



roots & connections tool kit

A culturally integrated ESL curriculum
for community orientation in Alberta



NorQuest
COLLEGE

CENTRE FOR EXCELLENCE IN
**INTERCULTURAL
EDUCATION**

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Project team

- ✓ Project Management
 - Anna DeLuca – Dean, Language Training and Adult Literacy, NorQuest College
 - Cheryl Whitelaw – Project Manager and Applied Research Manager, NorQuest Centre for Excellence in Intercultural Education
- ✓ Lead developer – Sarah Apedaile, NorQuest Centre for Excellence in Intercultural Education
- ✓ Project consultant and ESL curriculum writer – Dawn Seabrook DeVargas, NorQuest College
- ✓ Research – Lenina Schill, Jaimy Miller and Kerry Louw, NorQuest Centre for Excellence in Intercultural Education
- ✓ Curriculum writers - Judy Carter and Wendy Illot, NorQuest College; Rita Kerzinger and Theresa Brown, Lloydminster CALC
- ✓ Illustrations – Dalon Omand
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Planning Resources

Sample Registration Form

[Name of community organization] is offering an English as a Second Language course that will help you get to know your new community. We will make the course fit your needs.

Are you interested in learning more about this course?

Please give us your name and we will contact you.

Name: _____ E-mail address: _____

Telephone: _____ Language you speak: _____

Best time to call: _____

If the client does not speak English please identify a contact person who speaks English.

Contact Person: _____ Best time to call: _____

Name: _____ E-mail address: _____

Telephone: _____

(Provide information about your organization and other information such as name and location of course, start date, days and times it runs, and cost, if any.)

Name of organization: _____ Telephone number: _____

Contact name: _____ Best time to call: _____

Cultural Assessment Notes

** Use the Interpretive Guide to Registration Information*

Name _____ Other countries lived in _____

Phone number _____ Language spoken at home _____

Address _____ Family _____

Immigration Status _____ Child care _____

Length of residence in Canada _____ Transportation _____

Length of residence in this community _____ Past education and occupation _____

Country of birth/origin _____ Availability _____

Budgeting Tool

The following is a list of things that you might need for running a program using *Roots and Connections*. This list is based on suggestions from experienced program coordinators and instructors to help those who are new to this work. The list includes some good ideas but is not comprehensive nor will all of the items relate to every situation.

Human Resources

- coordinator
- instructor
- professional development fund

Classroom Supplies

- paper
- markers
- poster paper
- flip chart paper
- coloured paper
- dividers
- binders

Resources

Printing

- learner materials
- volunteer training materials
- instructor guide
- instructor planning materials
- program brochure

Training

- volunteer training workshop (materials)
- hospitality

Program Delivery

- Classroom space
- transportation (to and from program)
- child care
- hospitality (such as Christmas party, wrap-up community event)
- coffee encounters (coffee)
- awards, gifts (for speakers, tour leaders)

Office

- Phone
- Office supplies

Thank you for participating in *Roots and Connections* as a Community Facilitator! *Roots and Connections* is designed to help newcomers build essential language skills and connections for living in our community. Community Facilitators help participants achieve important learning goals through *Roots and Connections*.



Instructor Resources: ESL

Learner Language Assessment Tool

This assessment tool is designed for use with the *Roots and Connections* curriculum. Along with the learner profiles it can help you determine the approximate CLB level of your learners.

- It gives a picture of a learner's language competence using the CLB 2 performance indicators and the grammar introduced in *Roots and Connections*.
- Use this information to inform your teaching; what competencies and grammar do your learners need to have a basic ability to interact in the community?
- Use this tool at the beginning of the program and again at the end to measure changes in learners' proficiencies.

Note: The *Roots and Connections* curriculum is designed primarily to give specific language that enables greater access to community services and activities. It is not designed as a language course to raise benchmark levels; rather, its success is measured by learners' ability to access their community.

Tips for Administering This Tool

1. Be open. Show the learner the tool and explain that you will be making notes during the interview.

1. Speak clearly.
2. Follow a natural conversation flow as you work your way through each point.
3. Encourage the learners to reply using more than a single-word answer.
4. At some point, deliberately speak quickly or mumble to see how the learner indicates communication problems.

Note: It is also possible to gather this information through observation over time. This tool can be used at the beginning and end of a program. It can be used mid-term as well if the program runs more than 10 weeks. Make a learning portfolio to gather pre and post assessments (i.e. Language and Community Knowledge and Skills Checklists).

To administer this tool, carry out the "Interviewer Instructions" in Column 1. Evaluate the learner's ability to do the "Performance Descriptor" (if he is unable to do the task, if he tries but is not correct, if he is able to do the task). You can date each check mark or you can use different coloured inks to record—one colour as a pre-assessment, and another colour as a post-assessment.

Interpreting the Results

Roots and Connections is designed for learners at the CLB 2 level; however, it can easily be adjusted to fit different levels of learner ability.

If the majority of the checks are in the "Is Able" column use the CLB 3 adaptation notes.



Roots and Connections Learner Pre- and Post-Language Assessment Tool

Date of Pre-Assessment:		Date of Post-Assessment:		
Interviewer Instructions	Performance Descriptor Can the learner respond in these ways:	Is Unable	Tries	Is Able
Greet the learner and establish rapport. Ask: How are you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> answer greeting respond to greeting 			
Check pronunciation and spelling of the learner's name. Introduce yourself.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> respond, i.e. My name is ____. spell his or her name 			
Ask the learner personal information such as: Where are you from? What language do you speak? Where do you live?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide expanded personal information use simple present tense 			
When did you come to... ? Did you study English in (home country)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use simple past tense 			
What are you going to do tomorrow?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use simple future tense 			
Using the Coffee Encounter illustration from Unit 1, ask the learner to describe the picture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> give a basic description use a variety of adjectives 			
What are they looking at? What are they doing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> respond to simple questions with required information use present continuous tense 			
Ask about the location of items in the illustration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use prepositions of location: next to, above, below, on, etc. 			
Ask about likes and dislikes (i.e., Do you like coffee?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> talk about things he or she enjoys 			
Say: The coffee is very hot. Ask: What do you say?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> express a warning 			
Ask the learner to make some "wh" questions. Say: Ask me about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> request basic information make "wh" questions 			
Ask: What do you want to learn in this class?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> express a request use phrases to express a want or need, i.e. I would like to... I want to ... I need to... 			
During the interview, observe how the learner indicates communication problems, asks for clarification, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> indicate communication problems in a number of ways, such as: Please repeat. Pardon? I don't understand. 			

Learner Profiles ¹

Level 1 Profile

A learner at Level 1:

- Speaks and understands a very limited number of words and phrases, or may not speak any English at all.
- Relies heavily on gestures and the first language to give and receive information.
- May be able to read some simple sight words.
- May have strategies in place for decoding new words.
- May be able to copy or write his or her basic personal information.

Level 2 Profile

A learner at Level 2:

- Can communicate in a limited way. Conversation will be in response to questions from someone else.
- Has little sense of grammar and tense and has a limited vocabulary.
- Still depends on gestures and may have long pauses in his/her speech.
- Asks and responds to simple personal questions and simple commands or directions.
- Needs frequent assistance to express himself/herself and to understand.
- Can read short, familiar text.
- Can find specific information in a simple formatted text.

- Can write a few phrases and sentences about a familiar topic.
- Can copy short texts.
- Can fill out forms with a simple format with eight to twelve items.

Level 3 Profile

A learner at Level 3:

- Can interact, with some difficulty, in short informal conversations where the content is predictable.
- Pronunciation may impede the communication.
- Asks and responds to familiar questions.
- Demonstrates some control of basic grammar (e.g. uses basic time expressions; uses correct past tense with common verbs only).
- Still has a limited vocabulary.
- May require repetition and a slower rate of speaking in order to understand.
- Can follow instructions, commands and requests in a familiar context.
- Can read a simple paragraph in a familiar, predictable context.
- Can find specific details in clear language text.
- Can carry out simple, familiar writing tasks about everyday needs and experiences.
- Can write simple sentences.
- Can fill out simple forms that include more than fifteen items learners.

¹ These learner profiles are referenced to the Canadian Language Benchmarks. Taken from ESL Resource Package for Alberta Communities (ERPAC) Revised 2006, Copyright NorQuest College. (www.norquest.ca/corporate/edresources/index.htm)



Adapting CLB Levels

This curriculum has been written at a CLB 2 level but there are different ways that you can adapt the modules for a lower level (CLB 1) or a slightly higher level (CLB 3).

If the majority of checks are in the “Is Unable” column of the Learner Assessment Tool, refer to the CLB 1 adaptation notes.

If the majority of checks are in the “Is Able” column, use the CLB 3 adaptation notes.

1. Increase or decrease the amount of work presented or required.

2. Change the CLB outcomes.

Refer to the CLB 2000 or ERPAC2 to find the competency outcomes for lower or

higher levels. Teach to the tasks identified for those levels.

3. Adjust the language functions.

For CLB 1, choose only one function to teach:

- Point and gesture to teach it.
- Write the phrases used.
- Read the phrases.
- Practise saying the phrases.

Use fewer phrases for each function for CLB 1. Have learners practice them until they become automatic.

For CLB 3, make the phrases or dialogues more complex. Have the learners practice them and introduce some unpredictable responses.



These are some of the functions taught in *Roots and Connections*:

- Greetings
- Making requests
- Describing
- Giving personal information
- Telling time
- Making an appointment
- Asking for information
- Asking for clarification
- Agreeing or disagreeing
- Asking for directions
- Clarifying instructions

1. Modify the vocabulary.

- For CLB 1, limit the number of new vocabulary items to seven to 10.
- Use the illustrations to practise other areas of language that learners are familiar with such as counting, colours, etc.
- Make personal connections. Point to things in the illustrations that are the same as or different from their own experiences.
- Use lots of pictures and drawings to explain or clarify.
- Use authentic materials or visuals with words.
- Give antonyms or synonyms.
- Place new words on a continuum.
- Introduce words in context.

2. Adapt the grammar instruction.

Look at Levels 1 – 3 on the Grammar Scope and Sequence chart from ERPAC.¹

To adjust your lesson to a CLB 3 level:

- Repeat structures using a different verb tense.
- Use the structure in a new context.
- Instruct learners to form questions and answers.
- Instruct learners to develop their own dialogue (listen, edit and write).
- Make connections between the structure practised in class and how it is used in the real world.

To adjust your lesson to a CLB 1 level:

- Break down the language structure into smaller chunks.
- Practise individual words.
- Use repetition.
- Ask learners to write the structures on the board.
- Give learners opportunities to manipulate the structure by changing one word.
- Practise smaller chunks of language in pairs.
- Teach structures they will use in the real world.

¹ ERPAC: ESL Resource Package for Alberta Communities www.norquest.ca/corporate/edresources

Community Knowledge and Skills Checklists

Health and Wellness Unit

Instructions

Read each item and check the box that best shows how you feel about it. This assessment can help your instructor find out what you know and what you can do.

Note to the instructor:

Use this tool as a pre- and post- assessment of learners' community knowledge and skill.

When it comes to my health and wellness, I know...	Before			After		
	I do not know.	I know a little about this.	I am comfortable with this.	I do not know.	I know a little about this.	I am comfortable with this.
where to call to make an appointment (doctor, dentist, etc.).						
how to call and make an appointment.						
how to call for a taxi (e.g. tell the taxi where to pick me up and where I am going)						
what to expect when I go to the doctor in Canada (giving personal information, putting on a gown, wait time, length of consultation).						
how to read the instructions on my medication (how much to take, how often to take it, and how).						
how to dispose of medicines I don't need (i.e. expired).						
where to take my baby to be weighed.						
where to go for immunizations.						
what over-the-counter medicines are safe for my children.						
how to give my child medication.						
how much medication to give my child.						



Health and Wellness Unit

When it comes to my health and wellness, I know...	Before			After		
	I do not know.	I know a little about this.	I am comfortable with this.	I do not know.	I know a little about this.	I am comfortable with this.
how and when to contact the Health Link.						
how to get health information from my home.						
where to find a dentist.						
what kind of insurance I can get to help pay for the dentist treatment.						
how to maintain good oral health.						
how to apply for an Alberta Health Care number.						
where to use my Alberta Health Care card.						
what my Alberta Health Care program covers and does not cover.						
how health care and getting health services are the same and different in my country of origin.						
Other Questions:						

Community Knowledge and Skills Checklists

Personal Finance Unit

When it comes to my personal finances, I know...	Before			After		
	I do not know.	I know a little about this.	I am comfortable with this.	I do not know.	I know a little about this.	I am comfortable with this.
where the bank is.						
what I can do at a bank.						
how to use an ATM.						
how banks in Canada are different/same to banks in my home country.						
how to open a bank account.						
how to deposit money in my account.						
how to take money out of my account.						
how to pay my bills.						
what my bills mean (say) and how to read my bills.						
how to send money to my country.						
how to budget my money.						
how to protect my bank card and credit card.						
how to recognize common scams.						
how dealing with personal finances in Canada is the same as or different from the situation in my country.						
Other Questions:						



Community Knowledge and Skills Checklists

Shopping Unit

	Before			After		
	I do not know.	I know a little about this.	I am comfortable with this.	I do not know.	I know a little about this.	I am comfortable with this.
When it comes to shopping, I know...						
where to buy groceries.						
how to ask how much something costs.						
how to find what I need in the grocery store.						
where to buy what I need for making food from my country.						
how to ask a clerk for information.						
how to ask for directions in a store.						
how to get a refund or exchange something.						
where to buy clothes, shoes, household items, insurance, phone cards, things to make repairs, etc.						
how shopping in my country and shopping in Canada are similar and different.						
Other Questions:						

Community Knowledge and Skills Checklists

Education Unit

	Before			After		
	I do not know.	I know a little about this.	I am comfortable with this.	I do not know.	I know a little about this.	I am comfortable with this.
When it comes to my child’s education in this community, I know...						
how to “do” a parent-teacher meeting.						
what is expected at a parent-teacher meeting.						
how to talk to my child’s teacher about my concerns about English.						
how parents are expected to be involved in their children’s school.						
what to do when my child brings home a permission slip.						
what to expect from teachers (e.g. behaviours, teaching values).						
how to help my child with his or her homework.						
what kind of things will cost extra money.						
what to send and what not to send for school lunches.						
about the rules around food at school (i.e. peanut butter and other food allergies).						
how education is the same as and different from education in my country.						
how to help my child if he or she is being bullied.						
Other Questions:						



Community Knowledge and Skills Checklists

Community Unit

When it comes to community, I know...	Before			After		
	I do not know.	I know a little about this.	I am comfortable with this.	I do not know.	I know a little about this.	I am comfortable with this.
how to greet someone from the community in English.						
how to get support.						
how to build a support network.						
I have a support network.						
how to answer the phone.						
how to deal with household garbage (trash) and recycling.						
how to get across the road safely using crosswalks and crossing signals.						
how to meet my neighbours.						
why people volunteer and what it means in Canada.						
how to volunteer.						
how to participate in the community garden.						
how to get around.						
how to read the map.						
how to get Internet access.						
how to get a library card.						
how to use the library.						
where to find books in my language.						
where the post office is.						
how to get to the post office and ask for what I need.						
Other Questions:						

Community Knowledge and Skills Checklists

Safety Unit

When it comes to safety, I know...	Before			After		
	I do not know.	I know a little about this.	I am comfortable with this.	I do not know.	I know a little about this.	I am comfortable with this.
how to call the police if I need their help but it is not a 911 emergency.						
when to call 911.						
how to call 911.						
what to say when I call 911.						
how to prepare in advance for an emergency.						
what to do if I experience violence.						
how to prepare ahead for emergencies.						
how to make my new home safe.						
how to use the appliances, etc. in my home.						
how to check the fire alarms in my house.						
how to prevent electrical fires.						
how put out a fire.						
how to warn someone of a danger.						
how to be safe at home in the winter.						
how to be safe in my car in the winter.						
how to be safe outside in the winter.						
what to do if there is a blackout in the winter.						



Community Knowledge and Skills Checklists

When it comes to safety, I know...	Before			After		
	I do not know.	I know a little about this.	I am comfortable with this.	I do not know.	I know a little about this.	I am comfortable with this.
how to keep my kids safe.						
that everyone in the car must wear a seatbelt.						
that there can be no more people in the car than the number of seatbelts.						
that children under 12 must wear a bike helmet (it's the law.)						
what steps to take if there is an emergency.						
what kind of risks exist in my community that are different from those in my home country.						
what to do if I feel that I am being sexually harassed.						
Other Questions:						

Community Knowledge and Skills Checklists

Recreation Unit

When it comes to recreation, I know...	Before			After		
	I do not know.	I know a little about this.	I am comfortable with this.	I do not know.	I know a little about this.	I am comfortable with this.
where I can take classes.						
how to register my child for a sports activity.						
what sports activities are available for kids.						
what the expectations are for parents' involvement in children's sports activities.						
how to order food in a restaurant.						
what festivals are happening in my community.						
what the expectations are at the swimming pool/hockey rink/soccer pitch (communication, behaviour, safety, cleaning, spitting, parent participation, etc.).						
Other Questions:						



Lesson Planning Template

Unit:		Learning Outcomes:
Module:		
Noticing	Illustrations	
	Personal Connection	
Building	Vocabulary	
	Survival English	
	Dialogue	
	Number	
Connecting to the Community	Community Mapping	
	Community Connection	

Unit and Module Overview

Unit 1: Getting to Know You

	CLB	Form	Functions
Module 1: Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic courtesy formulas • make and respond appropriately to introductions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • verb to be in the affirmative, negative and interrogative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • greetings and • leave-taking • introducing self and others
Module 2: Who are you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • give a basic description • provide basic personal information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simple present tense of the verbs <i>to have, to live, to like</i> in the affirmative, negative and interrogative • simple regular past using verbs <i>to live, to work, to play, to enjoy</i> in the affirmative, negative and interrogative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • talking about self
Module 3: My Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • talk about things one enjoys, likes and dislikes • provide basic personal information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking yes-no questions • asking “wh” questions in the present tense 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking about family
Module 4: Where are you from?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide basic personal information • give a basic description 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • descriptive adjectives • comparative form of adjectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describing a place • making comparisons
Module 5: Community Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • follow directions/ instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking “wh” questions • prepositions of location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking questions related to getting and following directions • describing a place



Unit and Module Overview

Unit 2: Health and Wellness

	CLB	Form	Functions
Module 1: Making an Appointment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide personal information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May I? Could I? I'd like to... I want to... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> making and cancelling an appointment negotiating appointment time
Module 2: Going to the Doctor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use and respond to common courtesy formulas follow short instructions, positive and negative commands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple present verb <i>to feel, to have</i> How long have you ____? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> describing symptoms responding to doctor's orders
Module 3: Going to the Pharmacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> express requests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> asking choice questions using numbers/expressions of frequency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reading labels getting a prescription filled
Module 4: Visiting the Hospital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> give personal information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple past tense for verbs to fall, to cut, to hit, to feel, to faint, to pass out, to throw up. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> being admitted to hospital going to emergency department describing symptoms explaining what happened
Module 5: Staying Healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> give and follow instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> asking "wh" questions how often 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> finding out information cooking healthy food making plans

Unit and Module Overview

Unit 3: Personal Finances

	CLB	Form	Functions
Module 1: Going to the Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> express a request respond to basic instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> phrases to express want or need <i>I would like to</i> ____ <i>I want to</i> ____ <i>I need to</i> ____ <i>Could I please</i> ____ sequence words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> making a request following Instructions
Module 2: Banking Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> express a request respond to basic instructions asking for clarification identify specific details of texts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> phrases to express want or need <i>I would like to</i> ____ <i>I want to</i> ____ <i>I need to</i> ____ <i>Could I please</i> ____ find specific details in formatted text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> making a request following instructions
Module 3: Credit Cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify specific details of texts express future plans talk about things one can do get information from short texts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple future tense modals <i>can should, have to</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> read a credit card bill or statement
Module 4: Budgeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> give a basic description provide expanded personal information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> adverbs of frequency How much 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> making a budget talking about expenses
Module 5: Identity Theft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> express and respond to caution and warning give a basic description 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> modals <i>should, could, might</i> imperatives e.g. "Watch out" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> giving warnings giving advice of how to protect yourself



Unit and Module Overview

Unit 4: Shopping

	CLB	Form	Functions
Module 1: Food Shopping – Finding things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> requesting assistance using basic courtesy formulas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> determiners: a/an forming plurals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> making a shopping list
Module 2: Prices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> express and respond to requests for help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> determiners: any/some how much does it cost? count and non-count nouns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> requesting information about product and price
Module 3: Comparison Shopping – Using Flyers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> give a basic description check for understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> comparison of adjectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> comparing food items
Module 4: Clothes Shopping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> talk about things one likes express a request 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I want/I need to buy past form of buy verbs like/dislike use of too 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> describing a problem
Module 5: Returns and Exchanges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> make a request for help/service describe a problem give a basic description 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> non-referential subject this and these 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> returning or exchanging an item describing a problem

Unit and Module Overview

Unit 5: Sports and Hobbies

	CLB	Form	Functions
Module 1: Sports and Hobbies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> talk about things one enjoys provide personal information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple present verbs <i>to like, to enjoy</i> conjunctions <i>and, but, or</i> would you like to _____? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifying leisure time interests finding out about preferences talking about things one likes to do inviting someone to do something
Module 2: Accessing Recreational Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> express future plans (CLB3) indicate problems in communication identify specific details of texts fill in a form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> future tense with going to future time markers (adverbs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> talking about recreational plans scanning a brochure for specific details filling in an application form
Module 3: Children and Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> follow instructions appeal for clarification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> asking “wh” questions simple present verbs <i>to like, to enjoy, to hate</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> giving and following instructions or rules
Module 4: Community Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> get information from basic short text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> asking “wh” questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> finding out what’s happening in the community
Module 5: A Trip to the City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide basic personal information in context identify specific details of texts follow instructions appeal for clarification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple future giving a reason using <i>because</i> or <i>to</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> asking about reasons to go somewhere buying a ticket



Unit and Module Overview

Unit 6: Safety

	CLB	Form	Functions
Module 1: Emergencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide basic personal information clearly give a basic description of location follow positive and negative commands and requests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> non-referential subjects: <i>there is, there are</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reporting an emergency
Module 2: Winter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> give a basic description identify specific details about weather follow positive and negative commands and requests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> descriptive adjectives with <i>to be</i> and <i>to feel</i> count and non-count nouns imperatives with verbs <i>put on, wear</i> and <i>take</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> talking about temperature naming winter clothing giving instructions for winter safety
Module 3: The Role of the Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use basic courtesy formulas - - give a basic description follow basic instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple past tense indefinite pronouns <i>someone, anyone</i> <i>modals have to</i> and <i>must</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explaining what happened reporting an incident
Module 4: Children and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> give a basic description respond to statements of warning get basic information from formatted text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prepositions of location imperatives giving directions reflexive pronouns: <i>myself, himself, etc</i> asking "wh" questions modal <i>should</i> expressions <i>I agree/ I disagree</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> protecting children in the car advising about wearing bicycle helmets
Module 5: Protecting Yourself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> give a basic description give and follow short instructions understand simple floor plan express and respond to statements of caution and warning ask for and respond to requests for basic personal information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prepositions of location imperatives giving directions reflexive pronouns: <i>myself, himself, etc</i> asking "wh" questions modal <i>should</i> expressions <i>I agree/ I disagree</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> planning a fire escape route protecting your property with insurance locating emergency services children home alone

Unit and Module Overview

Unit 7: Community

	CLB	Form	Functions
Module 1: Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use courtesy formulas to greet unfamiliar people get information from short text express and respond to requests for service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> asking “wh” questions making polite requests could I/ I would like 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> what does municipal government do going to the town office
Module 2: Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide basic personal information about housing express and respond to requests for information use courtesy formulas with unfamiliar people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple present tense simple past tense asking “wh” questions embedded information questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> describing where you live inquiring about accommodation making a complaint
Module 3: Garbage and Recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> give a basic description of what things are made of follow positive and negative commands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> asking “wh” questions phrasal verb to be made of modal <i>can/can't</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> asking about garbage pickup what can you recycle
Module 4: The Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> make a request for help greet unfamiliar people follow basic instructions for location fill out simple forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> present continuous tense asking “wh” questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> getting a library card asking for assistance to find something asking for information
Module 5: Getting Around	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> give simple instructions respond to simple questions with personal information give a basic description related to location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prepositions of location simple past tense polite commands I would like to/ I want to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> finding your way around methods of transportation accessing transportation

Unit and Module Overview

Unit 8: Education

	CLB	Form	Functions
Module 1: Preparing for School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand and follows basic maps use courtesy formulas fill in basic forms give a basic description 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> asking “wh” questions with where polite request I would like to ____ simple future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> finding a school registering your child in school preparing your child for a new school
Module 2: A Day in the Life of a Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> get information from formatted chart/ school schedule talk about things one enjoys or prefers provide personal information about what is easy and hard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> expressing a preference preposition – during comparative and superlative of easy and hard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> talking about the school timetable expressing a preference telling what happens at a particular time comparing school subjects
Module 3: School Routines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> give a number of short instructions give a basic description of needs use basic courtesy formulas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> singular and plural nouns sequence words simple future tense 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> finding supplies recess time going on a field trip
Module 4: Communicating with the School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> write a basic note giving a reason follow simple commands on telephone practices clarification of spelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> adverb because for giving reasons Simple past of to be Simple future of to be Simple future with going to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explaining an absence Format of a note Making an excuse for an anticipated absence
Module 5: Parent Teacher Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fill out simple forms understand short memos and request forms use and respond to basic courtesy formulas introduce oneself appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> filling in short request form for interview basic formula to express concern I am worried that _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> signing up for a teacher’s conference teacher’s conference greeting expressing a concern



Tips for Teaching Vocabulary

Eight ways for instructors and volunteers to help learners build their vocabulary:

1. Activate learners' prior knowledge. (Personal Connections activity and Unit Illustrations are good for this.)
2. Define the words in multiple contexts.
3. Help them understand the structure of words, e.g., prefixes, roots and suffixes.
4. Teach them how to use a dictionary and show them the range of information it provides.
5. Help learners build their own dictionary using the Class Dictionary. The Class Dictionary includes five categories for learners to organize new vocabulary: people, places, things, actions (verbs), and how do I say that? (functional language).
6. Give them multiple exposures. If a new word comes up, try to use it as much as possible in your conversations with participants.
7. Focus on a small number of important words (Class Dictionary). Ideally the words should be related, so that the depth of concept development can be increased. Be aware of words that do not have an equivalent in the learners' language or words that have a more complex meaning in their language.
8. Play games. (See Additional Activities for Learning Vocabulary.)





Additional Activities for Teaching Vocabulary

Cloze Messages: guess the letter, guess the word!

Using vocabulary the class has studied, write a message with key vocabulary words missing (or for lower levels, letters from the vocabulary words missing, e.g. _i_h_r_a_ for withdraw). Read the message together and have the students guess the missing words. For lower levels, write the alphabet across the top of the board and cross off the letters as they are selected by the students (similar to the TV game show Wheel of Fortune). E.g., I go to the bank to (withdraw) money. Next I take the money to IGA and buy food.

Brainstorming

Put a topic on the board (e.g. grocery store). Divide the class into two teams. Within a specified time limit, each team must write as many words as they can related to the topic

on the board. The team that has written the most words wins.

Cloze Messages

Write a message that incorporates the vocabulary words but with blanks instead of the words. Students work together to guess which vocabulary words are missing. E.g., I go to the bank to money. Next I take the money to IGA and buy food. If they are struggling with this, you can put a blank for each letter in the vocabulary word (_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _) or fill in some of the missing letters in the word (_i_h_r_a_ for withdraw).

Discussion Questions

You will find several examples of discussion questions in this curriculum. Make a discussion question using the vocabulary. The purpose is to have students use the vocabulary word and then find out how this word relates to their

lives. For example, if the word is “withdraw,” you could ask students, “If people withdraw money from the bank each week, what might they use that money for?”

Crossword Puzzles

Find a website that makes crossword puzzles (try searching for the term “puzzle maker”). Make a crossword puzzle with the vocabulary words. Students can do the puzzles for homework on their own or you can fill in the answers for all the “down” words on one page and all the “across” words on another page. In an information gap activity, in pairs, students can read each other the clues for the words filled in on their sheets. As their partner guesses the correct answers, they can confirm whether their partner is right.

Daily Quiz

Each day, read out the definitions of the seven to 10 words introduced in the previous lesson and an example sentence, leaving out the key word. Have learners write the word as you give the definition. (Discourage them from calling out the answer so that each learner has to go through the process of figuring out the word.) Mark the quizzes together. Write the word on the board as you mark so that learners see it spelled correctly again. Learners will start studying between classes in order to do well on these quizzes. (Instead of having learners write the words, you can just ask learners at random to tell you the word that matches the definition.)

Karuta

Karuta is a Japanese card game. The basic idea is to quickly determine which card out of an array of cards is required, and then to grab the

card before your opponent. Various types of cards can be used to play karuta. Play this game when you are reviewing 20 words or more.

Using cards with the vocabulary words written on one side, ask learners to spread the cards in front of them. Define the word and see which learner can grab the right card first. If no one finds the word, start making sentences with the word missing. For example, if the word is “withdraw,” a sentence could be “When I need money, I go to the bank and [blank] twenty dollars.”

If your learners enjoy friendly competition within small groups, each individual can compete to see who has the most cards. In larger classes, small sub-groups can compete to see which group can grab and hold up the card the fastest.

Hot Seat

Divide the class in half. Ask one member from each team to sit in one of the two hot seats. Give a definition or a sentence with a missing word and see who can say the vocabulary item the fastest. The learner who is able to give the vocabulary word wins a point for his or her team. Try to have each learner take a turn in the hot seat.

Group Quiz

Deal the deck of vocabulary cards to a small group of three to six. Learners should not show anyone the cards. Each learner takes turns giving the definition or a fill-in-the-blank sentence of one of their words. The classmate who can guess the vocabulary item first gets a point.

The game continues as each learner gives one definition in turn until all the vocabulary



words have been guessed. For practice reading and writing, you could have learners guess the word and then write it down or spell it out.

Sentence Shuffle

1. Hand each class member one card with one vocabulary item on it.
2. Learners must stand up and walk around the class.
3. Each learner finds a partner.
4. Learner A says a sentence with the word on the vocabulary card.
5. Learner B listens to the sentence and checks for accuracy.
6. Learner B says a sentence with the word on the vocabulary card.
7. Learner A checks for accuracy.
8. Learners A and B trade cards and then find a new partner.

Learners repeat the process with their new partner and new card.

Pictionary

1. Pick out words that can be easily drawn.
2. Divide the class into two teams.
3. Each team has one member who blindly chooses one of the vocabulary cards.
4. This student then draws the word that is on the card. (No symbols or letters allowed.)
5. The team that can guess the vocabulary word first wins one point.

Charades

Follow the same steps as Pictionary except that students act out the meanings of words rather than drawing the words.

Memory

Prepare word cards and separate definition cards.

Place cards with vocabulary words and separate cards with the corresponding definitions face down at random. Students take turns turning over cards in an attempt to match the word with the definition. The student with the most pairs wins.

Go Fish (best with four to seven players)

Deal five cards to each player. Each player takes a turn asking another player for their cards with a specific word or definition. For example, "Agatha, do you have 'withdraw'?" A player may only ask for a card if he or she already holds its match. If the player who was asked does not have that card, he says, "Go fish" (or simply "fish"), and the asking player draws the top card from the pack. The turn then passes to the player who was asked.

When a player has the word and its matching definition, this player has a pair. The pair of cards are placed face up on the table. The game ends when all cards are matched.

If the player whose turn it is has no cards left in her hand, the game is not over. She must draw the top card from the pack. The turn then passes to the next player. Or, in the case of a two-player game, the turn goes to the other player.

For more interest and better application, add an example sentence card for each vocabulary word.

Independent Vocabulary Development

Everyone has a different learning style. Here are some memory tricks that cater to different styles. Encourage students to try them all and see what works.

Independent Vocabulary Development

Everyone has a preferred learning style. Here are some memory tricks that cater to three different styles. Encourage students to try them all and see what works. Make up some more!

Auditory learners: learn by listening

- Say the word and the definition over and over to yourself.
- Record your voice reading the words and definitions onto a tape and play the tape back.
- Ask a friend to quiz you on the words.
- Leave a message on your answering machines saying the words and definitions.

Kinaesthetic learners: learn by doing

- Write the word in the air or with your finger or on the back of your book.
- Write the word several times on a scrap piece of paper and think of the definition each time you write it.

Visual learners: learn by seeing

- Cover the definitions and see if you can think of the word.
- Cover the word and see if you can think of the definition.
- Write each word on one side of a card and the definition on the other side of the card and then review the vocabulary using the flash cards.
- Put papers with the words and definitions in places you will easily see (inside kitchen cupboards, beside the toilet, above the

bed, etc). Read the paper each time you go to that place.

- Imagine a picture of the thing described by the word. Then, in your mind, try putting the letters belonging to that word on top of the image.
- Go for a walk or ride the bus. Each time you reach a new landmark, memorize a word. Later, imagine or go on the walk or bus ride again and see if you can remember which word you memorized in each place.





Tips for Teaching Pronunciation

Incorrect pronunciation can create significant challenges for communication. Different language groups have different problem areas. When you help learners with pronunciation, you can use your own pronunciation as a model. However, when you want learners to produce the sounds correctly, sometimes you can give them more help if you are aware of what produces the differences. The four main aspects of pronunciation are voicing; mouth, tongue, and lip position; stress and rhythm; and intonation.

Voicing

When a sound is voiced, the air used to make the sound causes the vocal cords to vibrate. You can tell if a sound is voiced by placing your hand tightly on your throat and saying the sound in isolation. If the sound is voiced,

you will feel vibrations. (Try saying “zzzzz” with your hand tightly on your throat.

Now try saying “sssss.” You should feel the vibrations with “zzz” but not with “sss.”)

When a student is saying a sound incorrectly, one reason may be that he or she is voicing an unvoiced sound or is not voicing a voiced sound.

Mouth, Tongue, and Lip Position

The position of the mouth, tongue, and lips (sometimes called articulators) makes a difference in sound.

Vowels

Differences in vowel sounds are produced in these ways:

- How far forward or back the tip of the tongue is in the mouth

- How high or low the tongue is
- How much the jaw is dropped
- Whether the lips are rounded or not

Consonants

Differences in sound are produced in these ways:

- Where the tongue touches in the mouth
- Which part of the tongue touches
- Whether the air is stopped completely or partially and then released
- Articulators other than the tongue (“b” is produced by the upper and lower lip) or by the shape of the tongue rather than the position (“r” and “l” are different because the tongue curls up toward the roof of the mouth with “r”).

Teaching Tip: If your learners are producing a sound incorrectly, try to imitate them to feel where your tongue is and how your mouth is shaped; then move your tongue to the correct position to make the sound. You ought to be able to help learners get their tongues and mouths into the correct position in this way.

Stress and Rhythm

English has a stress and rhythm pattern that gives an equal amount of time between stressed syllables. This means that we say many unstressed syllables very quickly. The faster one speaks, the more blurred the unstressed sounds become. Words such as “and,” “a,” and “to” are often unstressed.

Example: “I want to go to the store and buy a book,” sounds like “I wanna go tuh tha store an buy uh book.”

This difference is one that most ESL speakers will benefit from learning through lots of listening practice and examples.

Intonation

In English, there are two basic intonation patterns: rising and rising-falling intonation. The intonation given to a sentence tells the listener about the meaning of what is being said.

More tips

For more ideas about helping your learners with pronunciation and for information on specific pronunciation problems, try these resources:

Teaching American English Pronunciation, by Peter Avery and Susan Ehrlich. Oxford University Press, 1992.

Accent on Canadian English, by Lisa Bjerke. 2006.
www.AccentOnCanadianEnglish.com



Additional Community Resources

The list of materials below comes from a variety of sources. It can be used in different ways:

1. As a classroom resource (authentic material)
2. Background information for instructors to become more informed about a particular service or issue
3. As a guide to building your own collection of resources available in your community

Document Name	Source
Getting to Know You	
I'm not the Woman I used to Be: 30 Poems by Recent Immigrant Women	Toronto: Women's Health in Women's Hands Community Health Centre whiwh@web.net www.whiwh.com
Community	
Volunteers Needed – Seniors Driving Centre of Edmonton	Edmonton General Hospital www.seniorsdriving.org
Food for Thought – Collective Kitchen Program brochure	Central Alberta Immigrant Women Association 403-341-3553
Computer Word Processing for Immigrants brochure	Central Alberta Immigrant Women Association 403-341-3553
Adult Basic Literacy Education brochure	Medicine Hat College, Brooks Campus www.brooks.mhc.ab.ca
Volunteering booklet	Alberta Government
CAIWA Catering brochure	Central Alberta Immigrant Women Association 403-341-3553
English Express February 2008	Alberta Learning www.englishexpress.ca
Meridian Booster newspaper	www.meridianbooster.com
Tim's Times poster	Tim Hortons

Lloydminster Region Community Futures Development Corporation brochure	Lloydminster Region Community Futures Development Corporation www.lloydcfdc.ca
Cold Lake Community Centre info sheets	Cold Lake Community Centre www.coldlakelearns.com
Prairie North Health Region Volunteer and Spiritual Services brochure	Volunteer and Spiritual Services 306-446-6892
2008 Multicultural Calendar order form	Creative Cultural Communications www.multiculturalcalendar.com
Energy Scorecard booklet	ATCO Electric www.atcoelectric.com
Bibliophage Fall 2006	Lloydminster Public Library www.lloydminster.info
Education	
Lakeland College ESL info sheet	Lakeland College www.lakelandc.ab.ca/ESL
English Express: Family Literacy Issues	Alberta Learning www.englishexpress.ca
English Express: Learning After High School	Alberta Learning www.englishexpress.ca
Annuaire 2007 handbook	www.acfa.ab.ca
Ecole Francophone de Brooks brochure	www.conseildusud.ab.ca
Personal Finance	
Money 101 – Budgeting Basics for Further Education booklet	Alberta Human Resources and Employment www.alis.gov.ab.ca
Action Sheets for Bank Clients handout	www.bogglesworldesl.com
Personal Finance Vocabulary Warm-Up handout	www.bogglesworldesl.com
Personal Finance Vocabulary Warm-Up II handout	www.bogglesworldesl.com



Banking Role-Play handout	www.bogglesworldesl.com
Making an Appointment handout	Handouts Online www.handoutsonline.com
RESPs: A Special Savings Plan for Education brochure	Government of Canada www.fcac.gc.ca
Financial Access for Immigrants article	Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago The Brookings Institution
Preventing Identity Theft for Dummies booklet	www.dummies.com
Victim of Crime handbook (several languages)	Government of Alberta www.victims.gov.ab.ca
In the Name of the Law and our Youth brochure	Department of Justice Canada www.canada.justice.gc.ca
The Support Network brochure	The Support Network www.thesupportnetwork.com
Health and Wellness	
Health Questions brochure	Capital Health www.cha.ab.ca
Face Mental Illness magnet	Alberta Mental Health Board 1-877-303-2642
It's in Your Hands – Influenza Self-Care brochure	Alberta Health and Wellness www.health.gov.ab.ca
Cervical Cancer Screening Project brochure	Central Alberta Immigrant Women's Association www.cirsonline.ca/caiwa/
HIV/AIDS Awareness Project brochure	Central Alberta Immigrant Women's Association www.cirsonline.ca/caiwa/
Glaucoma – It Can Take Your Sight Away brochure	Canadian Ophthalmological Society The Canadian National Institute for the Blind

Cataracts – Clouding the Lens of Sight brochure	Canadian Ophthalmological Society The Canadian National Institute for the Blind
Invest in Your Physical Well-Being brochure	Capital Health – Community Rehabilitation www.capitalhealth.ca
CNIB – Your Vision Health Resource brochure	The Canadian National Institute for the Blind www.cnib.ca
On Call Around the Clock brochure	Capital Health Link www.capitalhealth.ca
How to Explain Death to a Child brochure	Memento Funeral Chapel
Partner Abuse info sheet	Health Link Alberta www.healthlinkalberta.ca
Dental info sheet	Simply Health www.vrri.org
Emergency 911 fridge poster	Citizenship and Immigration Canada www.cic.gc.ca
Ask Your Pharmacist calendar	The Medicine Shoppe Canadian Pharmacists Association
Hearing info sheet	Simply Health www.vrri.org
Prostate info sheet	Simply Health www.vrri.org
Eyesight info sheet	Simply Health www.vrri.org
The Breast info sheet	Simply Health www.vrri.org
Podiatry info sheet	Simply Health www.vrri.org
Active Edmonton Spring 2007 guide	Active Edmonton www.activedmonton.ca
Canada's Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Active Living for Older Adults	Health Canada www.healthcanada.ca



AISH business card	AISH 1-866-477-8589
Health and Social Services for Canada's Multicultural Population article	Canadian Heritage www.canadianheritage.gc.ca
Canada's Health Care System guide	Health Canada www.healthcanada.ca
Healthy Eating – ESL curriculum resource	Toronto Public Health
Healthy Eating for Your Heart ESL curriculum resource	Toronto Public Health
Introduction to Heart Health ESL curriculum resource	Toronto Public Health
Heart Health – ESL curriculum resource	Toronto Public Health
Timeline, Bibliography and Online Resources ESL curriculum resource	Toronto Public Health
Picture Story for Adult ESL health literacy article	Kate Singleton, Fairfax Public Schools www.cal.org
Addiction and Substance Abuse information	AADAC www.albertahealthservices.ca
Taking Control – Lower Your Risk of Heart Disease and Stroke brochure	Heart & Stroke Foundation www.heartandstroke.ca
Lifeline brochure	Lifeline www.lifeline.ca
Protection for Persons in Care brochure	Protection for Persons in Care www.seniors.gov.ab.ca
Seniors, Sleeping Pills and Tranquillizers brochure	Health Canada www.hc-sc.gc.ca
Society of Seniors Caring About Seniors brochure	Society of Senior Caring About Seniors 780-465-0311

A Take-Charge Guide to Safe Living with Osteoporosis brochure	Lifeline www.lifeline.ca
Live Safely and Independently in Your own Home brochure	Lifeline www.lifeline.ca
Coverage for Seniors brochure	Alberta Blue Cross www.ab.bluecross.ca
In Difficult Times, Compassionate Care brochure	Service Canada www.servicecanada.gc.ca
Breathe Easy Program brochure	Caritas Centre for Lung Health www.caritas.ab.ca
2007 Directory of Seniors Services	Senior Association of Greater Edmonton (SAGE) www.mysage.ca
Parkinson's: The Facts brochure	Parkinson Society Canada www.parkinson.ca
Fitness – A Key to Fall Prevention brochure	Lifeline www.lifeline.ca
Heart Disease info sheet for seniors	Parkinson Society Canada www.parkinson.ca
Dementia brochure	Pfizer Neurosciences
Is it Time for a Medical Alarm? brochure	Lifeline www.lifeline.ca
Lifeline brochure (Arabic)	Lifeline www.lifeline.ca
Lifeline brochure (Russian)	Lifeline www.lifeline.ca
Lifeline brochure (Spanish)	Lifeline www.lifeline.ca



Recreation	
Visit the Country booklet	Visit the Country www.visitthecountry.ca
Healthy Active School Communities booklet	Summer Active www.summeractive.org
Safety	
For Parents and others Who Care – How a Parent’s Problems with Alcohol, Drugs or Gambling can Affect Children brochure	AADAC www.aadac.com
Victim Impact Statement handout	Department of Justice Canada www.canada.justice.gc.ca
A Drug Problem – How Can I Tell? brochure	AADAC www.aadac.com
What a Woman Should Know – Alcohol and Other Drugs	AADAC www.aadac.com
Report Hate Crime brochure	Edmonton Police Service
Nutrition and Recovery booklet	AADAC www.aadac.com
Newcomer Outreach LINC/ESL lesson plans	Toronto Catholic District School Bd. www.tcdsb.org Toronto Police Service www.torontopolice.on.ca
Is Your Child Safe? brochure	Health Canada www.hc-sc.gc.ca
Stay Safe – An Education Guide to Hazard Symbols	Health Canada www.hs-sc.gc.ca
Children’s Safety Zone – Using 911 article	Los Angeles Fire Department www.sosnet.com
Children’s Safety Zone – Fire: The Silent Killer article	Los Angeles Fire Department www.sosnet.com

Children's Safety Zone – Smoke Detectors article	City of Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services www.sosnet.com
Children's Safety Zone – Fire Extinguishers at Home article	City of Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services www.sosnet.com
Be Safe at Work booklet	English Express www.englishexpress.ca
What to Say When I Call 911? handout	Unknown
Basic Emergency Kit Package	Public Safety Canada www.getprepared.ca
Continuing Care Safety Association booklet	Continuing Care Safety Association www.continuingcaresafety.ca
2006 Product Catalogue	Work Smart www.worksmart.ca
Worker Orientation Health and Safety Checklist	Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry www.alis.gov.ab.ca
Highlights of the Changes to the OHS Code 2006 booklet	Work Safe Alberta www.worksafely.org
10 Questions to ask your New Employer wallet card	Government of Alberta www.gov.ab.ca
Bridges for Youth brochure	Brooks International Service Centre 403-362-2129
Diversity at Work handout	Central Alberta Diversity Association www.mycommunityinformation.com/cada
Canadian Centre for Environmental Education brochure	Canadian Centre for Environmental Education www.ccee.ca
Labour Market News July 2007	Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry www.labourmarketnews.ca
Time is Everything brochure	Alberta Human Resources and Employment www.gov.ab.ca/hre/emplomentstandards/



Employment Standards Guide brochure	Alberta Human Resources and Employment www.gov.ab.ca/hre/emplomentstandards/
Employer Publications info sheet	Alberta Human Resources and Employment www.gov.ab.ca/hre/
Workability handbook	Alberta Human Resources and Employment www.gov.ab.ca/hre/
Workplace Rights and Responsibilities poster	Alberta Human Resources and Employment www.gov.ab.ca/hre/
Other: Diversity	
Understanding Islam and Muslims booklet	Canadian Islamic Cultural Centre 780-623-4578
Centralized Interpreter Service handout	The Family Centre 780-448-2627
Facing Facts brochure	Canadian Council for Refugees www.web.net/~ccr
Help Make a Difference brochure	www.helpmakeadifference.com
Central Alberta Diversity Association brochure	The Central Alberta Diversity Association www.mycommunityinformation.com/cada
MacEwan Policy on Harassment brochure	NO LINK HERE?
Other: Work	
English Express: Employment Laws Protect Alberta Workers	Alberta Learning www.englishexpress.ca
English Express: Looking for a Job	Alberta Learning www.englishexpress.ca
A Guide to Rights and Responsibilities in Alberta Workplaces booklet	Alberta Learning Information Centre www.alis.alberta.ca
Welcome to Alberta booklet	Alberta Learning Information Centre www.alis.alberta.ca
Career Planner booklet	Alberta Learning Information Centre www.alis.alberta.ca



Intercultural Resource

This resource is a collection of interesting cultural knowledge that you can use to familiarize yourself with some of the subtleties of communication between cultures. Appreciating these subtleties will help you more accurately describe Canadian norms and values for your learners and make sense of misunderstandings that come up as you engage in cross-cultural work.

This resource includes:

1. Definitions
2. Interpretive Guide to Registration Information
3. Culture General Tool for Noticing and Interpreting Behaviour
4. Culture Specific Research Tool
5. Characteristics and Challenges of Settlement, Adaptation and Integration
6. Knowledge Builder – Barriers Faced by New Immigrants
7. Knowledge Builder – Refugees
8. Knowledge Builder – Additional Intercultural Communication Resources



Definitions

Cultural knowledge

Cultural knowledge is made up of “culture general” and “culture specific” knowledge. Learning specific things about a culture will serve you well but learning culture general frameworks will serve you even better.

Culture general knowledge

General categories facilitate our exploration of values, beliefs, and behaviours in any culture and provide a perspective for comparing and contrasting cultures.

Examples: nonverbal behaviour, communication style, cognitive style, cultural values and language use (pragmatics).

Culture specific knowledge:

Culture specific knowledge builds on culture general knowledge with deeper and subtler interpretations of cultural patterns within a specific culture.

Example: Many Canadians greet each other with a handshake (non-verbal behaviour: eye contact, touching, conversational distance, facial display etc.) There is a pattern to the length of time it takes and how firm it needs to be. (Three pumps on average and firm but not too strong, definitely not weak.) The firmness of the handshake results in interpretations of things like character or trustworthiness. The handshake will vary depending on gender, how well the two people know each other, age, etc. There are also rules for eye contact in this situation.

Stereotypes and Generalizations

Before working with culture general categories it is always important to approach with an awareness of stereotyping. A Cultural

Generalization, using culture general knowledge, is the description of the tendency of a majority of people in a cultural group to hold certain values and beliefs, and to engage in certain patterns of behaviour. A cultural stereotype, on the other hand, is the application of a generalization to every person in a cultural group; or, generalizing based on only a few people in a group. Culture general information is very valuable as a starting place to help understand cultural patterns shared by a group. When information is used in a limiting way it risks becoming stereotypes.

For example, people from country A tend to be more individualistic than people from country B when it comes to their behaviour in certain situations (generalization) compared to all people from country A are individualistic (stereotype). Starting with this knowledge can help when we are trying to make sense of confusing or unfamiliar behaviours. Then it is up to us to find out if our interpretation is accurate or not. As we meet more people from a particular region or culture we can fine tune our observations and interpretations. It is always good practice to consult someone from the same cultural group or someone who has experience in that culture to get some perspective.

Cultural Generalization

The tendency of a majority of people in a cultural group to hold certain values and beliefs, and to engage in certain patterns of behaviour.

Cultural Stereotype

The application of a generalization to every person in a cultural group; or, generalizing based on only a few people in a group.

Interpretive Guide to Registration Information

Registration Category	Tips	Cultural Considerations
Name	<p>Make an effort to learn to say this name correctly. Be curious about it. Ask the person to spell it. Do you know which name is the family name? How is the person normally addressed? Are children given the same last name as the parent? Which one?</p> <p>Share your name.</p>	<p>Names are important clues to a person's identity.</p> <p>Be aware that the person you are talking to may be uncomfortable with or not used to the informal style of address used in Canada. By asking the person to spell or write his or her name you can begin to assess his or her language level.</p>
Phone number	<p>Is the phone a landline or a cell phone? Will the learner have to pay for incoming calls?</p>	<p>This information will be useful for future contact as well as for homework exercises.</p>
Address	<p>What kind of place does he or she live in — a house, apartment or trailer? How far away does the individual live from the place where the class will be held? How many other people live with the participant and what is their relationship to him or her?</p>	<p>This lets you know what kind of privacy or support the participant will have for homework.</p>
Transportation	<p>Does this person drive, have access to a vehicle, get around by bus, taxi, bicycle or on foot?</p>	<p>To inform your planning, you will need to know how much of a barrier will be presented by transportation issues.</p>
Country of birth/origin	<p>Where was this person born? Did she live there for her formative years? Did she live in any other countries or areas in Canada before arriving in your community?</p> <p>Does this person belong to an "emerging community" or a well established community? Emerging communities have fewer established support networks.</p>	<p>This information can help you to determine what the cultural distance might be for this person. Remember, however, that many people may have lived in a country other than their own before coming to Canada and may have already bridged some of their cultural distance issues.</p>



Registration Category	Tips	Cultural Considerations
<p>Immigration status</p>	<p>Is the person a permanent resident, a temporary foreign worker, or a visiting student? (A temporary foreign worker has come to Canada on a work permit for one or two years and does not have permanent resident privileges.)</p> <p>To be eligible for Canadian government immigration, a foreign national must apply for and be granted a Canadian Permanent Resident (immigrant) visa. Individuals who have been issued an immigrant visa must present themselves to an immigration officer at one of Canada’s official ports of entry in order to be granted permanent resident status. Obtaining “permanent residence” or “permanent resident status” in Canada was formerly known as becoming a “landed immigrant.” Canadian permanent residents are entitled to live and work anywhere in Canada and enjoy most of the privileges of Canadian citizenship. After three years of residence in Canada, a permanent resident may apply for Canadian citizenship. Permanent residents may sponsor their non-Canadian family members wishing to obtain permanent resident status in Canada.</p> <p>There are different ways to qualify for Canadian permanent resident status: as an economic immigrant; as a member of the family class; and, in certain cases, as a refugee.</p> <p>Temporary foreign workers and individuals in the Live-in Caregiver Program do not have permanent residence status and therefore do not qualify for government-funded programs.</p>	<p>This information will affect how you honour your program mandate. <i>Roots and Connections</i> is a free resource that you can use with anyone. Their immigration status will however impact what kind of funding help you can get to deliver a program using <i>Roots and Connections</i>.</p>

Registration Category	Tips	Cultural Considerations
Length of residence in Canada / community	<p>How long has the person lived in Canada, and this community in particular?</p> <p>Where did this person live before moving to this community?</p>	<p>This information will give you insight into the stage of adjustment (for more information see Stages of Adjustment for Newcomers, page 61) or culture shock this person/family may be experiencing as well as their familiarity with supports available to them.</p>
Language spoken at home	<p>What kind of opportunities does the learner have to practise English outside of your class?</p>	<p>This can give you some insight into how quickly the learner may progress in speaking English. Remember that children need to have ample opportunities to speak their mother tongue at home as a foundation for strong literacy. Also, language is intimately connected to culture. By telling people that they should speak only English (and not speak their first language), you could be sending unintentional messages about the value of their first language and their cultural identity.</p>
Family	<p>Is the person married or single? Does he or she have children? Is he or she taking care of other relatives or living with other relatives? Does the person have a Canadian-born partner or spouse?</p>	<p>Knowing about participants' family situations will help you to understand how their time and energy are divided and what their other responsibilities are. This will also tell you if childcare is required for those individuals to attend your class. Remember that some newcomers may not be comfortable having a stranger care for their children. Sometimes a Canadian-born spouse can provide too much support by doing the homework for your learner! If they are very helpful think of tasks they can do together that can involve the spouse in a productive and satisfying way.</p>





Registration Category	Tips	Cultural Considerations
<p>Past education and occupation</p>	<p>Levels of education can range from little or none to advanced degrees.</p>	<p>The amount of formal education someone has received will influence his or her learning strategies and expectations/ knowledge of how to learn in a Canadian adult learning environment.</p>
<p>Availability</p>	<p>When are the participants available? How many hours a week are they available? Where are they able to meet? What are you reasonably able to offer? How much time outside of class will they be able to study? What other kinds of responsibilities do they have (family, work, home)?</p>	<p>This information will have an impact on when, where and how you choose to offer your program.</p>

Culture General Tool for Noticing and Interpreting Behaviour

This culture general framework can help guide your attention to important cultural differences. Culture general frameworks (general information about a culture’s values, beliefs and behaviours) provide a frame for understanding culture specific information (deeper and subtler patterns within a specific culture).

One useful culture general framework is cultural value dimensions. These well documented sets of ingrained cultural values make up the complex ways that cultures help people make sense of the world. For newcomers, learning these invisible aspects of the “host” culture is challenging and sometimes frustrating especially because members of the “host” culture don’t necessarily know how to talk about them, it’s just “the way things are done.”

When you are part of a culture you can act and respond automatically, knowing what the boundaries of acceptable behaviour are. It is not uncommon for people in a new culture to shut down or hold back until they figure out the rules or become comfortable with the risks and consequences. This can sometimes

be misinterpreted as being shy or lacking in confidence. As part of your role as a cultural bridge it will serve you well to become aware of how culture general patterns are expressed specifically in your culture and in the culture of your learners.

How to use this tool

Look at the following table:

1. Which of the contrasting descriptions do you identify with? (self awareness)
2. Which descriptions characterize your parents’ culture? (noticing ways culture evolves and changes over time)
3. Culture A descriptions are closer to the tendencies of mainstream Canadians. Observe the behaviours of your learners. Can you identify any of the cultural values and behaviours from the chart below? (awareness of your learners’ cultural patterns)
4. Use these contrasts to help name and make sense of cultural behaviours for your learners and for members of the community when needed.

Aspects of Culture	Culture A Values and Behaviours	Culture B Values and Behaviours
Sense of space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • informal • handshake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formal • hugs, bows, handshakes
Communication and language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explicit, direct communication • emphasis on content (meaning found in words) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implicit, indirect communication • emphasis on context (meaning found around words)



Aspects of Culture	Culture A Values and Behaviours	Culture B Values and Behaviours
Dress and appearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “dress for success” ideal • wide range in accepted dress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dress seen as a sign of position, wealth, prestige • religious rules
Food and eating habits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eating as a necessity (fast food) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dining as a social experience • religious rules
Time and time consciousness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • linear and exact time consciousness • value on promptness (time = money) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • elastic and relative time consciousness • time spent on enjoyment of relationships
Relationships, family, friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focus on nuclear family • responsibility for self • value on youth, age seen as handicap 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focus on extended family • loyalty and responsibility to family • age given status and respect
Values and norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individual orientation • independence • preference for direct confrontation of conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • group orientation • conformity • preference for harmony
Beliefs and attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • egalitarian • challenging authority • individuals control their destiny • gender equity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hierarchical • respect for authority and social order • individuals accept their destiny • different roles for men and women
Mental processes and learning style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • linear, logical, sequential • problem solving focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lateral, holistic, simultaneous • accepting of life’s difficulties
Work habits and practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emphasis on task • reward based on individual achievement • work has intrinsic value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emphasis on relationships • rewards based on seniority, relationships • work is a necessity of life

Adapted from Gardenzwartz and Rowe, 1998, Managing Diversity Chapter 4 pg.67

Culture Specific Research Tool

This cultural assessment is a tool to help providers understand about beliefs, values and practices of individuals and families. For you as an instructor or program administrator working with newcomers consider this tool as a resource to learn more about your learners or to problem solve. There are some critical things to think about when trying to capture a snapshot of important cultural factors impacting a learners engagement with your program, such as:

- level of ethnic identity
- use of informal network and supportive institutions in the ethnic/cultural community
- community values orientation
- language and communication process
- migration experience
- self concept and self esteem
- influence of religion/spirituality on belief system and behavior patterns
- views and concerns about discrimination and institutional racism
- views about the role of ethnicity
- educational level and employment experiences
- habits, customs, beliefs
- importance and impact associated with physical characteristics
- cultural health beliefs and practices
- current socioeconomic status

Here are some examples of questions you can ask yourself to provide you with cultural information about your learner, as well as enhance your own self-awareness.

1. What is your learner's self-identity? (e.g. female, Hispanic, professional)
2. What historical events have shaped your learner's life experiences?
3. What have your learner's life experiences been like? (e.g. success, inequity)
4. What is valued? (e.g. respect, responsibility, pride, self-determination, interdependence)
5. What gives your learner a sense of belonging? (e.g. religion, occupation, history)
6. What are valued relationships between people, genders, generations?
7. What are valued religious beliefs?
8. What language is used?
9. What are important customs?
10. What are valued emotions?
11. What are some important beliefs for solving problems?
12. What are valued institutions in your learner's culture (i.e. religion, family elders)?
13. What are important features of family (boundaries such as nuclear or extended; other family members considered important)?
14. What are valued features of marriage?
15. Most valued form of social organization?
16. Value of formal education?
17. Most valued community unit? (e.g. neighborhood, city, county)
18. Attitudes about others or outsiders helping to solve problems?
19. Attitudes about solving problems on his or her own?
20. Most valued help-giving person?
21. Economic conditions?

Reference: Multicultural Health Brokers. Edmonton, Alberta.



Stages of Adjustment for Newcomers: Considerations in Cultural Assessment

This tool helps you to anticipate or recognize challenges your learners may be facing depending on where they are in their settlement, adaptation and integration story.

The Stages of Cultural Adjustment (Figure 2) chart examines the transition process and divides it into three distinct stages of cultural adjustment most people experience as adjusting to a new cultural context. Knowing these variables can help you understand the motivations and challenges experienced in different stages. As you consider the stages, keep in mind that there are a number of

variables that can influence an individual’s ability to navigate each stage including:

1. Age
2. Cultural distance (the degree of similarity or dissimilarity between the host culture and the culture of origin)
3. Education
4. Gender
5. Support network
6. Experiences of discrimination
7. Immigration experience, e.g. time of arrival, length of residence, reason for immigration, language, politics, religion, status before immigration

Stages of Adjustment	Needs/Characteristics	Challenges
<p>Settlement</p> <p>Newcomers are establishing themselves in their new home and learning how to access the basic necessities for day-to-day living. This can take as long as three years.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic needs • financial issues • employment • housing • education • banking • orientation • cultural Orientation • settlement services • appropriate programs • accurate interpretation of needs • acknowledgement/ understanding of pre-migration and migration experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support/ family • financial • don’t know who to trust • language • culture shock • cultural disorientation • health • environmental • mental health • isolation/loneliness • where to look for services • naivety • hesitant to challenge • pre-migration issues • stigma

<p>Adaptation</p> <p>Immigrants are learning how to engage with the new culture and adapt to their environment, while seeking to retain some aspects of their own cultural identity. Some settlement issues may linger.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • family role changes • spousal role changes • parenting • shift in gender roles • disconfirmed expectations • new career training • developing language skills • can move around with less support and assistance • finished school • own circle of friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identity • shifting values: conflict • lack of understanding of the nature of this conflict • struggle of adapting • time • once children are able to speak the intergenerational gaps begin • socialization of children into different value set (communication norms) • parents need to build confidence and language to be effective parents in bi-cultural context
<p>Integration</p> <p>Immigrants have reached the point at which they can act as fully functioning members of Canadian society.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participation in all aspects of life • political • social • parent/School • career advancement 	

“Mapping the life experiences of immigrant and refugee families is a series of transitions – each stage presents myriad challenges and opportunities. Each time and moment, the families must make decisions that will forever change their lives. While each decision carries uncertainties, each family is hopeful that their lives will be better.” (p. 11)

(Multicultural Health Brokers, 2004)



Background Knowledge Builder 1

Barriers Faced by Newcomers

Gaining insight into newcomers' settlement experiences and the barriers they face will help *Roots and Connections* facilitators understand trends in settlement, adaptation and integration. This information comes from a study done by the Latin American community in Toronto but reflects the experiences of other groups as well.

The research brought together immigrant seniors, youth and professionals – including some who had lived in Canada for close to 20 years and some with less than a year in Canada.

Social Barriers

- In order to settle in Canada we have to be resilient. We have to bring a strong base of discipline and responsibility to overcome barriers, succeed and get jobs. Not everyone has the strength and endurance to overcome negative barriers.
- A new immigrant needs from five to six years to fully adjust to their new environment.
- Settlement is a transitional period in which people tend to keep to themselves and not share their feelings with many people.
- I have noticed that we have to struggle harder; it seems like we have to “accept and be pleased” with the opportunities offered to us.
- We get acquainted with community centres only when we experience hardships. It will be good to have on hand all information about rights, duties, orientation, housing and job placement and family settlement services.
- At the individual level we are led to feel inferior because of the way mainstream society perceives us.

Transitional Process Barriers

- A drop in socioeconomic status following migration
- Inability to speak the language of the host country
- Separation from family
- Lack of friendly reception by the host population
- Lack of ethno-cultural community to provide support
- A traumatic experience prior to migration
- Migrating during adolescence or after the age of 65
- Women and seniors may face a loss of independence and social support structures
- Legal limbo regarding refugee claims
- Immigration status
- Intra-Community Barriers
- “Exploitation” of labour
- Imported conflict and distrust

Discrimination and Racism

- Racism still the biggest barrier for the adequate social adaptation and integration of visible minority immigrants



- Mainstream ignorance of the background of immigrants creates distorted perception.
 - These misperceptions shape the way mainstream Canadians interact with visible minorities.
- The system absorbs our children, which means they begin the process of losing their rich cultural legacy
 - Teachers give series of recommendations to our children that broaden their alternatives outside the family setting. For example if they disagree with their parents, and if the child is 15 years old and older, the teenager is told that he/she can leave home, get help obtaining a job.
- Questions include:
 - How does the system work?
 - What will be the impact of a different system in my family's lives?

Language and Culture

- Language is one of the main barriers
- Language fluency is more than "speaking" English and is correlated with the social transition between the individual's background and the values of the new Canadian social setting.
- Cultural distance

Schooling and Children's Education

This is a grey area for newcomer parents, their children, educators and the schooling system, in particular, in light of the lack of a sensitive cross-cultural communication system.

- Concerns include:
 - Emphasis on individualization rather than strengthening family relationships tends to desegregate family members

Source:

Integrated Settlement Planning Project: Social, Economic and Demographic Profile Hispanic Community
 Prepared by Eduardo Garay Hispanic Development Council
 1076 Bathurst St. Suite 204, Toronto, Ontario, M5R 3G9,
 Tel (416) 516-0851

April 25, 2000 Funded by: Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), The Ontario Administration of Settlement and Integration Services (OASIS)

[http://atwork.settlement.org/downloads/Hispanic Community_Profile.pdf](http://atwork.settlement.org/downloads/Hispanic_Community_Profile.pdf) page 43



Background Knowledge Builder 2

Refugees

The text in this Background Knowledge is adapted from the Multicultural Families Connection Project, *Mapping the Life Experience of Refugee and Immigrant Families with Pre-school Children*, and has been adapted and reprinted with permission.³

Refugees are persons in need of protection due to: fear of persecution, risk of torture or cruel and unusual treatment or punishment. Refugees are almost certainly people who had not intended to leave their country of origin. This is not the case for immigrants. Persons who choose to immigrate have given the decision due consideration and have had time to physically and emotionally prepare themselves for the resettlement process. For refugees or asylum seekers, “the sudden and involuntary nature of the process generates tremendous tensions within the family.” (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001, p. 27).

Tensions and Challenges for Refugees

1. Experiencing feelings of guilt, failure or grief for not having been able to provide for the basic safety and well-being of their children.
2. Being separated as a family, as is often the case when fathers are forced to go into hiding because of threats upon their lives.
3. Having witnessed or experienced the terrors of war such as death and torture that often result in post-traumatic stress disorder.
4. Not holding the same hope of one day returning to their country of origin that immigrants do.
5. Losing one’s home and possessions.
6. Dealing with the disruption of one’s accustomed way of life.

7. Having to deal with differing cultural expectations at home and at school.
8. Experiencing racism and discrimination.
9. Developing a sense of self (identity) in the midst of dealing with other tensions and challenges.
10. Coping with loss of culture and support.
11. Adjusting to a new culture and environment.
12. Experiencing a steep reduction in standard of living.
13. Working menial jobs sometimes 2–3 jobs for more than 50 hours per week.
14. Managing the government-assisted refugee debt (\$5000–\$10,000).
15. Raising children in two cultures.

“Life in Canada contains stories of struggle and hopefulness in a new environment from landing and settlement, survival and integration.” (p. 2)

Extra Challenges for Refugee Children

- With respect to refugee children, though faced with considerable loss, the grief and mourning associated with loss often goes undetected or unacknowledged.

³ Multicultural Health Brokers Co-op, 2004. *Mapping the Life Experience of Refugee and Immigrant Families with Pre-school Children*, Edmonton, Alberta. Multicultural Families Connections Project. Adapted and reproduced with permission.

“This may be attributed to a long-held belief that children adapt quickly, bolstered by the tendency of children to not express their sadness and their mourning in words.” (Fantino & Colak, 2001, p. 590) Children may avoid talking about their feelings in order to avoid upsetting their parents, but as well, as a society we may not care to listen.

- Beyond these specific stresses impacting refugees, like all immigrants the resettlement process will be influenced by “the physical and psychological availability of parents, the family’s socioeconomic background and the context in which the family resettles.”
- Adopting the role of language and cultural interpreter for their parents.

Settlement Issues Experienced in Alberta

A Prairie Centre study (Abu-Laban, Derwing, Krahn, Mulder & Wilkenson, 1999) into the settlement experiences of refugees in Alberta provides insight into the experiences of refugees entering specific communities in Alberta. Recent refugees and long time community residents in Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge, Red Deer, Medicine Hat and Fort McMurray were surveyed with respect to settlement issues. Some key generalizations include:

- The majority of refugees experienced great stress, difficulty and trauma prior to arriving in Canada.
- Discrimination and racism appear to be a barrier to settlement particularly in the case of visible minorities.
- The lack of recognition for international credentials is a tremendous barrier to settlement.
- Refugees wish they had been better informed about what to expect when settling in Canada.
- Information regarding settlement support here is lacking.
- Personal income, government assistance, cost of living and other financial issues such as landing fees and the need to start paying back travel assistance loans within the first year needing affects settlement.
- The support of settlement agencies is of utmost importance. The settlement services most needed by refugees are English language instruction, help finding housing and more support in finding good jobs.
- Having access to an interpreter is also deemed important to settlement. Being welcomed by local residents is crucial to successful settlement.
- Both adults and youth considered having access to a good bus system important.
- Most Canadians are unaware of the situation refugees endured before coming to Canada. Some refugee communities consider having relatives and local amenities such as foodstuffs and places of worship nearby also significant to settlement.
- The advice respondents most commonly had for other refugees related to employment and education. “The advice to Canadians was an appeal to be treated fairly and to be given the opportunity to live a normal life in which refugees can fulfill their potential as contributing members of society” (p. 181).





Mental Health Issues

Several studies have been conducted regarding the mental health issues faced by refugees and immigrants. Though not specifically intended to address parenting issues, the 1988 task force report, *Mental Health Issues Affecting Refugees and Immigrants in Canada*, begins with a case study involving Vietnamese refugees whose children were apprehended by social services and the mother hospitalized for depression.

It is shown that settlement issues affect the mental health of refugees and immigrants and this in turn affects their ability to provide parental care for their children (p. 8). Negative public attitudes, separation from family and community, inability to speak English or French, and failure to find employment are among the most powerful causes of emotional distress.

Persons whose pre-migration experience has been traumatic, women from traditional cultures, adolescents and the elderly also are at high risk for experiencing difficulties during resettlement (p. 91).

Misunderstanding, loneliness and lack of opportunity are sighted as having tragic consequences for many refugees and immigrants.

Suggested ways of ameliorating mental health issues associated with settlement include:

- Changing attitudes so that Canadians come to value cultural pluralism
- Strengthening communities
- Ensuring English or French language acquisition
- Understanding the lived cultural and historical context of refugees and immigrants
- Removing barriers to accessing services
- Making services more effective



Background Knowledge Builder 3

Additional Intercultural Resources

NorQuest Centre for Excellence in Intercultural Education www.norquest.ca/cfe/intercultural

Go to this website for links to free resources and additional information about intercultural communication

Toolbox of Ideas for Smaller Centres:

Attracting, Welcoming & Retaining Immigrants to Your Community www.icavictoria.org

Includes these Resource Handouts:

1. 20 Ways to Welcome a Newcomer to Your Community
2. Dimensions of Culture
3. Differences - Cultural Norms & Values
4. Glossary of Terms Used in Understanding Diversity
5. Guidelines for Multicultural Collaboration
6. Our Learned Cultural Bias and Prejudice
7. Diversity Awareness Continuum
8. What am I Doing to Welcome Diversity? (Quiz)
9. Suggestions for Improving Cross-Cultural Communication
10. Tips for Organizing a Multicultural - Diversity Event

Fantino, Ana Maria. (2006). *Cultures at Work: Intercultural Communication in the Canadian Workplace*, The Muttart Foundation (Download at www.muttart.org)

Culture Cues Resource Guide for Service Providers Working with Calgary's Culturally Diverse Seniors www.calgary.ca



Culture Bytes – Complete Collection

The following is a compiled collection of the Culture Bytes found in the Curriculum. It includes 8 Culture Bytes.

Culture Bytes are snapshots of cultural information. They include basic information for working cross-culturally, information about the newcomer experience, stories, and explanations of common misunderstandings. They are a tool for instructors to check their own assumptions regarding the concepts introduced by *Roots and Connections*.

Culture Bytes work in combination with the Personal Connections activities and the Community Knowledge and Skills Assessment Tool (found in the toolkit). These resources help instructors and volunteers estimate the cultural distance being bridged by participants, and adjust expectations and lessons accordingly. Culture Bytes are designed to highlight “culture general”² generalizations and patterns.

Getting to Know You Culture Byte

Identity is central to this curriculum because the experience of settlement, adaptation (adjustment), and integration are, at their core, questions of identity. Adaptation is a natural human instinct to seek internal balance in the face of change. Moving from one culture to another is fraught with change, impacting each and every part of a person’s identity in some way.

Roots and Connections is designed to help instructors and community members support newcomers at this intersection in their lives. It does this through a culturally integrated process by providing introductory community information and facilitating relationships, supported with insightful cultural knowledge presented as “Culture Bytes.” In unit one identity wheels and Personal Connections activities are introduced to help make the orientation process more welcoming by intentionally exploring aspects of identity.

Identity is complex and dynamic. It is made up of ethnicity, culture, gender, personality, roles and relationships. Some aspects of identity will be supported and accepted by the host culture, while others may conflict with the host culture’s norms and expectations. The adaptation process is a complicated negotiation of identity.

For example, gender roles are more separately defined in some cultures than in others. In Canada, women have fought for equal rights and access to roles that may have been more typically male in the past. Men today often take on roles that were previously considered to be for women. For newcomers coming from more traditionally patriarchal societies, this may present a new reality. For women, sometimes this opens a whole new world of possibilities, and the shift in roles can cause tension in families.

People who move from one country to another (or even from one part of the country to another, or from an urban to a rural area) may have a lot of difficulty adjusting to their new environment. Not only are they learning a new language, they are also learning a very different way of life. Some people may go through phases where they feel frustrated and humiliated.

Issues they may be facing could include:

Loss in status

People who were respected in their former communities may feel they are now labeled as “immigrants,” especially when they find themselves working in jobs well below their education and experience level.

Loss of established support systems

For many newcomers, extended family members were their traditional source of support in everyday life. When a family moves to Canada and leaves these connections behind, it can result in a strong sense of loss. This is especially felt in times of difficulty (i.e. illness, financial difficulties or culture shock), which can be even more challenging when there are no family members or close friends to call on for support.

Feelings of isolation may result when a parent is required to stay home and take care of the children. Without a job or the opportunity to take language classes, an individual with limited language skills may feel like a prisoner in her own home.

Frustration with the inability to do simple tasks

Imagine standing in front of a bus and not knowing how to get on and pay. Do you enter by the front or rear door? Do you pay when you get on or get off? In some countries, passengers pay when their ride has ended and they are leaving the bus. In some countries, a conductor collects the fares after passengers are seated. The way you signal to get off the bus may be different. Imagine trying to ride a bus without the proper change or without knowing the purpose of the fare box and bell cord. Not only is language difficult, but procedures are confusing as well. It is frustrating to feel incompetent when you are trying to carry out common everyday tasks.

Threats to cultural identity

Canada is a multicultural country but there is still an expectation for those outside mainstream society to become acculturated. Keeping traditions and raising children in the manner learners feel is best may be more difficult than they anticipated. Traditional parent-child relationships can be dramatically altered when children know more English than their parents. Having to depend upon one’s children for assistance can cause problems as it may undermine parental authority. In some situations, it can even result in parental abuse.



Culture shock

Culture shock refers to feeling disoriented and threatened as the result of being in a culturally new environment. In this foreign environment the safety net of familiarity has vanished. Depending on how long learners have been in Canada, they will be in one of four stages of cultural adjustment⁷, as described below.

Students in the second stage are probably the most difficult to facilitate because they may be particularly negative. Keep in mind that they may be experiencing culture shock. Each stage lasts a different length of time for every individual, but in general, the stages are:

- **Stage 1 – Excited!** During the first stage, the new country is interesting, the people are friendly and helpful and the future looks promising.
- **Stage 2 – Problems!** School, language, shopping – everything is difficult. Things that were simple back home require more effort in the new country. It seems hard to make friends. At this point, newcomers may begin to believe that the local people are unfriendly. Homesickness begins and along with it complaints about the new country. This is the stage we hear referred to as “culture shock.”
- **Stage 3 – Recovery.** The newcomer begins to use the language more fluently, so communication with local people becomes easier. Customs and traditions become clearer and slowly the situation passes from impossible to hopeful. Minor misunderstandings which were stressful in Stage 2 become manageable.
- **Stage 4 – Stability.** Eventually newcomers begin to feel more at home in the new country. What they do not like about their new country no longer makes them so dissatisfied and unhappy. Life has settled down and they are now able to find humour in the situations in which they find themselves.

In *Roots and Connections*, we emphasize the need and responsibility of both the host society and the newcomer to learn from each other in order to create an inclusive, just community. “Cultural identity wheels” are tools for reflecting on and talking about the variety of places an individual’s identity intersects with new and different cultural norms, values and expectations. Identity wheels are referred to throughout the orientation as additional layers of identity, norms and expectations are uncovered.

Community Culture Byte

Traditionally a *community* was defined as a group of interacting people living in a common location. However, the term has evolved to mean a group of individuals who share characteristics, regardless of their location or degree of interaction. Today there are sports communities, religious communities and even virtual communities. If individuals develop the feeling that they belong to a group and they must help the group they belong to, then they develop a sense of community.

The communities we live in are composed of individuals, families and institutions that organize systems, agencies and organizations to work together for the welfare of people within and beyond their borders. Each community is governed by a set of formal laws and unwritten rules. For newcomers, these are some examples of experiences that may be different or new.

1. Elections.

In a democratic society such as Canada's, leadership is determined by voting. Every three years there is a municipal election. You must be 18 years old and have resided in Alberta for six months to be able to vote in a municipal election. You are eligible to vote in the area you are residing in on election day. It is important to orient newcomers to the three orders of government as a first step toward their capacity for full participation and active citizenship.

2. Garbage and recycling.

Within Canada, the process of garbage disposal varies from one community to another. In some countries, the process is further advanced than in Canada. In other countries, the system of waste disposal is not organized like ours and newcomers will need to learn what is expected for different types of waste. In Alberta there are guidelines for what to do with used batteries, expired medications, broken electronics and other waste material.

Some processes used in Alberta are the blue bag system for recycling (with specific instructions for what can go in); recycling centres; bottle depots; special places to dispose of batteries, tires and oil; recycling fees added to the purchase price of electronics, etc.

3. Tipping.

The word tips originated in England from "to insure prompt service." It is now a custom and expectation to tip service providers in restaurants, taxis, hair salons, etc. This custom may be new to some people and can feel a bit intimidating or confusing. People need to know how much, when and who to tip.

4. Housing.

Houses around the world have both similarities and differences and reflect cultural norms and values through design and layout as well as expectations for upkeep. Newcomers with a larger cultural distance or those who are unfamiliar with the style of housing in Canada



may be unfamiliar with many things about their new home. If you are working with someone with a large cultural distance, then the following examples are areas where the individual may need orientation:

- Familiarity with hot and cold water and how to use the shower
- How to keep a home clean, what cleaning products to use and the dangers associated with chemical cleaners
- How to use the appliances
- Different types of power outlets and light switches
- The importance of the smoke/fire alarm, what it sounds like when it goes off, how to turn it off and how to take care of it
- How to adjust the heating
- Safety in winter, using heaters, reducing drafts and dangers of CO2 poisoning
- Rental contracts, what happens if you get evicted, avoiding a bad reputation (improper upkeep, damage, etc.) and landlord and tenant rights and responsibilities

5. Library services.

Newcomers need to know how to get a library card, access the Internet, borrow books in languages other than English, avoid overdue fines, etc.

6. Licensing.

Newcomers need to know what requires a licence or permit (pets, car, home renovations, serving alcohol, business, etc.) and where to get that information.

7. Public services.

In some countries, it is customary to give gifts or bribes to public officials in order to get things done. This is not the way we do things in Canada. People need to find out the proper procedures for dealing with institutions and know how to ask for help or guidance.

8. Neighbourliness.

What are the norms and expectations for getting to know your neighbours? People who come from more collectivist community oriented cultures may find the private individualist lifestyle practiced by many Canadians to be strange and unfriendly. The lines between public and private vary from culture to culture as well as the concept and definitions of friendship and the rules and norms regarding building relationships.

Education Culture Byte

Beliefs about the purpose of education vary even within one cultural group. No single definition of *education* is agreed upon by all, or even most, educators. The meanings they attach to the word relate to complex beliefs arising from their own values and experiences. There are, however, some patterns that distinguish values and beliefs about education from

one culture to another. In this Culture Byte we will explore some of the ways culture impacts education and how this plays out in the family.

For many families, the reason to move is to provide a better future for their children. There is pressure on the children to succeed in order to realize the parents' dreams. The generation gap between parents and children can be difficult for newcomers to Canada. While adults do change, they keep with them many of the attitudes, beliefs and values they learned as children in their country of origin. However their children, who grow up in Canada, tend to adopt a more Canadian viewpoint. This can make parents feel alienated from their children and can create tension.

The children of newcomers face the difficulty of being expected to conform to patterns of behaviour from their country of origin at home, while conforming to Canadian norms at school. They must find a balance between respect for family traditions and the pressure to conform at school. This process takes time, patience and understanding.

Many students come from cultures that value more traditional schooling in which memorization and accuracy are measured through testing. Children learn not to question authority, teachers take a more authoritarian role and play is considered to be fooling around and not part of serious study. In some countries, the school and teachers play a central role in discipline and education is left entirely up to the school.

In Canadian educational settings, newcomers are likely to notice a focus on individual thought, problem solving, creative thinking and questioning in an informal classroom structure. They may wonder if their children are receiving what they understand to be a "good education."

The amount and type of participation in their child's education expected from parents both in the school and at home may be different for newcomers to your community. Teaching choices and behaviours reflect cultural values and in the Canadian schooling system, newcomers may see these values expressed through behaviour. Newcomers may feel confused or frustrated due to a contrast between their beliefs and expectations about "good education" and what they see happening.

Finance Culture Byte

Money was developed independently in many parts of the world to fulfill a variety of purposes and the concept of exchange is common to cultures around the globe. Many things have been used as money at different times in different places, such as seashells, beads, tea, fish hooks, fur, cattle and even tobacco. Although all cultures use some form of money, there are differences within cultural groups. For example, the tradition of giving money (how much, when, why, to whom and the significance or expectation for reciprocation) varies within and between cultural groups.



Culture influences people's relationship with money as well as their spending or saving behaviours. The various categories you recognized in your identity wheel will provide clues to where you learned and developed your own expectations about money. Consider these questions about money to explore where your values and beliefs may be rooted:

- What is your earliest memory of money?
- What messages about money did you learn growing up?
- Who controlled money in your family? How was that done?
- How did your family contribute to the needs of others?
- What happened when money was scarce?
- Was there a strong connection between money and your sense of self?
- How did your family prepare for the future?
- How did they deal with financial crises?
- Was money talked about openly or was it a secret not to be discussed?
- Did you have to earn your own money or did you have an allowance?
- Was money used as power and withheld as punishment?

If you take a closer look, you can observe a lot about mainstream cultural values and general cultural patterns with respect to money by reflecting on advertising about banking, the way banking is set up and advertising in general.

When you enter a financial institution in Canada you are likely to see advertisements for products such as RRSPs, RESPs, GICs, loans, mortgages and chequing and savings accounts. These products indicate a value in saving for the future and imply that people are generating enough wealth to have "extra" money to put away and that the government is involved. People trust banks to keep their money because a deposit insurance is also provided by the government. The convenience of ATMs (including drive-through ATMs) for do-it-yourself banking are reflections of our fast-paced, time-limited, task-oriented culture.

In the past it was normal to have a relationship with your banker. Today, you can avoid going to the bank altogether and do your banking by phone or online. If you do go into the bank to talk to a teller, you are expected to stand in line and wait until a teller is available to serve you. Employees behind the counter may be dressed in business suits but they may also be wearing fairly casual clothes—especially if it is Friday. Chances are they will call you by your first name, demonstrating a value for informality. Finally, when it comes to modern consumer habits, you can see that advertising encourages us to buy now and pay later, indicating an orientation towards immediate rather than delayed gratification.

Consider these two descriptions of relationships to money in Canadian culture and consider how this culture has changed with time and prosperity.

Save for a Rainy Day

Those who grew up in the Depression learned to save for a rainy day and did not spend money unless it was absolutely necessary. If you grew up in a household where someone had memories of poverty, you probably learned to save everything from pieces of string to empty yogurt containers.

You probably wore hand-me-down clothes and used very old clothes as rags just to get every last bit of use out of them.

Buy Now and Pay Later

After the war, attitudes towards money changed. There was a shift toward immediate gratification and consumerism became the accepted style. The idea of “buy it now and pay for it later,” became more common. Money was readily available, at least by credit and credit cards appeared in every wallet. Those who grew up in Boomer households learned how to spend, but not necessarily how to save. They might defer maintenance on buildings and spend income on other items, such as entertainment or automobiles. This type of spending reflects the belief that tomorrow is uncertain and we should enjoy today.

The following examples of behaviours associated with personal finance provide a scaffold for understanding the experiences and perspectives of newcomers and for considering your own values and beliefs.

Decision making: Gender roles have a place in how decisions about financial matters are made in a family. In some cultures, the decisions are made equally; in others, they are made by the male head of the household and in still other cultures it is the women who manage the family finances. In Canadian society, women have fought hard for gender equality in many roles and the lines between gender roles are sometimes less clearly defined. In other cultures these lines are clearly defined and people may be reluctant to cross them.

Old age security: Consider these two examples that demonstrate different views of family relationships and expectations about financial security in an individual's senior years.

- I am expected to take care of myself when I am old, so I have a pension plan, investment portfolio, savings account and I work with my financial planner. Freedom 55! I have a retirement plan and know how much money I will probably need. I expect to live on my own for as long as I can and then I will probably move into a retirement home. I know my children will be very busy so I don't expect them to take care of me.
- My children will take care of me in the future so I invest my money in them. I expect my children to live with me until they get married and start their own household. I expect to live with one of my children when I am old and my children will care for me.



Past banking experience: Due to experiences of financial crises and currency devaluations, some first-generation immigrants may not trust the banks and as a result may prefer to carry cash rather than deposit their money in the bank. It is not uncommon for people to keep cash hidden at home or to carry it with them. This increases people's anxiety about money and the possibility of being robbed. Furthermore, some newcomers may have had limited experience with banking in their home country, depending on their circumstances. So in addition to language barriers, some newcomers come to Canada with very little banking experience and a sense of distrust.

Credit: Canada is a credit society. Many people use only cards to pay for things and will not carry cash. Other places in the world are almost entirely cash oriented and credit is used only for big items or not at all. Misunderstandings and a lack of experience about ways to manage credit cards can lead to a false sense of the availability of cash, resulting in damaged credit ratings. Also, many people are not familiar with the risks associated with payday loan companies.

Sending money home: Many newcomers struggle with the expectations or requirements of sending money back home to family. Chief among their needs are inexpensive and user-friendly remittance services to enable them to send funds to family or friends back home. Pressures due to the cost of living and the need to send money back home make it difficult to save money and get ahead.

Health Culture Byte

As humans, we share many things in common no matter where we come from in the world. Our environment affects our physiology, anatomy and psychology in many of the same ways. Bones break, bodies become sick, if we are cut we bleed and what we do and eat affects our growth.

There are also some important similarities and differences within cultures. In Canada, values around health and wellness inform the way health care is delivered, the promotion of healthy lifestyles, treatment protocols and our understanding of wellness. There is a predictable way doctors' offices look and operate and there are certain things we have come to expect from pharmacies or hospitals and those who work there. Beyond these similarities we can also see a range of differences of values and beliefs within our own culture about health and the definition of wellness. Some people eat only vegetables, others take daily vitamins and others have a glass of wine each day for their health.

Newcomers sometimes have difficulty accessing the care they need not only because of language barriers but also because of different perspectives on health, medical care and expectations about diagnosis and treatment.

This Culture Byte provides a framework for understanding how culture can influence a person's experience of health and wellness. It will help you to understand some ways in which the norms and expectations in Canada might not line up with what newcomers have learned to expect. It is also important to check for equivalent concepts. You can do this by asking if there is an equivalent word for something in the learner's language. (For an exceptional example of how concepts do not translate across cultures, look at *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*, by Anne Fadiman.)

There are three major categories of health belief systems⁹. In Canada, health care is based on a biomedical system of health and illness. This means that when you are ill it is either the result of something exterior such as bacteria, viruses, or germs, or it means that something in your body is not working well, causing you to be sick. Additionally, there are many preventive treatments in place that some newcomers may be unfamiliar with and perhaps reluctant to access.

A second belief system regards disease as the result of a supernatural being—a ghost, an evil spirit, a witch or a sorcerer. A third system explains sickness as a result of cold, heat, winds, dampness and an upset in the basic body elements. In this explanation, illness results from an imbalance between hot and cold elements of the body. People who follow this system believe that all foods, medicines, conditions and emotions can be ascribed hot or cold qualities.

These differences in belief systems will result in different ideas about how to treat and prevent illness. Examples of how culture impacts aspects of health and wellness can help you check your assumptions about what "common knowledge" is and how a person's view of the world will influence behaviour. The following examples of behaviours associated with health and wellness provide a scaffold for understanding the experiences and perspectives of newcomers and for considering your own values and beliefs:

- **Health beliefs.** Do people believe in taking medication (pills, etc.) to feel better?
Do people believe in talking to a psychiatrist or psychologist?
- **Health-seeking behaviour.** In Canada, there is an emphasis on health promotion and preventive measures such as getting a check-up once a year. This may seem odd to some newcomers who are accustomed to seeing the doctor only if they are ill.
- **Expression of pain.** People of all cultures have similar emotions such as happiness, sadness and anger. Cultures do, however, vary in the way emotions are expressed. People from some cultures are very demonstrative and the expression of positive and negative emotions might include laughter, shouting, fist shaking, yelling, large gestures and easily identified facial expressions. People from other cultures tend to show minimal levels of expression. This applies to the expression of pain as well, which can make it difficult to recognize an individual's experience of pain.

⁹ Samovar L. and Porter R., *Communication Between Cultures*, 5th ed. Thompson and Wadsworth, 2004.



- **Breaking bad news.** In Canada, patients are considered to be autonomous individuals, and will therefore be given information about their illness. They may also have a personal directive such as DNR (do not resuscitate).
In Canadian hospitals, patients are required to sign an informed consent form before a procedure can take place. In other cultures, information regarding a person's illness may be withheld from the patient or may be told first to the head of the family rather than the patient. It may also be up to someone other than the patient to provide consent.
- **Decision making.** Who makes the decisions? In some countries, the head of the family makes decisions rather than the patient.
- **Gender considerations.** In some cultures, it is unusual for a male doctor to look after a female patient and vice versa. Male physicians in Canada will usually call another person into the examining room before examining a woman's private areas.
- **Customs and practices.** People have many cultural differences regarding pregnancy and childbirth, death and dying, visiting a person in the hospital, etc.
- **Disclosure.** Privacy laws in Canada restrict disclosure of patient information to close family members only.
- **Time.** Orientation to time can influence whether a client shows up on time for appointments, takes medication on schedule and returns for follow-up visits. It can also influence the amount of time a health-care professional spends with a client. In Canada, doctors often do not expect to spend a lot of time developing rapport or discussing the causes and cures of illnesses with a client. In many other cultural contexts, patients expect doctors to spend time building a relationship and discussing the details of their illness.

As well as beliefs about health and illness, newcomers may face additional barriers at the patient level⁹. These may include:

- Limited finances
- Fear of stigmatization (e.g. mental health, wearing glasses, etc.)
- Lack of understanding of the system
- No health care or insurance
- Lack of experience for understanding scheduling and appointments
- Competing life demands (work, family, communication, school, housing)
- Gender barriers
- Discrimination
- Communication problems resulting from language barriers

Recreation Culture Byte

People play games, tell stories, find ways to relax and participate in sports all over the world. Recreation, leisure and free time are influenced by cultural expectations and context. In countries where the climate is warm and there are more dense populations, people tend to congregate outdoors, sit at cafes, play chess in the park or exercise. Many cities around the world are designed with a central square that draws people together, which is different from the design of most towns and cities in Alberta.

The concept of “free time” is also not the same across cultures. In many places, the things that people do in their “free time” in Canada are embedded in daily life or associated with everyday activity (i.e., going for a walk). Leisure time and free time may be new concepts that will become a part of newcomers’ lives as they adapt to Canadian customs.

In many cultures, socializing is an important form of recreation. The wonderful parks and open spaces in Canada provide excellent opportunities for large family or community gatherings. However, when it comes to recreational facilities and organizations, there may be some things that are taken for granted in Canada that may be new or unfamiliar for newcomers. The following are some newcomers’ perspectives on using public recreation facilities in Canada. The responses come from a focus group conducted by the Multicultural Health Brokers Co-op in Edmonton.

1. The school is often the centre of extracurricular activities for children in rural areas. Students and their parents are often asked to fundraise for out-of-town trips, expenses incurred on these trips and uniforms. This expectation for participation may be unfamiliar, and due to other pressures on their time, parents may find it difficult to participate. Also, some parents may be uncomfortable with the idea of out-of-town trips or an event that requires their children to sleep away from home.
2. Sports in Canada have been formalized and institutionalized, making them more difficult to access due to cost, scheduling and registration procedures. Kids cannot just join in a scheduled game at a scheduled competition. They can, however, make up teams and play freely in any park.
3. Participating in organized sport requires transportation.
4. Muslim women often feel uncomfortable at public swimming facilities.
5. For many newcomers, facilities like those available in Alberta communities were accessible in their home country only to the elite and therefore the experience of using them may be new and unfamiliar.
6. Fitness equipment is unfamiliar and people may feel too shy to ask how to use the equipment, especially when there are language barriers.



Safety Culture Byte

The desire to avoid danger and keep safe is common throughout the world. It is natural to want to protect ourselves from harm and hurt. In this Culture Byte, we will explore how culture influences the ways people interpret, understand and manage risk, danger and the challenge of staying safe. Differences arise from diverse cultural contexts, climates, geography and social and political conditions, resulting in different responses to risk. It is important to keep differences in mind when helping newcomers orient themselves to the safety expectations and standards of their new community as well as new risks they may not be familiar with. Cultural differences are explored in this Culture Byte through the following brief stories.

Cold

It was so cold and I just could not get warm. I am afraid to go outside because of the cold. Today I had to go to an appointment so I put my jacket in the oven to warm it up before putting it on. I've done it before but this time it caught fire. I was really scared...

Winter is filled with safety hazards and Canadians have learned to adapt. Newcomers who are not familiar with this kind of climate may not know all the risks and how to be prepared.

Police

A young man saw a police car and his instinct was to run, even though he had done nothing wrong.

In Canada, the police want to project an image of being those who protect society and work for the citizens to keep them safe. Generally when people see a police car they may slow down if they are speeding, but they are not afraid. The relationship and view of police is not like this for some newcomers. Module 3: The Role of the Police, is an opportunity for you to help the newcomers in your class learn more about police in Canada and for the community police to establish a relationship with the participants in your class.

Children

When our baby was born, the hospital wouldn't let us take her home until we had a proper car seat for the car. I was really surprised. I also found out that I needed a car seat for our three year old.

Keeping children safe requires an understanding of the dangers present. In Canada, certain laws are in place to protect children from harm and these may not be familiar to some newcomers.

Home Alone

I had to work last weekend and when I got home I found out that the neighbour had called social services and they had come and taken my children. I was so afraid. Why did they take my children? Back home I often leave my six year old at home to take care of the two year old.

Different cultures have different definitions about what a child should be expected to do at what age. In some countries, children as young as six years old are responsible for looking

after younger siblings. When people live in close-knit communities, children are able to move freely without direct parental supervision. In Canada, this is often not the case. In Alberta, there is no legislation giving a minimum age when children can be left at home alone without adult supervision; however, if a parent does leave a young child at home and something bad happens, then the consequences are severe.

Ouch

My wife and I were fighting and I got carried away and was too physical. My daughter called the police and they put me in jail. Now I am not even allowed to go home. I don't understand. In my country this is a private matter between my wife and me. The government would not get involved. The system is confusing here—I don't understand why I can't go home.

Abuse is a problem for people in all walks of life, whether Canadian-born or recent arrivals. Those who suffer from abuse need comfort and support; however, it is particularly important that newcomers know that this support exists since many of the mechanisms we have in Canada may not exist in their native country. You may want to discuss the idea of “public responsibility” with learners. In Canada, it is expected that the government can (and should) get involved in situations where children or spouses are being abused.

“The relationship between the family and the government is markedly different in Canada from many other countries. Canadians have come to expect that there are good reasons why there should be intervention in the family cases of violence, abuse or neglect. In some cases, newcomers must recognize that aspects of life which they may think of as private are illegal in Canada.”¹²

Shopping Culture Byte

Food

Food shopping varies from place to place in the world. With our large homes, fridges and freezers, many Canadians are accustomed to buying food for the week in one shopping trip. If there is something on sale, it can be purchased in bulk and stored in the freezer or pantry. It is also popular to buy food items in bulk at wholesale stores.

In some parts of the world, however, going to market is a daily event and foods are eaten fresh. If you go to a grocery store in Canada you will find many products that are processed and packaged.

There is also a label on the back with nutritional information and Canadians are encouraged to use these labels to make healthy food choices. Newcomers with specific diet restrictions can check these labels for ingredients that they are not able to consume (e.g., sugar).

¹² Rutten-James, Myrina. *English as a Second Language Tutor Training Kit: Tutor Training Manual*. Regina Public Library, 2003. p. 29.





Culture influences consumer behaviour in a number of interesting ways:

- The length of time it takes to make a decision
- The number of senses used in making a decision
- Culturally influenced shopping behaviours
- Types of foods eaten

Prices

For many newcomers, money is a big issue. Government sponsored refugees will have to pay back the government for their travel expenses to Canada; some families are sending money home to family left behind; there are a lot of costs associated with settling; and the cost of living may seem very high. As newcomers settle, find work and figure out how far their dollar can go, money will be a central concern.

Flyers

Grocery store flyers are a common sight in Canadian towns and cities. They tell us what is on sale and encourage us to come to the store to shop. Prices can vary from store to store, so many people look through the flyers to find the best deals and then plan their shopping accordingly. This is one strategy people in Canada use to save money. Many Canadians use a freezer. People buy foods on special and have them on hand whenever they need them.

Clothes

Clothes are a necessity, but they also tell us a lot about culture and about the groups we belong to. Many factors affect the clothing worn by different cultural groups. Some factors include region, beliefs, climate and gender. Canadian clothing has dramatically changed over the years. In the early days, when the first colonists arrived, women's clothing covered every area of the body except the hands, neck and face. It was considered shameful for a woman to show her ankle.

With the arrival of the 20th century, women began to break free from the old constraints and, in just a century, Canada has seen a drastic shift in its view of women and appropriate clothing.

Today, Canadian culture is very complex and consists of many subcultures that can be broken down into decades and regions. For example, the Roaring 1920s, the Hippie 1960s and the Pop Culture 1990s all showcased specific subcultures of Canada, each with their own style.

In this particular decade, Canadians wear styles associated with urban, punk, gothic and many other lifestyles. Clothing can also be broken down by region. Today in Alberta you can see everything from cowboy boots and ball caps to turbans and hijabs.

Refunds and Exchanges

Exchanging something you bought or getting a refund is a practice that may be unfamiliar to some learners. They may have come from places where there is less competition or less availability of goods. For these learners, getting used to the idea of exchanges and refunds is the first step. Then they need to learn the rules associated with it, including "reading the small print."

In Canada, not all stores have the same rules. Some stores give refunds, but many stores only allow customers to make an exchange. If a customer does not have the receipt, most stores do not give refunds. If clothing has been worn, it will not be accepted for refund or for exchange.

However, if there is a problem with the clothing that you bought, most stores will allow you to exchange it. There is usually a time limit for when the clothing can be returned for a refund or an exchange. If "final sale" is written on the receipt, the store will not give you a refund or let you make an exchange. Always find out the store's rules before you buy anything!



Instructor Resources: Community Connections

How to Build a Community Map

Integrating Community Mapping into your Program

Outcome

Create a physical, social and cultural map of the community through a collaborative process.

Resources needed:

- Coloured pins or dots
- Community Map building guide
- Town or county map
- Coloured pens
- Large sheet of paper

Steps

1. Start with a street map of your community (town and county). These are available through the municipal or county office. If one is not available, then you can make one yourself! If there is one available, make it as big as possible.
2. Print out the community mapping checklist on the following page.
3. Build your map. After the initial start-up session, you can continue to add information to your map as you move through the units and modules.
4. Create a visual representation of the community resources, and ways of accessing these resources. Identify possible barriers such as childcare and transportation. Reflect the cultural and social identity of the community.
 - a. Town, county or region
 - b. Famous sites and places
 - c. Community resources
 - health
 - safety
 - recreation
 - education
 - retail
 - d. Cultural resources
 - public (cultural) facilities
 - not-for-profit cultural organizations
 - creative or cultural businesses and enterprises
 - human or cultural heritage
 - natural heritage
 - festivals and events
 - e. Other mapping ideas
 - fruit trees
 - garden space
 - local produce for sale
 - seniors' activities
 - green spaces
 - playgrounds
5. Plan time at the beginning and/or the end of each session to do a community map activity.



Community Mapping Checklist

A list of important or suggested locations for labeling on your map, organized by unit.

Getting to Know You

- My home
- My favourite place
- My workplace
- Famous places in the community
- Historical landmark
- Oldest place
- Famous landmark
- Popular meeting place

Health and Wellness

- Clinic
- Hospital
- Dental office
- Pharmacy
- Eye doctor (Optometrist)
- Lab
- Doctor's office
- Safety Unit
- Police station
- Fire station
- Crosswalk

- Place to buy safety equipment (hardware store)
- Victim's services

Finance

- Bank
- Credit Union
- ATM

Shopping

- Grocery store
- Ethnic food store
- Clothing store
- Second-hand clothing store
- Shoe store
- Hardware store
- Convenience store
- Post office
- Place to buy money orders
- Farmers' market
- Shopping mall
- Big box store such as Home Depot
- Gas station
- Second-hand housewares





Education

- Play school
- Elementary school
- Junior high school
- High school
- Daycare
- Community Adult Learning Council
- Literacy Alberta Office

Recreation

- Library
- Park
- Playground
- Hockey arena (skating rink)
- Outdoor skating rink
- Dance studio
- Nightclub
- Soccer field
- Curling rink
- Coffee shops
- Ethnic restaurants

- Activities for seniors
- Garden space
- Local produce for sale
- Art gallery
- Museum
- Sports facility
- Swimming pool

Community

- City Hall
- Town Hall
- Provincial Building
- Child and Family Services
- Community associations
- Religious/spiritual gathering places
- Native Friendship Centre
- Cultural organizations
- Rental office

Preparing the Community Facilitator

Making connections in the community is an important part of the *Roots and Connections* curriculum. This enables newcomers to connect to both services and people. Below are suggestions for preparing the Community Facilitator for a positive interaction that ensures learners will benefit from the interaction.

Whether the Community Facilitator is coming to your class as a guest speaker or meeting the class when you go on a field trip, there are a few things you can do to help the facilitator prepare.

1. Confirm the time and place.
2. Describe the class makeup including the names of participants, countries of origin, and languages spoken.
3. Help the Community Facilitator understand the language skill levels of the participants. Give the facilitator copies of the Learner Profiles, Levels 1-3 from ESL Resource Package for Alberta Communities (listed below).
4. Tell the Community Facilitator what you have been teaching and what learners want or need to gain from the interaction.
5. Give the Community Facilitator some strategies for presenting to people at this level of English. Go over the information in the Community Facilitator Resource Package.
 - ✓ Speak clearly.
 - ✓ Speak at a medium pace (not too fast, not too slow).
 - ✓ Do not speak “pidgin English.”
 - ✓ Repeat important points.
 - ✓ Choose simple language. Avoid difficult words and too many idioms.
 - ✓ Check for understanding.
 - ✓ Pause frequently for questions.
6. If the Community Facilitator would like further information, the following information in the *Roots and Connections* Resource Guide may also be of interest:
 - Background Knowledge: Barriers Faced by New Immigrants
 - Background Knowledge: Refugees
 - Relevant Culture Bytes



Community Facilitator Information Package

Thank you for being a Community Facilitator!

A community facilitator is an individual in the community who:

- ✓ can facilitate a community field trip in his or her place of work
- ✓ can be a guest speaker to introduce some aspect of community knowledge (related to the unit themes)
- ✓ is interested in establishing a relationship with newcomers

The goals of *Roots and Connections* are:

- ✓ provide survival English
- ✓ build community knowledge
- ✓ establish community connections
- ✓ increase cross-cultural awareness

This package is designed to share some useful information to help you prepare for and deliver your Community Connection session. Additional information about immigrants and some of their experiences are available in the *Roots and Connections* resources.

This package includes:

1. Tips for communicating when there is a language barrier
2. Considerations for working with adult immigrant participants

1. Tips for enhancing communication when there is a language barrier

- ✓ When you are speaking
 - **Speak clearly and slowly.**
 - **Repeat** important ideas using different words to explain the same concept.
 - **Use simple sentences.**
 - **Use active verbs** and avoid passive verbs.
 - Avoid **colloquialisms and slang.**
- ✓ Be aware of non-verbal tools
 - **Use Visuals.** Use as many visual restatements as possible, such as pictures, graphs, tables and slides.
 - **Gestures.** Use appropriate facial and hand gestures to emphasize the meaning of words.
- **Demonstrate** or act out what you want to say whenever useful.
- **Pause** more often. Leave a slightly longer gap between sentences.
- **Summaries.** Provide written summaries of your verbal presentation (orientations and trainings).
- ✓ Take care to make accurate interpretations
 - **Silence.** When the other person is silent, wait. Do not jump in to fill in the silence. The other person may just be thinking more slowly in their native language or translating.
 - **Intelligence.** Do not equate poor grammar and mispronunciation with lack of intelligence.

- **Differences.** If you are not sure, assume difference, not similarity.
- ✓ Comprehension
 - **Understanding.** Do not just assume understanding; assume they do not understand.
 - **Checking comprehension.** Have participants paraphrase their understanding of what you have said. Do not simply ask if they understand. Let them explain what they understood.
 - **Paraphrase** what you have heard and confirm understanding
- ✓ Designing your session
 - **Breaks.** Take more frequent breaks. Second language comprehension is exhausting.
 - **Small chunks.** Divide the material you are presenting into smaller chunks.
 - **More time.** It takes more time so plan for it.
- ✓ Create a welcoming environment
 - Verbally and non-verbally encourage speaking by participants
 - Encourage marginal and passive speakers to contribute by considering alternative participation formats
 - Avoid embarrassing novice speakers

2. Considerations for working with adult immigrant participants

The following variations among adult immigrant participants may affect how you present. When facilitating to a group of newcomers, you will generally find a wide range of backgrounds, skills, and interests in every group.

1. Literacy

One of the most important differences among adult participants is whether they can read in their native language. This could be a great chance to look at communication materials you have in your business or organization and assess them for plain language. For more information about literacy issues and access to many excellent resources including tips for plain language, visit Literacy Alberta at www.literacyalberta.ca.

2. Formal education

The amount of formal education experience can vary from higher university degrees to minimal education for some who had their education interrupted for some reason. A participant's experience or lack of experience with formal education can impact a variety of things including:

- a. formal learning strategies
- b. readiness to engage with cognitively complex concepts
- c. background knowledge

3. Age

You may have newcomers of all ages arriving in your community. Given this wide range of ages, you may need to use a variety of activities in order to be relevant and engaging for all of your participants.

- i.e. Seniors will have different interests, learning challenges and issues. If you are facilitating a Community Connections activity for a group of seniors look at Cultural Cues



Resource Guide for Service Providers Working with Calgary's Culturally Diverse Seniors at www.calgary.ca.

4. Motivation

To understand the motivation of your participants, you need to explore what your participants really want. Creating a warm and genuine environment and providing opportunities for the participants to ask questions and make suggestions can boost motivation.

5. Native language background

Because immigration laws and refugee patterns shift frequently, the native language backgrounds of your participants may be as varied as their ages or quite homogeneous. The native language backgrounds of the participants can affect your presentation as much as any other single factor because some languages are more similar to English than others.

These similarities can be in vocabulary, grammatical structure or sound and they might also share the English alphabet. Speaking or presenting to people with these language backgrounds is easier than teaching those with language backgrounds less similar to English. Even though it may be more difficult to communicate with people when their native language is extremely different from English, it is not impossible and many of these participants become very fluent in English.

6. Culture in the classroom

One of the most surprising things for many teachers (facilitators) is the influence that culture has in the classroom. Participants come with their own cultural view of these issues:

- a. What a teacher should say and do
- b. How a teacher should dress
- c. What should happen in any kind of classroom
- d. How a language (or other subject) should be taught
- e. The social distance between teachers and students (what kind of interpersonal relationship is appropriate and expected and how to nurture/recognize this relationship)

Instructor Community Connections Checklist

Distribute *Roots and Connections* brochures to potential sites.

Call the place you would like to visit.

Introduce yourself and the *Roots and Connections* program.

Talk about the benefits, commitment and expectations of facilitating a community visit.

Give the Community Facilitator a copy of the Background Knowledge Bytes included in this toolkit.

Review the location-specific materials and ask the Community Facilitator to provide any other information he or she feels the learners should know.

Provide the facilitator with learner information. Inform the facilitator that one of the class participants will phone to confirm the visit.

Arrange a mutually suitable time for the class visit.

Write down the time and contact information. Keep a copy for yourself and give one copy to the Community Facilitator.

Add context-specific information to the field trip handout.

Make copies of the handout for the learners.

Do the pre-field trip activity.

Have one of the learners call to confirm the day and the time of the visit (during the class time).

Organize and plan transportation, and the meeting time and place.

Attend the field trip. (Assign tasks to each participant.)

Do a post-field trip activity. (See Community Connections Participant Worksheet)



Community Connections Participant Worksheet

Before	
Where are we going?	
Draw the place on your Community Map.	
Why are we going to this place?	
What day is our visit?	
What time will our visit start?	
What time should we arrive?	
How long will the visit last?	
How will we get there?	
How long will it take to get there?	
After	
Who was your community connections facilitator? What is his/her name?	
What is his/her job?	
When did he/she start to work in this job?	
Where was he/she born?	
How long has he/she lived in this town?	
Write down new language (questions, answers, vocabulary).	
Ask questions.	
What did you find out about what you can do at this place?	
What did you find out that surprised you?	

Coffee Encounter Guide

Thank you for being a Coffee Encounter volunteer!

This is a short guide to give you some ideas about what to do.

A Bit of Background

Coffee Encounters are a special part of the *Roots and Connections* curriculum, based on the idea of conversation cafes (www.conversationcafe.org). Conversation cafes provide an open forum to talk about important topics over a cup of tea or coffee. For both newcomer and community member, these encounters help to broaden understanding about each other, modify beliefs and prevent possible stereotyping. Coffee Encounters are an important part of building a welcoming community.

General Outcomes of Coffee Encounters

- Build relationships through cultural exchange
- Provide opportunities for newcomers to meet community members
- Provide opportunities for newcomers to practise English and for community members to support their learning
- Build community knowledge

Setting up a Coffee Encounter

1. Arrange for a time and place to meet. The culture of some organizations and businesses encourages employees to participate in their community. Some companies allow their employees paid time off during working hours to do this.
2. Choose from the selection of topics and activities.
 2. Family:
 - a. Bring in a photograph of your family and yourself. Practise vocabulary by writing each person's name and who they are (son, daughter, aunt, uncle, etc.).
 - b. Practice questions:
Who is this?
How old is he/she?
What does he/she do?
 3. Favourite places
 4. Community history
 5. Job
 6. Cooking and food
 7. Hobbies
 8. A favourite childhood memory
3. Bring a piece of paper and a pencil to write things down and draw pictures.
4. Enjoy!

Coffee Encounter Topics and Example Activities

1. Getting to know you:
 - a. Talk about your name. Where did you get it? How is it spelled? Practise pronouncing each others' names.
 - b. Use the "Identity Wheels" from Unit 1 of *Roots and Connections*.



