiasm is contagious. Be enthusiastic, demonstrate your sense of humour and be an interested audience."** (Ennis and Woodrow, 1992: p. 48)

## **Methods of Motivation and Reinforcement**

Set realistic short-term goals to provide for immediate successes.

Accept learners' ideas and answers. (Butler, 1990: p.31)

Plan for *success*. Use materials that the learner is interested in and plan for activities that build on what they already know. (Ennis and Woodrow, 1992: p.47)

Be positive about the learner's ability to learn. Try to build confidence in the learner. Providing enough information so the learner can make the correct response. (Colvin and Root, 1986: p.63)

Make sure the learner knows the meaning of new words she learns. Unless she understands the words, and the meaning of text, she is not reading. (Colvin and Root, 1986: p.63)

Ask **who, what, when, where, why** and **how** questions as appropriate to the topic. The purpose is to learn, and to see how well the learner understands what she is reading, not to see how well she can guess the intent of "trick" questions. (Colvin and Root, 1986: p.63)

Read for enjoyment **each session**. Find something the learner is interested in and, if they are unable to read it easily, and therefore for enjoyment, you read it to her. If the learner has the skill, but does not read for enjoyment, read some of the material to her. Stop at an exciting part so that the learner will be interested in reading the rest to find out what happens.

Encourage risk taking. Assure the learner that it is acceptable to make mistakes and encourage them to take chances, explaining that is how we learn. (Ennis and Woodrow, 1992: p.47)

Get the learner reading independently as soon as possible, so they know they can. Have them read with book/tape sets, encouraging independent reading at a higher level and increasing vocabulary.

Praise and encourage the learner each time you have a class tutoring session. Saying 'That's great! You know a few new sight words!' rather than 'You *only* know a few sight words,' is like the difference between seeing a glass as half empty or half full!

Be a resource person. Your own ability as a learner can be utilized to check out something, when you are not sure of it. (Ennis and Woodrow, 1992: p.47)

Vary tutoring techniques to keep the learner engaged, to make learning fun, and to help the learner understand there are many ways of learning which don't have to be boring or painful.

Help the learner recognize how much they are learning and how much progress they have made by :

- Keeping a progress chart of new words learned;
- Creating a portfolio of their work, dating each piece to show progress over time;
- Reminding them of the gains they have made;
- Giving them an opportunity to practice their new skills in meaningful situations (ie. practicing alphabetizing by looking things up in a phone book, index, dictionary, encyclopedia, etc.);
- Having them read to children, elders or others as they are able to;
- Rewarding them with a certificate of achievement at certain times in the program, especially when specific goals have been achieved;
- Keeping a dialogue journal in which they reflect upon their learning experiences. You respond by affirming their feelings, praising their progress, and encouraging them. The fact that you can dialogue with each other in writing will be rewarding in itself.

Model how you learn and help the learner become aware of how they learn. Developing an awareness of how one learns allows one to have greater control over the learning process and develop greater independence. (Ennis and Woodrow, 1992: p.47)

***"The process of the learner's discovery of their voices as writers is the most dramatic step toward becoming literate."*** (Weinstein as quoted in Thomas, 1990: p. 21)

You can help the learner discover their voice by:

- Being an interested audience for their writings;
- Having them participate in authors' circles, where they share their work with each other;
- Creating a newsletter where they can have their materials published for others to read;
- Publishing a collection of learners writings in a professional looking newspaper, magazine or book.

(Butler, 1990; Colvin and Root, 1986; Ennis and Woodrow, 1992; Fry, 1992; GNWT Literacy Office.)

## **Interpersonal Communication Skills**

(Fretz and Paul, 1994: p. 315)

Interpersonal communication is a skill which requires conscious practice. It includes both speaking and listening, as well as sending and receiving non-verbal messages such as gestures, facial expressions, and distance put between ourselves and others.

Communicating effectively through **speaking** requires making sure that the message is clear, specific and complete. A tutor providing information or instructions to a learner should speak in short sentences using simple vocabulary. Speak slowly enough, pausing between sentences, for the information to be absorbed before moving on. And ask for feedback to see if the listener interpreted the message the way it was intended.

Since the large majority of all interpersonal communication is **non-verbal**, it is important to be aware of how you communicate non-verbally. This includes gestures, facial expressions, body language, and the amount of space we put between ourselves and others. It is important for effective communication that our words and our non-verbal communication match, otherwise we may be sending very mixed messages.

It is also important to be aware that different forms of body language and non-verbal communication can mean different things in different cultures. Be aware that differences may exist, and observe the learners non-verbal communication

to see if you can familiarize yourself with some of the differences, and avoid sending unintended negative messages.

*"The ability to listen and learn from [learners] builds mutual respect. It affirms the dignity of all; it is the basis of empowerment. To listen is to be on an equal footing; listening means putting yourself in the place of the other... The art of listening is an important pillar in building structures that counter-act some deeply ingrained, top-down teaching habits.*

*At the base of all this is the educator's genuine belief in people's potential and willingness to let go of some power and control. An authentic relationship of dialogue [will develop as learners] feel the underlying belief and trust of the [tutor]. Becoming honest, open, and vulnerable is not easy; it is a struggle."*

(Source: Arnold, et al., 1991: p. 162 )

Another key to effective communication is **active listening**, which helps to ensure that a message is received correctly. According to Fretz and Paul (1994), active listening involves several components:

- **Listen attentively.** Don't interrupt or judge what is being said. Concentrate solely on getting the message straight.
- **Check understanding.** When the speaker is finished, rephrase or paraphrase the message (put it in your own words) and ask if you have it right.
- **Clarify.** If you don't quite understand, ask questions *to clarify the meaning only*, not to question the sentiments expressed.
- **Summarize the message.** Reflect back the main points of the message.
- **Reflect upon the message.** Think about what has been said.

To listen effectively:

- **show interest** through encouragement (make eye contact, nod your head, lean forward) or interested silence, allowing the learner time to think about what she's saying;
- **try to understand** the other person's point of view;
- **express support** or empathy;
- **provide door-openers**, cues which invite the learner to speak (You seem quiet today. You look excited! How did it go?)
- **ask open-ended questions** to encourage the learner to elaborate (Can you tell me a little more about that? How did that make you feel? What is it that you don't understand?)
- **help the speaker understand** her own problem by restating it;
- **encourage the speaker to solve** her problem.
- **ask follow-up questions** for clarification
- **be non-judgemental**

To listen effectively, avoid:

- **interrupting;**
- **arguing**, or reacting aggressively;
- **closing your mind** to points of view different from your own;
- **jumping to conclusions;**
- **giving too much advice;**
- **making assumptions;**
- letting your **own thoughts interfere.**

## **Some advice to tutors from adult learners**

(The following quotes are from Clarke, Mallory, 1991. Goodwill Literacy Tutor Handbook, with the names of the speakers indicated.)

"Kindness covers a whole lot of territory and talking, like getting used to each other. I was a little shy. Try to be wide open. We sit up and talk, and it stretches your mind. Good tutors give a person a chance to ask questions about different things. Then you get the answer, and it sticks there. It is not helpful when a tutor has something on the blackboard and erases it off before you write it down. I like to be able to go over things at least twice." (Robert Easterling)

"My advice to tutors is to be very patient with their students. To help the students turn their failures into victories." (Carl Furioso)

"Someone at my job told me about this project at the Goodwill Center a while ago. When I called I didn't know what they were going to do. First thing I said was "I know I'm too old. I'm kind of ashamed." She said, "You're never too old." " (Prentis H. Wiley)

"Be prepared; have a lesson plan in mind each session. Let students make suggestions, then try to incorporate them into your lesson." (Kimberly Stern)

"The main thing is to go back over what you learn with your student; otherwise they'll probably get lost, because I'm getting lost myself. There are so many words, so it's best to go back and review all the things we worked on." (Tim Hicks)

"A really good tutor is very sincere in what they are doing or they would not be here." (Berwick Jones)

"A tutor should just work on what a person needs. A tutor shouldn't teach grown-ups like kids. Just because a grown-up don't know how to read that well doesn't mean that they're a child, like they was coming in and it was their first time learning, like little kids. You don't have to do that. You treat them like a grown-up, they learn more. You treat them like an adult, they talk to you. You treat them like a kid... hmph... they're not going to want to talk to you." (Shawn Bradford)

***"It can take years of nurturing to restore someone's confidence and motivation to risk new learning. "***

*(...literacy worker, NAPO, 1992: p.57)*

"Don't yell - tell in a kind way. Sometimes they might say something to make the person lose interest in learning. It's a funny feeling when you first start. It's strange to even get used to your tutor. First I kept choking up on words. When I started here, Karen asked what I wanted. I couldn't tell her. It may only have been me, but I couldn't make those decisions." (Jesse Hopson)

"A tutor should teach with kindness and consideration. Don't scold. Respect your student and encourage her." (Bertha Bames)

"I want a tutor to be patient with me when he finds out how low my reading level is. I want my tutor to be committed and show up on time or at least let me know ahead of time that he isn't going to show up. It doesn't make any difference to me who teaches me, for example, what race or sex they are, but I don't want someone who has a race problem because I won't learn anything that will help me." (Lee White)

"The tutor should know themselves. They also should know a little about the person they'll be tutoring. They should be patient and understanding and should listen. (These aren't the same.) They should also be assertive. Also, don't be phony - don't put on airs; like you care when you don't care. It's too important to the student. Don't make light of it. Another thing to remember: be honest with yourself and the student. If you don't agree, let them know because you're here to help them and they are here to help themselves. The student will respect you and you'll respect yourself. We don't want it to be the way it was in school because in school some teachers were phonies and that's why we were allowed to jump from grade to grade." (Cleo Coleman)

"If the tutor has patience with their student, the student will feel more comfortable with you and both will be able to go further in their studies. I also suggest that learning should not be all work and no play. There should be some learning games so that the student doesn't get too stressed out. You need these games so that they know learning can be fun. I think you should let the student suggest ideas for work so they feel good about themselves and you can get to know them better and you can see where their leaning ability is." (JoeAnn Knowlton)

## **Maintaining Boundaries**

Developing a positive and supportive relationship between the tutor and learner is critical to the learner's success. However, learners sometimes want or need support beyond what can be reasonably expected of a volunteer tutor. They may: want help with social services, or dealing with family, personal, or legal problems; ask to borrow money, bus tickets, personal belongings; expect favours, such as giving them rides or helping them get a job; or they may want to start socializing as friends or even be interested in a romantic or sexual relationship.

As you can imagine, there can be a fine line between your role as a supportive and trusted tutor, and being a counsellor, social worker or friend to the learner. But as long as the tutor continues to provide support beyond the tutoring role, they are giving the learner the message that these expectations are acceptable. The learner may continue pushing, until the relationship has gone much beyond appropriate limits.

Remember that in your role as volunteer tutor you are not a psychologist, social worker, counsellor, etc. and cannot take the risk of taking on these roles and giving advice or support that you are not qualified nor authorized to be giving. Rather than providing counselling or finding additional services and support learner the learner, it is usually more appropriate to help the learner find out how to access the services or information for themselves.

It is important to clarify with your program coordinator the role, responsibilities and boundaries of volunteer tutors. If this is not discussed in your program's orientation or training, ask the program coordinator about it. Find out, what you're supposed to do if the learner makes requests of you which are inappropriate, or simply beyond your role and/or expertise as a volunteer tutor. It may be, to some degree, a matter of comfort level on the part of the volunteer tutor to decide when to help and when to refer the learner to someone else. Ideally, the program coordinator will **clarify the role of the volunteer tutor with the learner** from the beginning.

## **Appreciating Cultural Differences**

*"..just in showing that we have taken the time to learn about and relate to the symbols and images of various cultural and class groupings we have the potential of lessening social distance. We can establish that these are things we share; these are things that define group membership and identity.*

*When we try to speak in the other's language, however imperfectly, we communicate powerfully that we accept the other. Symbols and images are more complex, but equally powerful. Everyday behavior, ordinary forms of interchange, ways of acknowledging ourselves and others; these are all symbols. Our willingness to recognize these symbols and accept what is intended by them is a way of lessening social distance. " (Arnold, Rick et al., 1991: p. 156)*

Culture is a complex system of beliefs, values, languages, life experiences ways of behaving and world view shared by a particular group of people at any given time. Culture includes the political, economic, social, and religious systems of a group of people. It also includes material aspects of life, such as songs, dances, food, dress, jewellery, types of transportation, styles of housing, decoration, architecture, and art forms.

Seen in this way, culture is something which may define distinct racial or ethnic groups, but may also define sub-cultures, such as "street" culture, "youth" culture, "prison" culture, "yuppie" culture, "arts" culture, "gay/lesbian" culture, "urban" and "rural" culture, or the sub-cultures found within specific clubs, organizations or institutions.

There are often obvious cultural differences between learners and tutors: such as education, race, socio-economic class, and place of residence (ie. inner city vs. suburbs). These differences create an immediate power imbalance between the tutor and learner. It is important to recognize these differences, and to be aware that learners "are sensitive to how [tutors] display a knowledge and appreciation of their values, life experiences, issues and concerns." (Arnold, et al., 1991: p. 156.)

It can be very helpful for a tutor to develop an awareness of the culture and background of the learner, in order to reduce tensions, and bring a greater degree of trust and understanding to their relationship. You may want to read books and articles about the learner's country, culture and language, and learn their greetings and farewells. Become familiar with a current map of their country, the religions, major holidays and some current events. You may want to read a novel, view movies or documentary films by and about people from that country or culture (ie. about immigrating to Canada, a refugee experience, attending residential school, traditional Aboriginal teachings, growing up on a First Nations reserve, a farm, prison life, street culture, single-parenthood, poverty or addictions).

Exploring both the similarities and the differences between yourself and your learner(s) can be very exciting and rewarding. The trick is in drawing out and celebrating the diversity of knowledge and experiences shared between you, which make the world a much more interesting place, and which mean you can learn from one another. It shows that you have a genuine interest in your student and an openness to share information about yourself, which contributes a great deal to creating a relationship of mutual respect. This sharing and respect will strengthen the relationship as you come to know, trust and understand each other better.

Focussing only on cultural *differences* between yourself and the learner(s), or between learners, carries with it the danger of stereotyping, and can give the message that one's differences make one less worthy. Despite one's membership in a particular culture or group, each person also has their own personal history, background, knowledge and life experiences. Coming from very different cultural or class backgrounds, you may think that you couldn't possibly have anything in common. However, is it possible that you both: are about the same age? have the same religion? grew up on farms? are the same gender? were an only child? love sports? movies? dancing? grew up with only one parent? travelled? have children?

If you have any of a myriad of life experiences in common, then you have some common ground from which to begin exploring both the similarities *and* the differences in those shared experiences. Other aspects of one's life experiences which contribute to individual culture or identity may include: race, ethnicity, language, education, social class, family size and structure (single-parent, same-sex parents, nuclear or extended family); ability/disability; geographic location; place of origin; hobbies or interests, etc.

To give an example, you may think that a woman from Manitoba (whether Christian, Jewish, Aboriginal, Goddess-inspired, or atheist) would have little common ground for discussion with a Muslim man from Turkey. However, both of these people come from cultures or religions which have ways of marking major life events such as a birth, marriage or death. What are the differences and similarities in how these events are honoured? What are the roles of men, women, children, elders in these activities? What kinds of things are used in the ceremonies or celebrations and what is the significance? How long do such occasions last? What is the significance of who attends? When, where, what, why and how do things take place? Do they take place on a certain day of the week? Why? What kind of food is eaten and why? Do different people eat different things, or at different times? What kinds of gifts are given, to whom, and why? Do people cry? Who? Why?

This type of exploration can be applied to an endless array of real-life situations, can continuously strengthen the tutor/learner relationship through mutual sharing of meaningful information can reinforce for the learner that their life experiences and knowledge are interesting and valuable, and can provide a wide diversity of material for lesson planning. Caution: Be sensitive to the learner's willingness to talk about certain things. Some things which you speak openly about in your culture may be uncomfortable or even taboo subjects for the learner.

# **A Quick Cultural Quiz**

(Adapted from Regina Public Library, ESL Tutor Training Workshop (draft).)

How many of these questions can you answer about your learner's language and culture?

## Meals

How many meals are usually eaten in a day?

At what times?

What is the main meal?

What foods are usually served at the main meals?

Who prepares and serves the meals?

Who eats first, second, third? Or does the whole family eat together?

Are any foods considered sacred or used in religious rituals? which ones?

What is their significance?

## Gestures

What gestures are commonly used for greetings? Formal? Informal?

What gesture is used when asking for silence? for getting someone's attention? for calling someone over?

How is approval shown at concerts or public performances? At meals?

## Names

What is a typical full name?

When and how does a person receive their name?

In what order are family names written? (family name first, etc.?)

How much significance is given to the meaning of a name?

How do names and titles change when a person is married? Widowed? Divorced?

Are there any rules about using names? Any special forms of address depending on relationships between people (ie. husband/wife; children/parents/elders, etc.)?

## Human/Animal Relations

Is it common to have pets? What kind of pets?

Where are pets kept?

What happens to pets if they get sick?

## Numbers

What numbers are regarded as lucky? Unlucky? Why?

## Colours

What colours mean happiness? Mourning?

Which colours carry special symbolism? (purity, love, death, femininity, masculinity)

Which colours have special ceremonial significance? (marriage, birth, death, fertility)

### Holiday

What are the three most important holidays?

What is their significance? Are they religious?

When are they? How are they celebrated?

### Time

How is the date written in full form? Abbreviated form?

If you are invited to dinner at 6:00 pm, when is the polite time to arrive? What should you bring for the host?

### Addresses and Telephone Numbers

How are addresses written on envelopes?

What are some common abbreviations used in addresses and what do they mean?

How are telephone numbers written and said?

### Taboos

What are three subjects or actions which are generally considered to be taboo?

## **Exploring Cultural Traditions - An Exercise**

(Adapted from King, et al., 1993: p. I- 14.)

This exercise could be used with a group or individual, to learn more about each others customs, cultures and traditions. You could begin by handing out a short description of a cultural tradition, such as a special holiday, wedding, funeral, coming-of-age ceremony, etc. Or you could begin by discussing a timely event or celebration, such as Christmas, New Year, Halloween, etc. If it is a specific holiday or type of event known to everyone in the group (ie. weddings), the purpose will be to compare the differences and similarities.

For example, in all cultures, people get married. How the marriage is decided upon, the form of the actual ceremony and celebration, who attends and what they do, what people wear, gift-giving, and living arrangements following the marriage all vary depending upon the religious and cultural traditions, the community and family expectations, and the individuals who get married.

If working with a group, you could compare a number of different types of events, having each person choose a significant event from their culture, religion, community, or family. Or you could have them compare the traditions associated with a common event or holiday (birth, birthday, graduation, reaching adulthood, marriage, death, Christmas, Hanukkah, etc.). In fact, even the *kinds* of events which are marked with a celebration or ceremony may vary widely from one culture to another.

If working with one learner, you can explore the similarities and differences between events of your own and the learner's culture. The purpose is to identify and list some of our traditions, think of their significance, and predict what might happen if suddenly these traditions were to change.

Guide learners through thinking about the event. Think of some events, special occasions or traditions which are important to your family, community or culture. Ask learners to share their traditions with each other. As they talk, ask the group to think about how their traditions are similar and different from one another's.

You may wish to ask some of these questions:

How do they explain the differences and similarities?

What are the values underlying the tradition? Why do we value tradition?

What types of symbolism are associated with the tradition?

What role do traditions play in the culture?

How have their traditions change over time? How do they feel about these changes?

Why do traditions change?

How do children learn their cultural traditions?

What happens when people with different traditions come together?

How do you react to traditions which are very different from your own?

Are there different traditions related to gender? (ie. for men/women, boys/girls?)

How do traditions relate to how you learn?

What do your traditions tell you about learning and about your abilities as a learner? About your goals?

You may wish to explore some more controversial questions. Should traditions be valued and upheld simply because they are tradition? Should they be questioned and re-evaluated to determine what purpose they serve? Can some traditions actually be harmful? How do we resolve conflicts resulting from a clash of cultural values and traditions? In such cases, who's traditions are more highly valued and why? (ie.. the turban issue in the Legions)

Be aware that even if a group of people "appear" to be of the same culture or race, you will find that there will always be diversity in their values, life experiences, family histories, etc. Do not assume that because a group of people appear to share the same race or cultural background that they will all be the same! This exercise will provide an opportunity for some sharing of individual backgrounds, and can provide the basis for further exploration and sharing of cultural traditions and values.

## **Chapter Six References**

\*\* Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit formerly Literacy and Continuing Education Branch

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## **CHAPTER SEVEN:**

# **DEVELOPING THE LEARNING PROGRAM**

- **CERTIFICATE IN LITERACY AND LEARNING**
- **STAGES OF LEARNING**
- **LEARNING STYLES AND PREFERENCES**
- **ASSESSING READING/INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**
- **READABILITY INDEXES**
- **EVERYDAY READING MATERIALS**
- **LESSON PLANS**
- **REFERENCES**

## **Certificate in Literacy and Learning**

Certificates in Literacy and Learning developed by the Literacy and Continuing Education Branch are available at three different stages of learner development. They were developed in response to requests from adult learners for a measure and recognition of their progress.

The certificates aimed at learners who do not have specific goals but would like some recognition of their progress. Neither learners nor tutors should feel that the learner ought to take the certificate, as many learners would prefer to establish their own goals and not be involved in something as formal as a certificate.

The certificate is intended as a means of recognizing the learner's development over time. It incorporates a range of learning tasks and skills, including reading, writing and oral skills. The requirements are practical and useful in everyday activities.

For further information on the Certificate in Literacy and Learning, contact

Robin Millar at the Manitoba Literacy and Continuing Education Branch, 945-8136.

# **Stages of Learning**

(Ennis & Woodrow, 1992: p. 41-88)

## **Stage I - Feeling Literate**

The goal of Stage I literacy is to help learners *feel* like readers and writers. This is a process of developing confidence with the written language. It involves encouraging learners to make connections between oral and written language.

Stage I learners:

- would probably identify themselves as non-readers;
- have very limited reading and writing abilities;
- may write their own name;
- may recognize and name most letters of the alphabet;
- may recognize some environmental print (STOP, Bingo, NO SMOKING);
- may recognize some meaningful words such as names of family members.

Expected achievements of Stage I literacy include:

- to write a sentence independently, using capitals and periods;
- to develop a limited meaningful sight vocabulary;
- to compose language experience stories with the tutor acting as scribe (ie. writing down the words as the learner says them)
- to read short, highly predictable text on familiar subjects that reflect the learner's interests;
- to recall explicit text information;
- to recognize that their background knowledge is one of the biggest contributors to understanding what they read;
- to generate and organize ideas for writing.

Introductory work will focus on: language experience stories, introduction of the alphabet and the notions of print, word recognition activities, photo stories, listening to stories on tape, listening to others read, doing assisted reading with a tutor or teacher.

## **Stage II - Developing Literacy**

The goal of Stage II literacy is to help learners become readers and writers. This is a process of consolidating skills. It involves encouraging learners to focus on the visual characteristics of print while continuing to use their world knowledge.

Stage II learners:

- can identify many words on sight;
- may have some difficulty recognizing that reading is a process of seeking meaning from print;
- may believe that good writers find it easy to write and spell all the words they use;
- have limited word identification abilities;
- are more comfortable with predictable, narrative text;
- often edit as they write.

Expected achievements of Stage II literacy include:

- to write a paragraph independently, using appropriate grammar and punctuation;
- to understand the importance of using questions for learning;
- to begin independent use of fluent reading strategies to understand text;
- to use spelling patterns and generalizations;
- to read between the lines and infer meaning from text;
- to develop word identification strategies;
- to use strategies to generate and organize ideas, to prepare the first draft, and to revise text;
- to read more text;
- to develop a more extensive vocabulary.

Stage II work will focus on learning about print cues for word identification and spelling, together with reading for meaning. Learners will be developing writing skills, inventing spelling for the purpose of writing, learning spelling words from writing, practicing silent reading, doing assisted reading of more difficult texts, and learning about different language patterns.

### Stage III - Becoming Literate

The goal of Stage III literacy is to help new learners move from learning to read to reading to learn. It involves helping learners refine their skills.

Stage III learners:

- are effective readers of most everyday materials and narratives;
- have developed a wide variety of word-identification strategies;
- accept that no reader can identify or understand all of the words in the English language;
- may be comfortable in recognizing they may not become good spellers;
- know common words from memory;
- understand some spelling generalizations;
- may still be hesitant writers.

Expected achievements of Stage III literacy include:

- extensive silent reading;
- to distinguish between fact and opinion;
- to use basic reference materials;
- to write for different audiences;
- to adopt a critical attitude towards text;
- to write a page of text;
- more consistent spelling and use of grammar conventions.

Stage III work will focus on developing a variety of writing skills (e.g. essay writing, proof-reading, re-drafting and re-writing, styles of writing), individualized spelling according to need, reading comprehension, vocabulary development, critical thinking, advanced and diverse reading assignments, and developing study methods.

# **Learning Styles and Preferences**

(Baker, p.94-96; Klein and Millar, 1990: p.9-10)

Learning styles are the variety of ways in which people learn. They are commonly grouped into three main categories based on the physical aspects of learning: visual (seeing), auditory (hearing), and kinaesthetic (tactile or motor learning). Every person uses all three learning styles, but how much they rely on each varies widely from person to person. Visual learners prefer print materials, diagrams and charts; auditory learners like lectures, audio tapes, book/tape sets, songs; and kinaesthetic or tactile learners prefer hands-on activities such as role plays, simulations, experiments, and assembling or repairing things.

Also, as tutors, **your teaching style will be a natural reflection of your own learning style.** What may seem to you like an obvious and natural way to teach, may not meet the needs of the learner. It may be necessary to present new materials in a variety of ways.

**It has been suggested that people learn best when all three modes are used, [because]:**

- 1. people who only see information will probably remember about 10% of it;**
- 2. people who both hear and see information will probably remember about 20% of it;**
- 3. people who hear, see and do something with information will probably remember 80% of it.**

**The challenge is to integrate all the learning modes into lesson plans.**

## Identifying learning styles

Some ways in which you can identify someone's learning style preference include:

- asking the person how he prefers to do things, and how he thinks he learns best;
- observing what methods and approaches motivate him;
- using learning styles inventories;
- observing body language (ie. use of gestures often indicates a tactile, experiential learner);
- listening to the words the person uses (ie. I think/feel/believe).

Students can also benefit from understanding their preferred learning style, because it can give them a better understanding of the errors they make and to choose the best learning strategy for themselves. It is also useful for the student to understand if their own particular learning style does not match that of the teacher, and it may serve to motivate them to take greater control of seeking information in the format in which they need it.

### Assisting the auditory learner

Auditory learners need special emphasis on the hearing mode of learning and may benefit from:

- learning active listening skills;
- listening to oral presentations;
- taking notes from clear dictation;
- following along while tutor reads aloud;
- oral tests, oral feedback, oral instructions;
- repeating important points quietly to themselves;
- hearing what they are reading (ie. book/tape sets for independent reading).

### Assisting the visual learner

Visual learners require an emphasis on visual instruction techniques, and can benefit from:

- having the spoken word turned into pictures;
- being helped to "see" the item of instruction (ie. a drill bit, a thermostat);
- practicing the look-say method;
- underlining or highlighting key points or words with coloured pens;
- learning to clearly separate concepts on each page when note-taking;
- for math, use of flash cards for problems, formulas, equations; visualizing story problems;
- using acronyms to visualize words in his mind;
- a variety of visual aids, such as drawing/writing on the chalkboard, use of overhead projectors with highly visual materials, movies, filmstrips, videotapes;
- using drawings, maps and graphs to complete assignments and present his/her ideas

### Assisting the tactile, kinaesthetic or motor learner

Tactile learners will learn best by doing, so will benefit most from hands-on activities, such as:

- using tape recorders, calculators, typewriters, computers, audio visual equipment;
- using available tools and equipment in the classroom;
- assembling models or equipment to be used for instruction;
- gaining real or simulated work experience;
- feeling and touching the items being discussed;
- building models and replicas;
- role plays, simulations and experiments.

# Assessing Reading/Instructional Materials

(Clarke, 1991: p. 16; Rigg and Kazemek; Ennis and Woodrow, 1992: p. 117.)

These guidelines for assessing materials should help you select and/or develop appropriate reading and/or instructional materials for adult learner(s). The following attributes of the reading material should be considered:

## Content

- Is the material relevant and interesting to adults living in Canada?
- Is the material meaningful to the student?
- Do the materials respect the dignity of the adult learner?
- Does the material have literary merit? Is the material complete?
- Are the materials relevant and sensitive to the culture and needs of the learner?
- What is the author's educational philosophy? Does the author make any social/cultural assumptions? (ie. are there race, sex, class or other types of biases?)
- Is the content ordered logically, and does it make sense?
- Is there a description of how and where the material was developed? (This is particularly useful for learner produced materials.)

## Format

- Are the visuals and layout appealing to an adult?
- Are the graphics clear, and do they provide clues to the text?
- Are the form and typeface easy to read? Is the binding easy to handle?

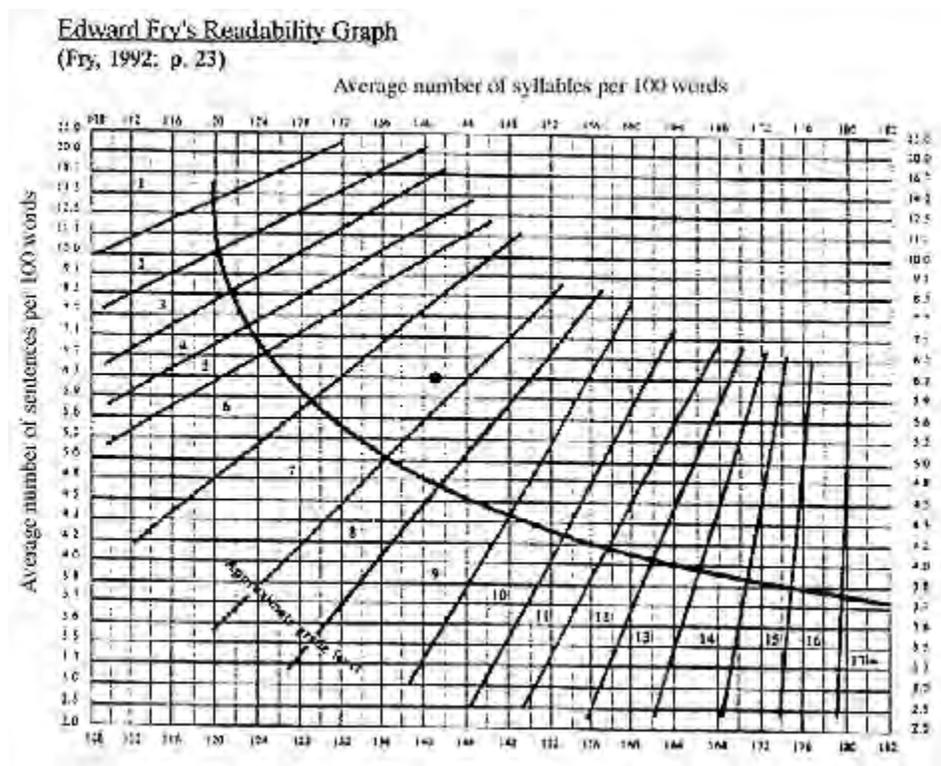
## Applications

- If there is an instructor's guide, does it stress that the learner's expressed needs are more important than following the book from start to finish?
- Are instructions clear so that the learner can use the material independently?
- Does the material encourage the learner and the tutor to be creative and to use their critical and imaginative abilities?
- Does the material promote the integration of the learner's **developed** language abilities (memory and conversational skills) with **developing** language abilities (reading and writing)?
- Is there a variety of activities at each level of difficulty, so the learners can reinforce a new skill by using it in different ways?
- Are the materials readily available and/or inexpensive?

## Readability Indexes

Materials must also be selected at a reading level which is appropriate for the learner. That is, it should provide the learner with a challenge without frustrating him unnecessarily. It is suggested that reading material is selected at, or slightly above, the learner's reading level when tutor and learner are reading together. Material slightly below that level is recommended for learners to read alone. (Clarke, 1991: p.17)

The following are some commonly used readability indexes or formulas.



### Directions:

Randomly select 3 one-hundred-word passages from a book or an article. Plot average number of syllables and average number of sentences per 100 words on the graph to determine the grade level of the material. Choose more passages per book if great variability is observed and you conclude that the book has uneven readability. Few books will fall in the grey area, but when they do, grade level scores are invalid.

Count proper nouns, numerals and initializations as words. Count a syllable for each symbol. For example, "1945" is 1 word and 4 syllables and "IRA" is 1 word and 3 syllables.

Example:	Syllables	Sentences
1st hundred words	124	6.6

2nd hundred words	141	5.5
3rd hundred words	158	6.8
Average	141	6.3

Readability falls within the 7th grade (see dot plotted on graph)

### Gunning Fog Readability Index

(Clarke, 1991: p.16)

Count out a 100-word sample from a text.

Count the number of sentences within the 100-word sample. If more than half of the last sentence is included within the 100, count it also.

Figure the number of words per sentence by dividing the number of words (100) by the number of sentences.

Count the number of "difficult" words (ie. with three syllables or more). Do not count proper nouns, compound words (ie. blackberry), or words converted to three syllables by adding a verb ending (ie. importing, imported).

Add the number of difficult words to the average words per sentence.

Multiply the total by 0.4 to get the approximate grade level.

For longer works, find the level for three passages and then average them.

Formula:  $100 \div \text{number of sentences} = \text{average words per sentence}$

Average words per sentence + number of difficult words = Total

Total  $\times 0.4 = \text{approximate grade level}$

## **Everyday Reading Materials**

These everyday reading materials are readily available, inexpensive, and may relate to your student's goals. They will also provide opportunities to place reading, writing, and math skills within the context of daily activities.

Advertisements

Bank statements

Bills

- Cable vision
- Credit card
- Phone
- Repairs
- Utilities

Biographies

Brochures

Bumper stickers

Bus schedules

Calendars

Catalogues

- Adult education
- Mail order
- Specialties
- Stores

Cheques

Community news

Contracts

Cookbooks

Coupons

Dictionaries

Film subtitles

Film titles and credits

Flyers

Food boxes

Forms

- Applications
- Bank transactions
- Insurance
- Income tax
- Memberships
- Registrations
- Greeting cards

Identification

- Birth Certificate
- Credit cards
- Driver's License
- Health insurance
- Social Insurance

Instruction manuals

- Appliances
- Assembling furniture
- Computers
- Equipment for job
- Games
- TV/VCR
- Vehicles

Labels, packages, containers

- Cleaning products
- Clothing
- Food packages
- Medicine bottles
- Pet products

· Toys

· Records/Tapes/

CDs

Letters

- Business
- Complaint
- Fundraising
- Inquiry

· Love

- Personal
- To politicians
- With job application

Magazines

Mail

Maps

Membership cards

Menus

Movie/play scripts

Newsletters

Newspapers

- Advice columns
- Book reviews
- Comics
- Editorials
- Entertainment reviews
- Feature articles
- Letters to the Editor
- Movie ads
- Opinion pieces
- Recipes
- Sports
- Weather

Notes from school

Notices

Novels

Poetry

Political books

Posters

Programs

- Awards Ceremonies
- Church bulletins
- Concerts
- Graduations
- Plays
- Sports events

Price tags

Quizzes/questionnaires

Recipes

Religious materials

Report cards

Short stories

Signs

Song lyrics

Telephone book

Text books

T-shirts

Travel books

TV guide

Warranties

# Lesson Plans

(Baker, D., p. 14-15)

There is not one right format for a lesson plan. Facilitators develop a format best suited to themselves and to the course content. A good starting point for a new tutor is the **ROPES** model, meaning **R**eview, **O**verview, **P**resentation, **E**xercise, and **S**ummary.

**Review:** Tutors review with learner(s) what they already know. This can provide useful information about learners' experiences, attitudes and competence and reinforce for the learners the importance of their prior knowledge and/or experience.

**Overview:** An overview should describe the major steps learners will take to reach the goal of the lesson, and explore how learners may be able to use what they learn.

**Presentation:** The presentation phase includes both the major and minor steps that make up the content, the support knowledge, and the "tell", "show" and "do" steps. At this stage, however, the tutor leads or demonstrates the "do" step.

**Exercise:** The exercise gets learners doing. For an exercise to be effective, learners should first be asked to practice the skill under supervision. Later, learners should be able to do the exercise without your guidance.

**Summary:** In the summary, learners describe and demonstrate what they have learned and explain how they plan to use it. The summary can be a simple matter of verbal or written questions and answers, or it can involve the learners in demonstrating their competence - a worthwhile exercise, as most people take pleasure in demonstrating a new skill.

Other standard elements that should be included in most lesson plans include:

- details of any pre-assessment procedures to be used;
- the instructional techniques to be used;
- the time allotted for each activity;
- the facilities, media, supplies, tools, equipment, etc. required;
- details of any references and textbooks required;
- details of any assignments;
- details of any post-assessment or evaluation procedures to be used.

## **SAMPLE LESSON PLAN - EXAMPLE ONE**

(Ennis and Woodrow, 1992: p. 129)

50-60 min. planning for writing

- brainstorm ideas
- choose topic

ask question

- list what the learner knows about the topic
- list questions the learner wants answered about topic

find answers

- brainstorm a list of possible sources
- begin to examine and read sources
- record answers to questions or other information that's pertinent

begin to write

- first/rough draft

10-15 min break

15-20 min. easy reading activity

15-20 min mini-lesson on anything that needs concentrated attention

- prediction skills
- spelling patterns
- punctuation skills

## **SAMPLE LESSON PLAN - EXAMPLE TWO**

(PAL Tutor Guide, p. 19-20)

If your learner's goal is to find employment, a lesson plan might look like the following:

What to do:

Learn the vocabulary on job application forms.

Why do this?:

Learner is embarrassed that they do not have this skill and sees as a priority. Learning the vocabulary is a first step to being able to fill out application forms.

How will we do it?:

Obtain one or two application forms.

10 minutes - Review last session's work

10 minutes - Read forms with the learner

15 minutes - Re-read the questions and discuss the meaning of each question where necessary and help learner

decide what an appropriate answer would be.

10 minutes - Write out or help learner write out their work history which they can copy onto the application form.

10-20 minutes - Make flashcards for key words. Write the word in a sentence at the bottom of the card. Practice reading these words and sentences.

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## **CHAPTER EIGHT: ARE YOU LITERACY LITERATE?**

- **TYPES OF LITERACY PROGRAMS**
- **CLARIFICATION OF LITERACY TERMS AND CONCEPTS**
- **REFERENCES**

## **Types of Literacy Programs**

**Adult Basic Education (ABE)** is the term commonly used to describe high school level courses (Grades 10, 11, 12) taught for credit at community colleges. However, 'Adult Basic Education' is also used by many programs and practitioners synonymous with or as an alternative to the term 'literacy'. 'Literacy' is felt by many to have a stigma attached to it, as it tends to focus on the failure of people to have gained literacy skills, rather than to focus on and encourage the development of their potential to learn.

**Community-Based/Learner-Centred Programs** (Rodriguez, 1994b) have the potential to promote both personal and social change because they provide learners with opportunities to:

- validate their language, experiences, and knowledge and become aware of their own capabilities and power;
- acquire new tools for expanding their knowledge and understanding of both personal and community issues;
- develop a critical awareness of the social and political sources of the problems they confront as individuals and as members of their communities;
- use all forms of language to explore, reflect upon, and dialogue about those issues;
- articulate solutions and take action in the direction of positive change.

**Community-Based Programs** are those in which the community is involved in the planning and operation of the program. There is generally a board or committee comprised of a representative group of community members with an interest in literacy (ie. learners, schools, media, politicians, community organizations, agencies such as Child and Family Services, government departments such as Employment and Immigration, etc.) The program responds to the needs identified by the community, and will change as the needs of the community change. Community-based programs are usually also learner-centred.

"Frontier College's Student-Centred Individualized Learning (SCIL) is a positive teaching model that addresses three specific issues in a student's life: needs, strengths and goals. It is a practical and effective way to help you and your student design a learning program that is productive and enjoyable for both of you. It follows these steps:

1. Defining a goal.
2. Deciding what skills/resources you need to achieve this goal?
3. Exploring which of these skills/resources you already have?
4. Determining your needs.
5. Creating a plan of action." (Nore, et al., 1991: p.18)

**Deaf Literacy Programs:** A large number of deaf adults have low literacy skills in English, and there are often "astounding gaps in the learners' understanding of basic information. This situation is symptomatic of the isolation experienced by deaf people. They are excluded from information sources such as radio, television, public address systems and conversations. If they have difficulty reading, they are also excluded from information sources such as newspapers, posters, captioned television, brochures and books. Thus, if deaf people are not given the information directly, one can conclude, they do not learn about it." (Thomas, 1990: p.69)

According to Audrey Thomas (1990: p. 69-70), "Deaf and hard of hearing people need literacy skills for all the same reasons that other people need to read and write. In addition, they need to read to utilize any of the devices and systems which have been designed to help them."

Such devices are:

- TTYs (Teletype), with which the user types messages over the phone, and receives typed messages on a screen display
- Most provincial telephone services offer a relay service enabling the user to contact persons without TTYs through an operator
- Closed captioning for television programs, in which the written English for adult programming is usually at a grade 7 or 8 level or higher
- Notes are often the easiest way for deaf people to communicate with people who do not know sign language

The Deaf Literacy Program at Red River Community College provides English literacy instruction to deaf adults who are fluent in American Sign Language. The program is based on a Bilingual/ Bicultural philosophy, in which:

- American Sign Language (first language), a natural visual-gestural language is the primary language of instruction to teach English language reading and writing (Bilingual)
- Deaf/Hearing participants are encouraged to know about cultural differences that include Deaf and Hearing persons (Bicultural)
- Students are enabled to interact naturally and to empower their own Deaf Heritage and cultural background
- Students are encouraged to increase their linguistic (ASL/English) and cultural (Deaf/Hearing) awareness
- Volunteer Tutors must be fluent in English and American Sign Language

**Family and Intergenerational Literacy Programs** (Tessier, 1994) are organized efforts to improve the literacy of parents and children through specially designed programs.

- Family Literacy is a community-based initiative designed to break the cycle of low literacy skills.
- Family, in this context, is interpreted in the broadest sense of the word.
- Implicit in this process is a shared responsibility within the community to provide Intergenerational support, education and advocacy.
- The intention is to empower the individual and establish reading as a valued activity shared within the family.

**Models of Family Literacy include:**

(Adapted from Bate, B., p. 12-13)

**Direct Adult-Direct Children** An intensive model in which adults and their children both participate directly. Adults attend literacy instruction/parent training, and are taught to interact with their children around reading activities. Children receive pre-school instruction.

**Direct Adult-Indirect Child** A model in which literacy instruction is directed at parents, with children participating minimally if at all. The parents are then better equipped to reinforce literacy at home.

**Indirect Adult-Direct Child** A model in which child literacy development is the main target. There may also be an adult program which involves help for adults to help their children with school work.

**Indirect Adult-Indirect Child** Literacy development is limited to the support of reading *for enjoyment*, with both adults and children invited to participate in story-telling, read-alongs, etc. Attendance is voluntary, events informal, and there is no direct literacy instruction.

**Learner-Centred or Student-Centred Programs** are learner-defined. That is, they are based on the needs, interests and goals of the learners, rather than on pre-determined goals or curricula. They begin by assessing the learners' perceptions and uses of literacy. They make extensive use of the learners' words and experiences. They have content that is meaningful and relevant to the learners, and accept and affirm the learners' language. And they operate in locations and with schedules that meet the learners' needs. (Rodriguez, 1994b )

## **Clarification of Literacy Terms and Concepts**

**Cloze Procedures:** A reading technique in which blanks are substituted for words, or portions of words, in the text, and the learner is asked to guess the words, based on the context. Sometimes a list of the words to choose from is provided in a random order, sometimes they are not. This technique helps learners move from a skill-based to a meaning-based view of reading, teaches the use of context clues, and can also help with grammar, leaving only portions of words blank to be completed with the correct ending. (King, et al.,1993: p. III- 19)

**Curriculum** (Rodriguez, 1994a: p.21) is not a pre-packaged product put together before the beginning of the program. It is not a series of workbooks or computer tasks to complete. The curriculum is a dynamic process which engages several elements:

- Content-relevant themes or topics;
- Materials and resources - anything of relevance to the content (people, places, events, reading materials, games);
- Activities - the interaction of the participants (instructor and learners) with each other and with the material or resources, through the use of some form of language;
- Scheduling - organizing the activities within a given time framework;
- Outcomes - at the level of content (how much more does the learner know?) and language (can the learner communicate/ express herself better?).

**GED (General Educational Development or General Equivalency Diploma)**, sometimes also referred to as the High-School Equivalency Test, "measured one's ability against that of graduating high-school students and gives one a chance to earn a certificate that is the equivalent of a high school diploma." (Passing the GED. 1995: p. 1)

"Many Canadian provinces and Territories (and all of the United States) use GED Test results as the basis for giving high-school equivalency credentials. Those credentials are accepted as the equivalent of a high-school diploma for purposes of employment, promotion, and licensing. ...Many colleges and universities now accept satisfactory GED Test scores in place of completed high-school grade transcripts for admissions purposes." (Passing the GED. 1995: p. 1)

**Language Experience** stories are simply the learners' own stories written in their own words. They may be about personal experiences, procedures at work, material which has been read to them, or anything else which interests them. Using the learners' own experience and language as the basis for material that they will be reading is an effective way of involving students from the very first lesson, and of ensuring that the materials used are meaningful for the learners. This approach contributes to success and is an ice-breaker in a new teaching situation. It also gives you insights into the learner's world that can be of great help in selecting materials for a series of lessons.

The steps used in developing a Language Experience story are, (MB Education Branch and Training, Literacy Office):

1. Discuss the story
2. Taking notes
3. Writing it down
4. Checking back, reviewing the story
5. Reading the story together (assisted reading)
6. Further activities using the story (ie. identify and learn sight words, spelling, developing other sentences with the same words, phonics, etc.)

Language experience stories are successful in teaching adults because:  
(Adapted from Cypress Hills Regional College, 1994, Module II: p.3)

- The learner is motivated to read it because it is a topic of interest to him, it is his own story, it contains words that he will need to read in other material;
- It is easy for him to read because he is familiar with the content, words and structure;
- He quickly learns to read the longer, more difficult words because they have meaning for him. This gives him confidence in his ability to read.
- Watching the story being written and read familiarizes the learner with the processes of reading and writing (ie. one reads/writes from left to right, each word has its own separate space, special marks (punctuation) show natural pauses at the end of a complete thought, the first letters of words that begin a new thought or a name are large (capitals).

**Laubach.** "The Laubach Way to Reading (LWR) series is a basic reading and writing program designed to teach adults with little or no reading ability. The series consists of four levels of skill books, correlated readers and supplementary materials. Tutors are trained and encouraged to use a variety of techniques in addition to the LWR series, including developing their own materials to meet needs of each student...

...The Laubach method starts with the known - the spoken word - and progresses to the unknown - the written word - through a series of easy steps. Each lesson includes vocabulary development, phonics, a short story, comprehension checks and writing practice. Lessons progress from the sounds and regular spellings of consonants to those of the short vowels, the long vowels, and finally to irregular spellings and more challenging reading and writing skills." (Laubach Literacy of Canada, p. B-3)

**Numeracy** can be defined as an ability to cope confidently with the demands of mathematics in everyday life. Mathematics, like reading and writing, is a tool of communication. The ability to use this tool provides a person with the opportunity to express facts and opinions and to analyze things in the real world. Knowing how to calculate percentages, for example, is necessary for discount shopping and for understanding the Goods and Services Tax. Seen in this way, numeracy is a basic need and everyone has the right to have it.

Determining appropriate instructional methods depends on both the learners' current mathematical skills and on their attitudes towards the use of mathematics. Since the mathematics used by adults varies greatly according to their personal lifestyle and, perhaps, their cultural background, numeracy instruction will be most effective using a functional approach. Numeracy learning can range from recognizing numbers to calculating percents, from reading a bus schedule to baking a cake. In teaching any numeracy skills, we should bear in mind the context and the students' skill level and learning style.

**One-to-One vs. Small Group Literacy** (GNWT Literacy Office; Fretz and Paul, 1999; Horsman, 1984): There are many advantages to one-to-one literacy instruction. It offers an excellent opportunity for learner-centredness, as the program is completely individualized. It also permits the learner and tutor to develop a good relationship based on mutual respect, and a possibility to bridge some class stereotypes as the two working together are likely to be from different social classes. It may also give the learner privacy in terms of publicly declaring his literacy needs.

There are also felt to be some limitations to one-to-one tutoring. To begin with, people with literacy needs often have feelings of shame, embarrassment and isolation from society. A one-to-one tutoring situation may improve their technical and functional literacy skills, but it may also reinforce their feelings of isolation. Because literacy involves not only reading and writing, but also developing critical thinking, social skills and communication skills, problem-solving, self-esteem, self-confidence, and breaking the isolation of low literacy, a group learning context is felt by many to be better for the whole learning experience.

Making decisions or learning as a group enhances communication. Information, opinions and resources are exchanged during discussion, and an issue is viewed from a variety of perspectives, offering new insights. The process builds thinking and problem-solving skills, and is both creative and dynamic. Some effective group learning activities include group discussions, brainstorming, role-playing, problem-solving, interviews, and active listening. These may take place in the large group, or in smaller groups of two, three, four or five.

Group learning also recognizes that the tutor/instructor is not the only source of knowledge, but that each group member has knowledge, capability and a right to share ideas and information with others. This encourages group members to provide support and encouragement to one another, and builds self-confidence and self-esteem.

**Phonics** (Cypress Hills Regional College, 1994; Colvin and Root, 1987) is a method of teaching beginners to read and pronounce words, using the sounds represented by letters, letter groups and syllables. Phonics is based on phonetics, which is the study and classification of the sounds made in speech.

Being able to associate letters and sounds is an asset in reading and spelling. Some people learn phonics (letter-sound association) intuitively by reading, while others need to have some concepts pointed out to them. Phonics is a method, not a goal, of reading. Teach it only if and when it will help people to read and spell, and only in the context of what they are trying to read or spell.

**Plain Language** or "clear writing is a way of presenting information so that it is easy for everyone to read and understand...Sometimes it is also referred to as readability, plain English, plain writing or clear language." It includes more than just the words that are used and how they are put together. It considers how the material looks, and what it says. It considers what the reader needs to know, and what the writer wants to say. "Most important, it is writing that can be read and understood by as many people as possible...If material is written clearly, it will be easier for people who don't read well to get the information they need." (Baldwin, 1990: p. 1)

Plain language materials are important because:  
(Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada, 1991: p.5)

- they reach people who do not read well
- they help all readers understand information
- they avoid misunderstandings and errors
- they save time because they get the job done well the first time.

When tutoring, it is important to give written instructions in plain language as much as possible. It is also important to use plain language materials whenever possible, to help the learner understand what they are reading.

When developing or selecting plain language materials, tutors should remember to:  
(Plain Language Institute, 1992: p.3-10)

- Distinguish between reading and age levels. Adults are a mature audience with different sets of experiences than children. Look for material that is clear, focused on the main ideas, and well designed, which does not "talk down to" adults.
- Be aware of different reading levels, and rewrite or design separate documents as appropriate.
- Use appropriate vocabulary. Even though adults may have difficulty reading, they tend to have good vocabularies, based on adult thought processes and life experiences. Use words that reflect the readers own vocabulary.
- Explain new, difficult or key words by including the definition as part of the text.
- Reinforce important points by briefly stating them in an introduction, discussing them in the text, restating them in a summary.
- Use real-life scenarios, anecdotes and imagery.
- Consider alternative methods of communication such as audiotape, videotape, demonstrations, computer displays, photos, and sketches. These, too, should be clear, attractive, and straight-forward.

**Popular Education** (Arnold and Burke; Neighborhood Action, 1985) is both a philosophy and an approach which was developed by Paulo Freire in the context of adult literacy work in Brazil in the 1960's, and spread throughout South America during the 1970's. It is a collective or group process of education carried on by grassroots organizations. It is a joint creation of knowledge with the starting point being the life experience of the participants.

Popular education assumes that:

- education can serve the interests of the poor, the powerless and the oppressed;
- education can challenge an unjust global system;
- developing a critical consciousness is part of organizing for change;
- people themselves can define their own content and can create their own forms of education;
- learning can be fun, participatory and mobilizing.

Some characteristics of popular education are:

- it starts with the concrete experience of the learner;
- everyone teaches and everyone learns;
- it involves a high level of participation;
- it is a collective effort focussing on group rather than individual solutions to problems;
- it is an ongoing process (not limited to a workshop) - used any time, place or with any age;
- it stresses the creation of new knowledge, not only the passing on of existing knowledge;
- it causes people to reflect on what they've done, in order to improve what they will do;
- it strengthens the ability of people to organize themselves;
- it links local experience to historical and global processes;
- it leads to action for change or change in consciousness.

**Readability Indexes** or formulas are short, simple formulas used to determine how difficult a text is to read. Over 50 such formulas have been proposed, the accuracy of which is the subject of much debate. For example, most readability indexes assume that difficulty can be measured simply in terms of the length of words and/or sentences. However, not all long words are equally difficult to read. Other factors, such as how complex the sentence construction is, or the meaning of the words are far more important, but not generally considered in these formulas. In the absence of more sophisticated measures, though, they continue to be widely used as a reasonably convenient way of predicting reading difficulty. (Crystal, 1987: p. 252)

**Reading Process Approach** sees reading as "a communication process between the reader and the author. **Interpreting meaning is the goal of reading.** [The] goal is to have the reader's thoughts and language constantly interacting with the thoughts and language of the writer. To accomplish this the reader must be actively engaged and utilizing his background knowledge along with text information in order to make sense of the information on the page.

An important aspect of the Reading Process Approach is that the tutor focuses on **how** the student interacts with print. Through observation, discussion and questioning the student and tutor will be able to determine which reading strategies the student is using. Student and tutor will be able to identify where there are gaps in the student's knowledge. Student and tutor will be able to assess whether strategies currently in use are effective and then decide which new strategies should be introduced and practiced. On the basis of this information an individualized reading program for the student is developed between the tutor and student. This type of approach, by nature, is eclectic and involves a combination of approaches and strategies based on

the student's needs at a particular time and the student's developmental learning stage. Using everyday reading materials and picking and choosing from commercially produced texts and workbooks ensures that the learning will be highly practical to the student." (Baker, D. p. 27)

**Sight Word or Whole Word Methods** teach learners to recognize individual words on sight. Then they read a story that includes those 'sight words'. Teaching sight words involves using a language experience approach, dictated stories or other materials of interest to the learner. The sight words to be learned are chosen by the learner after reading the material. Some students learn to recognize words by predicting, seeing and reading them in the story.

**Spelling** (Klein and Millar, 1990: p.1-2) should never be taught as a list of unrelated words to be learned. It should be taught as needed, in the context of other reading and writing tasks, in order to be meaningful and effective. (See Whole Language)

What are the benefits of teaching spelling?

- Spelling improves
- Self-confidence improves
- Spelling errors that do remain will be more readable
- Writing fluency improves
- Quality of writing will improve
- Students will understand the nature of their learning style and needs
- The English language is demystified
- Students become better self-critics
- Students' attention to language will improve

**Theme Units** (BC Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, 1990: p.133-134) "are curriculum units that combine the concepts, skills, and objectives of the various content areas - basic literacy, life skills, computation and cultural studies. Theme units ... have also been called 'integrated' units in that they integrate a variety of skills around a general idea or theme. They direct attention and inquiry to a particular topic, issue or concern."

While a "focussed unit" might emphasize "writing a business letter", writing the business letter might be only one of many activities in a "theme unit" on "applying and interviewing for a job". In the context of literacy, consonant blends might be taught as a discrete unit in a focussed approach. Or they could emerge naturally from and in the context of the language generated by activities in any "theme unit".

Theme units are more consistent with a whole language approach because they aid the natural integration of language (speaking, writing, listening, viewing and reading), math, life and social studies skills. The relationship between life skills and language skills is reinforced as language comes to be seen as a means of investigating, reflecting, and acting upon problems affecting the student's own lives. Other advantages of theme units are:

- They allow student input into determining the content of the course
- They allow for the accommodation of individual differences
- They provide an opportunity to include a wide variety of activities
- They promote the use of various media, resources, and approaches
- They build flexibility into the program
- They encourage instructors to develop their own units appropriate to their students' interest
- They permit the curriculum to reflect the real issues and problems of the local community
- They result in more student interest and enjoyment

## **Vision and Literacy**

(The Canadian Association of Optometrists, 1995)

- At least 80% of all learning is visual.
- Many Canadians cannot read well simply because they cannot see well.
- As many as 75% of adults with low literacy skills have vision problems.
- One in six children has a vision problem that makes learning and reading difficult.
- Most vision problems can be successfully treated and, if detected early and corrected, will not hinder a child's ability to learn and read.

For adults with low literacy skills, many find it hard enough to overcome the barriers to learning to read and write. A vision problem only makes a difficult situation worse.

Images seen from both eyes usually blend into a single image in the brain. If the eyes are not working equally, an individual will have a vision problem - such as blurred vision - and a difficult time reading. People may have vision problems if they:

- lose their place while reading
- avoid close work
- hold reading material closer than normal
- tend to rub their eyes
- have headaches
- turn or tilt their head to use one eye only
- use their finger to maintain place while reading
- leave out small words when reading
- have a short attention span
- have trouble remembering what has been read

**Upgrading** is a term often used to describe any adult literacy/numeracy instruction from beginning level to GED. Because the term 'literacy' is felt to be negative and stigmatizing, the term 'upgrading' is often preferred.

**Whole Language** "views reading as a learning process that integrates a variety of skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, writing and thinking. Language development is not seen as sequential, where a specific concept, skill or mechanic must be learned at a specific time. The focus is placed upon reading and writing as **communication**, and upon **how** people read. Whole

Language promotes people learning together, drawing upon each other's experiences, strengths, interests and support." ( Fretz and Paul,1994: p.237)

Does this mean that we don't teach such things as phonics, spelling, sight words, and vocabulary? No! What it means is that we teach them *in context* and as part of the processes of reading and writing.

"Whole language approaches emphasize the importance of using whole texts for literacy and of making reading and writing meaningful and purposeful activities from the outset, with attention focused on vocabulary, spelling, and other formal or mechanical considerations **when they become relevant**....Phonics is not eliminated; instead, the relationships between sound and symbols are introduced when a learner encounters an unfamiliar word or is confused about words with similar spellings or when sentence structure affects the meaning of what one has written or read." (Crandall, , et al., p.142.)

A fundamental assumption of the whole language approach is that adult learners bring a wealth of prior knowledge and a lifetime of experience to their learning. They bring their own goals or reasons for wanting to read and write, interests in particular topics, concepts and attitudes - how they think and feel about certain topics, events, etc., and internal resources - world knowledge, knowledge of language, attitudes and motivation. A whole language approach builds on the learner's prior knowledge, interests and goals to develop a meaningful and effective learning program.

**Word Attack** simply means breaking words down into parts. Beginning learners are more likely than others to need to learn some of these skills in order to decode what they are reading. Word attack techniques include phonics (letter-sound associations), sight words (words recognized on sight), cloze procedures (guessing words from context), word patterns or families (words with the same letter patterns), syllabication (breaking words into syllables). (Butler, 1990)

According to what is now understood about reading, none of the word attack methods are appropriate on their own. Fluent reading requires instant recognition of words on sight. Understanding phonics, word patterns and/or syllabication can help readers figure out and spell words they do not know. Cloze procedures can help readers to identify words from context. However, all of these techniques are most appropriately learned by reading in context, and taught as aids to reading. (See Whole Language) (Norton, 1990)

**Word Patterns or Word Families** are lists of words with common parts or the same pattern of letters (ie. fight, light, night, right). Word family exercises help students approach new words by using information about how words are constructed. Exercises in which certain parts of words that are familiar remain constant (such as the initial consonant or the ending syllable) while other parts change (inserting new initial consonants or new endings) build vocabulary when the new words are introduced in the context of sentences. It is important that word families are not simply lists of words, but that the meaning of the words is explored through their uses in new text. (King, et al., 1993)

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# **ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

## **INTRODUCTION**

- **VOLUNTEER TUTOR RESOURCE**
- **ABORIGINAL/CROSS-CULTURE LITERACY**
- **ABOUT LITERACY**
- **BIBLIOGRAPHIES**
- **ESL/LITERACY**
- **FAMILY LITERACY**
- **MISCELLANEOUS**
- **NUMERACY/MATH**
- **PLAIN LANGUAGE RESOURCES**
- **POPULAR EDUCATION**
- **VIDEOS**
- **WORKPLACE LITERACY**
- **WINNIPEG PUBLIC LIBRARY RESOURCES**
- **ABOUT LITERACY AND BASIC SKILLS UNIT RESOURCES**

## **Introduction**

The following Annotated Bibliography is an attempt to provide a selection of resources that are accessible and free of charge to volunteer tutors. This is not a complete catalogue, but a sampling of practical and easy to use resources appropriate for use by literacy tutors, available at Literacy Partners of Manitoba (LPM).

Entries are listed alphabetically according to the title. The majority of entries are annotated with the LPM Resource Centre call number listed, (call numbers may not be listed for some titles that have not yet been catalogued). These materials are available for borrowing by LPM members, and for in-house use by non-members.

A selection of entries with self-explanatory titles that are not annotated are also listed at the end of each section. Of particular note are the selection of Learner Writings, and Tape/Book sets that are not included in this Bibliography, but are available at the LPM Resource Centre.

In addition to the LPM resources, the following are included in the Bibliography:

- a selection of resources available for borrowing from the Winnipeg Public Library;
- a list of materials available free of charge from the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit, located at 417-185 Carlton Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3C 3J1. Phone: Robin Millar.

## **Literacy Partners of Manitoba Resource Centre Information**

### **LOCATION**

Building The Literacy Partners of Manitoba Resource Centre is located on the ninth floor in room 998, The Grain Exchange Building, (167 Lombard Avenue), Winnipeg.

### **BORROWING**

Resource Centre materials may be borrowed by any member of LPM. The basic borrowing period is two months. Longer borrowing periods may be negotiated.

### **HOURS**

The librarian is available Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday afternoons from 1:00 to 4:00 PM. If you are unable to get to LPM during library hours, there will usually be someone available to help you during regular office hours (Monday to Friday, 9:00 to 5:00). However, it would be best to phone before you come in.

## HOLDINGS

The Resource Centre currently has over 2000 titles, including some book-audiotape kits, and a few videotapes. The collection is divided into seven sections:

1. Learners' Materials
2. Tutor Resources
3. Periodicals
4. Archival copies of LPM Publications
5. GED Materials
6. Students' Writings
7. Oversized Items

Tutor resources include:

REFERENCE MATERIALS  
GENERAL WORKS (MISC)  
LITERACY IN CANADA  
LITERACY OUTSIDE CANADA  
WORKPLACE EDUCATION  
PROGRAM PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT  
CURRICULUM COURSE DEVELOPMENT  
TEACHING TECHNIQUES, TUTORS, ETC.  
EVALUATION, ASSESSMENT, TESTING  
MATHEMATICS, WORKPLACE NUMERACY  
RESEARCH, STATISTICS  
SPECIFIC AREAS OF LITERACY  
SPECIAL NEEDS LEARNERS  
LANGUAGE ARTS  
ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

The learners' materials are organized into the following subject categories:

BIOGRAPHY  
FICTION, POETRY  
HEALTH, NUTRITION  
LIFE SKILLS  
MATHEMATICS  
NON-FICTION/MISC.  
RECREATION, SPORTS  
REFERENCE  
LANGUAGE ARTS  
SCIENCE  
SOCIAL SCIENCES

# **Volunteer Tutor Resource**

*\*Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit formerly Literacy and Continuing Education Branch*

**Adult Literacy Volunteer Tutor Pack.** Literacy and Continuing Education\*, Winnipeg: Manitoba Education and Training. FREE COPIES AVAILABLE.

This handy volunteer tutor pack contains a set of reference cards describing specific step-by-step approaches to: Getting to Know the Learner- Assessing Learning Levels, Assisted Reading, Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA), the Language Experience Approach to writing, Steps to Spelling and Ways to Remember Spelling including Look, Cover, Write, Check.

**Adult Literacy Resource Pack.** Manitoba Literacy and Continuing Education\*, Winnipeg: Manitoba Education and Training. FREE COPIES AVAILABLE

This handy resource pack includes a booklet entitled "Let's Get Started: An initial assessment pack for adult literacy programs", and an accompanying set of reading selections meant to help the tutor get started with a new learner. The pack does not provide teaching strategies or approaches, but refers tutors to Journeyworkers and the Adult Literacy Volunteer Tutor Pack for these.

**Adult Literacy Volunteer Tutor Program Evaluation Kit** Thomas, Audrey M. Adult Basic Education. Victoria, BC: Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, Province of BC. 1991.

A self-study evaluation kit designed to help programs examine their practice in relation to a number of generally agreed upon "good practice statements", and to reflect upon the evaluation in the hope that it would lead to action and improved programs. According to the author: "The motivation for the evaluation comes from within the program. For it to work, it has to be used by a program that takes seriously the idea that it can improve. The evaluation is a participatory process [involving program coordinators, volunteer tutors and learners] that takes a fair amount of time to complete, but it's worth it!"

"The process: encourages objective evaluation of the program; encourages upgrading of program conditions; suggests areas for growth; enables coordinators to focus on needs of tutors and learners; provides opportunities to plan ahead; promotes group spirit and discussion; provides a tool for in-service development; and provides a basis for program funding proposals."

**Basic Skills for Effective Reading.** Second Edition. Selma Wilf. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall. 1988. LPM LM RW AB WIL

This book is intended for learners with limited reading skills. A step-by-step approach provides students with adequate practice as they learn individual skills. Each skill is explained and then learned through the use of guided practice exercises. The book is divided into the following three parts: working with words, building vocabulary, and improving comprehension.

**Connections.** Austin: Steck-Vaughn Company. 1992.

This series of books is designed for use by high school students but its contents may be adapted for the adult learner. Life Skills and Writing presents the writing process as a series of steps, while Reading and Literature utilizes literary passages to develop active reading skills. All of the books contain activities such as fill-in-the-blank, short-answer, and multiple-choice questions, accompanied with answers and explanations. The titles in this series are:

- Connections. Life Skills and Writing **LPM RW BC CON lif**
- Connections. Reading and Literature. **LPM RW BC REA lit**
- Connections. Reading and Science. **LPM RW BC CON rea**
- Connections. Reading and Social Studies. **LPM RW BC REA ss**

**Goodwill Literacy Tutor Handbook.** Clarke, Mallory. Fifth edition. Seattle WA: Goodwill Literacy. 1991. **LPM TR RW CLA**

This tutor handbook combines theory and practice in a step-by-step approach to tutoring. It includes the "tutoring cycle": choosing material, pre-reading, reading, post-reading, writing, evaluation and planning. It also addresses word attack skills, breaks and games, and lesson planning.

**A Guide for Tutoring Adult Literacy Students: Adult Basic Education.** Cameron, Joyce and Myrna Rabinowitz. Victoria, BC: Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, Province of British Columbia. 1988. **LPM TR VT CAM**

This is a very practical guide to tutoring adult literacy students which combines theory, practical approaches and exercises, interspersed with quotes from tutors/learners about their experiences, what works and what doesn't how it feels to be a tutor/learner, etc. Chapters include: The Joys of Tutoring, Getting to Know Your Student; Using the Language Experience Approach; Helping Adults Learn ... to Read; ...Word Attack Skills; ...to Write; ... to Spell; Setting Goals, Assessing Progress, and Planning Lessons; and, Measuring the Results of Tutoring

**Homemade Literacy Ideas: Recipes for Success.** Tessier, Angela and Carolyn Buffle (eds.) Winnipeg: Association for Community Living - Manitoba. 1993. **LPM TR LT TES**

This "recipe booklet" is actually a compilation of ideas and strategies developed over the years by tutors and instructors, that use simple "ingredients" in the home. Simple directions for activities that can be fun, instructive, and applied to everyday living of learners contribute to the contents.

**How to Teach Reading: For Teachers, Parents, Tutors.** Fry, Edward. Laguna Beach, CA: Laguna Beach Educational Books. 1992. **LPM TR RW FRY**

This booklet is written from the standpoint of a teacher, tutor or parent working with the individual student, however many of the methods also apply to small groups or the classroom. The step by step presentation provides specific methods of teaching reading that are suitable for

both the beginning reader and the remedial reader of any age from 5 years old up through to adults. There are practical items such as songs, games and phonics charts with diagrams. Sections include determining reading ability, selecting materials, teaching vocabulary, developing phonics skills, sample lessons, comprehension and oral reading tests.

**Improving Your Reading With Cartoon Strips.** Gruber, Edward. New York: Educational Design Inc. 1988. LPM TR R LAN GRU

Using humour as a motivation to read, cartoons are used as the focus for learning to read. Composed of 60 units, each with a cartoon strip, glossary of unfamiliar words, multiple choice questions, and explanatory answers. These features put words into context and aid in learning comprehension.

**It's About Learning: A Student Centred Approach to Adult Learning.** Forest, Marsha with Bruce Kappel. Toronto: Frontier College Press, 1988.

A vivid and often moving collection of personal experiences of tutors, students, coordinators and others involved in Frontier College's SCIL Program (Student Centred Individualized Learning). Discusses at a very personal level the SCIL approach to adult literacy, qualities of a good tutor, developing and nurturing the tutor/student relationship, motivation, celebrating accomplishments, etc. Really helps you "feel" what tutoring is all about, for both the tutor and the student.

**Journeyworkers: Tutor's Handbook. Approaches to literacy education with adults.** Norton, Mary. Calgary: ACCESS NETWORK, The Alberta Educational Communications Corporation, 1988. LPM TR R LAN NOR

This practical and widely used tutor's handbook describes ways to provide instruction for adults to learn through experiencing reading and writing, and through guided practice, which will help them to learn strategies and approaches necessary to become independent readers and writers. Units include: [Reading is] A Matter of Making Sense; Learning from Experience (includes questioning, assisted reading/writing, developing lessons plans); Making Sense of Words (includes recognizing, identifying, and spelling words); Making Sense of Content (strategies for reading and writing such as drawing inference, anticipating audiences' knowledge, main-idea/detail relationships, sequence relationships, recognizing and recalling text information); Tutor Reference Materials (punctuation, common spelling patterns, prefixes and suffixes, using a dictionary to proofread for spelling, using words for filling out forms, 300 most frequently used words in rank order).

**Learning Together: A Small Group Literacy Tutor Training Handbook.** Fretz, Barbara and Marianne Paul. Core Literacy, Waterloo Region Inc., 1994. LPM TR M TEA FRE

Don't shy away from this handbook because of its focus on small groups! It is not only an excellent resource for training small group literacy tutors, but also contains invaluable background information, ideas and techniques which can be used as is, or easily adapted, either for training tutors or by tutors themselves working with individual students.

The main chapters are: Learning in a Group, Program Planning, Methodology, Communication and Cooperative Learning. Many areas could be easily adapted for one-on-one tutoring, such as: the learner-centred approach, learning style inventories, tutoring styles and how to adapt them to the learner, individual needs assessment, evaluating tutor and learner progress, reading and writing approaches, learning strategies, active listening, learner self-evaluation tools, guidelines for tutors and trainers, etc.

**Learning Together: The Challenge of Adult Literacy. A Resource Book for Trainers.** Ennis, Frances and Helen Woodrow. St. John's, Newfoundland: Educational Planning and Design Associates Ltd. 1992. LPM TR LT LEA

Although this resource book was intended for *trainers* of literacy workers, each module contains useful summary sheets meant for use as handouts and overheads. The modules are: Adult Learning, Reading and Writing, Stages of Literacy, Stage I - Feeling Literate, Stage II - Developing Literacy, Stage III - Becoming Literate, Spelling, Curriculum Materials, Getting Started and Evaluation.

**Literacy Portfolio Assessment, A Resource for Literacy Workers. Ottawa: Partnerships in Learning. University of Ottawa. 1994 LPM TR NEVA TAY**

This guide on assessment is an excellent resource for anyone interested in the method of portfolio assessment. "A portfolio is defined as a purposeful collection of a learner's work that tells a story of the efforts, progress or achievement in a given area. " The assessment process is clearly explained in a step by step format with attractive worksheets that make up the portfolio. These worksheets could easily be adapted as exercises for student use and need not be restricted to use for assessment purposes alone.

**The Literacy Tutor.** Baker, Diane. Wetaskiwin, Alberta: Wetaskiwin PALS (Program for Adult Literacy Skills).

A handbook designed by the Wetaskiwin PALS and dedicated to each new tutor and learner, to give them confidence as they work and learn together. Contains practical information/tools on the role of the instructor, tutor self-evaluation, Carkhuff's model for planning, writing learning objectives, adapting lesson plans to learning styles, evaluation, the first meeting, tipsheet on tutoring, and "tutor magic".

**Many Literacies: Modules for Training Adult Beginning, Readers and Tutors.** Gillespie, Marilyn. Amherst, MA.: Center for International Education, University of Massachusetts.1990. LPM TR VT GIL

This handbook was designed to be used by teachers and/or volunteer tutors working with adult beginning readers, that is, English speakers who do not yet read or write well enough to enter a pre-GED program. The author recognizes that most tutors "are deeply concerned with knowing more about how their students view the world and how they learn", thus providing activities designed for mixed groups of students and tutors to explore these issues together. The activities and approaches are meant to be adapted: group activities to one-to-one tutoring, any of the

approaches to working with ESL literacy students. It's main purpose is to generate an interest in creative, renovative ways to involve students in the learning process.

Specific chapters include: Creating a Community of Learners (first meetings, what is literacy, myths & facts about illiteracy, adult learning, purposes for reading & writing); Developing a Learning Plan (planning/learning cycle, individual goals, learning contracts, group assessment); Introducing Reading (your reading history, what good readers do, strategies, language experience, sustained silent reading), Writing and Publishing (a writing workshop, the writing process, spelling, revising and editing, dialogue journals, life stories, collective writing).

**1001 Practical Ideas for Teaching Language Arts.** Moore, Bill Markham, Ont.: Pembroke Publishers Limited. 1989.

A four-booklet series containing "more than a thousand games, strategies, suggestions, exercises, procedures, activities, and ideas to help language live for every student.

Listening, Speaking, Viewing and Doing " provides exciting opportunities for teachers to help students experience all aspects of language. Topics include: what makes a good listener, the listening-reading connection, the advantage of a speaking program, speaking from outlines, planning openings and closings, impromptu speech, building vocabulary, critical television viewing, dramatization, playmaking, performing." LPM TR CD MOO lis

Organizing the Whole Language Classroom: why whole language learning makes sense, "theme" is one way to go, working with the whole class, organizing small groups, meeting individual needs, student-teacher conferences, evaluation and testing. LPM TR CD MOO org

Reading for Whole Language Learning "provides practical hands-on activities to help you: teach basic reading skills, recognize reading styles for different materials, develop good questioning strategies, explore ways to enjoy literature, use new technologies to present a story, poem or play, discover reading aloud (when and why), evaluate reading and literature. LPM TR CD MOO rea

Writing for Whole Language Learning "will help you take students through the writing process and build important writing skills. Includes specific activities on: writing to inform or persuade, writing verse, logs, diaries and journals, cause and effect, spelling and total word control, mechanics of writing, evaluating written work. LPM CD MOO wri

**PAL (Project for Adult Literacy) Tutor Guide.** Winnipeg Core area Initiative.

Tutor manual designed for volunteer tutors working in community-based literacy programs. The main approach taken is using language and the experience of the learner to write a story. Included are example activities to create your own sessions, lesson planning, tips for tutors, record keeping, using community resources and your neighborhood.

**Partnerships in Literacy: A guide for Community Organization and Program**

**Development.** Watson, Wendy and Barbara Bate. Victoria, BC: British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. 1991. LPM TR PP WAT

This guide uses a community-based approach, using the philosophy that cooperation among community groups is essential to a successful literacy strategy. The aim is to help beginning literacy groups develop into strong organizations and encourage new directions in literacy partnerships. Four major areas of focus are: developing a community literacy organization, implementing a program, examples of innovative literacy partnership projects, and a detailed description of 37 different programs in BC. A practical step by step account covers essential aspects from fundraising to tutor training, and program evaluation. Specific examples of partnerships with libraries, media, family literacy, business, and labour, and advocacy groups are provided.

**Passing the GED: A Complete Preparation for the High School Equivalency Examination,** New Revised Canadian Edition. Agincourt, Ont.: GAGE Educational Publishing Company, 1995. LPM GED GEN PAS

This is the Canadian edition of a very thorough and hands on guide that may be used to prepare for the High School Equivalency Examinations. Sample test items, warm-up exercises and tips, mini-tests with answers, and overviews of each subject area tested on the GED are provided.

**People Reading Series.** Stevens, Darlene and Terrie Moar. LPM TR E SPN STE

A series designed for people at beginning reading levels and has materials for adults labeled with a mental disability. Also created for integrating into adult literacy programs that include people with a variety of skills. Provided are instructional techniques and activities to develop specific skill areas. The use of photographs of people in everyday situations makes this an approachable book for tutor and learner. The series contains four learner books each accompanied by an instructor's manual.

**Recommendations of the Manitoba Task Force on Literacy.** Manitoba Task Force on Literacy. Winnipeg: Manitoba Education & Training. 1989. LPM TR IP MAN

The mandate of this particular Task Force was to determine the magnitude of literacy issues among affected groups, and to recommend strategies for continuous programming on literacy. Twenty-eight recommendations covering issues of policy, funding, the MB Adult Literacy Council, the Literacy Office, supports for learners, awareness, at-risk students, Aboriginal literacy, ESL, training and education, are presented in this publication.

**Read All About It!! Tutor Adults with Daily Newspaper. Tutor Handbook.** Lawson, U., K. New York: Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc. 1984. LPM TR RW LAW

If you are interested in developing lesson plans that are focused on using the newspaper as a teaching tool, then this is the handbook for you! A variety of lesson plans incorporate newspaper clippings from both Canada and the United States, with explanations on using them.

**Reading for Today, A sequential program for adults.** Beers, J. et. al. Austin, Texas: Steck-Vaughn Company. 1987. LPM LM RW AB REA

An easy to use, and approachable series of five books and teacher's guide for adult learners. This sequential program has students read units that teach and practice all subskills simultaneously. Life-coping themes, sight words, phonics, oral and structural language, and comprehension are some of the techniques employed. Each page contains activities using photographs interspersed with words. The teacher's guide also includes student objectives, teaching notes, reviews, and a diagnostic placement form.

**The Right to Read: Tutor's Handbook for the SCIL Program (Student Centred Individualized Learning).** Carpenter, Tracy. Frontier College Press, 1986. LPM TR M TEA CAR

A practical "how-to" resource manual meant to assist volunteer tutors in developing effective individual learning programs with the active input of their students. With three main sections focusing on Reading, Writing and Math, this tutor's handbook also includes information on the Literacy Crisis, What is a Tutor, and sections on Starting Out, Tutoring Independently, Special Considerations, Ending Tutor/Student Relationships and Long-Term Lesson Planning.

**Supermarket View (The).** Leeds: The Printed Resource Unit for Continuing Education, Leeds City Council Department of Education. 1980. LPM TR M TEA SUP

A photopack containing a selection of signs and some common food products found in a supermarket. May be used with individual students or small groups of beginning readers as a stimulus for developing oral language, or as an aid teaching a wide range of skills (ie. speaking, reading, comprehension, writing, numeracy). Includes tutor's notes, sample workcard and flashcards. Photos are of British products, but provides an excellent example for developing your own photopack and how to use it.

**Survival Vocabulary Books.** Richey, Jim. Haywood, CA: Janus Book Publishers. 1979 LPM LM LS AB RIC

This set of six books contains self-explanatory units designed to help learn vocabulary for specific life situations. The books are entitled: *Restaurant Language*, *Job Application Language*, *Drug Store Language*, *Credit Language*, *Supermarket Language* and *Clothing Language*.

**Thinking Skills.** Wagner, Rudolph F. Portland, Maine: J. Weston Walch, Publisher. 1982.

A series containing copy masters of student worksheets and answer keys. Includes:

- *Summaries and Symbolizations* LPM TR R LAN WED v.1
- *Classification and Opposites* LPM TR R LAN WED v.1
- *Analogies and Similes* LPM TR R LAN WED v.2
- *Creative Thinking and Problem Solving* LPM TR R LAN WED v.2
- *Inferential Thinking* LPM TR R LAN WED v.2

**TUTOR: Techniques Used in the Teaching of Reading.** Sixth Edition. Colvin, Ruth J. and Jane H. Root. Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc. Syracuse, New York, 1987. LPM TR R LAL COL

A handbook for teaching basic reading to adults and teenagers. "This book is organized to enable tutors to become competent in the following areas: ability to evaluate for placement, diagnosis, and achievement; ability to plan and evaluate an instructional lesson; ability to apply the methods and approaches of Language Experience, Sight Words, Context Clues, Phonics, and Word Patterns to any literary or informational resources of adult or teenage interest newspapers, sports articles, job-related materials, household product labels, drivers' manuals or pleasure reading; ability to use assisted reading techniques to lead the learner into material beyond his or her current reading ability; ability to integrate writing skills into lessons from the very beginning; sensitivity to the needs of the adult new reader. Accompanied by personal illustrations from the experiences of real people.

**Tutor Ways: A Training Program for Literacy Tutors.** Swift Current, SK.: Cypress Hills Regional College. 1994 LPM TR M TEA TUT

A multi-media package designed to provide practical tutor training which can be easily accessed by individual tutors or small groups with minimal or no professional supervision. The focus is on helping adult learners improve their

reading, writing, speaking and/or mathematical skills. Each module consists of (1) *a manual* explaining what is to be learned, providing examples to illustrate it, exercises to practice it, and an answer key for the exercises; and (2) *a video tape* which further models the new information through actual sessions with learners. The manual also includes a discussions in each module regarding the ESL learner, and the importance of "culture" as it applies not only to the ethnic background of the learner, but also to the specific places within our own culture (such as various workplaces, the doctor's office, etc.)

The modules are: Performing a Task Analysis on Learner's Goals; Writing and Using Language Experience Stories; Using Learner-Centred Materials to Teach Reading Skills, and Planning Effective Lessons.

**Unscrambling Spelling.** Klein, Cynthia and Robin Millar. London: Hodder and Stoughton. 1990. LPM TR RW KLE c.2

This book is designed to encourage teachers to teach spelling, by using students' own written words as the basis of an individualized spelling program. Explanations of how to develop an individualized scheme for each student and how to discover effective strategies for remembering spellings are given. Suggestions are offered on how to integrate the individualized approach into the classroom. Included are photocopiable resource sheets that may be used to stimulate discussion about spelling, learning, and language issues. A resource and reference guide used to explore particular topics are also provided.

**The Volunteer Tutor's Toolbox.** Herrmann, Beth Ann (ed.) Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association. 1994. LPM TR R LAN VOL

This excellent new resource "is intended for the brand new tutor who may be apprehensive about the first (or even the fourth or fifth) lesson with a young or adult learner. It strongly emphasizes the language experience approach and individualized reading, and dismisses almost entirely the role of phonics in reading instruction. Written from the experiences of a variety of volunteer tutors and adult learners, it is written in a conversational tone for easy reading and avoids the use of professional literacy jargon as much as possible. Also "offers specific advice on improving study skills and test-taking abilities."

The chapters are: Practical Tips for Volunteer Tutors (developing and maintaining successful relationships, communicating effectively, planning and implementing lessons); Effective Literacy Instruction; Building Characteristics of Successful Readers and Writers; Helping Learners Complete Assigned Work; Effective Literacy Assessment; Where to go When You Need More Help lists recommended resources for further assistance; and Some Final Thoughts about Literacy and Tutoring.

**Whole Language and Adult Literacy Instruction.** Davies, Paula and Ann McQuaid. BC Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. 1992. LPM TR TP WHO

The aim of this book is to enable you to adopt whole language strategies for adult learners. As well as some personal reflections of the authors' experiences in applying the whole language approach in adult literacy classes, several teaching strategies that may be used in a variety of settings are discussed. Two extensive lists of references are also supplied.

**Wordless Book (The).** Human Resources Development Canada. Quebec: National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada. 1994.

Available FREE from National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada, 25 Eddy Street, Hull, Quebec K1A 1K5 or FAX (819) 953-8076. (Your program may have copies on hand or want to order multiple copies). Each book contains a tear-out Tutor's Manual.

"The Wordless Book is 24 pages of stories without words. Designed as an interactive teaching tool for today's adult learners, it leads, learners to the fun side of reading and writing, *regardless* of their reading level. The book allows *learners* to make up the stories, as this is *their* book. While tutors and learners are working together on the stories that they pick, learners can improve their spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure and organization.

The stories are designed for adults. Non-readers can develop story ideas as others write for them. More advanced readers can fill in the blanks themselves. All readers will benefit by what they learn working with their tutors, and when they review their stories later."

**WordPower: Tutor Training Manual.** Butler, Maureen. Yukon Literacy Council, Whitehorse, YT. 1990. LPM TR M TEA BUT

This "experiential workbook" for volunteer tutors provides interesting overviews of many aspects of adult literacy, experiential exercises for tutors to reflect upon their own knowledge, attitudes and approaches to literacy, and practical tools and instructional techniques. Some of the areas covered include: adult learners; volunteer tutoring; assessment (including numeracy); approaches to teaching reading; goal setting, lesson planning and evaluation; and getting started.

**Writing Activities for Newspaper Readers: A Teacher's Resource.** Gebhard, Ann Syracuse, NY: New Readers Press. 1986. LPM TR RW GEB

"This manual will show you how to create effective writing activities based on reading a newspaper." The four units focus on: Providing an atmosphere that promotes confidence, Helping students gain control [of the writing process], Helping students to achieve competence, and Integrating control and competence activities.

**Writing Our Lives: Reflections on Dialogue Journal Writing with Adults Learning English.** Peyton, Joy Kreeft and Jana Staton (eds). Prentice-Hall, Inc. and the Centre for Applied Linguistics, 1991. LPM TR RW WRI

"There have been many publications about dialogue journal writing, but none focusing on the adult developing literacy in English as a second language. [This book] represents the latest thinking on this practice, by leading teachers and researchers in adult literacy. This long-awaited volume presents a rationale for making open and continuing dialogue a central part of any work with adults, and discusses various approaches to promoting this dialogue with students, tutors, and teachers in many different types of programs. [It] also includes practical how-to suggestions for starting and maintaining written dialogue with adult ESL students, and concludes with the most comprehensive resource list now available for further reading about dialogue journal practice and research."

**Life Long Reading, A Basic Course.** Rouhier, Kathleen M. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Cambridge Adult Education, Prentice Hall Regents. 1993. LPM LM RW AA ROU

**Survival Vocabulary.** Wedler, Gertrude. Portland, Maine: J. Weston Walch, Publisher. 1984. LPM TR R LAN WED v.1, v.2, v.3

# Aboriginal/Cross-Cultural Literacy

*\*\*Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit formerly called Literacy and Continuing Education Branch*

**Native Literacy and Life Skills Curriculum Guidelines: A Resource Book for Adult Basic Education.** BC Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. 1990. LPM TR CD NAT

This resource book provides guidelines for providing basic literacy instruction, pre-employment and life-skills training, computational skills and Native cultural awareness. The book is divided into three parts: Understanding and Teaching Native Adults; Theme Units; and Selected References and Resource Materials. It is meant to be applicable in both urban and rural or on-reserve contexts, and directed toward students between a non-literate and Grade 5 literacy level.

The Theme Units included are: structure and function of traditional Native communities; producing a community newspaper; investigating a community issue; child care; looking at your community's schools; the Indian and non-Indian family in transition; identifying personal strengths and weaknesses; applying and interviewing for a job; Indian self-government; introduction to interpersonal communication; the critical consumer; personal values clarification.

**Letters to Marcia: A Teacher's Guide to Anti-Racist Education.** Lee, Enid. Cross-Cultural Communication Centre. Toronto. 1990. LPM TR CD LEE

This guide is designed for use by teachers in a school setting but the ideas and principles could be adapted for use with any kind of educational program. It provides information, analysis, and activities to enable you to use situations in daily work to contribute to anti-racist education. Included are letters, staff development notes, classroom activities, and resources.

**The NESAs Activities Handbook for Native and Multicultural Classrooms. Volume One.** Sawyer, Don and Howard Green. Vancouver: Tillacum Library. 1984. LPM TR SN SAW

Taking an experiential learning approach, this handbook offers over twenty-five exercises selected for the ability to involve learners, to introduce and explain concepts, and for the capacity to have a meaningful impact on participants. The games focus on and develop attitudes necessary for multicultural awareness, and sensitivity. Designed for use in multicultural and Native classrooms, but an excellent resource for any adults interested in challenging stereotypes and incorporating community issues into literacy learning.

**The NESA Activities Handbook for Native and Multicultural Classrooms. Volume Two**  
Sawyer, Don and Art Napolean. Vancouver: Tillacum Library. 1991. LPM TR SN SAW

"A second volume of educational culture-sensitive activities tested and designed for use in Native and multicultural classrooms, developed by the Native Education Services Associates. The activities stress the importance of culture in students' lives, and teaches them basic personal and community related skills so they may become more self-reliant and culturally responsible." Like the first volume, the activities in this book are appropriate to use with adult learners in a group setting.

**Stages of Learning, Building a Native Curriculum.** Candline, Mary. Literacy and Continuing Education\*\*, Manitoba Education and Training. LPM TR D SPA CAN

"This curriculum guide is designed to give teachers and tutors a model for designing multi-level activities for literacy groups. Several activities include simplified versions of reading selections. Many of the vocabulary, writing and spelling activities should be helpful when thinking about activities you could design for other materials." The curriculum is composed of three sections, each contained in its own booklet: 1) Teacher's Guide, 2) Student Activities and Research Unit, 3) Information for an Indian/Metis Trivia Game.

**An Anthology. Writing the Circle, Native Women of Western Canada.** Reneault, Jeanne and Sylvia Vancel (eds). Edmonton: NeWest Publishers Limited. 1991 LPM LM FP C WRI

**Native Literacy Resources. An Annotated Bibliography.** Purton, Debbie. Parklands Regional College. 1994. LPM TR A REF PUR

**Our Bit of Truth, An Anthology of Canadian Native Literature.** Grant, Agnes (ed)  
Winnipeg: Pemican Publications Inc. 1990. LPM LM FP C GRA

## About Literacy

**Adult Literacy in Canada: Results of a National Study.** Statistics Canada. 1991. LPM TR IP ADU

This report presents the findings of a survey entitled "Literacy Skills Used in Daily Activities", and has the intention of making the results understandable to the Canadian Public. A wide range of areas that have implications for adult literacy are presented including health, old age, workplace, gender, migration, language, and labour.

**Broken Words: Why Five Million Canadians are Illiterate: the Southam Literacy Report.** Calamai, Peter. Southam Communications. 1988. LPM TR IP BRO

Looks at the extent of illiteracy in Canada, the effects of illiteracy, and remedial measures undertaken by the public and private sector.

**Canadian Woman Studies. "Women and Literacy", vol. 9, nos. 3 & 4.** 1988.

This issue of Canadian Woman Studies contains a collection of articles written by women involved in literacy programs as workers and learners. Poems and other learner produced selections are included. Some of the topics presented are: immigrant women workers and literacy, Native women's literacy issues, literacy and disabled women, personal experiences of learners, programs and services across Canada, literacy and development, literacy in Eritrea, Nicaragua, and India.

**Deaf-Children and Literacy.** Padden, Carol A. Geneva: UNESCO: International Bureau of Education. 1990. LPM TR IP PAD

A short booklet discussing issues relevant to literacy and deaf children. Includes a list of suggested readings.

**Intergenerational Family Literacy: A Report on the Chilliwack Community Project.** Bate, Barbara. University College of the Fraser Valley. 1993. LPM TR IP BAT c.2

This report describes the Chilliwack Intergenerational Family Literacy Project in eight separate stages of development. Information of family literacy contacts, resources, and programs in Canada and the US follow the report.

**Illiteracy and Human Rights.** Miller, Louise. Ottawa: National Literacy Secretariat. 1990. LPM TR C GEN MIL

This document examines the current situation of illiteracy and human rights in Canada. It provides specific case histories with excerpts from personal interviews of individuals lacking basic literacy skills who are prevented from fully exercising their social and human rights. Proposals are offered in an attempt to remove the obstacles that people in this situation experience.

**Listen to Women in Literacy: The power of women-positive literacy work.** Atkinson, Tannis, Frances Ennis and Betty-Ann Lloyd. Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women (CCLOW). Fernwood Publishing. Toronto. 1994. LPM TR D SPA ATK

"This is a book written and designed for intermediate adult literacy students. It contains material from: The power of women-positive literacy work--Program-based action research and Women in literacy speak--The power of woman-positive literacy work." A collection of the experiences and descriptions of what twelve different programs across Canada attempted to do that would be positive for women, and what they learned in the process. This book could be used in several ways. The authors hope that it will help others understand women and literacy, and that programs may use it to start talking about women in their programs.

**Literacy Counts.** Perrin, Burt. Ottawa: National Literacy Secretariat. 1990. LPM TR IP PER

This short booklet considers both the economic, and human costs of illiteracy to Canadian society. It also asks the question of just how literate Canadians are, and what can be done to promote literacy.

**Literacy for Life: Report on Partnerships for Children's Literacy.** Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Education. 1991. LPM TR PL LIT

The ideas resulting from a series of meetings to promote community partnerships for children's literacy in Ontario are summarized in this publication. A listing of specific proposals for future action to support children's literacy development and a survey of existing programs are outlined.

**Literacy 2000: Make the Next Ten Years Matter. A Conference Summary.** New Westminster, BC: BC Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology; Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada; National Literacy Secretariat; and Douglas College, BC. LPM TR IP LIT

This conference summary contains papers written by conference presenters specifically for this publication, along with a critique of the conference design and recommendations. Issues covered include defining literacy; conceptions and strategies; meeting learner needs; interpreting literacy, culture and content; literacy and the job site; and training instructors.

**Literacy and Poverty: A View from the Inside. Research Report. Literacy Training for Low Income People: some issues and solutions.** National Anti-Poverty Organization. Ottawa. 1992. LPM TR IP LIT

This report is one chapter taken from a larger study by NAPO exploring the connection between poverty and literacy. Outlined are specific barriers which prevent low income people from participating in literacy training, and essential characteristics of good literacy programs for them. The information given is helpful for looking at funding, designing, and running literacy training to respond better to the needs of low income learners.

**Mobilizing Women for Literacy.** Lind, Agneta. Geneva: UNESCO: International Bureau of Education. 1990. LPM TR IP LIN

This booklet takes a global look at the social, political, and development issues that affect women's literacy. Examples of national literacy campaigns and direction for future action are offered.

**More Than Words Can Say: Personal Perspectives on Literacy.** Toronto: McClelland and Stewart. 1990. LPM . TR PL MOR

This publication was initiated by the Canadian Organization for Development Through Education (CODE) to commemorate International Literacy Year, and to promote awareness of the importance of literacy. A novel approach is taken by compiling the personal reflections, 'in the form of short stories, of well known Canadian authors and journalists. A short biography and photograph of the author accompanies each selection. This format offers a personal touch, and makes for entertaining reading while commenting on relevant issues pertaining to literacy.

**Native Literacy Research Report.** Rodriguez, Carmen and Don Sawyer. Salmon Arm, BC: Native Adult Education Resource Centre, Okanagan College. 1990. LPM TR IP ROD

This report addresses questions of what potential literacy learners have to say about literacy. More specifically what barriers interfere with learning, and what do learners consider as a positive learning environment. These questions are related to current literacy theory and effective practices. Included are the findings of a survey conducted in several Native communities in British Columbia, and an overview of innovative practices and illustrative programs.

**Put it on the List ...** Pike, Sue. United Way of Canada. 1991. LPM TR PP PUT text

This is a package of mixed-media materials consisting of a video called "Litrasee! Put it on the list", a folder called "Literacy Support Work: An Integrated Approach" and a handbook that serves as a facilitator's guide to using the video and folder in training workshops. The handbook includes: a survey to test how open and accessible your office is to people who cannot read or write well; a section on how to make your written materials easier to read; and a training module with ideas for planning and running a literacy awareness workshop in your program.

**Reading Skills of Adults in Canada. Excerpts from the publication Adult Literacy in Canada: Results of a National Survey.** Ottawa: Ministry of Industry, Science, and Technology. 1992. LPM TR B RES MON

As the title indicates this report is based on the original publication of the national survey on adult literacy. Provided here is a summary of information related to reading skills of the adult population in Canada. Major findings are presented and an analysis of reading and literacy skill levels related to selected characteristics are included.

**Reading the Legal World: Literacy and Justice in Canada.** Report of the Canadian Bar Association Task Force on Legal Literacy. Ottawa: The Canadian Bar Association. 1992. LPM TR IP REA

Due to the shortage of information on the relationship between literacy and the law, a Task Force was created to examine how the law serves people with limited reading skills. A research study was initiated to survey the experiences of members of the literacy and legal communities focusing on how they deal with this issue. The resulting report provides the findings and recommendations of this study along with a description of the research process used.

**The Reluctant Learner: A Research Report on Nonparticipation and Dropout in Literacy Programs in BC.** Thomas, Audrey M. Victoria, BC: British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. 1990. LPM TR IP THO

A project to explore reasons for non-participation in ABE literacy programs and reasons for dropout from such programs in BC, are summarized in this report. A detailed description of the study is presented, as well as the major findings, and a literature review of adult education studies.

**Spelling it Out and in French: Illiteracy and literacy training among francophones in Canada.** Boucher, André. Montreal: Institut canadien d'éducation des adultes. 1993. LPM TR IP BOU c.1-2

"A critical study of the circumstances of Francophones in Canada: required reading for all those who are interested in literacy action and the fate of Canada's French-speaking population."

**Voices from the Literacy Field.** Draper, James A. and Maurice C. Taylor (eds.). Toronto: Culture Concepts. 1992 LPM TR PL VOI

This book may be used as a valuable tool in analysing and studying basic adult education principles, philosophies, and theories that are closely linked to and guide good practice. A selection of case studies from all regions of Canada attempts to capture the experience of literacy practitioners, and their students. At the end of each case study discussion questions are used to provoke further reflection. Issues looked at include the foundation of literacy, community building, special needs, activating student participation, and workplace literacy.

**Women, Literacy and Action: A Handbook.** Breen, Mary (ed.) Toronto: Ontario Literacy Coalition. 1991. LPM TR IP WOM WOMEN

Written by a group of ten literacy workers, this handbook contains suggestions for literacy programs interested in planning International Women's Day activities, and includes a list of resources. Literacy is examined in relation to feminism, visible minority women, health, Native women, parenting and poverty, with a wide range of analyses, and several underlying themes that emerge to reflect women's experiences in our society. A section is also devoted to activities intended to spark action that workers, volunteers, and learners can do together.

# Bibliographies

*\*\* Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit formerly Literacy and Continuing Education Branch*

**Anti-Racist, Anti-Sexist Education: A Handbook of Resources.** Toronto: Ontario Literacy Coalition. 1992. LPM TR CD ANT

An annotated listing of resources supporting the development and production of anti-racist, anti-sexist curriculum materials for literacy workers.

**Books for Adult New Readers, Sixth Edition.** Cleveland, OH Project: LEARN. 1991. LPM TR REF PUR

A sample collection and annotated bibliography of low level reading materials of adult interest. Entries include publication information, prices, and descriptions. Titles represent fiction, non-fiction, periodicals, tutor resources, and guides to software for the adult new reader. This book lists over 700 titles and is organized in a handy to use format.

**Reader Development Bibliography: Books Recommended for Adult New Readers. Fourth Edition.** Revised and annotated by Vielde L. Collins. Philadelphia: The Free Library of Philadelphia. 1990. LPM TR A REF COL

An annotated list of printed literacy materials for adult new readers. These paperback instructional titles, many in workbook format are for use with ABE and ESL students. Priority has been given to easy to use material that is helpful to volunteer tutors and independent learners. Special features include ABE and ESL level charts for identifying reading levels. Titles are divided into the following categories: leisure reading, biography, community and family life, jobs, reading and writing, arithmetic, science, religion, the world, ESL, materials for tutors and teachers. Also included are two appendices of literacy materials for deaf adults, and addresses of publishers and distributors.

**Resource Reading List 1990. Annotated Bibliography of Resources by and About Native People.** Toronto: Canadian Alliance in Solidarity with Native Peoples. 1990. LPM TR A REF VER

A collection of writings by and about Native peoples and cultures, this book attempts to indicate the most useful resources for the general public, schools, colleges, libraries, bookstores, and Native cultural centres, and organizations. Titles are arranged to reflect the "Native way of seeing", and publication information is provided in addition to descriptive annotations. The selection includes books for children, youth, and adults, teaching resources, Français lists, periodicals, publishers, and audio-visual sources.

**Suggested Resources For Literacy Programs. Second Edition.** Revised and Expanded by Janet Regehr. Manitoba Literacy and Continuing Education Branch\*\*. 1994. LPM TR A REF REG

This catalogue contains an extensive list of books, and resources. The various topics selected are: reading, spelling and vocabulary, writing, learner/tutor writings, numeracy, print materials, games and concrete materials, social studies, science, GED preparation aboriginal materials, ESL, life skills, leisure reading, and teacher resources. Each title is accompanied by a description and publication information. A core resource list, and a list of publishers are also offered.

**Native Literacy Resources. An Annotated Bibliography.** Purton, Debbie. Parklands Regional College. 1994. LPM TR A REF PUR

# ESL/Literacy

**Drama Techniques in Language Learning: A resource book of communication activities for language teachers.** New edition. Maley, Alan and Alan Duff. Cambridge Handbooks for Language Teachers. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1982. LPM TR CD MAL

The approach taken in this book is that 'dramatic activities' give students an opportunity to use their own personalities in creating material on which part of the language class is based. These techniques draw on the natural ability of every person. Practical considerations in using drama are discussed, and a variety of uncomplicated exercises that are fun to use, and stimulate energy and imagination are given.

**ESL/Literacy: An Introductory-Handbook for Tutors.** London: Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit. 1985. LPM TR CD ESL

As the title suggests this handbook offers some starting points for tutors new to literacy with second language adult learners. A general approach is given along with some useful teaching strategies and case studies. Strategies described are the whole word approach, literacy through language practice, the language experience approach, phonics, using context, and spelling.

**ESL Literacy Instruction, A Guidebook to Theory and Practice.** Gunderson, Lee. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents. 1991 LPM TR LT GUN

Different programs are described and procedures for selecting appropriate reading programs are outlined. The focus is on literacy programs designed for ESL students at all age levels.

**Games for Language Learning. Cambridge Handbooks for Language Teachers.** Wright, Andrew, David Betteridge and Michael Buckby. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1983. LPM TR CD WRI

The authors of this book maintain that games help and encourage many learners to sustain their interest and to create contexts in which language is meaningful. It is suggested that games provide intense and meaningful practice, and should therefore be seen as central to teaching methodology. An extensive selection of games are described in order to enable teachers to do just that. Games to suit all levels, for class, individual, pair, and group work are provided. Lots of pictures and a straight forward format make this a very accessible resource.

**I Speak English: A Tutor's Guide to Teaching English. Third edition.** Colvin, Ruth J. Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc. Syracuse, NY. 1986.

Here is a simplified, condensed book of basic methods suggesting logical helpful ideas for persons teaching English for the first time. Presented in a practical manner, so that volunteers with no previous teaching experience can teach effectively. It is also useful to paraprofessionals and professional teachers in other fields called upon to teach conversational English. Various approaches, skills, and activities are provided from which lessons can be put together, with techniques that are also adaptable to small group instruction.

**Teaching English as a Foreign Language, A Practical Guide.** Dawson, Colin. Surrey, UK: Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd. 1984. LPM TR TP DAW

This compact but thorough guide introduces teachers to TESL/TEFL. As well as discussing the basics, a wide variety of techniques and practical advice are presented.

**Themes and Tools for ESL: How to Choose Them and How to Use Them.** Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Citizenship. 1987. LPM TR CD THE

A booklet which discusses how to choose themes, how to create tools, and how to use tools for conscientization and for language learning.

**TESL Talk. "The Teaching of Pronunciation. An Introduction for Teachers of English as a Second language."** Avery, P. and S. Ehrlich (eds) vol. 17, no. 1, 1987. LPM TR PL TES c.1

**TESL Talk. "Literacy."** Bell, Jifi (ed). vol. 20, no. 1, 1990. LPM TR PL TES c.2

# Family Literacy

*\*Literacy Partners of Manitoba formerly Literacy Workers Alliance of Manitoba*

**Come Read With Me. A Family Literacy Program. Conference Materials.** Regina, Saskatchewan. 1993. LPM TR IP COM

A collection of articles and resources regarding family literacy. Sections include: definitions and background; what do family literacy programs look like?; adult education principles, popular education, group processes; Family Literacy Programs Training Manual; issues in family literacy; facilitator resources; children's literature resources; facilitator read-alouds; reading strategies and theory; evaluation; and, parent handouts.

**Keepers of the Earth: Native Stories and Environmental Activities for Children.** Caduto, Michael J. and Joseph Bruchac. Saskatoon, SK.: Fifth House Publishers. 1989. LPM TR CD CAD

Written for children ages 5 to 12, this beautifully illustrated hard cover book, may easily be adapted for use with adults and family literacy work. The volume is composed of two parts, and a separate teacher's guide. The first part contains thoughts and suggestions for facilitating the use of stories and activities. The teacher's guide discusses the nature of the Indian myths, and cultures from which these stories come from. The second part uses stories as an introduction to subjects explored in the activities. Each story is followed by a summary and discussion section, while each activity is provided with procedures and materials needed to carry out the activity.

**Keepers of the Animals: Native Stories and Wildlife Activities for Children.** Caduto, Michael J. and Joseph Bruchac. Saskatoon, SK: Fifth House Publishers. 1991. LPM TR CD CAD

Written in the same format as its predecessor *Keepers of the Earth*, this book is also easily adapted for use in family literacy. Using the approach of story telling and activities, this is a valuable resource for anyone who wants to become excited by and connected with animals, ecology, and the environment.

**Learning Together: Family Literacy in Ontario.** McCoy, Liza, and Trudy Watts. Kingston: Family Literacy Interest Group of Ontario, Kingston. 1992. LPM TR IP MAC c.1-4

This is a resource manual that has been written based on interviews with family literacy practitioners in Ontario, and describes what many of the different programs are doing. The volume contains a description of activities currently involved in family literacy programming; discussion of the key issues in family literacy; and profiles of family literacy programs. Resources related to the issues and activities discussed are also listed.

**Literacy in Families Everywhere (L.I.F.E.): Models of family literacy that can be used in the home and the community.** Tessier, Angela. Winnipeg: Literacy Workers Alliance of Manitoba\*. 1994. LPM TR D SPA LIF

This practical guide to family literacy models includes units on: the importance of play, everyday literacy and language games, parents as reading partners, and family literacy in the wintertime.

**The Native Stories From Keepers of the Earth.** Caduto, Michael J. and Joseph Bruchac. Saskatoon, SK: Fifth House Publishers. 1991. LPM LM FP ML CAD

This is a compilation of twenty-four stories taken from *Keepers of the Earth: Native Stories and Environmental Activities for Children*. Like the original, this soft cover edition is filled with creative illustrations and the stories will appeal to readers of all ages.

**The READ CANADA Handbook.** Fernandez, Philip and Lynn Bowring. Toronto: Frontier College Press. 1993. LPM TR R LAN REA

This handbook was written "for people like you who are interested in promoting the love of reading among Canadian children." It is based on the recent experiences of READ CANADA, Frontier College's award-winning children's literacy program, whose aim is to ensure that every child in Canada becomes a lifelong reader, and thus promotes the concept of a "book buddy" - someone to read aloud regularly with the child. It suggests that you pick and choose ideas from the booklet that will work in your community. This handbook is also accompanied by a video entitled "Reading For Life".

## Miscellaneous

**The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language.** Crystal, David. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1987. LPM TR RW CRY

This is a unique source of information on the variety, structure, history and theory of language, with over 600 maps, diagrams and photographs. Comprised of 65 thematic sections, and organized in 11 parts, various topics such as the structure of language, languages of the world, child language acquisition, language and communication, signing and seeing, to mention but a few, are covered.

**Developing a Northern Curriculum.** Anderson, Audrey. Adult English Education Committee, Red Lake, Ont. 1986. LPM TR CD AND

With an introduction providing methods for developing teaching materials, and units on: recreation (fishing, hunting, gardening, the edible north), jobs for northern women, heating with wood, log spills, winter driving, around town (Sears, laundromat), citizenship information, (municipal, government and taxes, pensions).

**Exemplary Adult Literacy Programs and Innovative Practices in Canada.** Thomas, Audrey. Victoria, BC: British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. 1990. LPM TR PP THO

This is a report of a research project that examines existing programs and models of adult literacy. There is a selection of programs from across Canada that is a sample of a diverse range of the literacy field, including institutional, workplace, and community-based approaches. Descriptions are provided in sufficient detail to be of practical benefit to practitioners. Included are a list of innovative practices among Native groups in Ontario.

**Fundamental Level English Theme Units: Adult Basic Education.** Victoria, BC: British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. 1991. LPM TR CD FUN

Includes 28 teaching strategies and the following theme units: Identity, learning, introducing and using the novel, media literacy, heroes, multi-culturalism, biographies, peace, children's literature, the immigrant experience, gender roles and discrimination, and Native issues.

**Health: A Basic Education Pack.** Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit, Kingsbourne House, London. 1993. LPM TR HN HEA

The aims of this pack are: (1) to improve reading and writing through the provision of interesting and useful information about some areas of everyday health; (2) to draw attention of students and tutors to material available on health; (3) to outline the ways some of the materials may be presented to students. The activities are designed to be used with a group or an individual student and can be adapted, expanded and developed to meet different circumstances and levels of ability. Does not attempt to cover every aspect of health education but considers four main topics which cover the most common areas of interest: healthy eating and exercise, smoking and drinking, minor illnesses, and using the health service.

**Intermediate Level English Theme Units: Adult Basic Education.** Victoria, BC: British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. 1991. LPM TR CD INT

Includes 25 teaching strategies, and the following theme units: mysteries, Native education, Third World literature, the Environment, families, liberation movements in Canada, and violence.

**Teaching Groups: A Basic Education Handbook.** Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit, Kingsbourne House, London. LPM TR CD TEA

A small booklet containing information related to working with small groups, such as: starting points, a typical group session, some ideas for group work, talking in a group, talking and writing in groups, dealing with individual differences, group work over several weeks, and managing the group.

## Numeracy/Math

**Basic Skills with Whole Numbers, A Step-by-Step Approach.** Howett. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents. 1980. LPM LM MA HOW v.1

This book is filled with exercises that can be used to gain skill in adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing whole numbers. Throughout the book are word problems that provide the chance to apply these skills to real life problems.

**Math in Everyday Life.** Newton, David. Portland, Maine: J. Weston Walch, Publisher. 1991. LPM LM MA NEW

While this book teaches the numeracy skills that are used in everyday life, it does so using an innovative approach by following the daily accounts and financial problems of a family. The chapters focus on various lessons from budget planning, to mortgage loans, to life insurance. Questions, activities, and forms make this a very hands on resource.

**The Numeracy Pack.** Coben, Diana and Sandy Black. London: Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit. 1984. LPM TR NU COB

This pack consists of four booklets filled with easy to use exercises and explanations of basic number calculations, fractions decimals, percentages, and measurements.

**Banking for Adult Readers.** Calgary: ACCESS Alberta. 1981. LPM LM LS B BAN

**Numbers Start Here.** London: The Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit 1983. LPM TR MA NUM

**Working with Numbers. Ideas and Examples for Numeracy Worksheets.** London: Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit, and the Friends Centre, Brighton. 1982. LPM TR MA GAB

In addition to the above listing the LPM Resource Centre also carries a wide variety of Math series titles containing useful lessons and applications.

## **Plain Language Resources**

**Plain Language: Clear and Simple.** Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada. 1991. LPM TR RW PLA

"This guide shows how you can make even complex subjects easy to understand by using plain language techniques. [It] is designed to help with each stage of writing."

**Plain Language Resource Centre Catalogue.** Ottawa: Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada. 1992. LPM TR A REF PLA

This catalogue was compiled as a reference tool, and has an extensive listing of documentation held by the Plain Language Resource Centre.

## **Popular Education**

**Educating for a Change.** Arnold, Rick, Bev Burke, Carl James, D'Arcy Martin, and Barb Thomas. Toronto: Between the Lines and Doris Marshall Institute for Education and Action. 1991.

For anyone excited by the prospect of applying popular education methods to literacy work, this book may prove to be a useful introduction and practical manual. This is a book for all educators interested in the issue of using education as a tool for empowerment of people to work towards change, and is based on using democratic practice. In addition to analysing the broader social context in which work takes place, this resource aims to build skills and confidence in using popular education methods. Chapters cover designing educational events, educational activities and exercises, and group facilitation.

**Training for Empowerment: A Kit of Materials for Popular Literacy Workers Based on an Exchange Among Educators from Mozambique, Nicaragua and Brazil.** Marshall, Judith, Domingos Chigarire, Helena Francisco, António Gonçalves and Leonardo Nhantumbo. LPM TRH INT MAR

## Videos

**About Us: Adults with Learning Disabilities.** Learning Disabilities Association of Canada. (33 mins) LPM E SPN ABO

Personal stories of four adults with learning disabilities.

**Effective Instruction of Native Adults.** BC Ministry Responsible for Human Rights Learning Resources Branch, and Ministry of Education. 1990. LPM TR D SPA EFF

A six-part series of short videos addressing some of the unique aspects of working with Aboriginal adult learners. Also provides many insights into working with adult learners in general, and the importance of developing empathy with the learners' culture and life-experiences. The series includes:

- Part 1: Community-Based Education (12 mins)
- Part 2: Student-Centred Learning (13 mins)
- Part 3: Native Learning/Teaching Styles (14 mins)
- Part 4: Building Culture into Programs (13 mins)
- Part 5: Counselling and Support Services (14 mins)
- Part 6: Life Skills (12 mins)

**Ellen's Story.** National Film Board of Canada. 1992 (47 mins) LPM TR D SPA ELL

"A film about generational illiteracy and how a family can be imprisoned in poverty because it is unable to cope in a society which demands higher literacy skills every year. [Ellen Szita's true-life story is used to] illuminate the toll that illiteracy can take on individuals and families, and the resources, both personal and social, required to turn one's life around."

**A Key to Freedom: Literacy in the Prison System.** Heartland Motion Pictures. Feb/93. (22 mins) LWAM VID LM AKE

From the perspective of prison inmates who are learners and/or members of the Inmate Tutor Group at Prince Albert Correctional Centre.

**The Other Prison.** Winter Films. 1990. (42 mins)

A drama about a prison inmate's struggle with illiteracy within the prison culture.

**A Passage From Burnt Islands.** Handel, Alan. Montreal: National Film Board of Canada. 1992. LPM VID TR APA

A true story of how a small fishing village in Newfoundland overcame its literacy crisis through dedication, leadership and community involvement. Its message is clear: education empowers us all.

**Reading for Life.** READ Canada. Toronto: Frontier College Press. LPM TR R LAN REA

Re: Family Literacy.

**TD Green Machine: The Easy Way to Learn About a Great Way to Bank.** Toronto Dominion Bank. (13 mins) LPM LM LS AB TDG

A comical video, illustrating step-by-step procedures for using a banking machine, through the eyes of an apprehensive first-time learner.

**Willing to Learn.** Asterisk Productions, Toronto. (27 mins) LPM VID LM WIL

A drama which grew out of the real-life experiences of several women from the island of St. Vincent in the Caribbean. Written, acted and produced in collaboration with learners, tutors and friends of St. Vincent's New Horizons Adult Education Program.

**WORDS.** New Brunswick Committee on Literacy. 1992. (11 mins) LPM TRC GEN PED

Three adults talk about their experiences as non-readers - the fears, lies, how it impacted on their lives and their families - and the changes that learning to read had on their lives.

# Workplace Literacy

*\* Literacy Partners of Manitoba formerly Literacy Workers Alliance of Manitoba.*

**Crosswords and Wordgames for Workers.** "From the Shop Floor" Series. A publication of the Metro Labour Education Centre. 1989. LPM TR W WOR CRO

This booklet of puzzles and wordgames has been generated out of workers' own stories, newspaper articles, Scrabble, special events, and holidays. Used as a teaching technique, these games can develop vocabulary, practice spelling, learn homonyms, antonyms, and synonyms. All of the exercises use content that is relevant to workers in several different fields.

**Crosswords and Wordgames for Workers, Volume Two.** "From the Shop Floor" Series. A publication of the Metro Labour Education Centre. 1992. LPM TR W WOR CRO

This second volume has more great games, including some with a political flavour, such as a puzzle called "Away with GST", and others geared for math and computer learners.

**Employment Reading Skills Lab, Copy Master Package.** Pyrczak, Fred, Randall Bruce, and J.P. Dunne. J Weston Walch Publishers, Portland, Maine. 1985. LPM TR W WOR PYR

This particular set of reproducible activity sheets are designed for individual student use, and comes with instructions on how to use the package. Units include: reading to locate a job, health and safety on the job, compensation and benefits, employees' rights, tables, charts, and graphs in the world of work, equipment operating instructions, business forms and correspondence, keeping a job. Each unit has a one page reproducible achievement test. The focus is on developing vocabulary-comprehension skills, and reading skills. Reading passages deal with crucial aspects of employment. The activities in this lab may also be adapted to whole group instruction.

**Filling Out Forms.** Stein, Wendy. Syracuse, NY: New Readers Press. 1986. LPM LS B STE

A handy resource to use with learners, this book not only provides a wide variety of forms, but comes with detailed explanations of how to fill out the forms. There are twelve lessons, each studying forms related to: personal data, social security, banking, on the job, driving, voting, credit and health, and insurance.

**Form Filling Pack.** Printed Resource Unit For Continuing Education, Leeds City Council Department of Education. LPM TR M TEA FOR

This package is composed of the different kind of forms that individuals may find themselves filling out in their everyday lives. The sample forms provided may be copied and used as practice exercises for learners.

**Learning in the Workplace: Tutor Resource Guide.** Nore, Gordon W.E., Sarah Thompson and Brent Poulton. Learning in the Workplace, Toronto: Frontier College. 1991.

This tutor resource guide is the result of a series of workshops designed to provide peer tutor training within several companies across Canada. It is intended to give the tutor an introduction to SCIL (Student-Centred Individualized Learning) and as a companion to training. It is an excellent companion to other Frontier College publications, such as *The Right to Read*, *Tutor's Handbook for the SCIL Program*, and *It's About Learning*. Sections include: The workplace: a learning environment; how adults learn; the basics of teaching. developing learning materials; and, evaluating the sessions.

**Practicing Occupational Reading Skills.** Stewart, Charles and Ellen Taylor. Austin: Steck-Vaughn Company. 1990. LPM TR W WOR TAY

A series of six student books and teacher's guide containing lessons that are self-explanatory and self-directed, so that learners can work independently. The lessons provide opportunities to improve basic reading skills while offering selections about job-seeking, tools, equipment, using manuals, and other occupation related materials. The books look at the following fields: automotive, business, carpentry, electronics, health, and machine trades.

**WorkPlace Basic Skills: a teacher's guide for community-based literacy programs.** Plett, Lynette. Winnipeg: Literacy Workers Alliance of Manitoba\*. 1995.

The purpose of this guide is to "assist community-based literacy instructors with the planning, selecting, and teaching, of materials which their students will be required to use in the workplace." A series of lessons are found in each of the five units that make up this guide. The units cover: 1) understanding whole management structure of the workplace, 2) vocabulary, 3) practicing communication, 4) symbols and vocabulary of WEMS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System), 5) documents-employee handbooks, eg. topics, vocabulary, and sentence structure. A unique section on communication skills has been developed for women in technical and vocational programs, and includes lessons on assertiveness. The resources in this guide can be used as exercises for students to work on.

**Workplace Instructor's Handbook.** Plett, Lynette. Winnipeg: Literacy Workers Alliance of Manitoba\*. 1994. LPM TR W WOR PLE

Designed for use by instructors of Manitoba Workplace programs, this handbook suggests methods of assessment, implementation, and evaluation. Of interest to tutors are sections with sample lesson plans, course outlines, and learner objectives.

**Reading Skills That Work. A Functional Approach for Life and Work. Book Two.** Echaore - Yoon, Susan. Chicago: Contemporary Books.1991. LPM TR W WOR ECH bk. 2

**Spelling and Vocabulary Lessons from the World of Work.** Pyrczak, Fred. J. Weston Walch, Publisher. LPM TR W WOR PYR

**Working Mothers. Understanding Words in Context.** Steffens, Bradley. San Diego: Greenhaven Press Inc. 1989. LWAM LM SS C STE

# Winnipeg Public Library Resources

**The Right to Read: Tutor's Handbook for the SCIL Program (Student Centred Individualized Learning).** Carpenter, Tracy. Frontier College Press, 1986. Winnipeg Public Library call no. 374.012 CAR)

**Teach Someone to Read: A Step-by-step Guide for Literacy Tutors.** Rosenthal, Nadine. Belmont, CA.: Fearon Education. 1987. Winnipeg Public Library call no. 428.4 ROS

"A step-by-step guide for literacy tutors of adult new learners. The program covers background information on illiteracy, lists suggested lesson plans and provides diagnostic tests to determine students' abilities. Comprehension development and word recognition are two main elements of the program.

## VIDEOS

**Bluffing It.** A Nabisco Showcase Presentation. 1987. (95 mins)

An acclaimed movie about a man's struggle to become literate. Starring Dennis Weaver, Janet Carroll and James Sadwith. (Call no. VHS 5346)

**Bluffing-It II** Ohlmeyer Communications. 1987. (13 mins)

With Christopher Sands and Cleavant Derricks. (Call no. VHS 5343)

**I Want to Read.** Mid-Com, Inc. 1988.

With P. Newman. (Call no. VHS 6332)

**I Want to Read Two Too.** Mid-Com, Inc. 1989.

(call no. VHS 7106)

# **Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit\***

*\* Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit formerly Literacy and Continuing Education Branch*

The following materials have been published by Manitoba Education and Training, and are available FREE of charge from the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit.

- Appendices for Math Stage 1.
- Creative Student Assessment. A Guide to Developing Meaningful Evaluation.
- Exemplary Practice in Manitoba. Models of Quality in Literacy Programming.
- Manitoba Adult Literacy Programming Good Practice Guide.
- Stages of Learning. Building a Native Curriculum. Teacher's Guide.
- Stages of Learning. Building a Native Curriculum. Student Activities. Part 1.
- Stages of Learning. Building a Native Curriculum. Research Unit. Part 2.
- Stages of Learning. Building a Native Curriculum. Indian and Metis Trivia Game.
- Student Record of Achievement. Certificate in Literacy and Learning. Math Stage 1.
- Student Record of Achievement. Certificate in Literacy and Learning. Stage 1.
- Student Record of Achievement. Certificate in Literacy and Learning. Stage 2.
- Student Record of Achievement. Certificate in Literacy and Learning. Stage 3.
- Tutor Handbook. A Guide to Certificate in Literacy and Learning.

**Appendix A:**  
**WHO'S WHO IN LITERACY**  
**May 1996**

## Volunteer Tutor Mentors

The following volunteer tutors have offered to share their ideas and expertise with other tutors on request through an informal tutor mentor telephone network. Some have indicated specific areas of expertise and/or specific times during which they may be available. Please respect the times and/or time limits indicated, and the right of these volunteers to withdraw from the network at any time. Ideally, this directory will be updated once or twice per year. If you wish to have your name and number added or removed, or if you have suggestions as to how to further develop the mentor network, please contact Literacy Partners of Manitoba's Volunteer Tutor Network Coordinator at 947-5757.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Phone #</b>	<b>Program/Specifics</b>
Sherry Bailey	889-0222	Winnipeg Volunteer Reading Aides
Joan Cheyne	1-785-8504	Selkirk Independent Learning Centre
Ron Hamerling	222-8205	Educational Support Centre/RRCC
Ruth Henry	488-3533	Winnipeg Volunteer Reading Aides - evening referrals for limited information re strategies, success, materials
Shirley Kozak	334-1305	Selkirk Independent Learning, Centre - evenings/weekends
Alain Parent	694-0517(h) 943-0918 (at literacy program)	Beat the Street -Sunday 6-10 pm; messages at program anytime; working with street people
Lorna Sanders	832-1816	Winnipeg Volunteer Reading Aides
Rob Sarginson	1-482-6248	Selkirk Independent Learning Centre - afternoons/evenings - specially: reading, vocabulary building, language acquisition - also numeracy, basic computer literacy and "learning" software
Kazombwa Simbeya	489-8681	Journeys - Adult Program
Barb Thiessen	837-7038	Journeys - Adult Program
Kathryn Wiley	275-0146	Winnipeg Volunteer Reading Aides - days and early evening (before 8:00) - lesson planning and fun exercises

## **Literacy Partners of Manitoba\***

998-167 Lombard Ave  
Winnipeg, MB R3B 0V3.  
Phone: 947-5757 FAX: 944-9918  
Contact: Marg Rose, Executive Director

Literacy Partners of Manitoba is the provincial association for literacy practitioners and volunteer literacy tutors. Literacy Partners of Manitoba runs training events for learners, tutors and instructors; operates a lending library; responds to the LEARN Helpline published in the Yellow Pages; publishes a provincial newsletter, *Write On!*, for members; publishes a biannual learner newspaper, *The Manitoba Literacy Star*; and does pilot projects in the field of literacy. Staff and volunteers also mount displays for public education events. Office hours are by appointment for consultation. Library hours are: Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday 1:00-4:00 p.m. or by appointment. Call Bonita Cobb, Librarian.

*\* Literacy Partners of Manitoba was formerly known as Literacy Workers Alliance of Manitoba (LWAM).*

## **Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit**

(formerly Literacy and Continuing Education Branch)

410-185 Carlton St.  
Winnipeg, MB R3C 3J1  
Phone: 945-8247; FAX: 945-1792; Toll Free: 1-800-282-8069, Ext. 8247

The Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit of Manitoba Education and Training offers an extensive training and professional development program for volunteer tutors, new and experienced literacy practitioners. The Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit gives grants to part-time community-based literacy programs and provides ongoing support in the development and delivery of adult literacy programs. It also produces annually a Directory of Adult Literacy Programs in Manitoba and a booklet of Adult Literacy Training Events for volunteer tutors and practitioners. These are available on request free of charge.

Mary Lou Kuxhouse - Director  
945-8247

Robin Millar - Adult Learning Specialist: responsible for professional development  
945-8136

Judy Baker - Provincial Adult Literacy Coordinator  
945-8142

Sue Turner - Coordinator, Basic Education in the Workplace  
945-1682

Terry Lumb - Coordinator, Adult and Continuing Education  
945-7728

Marie Matheson - Rural Adult Literacy Coordinator  
Phone: 1-204-726-6027; FAX: 1-204-726-6583; Toll Free: 1-800-262-3930  
Room 107, 340 - 9th St., Brandon, MB R7A 6C2