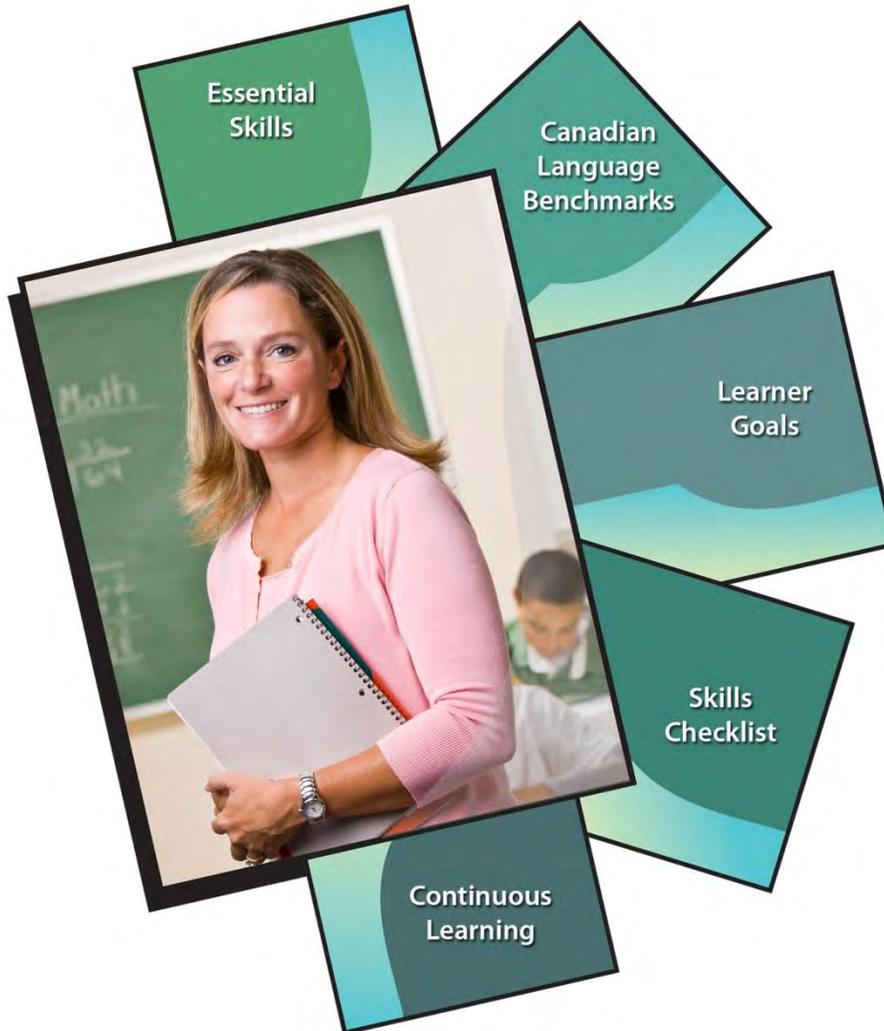


Evidence File Development Handbook



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Introduction

This handbook is designed to provide you with information about evidence file development, and how your Community Adult Learning Center (CALC) may use evidence files with individuals in your region. It is worthwhile to note that while this handbook has been written specifically for CALCs, Volunteer Tutor Adult Literacy Services (VTALS) may also find it beneficial to enhance or complement their work.

The evidence file development process was piloted within a 17-week Work Foundations program offered at the Taber and District Community Adult Learning Association (TDCALA) from November 2011 to March 2012. The students in the program were ESL literacy clients or learners with interrupted formal education (LIFE). ESL literacy is the “intersection of two fields: the acquisition of a second language at the same time as the development of literacy.” (Learning for LIFE: an ESL Literacy Handbook, 2009, Bow Valley College) Learners with interrupted formal education have between 0-10 years of formal education that is interrupted by displacement, conflict, poverty, famine, or natural disasters. Whatever the interruption was or when it occurred, all learners in this category, to varying degrees, find it difficult to cope with the literacy expectations of Canadians.

While evidence files were developed within the context of a program setting at TDCALA, evidence files may be developed individually with drop-in clients or incorporated into any CALC program or course with a workplace or further education outcome.

Also, while granting CALCs do not offer courses or programs where evidence files may be developed, they could promote the use of evidence files to their member agencies, make this handbook available to them, and host workshops informing their agencies of this valuable tool for their clients.

What is an Evidence File?

An evidence file is similar to a learning or career portfolio. A learning portfolio includes documented and assembled evidence of prior learning that is submitted to an employer or post-secondary institution in hard copy or electronic form to demonstrate knowledge and skills. The goal is either to get a job or have credit awarded for demonstrated learning. Typically, a portfolio includes an autobiographical essay, learning statements, and documented evidence of prior learning. An evidence file is a subset of a portfolio and contains only documented evidence of prior learning related to a specific goal. This may include a goal statement or cover letter, resume, letters of reference or verification, sample work documents, skills checklists, certificates, and performance assessments.

An evidence file may be a binder or folder containing documents that demonstrate the individual's skills and knowledge. An evidence file may also be developed electronically with documents in a folder that are saved on a CD or memory stick.

Evidence files, developed in the Taber and District Community Adult Learning Association's (TDCALA) 17-week Work Foundations program, have resulted in positive outcomes for students. For example, a student who completed the program in 2011 developed an evidence file that he took to an interview for an agricultural job. Several candidates were interviewed for the job, but the farm owner called the former student and offered him the job. The farm owner also called the TDCALA to say that he hired the former student, not because he had better qualifications than the other candidates, but because he had documented his skills in an easy-to-examine manner. The farm owner was impressed with the list of skills and the organizational ability that was demonstrated in the evidence file.

Another student in the 2011 Work Foundations program had identified a goal of being a landscaper apprentice in his evidence file. He was already working in the field, but had not had the opportunity to receive formal education. He had wanted to attend an apprenticeship program, but told TDCALA staff that he knew his literacy skills were too low. The TDCALA office set him up with a volunteer tutor who met with him for three hours six days a week. The tutor went above and beyond, as did the learner who was already working 12 hours a day. The learner wrote his apprenticeship exam and passed. TDCALA then assisted him to prepare for college. This included securing housing, getting registered, accessing grants, and setting him up with a support system within the post-secondary institution. Learner support is critical to a learner's success in these types of situations. The student has now passed his first year apprenticeship exam. His evidence file demonstrated his skills, employment goals, and pathways for his dream to become a reality.

Evidence Files and PLAR

Alberta Advanced Education and Technology (AET) released *Advancing Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) in Alberta: an Action Plan* (hereafter referred to as the *PLAR Action Plan*) in October 2008. Implementation of the plan has been in progress since 2009. The *PLAR Action Plan* contains ten action strategies, one of which is to engage the Community Adult Learning Centers (CALC) in pilot projects to increase learners' access to PLAR. The evidence file development project is directly linked to this action item.

PLAR is the assessment and recognition of a person's knowledge and skills, acquired through non-formal and informal learning, in relation to a certain goal (for example, receiving credit in a post-secondary program, meeting professional licensure/certification requirements, or obtaining employment).

A PLAR assessment may include one or a combination of the following:

- Written challenge exam
- Oral exam or interview
- Performance assessment
- Product assessment
- Portfolio assessment

PLAR assessments are developed and evaluated by subject matter experts in the subject area that is being challenged. In general, PLAR assessments are offered by post-secondary institutions, employers, and professional regulatory organizations.

As mentioned in the previous section, an evidence file is a subset of a learning portfolio. The TDCALA's evidence file development project piloted the evidence file concept with the understanding that portfolio development is a highly literate activity—it requires a substantial amount of reading and writing. Because clients of CALCs are often from under-represented groups, who may have low literacy levels, developing evidence files may be more accessible to them, and may lead to similar results of other forms of prior learning assessment—successful transition to or between employment and post-secondary education.

How do Evidence Files Assist Individuals?

There are two ways of using evidence files with client groups at CALCs. One is to assist clients who have prior learning to gather and assemble evidence of that learning in a format that would assist them to either secure a job or meet potential admission requirements in a program of study at a post-secondary institution. The second is to assist clients to identify a career or employment goal, and then either offer the relevant training they need or coordinate the training for them. The certificates and skills checklists that result from the training would then be assembled into an evidence file.

Evidence files may be developed for walk-in clients, as well as for cohorts with similar learning needs and goals. Clients who may benefit from developing an evidence file include:

- Unemployed or under-employed individuals
- Individuals who speak English as a second language
- Low literacy individuals
- Mature learners
- High school drop-outs
- Individuals who have been out of the workforce for some time
- Individuals who are registered in existing CALC courses or programs
- Individuals changing jobs

Evidence files may help these individuals to identify the knowledge and skills they possess, and thus, increase their self-esteem and self-confidence in working towards achieving their employment and education goals.

What is Included in an Evidence File?

Evidence files reflect each individual's specific interests, skills, knowledge, and goals. Because of this, no two evidence files will be exactly alike. In general, an evidence file may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Cover page
- Resume
- Personal goal statement
- Sample or real cover letter
- Certificates demonstrating skills (photocopies), for example:
 - St. John's Ambulance Standard First Aid
 - Farmer Pesticide Certificate
 - How to read construction blueprints
 - Injury and accident reporting
- Letters from former employers or instructors attesting to work ethic, and hard and soft skills learned or demonstrated
- Transcripts from former education or training (photocopies)
- Performance assessments
- Skills checklists (possibly based on essential skills)

Evidence File Development at CALCs

Evidence files that individuals develop at a CALC may lead to benefits not only for the individual, but also for the community adult learning organization and for the community as a whole.

Benefits for individuals include:

- Increasing access to post-secondary education
- Encouraging individuals to pursue education and career goals
- Validating learning acquired through life and work experience
- Assisting individuals in finding and keeping employment
- Increasing self-confidence and self-esteem

Benefits for community organizations include:

- Raising the profile of the CALC or VTALS in the community
- Providing a valued service for learners seeking employment or further education
- Creating a bridge between post-secondary institutions and the community organization

Benefits for the community include:

- Possibly increasing post-secondary participation rates
- Promoting partnerships between education institutions, community adult learning organizations, and employers

Goal

The goal of evidence file development at a CALC is to assist clients to gather evidence of their knowledge and skills, so that they can transition to work or further education. This may involve:

- Assisting clients in gathering and assembling existing evidence of prior learning to help them transition to work or further education.
- Providing training to clients in areas that they need and want to be trained in, while at the same time developing an evidence file as a record of their learning.

An evidence file may be revisited and expanded upon periodically during an individual's lifelong learning career. In this way, evidence files may become a living record of learning, which may be used whenever an individual is making a career transition.

Evidence File Development Model

The CALC evidence file development process will differ based on the client or group of clients, and whether the evidence file is developed individually or as part of a course or program. In general, the steps to develop an evidence file include:

- **Pre-assess learners**—this may include Canadian Language Benchmarks and/or an in-house assessment that consists of a structured interview and collecting a writing sample.
- **Register learners**—this may involve registering a learner to complete an evidence file individually, or registering learners in a course or program that has an evidence file development component.

- **Assist learners to apply for funding**—if applicable and available, assist learners to identify and apply for funding.
- **Identify learner goals**—this will determine what will be included in the learners’ evidence file.
- **Develop evidence files**—this involves assisting the learners to gather and organize evidence of learning, develop a resume and a cover letter, and possibly complete essential skills checklists.
- **Offer or coordinate skills training**—the CALC may either offer skills training, such as First Aid, or the CALC may coordinate skills training for clients. The certificates achieved would then be photocopied and added to the learners’ evidence file.

Pre-Assessment of Learners

Pre-assessing learners’ skill levels is an important part of educational programming as the assessment result is the benchmark upon which all future growth can be measured. Learner background is also important information to collect as it enables the program staff and instructors to provide programming that best meets the needs of each learner.

Interview Questionnaire

In order to get a clear understanding and best meet the needs of the learner, it is important to have an assessment that allows for a comprehensive understanding of prior education.

Where possible, include an interview with the following questions:

- Why do you want to come to school?
- How many years did you go to school in the past? When and where?
- Will you be able to claim EI while you are attending school?
- Will you need financial assistance while you are attending school?
- Will you be working after the course/program?
- What are your employment goals?
- What would be your “dream” job?
- What other education do you require to be successful?

One of the goals of the interview is to determine whether you are serving a language learner who has literacy needs. For example, addressing needs of ESL versus ESL literacy learners is different and needs to be accounted for in the classroom practices. For information about identifying ESL literacy learners and addressing their educational needs, visit Bow Valley College’s ESL Literacy Network website at www.esl-literacy.com.

Another goal of the interview is to determine the underlying needs and motivations of your learners. Include questions that ensure the course or program responds to and meets the needs of the learners.

In-House Testing

Developing in-house testing that is used at the beginning and end of a course or program is a method of measuring growth in learners. It is also a way to ensure that similar learners are placed together for optimal learning.

Developing an in-house test takes time and effort. A first step in developing an assessment is to include a writing sample in the intake process. Sample writing tasks include filling out an application form, writing a thank-you note, writing a description of a family member, and writing an opinion about a local issue (for example, smoking by-laws). By providing opportunities that go from simple to complex, learners may show the depth of their writing skills.

For additional information, go to the ESL Literacy Network website www.esl-literacy.com. There is a section called “developing an in-house assessment,” which may guide your process. The website includes information on structure and assessment of a test, as well as a guide for the complexity of the tasks that should be presented. For a sample of TDCALA’s in-house test, see the appendix in this handbook.

Canadian Language Benchmark Testing

CALCs are faced with an increasing number of English language learners in their communities and are tasked with offering English language training in a variety of models. Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) testing is available to assist CALCs in determining the English language skill levels of their clients.

The CLB test is recognized as the official Canadian standard for describing, measuring, and recognizing the language proficiency of adult immigrants in English. It evaluates reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Some learners without prior English language instruction may be considered pre-Benchmark or foundational learners. The CLB has 12 levels. In general, Alberta’s post-secondary institutions have determined that CLB 8 is the language level that is required for admission into their programs.

CLB provides a common language for the entire immigrant-serving community. Information about the work of the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB) can be found at www.language.ca. There are two streams of development acknowledged by CCLB, ESL and ESL literacy. The distinction between the two is determined by prior learning opportunities. Functionally literate ESL learners and learners with limited or interrupted formal education require different instructional models.

CLB testing centers can be found in the following locations in Alberta:

- **Calgary**
Immigrant Language and Vocational Assessment-Referral Centre (ILVARC)
910 -7th Avenue South West, Room 1401
Calgary, AB T2P 3N8
Tel: (403) 262-2656
- **Edmonton**
Language Assessment Referral and Counseling Centre (LARCC)
10709 - 105th Street
Edmonton, AB T5H 2X3
Tel: (780) 424-3545

NorQuest College Rural Itinerant Services
11140-131st Street
Edmonton, AB T5M 1C1
Tel: (780) 644-6700
- **Fort McMurray**
Keyano College
8115 Franklin Avenue
Fort McMurray, AB T9H 2H7
Tel: (780) 792-5706
(780) 791-8943
- **Lethbridge**
Southern Alberta Language Assessment Services, Ltd. (SALAS Ltd)
300, 515 Seventh Street South
Lethbridge, AB T1J 2G8
Tel: (403) 328-4811
Toll free: 1-888-329-4811
- **Medicine Hat**
Karen Ziemann Consultants
1657-31 Street South East
Medicine Hat, AB T1A 8J9
Please call to make an appointment: (403) 527-5062
- **Red Deer**
Central Alberta Refugee Effort (C.A.R.E.), LINC Assessment Centre
202-5000 Gaetz Avenue
Red Deer, AB T4N 6C2
Tel: (403) 346-8818

If a learner is unable to access a CLB testing center, there is an online CLB reading and listening assessment available. It is a valid and reliable way to determine the learner's initial levels and may be combined with an in-house writing sample and interview. For further information about the online CLB test, visit the website at <http://clb-osa.ca/>.

Intake Processes

There are two general types of intake and registration processes, one for walk-in CALC clients and the second for cohorts of learners in a CALC course or program.

The process for walk-in clients would generally include an intake interview to identify the client's needs and develop a plan to achieve the client's goals. Walk-in clients may not require a formal registration process, although it is beneficial to develop a "walk-in client tracking" document. It may be used to record all services provided to the client and to maintain contact with the client, thus ensuring that adequate assistance is provided by the CALC to address barriers that the client may encounter.

The process for intake and registration of cohorts of clients for a course include the following steps:

1. The course is advertised in the community with a registration deadline.
2. Clients register at the CALC office by phone or in person.
3. A receipt is provided by the CALC office with pertinent course details.

The process for intake and registration of cohorts of clients for full-time (and possibly provincially funded) CALC programs includes the following steps:

1. The program is advertised in the community with a registration deadline.
2. Clients register at the CALC office by phone or in person.
3. An appointment is scheduled with a CALC staff member for clients eligible for Employment Insurance (EI) and/or Alberta Works funding to complete an application to assist with expenses while attending the fulltime program.
4. Learner pre-assessment is completed to determine the clients' reading, writing, speaking, and listening levels.
5. Files are organized for clients containing the following information:
 - Picture of the client
 - Financial information for EI and/or Alberta Works funding
 - CALC registration form
 - FOIP form
 - Pre and post-assessment (CLB level, etc)
 - Sample of client's work at the beginning of the program and at the end
 - Training received during the program (such as First Aid, etc)

- Certificate of program completion
- Program report card or document that records progress made in the program

Alternate Intake Processes

People with a variety of backgrounds and needs come to a CALC seeking educational assistance. At times learners self-refer, but they may also be referred by employers, government agents, school systems, or friends. To best serve these learners, an assessment of goals, needs, and educational background should be performed at intake. The processes for four different potential streams are described below.

Bridge to Language Training

- Interview the client and discuss goals (both short- and long-term)
- Uncover the learner's background to determine if the individual is an ESL or ESL literacy learner
- Determine timeframes and availability
- Discuss funding requirements
- Help access a program that best meets learner needs (for example, workplace training, Families Learning Together, LINC, tutoring, etc)
- Track progress and growth of learner

Bridge to Career Training

- Interview the client and discuss goals (both short- and long-term)
- Determine timeframes and availability
- Discuss funding requirements and options
- Investigate the educational institutions who offer the course/program
- Check entry requirements
- Assess educational qualifications to see if the client has the necessary qualifications to register in the course/program
- If necessary, make appointments for the client at the institution
- Accompany the client to interviews if required
- Assist the client to assemble an evidence file

Bridge to Employment

- Interview the client to ascertain strengths and weaknesses. Self-assessment tools are available at: <http://alis.alberta.ca/ec/cp/cpt/planning-tools.html>
- Assist the client to identify a career goal
- Assist the client to identify the barriers to achieving the goal
- Develop a plan to overcome barriers
- Assist the client to assemble an evidence file

Bridge to Academic Upgrading

- Interview the client to ascertain strengths and weaknesses, including literacy levels. Self-assessment tools are available at: <http://alis.alberta.ca/ec/cp/cpt/planning-tools.html>
- Assist the client to identify a career goal
- Assist the client to identify the barriers to achieving the goal
- Develop a plan to overcome barriers
- Discuss funding requirements and options
- If the required training is offered by the CALC, enroll the candidate in the appropriate course (note that if your CALC is not a registered service provider, the client needs to be referred to a Career Resource Centre at an Alberta Employment and Immigration office)
- If the required training is not offered by the CALC, research and refer training options
- Assist the client to assemble an evidence file

Assisting Clients to Apply for Funding

If a client is planning to attend academic upgrading or a career training program through an educational institution, the CALC may assist the client by:

- Conducting an interview
- Administering appropriate testing to determine interests and employability skills
- Advising the client on possible training organizations and locations
- Providing the course cost, if possible
- Providing the funding options available
- Assisting the candidate with enrolment procedures
- Making an appointment for the client to see an advisor at the educational institution, and accompany the client if requested

Types of Funding

The following types of funding, which may assist you in establishing an evidence file development process within your community organization, may be available to you:

1. **CALC funding**—CALCs generally have a policy in place for financially barriered learners. If learners are assessed as not being able to fund their own training, this fund may be used to assist them.

2. **Anonymous donor funding**—There are a number of anonymous donors who may donate to your organization.
 3. **Funding for training**—This funding is available for applicants who are seeking to upgrade their skills to better qualify them for the job market. To see if a client is eligible, visit <http://employment.alberta.ca/ces/3172.html>. This training falls into two categories:
 - Work foundations
 - Basic skills training
 - Academic upgrading
 - English as a second language
 - Training for work
 - Integrated training
 - Occupational training
 - Workplace training
 - Transitional vocational program
 - Self-employment program
 - First Nations training for employment
 4. **Learner income support**—This may be available during the training period through Alberta Human Services, Employment and Immigration. CALCs must have a government-approved contract to qualify for this funding. For eligibility requirements, visit <http://www.employment.alberta.ca/AWonline/IS/5004.html>.
 5. **Employment insurance (EI)**—CALCs must have a government-approved contract to qualify for this funding. Go to <http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/sc/ei/index.shtml> to determine your eligibility. Student applications can be made online at <http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/ei/application/employmentinsurance.shtml>.
 6. **Student loans**—These are available for clients who wish to continue with an apprenticeship or post-secondary institution. In some cases, Alberta Human Services, Employment and Immigration, funding may be available for one year, and after that the client would need to apply for a student loan. For information on student loans visit the following websites: <http://alis.alberta.ca/ec/fo/studentsfinance/students-finance.html> and <http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/goc/cslp.shtml>.
 7. **Scholarships, bursaries and grants**—If you have a client who you think may be eligible for a scholarship, bursary, or loan, go to the following website for information: <http://alis.alberta.ca/ec/fo/studentsfinance/about-loans.html>.
-

Identifying Learner Goals and Training Needs

Once clients have completed the intake and registration process at a CALC, it is beneficial to assist them to identify their career or employment goals, because this will determine what type or types of training they will require and how they will develop their evidence file. Assessments that identify interests, abilities, and employability skills are available in many forms. These assessments may assist clients in seeing their strengths and abilities. Below are some assessment tools that the Taber and District Community Adult Learning Association uses in its programs. They are presented here as examples of the assessments available to CALCs to assist them in reaching their goal of providing service to a variety of learners.

COPSystem

The *COPSystem* has become one of Canada's most extensively used systems of assessing interests, abilities, and values. One of the features that make this system of assessment tools so unique is the broad range of applications that it covers. Designed for use in guiding individuals in the exploration of occupations, the *COPSystem* is particularly appropriate for the following applications:

- Group guidance units may be used as a starting point for exploring the world of work
- Individual counseling
- Assistance for individuals in planning their post-secondary career path
- Widen occupational horizons for early school leavers by specifying occupational opportunities available to them within their particular area of interest
- The basis of a comprehensive career search package for unemployed individuals

COPSystem is produced by Educational and Industrial Testing Service (EdITS) and must be administered by a registered human resources expert. It costs \$10 per assessment. For further information, visit <http://www.edits.net/>.

Personality Dimensions

Personality Dimensions is the latest evolution in Personality Temperament Theory. It builds on research conducted in Canada over a 10-year period, as well as the foundation of research established by the work of Carl Jung, David Keirse, and Linda Berens.

The *Personality Dimensions* system uses a card sort and short questionnaire to reveal an individual's temperament preference or personality type. It uses four colors along with short descriptors and symbols to represent the temperament preferences: inquiring green, organized gold, authentic blue and resourceful orange.

Barriers to Employment Success Inventory (BESI)

The *BESI* is a screening tool for administrators and counselors. This assessment gives individuals a quick and easy way to identify the hurdles and obstacles that stand in the way of their job success. Test-takers rate 50 simple statements covering five categories: personal and financial, emotional and physical, career decision-making and planning, job-seeking knowledge, and training and education. After the test-takers have identified their barriers, *BESI* suggests ways to overcome them and helps individuals develop an action plan that can be used in group or individual career counseling. For further information, visit <http://career-lifeskills.com/career-assessments-79/jist-assessments-150/>.

Evidence File Development Process

Once the learners' goals and training needs have been identified, the evidence file development process may begin. This may involve coordinating or delivering specific training for the client or group of clients, or it may involve working with a client to gather and assemble evidence of prior learning.

Evidence of learning provides proof of competency or proficiency in a learning outcome. There are three ways of providing evidence of learning:

- **Direct evidence of learning**—also called primary evidence, includes work samples/products, skills demonstrations, and challenge test results
- **Indirect evidence of learning**—also called secondary evidence, includes certificates, licenses, job performance evaluations, and letters of reference (including letters of verification, recommendation, and/or attestation)
- **Self-declaration of learning**—includes documents such as resumes, learning diaries, learning statements, and autobiographical essays

The evidence file development process for CALC learners includes the following steps:

- **Establish support**—identify a person at the CALC who will assist learners to develop an evidence file.
 - **Reflect**—ask learners to reflect on what they have done, what they like doing, what they are good at, and what their goals are.
 - **Gather information**—assist learners to gather documents that provide evidence of their knowledge and skills, such as samples of work, certificates, and reference letters.
 - **Document evidence**—assist learners to develop a resume and cover letter, and if applicable, complete essential skills checklists to detail the knowledge and skills they have developed.
-

- **Assemble evidence**—assist the learner to assemble all of their documented evidence in an effective manner in their evidence file.

Evidence File Development Flowchart

Developing a flowchart, such as the sample below, may provide CALC staff and clients with an at-a-glance view of your evidence file development process.



Essential Skills Framework

An effective way to structure evidence files with low-level or foundational clients is to use essential skills as a framework. The evidence file would include each of the nine essential skills as a tabbed section where related, documented evidence would be included. The next section of this handbook describes this process and includes checklists for each essential skill.

The nine essential skills have been identified and validated by the Government of Canada, with other national and international agencies. These skills are needed for work, learning, and daily lives of Canadians in different degrees. Four of the skills relate to literacy, which makes it possible for individuals to learn other skills:

- Reading
- Writing
- Document use
- Numeracy

The remaining five skills help individuals grow in their work, adapt to changes in the workplace, and engage fully in their family life and community:

- Computer use
- Thinking
- Oral communication
- Working with others
- Continuous learning

The Office of Literacy and Essential Skills (OLES), within Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), is a center of expertise that funds essential skills projects and partnerships; develops, adapts, and promotes materials relating to essential skills; and conducts research and disseminates information about using essential skills in specific occupations. Through its activities, OLES aims to help Canadians get the skills they need to get a job, stay in the job market, and contribute to their family and community.

For additional information about the OLES, visit its website at:
<http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/LES/index.shtml>.

Essential Skills Checklists

As mentioned previously, one way to structure evidence files with low-level or foundational clients is to base their evidence file on essential skills. The evidence file may have one section for each essential skill, and evidence of learning could be inserted where applicable. Because evidence files are individualized, clients need only include the essential skills that are relevant to them.



The following essential skills checklists are adapted from the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills' *Essential Skills Portfolio* (HRSDC, 2009). Use the checklists as samples or templates that you may modify to accommodate the needs and goals of individual clients. When a client has achieved a skill or set of skills, the line on the checklist may be dated and signed or checked off.

If clients are using essential skills to organize their evidence file, they may use the checklists as the first page of a section, where the listed certificates, letters, and other evidence of learning would then be placed.

Reading

Reading refers to understanding written materials. This includes reading signs, directions on how to use a product or a piece of equipment, memos, letters, and books.

Skill Statement	Client	Instructor	Date
<i>I/you can...</i>			
Read and understand product labels			
Read and understand emails and memos			
Read and understand written work directions			
Find important information in a work manual			
Use a manual to get information on how to do something			
<i>Certificates, letters of verification, and other documents</i>			
Canadian Language Benchmark score			
Letter from CALC instructor			

Document Use

Document use refers to using and understanding labels, charts, graphs, signs, symbols, and similar written materials.

Skill Statement	Client	Instructor	Date
<i>I/you can...</i>			
Add personal information such as mailing address and phone number to a document			
Create a pie chart of my work day			
Use a road map to plan a trip			
Know the symbols and meanings for hazardous materials			
<i>Certificates, letters of verification, and other documents</i>			
Letter from CALC instructor			
Completed application form			

Writing

Writing refers to writing or printing text by hand or typing on a computer.

Skill Statement	Client	Instructor	Date
<i>I/you can...</i>			
Write in complete sentences			
Complete a log entry for work			
Write down a phone message for someone			
Write a short letter or memo to inform or to request information			
Write a short paragraph of apology			
Write a short paragraph that shows sympathy or compassion			
Write a short paragraph to persuade someone			
<i>Certificates, letters of verification, and other documents</i>			
Canadian Language Benchmark			
Letter from CALC instructor			
Writing samples			

Numeracy

Numeracy refers to using and understanding numbers.

Skill Statement	Client	Instructor	Date
<i>I/you can...</i>			
Use a calculator to add, subtract, multiply, and divide			
Write a cheque			
Use an ATM card			
Make change from a \$20 bill			
Identify Canadian money amounts			
Calculate GST			
Calculate land measurements			
Measure an area			
Make an invoice for work completed			
Make out a receipt for payment received			
<i>Certificates, letters of verification, and other documents</i>			
Letter from CALC instructor			
Sample invoice			
Sample receipt			

Oral Communication

Oral communication refers to sharing thoughts and information by speaking.

Skill Statement	Client	Instructor	Date
<i>I/you can...</i>			
Speak to an individual in person or on the phone			
Speak to a small group of 4-6 people			
Stand up and speak to a large group of 7-12 people			
Leave a clear message on a telephone answering machine			
Ask clear questions to get information			
Give my opinions when asked			
Sound confident when I speak			
<i>Certificates, letters of verification, and other documents</i>			
Canadian Language Benchmark Speaking score			
Letter from CALC instructor			

Working with Others

Working with others refers to ways in which we work with other people to get things done.

Skill Statement	Client	Instructor	Date
<i>I/you can...</i>			
Take my turn speaking in a group			
Contribute to a group project			
Listen to others' ideas			
Respect others' ideas and opinions			
Ask for help when I need it			
Help others when they ask			
Act as a group leader			
<i>Certificates, letters of verification, and other documents</i>			
Letter from CALC instructor			
Letter from a team member			

Thinking

Thinking refers to reviewing information to make decisions, make plans, and solve problems.

Skill Statement	Client	Instructor	Date
<i>I/you can...</i>			
Remember information needed for my job			
Recognize problems			
Identify possible solutions to a problem			
Analyze the pros and cons of each solution			
Select the best solution			
Know how to find information to solve a problem			
Organize my work day by putting the most important task first			
<i>Certificates, letters of verification, and other documents</i>			
Letter from CALC instructor			

Computer Use

Computer use refers to using computers, phones, and business machines.

Skill Statement	Client	Instructor	Date
<i>I/you can...</i>			
Use a cell phone and a land line phone for local and long distance phone calls			
Operate photocopier and FAX machines			
Use the full keyboard on a computer by touch typing			
Log on and off a computer/notebook			
Use e-mail			
Search the Internet for information			
Use a word processing program			
Print a document or file			
Use a spreadsheet program to enter and change data			
<i>Certificates, letters of verification, and other documents</i>			
Letter from CALC instructor			
Sample of a written document			
Sample of a spreadsheet			

Continuous Learning

Continuous learning refers to always learning new knowledge and skills.

Skill Statement	Client	Instructor	Date
<i>I/you can...</i>			
Identify my learning style (seeing, listening, reading, doing)			
Identify and describe my skills as an employee			
Identify and describe my personal skills			
Identify what I need to learn			
Research education and training opportunities			
<i>Certificates, letters of verification, and other documents</i>			
Letter from CALC instructor			
Learning styles assessment result			

Next Steps

Evidence files allow learners to promote the knowledge and skills that they have acquired to employers or post-secondary institutions. Evidence files may contribute to a conversation between an employer or academic advisor and the learner, which may lead to an understanding of what the learner needs to do in order to achieve a career or educational goal. Where possible the CALC, in which the learner is preparing the evidence file, may proactively approach employers and/or educational institutions in the region to provide information about evidence files and how they may be used.

The steps for a client to approach an employer or post-secondary institution with an evidence file are listed below. For low-level clients, it is beneficial to provide them with opportunities to practice what they plan to say before a meeting.

Approaching employers

- Prepare an evidence file to highlight knowledge and skills that are in line with career goals
- Make an appointment with target employers
- Prepare a list of questions to ask the employer
- Present the evidence file as documentation of acquired knowledge and skills
- Highlight the strengths demonstrated by the evidence file

Approaching post-secondary institutions

- Prepare an evidence file to highlight knowledge and skills that are in line with educational goals
- Make an appointment with an academic advisor at the chosen educational institution
- If possible or necessary, make an appointment with a program chair to ensure understanding of the expectations of the program
- Prepare a list of questions to ask the advisor and/or instructor
- Present the evidence file as documentation of acquired knowledge and skills
- Highlight the strengths demonstrated by the evidence file

Collaborating with Post-Secondary Institutions

The Roles and Mandates Policy Framework for Alberta's Publicly-Funded Post-secondary Institutions (RMPF), released in November 2007, identified new directions for Alberta's advanced education and community adult learning systems. In particular, the RMPF calls for enhanced alignment between the two systems to strengthen foundational learning, increase learner transitions, and increase access to the full spectrum of learning.

CALCs play a major role in transitioning foundational learners to post-secondary institutions. This transition process may start as part of a CALC full- or part-time program where the class visits the post-secondary institution and receives an orientation. CALCs may connect with their institution representatives and arrange meetings with them to inform them of the CALC's programming, and to discuss potential opportunities to work together. CALCs are well positioned to be the gateway to post-secondary education. They can identify and provide information about learner trends and needs in their communities.

CALCs have the capacity to create learner pathways from their programs to post-secondary institutions. This may be done in a number of ways:

- Internet assistance—helping learners to access and navigate post-secondary websites
- On-line courses—assist learners in registering for on-line courses
- Applying for funding—assist learners to access funding
- Orientation—inform learners of post-secondary orientations
- Counseling services—develop collaborative relationships between the CALCs and post-secondary institutions so that referrals may be made
- Tutor services—provide tutor support to learners
- Proctoring services—oversee proctoring of tests locally so students do not have to travel
- Administrative services—providing Internet access, photocopying, faxing, and providing copies of post-secondary institution brochures
- Mentor services—matching volunteer mentors with foundational learners: the mentor may present an example of success that can motivate and raise the confidence of a foundational learner
- Housing—connecting learners to housing options

It is important to address non-academic factors when transitioning foundational learners. These play an important part in the successful transition of the learner and may include:

- Transportation
- Childcare
- Orientation services
- Information about time management, stress management, and study skills

While obtaining a four-year degree may not be the goal of all foundational learners, some post-secondary is needed by many adult foundational learners. This learning might include general education development diploma (GED) preparation, vocational training, and certification or re-certification courses. CALCs working with their post-secondary institution may ensure that learners are aware of the options that exist and may prepare learners with the tools and strategies that they need to make the transition.

Appendix

Appendix 1 Work Foundations Program Description

Appendix 2 Work Foundations Registration Form

Appendix 3 In-House Reading Test

Appendix 4..... In-House Writing Test

Appendix 5 Evidence File Checklist

Appendix 6 Workability Skills Checklist

Work Foundations Program Description

The Work Foundations program at the Taber and District Community Adult Learning Association (TDCALA) provides 425 hours of basic skills training in a classroom-based setting designed to help learners develop the basic competencies needed to obtain employment and/or to pursue further employment-related training. The focus is to provide literacy, numeracy, and employability skills. It is a full-time program, which runs 4 days a week for 17 weeks.

The program is open to English-as-a-second-language learners that are permanent residents, landed immigrants, or Canadian citizens.

Learners who complete the program:

- Have a better command of the English language
- Are more confident and comfortable using the computer
- Increase employability skills
- Improve reading and writing skills

The program model for Work Foundations is based on a laddering or bridging concept. This means that learners at TDCALA may first start in the Families Learning Together Program, continue to the Work Foundations program, then to a pre-apprenticeship program, and finally enroll in a program of study in a post-secondary institution. The TDCALA is continually building on programs, and moving clients from one level to another when they are ready.

Community Adult Learning Councils (CALC) are gateways to learning within the community. Adults may start at any point on a continuum that starts with basic literacy and continues to entry-level employment, advanced employment opportunities, and post-secondary programs. To assist an individual to start the process, the CALC creates awareness of the opportunities it offers within the community and surrounding area.

Here are some examples of how the TDCALA created awareness within the Low-German Mennonite population in its area:

- Since the Work Foundations program's clients are low-German speaking men, the TDCALA executive director met with local religious leaders to discuss how the program could be promoted.
 - The low-German outreach worker in the TDCALA office helped to promote the Work Foundations program.
 - To reach potential learners, the TDCALA office set up an information table at 10% Tuesdays at the local grocery stores.
 - TDCALA staff went door to door with religious leaders to promote the program.
 - TDCALA advertised on a local radio station.
-

- The Mennonite Post, a local German newspaper, ran ads and stories about the program.
- The Taber Times, a local weekly newspaper, ran stories about the program and articles about past graduates.

The partnering model that TDCALA uses is comprehensive and includes the following:

- NorQuest College—connecting with English-as-a-second-language teachers
- Lethbridge College—borrowing materials
- Bow Valley College—participating in professional development training on how to successfully teach multi-level classes
- Rural Routes Program—assisting with curriculum development
- Mennonite Central Committee—providing cultural diversity workshops and referring clients to Work Foundations program
- Southern Alberta Language Assessment Services—providing Canadian Language Benchmark assessments
- Lethbridge Community Network—providing each client with a refurbished computer to use in their homes
- Horizon School District—promoting the Work Foundations program to the parents via the students
- Churches—offering the space to hold programs in their church halls, such as in Grassy Lake and Vauxhall
- Community speakers—sharing information on relevant topics, such as bankers talking about financial literacy

Work Foundations Registration Form

Start date _____

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Address _____ Town _____

Postal Code _____ Telephone _____

Birth Date ____ day ____ month ____ year

Social Insurance Number _____

Alberta Health Care Number _____

Marital Status

____ Single ____ Married ____ Single Parent/Separated/Divorced/Widowed

Citizenship Status

____ Canadian ____ Permanent Resident ____ Landed Immigrant ____ Other

Schooling

Number of years you attended school _____ Where? _____

Employment

Where are you employed? _____

Name of Employer _____

How did you hear about this program?

- ____ Referral from agency/program
- ____ Flyer/poster
- ____ Word of mouth (from a friend, relative, etc.)
- ____ Take a Class booklet published by TDCALA
- ____ Employer
- ____ Flyer/Poster

Interview Questions

1. Why do you want to come to school?
2. Have you attended Work Foundations? When and where?
3. Will you be able to claim EI while you are attending school?
4. Will you need financial assistance while you are attending school?
5. Will you be working after the program?
6. What are your employment goals? What would be your “dream” job?
7. What other learning do you require to be successful?

Disclaimer:

I have completed the registration; respect the activities and property of Taber & District Adult Community Learning and request that I attend the program identified on the registration form. I agree that I understand and agree that Taber & District Adult Community Learning will not be responsible for any accident to me while on Taber & District Adult Community Learning premises or while engaged in any of its activities away from Taber & District Adult Community Learning.

I give my consent for photographs/videos, in which I may appear, to be used in any way Taber & District Adult Community Learning or Family Centre may care to use them including advertising, or promotion. In the event that I do not wish to have photographs/videos taken, I understand that it is my responsibility to notify the facilitator at the time of the event, and remove myself from the area in which photographs/videos are being taken.

Signature of Student

Date

Recommendations:

CLB Levels: Listening _____ Speaking _____ Reading _____
Writing _____ Numeracy _____

In-House Reading Test

Learner: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

Reading Test Part 1

TASK: Read the sentences. Draw a line to the picture.

Get up.



Eat lunch.



Play soccer.



Study.

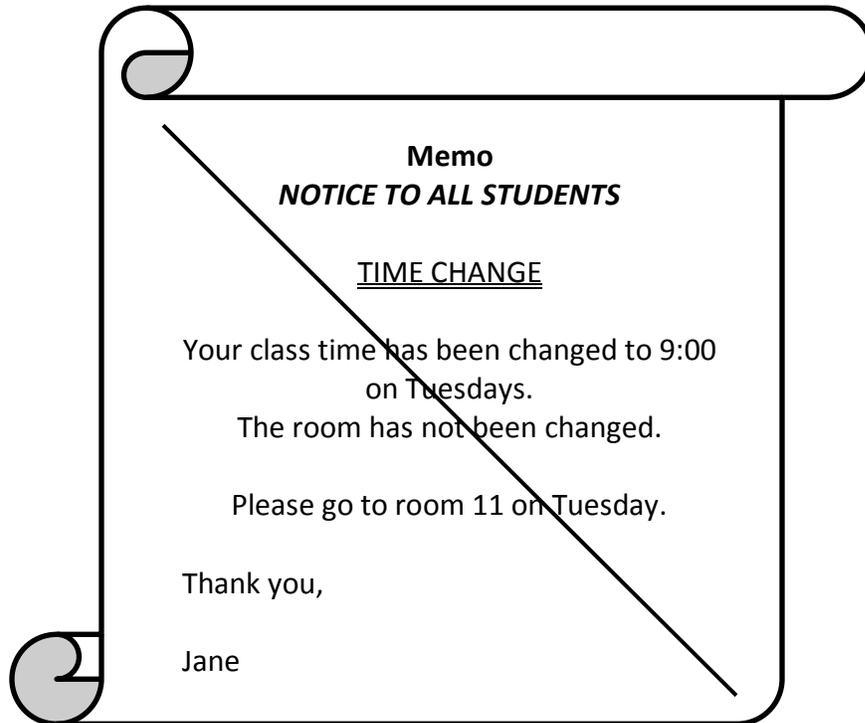


Talk to friends.



Reading Test Part 2

TASK: Read the sign. Answer the questions.



Example: Who is the memo from? From Jane

1. Who is the notice to? _____
2. What is the notice about? _____
3. What is the new class time? _____
4. Has the room changed? _____
5. What room is the class in _____

Reading Test Part 3

TASK: Look at the schedule. Answer the questions.

Taber Sugar Factory Work Schedule

	Morning Shift 5:00a.m. - 1:00p.m.	Afternoon Shift 1:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.	Night Shift 10:00 p.m. - 5:00 a.m.
Monday	Mike	Ann	Donna
Tuesday	Mike	Ann	Donna
Wednesday	Mike	Ann	David
Thursday	Mike	Mahtab	David
Friday	Sara	Mahtab	David
Saturday	Sara	Ann	David

Example: Who works the morning shift on Monday? Mike

1. Who works the night shift on Wednesday?

2. At what time does Mahtab start work?

3. What days does Ann work?

4. How many days a week does Sara work?

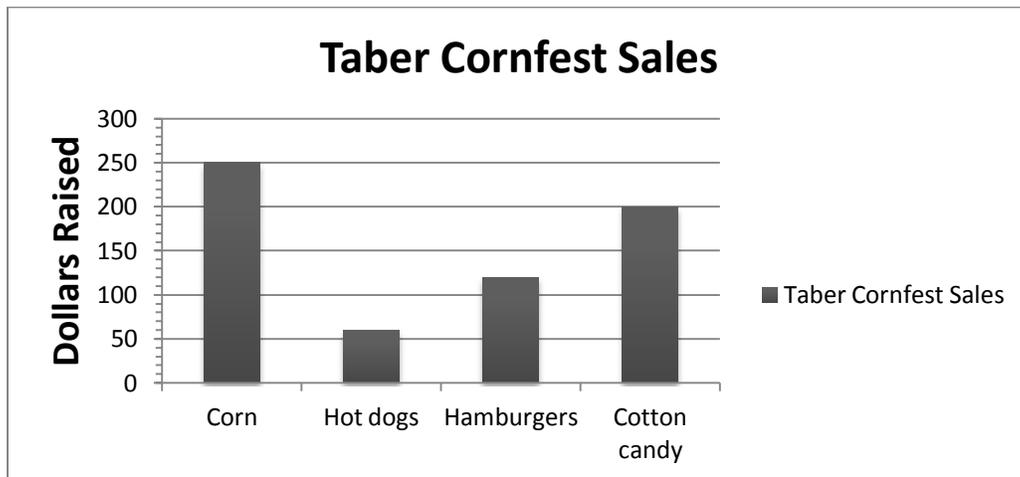
5. What shift does David work on Tuesday?

6. What are the names of the six people who work at the factory?

Reading Test Part 4

TASK: Look at the information and chart to answer the questions.

In August, Taber hosts a Taber Cornfest. In the first hour of the festival all the money goes to charity. The chart shows how much money was raised from each kind of food that was sold.

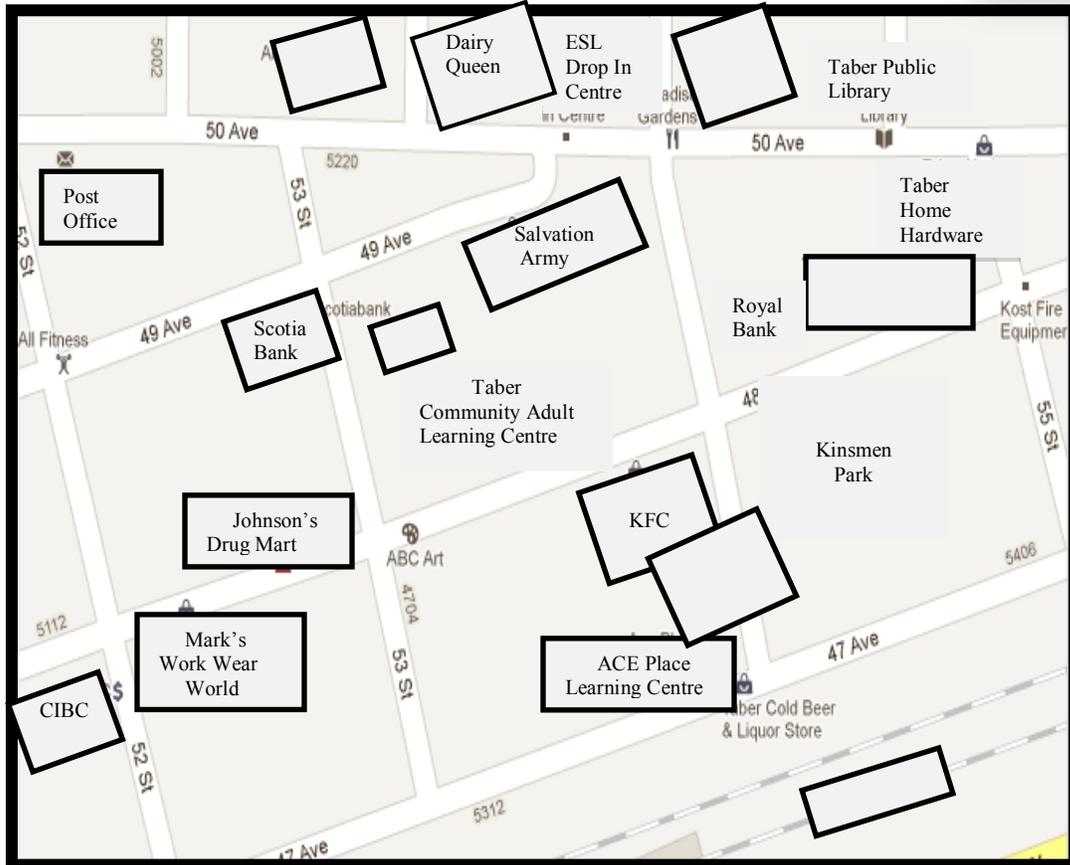


1. How much money did they raise from hot dogs? _____
2. Which food made more money hamburgers or cotton candy?

3. Which food made the least money? _____
4. Which food made the most money? _____
5. How much money did they make in total? _____
6. When is the Cornfest? _____

Reading Test Part 5

TASK: Look at the map. Answer the questions.



1. What are the businesses on 49th Ave.?

2. Where can I go to borrow a book (name the place and the avenue)?

3. Which places sell food (name the 2 places on the map)?

4. What are the names of the three banks on the map?

5. Start at the post office and walk east. Turn right on 53rd Street. Turn left on 48th Avenue. What is the building on your left?

Reading Test Part 6

TASK: Read the instructions on the following label. Answer the questions.

Children's Medicine

Relieves headaches, body pain and fevers

DIRECTIONS: Shake well and ensure that all contents of the dosage cup are taken.

Age	Dosage
Under 2 years	Consult your physician
2-4	5 ml
5-7	10 ml
8-10	15 ml
11-12	20 ml

WARNING: Do not exceed the recommended amount unless directed by your physician. Keep this and all medicines out of children's reach.

In case of accidental overdose contact a physician or poison control center immediately.

1. What does the medicine help with?

2. How old do you need to be before you can take this medicine?

3. Who, from the information in the "warning", should not touch medicines?

4. When is it okay to give your child more than the amount in the chart?

5. What is it called if you take too much medicine?

Reading Test Part 7

TASK: Read the following article. Answer the questions.

Swimming Safety

- **"Buddy up!"** That's what swimming instructors say. Always swim with a partner, every time — whether you're swimming in a backyard pool, in a lake or in a dugout. Even experienced swimmers can become tired or get muscle cramps, which might make it difficult to get out of the water. When people swim together, they can help each other or go for help in case of an emergency.
- **Get skilled.** Speaking of emergencies, it's good to be prepared. Learning some life-saving skills, such as CPR and rescue techniques, can help you save a life. A number of organizations offer free classes for both beginning and experienced swimmers and boaters.
- **Know your limits.** Swimming can be a lot of fun — and you might want to stay in the water as long as possible. If you're not a good swimmer or you're just learning to swim, don't go in water that's so deep you can't touch the bottom and don't try to keep up with skilled swimmers. That can be hard, especially when your friends are challenging you — but it's a pretty sure bet they'd rather have you safe and alive.
- If you are a good swimmer and have had lessons, keep an eye on friends who aren't as comfortable or as skilled as you are. If it seems like they (or you) are getting tired or a little uneasy, suggest that you take a break from swimming for a while.

www.kidshelp.org

1. People should always swim with a

2. Why should people swim together?

3. What should you do if you are going to be around water?

4. What shouldn't you do if you are a poor swimmer?

Why?

5. If you are a good swimmer what should you do?

Why?

In-House Writing Test

Learner: _____ Date: _____

Writing Test Part 1

TASK: Fill in the information below.

Personal Information	
Name:	_____
Address:	_____
City:	_____
Province:	_____
Postal Code:	__ _ - __ _
Telephone:	_____
Birth date:	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female
Signature:	_____
Date:	_____

Writing Test Part 2

TASK: Last week you went for dinner at your friend's house. Write a thank you note to your friend today. **Write as much as you can.**

Dear _____ ,

Sincerely,

Evidence File Checklist

Use this checklist to keep track of the evidence of learning you gather.

Name _____

Date _____

Item	√
Binder separated into clearly identified sections	
Cover page with course and student information	
Goal statement/cover letter	
Personal resume	
Letters of verification, recommendation, and/or attestation	
Sample work documents	
Certificates and/or transcripts from education or training (photocopies only)	
Performance assessments	
Job descriptions and/or course outlines	
Additional items:	

Notes

Workability Skills Checklist

Use this checklist to keep track of workplace competencies you can demonstrate.

Fundamental skills

- Writing sample, such as a written description of a project or completed work
- Participation in a club that requires a special skill
- License to operate vehicles, machinery, or equipment
- Picture of project you are proud of
- Transcripts or report cards
- Computer literacy
- A second language
- Trade skills
- Job skills
- Copy of a tax return you prepared
- Letters from past employers

Teamwork Skills

- Club memberships
- Student council
- Letters of recommendation
- Training certificates
- Team pictures
- Group projects
- Family responsibilities

Personal Management Skills

- Letters of recommendation from past or present employers/instructors
- Recognition rewards
- Job performance appraisals
- Coach's evaluation of personal and team commitment and attitude
- Record of attendance
- Courses you have taken out of college
- Volunteer positions
- Exercise schedule
- Education plan
- Self-exploration test
- Personal career plan

Resources

A Guide for New Job Seekers, Government of Alberta, available at www.alis.gov.ab.ca

Advancing Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) in Alberta: an Action Plan. October 2008. Alberta Advanced Education and Technology (AET).

Essential Skills Portfolio. 2009. Office of Literacy and Essential Skills, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. Downloaded from <http://abclifeliteracy.ca/files/portfolio.pdf>. Also available at <http://library.nald.ca/learning/item/8956>

Essential Skills Profiles. Human Resources and Skills Development Canada website at <http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/LES/profiles/profiles.shtml>

Learning for LIFE: an ESL Literacy Handbook. 2009. Bow Valley College.

The Career Planner, Government of Alberta, available at www.alis.gov.ab.ca.

Workability Handbook, Government of Alberta, available at www.alis.gov.ab.ca.