Black Youth Literacy

A Guide for Program Development

This guide provides organizations, agencies, and individual teachers with a framework for creating programs intended to help transform the attitudes of Black youth toward education, and to equip them with the ability to further their education in the ways that they choose.

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ALFA
ADULT LITERACY FOR ACTION

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Introduction

Purpose and Scope of this Guide

The Black Youth Literacy Project is aimed at improving the educational engagement and self-concept of Black youth who:

- have been turned off or let down by the regular education system and have left school;
- experience reading and writing difficulties;
- are either unemployed or underemployed; and
- are at risk of falling short of realizing their full potential.

The primary goal of this guide is to provide organizations, agencies and individual teachers with a framework and building blocks for creating programs that will:

- inspire a love of learning; and
- equip Black youth with the awareness, access and ability to further their education in whatever way they choose.

This guide is not a complete curriculum; it cannot be followed from beginning to end and does not emphasize testing or evaluation.

Instead, it provides non-traditional learning models and activities that help transform attitudes toward and readiness for further education by:

- rekindling interest in, and respect for, learning;
- renewing self-confidence;
- increasing literacy;
- beginning to reverse negative feelings toward formal education; and
- preparing students to re-enter a more structured learning environment.

The guide is meant to be used as a base on which to build unique literacy programs – from 10 to 20 weeks in length – aimed specifically at Black youth functioning at about a grade 6 level.[*]

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[*] Activity descriptions also indicate where activities are suitable for students functioning at lower literacy levels.

History of the Black Youth Literacy Project

Why the Black Youth Literacy Project?

The Black Youth Literacy Project is an initiative of the Toronto ALFA Centre, a community-based program that has been delivering literacy services to adults in the northwest corner of the City of Toronto[*] since 1985.

Two separate surveys, conducted in 1993 and 1996 respectively, determined that a significant proportion of Black youth within ALFA's service area were either unemployed or underemployed, but were not accessing education or job training services in the area. Their disengagement from upgrading opportunities was found to be due primarily to a lack of literacy skills, and a discomfort with or antipathy toward a culturally inappropriate education delivery system.

Summary of Original Research

In interviews and discussions with the target group, a project researcher identified a number of barriers which affect this group's ability to access educational programming. According to this research, Black youth feel "misjudged, distrusted, stereotyped, disbelieved, followed around in stores, and expected to underachieve."

In addition, negative experiences and perceptions of the mainstream high school system, the drug culture, and family dynamics were found to be significant factors in the disengagement of Black youth from the education system.

Based on recommendations by members of the target group, youth workers and literacy workers, five alternative literacy learning models were developed: creating a video or cable TV show; developing a radio show; learning to access information services; receiving one-to-one tutoring by teachers and peers; and producing a booklet based on mentor talks.

The Pilot Program

Concluding that literacy teaching for this target group must be done almost by stealth, the Toronto ALFA Centre opted to combine alternative learning models with Experiential Learning and Social Investigation (ELSI) activities. The basic premise behind ELSI is that social investigation activities, when closely tied to the teaching of basic literacy skills, positively impacts overall learning outcomes. Using the ELSI approach involves selecting themes or issues, planning activities for investigating the theme/issue, and planning a motivator for each activity.

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[*] Refers to the former City of Toronto before amalgamation with surrounding municipalities.

In March 1998, ALFA ran a pilot project, known as *Build Ya Skillz*, for eight young people between the ages of 16 and 24.

This 16-week course used both traditional and alternative means to increase awareness, access, ability and action, and to instill a love of reading and learning.

- Students studied computer and Internet skills, creative writing, multimedia (radio, film, video), cultural studies, literacy, life and job skills, Black history and community awareness.

- Each student had a trained tutor who offered one-to-one support.

- Guest speakers and field trips rounded out the course for a holistic approach to self-education and personal development.

The *Build Ya Skillz* pilot project was an unqualified success and, with some adjustments, formed the basis of this present curriculum guide.

Note: A complete project history can be found in *Appendix A: Original Research*.

Developing a Program for Black Youth

Requirements for a Successful Program

Some of the requirements for a successful program include:

- clarity around the expectations, goals and potential long-term benefits of the program, as well as the roles of all those involved;

- meaningful activities grounded in urban social and cultural realities;

- flexibility in terms of issues and activities;

- a safe, comfortable learning environment, including 'extras' that can bring the program to life (e.g., music, a student relaxing area, light and healthy refreshments);

- mutual respect and goodwill including the discard of any of personal biases, stereotypes, and myths about Black youth; and

- a liking for youth and the energy to work with them on the part of all staff and volunteers.

The following steps will help you achieve such a program:

1. Choose from alternative learning models or some combination of these.

2. Plan experiential learning and social investigation (ELSI) activities.

3. Create a positive learning environment.

Step 1: Selecting Alternative Learning Models

Based on initial research, five alternative learning models for literacy have been developed. These models differ greatly from traditional literacy programming and academic reading and writing curriculum. The difference is a primary condition for the success of any programming for the students.

Underlying and guiding programs based on these models should be an awareness of the consequences for the youth involved of not realizing their goals. Realistic goals — considering time, energy and resources — must be set.

Note: For a detailed discussion on these alternative learning models, see *Appendix A: Original Research*.

Creating a Cable TV Show or Video

> This model empowers the target population by providing opportunities for them to positively shape the representation of their reality.

Creating a Radio Show

> This model enriches both the individuals involved and the program listeners by offering youth an opportunity to have a 'voice' and share their perspectives.

Accessing Information Services

> This model helps members of the target group build confidence and assertiveness skills by increasing awareness of available community resources and how to access them.

Providing One-to-One Tutoring by Black Tutors and Peers

> This model motivates and encourages youth by providing positive, professionally successful role models.

Producing a Newsletter/Booklet Based on Mentor Talks

> This model educates youth about the possibilities that exist for them and the educational requirements needed to achieve goals.

Step 2: Planning ELSI Activities

ELSI stands for *Experiential Learning and Social Investigation*. The basic premise behind ELSI is that social investigation activities, when tied closely to the teaching of basic literacy skills, positively impact overall learning outcomes.

Literacy programs aimed at the target group must consist of highly practical activities that:

- reflect the realities of the students' lives; and

- help to rebuild (or possibly build for the first time) the students' trust, confidence and self-esteem.

Experiential Learning and Social Investigation provide a framework for Black youth to get involved in an activity, look back at it critically, determine what is useful or important to remember, and use this information to perform another activity. This approach also emphasizes group activities, which are not only more enjoyable, but which also promote a sharing of skills and perspectives between students.

Five steps of experiential learning are integral to the ELSI approach:

- experiencing the activity;
- sharing the experience by describing it;
- processing it to identify common themes;
- generalizing from the experience to form principles or guidelines; and
- applying what was learned to another situation.

Note: For a detailed discussion of ELSI, see *Appendix A: Original Research*.

Developing ELSI activities involves:

1. identifying and selecting themes or issues;

2. designing activities for investigating the theme/issue that meet ELSI criteria and form a well-rounded, cohesive program; and

3. planning a motivator for each activity.

a) Identifying Themes/Issues

The identification and selection of what to work on is of prime importance in ELSI learning.

To choose themes or issues, involve students in examining their lives, experiences, views and communities, as well as naming important issues.

You might ask, for example:

- What are some of the problems specific to Black youth or Black communities in general?
- Which of these problems are not being effectively addressed?
- Are issues different for males and females? If so, what are the differences, and why do these differences exist?
- Do you think other groups have made similar lists of the problems and needs of your community? How could you research to find such lists? What would your sources be? How will you know good information when you find it?
- Can you organize your list into categories? What should your headings be?

You might also ask students to draw a map of their neighbourhood and put in all the places they might go during the week. Then you could:

- Put the maps on the wall and have students examine them for similarities and differences.
- Ask each student to say whether they feel happy or sad when they visit each place on their map.
- Circle the places visited most often, themes most talked about, and areas that cause discomfort.
- Visit the places circled; photograph them; use them later as tools.

You could then ask students whether they would like to show their list to friends, neighbours, relatives, etc. to get additional input; or group students into teams and have each investigate a different issue of particular interest to them (e.g., environment, homelessness, people in institutions, intergenerational issues, etc.).

Listen to what students talk about and the questions they ask directly and indirectly. Follow hunches and feelings about themes that might be important to students.

In selecting which of these issues to work on, the following criteria should be considered:

- What is of greatest interest to the students? What do they consider most relevant and important to their lives?

- What issues offer good opportunities for students to learn and share knowledge?

- What issues are about the right scope for this group, considering its size, the time available, students' skills, etc. Issues selected should be those on which some concrete action(s) might be taken.

- Are there other groups that might be interested in working with you to make change? Good social investigation often involves several groups or institutions working together to address an issue.

b) Designing ELSI Activities

Identify an assortment of activities for investigating the theme/issue. Choose initial activities that will:

- create a safe space in which to learn, break down barriers, identify and address fears, and help students get to know and respect one another (our Self-Esteem/Community theme has a number of introductory activities for low literacy levels that may be useful early in your program); and

- engage the students early, and get them hooked on the idea of further education, e.g., high impact field trips and special guests.

The themes and activities in this guide touch on issues very specific to Black youth (e.g., cultural awareness and support) rather than wider issues facing many groups of struggling youth (e.g., high school upgrading).

However, you may want to address some of the other issues that our research identified were important to Black youth, such as:

- housing;
- law and legal issues (e.g., how to get support through the legal processes and what to do about police abuse);
- drugs;
- employment counseling;
- financial assistance;
- high school upgrading;
- basic literacy;
- teenage sexuality;
- single parenthood and childcare;
- family issues; and
- peer pressure.

Therefore, you may wish to pick and choose from the activities in this guide, combining and adjusting them to suit your own themes.

Note that this guide suggests some foundation activities to be used extensively, regardless of your themes.

Ask the following questions of activities you are considering:

Objectives	• What is the goal of the activity? (e.g., build skills in listening, observing, thinking critically and creatively, problem-solving, speaking, reading or writing) • What are the specific learning objectives? • How will the results be evaluated? • Are there deadlines and target dates?
Resources	• How many students will be involved, and what will their roles be? • How much time is required? • What human resources are needed (e.g., staff, tutors, peers, mentors, information sources, etc.)? What skills/qualities must these individuals have? • What supplies and materials are needed? • Will there be any related costs (e.g., transportation, photocopying, etc.)?
Preparation	• What training/information do the students need to be given before they set out on their investigation?

Once you have developed a list of activities, use the following criteria to ensure they form a well-rounded, cohesive program:

- Do the learning experiences integrate all five steps of the experiential learning approach (i.e. experience, share, process, generalize, apply)?

- Are there opportunities for involving youth as partners in planning, implementing and evaluating the learning process?

- Are there various types of activities that accommodate various learning styles: (e.g., experiential learning, cooperative learning, demonstrations, small group discussions, role playing, tours, modeling, journals, portfolios)?

- Are activities based on and applicable to real world situations and current societal issues? Are these issues of interest to Black youth?

- Are learning materials appropriate for these students in terms of their skill levels and life experiences? Are there additional challenges for more advanced students? Are there opportunities for students to go at their own pace?

- Do the activities encourage positive attitudes toward learning? Are they presented in a fun, appealing, engaging and challenging manner?

- Do activities include one or more life skills appropriate for the target group?

  Note: Life skills are the capacities that enable an individual to be effective in identifying and achieving personal goals and responsibilities. They may include, for example, understanding self; communicating and relating with others; problem-solving; decision-making; acquiring, analyzing and using information; managing resources; working with groups; orientation to the world of work, vocations, and money; and psychomotor skills (strength, endurance, coordination and precision).

- Are activities and materials sensitive, reflective and respectful of diversity in income, cultural background, gender, and physical and mental abilities? Are stereotypes of race, sex roles, etc. avoided? Do graphics show diverse gender, economic, racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds?

- Are the goals and desired outcomes of learning activities made clear to the students? Are these goals/outcomes in keeping with students' objectives?

- Are evaluation tools (demonstrations, journals, tests, portfolios, etc.) useful to students?

- Can evidence be provided to demonstrate progress and achievements?

c) Planning the Motivators

Whenever possible, activities should be introduced by *motivators*. Motivators invite people to share their own perceptions, and so provoke critical discussion and natural conversation.

A motivator can take many forms — pictures, drawings, cartoons, slides, posters, skits, poetry, films, proverbs, folktales, songs or a combination of these. Motivators should:

- be recognizable/familiar to the students;
- involve students personally and emotionally in the issue and discussion;
- generate questions; and
- Be contextually clear.

In order to decode a motivator, students need to be able to refer to it many times during discussion. For this reason, the motivator should be physical (like a picture) or repeatable (like a recording or a song).

Tips For Using Motivators

Make it descriptive	Use motivators that touch on as many aspects of the theme as possible, and that hint at connections to related issues.
Encourage personal association	To present a motivator to the group, make your first question, "What do you see?" Invite students to "read" the picture and relate it to their own experience. Expect students to read the motivator differently.
Analyze the broader implications	Move the discussion through four levels: 1. Perception of the motivator; 2. Personal experiences of the issues raised; 3. Awareness of group experience of the issues; and 4. Historical/cultural context of the group experience. As the discussion proceeds, identify patterns across individual experiences and challenge the group to question these patterns. Why do they exist? Examine historical and cultural factors.
Plan for action	End the analysis by having students explore actions that individuals or the group may take.

Step 3: Structuring Your Program

Structure your program to accommodate one or more alternative learning models, and to incorporate ELSI themes and activities throughout. Try to create a sense of progression and achievement so that each activity can be seen to be building toward a final product (a radio show, video, newsletter, etc.).

Sample Structure

Following is an example of how you might structure your program into three parts, accommodating three alternative learning models (see Step 1) and incorporating themes and ELSI activities. The two other learning models (accessing information services and peer tutoring) can be incorporated throughout the program.

Beginning of program	Learning model: Publish a newsletter Themes: History, Community, Dreams Activities: Bi-weekly guests, weekly field trips, technology studies, storytelling, daily discussions/reading/writing
Middle of program	Learning model: Produce a radio show Themes: Equity, Work, Music Activities: Bi-weekly guests, weekly field trips, technology studies, storytelling, daily discussions/reading/writing
End of program	Learning model: Produce a video or cable TV show Themes: Movies, Technology, Power Activities: Bi-weekly guests, weekly field trips, technology studies, storytelling, daily discussions/reading/writing

The following sections describe each part of this sample program in more detail.

Note: In order for a program such as this to be a success, it would be necessary to:

- complete research beforehand;

- gain access to computers with adequate software (e.g., a typing program, and word processing, desktop publishing and graphics software, clip art) as well as hardware (e.g., scanner, printer, digital camera, CD-ROM);

- obtain the scheduled co-operation of the technical staff of the radio station and television network;

- set clearly delineated goals.

Beginning of Program

Learning Model: Creating a Newsletter

This part of the program is intended to:

- provide students with a vehicle to reflect what they have learned and showcase their work;
- provide youth with training in desktop publishing and computer skills in general;
- instruct students in the process of getting their work published and distributed.

Themes: History, Community, Dreams

Activities:

- Provide students with appropriate training in basic computer hardware, typing and software.

- Have daily discussions to foster relationship building, share background, set goals, etc.

- Invite bi-weekly guest speakers such as writers, graphic designers and publishers, as well as storytellers, inspirational speakers, community leaders, authors and artists.

- Take weekly field trips to neighbourhoods, markets, libraries, community centers, museums, etc.

- Teach students about storytelling and have them develop personal and group stories.

- Encourage daily reading (e.g., books, newspapers).

- Help students build their portfolios through daily writing (e.g., stories, poems, rhythmic poem, journals, music lists, basic literacy skills).

- Help students select pieces from their portfolios for inclusion in the newsletter. Content can include group and individual poems and stories, lists of their favourite music, research articles, interviews with mentors, opinion pieces, advertisements, etc.

- Involve students in the process of getting their work published and distributed (e.g., to other programs working with youth).

Middle of Program

Learning Model: Creating a Radio Show

This part of the program is intended to:

- empower students by providing them with a voice and a way to reach out to the community;
- expose students to a range of potential careers;
- develop students abilities to plan, research, organize information, write for various purposes, and communicate verbally.

Themes: Equity, Work, Music

Activities:

- Invite speakers and mentors, e.g., Black individuals who are involved in the film and video business doing production, technical support or acting, as well as employment professionals, social workers, entrepreneurs, politicians, law enforcement, musicians, etc.

- Have students interview professionals in the radio industry, to research the process of creating a radio show.

- Take weekly field trips. For example, tour a radio station, preferably at a station geared toward youth. Visit libraries, job agencies and employment centers, youth conferences, radio stations, or music festivals/stores.

- Plan daily discussions, reading, writing and storytelling to generate content for the radio show. Have students research additional content.

- Have students complete the steps to develop a radio show. Teach literacy and other required skills throughout. The process of creating a radio show can include:

  - writing a script;

  - selecting interview subjects and music play lists;

  - deciding how much time to devote to each message; and

  - editing the work (tape to tape, either at the radio station or manually on a two-tape cassette player).

The radio show can feature dub poetry, rap music, prose, opinion pieces, interviews with Black mentors and service suppliers, as well as music written and created by the youth. Students can:

- create a public service announcement about what to do in case of a natural disaster, e.g., fire, hurricane, tornado;

- design an invention and creating a radio advertisement to sell it, complete with a persuasive strategy and a jingle;

- celebrate a particular culture, describing important symbols, holidays, customs and clothing and using music, language and stories from the culture;

- create news broadcasts in teams of four to six (assign each team member a different responsibility, such as news anchor, sports anchor, weather anchor and feature reporters, and give each member a total of three or four minutes on the air);

- develop a 'rapumentary' in small groups;

- hold a competition for the best thirty-second public service announcement on issues such as drug awareness, staying in school, dangers of smoking, nutrition, etc.;

- write a tribute to an inspiring person in the community;

- create a version of theatre for the radio, complete with sound effects; or

- write and deliver a political campaign speech.

End of Program

Learning Model: Creating a Video or Cable TV Show

Students create a video on a topic of their choice or a short cable TV show. Students will interview professionals in the film or television industry, research the process of creating a video or TV show, then propose, plan, write, shoot, and publicize the video or TV show.

This part of the program is intended to:

- introduce acting as a form of expression;
- develop students' abilities to plan, research, organize information, write for various purposes, and communicate verbally.
- empower students by allowing them to positively shape the representation of their reality;
- expose students to a range of potential careers;

Themes: Movies, Technology, Power

Activities:

- Invite speakers and mentors, e.g., Black individuals who are involved in the film and video business doing production, technical support or acting; individuals involved with television shows popular with Black youth; as well as activists, sports stars, media personalities, actors and other professionals.

- Tour a television studio, preferably at a station geared toward youth.

- Plan daily discussions, reading and writing to help generate content for the video. Have students research additional content for the video.

- Have students complete all the steps to develop the video or show, including:

  - outlining a proposal for a video/show;
  - writing letters of request to cable TV networks;
  - writing the script;
  - shooting the video/show; and
  - writing announcements to inform the community about the video/show.

Teach literacy, technology and other required skills throughout.

For sample video topics, see the suggestions listed under *Creating a Radio Show.*

Note: To teach students about both videos *and* cable TV shows, students could create an investigative video about the making of a TV show. Topics could include:

- the different employment opportunities that exist in film and television production;

- education and other requirements needed to work in television;

- opportunities for apprenticeships;

- openings and training programs available; and

- the real demands of a career in the field.

Step 4: Creating a Positive Learning Environment

Examining Your Own Biases

No one escapes learning and believing some of the stereotypes and biases that underlie racism and forms of discrimination.

In order to become more aware of deep-seated biases, staff and volunteers involved in this kind of program should begin by asking themselves the following questions:

- What are my expectations of students?

- Do I unintentionally convey negative stereotypes?

  Even intended compliments can be patronizing (thereby damaging to the student and your relationship with that and other students) such as, "You're particularly articulate for a Black person or a woman or a person with a disability."

- How do I deal with silence? Is non-participation of any student ignored?

- Am I insulted if someone does not make direct eye contact with me? Do I consider them belligerent or disrespectful?

- Am I uneasy if someone makes direct or prolonged eye contact with me?

- Do I call on some students less than others?

- Do I perceive some students as experts on particular issues, but assume they don't know anything else?

- Do I give feedback promptly and immediately so students can accurately assess their progress?

- Do I know how to recognize oppressive behaviour and attitudes? Would I know how to address it in an appropriate manner? If not, do I know who to speak to about it?

- Do I feel comfortable dealing with discrimination issues and themes? Who can I consult should I need assistance in this area?

Setting Up Optimal Learning Conditions

Those developing and/or working within such a program should also adhere to the following guidelines:

Create and maintain a safe, positive and open environment

A safe, positive and open environment is vital for full participation, sharing and learning.

- Reinforce similarities, look at options together, and build consensus. Listen to the students, and ensure that they know that they are being heard.

- If a student feels marginalized and refrains from participating, address it in a positive manner that will bring him/her back into the group.

- Spend time helping students understand inappropriate comments or behaviour. Be clear that such actions/words will not be tolerated.

The learning environment and the material and human resources available provide program participants with important information about what is important or not important. What isn't seen can be as powerful a contributor to perception as what is seen.

- In many environments there is an abundance of materials reflecting White, able-bodied people in traditional gender roles.

- Materials depicting people from ethno-racial communities are frequently biased, showing stereotypes, images from the past or only token images.

- An effort should be made to provide materials that reflect people who are from a variety of ethno-racial communities, who are differently abled, and who are engaged in non-stereotypical gender activities.

- Stereotypical images may be used to help students to learn to identify and critique unfair pictures, but these should be used only for those purposes.

Reinforce positive values

Identify and reinforce positive values, including:

- respect for self, others, elders and the environment;
- traits such as humility, co-operation, empathy, volunteerism;
- passion for and dedication to Black and youth issues; and
- commitment to help bring about positive change.

Promote students' sense of self-worth by ensuring that there are sufficient activities, resources and guests that underscore the positive contributions of Black people in Canada. Help students to recognize and articulate their own qualities, talents and attributes.

Honour students' perspectives

Many Black youth experience racism in addition to the biases and stereotyping faced by members of other races with respect to gender, class, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, age, ability, appearance, etc.

- Do not minimize the anger, hurt and fear felt by students.

- Facilitate open, constructive discussion and encourage students to express their views, suggest solutions, and offer support.

- Be prepared to share your viewpoints, too.

Encourage problem solving

Encourage students to be resourceful in trying to turn challenges into opportunities. Spend time discussing how to make use of their personal power to bring about change.

Give encouragement

Acknowledge students' risk taking, ideas, suggestions and achievements. Do it often, be specific about it, and be sincere.

Mediate conflict

Students will be engaged in activities and discussions that will fan emotions and, at times, disagreement. Personalities may clash.

- Encourage healthy, interesting disagreement.

- Set out ground rules for good listening and debating skills at the start.

- In the event of direct confrontation between individuals, step in as soon as possible to get things back on track and direct the group toward a constructive resolution.

- Where it will not create further confrontation, encourage the group to engage in brainstorming to identify possible solutions.

Be prepared

Preparation is key in any educational undertaking. It is even more crucial for success in this kind of program. If you are hesitant, don't have a plan, have low energy, are not clear on your role, do not use culturally relevant examples, activities and points of reference in your work, and do not have a clearly agreed-upon outcome, participants will likely have a poor and unproductive experience. Students who have experienced far too much 'failure' will, once again, be shortchanged.

Leave your drill commands at home

Many Black youth have become cynical and distrustful of authority figures who may have treated them less than respectfully in the past. Don't wield your power in the same manner. The role of the teacher is to encourage leadership, communication and participation.

Be creative with room set-up

A traditional classroom set-up (i.e. rows) may not be conducive to learning for many of the youth who participate in this program. This arrangement may have too many associations with the school experience that failed them previously.

- Ask students how they would like the room set up.

- Some alternative seating arrangements include circles, semi-circles, a horseshoe or learning stations.

- The Unity Circle is an African symbol of unity, strength, interdependence, balance and equality. This may be a good opportunity to discuss this with the students.

Have fun

Promote laughter and fun in the sessions whenever appropriate. Laughing 'at' someone should not be condoned. But when there are humorous incidents, don't be afraid to lead the laughter.

Themes and Activities

Overview

The following themes have been identified as being of particular interest to the target group:

- self-esteem and community;

- equity; and

- popular culture and multimedia.

Within these themes we have provided are a variety of experiential, investigative and specific skill-building activities. Note:

- We have suggested some foundation activities to be used extensively, regardless of your themes.

- In addition, we suggest you pick and choose from our selection of activities, combining, adjusting and building on them to suit your themes, the skill level of the students, and your desired outcomes.

We have made a conscious decision to include sample activities that touch only on issues very specific to Black youth (e.g., cultural awareness, police abuse) rather than wider issues facing many groups of struggling youth (e.g., high school upgrading).

Depending on your themes, you may want to adjust or create activities to address other issues important to Black youth (e.g., housing; law and legal issues; drugs; employment counseling; financial assistance; cultural awareness and support; high school upgrading; basic literacy; teenage sexuality; single parenthood and childcare; family issues; and peer pressure).

Foundation Activities

Generic activities that should be employed extensively regardless of the theme include:

- field trips;

- guest appearances;

- daily discussions;

- daily reading to students (plus playing books on tape, movies, music, etc.);

- oral story telling (individual and group); and

- daily writing (pre-writing exercises, grammar, spelling, vocabulary drills, poetry, journal writing, etc.).

This section describes each foundation activity in more detail.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of the program and students should be out in the community at least once per week.

Purpose:

- To increase awareness of available community resources and how to access them.
- To create opportunities on which to build group and individual experiences and stories.

Guidelines:

The community has no more valuable resource than its public library, which provides many services in addition to loaning books (e.g., opportunities to do research, attend an internet workshop). A trip to the library during the first week and frequent visits thereafter are recommended.

Other ideas for field trips:

- Tour a youth-oriented TV studio, meet a celebrity and learn how a TV station runs.
- Work at a radio station (e.g., Make a radio commercial for the program).
- Visit an ethnic market.
- Visit a variety of youth job agencies and employment centers to learn about finding one's skills, writing a resume, interviewing and believing in oneself.
- Attend a movie with a relevant theme.
- Explore students' neighbourhoods.
- Visit a museum or community center to learn about African or Caribbean history.
- Visit a library to conduct some research (e.g., the African drum, the world's first musical instrument).
- Participate in a youth conference.
- Visit a beach or have a picnic at a park and interview each other or write stories together.
- Celebrate Black music by visiting music stores, music festivals and libraries to explore and learn about spirituals, blues, jazz, R&B, soul, funk, and hip hop.

Guest Appearances

A series of forums/workshops, including meetings with Black professionals in different fields, can help Black youth learn to work within established systems while retaining their unique perspectives. Role models and mentors also popularize the idea of volunteerism, working together as a community, helping each other, and taking responsibility for oneself.

Purpose:

- To educate youth about the possibilities that exist for them and the educational requirements needed to achieve goals.

Guidelines:

Ideally guests are not simply lecturers, but role models and mentors who:

- Give multi-media presentations (using tools, pictures, audio/videotapes or other materials) that provide a hands-on experience for the youth.
- Assist in setting goals.
- Offer advice and guidance.

Guests can be:

- small business entrepreneurs and professionals;
- inspirational speakers (e.g., Hurricane Carter);
- authors or dub poets (e.g., Clifton Joseph or Afua Cooper);
- activists (e.g., Dudley Laws);
- socially conscious rappers or dance hall stars;
- sports stars and media personalities;
- community story tellers;
- social workers to speak about welfare, social assistance, legal issues, family/domestic issues, etc.;
- politicians (preferably people who can relate to Black youth); and
- law enforcement officers.

Guest visits can be used to spawn pre-work and follow-up work. For example:

- The literacy component could include having youth do research on the presentation topic and prepare questions for the mentor in advance.

- As a follow up, students could create booklets containing the career information they learned from the mentor's presentation.

Daily Discussions

The ELSI approach is grounded in communication that is, for the most part, verbal. It is through conversation and dialogue that Black youth will share their interpretations of the world. Therefore discussions should be part of every teaching activity. A discussion is an oral exploration of a topic, object, concept or experience.

All students need frequent opportunities to generate and share their questions and ideas in small group and whole class settings. Teachers who encourage and accept students' questions and comments without judgment and clarify understandings by paraphrasing difficult terms stimulate the exchange of ideas.

Purpose:

- To develop social skills of questioning, listening and speaking.
- To promote positive group interaction, the exchange of ideas and the expression of individuality.
- To stimulate thought, explanation, reflection and recall.
- To expand vocabulary.

Open-ended Discussions are spontaneous discussions that ensue in response to a sincere question (posed either by the teacher or a student) to which there is no one correct or concise answer.

Guided Discussions are planned discussions, initiated by the teacher's specific questions, to promote the exploration of a particular theme, topic or issue. After some time is spent on teacher-directed questioning, students should be encouraged to facilitate discussions by continuing to formulate and pose questions appropriate to the topic of study. Through discussion, students should achieve a deeper understanding of the topic.

Guidelines:

- Permit all listeners to respond to the question.
- Respect students' questions and their responses.
- Incorporate pauses after students' responses to encourage extended or different responses.
- Clarify students' responses when necessary.
- Establish student-student dialogues during the discussion whenever possible.
- Model the role of sensitive listener, collaborator, mediator, prompter, learning partner and questioner.
- Observe students' participation and conduct in large and small group discussions.
- Note which students rarely or never ask questions.
- Note the settings, topics, concepts or objects that stimulate the most discussion.
- Respect all questions and responses.
- Encourage all students to contribute questions and comments.
- Avoid "closing" questions that shut down conversation with quick, finite answers.
- Provide a supportive environment that encourages students to take risks when responding to the questions and comments of peers and teacher.
- Do not judge responses and discourage students from judging the oral contributions of peers.
- Ask a variety of questions that stimulate different levels of thinking and understanding.

Sample Discussion Activity: Debating

Snapshot: Students share their opinion on a controversial topic relevant to the theme and explain why they feel the way they do.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To develop students' ability to present an argument to support an opinion, and recognize other arguments with merit.

Objectives: Students will list the arguments in favour of and against a topic.

Students will give reasons for supporting the argument.

Students will state their opinion on the topic and give reasons for holding that opinion.

Pattern: Full group

Materials: Flipchart, marker

Activities

This activity works best when you have some knowledge of the students and after the students have become acquainted with each other.

1. Select a controversial topic, news matter, statement or myth.

    You can also have the students brainstorm topics and then come to consensus on the one they wish to examine. For example:

    *   mixed marriages, arranged marriages, same-sex marriages
    *   nature versus nurture: is the person's character biologically inherited or learned?
    *   whether discrimination and/or racism will ever be eliminated?
    *   to what extent do you think the media controls us?
    *   censorship

2. Ask students how they feel about the idea. List ideas on a flip chart.
    *   **Refrain from voicing your own personal opinions at the beginning of the exercise.**
    *   Remind students that it is all right to have differing opinions, but to respect others' opinions and treat each other with respect.

3. Once the students have expressed their opinions, have them explain why they believe their opinion is correct.

    As they improve in this area, students can be asked upon what they base their view (for example: read it in the newspaper, views of family and/or friends, did a research project, etc.)

4. If necessary, create balance in the discussion by playing devil's advocate with questions that will provide thoughts on other points of view.

Sample Discussion Activity: What Have You Learned?

Snapshot: Before they research a topic, students identify what they already know and what they want to learn. After they research the topic, students identify what they learned.

Level: Intermediate to Advanced (LBS level 3-5)

Purpose: To activate students' background knowledge about a topic.

To assist students in generating questions, organizing information and developing their vocabularies.

Objectives: Students will identify what they know about a topic.

Students will generate a list of questions about a topic.

After conducting research, students will list what they have learned.

Pattern: Full group

Materials: Flip chart, marker, tape

Activities

1. Create a K-W-L chart (Ogle 1989) by hanging three sheets of flip chart paper and labeling the sheets K, W, and L.

    The letters stand for *What We Know*, *What We Want to Learn* and *What We Learned*.

2. Before having students research a topic, have them brainstorm what they know about the topic. Record the ideas on the K column.

    If students suggest information that is not correct, turn these statements into questions and add to the W column.

3. Have students complete the research on their topic (e.g., research Black history, tour a music studio, interview a mentor, and research job opportunities in the music industry).

4. After students research a topic, complete the L column so that students can reflect on what they have learned.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Separate ideas clearly into two categories: things they know and things they want to know. Contributes at least one question to the list of things they want to know.

- During tours, interviews and other research, gets main ideas and can list key points. Discusses key points with peers. Uses a wider range of vocabulary when sharing newfound knowledge.

- Draws conclusions about what they have learned during tours, interviews and other research activities. Identifies questions that have been answered.

5. From the list of ideas you recorded:
   - Have students state what they believe to be the best solution to the issue.
   - Ensure they give reasons for their beliefs.
   - Have them select at least one point from the opposing view that they feel should be explored more.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Expresses an opinion to the class, and elaborates on why that opinion is "right."

- Supports an opinion by referring to something once read, a personal experience, statistics, someone else's views, etc.

- Selects a final position from a list of opinions developed by the class.

- Identifies one other position they feel is worth considering.

Daily Readings

Teachers who model an interest in reading and read a variety of resources to students invite them into the enjoyable and informative process of reading. You can also play books on tape and invite writers to read their work. In addition to literature selections, you should read interesting articles from newspapers and magazines, and from resources relevant to studies in other subject areas.

Purpose:

- To kindle enthusiasm and interest in reading for enjoyment and information.
- To introduce students to a variety of printed resources.
- To extend students' listening, speaking, reading and writing vocabularies.
- To reinforce the patterns, sounds and rhythms of the English language.
- To expand students' knowledge and experience through reading.

Guidelines:

A specific portion of each day may be designated for this routine. Students should be given the opportunity to choose some of the resources to be shared.

Prepare students to listen by:

- having them predict content by using the title, cover, or information about author;
- reviewing a previously read article or related selection;
- setting the mood by creating appropriate atmosphere; and
- sharing information about the storyline or topic.

During reading:

- Pause when appropriate to share illustrations.
- Have students make further predictions.
- Ask students about what has been read or answer students' questions.
- Observe students' interest and involvement in what is being read.
- Take note of students' comments, questions and responses.
- Observe students' choices of reading materials and their reading habits.
- Students' reactions and attention spans determine the length of these sessions.
- Always read with expression and enthusiasm.
- Discussions should periodically focus on language used to create images and evoke emotional responses, on interesting or unusual vocabulary, on students' personal interpretations or on accompanying illustrations.

After reading:

- Elicit reactions and responses to the selection.
- Encourage students to discuss their thoughts, ideas, feelings and questions about the selections.

Additional ideas for reading exercises:

- Students could read to peers.
- Students could adapt shared selections to compose original stories or poems.
- Students could listen to the taped recordings of other readings.
- Students could create illustrations to accompany recorded readings.
- Members of the community could be invited to tell or read stories.
- Students could discuss bias or inequities in literature selections
- Story grammar, reading logs and story mapping may be post-reading activities.

Sample Reading Activity: Book Reviews

Snapshot: Students read a book, share their responses and attempt to pique the interest of others through written reviews, posters and presentations.

Level: Intermediate to Advanced (LBS level 3-5)

Purpose: To encourage reading for enjoyment and information.

To extend students' reading and speaking skills.

Objectives: Students will read a book.

Students will write their responses to the book, develop a poster and give informal talks in an attempt to pique the interest of their peers.

Students will present a short, formal book review, summarizing main events and reading a passage aloud.

Pattern: Individual, full group

Materials: Books based on student interests

Preparation

1. Model this process (i.e. do your own book review) before you give the students the assignment.

2. Show the book and display it on a table or ledge.

Activities

1. Give students a number of options for books to read and have them choose one.

   For example, introduce five different books about Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad and then have students read one of the books. Books on tape (e.g., Star Trek) are also good options.

2. Have students write their response to the book in their dialogue journal. (Students could share their response to the first chapter with a partner, to pique reader interest.)

3. Divide students into groups of three and have each bring the book and describe a favourite character or event.

4. Have students use characters and a story event to create a billboard advertisement to "sell" the book to their peers. This can be used as a display.

5. Have students create a two-minute presentation that:
   - States the title, author, illustrator, genre or topic.
   - Summarizes the plot and why the class might like the book.
   - Includes reading a short excerpt from the book and showing an illustration if applicable.

6. Have students (individually or in pairs) write a letter to the author or illustrator, to express enjoyment or ask a question.

7. Have students present the pros and cons of their most and least favourite books, in a talk show format. They might produce the show on videotape.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Reads a book of many pages, determining the meaning of the text independently.

- Identifies the main characters and a main story event in a poster.

- Writes short summaries and opinions about the book, organizing ideas in paragraphs. Shows awareness of the expressiveness of words.

- Develops a two-minute book review, presenting key points in logical order. Shows an awareness of the audience through attempts to pique interest (e.g., selecting words to create effect, use of non-verbal communication cues).

Sample Reading Activity: Reading Newspapers Using 3 X 3

Snapshot: Students have a successful newspaper encounter. They list three things they know about a subject prior to reading, three things they learned by reading and three questions they have after reading.

Level: Intermediate to Advanced (LBS level 4-5)

Purpose: To kindle enthusiasm and interest in reading for information.

To introduce students to the types and contents of newspapers and other periodicals.

To enhance students' reading abilities.

To expand students' knowledge and experience through reading.

Objectives: Students will become familiar with several different magazines and newspapers.

Students will read various articles, and identify what they did and did not learn.

Students will identify ways to learn more about a topic.

Pattern: Individual, full group

Materials: Paper, pencils, variety of newspapers and magazines

Activities

1. Have students collect a wide variety of community, local, national and international newspapers/magazines.

2. Have students choose a story after reading only the headline in the newspaper.

3. Have students predict what the article is about and list three things they know about the subject matter of the story.

4. Have students read the story and then list three things they learned and three questions that remain unanswered.

5. As a class, discuss possible approaches to finding answers to the questions.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Contributes one or more ideas to the discussion of what they already know.

- Skims headlines and makes inferences about the content of the article.

- Reads a text of many paragraphs and decodes unfamiliar words independently. Gets main ideas and can list key points.

- Clarifies understanding by discussing key points with peers and asking questions. Incorporates new vocabulary when discussing newfound knowledge.

- Draws conclusions about what they have learned.

Oral Storytelling

Storytelling activities provide opportunities for students to tell stories using their own language rather than reading from a text.

Purpose:

- To stimulate students' imaginations.
- To develop awareness of story structure and story language.
- To develop students' sequencing abilities.
- To develop awareness of the influence of voice, expression and gesture on oral communication.

Guidelines:

Individual Storytelling

Students choose a story, learn the main sequence of events, and tell the story to an audience. Students may retell familiar stories, or they may choose to tell stories they have read or written.

Students can create wordless picture books to assist storytelling, and stories can be recorded or videotaped.

Group Experience Stories

Group Experience Stories are about experiences shared by students. These experiences are meaningful resources for developing students' reading and writing abilities. Topics may originate from previous discussions, planned or spontaneous activities, generative themes, the use of motivators, etc.

Students discuss a class experience (e.g., a field trip) from their different viewpoints. You make notes on a flip chart to capture their collective story, then read it back to them.

Group Experience Stories are a useful bridge between oral and written storytelling. They:

- introduce students to the process of writing by demonstrating that their spoken words and ideas can be written and read;
- develop students' sense of story and sequence;
- model letter formation, directionality of print, and the use of capital letters, punctuation and conventional spelling; and
- build sight vocabulary.

Collaborative experiences should be short and interesting to keep students involved. Refer to Group Experience Stories often and use them as a basis for further writing exercises.

Sample Storytelling Activity: Individual Storytelling

Snapshot: Students learn about storytelling, choose a story and tell it to an audience.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To enhance students' appreciation of the spoken word as a form of communication and self-expression.

To encourage the development of effective listening, note taking and verbal storytelling skills.

Objectives: Students will develop awareness of story structure and story language.

Students will develop or enhance listening, basic note taking, sequencing and speaking skills.

Students will develop awareness of the influence of voice, expression and gesture on oral communication.

Pattern: Pairs or small groups

Materials: A selection of stories (printed or on tape) students might like to tell, materials for creating simple props

Preparation

Provide many opportunities for students to hear stories being *read* as well as stories being *told*, by yourself and perhaps guests. Invite community members to tell stories from various cultures.

Activities

1. Model storytelling using a story with an uncomplicated plot, an obvious sequence of events, strong characters and interesting language.

2. Discuss the differences between reading a story aloud and telling a story.

3. Discuss effective storytelling, emphasizing the importance of voice variations, gestures and expressions.

4. Have students work in pairs or small groups, choose a story they would like to tell, and read/listen to it several times to learn the sequence of main events.

   Encourage students to take notes to help learn key points of the story.

5. Help students interpret and convey characters and events through variations in voice, gesture and expression.

6. Provide time for students to practice telling their stories and prepare simple props.

   Students could do a "test run" of their stories to another pair or group for feedback and suggestions for polishing.

7. Have students tell their stories to the class or to younger students.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Identifies an instance when a) a story was *read* to the class, and b) a story was *told* to the class.

- Contributes to the discussion on story-telling techniques (e.g., suggests a particular expression or gesture).

- Learns and relates the sequence of main events for their story of choice.

- Begins to: use less familiar words; introduce words from reading into writing; select words to create effect; and use non-verbal communication cues.

- Integrates feedback from peers after a "test run," and contributes feedback in response to the "test runs" of others.

- Recites the story to a small group with which they are comfortable. Shows awareness of audience needs (voice, vocabulary, expression, gestures, etc.).

Sample Storytelling Activity: Group Experience Stories

Snapshot: Students discuss a class experience (e.g., a field trip) from their different viewpoints. The teacher captures their collective story on a flip chart and reads it back to them.

Level: Basic to Intermediate (LBS level 1-3)

Purpose: To introduce students to the process of writing by demonstrating that their spoken words and ideas can be written and read.

Objectives: Students will develop a sense of story and sequence.

Students will develop an awareness of words and sentences as units of meaning.

Students will develop a better awareness of their own literacy level.

Students will enhance their sight word vocabularies and reading abilities.

Pattern: Full group

Materials: Flip chart, marker

Preparation

Arrange for a field trip, guest speaker or other class experience on which to base this exercise.

Activities

1. Discuss a class experience. Encourage all students to share recollections and ideas.
   - If necessary, ask focused questions to stimulate sensory details and elaboration.
   - Ask students to think about the sequence of ideas as they relate incidents.

2. Print each statement offered on flip chart paper with minimal editing. Repeat students' statements as you print.

3. Use terms such as *sentence*, *word*, *letter*, *period* or *exclamation point* after you print the statement.

4. Encourage all group members to agree with the sequence and quantity of detail.

5. Read the story back to students. Date it and display it for future language activities.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Recalls and relates a detail of the experience.

- Contributes to the discussion on the sequence of events (e.g., corrects or verifies).

- Asks about words that are not familiar.

- Asks about parts of speech (e.g., What is a noun? Is "XXX" a noun?).

Daily Writing

While the ELSI approach is grounded, for the most part, in verbal communication, once students begin talking, myriad possibilities for effective literacy learning present themselves.

Purpose:

- To introduce the process of reflection, idea exploration and writing.
- To kindle enthusiasm and interest in writing for personal enjoyment and practical communication.
- To develop students' creative and practical writing abilities.

Guidelines:

Pre-writing Exercises

Many people feel a sense of fear and experience failure when asked to write creatively because they are not given the opportunity to learn and practice the art of pre-writing process. Pre-writing activities encourage students to manipulate, explore and discover words.

Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar Lessons

The teaching of basic literacy can be tightly integrated with the sample activities in this guide. For example:

- During the warm-up exercise on respect, you can record ideas onto a flip chart entitled Respect. This list of ideas could be used as the basis for many exercises in reading, spelling, vocabulary, grammar, etc.
- Vocabulary can be expanded by teaching a word of the day that is closely tied to the topic of discussion.

Individual Writing Exercises

Simple writing exercises can be incorporated into any activity. For example, students can:

- write a simple poem about themselves;
- write the story of their future;
- write a list of their top music choices; or
- write in a journal every day.

Undirected journal writing: The class brainstorms topics they might write about. You provide time at regular intervals through the course for the students to write on a topic of their choice.

Directed Journal Writing: You start the day by writing a question on the board or flip chart. The students write in their journal for five minutes, responding to the question. The class discusses any responses that people are willing to share.

Sample Pre-Writing Activity: Generating Ideas and Words

Snapshot: In these pre-writing exercises, students practice generating as many ideas and writing as much as they can.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To develop students' confidence in their ability to write creatively, by encouraging them to manipulate, explore and discover words.

To expand students' ability to generate ideas and write in quantity.

To set the stage for formal writing exercises.

Objectives: Students will write several words related to a particular topic.

Students will write words of varying length.

Students will write sentences of varying length.

Pattern: Individual

Materials: Flip chart, marker, paper and pencils

Activities

"Power Writing" — Writing As Many Words As Possible

Repeat this exercise six times:

1. Write two words, e.g., RESPECT and YOUTH, on a flip chart.

2. Ask students to select one word and, at a given signal, write as much as they can, as well as they can, on that topic.

3. At the end of one minute, direct student to count the words they have written. Record these numbers on a chart on the flip chart.

   This exercise can initiate discussions on topics of interest to the students.

"Word Pyramid" — Building a Word Pyramid from Your Name

Present the following directions to students:

1. Select an initial from your name and write it on the paper.

2. Think of a three-letter word that begins with your letter and write it below your letter.

3. Think of a four-letter word that begins with your letter and place it below the three-letter word.

4. Continue adding one letter at a time until you can think of no more.

"Writing Blitz" – Writing Sentences of Varying Lengths

Deliver one direction, as listed below, every two minutes:

1. Write a five-word sentence using the word RESPECT.

2. Write a five- to ten- word sentence using the word YOUTH.

3. Write a three- to ten- word sentence using the words YOUTH and RESPECT.

4. Write a sentence that contains at least five 't's.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Writes several words and simple sentences.

- Begins to use less familiar words; introduce words from reading into writing; and select words to create effect.

Sample Pre-Writing Activity: Word Substitution

Snapshot: In this pre-writing exercise, students learn the concept of substitution, practice substituting one word for another and one idea for another, and as a result explore new ways to describe themselves.

Level: Basic to Intermediate (LBS level 2-4)

Purpose: To help students realize that creative thinking is a skill that can be learned, and doesn't just happen magically.

Objectives: Students will understand the concept of substitution and gain practice in substituting words and ideas.

Pattern: Full group

Materials: Flip chart with familiar song written on it, extra flip chart paper and marker, OREO cookies (at least one for each student), thesauruses

Activities

1. Briefly discuss the meaning of substitution, as used in this lesson: to replace one thing with another, while keeping the basic structure the same, e.g., a substitute teacher replaces the regular teacher, but the structure of the day remains basically the same.

   Emphasize that substitution, as a creative thinking tool, can be used in an endless variety of ways.

2. Substitute motions in a rhythm game:
   - Demonstrate the following 4-beat rhythm game - clap hands once, slap both hands on thighs, snap fingers on each hand one time.
   - Have students join in, until the whole group is doing rhythm in unison.
   - Substitute one motion (e.g., tap head instead of clapping hands) and have students follow along.
   - Have students take turns demonstrating ways to substitute other body movements while keeping the rhythm the same. Have the group follow along.

3. Substitute words in a song:
   - Show a flip chart with the lyrics of a familiar song.
   - Have the students sing the song.
   - Identify rhyming pairs of words. Ask students to suggest other words for the end of each line.
   - Have them choose a rhyming word to substitute in the next line.
   - Have students sing their new version of the song.

   Continue substituting rhyming pairs in the remaining verses.

4. Write the sentence, "Black youth are very cool!"
   - Have students suggest substitutions for the words *Black*, *youth* and *cool*.

   - Introduce the use of a thesaurus.

5. Create a new cookie:

   - Give each student an OREO cookie. Have them take a small bite.
   - Then have them take another bite, but this time, ask them to imagine they are tasting something else beside the cream in the centre. List students' cream substitutions on flip chart. Encourage wild and wacky responses.
   - Have them suggest a name for their new cookie.

6. Review ways the substitute technique was used in this lesson:

   - Create a new rhythm game, new song, more interesting sentence, etc.

   Have students work in pairs or groups of four and brainstorm other ways the substitution technique might be used to generate new ideas.

   If they have difficulty thinking of ideas, suggest that they mentally review their day and think of situations in which substitution could be used.

   Encourage multiple responses to each situation.

Assessment — What to Look For

   - Demonstrates one substitute body movement.

   - Suggests one or two substitute rhyming words.

   - Uses the thesaurus to find a substitute word.

   - Suggests an alternative for the cookie filling.

   - Contributes ideas to the discussion about other ways the substitution technique might be used.

Sample Pre-Writing Activity: Organizing Your Thoughts

Snapshot: In this pre-writing exercise, students learn a mind-mapping technique and practice organizing their thoughts on issues that matter to them.

Level: Intermediate (LBS level 3-4)

Purpose: To teach students to organize information using common techniques.

Objectives: Students will brainstorm ideas on a topic.

     Students will use a mind mapping technique to organize information, first in unorganized clusters, then in organized clusters.

Pattern: Small group, full group

Materials: Flip chart, marker, paper, pencils

Activities

Model the technique for the students by doing your own mind map on a flip chart.

Clusters are spider web-like diagrams with the topic written in a circle centred on a sheet of paper. Words and phrases are written on rays drawn out from the centre circle, and sometimes drawings/sketches accompany the words.

Unorganized cluster:

1. Draw a circle and write the word *homelessness* in it.

2. Have students brainstorm as many words and phrases as they can that are related to the topic, e.g., no money, poor, cardboard box, children, no food.

    Write them on rays drawn from the center circle to complete an unorganized cluster.

Organized cluster:

1. Draw a circle and write a word in the middle.

2. Identify categories, draw rays from the center circle for each category and write the category's name in a box or geometric shape at the end of the ray.

3. Have students brainstorm words and phrases related to each category and write them on rays drawn out from the category box or circle.

4. Have students write a paragraph (just a few sentences) about each category.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Suggests several words and phrases during the brainstorming, using both familiar oral language and less familiar language.

- Organizes information and ideas to convey one main idea in each paragraph.

- Begins to use appropriate connecting words and sentences.

Sample Writing Activity: "Free Writing" in Your Journal

Snapshot: Students construct their own journal booklets. The class brainstorms topics to write about. The teacher provides time at regular intervals for the students to "free write" on a topic of their choice.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 2-5)

Purpose: To introduce the process of reflection, idea exploration and writing.

To encourage students to take risks in using language.

To provide an opportunity for students to reflect on their growth and development as writers.

Objectives: Students will clarify thoughts, feelings and experiences, and develop or enhance self-awareness.

Students will gain confidence in their ability to capture thoughts in writing.

Pattern: Individual

Materials: Student journals, pencils

Activities

1. Have students construct their own journal booklets.

2. Model journal writing for students, demonstrating the process of reflection, idea exploration and writing.

3. Schedule journal-writing sessions daily or as frequently as possible.

    Initially you might focus students' thoughts by:

    *   Discussing topics or experiences they might want to write about.
    *   Displaying a brainstormed list of writing topics.
    *   Having students describe a particular object, place, event or person; or experiment with specific patterns to create poems, rhymes, songs and stories; or respond to literature selections.
    *   Allowing five minutes at the end of the day for students to write their own observations or summaries about what occurred.

    Once students are familiar with the routine of journal writing, encourage them to explore topics of their choice. During their journal-writing time:

    *   Allow time for reflection and idea exploration. Ensure each journal entry is dated.
    *   Respond to, and assist students with, the entries they wish to share.
    *   Avoid editing or grading journal entries.

Assessment – What to Look For

*   Writes simple sentences to express thoughts. Uses basic punctuation.

*   Uses words from oral vocabulary; begins to use less familiar words.

Sample Writing Activity: Question/Problem of the Day

Snapshot: The teacher specifies when and why the students write in their journals.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To clarify thinking and foster problem-solving skills.

To increase writing fluency.

Objectives: Students will discover they have something to say about various subjects.

Students will appreciate that solutions to problems are often discovered while writing about the problem.

Students will increase their ability to construct simple sentences.

Pattern: Individual, small groups, and full group

Materials: Flip chart, markers, student journals, pencils

Activities

1. Write a question or problem on the flip chart each day before students arrive.

2. Ask students to open their journal and write for five minutes, responding to the question.

3. When students finish writing, you might:
   - ask students to read each response aloud, then take time for group discussion, revising and rewriting, or
   - have three volunteers read their responses and lead a discussion into the next lesson.

   Reflect on a topic or a problem:

   - Interrupt a discussion with writing to help the discussion change direction, to get back on the point, to encourage more students to participate, or show them that they have something to say about the subject.

   OR

   - Have students write about a problem, to help them clarify their thinking and possibly discover the solution.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Organizes thoughts to convey a main idea. Writes short summaries to present opinions.

- Begins to show some awareness of different audiences.

- Uses basic revising techniques.

- Begins to use less familiar words.

Sample Writing Activity: Other Points of View

Snapshot: Students answer a yes or no question, then write about why they chose that response. You compile a list of reasons for yes and no and the class compares rationales.

Level: Intermediate (LBS level 3-4)

Purpose: To encourage students to explore an issue from several angles before choosing a position.

To expand students' abilities to generate ideas, write in quantity, and articulate their point of view.

Objectives: Students will write several reasons to support both yes and no answers to a question, then choose a position and write an explanation of their choice.

Students will verbally articulate the same information to the class.

Students will listen to other reasons, re-examine their position and articulate their final position.

Pattern: Individual, full group

Materials: Flip chart, marker, student journals, pencils

Activities

1. Give students with a question they can answer with either yes or no.

2. Have students write for ten minutes to:
   - Record reasons to answer yes AND reasons to answer no.
   - Pick an answer and write why they chose it.

3. Discuss as a class and record all possible reasons for yes and no answers.

4. Have students share their final decisions with the class and explain their rationale.

5. Optional – Have students: challenge each other's position; write responses to peer generated questions; or read a relevant article or story, re-examine their position and identify the author's point of view.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Writes at least three paragraphs, describing two different points of view and their own opinion. Organizes information and ideas to convey one idea in each paragraph.

- Makes a case to the class, presenting written ideas verbally.

- Listens to the opinions of others and contributes verbal feedback, staying on topic.

- Writes down the answers to several questions (at least one paragraph per answer). Supports a main idea with relevant details. Connects thoughts together with connecting words.

- Reads a relevant article or story and: a) identifies the author's main idea; b) relates one or more supporting details; and c) explains how the article affects their opinion.

Self-Esteem/Community

Activities within this theme focus mostly on developing self-awareness, cultural awareness and building self-esteem.

Many of these activities are useful early in the course for:

- establishing a supportive learning environment and trust;

- opening up topics of interest;

- getting students listening, reflecting, and talking; and

- helping students find different ways to articulate on subjects of interest.

What Is Respect?

Snapshot: A warm-up exercise for the first day. Students form pairs and discuss the meaning of the word *respect* for five minutes. The class then discusses the word as a group.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To establish a safe learning environment by building respect for one another.

Objectives: Students will meet someone they did not know.

Students will generate ideas about what respect means to them.

Students will identify similarities and differences in their perspectives.

Pattern: Pairs, full group

Materials: Flip chart, markers

Activities

1. Ask everyone to introduce themselves to someone they do not know and spend five to ten minutes talking about respect.

   What does it mean for you to show respect, and what does it mean for you to be shown respect?

2. After the allotted time, discuss as a class.

   What ideas did people come up with?

3. Copy the ideas on a flip chart.

   Note the importance of respect in any discussion, but especially in a discussion of often-controversial issues regarding race, culture, and religion.

   Point out that the idea is to learn from our differences — to understand each other's viewpoints rather than having to agree with everything someone says.

Extension

This activity can lead to discussion about differences in cultural norms - such as whether it is or is not appropriate to look someone in the eyes - and what happens if someone violates that norm.

Assessment – What to Watch For

- Introduces self to another person in the classroom and initiates conversation.

- Can give a simple example of a) showing respect, and b) being shown respect.

What's in a Name?

Snapshot: Introductions on the first day. Each student tells the rest of the class about their name (e.g., origin, meaning, pronunciation, feeling about it, etc.)

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To introduce participants to one another.

Objectives: Students will learn to pronounce each other's names correctly.

Students will gain insight into others.

Pattern: Full group

Materials: Flip chart, marker

Preparation

Have students come to class prepared to tell the other students about their names. Have them investigate:

- Whether they were named after someone. If so, who and why?
- What their name means, if they can find out.
- The proper pronunciation, if applicable.
- Their nickname or pet name, if they have one and care to share it.
- Whether they like their name and why, or if there is a name they would prefer.

Activities

1. In class, have each student print his/her name on the flip chart for everyone to see and introduce himself/herself.

2. Have the other students question them, if the student is comfortable with that.

3. Discuss the importance of calling people by their name and the respect that is exhibited when one takes care in pronouncing names correctly

4. Encourage students to remember each other's names, but not to be hesitant to ask if they forget someone's name.

5. Engage students in discussion about how they like to be identified. You may want to propose such names as: African-Canadian, Black, Canadian, Caribbean, African.

   This could lead to heated discussion, but it is an important aspect of self-determination and can engage students in critical thinking and positive group problem solving.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Relates a short story about their name and answers questions requiring basic information about their name.

- Repeats others' names properly, and asks simple questions about others' names.

So Where Are You Really From?

Snapshot: A day 1 activity. Students share their backgrounds and explore the assumptions they made about each other.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To establish an appreciation of the diversity in the group.

Objectives: Students will discover something about each person's background.

Students will develop a greater understanding and appreciation for the diversity within the group.

Pattern: Full group

Materials: Flip chart, masking tape, coloured markers

Preparation

Note that movies such as *Roots* and readings from Bible stories are good resources for discussing family and roots.

Activities

1. Tape flip chart paper to the wall and label with headings such as:

Name	Place of birth	Place(s) of birth (parents)	# of Genera-tions in Canada	Family custom or tradition	Vision of self in one year	Vision of self in 5 years	Favourite music, etc.

2. Ask the students to identify one or two people in the group they do not know, and think about what answers they expect from those people. This part is not to be shared among group members.

    You should model how to do this activity.

3. As each student answers the questions (5 minutes each), record their answers on the flip chart paper, using a different colour marker for each student.

    SPECIAL NOTE: They only have to reveal what they feel comfortable revealing. This activity can be emotional for some students; if so, give them some time out.

4. When finished, ask the group to discuss what they have learned from the exercise.

    Certain themes usually emerge:

    - Even members of the same "race" have very different backgrounds.
    - Often members of different "races" have more similar backgrounds than they realize.
    - Cultural diversity transcends black/white.
    - Many people find out information that allows them to connect somehow with someone else in the group.

5. Ask students why this is an important activity. Engage them in discussion about why it is important to individuals and to the group.

    You may want to give students time to copy the information from the flip chart into their own books. The information can also serve as a basis for a number of literacy and research activities.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Answers questions with appropriate information about their background.

- Listens to and contributes their own ideas to the discussion about preconceptions.

Hopes and Fears

Snapshot: A day 1 or 2 activity. Students discuss hopes and fears for the program and set both individual and class goals.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To establish a non-threatening, safe, trusting environment.

To focus students on achievable goals.

Objectives: Students will identify hopes and fears and share them with each other.

Students will set learning goals for themselves and the class as a whole.

Pattern: Individual, small group, full group

Materials: Flip chart, marker

Activities

1. Read the questions:
    - What are your hopes about taking these classes?
    - What are your fears about taking these classes?
    - How can you achieve your hopes and overcome your fears while taking these classes?

2. Tell the students to think about their answers on their own first, and then share their answers in a small group.

3. Ask one student in each group to record the students' views and feeling of their group members.

4. Allow about 15 minutes for students to complete the activity.

5. As a class, discuss their answers and how they can set individual and group goals for the program.

Assessment – What to Look For

- During the small group discussions, expresses thoughts and feelings in a small group.

- During the class discussion, a) repeats key information to the class, and b) listens to and contributes their own ideas to the discussion on goal setting.

Finding People Like You

Snapshot: Day 1 or 2 activity. Students mingle, attempting to find people with certain characteristics.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To establish a non-threatening, safe, trusting environment.

Objectives: Students will speak to, and share something about themselves with every other person in the room.

Pattern: Full group

Materials: Handout, flip chart, marker

Activities

1. Introduce this activity by telling students: this is the type of activity that helps people get to know one another; and you understand that meeting new people can make some students a bit uneasy.

2. Give students a list of characteristics.

3. Ask students to walk around the room and find a different person for each characteristic on the handout. Get them to sign their name.

4. When everyone has his/her sheet filled up, review some of the interesting characteristics.

5. It is OPTIONAL whether you record any of this data on a flip chart. If you do, you may want to save it to use some of the information about the students at another time.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Follows simple oral instructions to complete the exercise.

- Introduces self to others and initiates conversation.

- Discusses content of the handout.

- Gets a signature from each person in the room.

- Relates a key characteristic about someone to the class.

Sample Handout

Walk around and find someone who:	Name:
Likes the same clothes as you	
Has the same number of brothers and sisters	
Has a drivers license	
Has an aunt living with them	
Has the same favourite movie	
Has lived in another country	
Likes sports	
Collects things	
Likes the same music as you	
Can cross their eyes	
Has more than 6 people living in their home	
Is the youngest in their family	
Likes winter sports	
Speaks more than one language	
Plays on a sport team	
Has a pet	
Likes to cook	
Exercises regularly	
Plays a musical instrument	

Where Do You Live?

Snapshot: Students take a field trip, come back to the classroom, and construct a physical model of their community.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To increase students' awareness of the neighbourhood and what it offers, as well as the community and its history.

To explore the concepts of *neighbourhood* and *community*, and develop a sense of belonging to a community.

To encourage students to visualize the future of their community and consider their role in bringing that vision about.

Objectives: Students will understand the terms *neighbourhood* and *community*.

Students will identify existing and desired attributes of their neighbourhood and community.

Students will develop a model community.

Pattern: Individual/pairs/small group, full group

Materials: Small boxes of various shapes and sizes, markers, flip chart paper, felt tip pens, glue, scissors, wide space to lay down paper

Activities

1. Talk with the class about buildings, streets, parks, or features unique to the community in which they live.

2. Discuss what makes a neighbourhood versus a community.

3. Take field trips to observe the actual make-up of the neighbourhood, and to investigate the history, cultural make-up, lives and activities of people in the community.

   Ask the students to make mental or written notes to help in constructing a model of the community.

4. Return to class and discuss:
   - characteristics of the existing neighbourhood and community; and
   - characteristics of their ideal neighbourhood and community.

   Discussion can cover a range of issues including housing, community projects, etc.

5. Have the students work individually, in pairs, or in small groups to draw a plan and construct the existing or a model community.
   - Make buildings from the cereal boxes and art supplies.
   - Place the cereal boxes in appropriate spots on the streets and roads drawn on the paper.
   - Make traffic lights, street signs, trees, flowers, grass, etc. from various art supplies to add realistic interest.

6. Have the class examine and discuss each model.

7. As a class, discuss things that people in the community (including themselves) could do to help bring change to the neighbourhood.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Describes one characteristic each of a) a neighbourhood, and b) a community.

- Relates one or two things about the existing neighbourhood or community, observed on the field trip.

- Contributes one or two ideas to the discussion/model of an ideal neighbourhood or community.

A Poem about Yourself

Snapshot: Useful towards the end of the first week. After hearing/seeing the teacher's model, students write an eleven-line auto-bio poem analyzing themselves.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To help students share more information about themselves.

To introduce writing with a simple, non-threatening exercise.

Objectives: Students will write 11 lines about themselves.

Students will develop a greater understanding of each other.

Pattern: Individuals

Materials: Flip chart, marker, paper and pencils

Preparation

Write your own auto-bio poem in advance of the session to model how this activity is done.

Activities

1.   Read your own auto-bio poem to the class.

2.   On a flip chart, set up an example of an auto-bio poem in the following manner:

Line 1: My first name	-Latifa
Line 2: Four descriptive traits	-Honest, caring, curious, energetic
Line 3: Sibling of…	-Sister of Kwesi
Line 4: I love (people, ideas)	-Laughter, learning, challenge
Line 5: I feel…	-Joy when traveling
Line 6: I need…	-Sunshine every day
Line 7: I give…	-Friendship, support, and smiles
Line 8: I fear…	-Pain, hunger, and end of summer
Line 9: I would like to see…	-Contentment for all living things
Line 10: Resident of (your city)	-Toronto
Line 11: My last name	-Kamau

3.   Have students write an eleven-line auto-bio poem about themselves.

This information can be used in subsequent writing activities to build longer auto-bio poems or stories.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Completes all 11 lines with "answers" that match the "questions."

- Expresses ideas about themselves.

- Uses familiar words from oral vocabulary.

What Is Important to You?

Snapshot: The class discusses what is important to them and their peers, family, community and society. Students identify priorities and principles that they have in common.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To create awareness of and appreciation for individual and shared priorities and values.

To teach students the difference between *things they prize* and *principles they endorse.*

To instill an appreciation for the impact of priorities and values on people's lives.

Objectives: Students will identify their own priorities and principles and compare them to those of others.

Students will understand the concept of *values*, differentiating between *things they prize* and *principles they endorse.*

Students will give examples of how their priorities and principles influence their behaviour.

Pattern: Small group, full group

Materials: Handout, flip chart, marker, paper, pens, Bristol board, tape

Activities

1. As a class, discuss what is important to students and their peers family, community and society in general.

    Identify one or two things important to you (including a *thing you prize* and a *principle you endorse*), so students understand the activity. Indicate that no one will be judging the students based on their answers.

2. Have students work in small groups to:
    *   complete a handout to identify things they value and principles they believe in; and
    *   identify what they have in common and where they differ.

    (They can work in pairs if some struggle with reading).

3. Discuss as a class and note the most common priorities and principles on a flip chart.

4. Explore the concept of values.

    Define the term *value* (e.g., a standard of good behaviour, such as honesty or helping others).

    Ask students what they consider to be values (e.g., Is inner peace a value? Family?)

Discuss the difference between *things they prize* and *principles they endorse* (e.g., inner peace and family may be valued, but are they standards of behaviour?)

5. Ask students to discuss what type of dreams, jobs, and lifestyles they think people with various priorities and principles can obtain.

6. Determine whether some of the priorities and principles are things the group expects of this learning environment.

    Record these items on some Bristol board and title it Group Expectations (NOT Rules).

7. Lead students in a discussion of how priorities and principles affect peoples' lives, the choices they make and how they interact with others.

Assessment – What to Look For

- During the initial class discussion, describes one or two things that are important to them.

- Scans the handout for familiar words, and asks for help with unfamiliar words.

- During the follow-up class discussion, relates to the class the items on the handout that are important to them.

- Picks out a) one standard of behaviour and b) one value on the class list.

- Expresses one or two ideas on how their priorities/principles affect their lives.

Handout

Read each point below and decide which ones are important to you. Can you answer why?

Independence	I like to be able to determine my activities.
	I prefer to have the freedom to do things on my own.
Inner Peace	I like to develop harmony within myself.
Duty	I stand up for what I believe in.
Recognition	I look for positive feedback and credit for work well done.
Power and Authority	I feel best when I am in control of activities/ situations, or partly in control of the destinies of others.
Help Others	I like to help others directly, either individually or in small groups.
Religion	Religion is important.
Competence	I believe in doing everything I do as well as I can do it.
Being Part of a Group	Belonging to a group is important to me.
Influence People	I like to be able to change people's attitudes and opinions.
Popularity	It is important for me to be liked by others.
Expert	It is important that people think I'm an expert in something.
Family	My family is very important to me.
Family Life	It is important for me to lead a family-based life.
Helping Society	I feel it is important to make this a better world.
Health	I believe it is important to look after my health.
Fulfillment	I get satisfaction when I feel I have done a good job.
Knowledge	I believe in learning every day from everything in my life.

The Story of Your Future

Snapshot: Students write a series of goal statements.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To enable students to acknowledge and express their aspirations.

To help students generate short- and long-term personal goals.

To introduce writing with a simple, non-threatening exercise.

Objectives: Students will complete several line beginning with "I would like…"

Pattern: Individual, full group

Materials: Paper and pencil

Activities

1. Discuss with the class some of the things they would like tomorrow, this year and beyond.

   Encourage students to discuss things they would like to have, do, see, or work at.

2. On a flip chart, print "I would like…".

3. Ask students to complete the sentence in writing. Have them write five to ten things they would like.

   Encourage them to think both short and long term.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Completes five to ten lines using familiar words from oral vocabulary.

Our Group Poem

Snapshot: Students collaborate to write a poem.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS 1-5)

Purpose: To encourage students to explore self-expression by manipulating rhythm, meter, words, etc.

To introduce students to conventions and models of poetry.

Objectives: Students will write a simple poem of 10-15 lines.

Pattern: Small group, full group

Materials: Flip chart, marker, paper, pens, pencils, poems to read

Activities

1. Ask the class, what is a poem?

    Solicit and discuss their ideas. Have students recite any poems (e.g., simple rhymes) they remember by heart.

2. Read several types of poems to the class.

    Discuss what the students like/don't like about each poem and why.

3. Discuss simple poetry conventions and models.

    On a flip chart, write any new terms you introduce (e.g., rhyme, meter, etc.).

4. Have students form small groups and write a poem on a topic of their choice.

    Explain that students can try using, but need not limit themselves to a model.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Suggests one or more characteristics of a poem.

- Expresses thoughts and feelings about various poems.

- Collaborates with others to develop a poem, contributing ideas for content, word choice, meter, rhythm, etc.

- Show an awareness of the expressiveness of words (more advanced students only).

How Do You Feel about Art?

Snapshot: Students visit an art gallery and discuss what they see and how they feel about it. (An artist may visit to discuss the work ahead of time.)

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To introduce students to art as an additional form of expression.

To encourage students to use language to interpret and respond to art.

To develop the students' vocabularies with new words.

Objectives: Students will describe their reactions to various works of art.

Students will add new words to their vocabularies.

Pattern: Full group

Materials: None

Preparation

Before visiting the gallery to see an artist's exhibit, invite the artist to speak about their work. Students will learn how the artist gets ideas and how much time is spent working on a piece. The talk can generate discussion of what to look for at the exhibit.

Activities

1. Upon arrival at the gallery, walk as a group and initiate discussion about the art.

    Here are some guiding questions:

    - What do you see?
    - What kind of lines do you see? (quiet, active, thick, thin, long, thick brush, etc).
    - How would you describe the colours of the painting, sculpture … ?
    - What do you think about this piece?
    - What does the work remind you of?
    - If this were a piece of music, what would it be?
    - Is this artwork real or imaginary? Both?

2. Develop the students' word bank with new vocabulary.

3. Stop at the gallery bookshop at the end to pick up pamphlets and art postcards.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Picks out characteristics they notice about the art.

- Expresses ideas on how they feel about the art. Listens to the reactions of others to the art and contributes ideas and opinions.

- Begins to use less familiar words in discussing the art (for example, words that describe the technique or style of the work).

Adding Rhythm to Your Personal Story

Snapshot: Students turn a personal story into a chant or a song to share with the class.

Level: Basic to Intermediate (LBS level 1-4)

Purpose: To empower students to express views and feelings through personal language that reflects their world.

Introduce students to the process of writing by demonstrating that their spoken words and ideas can be written and read.

Develop students' sense of story and sequence.

Objectives: Students will record a personal story in their own words.

Students will break the story into stanzas, introduce a "chorus line" and add meter.

Pattern: Pairs, full group

Materials: Audio player, blank tapes, paper, pens/pencils

Activities

1. Share personal stories and encourage students to tell their stories about things that have happened to them.

2. Have students converse, sharing the event of their lives from their worlds. While one student talks, the other writes or tape records.

3. Have the students review their stories and play with their language:
   - Choose a line in their stories to repeat again and again.
   - Break their stories into stanzas, followed by the repeated line.
   - Develop a rhythmic pattern for using their voice.
   - If they want, choose an instrument, clapping, movement and/or dance to accompany their story.

4. Have students tell their story:
   - Teach the class the repeated line to say in chorus.
   - While chanting or singing, cue the group to respond with the chorus.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Relates a short personal story using familiar vocabulary and discusses the taped or read story with a partner.

- Chooses one line as a chorus line and inserts it throughout the story.

- Gives simple directions to the class (to repeat the chorus line).

- Recites the story to the class, using their voice to create rhythm.

Who Gets Your Vote?

Snapshot: Students explore what it means to vote, who can vote, and how to select a candidate. Politicians make guest appearances. Students contact or visit political offices and learn about sources of information (the library, election brochures, the Internet, etc.)

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To help students discover that they have a voice, and encourage them to use that voice.

To equip students with the ability to research candidates and issues, and select a candidate.

To introduce the vocabulary used to discuss elections.

Objectives: Students will know who is eligible to vote.

Students will understand what it means to be able to vote, and how the Canadian approach compares to other cultures.

Students will identify where to find information about election candidates and campaign issues.

Pattern: Individual/pairs/triads, full group

Materials: Handout, access to a library or the Internet

Activities

1. Read the article to the class. Have the students discuss it in pairs or triads.

2. Discuss who can vote in elections.

3. As a class, discuss their views, whether they intend to vote, and what it means to be able to vote.

4. Examine the difference between voting and reaching consensus and discuss which approach is traditionally taken in other cultures.

5. Have a politician (who can relate to the students) speak about being a representative of the people.

   For example, invite a Black MP, MPP, Regional Counselor or School Trustee to speak to students. The students can collectively write a letter of invitation to the speaker and one or more students can write thank you notes following the visit.

6. Discuss how to learn about and select a candidate.

   For example, discuss the value/negative side of campaign signs. Expose students to additional ways to learn about candidates and campaign issues.

7. If it is time for an election:
   - Have the students collect the literature of candidates running for the same seat, explain what that seat is, and discuss the pros and cons of each candidate.
   - Hold a mock election, including students making campaign speeches and holding the vote.

8. Have students complete additional research about voting (either at a library or through the Internet).

   For example, students could research countries that do not give people the right to vote, or Blacks who have held elected office in North America.

Assessment – What to Look For

   - Contributes thoughts and feelings to the discussions on what it means to vote, the difference between voting and reaching consensus, and the approached traditionally used in their culture.

   - Begins to use less familiar words in discussing elections.

   - Describes key information from discussions (e.g., who can vote) and highlights from speakers and research.

If it is time for an election:

   - Locates information about campaign issues or candidates through one or more sources in addition to campaign signs.

   - Chooses a candidate and makes a simple case for that candidate to the class.

Handout

You have probably seen election signs on lawns, businesses and fences. They appear quite often. Have you considered what it means to vote – to be able to vote? People in many other countries do not have that right; they must accept whoever is strong enough to have the power to rule.

In a democracy like the one we have in Canada, people have the right to elect the men and women who will represent them. No one can be kept from voting because of their race, religion, beliefs or gender – the Constitution says so.

To vote in a federal election, one must be 18 years of age and a Canadian citizen. Someone called an Enumerator will visit your home to ask who wants his/her name on the voters list.   However, people who are serving a sentence for breaking the law cannot vote.

It is important to pay attention to who is running for election so you can make a wise choice. Then, it is good to watch how that person represents you because they may ask for your vote again in a few years.

Being a responsible voter makes each of us a powerful part of the community and can bring about change.

How You Act when You Listen

Snapshot: Students complete a group exercise that helps them identify and explore non-verbal communication techniques.

Level: Intermediate to Advanced (LBS level 4-5)

Purpose: To demonstrate to students the importance of non-verbal communication.

                   To enhance students verbal communication skills through appropriate use of listening behaviours.

Objectives: Students will explain the effects of inappropriate non-verbal communication, based on their observations and experience.

                   Students will identify appropriate and inappropriate listening behaviours in various situations.

Pattern: Small group, full group

Materials: Tags, masking tape

Preparation

Create a selection of large tags, perhaps on index cards or Bristol board/construction paper and write the following on the tags:

Tell me I'm wrong.	Look away from me.
Ignore me.	Give me advice.
Interrupt me.	Make a lot of nonverbal noise when I talk.
Agree with me.	Summarize what I say.
Ask me a follow-up question.	Act very interested in what I am saying.
Ask me to tell you more.	Smile at me and nod your head.
Laugh at everything I say.	Applaud when I finish speaking.

Activities

1. Explain the purpose of the exercise is to understand how listening behaviours can have a positive or negative effect on communication.

    Mention that some students may experience some uncomfortable or surprising feelings. This is natural and they will be asked to tell the rest of the group about it shortly.

2. Divide students into manageable groups. Arrange group (s) in a circle so that everyone in a group can see and hear the others in the group.

3. Tape a tag to each person in a group. Tell the students NOT to look at their own tag.

4. Give students a question such as "What is your favourite movie and why?"

5. Instruct students to each take a turn answering the question. While one person answers, the others should respond based on that person's tag.

6. When all students have had a chance to answer, have them remove their tags and look at them.

7. Begin a discussion on the following:
    - How did you feel when listeners responded to you?
    - Have you ever noticed people using this behaviour in real life when they listen?
    - Describe those times.
    - Would you say that particular listening behaviour has a positive or negative effect on communication? Why or why not?
    - What listening behaviours do you like that people use in real life?
    - What do you like about your own listening behaviour?
    - How do you think it is best to handle unpleasant feelings when people behave negatively in real life?

Assessment – What to Look For

- Relates at least one example of how non-verbal communication cues affected communication during the exercise.

- Describes a real-life example of good/bad use of non-verbal communication cues.

- Identifies some specific cues they consider to be helpful to communication, and specific cues they use themselves.

- Contributes thoughts and feelings to the discussion on how to respond to negative cues.

A Speech on Your Cultural Heritage

Snapshot: Students research an aspect of their cultural heritage through interviews and other sources, then write, rehearse and deliver a 4-minute speech, properly citing sources. Speeches can be tape-recorded.

Level: Intermediate to Advanced (LBS level 4-5)

Purpose: To develop a positive self-identity through knowledge and appreciation of cultural heritage.

To encourage the development of effective listening, note taking and speaking skills.

To emphasize the importance of communicating effectively orally.

Objectives: Students will add to their knowledge of cultural heritage.

Students will develop or enhance listening and basic note taking skills.

Students will understand the value of the spoken word as a form of communication, teaching and self-expression.

Pattern: Individual

Materials: Paper, pencils, tape recorder and other appropriate research resources as identified by the students

Preparation

Develop your own cultural heritage speech to enable you to model the process.

Activities

1. Model the process (i.e. deliver your own speech, sharing aspects of your cultural heritage, referring to your interview and citing your other sources).

2. Have students choose an aspect of their cultural heritage to research and write a speech about. Students should:

   - prepare a list of interview questions, then interview a family member or other person familiar with their cultural background;
   - tape record the interview or take very good notes about the person's answers;
   - gather additional information through three other sources; and
   - use the information to write a three- to four- minute speech.

   The speech should:

   - identify the cultural heritage being explored;
   - introduce the person interviewed, and explain and why that person was selected;
   - explain the new insights the student has gained through the research; and
   - contain specific references to the interview and other sources.

3. Provide opportunities to rehearse and time the speech beforehand.

4. Have each student give their speech to the class. Tape the speech for the student's portfolio.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Prepares for the interview by compiling a list of questions, and documents the interview by taking notes.

- Uses a variety of sources to compile additional information.

- Evaluates information, picking and choosing points for the speech.

- Organizes written ideas in well-linked paragraphs. Supports main points with quotes, statistics, etc.

- Selects words and expressions to create special effect. Uses special terminology where necessary.

- Rehearses and revises material before make the presentation (e.g., reorders ideas, changes the conclusion). Revises independently, seeking feedback when needed.

- Makes a formal presentation on the researched topic. Responds to the audience while presenting (e.g., answers questions, asks for feedback).

Equity

Each individual brings to every interaction a personal history, personality, cultural background, and a set of values and beliefs that are reflected in attitude and behaviour. This kind of program should create opportunities for students and teachers to discover how attitudes, perceptions, stereotypes, and prejudices colour thinking and affect interactions.

The activities in this section are *samples* of ways to address equity issues while developing communications, critical thinking and literacy skills in a number of areas, including reading, spelling, creative writing, dictionary and library skills, research skills, grammar, sentence structure, and social skills.

Integrating equity issues into program activities means seeking to respect and support each student's reality while introducing ideas and ways of working that challenge social stereotypes and discrimination. Respecting students does not necessarily mean agreeing with all their beliefs. Teachers also demonstrate respect when they challenge students, speak with them openly and with respect when there are disagreements, and search for solutions agreeable to both.

If a student makes a blatantly sexist, racist or other comment that is likely to be offensive to someone else, ask the student if they could rephrase the question/comment to express the idea without offending anyone. Use the opportunity to inform the student(s) that those types of statements are inappropriate. Explain why they are wrong and the effects they have on others. If necessary, use this as an opportunity to discuss relevant sections of your anti-discrimination policy.

Sharing Stories about Discrimination

Snapshot: Students form groups of three, share stories about discrimination, and discuss how they feel.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To encourage students to articulate thoughts and feelings about sensitive issues such as prejudice and discrimination.

Objectives: Students will identify how they first became conscious of prejudice and discrimination.

Students will articulate feelings associated with prejudice and discrimination.

Students will understand forms of prejudice and discrimination.

Students will formulate potential responses to such experiences.

Pattern: Triads

Materials: None

Activities

1. Tell a story in which you felt discriminated against and explain how it made you feel.

2. Divide students into groups of three and ask each student to relate a story in which they felt discriminated against (or discriminated against someone else) and explain how it made them feel.

   Remind students about confidentiality. Discourage students from naming someone in class.

3. Discuss forms of prejudice and discrimination, and how similar experiences might be handled in future.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Relates a short personal story about discrimination and expresses feelings about the experience.

- Contributes an idea or example to the discussion on forms of prejudice and discrimination.

- Contributes one or two ideas to the discussion on how to handle similar experiences in future.

Defining "Prejudice" and Other Terms

Snapshot: Students define and discuss several terms, including: *Prejudice*, *Discrimination*, *Racism*, *Sexism*, *Homophobia*.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 2-5)

Purpose: To increase students' understanding of the forms of discrimination.

   To build the vocabulary needed to discuss the issue.

   To help students appreciate the importance of terminology in discussing an issue.

Objectives: Students will explore definitions of at least five words: Prejudice, Discrimination, Racism, Sexism, Homophobia.

   Students will experience how *discussion* of terms contributes to *understanding* of terms.

   Students will learn to use a dictionary and gain practice using it.

Pattern: Triads, full group

Materials: Flip chart, marker, dictionaries

Preparation

   Previous activities should have set the stage for a respectful forum for this discussion. This discussion can become emotional. Revisit RESPECT if necessary.

Activities

1. Write the words on a flip chart (or chalkboard) and help students through a quick recognition exercise.

2. Divide students into groups of three and have each student give her/his definition for each word.

3. When small groups are done, bring everyone back together for a class discussion of definitions.

4. Introduce (or reintroduce) the dictionary.

   Mention how, when we don't know the meaning of a word, we go to the dictionary and accept its definition as truth.

   Challenge people to look up definitions for *black* and *white* and notice the connotations.

Look up the definitions of:

- Prejudice - an attitude about another person or group of people based on stereotypes
- Discrimination - an action or behaviour based on prejudice
- Racism - prejudice or discrimination based on race /ethnicity
- Sexism - prejudice or discrimination based on gender
- Homophobia - fear of homosexual people or homosexuality

5. Encourage students to discuss the positive and negative aspects of prejudice and discrimination.

   Point out that prejudice and discrimination can be positive. (I am prejudiced toward my children/I am a discriminating eater.)

6. Discuss how, according to the definitions, anyone can be racist or sexist.

7. Differentiate between individual and institutional acts of racism, and between personal and institutional power.

   Discuss personal power (do we stand up for the right things?) and institutional power (who gets to make the rules and who do those rules benefit?).

Assessment – What to Look For

- During the small group discussion, expresses ideas about each word. During the follow-up class discussion, relates the ideas discussed (their own or those of others) to the class.

- Locates one or more words in the dictionary and expresses reactions to what they read.

- Differentiates between positive and negative discrimination (e.g., gives an example of each).

- Differentiates between individual and institutional acts of racism (e.g., gives an example of each).

- Suggests things an individual can/should stand up for. Identifies rules made by others to benefit others.

Exploring Types of Harassment

Snapshot: Students identify and discuss different types of harassment.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To increase students' understanding of the types of harassment.

              To introduce the concept of using metaphors in communication.

              To develop students' problem-solving abilities.

Objectives: Students will differentiate between types of harassment.

              Students will describe types of harassment in visual and auditory terms.

              Students will generate ideas on how to respond to harassment.

Pattern: Full group

Materials: Flip chart, marker, tape, pencils, coloured Post-It Notes

Activities

1. Write the words RACIAL HARASSMENT, SEXUAL HARASSMENT and OTHER HARASSMENT on flip chart paper taped to the wall, so that students can put Post-It Notes under each heading.

2. Distribute three colours of Post-It Notes to students, advising that one colour is for RACIAL HARASSMENT, one for SEXUAL HARASSMENT and the third for other forms of harassment.

3. Have students think about what each form of harassment looks like or sounds like, write the actions or sounds on the appropriate coloured Post-It Notes, and place them under the headings.

4. Discuss the various forms of harassment, highlighting similarities, differences, victims, perpetrators and how people are affected.

5. Have students brainstorm on how to deal with each form of harassment.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Posts at least a few words describing the appearance or sound of each form of harassment.

- Identifies characteristics of the various forms of harassment. Gives examples of one or more forms of harassment.

- Contributes one or more ideas to the discussion on responding to harassment.

Learning about Your Rights

Snapshot: Students learn about the Ontario Human Rights Code and discuss their rights in various situations in daily life.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To acquaint students with the guaranteed rights of the Ontario Human Rights Code.

To teach students to apply their rights in their daily lives.

To expand students' vocabulary.

Objectives: Students will be able to recognize the Ontario Human Rights Code, and identify the areas protected by the Code.

Students will give examples of how to apply the rights to their daily lives.

Students will add words in the Code to their vocabulary.

Pattern: Full group

Materials: Flip chart paper, markers, copies of the Ontario Human Rights Code

Preparation

On a flipchart, list and number the rights protected by the Ontario Human Rights Code. Invite an Ontario Human Rights Commissioner to come and speak with the students about their rights and how to pursue a claim if they face discrimination.

Activities

1. Discuss the list of rights to ensure all students understand these rights.

2. Ask students to give examples of Rights in the following areas:
   - rights in the literacy program;
   - rights at home; and
   - rights in public.

3. Test the students' ability to recognize words from the Code that identify the individual grounds of protection against discrimination.

4. Have the students discuss which single right is most important.

   They should eventually realize that each right is as important as the next, given the set of circumstances.

5. Lead students into discussion about specific issues such as: being discriminated against based on a disability or sexual preference.

    They may examine such matters as:

    - To what extent are the issues of those protected under the Code of individual freedom or cultural parity?
    - How do the rights of a group relate to those of the individual?
    - In the event of a conflict, what or whose rights, in students' opinions, should prevail?

6. Have an Ontario Human Rights Commissioner speak about how to pursue a claim if they face discrimination.

Extension

A similar activity can be conducted regarding the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Advise students of the key section of the charter, Article 15 which states:

(1) *Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.*

Assessment – What to Look For

- Identifies and defines selected words in the Code.

- Contributes one or more examples of their rights in various contexts.

- Express thoughts and feelings about the right they consider most important.

- Uses words from the Code during the discussion of their rights.

- Repeats key information provided by the speaker about how to pursue a claim.

Encounters with Police

Snapshot: Students discuss a hypothetical encounter with police and brainstorm ideas to deal with the situation constructively. Guests might include police officers or other law enforcement officials.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To promote positive interactions with others.

To expand students' abilities in listening, reading, writing and problem-solving.

To introduce students to professional role models.

Objectives: Students will read and discuss a scenario.

Students will formulate and write a list of potential responses to the scenario.

Students will interact with a law enforcement official.

Students will verbalize thoughts and feelings about police officers as role models.

Pattern: Triads, full group

Materials: Flip chart, marker, paper, pencils

Preparation

Invite an officer from The Association of Black Law Enforcers to speak with the students about interaction with police officers.

Activities

1. Have the students form groups of three to discuss a scenario, such as:
   - you are stopped and questioned by police while walking in an upscale neighbourhood;
   - police come to your door to ask you about your whereabouts last Saturday; or
   - police ask for a DNA sample.

2. Have students record key points from their discussion.

3. Discuss as a class, and record comments on a flip chart.
   - Encourage students to share personal experiences.
   - Conclude on a positive note with brainstorming about how best to deal with police.

4. Have an officer from The Association of Black Law Enforcers speak with the students about interaction with police officers.

5. As a class, discuss police officers as role models.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Collaborates with the group to decode unfamiliar words and identify the main idea of the scenario. Expresses thoughts and feelings about the scenario.

- Writes simple notes to record key discussion points and relates those points back to the class.

- Contributes a personal experience to the class discussion, and one or more ideas to the brainstorming session.

- Asks questions of the guest speaker. Later, repeats key information from the guest speaker.

- Expresses thoughts and feelings during the discussion of role models.

Gender Beliefs

Snapshot: Students discuss gender beliefs.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To increase students' awareness of gender beliefs and their impact.

To build vocabulary to discuss the issue of gender beliefs.

To encourage students to examine an issue from different perspectives.

Objectives: Students will explain the concept of gender beliefs.

Students will verbalize reasons for, and impact of gender beliefs from male and female perspectives.

Pattern: Small group, full group

Materials: Handout

Activities

1. Distribute the handout.

2. Have students form small groups to read about and discuss gender beliefs about women and men.

    Depending on the dynamics of the group, it may be worthwhile to separate the groups according to gender to compare the differing views.

3. Monitor the tone of the groups to ensure that 'isms' are not being reinforced nor taken too lightly.

4. As a class, discuss the following questions:
    *   What impact do the statements have on individual women/men when people think they are true?
    *   What impact do the statements have on groups of women/men when people think they are true?
    *   Why do people have these views?
    *   What impact do these beliefs have on women's/men's position in society?

    If separated by gender, note the differences in the two perspectives and discuss why.

5. Discuss gender beliefs that affect the types of jobs people are encouraged to pursue.

    Have students discuss how gender beliefs impact their ability to apply for certain jobs or find jobs they enjoy.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Gives an example of a gender belief.

- During the small group exercise, collaborates with the group to decode unfamiliar words and identify the main idea of each statement on the handout.

- During the small group and class discussions, expresses thoughts and feelings about the statements.

- Contributes ideas to the class discussion on a) how people are impacted by gender beliefs in general; and b) how gender beliefs impact their ability to find a job.

Handout

Images of Women

- Women are the weaker sex

- Women make poor drivers

- Feminists are lesbians

- Women are better at domestic work

- Women are always emotional

- When a woman says "no" she really means "yes"

- All women really want a man

- Women cry a lot

- Women should just stay home and have kids

- Women are not athletic

- Women gossip

- Women want to steal men's jobs

Images of Men

- Men are the stronger sex

- Men shouldn't show their feelings

- All men really want from women is sex

- Men aren't nurturing

- Men shouldn't have to do housework

- Men shouldn't have to look after their children

- Men's work is more valuable than women's work

- The man should be the head of the family

- Men's opinions are more important than women's

- Size matters

Stereotypes in the Media

Snapshot: Students examine various kinds of stereotypes found in movies, music, and the press.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To increase students' awareness of stereotypes in the media and their impact.

To build vocabulary to discuss the issue of stereotypes.

To promote positive interactions with others.

To expand students' problem-solving abilities.

Objectives: Students will define the term *stereotype*.

Students will identify stereotypical representations of people in the media.

Students will identify how stereotypes impact interaction among cultures.

Students will identify ways to deal with negative stereotypes.

Pattern: Small group, full group

Materials: Newspapers and magazines

Activities

1. Define the term *stereotype*.

2. Explain the use of subliminal messages to promote certain ideas or products.

3. Have students form small groups to look at newspapers and magazines and identify images or articles that promote certain stereotypes of women, men, religious groups, persons with disabilities, etc.

4. Ask students to remember recently viewed movies or television programs and consider what stereotypical images they saw.

5. Ask students to think of stereotypes that THEY themselves discovered in a previous activity (e.g., Gender Beliefs) and whether they should or should not be able to voice them.

   Have them consider how they developed those views and whether the media assisted them in having those views.

6. Discuss how these stereotypes affect interaction among cultures.

7. Encourage students to brainstorm ways to deal with negative stereotypes.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Can define the term *stereotype* in own words or identify one or more characteristics of stereotypes.

- Recognizes images that promote stereotypes in various sources (e.g., magazines, movies).

- Differentiates among kinds of stereotypes.

- Identifies a stereotype of their own, contributes ideas on how it was developed and draws conclusions about whether it should be voiced.

- Contributes one or two ideas to the class discussion on how to deal with negative stereotypes.

Social Power and Privilege

Snapshot: Students discuss power and how it impacts their lives.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To increase students' awareness of social power and privilege.

                  To build vocabulary to discuss the issue of power.

                  To empower students through discovery of personal and collective power.

Objectives: Students will understand and give examples of social power and privilege.

                  Students will differentiate between personal and collective power.

                  Student will identify opportunities for gaining personal/collective power.

Pattern: Full group

Materials: None

Activities

1. Share the definitions below:
    * Social Power can be inequitable when… one group of people uses power over another group of people based race, religion, ability etc. in a way that discriminates or leaves them out of the bigger society.
    * Social Privilege… is power given because someone belongs to a group that results in more economic and social chances without necessarily earning it (e.g., males being preferred over females in decision-making positions).
    * Inequity happens when a whole group is excluded from chances that would allow them to be equal members in society.

2. Engage students in discussions about:
    * how power is used
    * power imbalances
    * where they have power in their lives
    * how to gain personal/collective power

Assessment – What to Look For

* Checks understanding by asking questions or asking for repetition of the definitions. Reflects on the definitions by discussing the meaning.

* Identifies: a) one group with social privilege, in Canada or elsewhere; b) an instance of social power used inequitably, in Canada or elsewhere; c) an example of where they have personal power in their lives.

* Contributes one idea of how they could gain collective power to achieve a goal.

* When speaking, begins integrating words from previous lessons (stereotype, racism, equality, human rights) with the words introduced in this lesson (social, personal, collective, power, privilege).

Oppression

Snapshot: Students explore the broad topic of oppression in general.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To increase students' awareness of oppression close to home and around the globe.

     To build vocabulary to discuss the issue of oppression.

     To stimulate reflection and foster self-awareness.

     To develop students' problem solving abilities and promote positive interaction.

Objectives: Students will define the term *oppression*.

     Students will identify groups of people who are oppressed.

     Students will identify oppressive relationships in their lives and oppressive behaviour of their own.

     Students will identify ways to build better relationships.

Pattern: Full group

Materials: None

Activities

1. Ask students what they feel oppression is. Discuss the definition.

2. Identify and discuss groups of people who are oppressed.

3. Review their relationships and discuss oppressive relationships in the students' lives.

4. Explore whether they have ever oppressed anyone (i.e. sexist comments).

5. Further discuss how someone can move from being oppressed to being an oppressor.

6. Conclude on a positive note by problem solving ways to create better relationships.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Checks understanding by asking questions.

- Can identify characteristics of an oppressor, and characteristics of the oppressed.

- Can pick out a) a group of people who are oppressed, in Canada or elsewhere; and b) a relationship in their own life that is oppressive.

- Relates a short personal experience to illustrate oppressive behaviour of their own.

- Identifies one action item they can execute to improve a relationship.

Fact or Opinion?

Snapshot: Students learn the difference between a fact and an opinion and practice differentiating one from the other.

Level: Intermediate to Advanced (LBS level 3-5)

Purpose: To enable students to differentiate between hard fact and opinion.

To familiarize students with a variety of newspapers and the type of content in them.

To enable students to recognize ways in which the media can distort the truth, influence opinion and promote discriminatory attitudes.

Objectives: Students will be able to explain the difference between fact and opinion.

Students will be able to pick up clues in the wordage of a sentence to determine if it is factual, and give reasons for their feelings.

Pattern: Individual, full group

Materials: A list of facts and opinions pulled from the text of an article, a variety of newspapers (mainstream and racial/ethnic papers)

Activities

1. Provide an explanation of the terms *fact* and *opinion*:
    - An opinion will involve a judgment about the worth, value or truth of something, whereas a fact has evidence to prove it.
    - A fact, while presented as true, may be false. Faulty facts can lead to faulty opinions.

2. Present the statements as a quiz and have the students indicate whether they are fact or opinion.

3. As a class, discuss their responses and help students differentiate fact from opinion.

4. Have students scrutinize a variety of newspapers (mainstream and racial/ethnic papers) and pick out examples of both fact and opinion.

5. Have the students review their examples with the class and describe:
    - how they reached their conclusions;
    - how they think the fact/opinion will impact the population's views about an issue;
    - how the fact or opinion has/may impact on the students' views or actions.

Assessment – What to Look For

- While reviewing the quiz, checks understanding by discussing key points in class.

- Skims the newspapers to understand the type of article. Decodes unfamiliar words, asking for help when necessary.

- Provides one example of a fact or opinion, and makes a case for fact/opinion based on some evidence in the text.

Exploring Your Own Perception and Bias

Snapshot: Students are given a series of topics to write about in their journals that will help them explore their own perceptions and biases.

Level: Intermediate to Advanced (LBS level 3-5)

Purpose: To stimulate reflection, clarify thinking and foster self-awareness.

To build the vocabulary to discuss the issues of perception and personal bias.

To increase writing fluency.

To promote positive interactions with others.

Objectives: Students will identify and write about their personal biases.

Students will brainstorm and write about solutions to combat stereotypes.

Pattern: Individual

Materials: Journal notebooks, pens & pencils

Activities

Tell students to write honestly and thoughtfully, and that their writing is to be shared with you and on occasion with the rest of the class.

1. Define the terms *perception* and *bias.*

2. At regular intervals, instruct students to write in their journals on one of the following topics:
    - Perceptions and biases. Think of an occasion when your first impression of a person was absolutely wrong. What led you to make that first impression? What later caused the change in your perception?
    - People often develop personal biases when they live in one culture or another. Can you identify any biases that you have? How do you think these biases affect your communication with other people?
    - Have you ever been affected by stereotyping? If so, what happened? How did you feel? What can you do in your communication to avoid stereotyping other people?
    - Have you ever been the victim of a rumour? What happened? Do you share rumours with other people? What happens when people listen to rumours?
    - Locate a fairy tale, cartoon, television program or movie/video that presents gender stereotypes. How are these stereotypes harmful to females/males?

Assessment – What to Look For

- Writes short experiences that illustrate perceptions and bias. Organizes thoughts to convey a main idea. Writes short summaries to present opinions and solutions.

- Begins using vocabulary from previous discussions in the writing (e.g., perception, bias, stereotype, racism, equality, human rights, social/ personal/ collective power/ privilege).

History of Black Canadians

Snapshot: Students research a statement about racial discrimination in Canada, and present their findings in a creative manner.

Level: Intermediate to Advanced (LBS level 3-5)

Purpose: To expand students' research skills.

To encourage students to experiment with various methods of communicating information.

Objectives: Students will conduct research on a topic and present their findings via a method of communication of their choosing.

Pattern: Individual

Materials: Paper, pencils, access to a library or the internet, materials to create posters/artwork, etc.

Activities

1. Present the following statements to students:
   - A quarter of the Black population in the Maritimes was enslaved during the Loyalist period. Slaves could be sold at any time without thought for family ties. Blacks were sold at auctions along with cattle and other household items.
   - In the city of Saint John, New Brunswick, a Charter stated that Blacks were not to practice trade within the city limits except under special license (1785).
   - An advertisement stating "To be sold black woman" appeared in a Toronto newspaper (1806).
   - Blacks were excluded from public schools by the Halifax City Council (1870).
   - Blacks were denied burial in a Nova Scotia cemetery through a bylaw (1907).

2. Have students select one statement to research.

3. Have students present findings to class in a creative manner, e.g. a poster, poem, story, artwork, etc.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Uses a variety of sources to compile information. Skims to understand type of text. Begins to take notes.

- Evaluates information, picking and choosing points they will use.

- Organizes written ideas in well-linked paragraphs. Supports main points with quotes, statistics, etc.

- Selects words, visuals and expressions to create special effect. Uses special terminology where necessary.

- Revises independently, seeking feedback when needed.

Multimedia/Popular Culture

In a technological world in which thought is increasingly dominated by media such as newspapers, magazines, radio, television, movies, computer software and electronic networks, students need to understand the impact of media on daily life and use media effectively.

Students should examine and use media and technology critically and creatively to obtain, organize, prepare and share information; to influence and persuade; and to entertain and be entertained.

Activities should allow students to:

- use computers to acquire, organize, analyze and communicate information; and

- create media products appropriate to audience and purpose.

Ideally, activities within this theme should build toward creating a newsletter, a radio show and/or a video. (See *Developing a Program for Black Youth, Step 3: Structuring Your Program*.)

Using the Keyboard

Snapshot: Students practice typing on a keyboard.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To equip students with basic keyboarding skills.

To expand students' vocabulary and improve spelling.

Objectives: Students will be able to type words using the keyboard.

Students will add the words they practice typing to their vocabularies and be able to spell those words.

Pattern: Individual

Materials: Computers with word processing software and a typing application

Preparation

Prepare a bingo-type game for vocabulary practice.

Activities

1. On a keyboard, demonstrate the use of letter keys, number keys and special keys (e.g., shift key, delete/backspace, space bar, arrow keys).

2. Have students use a typing application, or provide several words for the students to practice typing.

   Choose appropriate words based on current vocabulary lists (e.g., words from stories being read).

3. Play a bingo-type game for vocabulary practice.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Knows the hand position for the keyboard.

- Knows the position of some letters and symbols on the keyboard.

- Types short words, and uses the backspace, cursor and delete keys to correct errors.

Writing with a Word Processor

Snapshot: Students regularly use a word processor to complete various writing assignments (e.g., a list of favourite music hits, poems, book reviews, etc.)

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To teach students to capture and communicate ideas using technology.

To expand vocabulary and enhance spelling abilities.

Objectives: Students will compose text using a word processor.

Students will check their spelling and learn new words using the spell checker and thesaurus.

Pattern: Individual

Materials: Computers with word processing software (e.g., Microsoft Word)

Preparation

Teach students to use the keyboard and word processing software first.

Activities

1. Have students use the word processor for composing.

   Remind students that their work is highly visible on the screen, and composing is a more public activity than usual.

2. Suggest that students insert an asterisk (*) by an uncertain word or phrase and go back to it later.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Types lists of words, short sentences and short paragraphs.

- Flags words or phrases they are not sure how to spell or use with an asterisk (*).

- Begins to check spelling and usage with a resource (a dictionary, spell checker, thesaurus, etc.).

Typing and Reading Your Personal Stories

Snapshot: Students use a word processor to write stories, then practice reading their own stories and the stories of others.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To show students how the words that are spoken every day to communicate are the same words used to study reading and writing.

To teach students to read using their own words.

To change students' perceptions of print from foreign and forbidding to familiar and friendly.

To create a "learn to read" book containing the students' own work.

Objectives: Students start with a hand-written story of their own, type it and read it several times.

Students read stories printed by others.

Pattern: Individual

Materials: Computers with word processing software (e.g., Microsoft Word)

Preparation

Teach students to use the keyboard and word processing software first. Give students opportunities to produce hand-written stories.

Activities

1. Have students take a hand-written story from a previous exercise, read their own words and type them on the computer.

2. Have students read the story on the screen and make any corrections they need.

3. Have students print the story, read the printout, and make any corrections they need.

4. Have students print copies of the story, share them, and read another person's story.

5. Discuss the stories as a class, and compile them into a book.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Reads their own hand-written story, which uses words from their oral vocabulary.

- Types the story on the computer. Uses basic knowledge of spelling and simple punctuation.

- Reads a few short paragraphs of someone else's story. Decodes words using knowledge of the alphabet and basic phonics.

- Expresses thoughts and feelings about stories.

"All About You" Slide Presentation

Snapshot: Students create a PowerPoint presentation about themselves, a relative or a famous person.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 2-5)

Purpose: To teach students to capture and communicate ideas using multimedia and technology.

To enhance students' writing and public speaking skills.

To teach students to facilitate a presentation.

Objectives: Students will organize their thoughts into an outline for a presentation.

Working from their outline, students create a slide presentation in PowerPoint, using pictures, text and other media.

Students will deliver a speech facilitated by a PowerPoint slide presentation.

Pattern: Individual, full group

Materials: Your own PowerPoint presentation, computers with Microsoft PowerPoint, video camera

Preparation

Teach students to use the keyboard, Microsoft Word and Microsoft PowerPoint first. Prepare your own PowerPoint presentation.

Activities

1. As a class, discuss ways to communicate without words.

    For example: sign language, sounds, gestures, mime, pictures, music, or video.

2. Define multimedia: communicating through visual images, sounds, and written words.

3. Explain the assignment: to create a PowerPoint slide show about themselves, using multimedia.

4. Give a demo, showing your own PowerPoint presentation.

5. Have students jot down a list of things about themselves, such as:
    *   where they live
    *   the number of people in their family
    *   their hobbies
    *   their favourite foods
    *   what they want to be
    *   the funniest thing that ever happened to them

6. Have students divide their information into different categories.

    Explain that each category will become a slide in the PowerPoint presentation. Model this process if necessary.

7. Have students plan each slide, deciding on pictures, words, sounds, music, etc.

8. Have students make notes on what they will say when showing each slide.

9. Provide opportunities to rehearse the presentation.

10. Have each student give a presentation to the class. Videotape the presentation for the student's portfolio.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Writes a list of information about themselves.

- Groups thoughts to convey a main idea on each slide.

- Chooses words most appropriate to their purpose. Checks spelling using resources (e.g., a dictionary).

- Uses simple visual and audio material to support the message.

Using Email for Correspondence

Snapshot: Students correspond with someone in another location using email.

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 1-5)

Purpose: To teach students' to use email for informal one-to-one correspondence.

   To enhance students typing and reading skills.

Objectives: Students will type email messages and read email messages they receive.

Pattern: Individual

Materials: Computer with a browser and email software

Preparation

Teach students to use the keyboard and email software first. Arrange "pen pals" with whom the students can correspond.

Activities

1. Have students regularly read email from, and compose messages to a pal.

    Remind students that their work is highly visible on the screen, and composing is a more public activity than usual.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Types short sentences and paragraphs to create an email message.

- Uses words from oral vocabulary. Uses basic knowledge of spelling and simple punctuation.

- Reads short paragraphs in email messages. Decodes words using knowledge of the alphabet and basic phonics.

Producing Work with a Desktop Publishing Tool

Snapshot: Students regularly use a desktop publishing package to produce messages aimed at a particular audience (e.g., posters, brochures, newsletters).

Level: Basic to Advanced (LBS level 2-5)

Purpose: To teach students to communicate ideas using a combination of text and visuals.

                   To enhance students' writing and computer skills.

Objectives: Students will identify the audience for their work.

                   Students will select visuals to augment their written work.

                   Using a desktop publishing package, students will create a page combining text and visuals.

Pattern: Individual or pairs

Materials: Computer with desktop publishing software and clipart

Preparation

Teach students to use the keyboard, desktop publishing software and clipart first.

Activities

1. Have students produce one page, aimed at a particular audience, combining text and visuals using a desktop publishing package.

    For example, have students (individually or in pairs):

    •   produce a poster to accompany a book review;

    •   create a one-page brochure for, or newsletter about, the program;

    •   produce one page summarizing career information they learned from a mentor (later you can combine their pages into a career book); or

    •   research and produce one page about their favourite kind of Black music or music group (later you can combine their pages into a book about Black music).

Assessment – What to Look For

    •   Identifies the purpose and audience for the piece of work.

    •   Organizes thoughts to convey a main idea in a paragraph. Uses simple visual material to support the message.

    •   Begins to show some awareness of the audience.

What Do You Want to Be?

Snapshot: Students survey their abilities, identify several potential careers, choose one career to research using print and online resources, and share what they have learned at a career fair.

Level: Intermediate to Advanced (LBS level 3-5)

Purpose: To help students explore attributes they bring to a job.

To teach students how to research suitable career options.

To expose students to a range of potential careers.

Objectives: Students will complete an exercise to identify skills, interests and values.

Students will choose a career they want to learn more about.

Students will use library and online resources to research a career.

Students will interview a person working in the field.

Students will summarize key points from the interview on a poster.

Pattern: Individual

Materials: Access to a library or the internet, materials for creating posters

Preparation

1. Before this exercise, teach students the base skills needed to conduct interviews and research using a variety of print and online resources.

2. Invite several guest speakers to your class, or arrange a field trip to a particularly interesting place to work.

3. For students struggling with ideas, choose careers they can investigate and compile a list of websites to visit.

4. Compile a list of community people willing to be interviewed.

5. Create a survey that will help students identify their job preferences and assets.

   You can create your own survey or take one from any number of books or websites on the subject. (See *Appendix B: Resources.*)

Activities

1. In class, distribute and review the survey to help students identify their job preferences and assets.

2. Assign homework. Instruct students to:
   - Complete the survey on their own time at home.
   - List one or more careers they think they might match their strengths and abilities.

3. Back in class, discuss their experience completing the survey.

    Was it easy or difficult to complete? What aspects were easy, what aspects were difficult? Ask for volunteers to share ideas.

4. Have students pick a possible career to research (e.g., job descriptions, necessary education, famous people in the field).

5. Introduce students to appropriate library and online resources.

6. Provide class time to research a career.

7. Assign homework to interview a person in the community involved in the career they are researching.

8. Back in class, have students create Career Profile posters, using the information gathered in their interviews.

9. Hold a "career fair." Display the posters and allow time for students to circulate and ask and answer questions.

10. As a class, discuss what students have learned about careers that interests them.

11. Have students practice writing resumes and cover letters, and contacting organizations, colleges, and companies for more information on specific careers and career preparation.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Uses a variety of online sources to compile information. Skims to understand the type of text; scans to find specific information. Decodes unfamiliar words, asking for help when necessary.

- Prepares for the interview by compiling a list of questions, and documents the interview by taking notes.

- Identifies the purpose and audience for the poster. Evaluates information, picking and choosing points to highlight.

- Selects words and expressions to create special effect. Uses special terminology where necessary. Uses simple visual material to support the message.

Creating a Jingle Book

Snapshot: Students rewrite pop tunes, poetry, sayings, hymns and commercial jingles.

Level: Intermediate to Advanced (LBS level 3-5)

Purpose: To make students aware of their rich oral language base.

     To develop students' reading and writing abilities.

     To introduce students to music as an additional form of expression.

Objectives: Students will recall and write down familiar tunes/jingles.

     Students will write personalized versions of familiar tunes/jingles.

Pattern: Individual

Materials: Paper, pencils, dictionaries and thesauruses

Activities

Familiar Tunes

1. Have students record pop tunes, poetry, sayings, hymns, etc. from memory into a notebook.

    Encourage students to record what they were doing when they first heard the tune. Sometimes rhythms, sayings, and verses are of real personal significance.

2. Have students personalize the collection by rewriting the pieces with themselves as central characters.

3. Have students write creative stories based on the collection.

Commercial Jingles

1. Have students collect commercial jingles.

2. Invite students to examine why commercial jingles are appealing to the consumer.

3. Ask them to rewrite the jingles for other products.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Works from memory to recall and write down specific pieces. Uses basic knowledge of spelling and simple punctuation.

- Expresses thoughts and feelings about the pieces.

- Rewrites something that is meaningful to them, using words for effect and a dictionary and thesaurus where necessary.

- Rewrites a jingle, showing awareness of audience needs and using words for effect.

Exploring the Image of Blacks in the Media

Snapshot:　　Students rewrite articles or role play TV or movie scenes to show Blacks as the students would like them to be seen.

Level:　　Advanced (LBS level 5)

Purpose:　　To empower students by allowing them to positively shape the representation of their reality.

To expand students' research, writing and verbal communication skills.

To introduce acting as a form of expression.

Objectives:　　Students will research Blacks in the media using a variety of sources.

Students will rewrite existing articles or scripts to change the way Blacks are portrayed.

Students may also act out a TV program or play.

Pattern:　　Individual

Materials:　　Paper, pencils, access to a library or the internet

Activities

1. Pose the question, "What is the image of Blacks in the media?"

2. Have students research Blacks in the media (e.g., in newspapers, on the Internet, in TV shows or movies) and:
   - Rewrite articles or daily newspapers the way they would like them to read.
   - Perform their own Black TV program or play, in which they portray Blacks in the manner they would like them to be portrayed.

Assessment – What to Look For

- Uses a wide range of sources for research. Reads text of many paragraphs independently. Summarizes the main ideas, questioning certain ideas.

- Identifies social and cultural influence and bias in written material. Identifies subliminal as well as overt messages.

- Revises material to convey a new message. Chooses words to reinforce the message. Uses special terminology where necessary.

- Uses less familiar words and non-verbal communication cues (e.g., body language, volume, tone of voice) when acting out a TV program or play.

Thinking Critically about the Media

Snapshot: Students watch a commercial and identify what made it persuasive.

Level: Advanced (LBS level 5)

Purpose: To introduce students to language as a tool of persuasion, and demonstrate the impact of both verbal and nonverbal communication.

Objectives: Students will summarize key points in a commercial.

Students will identify verbal and non-verbal cues that made a commercial persuasive.

Pattern: Full group

Materials: TV, VCR, videotape of a short, captivating television commercial

Activities

1. Write the following questions where the class can see them:
   - What are two or three main points described in this presentation?
   - Can you give an example of something that the speaker said that was used to help explain a main point?
   - If one of your friends wanted to learn about this, would you recommend watching this commercial? Why or why not?

2. Play the commercial two or three times so that students have a chance to absorb it.

   Encourage the group to remain quiet while rewinding and replaying the commercial.

3. Discuss their answers to the questions.

Assessment – What to Watch For

- Identifies the main idea and supporting information in the commercial.

- Identifies subliminal as well as overt messages. Checks interpretation with other listeners.

- Identifies social and cultural influence and bias.

- Evaluates the overall effectiveness of the commercial.

- Identifies information, language and non-verbal communication cues that made the commercial effective.

Intake and Assessment

An effective assessment process is continuous and relies on information gathered from the intake process, goal setting, training plan development and tracking and documenting progress.

Performance assessment requires students to accomplish complex and significant tasks, while bringing to bear prior knowledge, recent learning, and relevant skills to solve realistic or authentic problems. Exhibitions, investigations, demonstrations, written or oral responses, journals, and portfolios are examples of the assessment alternatives.

The following pages contain samples of tools and procedures that can be used to collect appropriate information for each part of the assessment and evaluation process.

The Intake Process

The intake process should make the student feel comfortable, valued, competent, and an equal partner in the learning process.

If necessary, allow students to observe the literacy group or teachers at work, so that they do not have to decide immediately whether to join the program or not.

Step 1. Interview

Conduct the intake interview as a conversation, rather than as a question and answer session. Make students feel at ease by:

- informally discussing the program; and
- discussing learning possibilities, other students you have tutored or taught, or the kinds of students already involved in the program.

Use the interview to stimulate discussion and:

- encourage students to reflect on past experiences;
- learn about educational background (e.g., how much formal education the student has had);
- identify language background;
- collect information about interest and goals;
- collect literacy information on what things they can read and write;
- identify prior skills;
- learn what students understand about being a student;
- allow students to identify their goals; and
- allow students to identify what they think is needed from themselves and others to achieve their goals.

Start a discussion on the following topics.

Topic: Education/Training	
Following are some of the questions you might ask students about their previous learning experiences.	
Early Education:	Tell me something about your school years: • Where did you grow up? • Did you go to school there? • What was school like for you? • Did you have any specific difficulties? • What were they? • Did you get any special help? • What did you like best about school? • How were you taught to read and write in school? • Why do you think you didn't learn? • Did you miss a lot of school? If so, why? • Did you change from school to school? If so, why? • What grade did you finish? • When did you leave school? • Why did you leave? • Did you speak the same language at home and at school? • Did anyone else in your family have difficulty in school?
Other Education/ Training:	Have you ever been to classes for adult education before? If so, • Where have you been? • When did you go? • Why did you go? • Did you finish? If not, why not? • What was it like for you? • What did you like best about that schooling? • How do you feel about coming back to school now?

Topic: Student Needs

The following statement and questions could be used to begin a discussion about the kind of supports the student might need, it also encourages the student to begin to think about ways of assuming ownership for his/her own learning.

Statement:

Some students really want to come to class and improve their skills, but things get in the way. Some of the things that come up are:

- problems with transportation
- child care
- looking after other family members
- getting sick a lot
- having problems with drugs or drinking
- too much going on at home.

Questions:

1. What kinds of things do you think might make it hard for you to come to class and study?

2. How much time and effort do you think you can give to learning now?

3. What do you think you could do to make it easier for yourself to come to all the classes and study?

4. What can we do to make it easier for you to study and come to all the classes? Examples:
   - help figure out a bus route
   - find information on child care
   - fill out forms…

5. Can you read and write (study) where you want to at home?

6. Can you read and write (study) when you want to at home?

7. What changes can you make to help you read and write (study) when and where you want to?

8. Have you ever had any of the following physical problems: poor eyesight, hearing loss, speech difficulties?

9. If so, how old were you when the problem was found and what was the treatment?

10. Do you have any other physical or health problems that might affect learning?

Topic: Acquired Skills	
A discussion about work experience and literacy tasks that the student is currently performing will provide information about skills and strategies that the student can build on. It will also help the student recognize his strengths and competencies.	
Work	1. Do you have a job now? 2. If so, what kind of work do you do? 3. What kind of jobs have you had? 4. Do you need to use reading and writing at work? 5. What reading and writing do you do at work? 6. How are you coping with these tasks?
Home	1. Do you do any reading on your own now? 2. What kinds of things do you read at home, in stores, on the street? (examples: TV schedule, mail, newspapers, stories to children, labels, street signs) 3. Do you do any writing on your own? 4. What kinds of things do you write? (examples: shopping lists, cheques, notes, letters) 5. How do you feel about your spelling? 6. How would improved reading, writing and spelling skills help you at home and at work?

Topic: Goals
1. What are your educational goals?   2. What are your work/career goals?   3. What is your most important reason for wanting to learn to read, write and spell better?   4. What are some things that you want to do right now that being able to read and write better will help you to do?

Topic: Ideas About Reading and Writing

1. What do you think you need to learn to improve your reading and writing?
2. What do you do when you are reading and you come to a word you don't understand?
3. What do you do if you don't understand what you have just read?
4. What do you do if you don't know how to spell a word that you want to use in your writing?
5. What do you do if you have to write something and you are not sure how to get started?
6. What do you think will help you learn to read and write better?
7. How did you learn to do something or memorize something?

Note: It is a good idea to use a specific skill like taking the bus as an example.

Topic: Learning Styles and Preferences

1. Do you like to work by yourself or with other people?
2. How do you learn best? Alone? With other people? With no noise? With music or with the TV on?
3. Where do you learn the best?
4. When do you learn the best?
5. What makes it difficult for you to learn something?
6. What do you like to do when you read and write? (take regular breaks? nibble on snacks? smoke? listen to music?)
7. What do you need to do to remember something?
8. Do you understand something more easily if you hear about it? see it written down? use the word or idea yourself?
9. How do you feel about making mistakes when you are learning something new?
10. How do you like to have your mistakes corrected? figure it out yourself? have the teacher correct you? ask another student to correct your work?
11. Think of a recent learning experience that was good and one that was bad. What made the good experience good? What made the other experience bad?
12. How do you like to find out how well you are doing?
13. What would you like the instructor to do to help you learn?
14. What kinds of things do you like to do in a group?
15. What would you do to figure out how something like a machine works? (ask someone? read about it? take it apart? watch someone else take it apart? other?)

Topic: Interests, Activities, Hobbies

Engage the student in a conversation about:

- favourite recreation, sports and leisure activities
- any organizations or groups that the student belongs to
- the kinds of things that they like to learn, watch on TV or read about
- the things that they would like to read and write about in class

The following questions can be used to initiate this conversation.

1. What kinds of activities do you like to do the most?

2. What kinds of activities don't you like to do?

3. What would you do if you won the lottery?

4. What is the best holiday you ever had?

5. If you could spend a whole day doing anything you wanted, what would you do?

6. Tell me about someone you really admire?

Topic: Attitudes and Reading Habits

1. Do you read every word in a piece of reading material no matter what it is?

2. Do you read everything at the same speed?

3. When you read to yourself, have you ever noticed that you move your lips?

4. Do you tend to avoid reading if you can get the same information in another way.?

5. Do you feel it is necessary for you to read things over more than once?

6. Do you skip graphs, charts, pictures, or diagrams in reading material?

7. Do you often read a page and then realize that you really do not know what you have read?

8. Do you believe that you must never skip any portion of a reading passage?

9. Do you read any newspaper or magazine on a regular basis?

10. Do you believe that understanding what you read is more important than how fast you read?

11. Can you remember the main point or the plot of the last book you read?

12. Do you believe that people with large vocabularies are better readers than people with limited vocabularies?

Step 2. Literacy Skills Assessment

Use an initial assessment to:

- identify the student's strengths and weaknesses; and

- plan instruction and materials to match the student's abilities.

Do NOT make the assessment seem like a test. Make the student feel as relaxed as possible. Explain what will happen and why. After the assessment, discuss why errors were made.

Goal Setting

Using information gathered during the intake process, formulate and record realistic short, mid- and long-term goals immediately after intake.

Type of goal:	Sample goal:
Academic goals	Access a credit program to achieve a Grade 12 diploma or General Education Diploma (GED) high school equivalency for employment or personal purposes.
Skills training goals	Continue to occupational skills training at another institution after this program. Most skills training programs outline their program entry requirements in terms of grade or functional levels.
Employability goals	Be able to complete employer's tests to get a job. Improve literacy skills to increase marketability.
Personal learning goals	Improve specific skills in order to increase his or her general literacy level. For example, learn to read well enough to read the newspaper, improve numeracy to do personal banking, improve writing skills in order to write a short letter, or be able to get a driver's licence.

Learning Outcomes

Because ALFA is located in Ontario, we have coordinated our learning outcomes with provincial Literacy Basic Skills (LBS) learning outcomes, to indicate the skill levels appropriate to each activity.

Our Level:	LBS Level:	Grade within the Ontario school system
Basic	Level 1	Grade 1
	Level 2	Grade 2/3
Intermediate	Level 3	Grade 4/5
	Level 4	Grade 6/7
Advanced	Level 5	Grade 8/9

These levels should be used as a guide only. Almost all activities can be easily adapted to suit the abilities of any student.

Following are descriptions of the Ontario Provincial LBS learning outcomes.[*]

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[*] Source: Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

Read with Understanding for Various Purposes

Level One	Level Two
The reader locates, understands and responds to simple, concrete ideas and sequential information in graphics, sentences, and very short, simple texts about familiar topics. To do this, the reader uses basic reading strategies, personal experience and familiarity with some common forms and conventions of simple texts.	The reader locates, understands, and begins to interpret concrete and some inferential meaning in short, uncomplicated texts about familiar topics. To do this, the reader uses various common reading strategies, personal experience, and knowledge, as well as familiarity with some forms and conventions of more formal texts.
Reading Strategies	Reading Strategies
❑ Uses knowledge of alphabet and basic phonics to decode common words ❑ Uses knowledge of basic grammar, predictable word patterns, and basic sentence structure in speech to understand phrases and sentences ❑ Uses knowledge of basic spelling conventions and simple punctuation ❑ Uses context cues and personal experience to gather meaning from the text ❑ Scans simple text for familiar words ❑ Uses pictures and illustrations to determine meaning of unfamiliar words and gather information about the text	❑ Uses phonics and knowledge of word parts to decode more easily ❑ Uses knowledge of basic grammar, predictable word patterns, and sentence structure in writing to understand phrases and sentences ❑ Uses knowledge of basic spelling conventions and simple punctuation ❑ Uses context cues and personal experience to gather meaning from the text ❑ Scans to find simple information ❑ Uses pictures and illustrations to gather information about the text
Forms and Conventions	Forms and Conventions
❑ Demonstrates basic awareness of familiar forms of writing by identifying how different kinds of materials are organized (e.g., simple schedules, charts, menus, personal letters, job ads) ❑ Uses alphabetical order and basic conventions of formal texts (e.g., book titles) to locate information ❑ Reads text of one paragraph (or a few short paragraphs) or a list of sentences ❑ Text is familiar with everyday content with personal relevance ❑ Text has simple, concrete information in simple, familiar wording	❑ Demonstrates knowledge of more forms of writing (fiction vs. non-fiction) and uses that knowledge as a guide in reading (though not always able to read all of the located information) ❑ Uses various conventions of formal texts (e.g., simple charts and maps, dictionaries) to locate and interpret information ❑ Reads text: one page of short paragraphs ❑ Text is familiar, with everyday c ontent and personal and/or general relevance ❑ Text has concrete information in familiar, concrete wording; some simple inferential meaning
Comprehension	Comprehension
❑ Retells a simple story or event in order ❑ Reads symbols and common sight words from everyday life ❑ Follows simple pictorial instructions	❑ Identifies the topic and purpose of a piece of writing ❑ Identifies the main idea and supporting details ❑ Follows simple written instructions
Interpretation	Interpretation
❑ Expresses thoughts and feelings about stories and events ❑ Predicts what may happen in a story; revises or confirms predictions	❑ Begins to consider ideas from reading in development of own opinions ❑ Distinguishes between fact and opinion in text ❑ Begins to make simple inferences ❑ Expresses thoughts and feelings about ideas in a piece of writing

Level Three	Level Four
The reader locates, understands, interprets, and makes judgements about ideas and information in a variety of texts that have some complexity of content and form. To do this, the reader uses a variety of more advanced reading strategies, personal experiences and knowledge and a familiarity with a variety of forms and conventions of formal texts.	The reader analyzes, synthesizes, makes reasoned judgements, and draws conclusions about ideas, information and the writer's perspective in texts that are complex in form and content. To do this, the reader uses a wide variety of reading strategies, personal experiences and knowledge as well as familiarity with a wider variety of forms and conventions, including some stylistic elements.
Reading Strategies	**Reading Strategies**
❑ Uses a variety of strategies (patterns of word structure, root words, prefixes and suffixes) to decode and determine the meaning of unfamiliar words ❑ Uses knowledge of more detailed elements of grammar, language structures, spelling and punctuation to understand phrases and sentences ❑ Draws on personal experience and on reading experience to gather meaning from the text ❑ Adjusts reading speed ❑ Skims to understand type of tex t; scans to find specific information ❑ Begins to take notes	❑ Uses a variety of more complex strategies (word origins and derivations) to decode and determine the meaning of new vocabulary independently ❑ Uses knowledge of elements of more complex grammar, language structures, spelling, punctuation, and some stylistic devices to understand phrases and sentences ❑ Draws more deeply on personal experiences and on a wider variety of reading experiences to gather meaning from the text ❑ Skims to get an overview of the content; scans to find specific information ❑ Organizes and records key points in order
Forms and Conventions	**Forms and Conventions**
❑ Demonstrates a wider knowledge of various forms of writing such as articles, editorials, or short essays from resources including newspapers, magazines, books, the Internet, and computer CDs ❑ Uses various conventions of formal texts to locate and interpret information (headings, index, parts of a letter, reference materials) ❑ Begins to select appropriate materials for different purposes ❑ Reads text of a number of paragraphs; gathers information from graphs and tables ❑ Text is within the interest of the reader with personal and/or general relevance ❑ Text has a combination of concrete and inferential meaning, some of it complex, some unfamiliar vocabulary	❑ Demonstrates a knowledge of elements and style in a variety of forms of writing ❑ Uses a variety of conventions of formal texts (index, appendices, graphs, tables, footnotes and more complex reference resources) to locate and interpret information for a variety of purposes (simple research) ❑ Reads independently from a variety of materials but may require help choosing reading material for a specific purpose ❑ Reads a text of many paragraphs ❑ Text contains complex subject matter with personal and/or general relevance ❑ Text has levels of meaning and interpretation and a number of unfamiliar words
Comprehension	**Comprehension**
❑ Identifies the topic and purpose of a piece of writing ❑ Identifies the main idea and supporting details ❑ Follows written instructions	❑ Identifies the main idea and purpose in writing ❑ Cites details that support the main idea ❑ Follows increasingly complex written instructions
Interpretation	**Interpretation**
❑ Makes judgements (predictions, conclusions) using evidence from the text ❑ Makes inferences ❑ Begins to identify a writer's point of view ❑ Considers ideas from reading in the development of own opinions ❑ Recognizes how one's own attitude may influence interpretation	❑ Continues to make judgements based on evidence ❑ Makes more complex inferences ❑ Identifies a writer's perspective; distinguishes between logical and illogical arguments, objectivity and prejudice ❑ Develops and clarifies own points of view by examining the ideas of others

Level Five
The reader analyzes, synthesizes, makes reasoned judgements, and draws conclusions about ideas and information, including the writer's perspective and bias, and the use and impact of stylistic devices in texts that are complex in form, content, and style. To do this, the reader uses a wide range of appropriate and efficient strategies, including a deeper application of personal experiences and knowledge and a familiarity with complex forms and conventions, including stylistic conventions.

Reading Strategies

- ❑ Uses a wide variety of complex strategies (knowledge of word origins and derivations and word analysis techniques) to decode and determine the meaning of unfamiliar words independently
- ❑ Uses knowledge of elements of complex grammar, language structures, spelling, punctuation, and numerous stylistic devices (e.g., symbolic language) to understand phrases and sentences
- ❑ Draws more deeply on personal experiences and on a much wider variety of reading experiences to gather meaning from the text
- ❑ Selects appropriate reading strategies (skimming, scanning)
- ❑ Organizes and records key points in order

Forms and Conventions

- ❑ Demonstrates a knowledge of the elements and style in a wide variety of writing and uses knowledge to evaluate critically in a variety of contexts
- ❑ Uses an extensive range of formal texts and identifies and evaluates content for a variety of complex purposes
- ❑ Reads independently from a wide range of materials, independently choosing reading material for a specific purpose
- ❑ Reads a text of many paragraphs
- ❑ Text contains challenging and complex subject matter with personal and/or general relevance
- ❑ Text has levels of meaning and interpretation and a number of unfamiliar words

Comprehension

- ❑ Identifies the main idea and explains how the details support the main idea
- ❑ Identifies important elements of fiction (setting, characters, plot and theme)
- ❑ Follows complex written instructions

Interpretation

- ❑ Questions and evaluates ideas (e.g., when summarizing the main ideas)
- ❑ Uses structural and visual elements of the text to make reasoned judgements
- ❑ Makes more complex inferences
- ❑ Recognizes social and cultural influence and bias in writing
- ❑ Compares and evaluates the organization and detail of different texts that represent the s ame topic or story

Clarifies and broadens own point of view by examining the ideas of others; expresses a personal opinion based on increased understanding

Write Clearly to Express Ideas

Level One	Level Two
The writer writes for some specific, personally relevant purposes, using a few simple forms and sentences, a familiar vocabulary, and some basic grammar, punctuation, and spelling.	The writer writes for a variety of specific, familiar purposes and audiences, using various simple forms and a basic paragraph structure, with simple support to convey a main idea. The writer uses words and phrases appropriate for the purpose and audience, and basic grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
Purpose and Form Begins to write for specific purposes using a few different forms: ❑ Gives personal information (writes own name, names of family members, and address, fills out a simple form) ❑ Writes a short list using familiar words ❑ Writes simple notes and short, simple personal letters ❑ Describes experiences ❑ Copies from printed materials	Purpose and Form Writes for specific purposes using various forms of writing: ❑ Completes forms requiring more detailed personal information ❑ Writes lists, simple letters, simple paragraphs and short simple stories ❑ Answers simple comprehension questions ❑ Describes experiences ❑ Writes simple instructions
Organization ❑ Writes simple sentences to express thoughts (though not always able to express thoughts clearly or write sentences correctly)	Organization ❑ Organizes thoughts to convey a main idea in a paragraph ❑ Uses basic organizers such as common linking words, titles, basic parts of a letter, and parts of a paragraph (introductory and concluding sentences and simple support) ❑ Uses basic revising techniques
Style (Voice, Vocabulary, and Sentence Variety) ❑ Writes for a familiar audience ❑ Uses words from oral vocabulary ❑ Begins to use less familiar words ❑ Writes simple sentences leaving spaces between words	Style (Voice, Vocabulary, and Sentence Variety) ❑ Begins to show some awareness of different audiences ❑ Introduces words from reading into writing ❑ Chooses words and phrases most appropriate to their purpose ❑ Uses various sentence types (questions and commands) ❑ May use simple visual material to explain or support message
Mechanics (Grammar, Punctuation, and Spelling) ❑ Uses capital letters for beginning of sentences, for familiar proper nouns such as names and for the pronoun I ❑ Writes word endings ("ed" "ing" "s") from knowledge of spoken English ❑ Uses basic punctuation (period at end of a statement) ❑ Uses basic phonics to spell unfamiliar words	Mechanics (Grammar, Punctuation, and Spelling) ❑ Uses capital letters for proper nouns ❑ Uses the apostrophe in common contractions ❑ Uses commas in lists, dates, and addresses ❑ Uses common abbreviations ❑ Checks spelling by using word knowledge; begins to use resources: a dictionary or computer

Level Three	Level Four
The writer writes for a variety of specific purposes and audiences, using various forms of some complexity and developed paragraphs to convey a main idea. The writer begins to use an appropriate style for the purpose and audience and common grammar, punctuation, and spelling.	The writer writes for a variety of different purposes and audiences, using complex forms, and well-linked and well-developed paragraphs, with effective supporting details to convey a main idea. The writer uses a style appropriate for the purpose and audience, as well as more complex grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
Purpose and Form Writes for specific purposes using a variety of forms of writing: ❑ Completes more complex forms requiring non-personal information ❑ Writes letters (personal and business) and memos ❑ Writes short summaries, short reports, and short compositions/essays to present factual information, opinions, and experiences ❑ Presents opinions based on reading	**Purpose and Form** Writes for a variety of purposes using a variety of more complex forms of writing: ❑ Writes business letters, news articles, book and article reviews, longer essays ❑ Takes notes from a text ❑ Writes to narrate, report, persuade, argue, inform, explain, summarize, compare, establish a cause-and-effect relationship, clarify personal concerns, explore social issues, evaluate information and state a position
Organization ❑ Organizes information and ideas to convey one main idea in developed paragraphs ❑ Uses introductory and concluding paragraphs, appropriate connecting words and relevant supporting details ❑ Revises using feedback	**Organization** ❑ Organizes information and ideas to convey one main idea in well-linked and well-developed paragraphs ❑ Selects supporting ideas for effect; may use opinions/quotes and statistics ❑ Revises independently, seeking feedback when needed
Style (Voice, Vocabulary, and Sentence Variety) ❑ Shows awareness of audience needs ❑ Uses appropriate levels of language (formal/informal) ❑ Selects words to create effect; uses thesaurus and a dictionary to find synonyms ❑ Uses a variety of sentence structures (simple and compound sentences with phrasing to add details) ❑ May use basic word processing applications (e.g., fonts, graphics)	**Style** (Voice, Vocabulary, and Sentence Variety) ❑ Uses voice appropriate to purpose ❑ Shows awareness of the expressiveness of words in word choice and selects words and expressions to create special effects; uses special terminology where necessary ❑ Uses a wide variety of sentence types and structures (complex sentences) appropriately and effectively ❑ May use word processing applications (e.g., fonts, graphics) to enhance writing
Mechanics (Grammar, Punctuation, and Spelling) ❑ Uses noun/pronoun agreement, consistent pronoun and consistent verb tense ❑ Uses standard subject-verb agreement ❑ Uses phrases to clarify meaning ❑ Uses apostrophes for possession ❑ Punctuates simple and compound sentences with periods and commas ❑ Checks spelling by using word knowledge and resources: a dictionary and computer	**Mechanics** (Grammar, Punctuation, and Spelling) ❑ Uses a variety of subordinate clauses and modifiers ❑ Uses periods consistently after initials and abbreviations ❑ Uses quotation marks with commas and periods for direct speech ❑ Uses commas in complex sentences ❑ Spells a wide range of common words ❑ Confirms spelling of difficult, unfamiliar words by using word knowledge and a variety of resources

Level Five
The writer writes for a wide variety of different purposes and audiences, using a wide variety of complex forms and organizational approaches with appropriate and precise supporting details to convey a main idea creatively and logically. The writer uses a style that reinforces the purpose and engages the audience, as well as complex grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Purpose and Form

Writes for a variety of purposes using a wide variety of complex forms of writing:

❑ Writes business letters, news articles, book and article reviews, longer essays, technical instructions

❑ Takes notes from a text

❑ Writes to narrate, report, persuade, argue, inform, explain, summarize, compare, establish a cause-and-effect relationship, clarify personal concerns, explore social issues, evaluate information, and analyze data to solve problems or state a position

Organization

❑ Organizes information and ideas to convey one main idea in well-linked and well-developed paragraphs creatively and logically by using a variety of approaches

❑ Selects essential supporting details skillfully for effect

❑ Includes documented source materials and media materials such as graphs and charts where appropriate

❑ Revises independently

Style

(Voice, Vocabulary, and Sentence Variety)

❑ Uses voice to reinforce purpose and connect with the audience

❑ Uses vocabulary with increasing sophistication and effectiveness

❑ Uses special terminology in a particular area of study (if necessary)

❑ Uses a wide variety of sentence types and structures with conscious attention to style

❑ Uses more word processing applications (graphics, tables, charts) to enhance writing

Mechanics

(Grammar, Punctuation, and Spelling)

❑ Uses standard case for pronouns

❑ Uses more complex punctuation (colons and parentheses)

❑ Uses quotation marks to distinguish words being discussed

❑ Confirms spelling of difficult, unfamiliar words by using word knowledge and a variety of resources

❑ Uses generalizations and knowledge about how words are formed to spell technical and unfamiliar terms

Speak and Listen Effectively

Level 1	Level 2
Presenting ❑ Uses familiar vocabulary and common expressions ❑ Presents ideas and information in a sensible order Examples: ❑ Gives a simple explanation of how to do or make something (2 or 3 steps) ❑ Answers questions requiring basic information ❑ Relates a short personal story	Presenting ❑ Uses a wider range of familiar vocabulary to organize, link, and clarify ideas when speaking ❑ Presents ideas clearly and in a coherent order and provides more detailed information Examples: ❑ Gives simple directions to perform a task or a job (tells how to use a household appliance or tool) ❑ Talks about a TV show or a movie ❑ Relates a story in the news ❑ Uses the telephone to give and receive information to unfamiliar people/in unfamiliar situations (calls to make or cancel an appointment)
Interacting (one-on-one and in groups) ❑ Listens to and contributes to discussions on familiar topics expressing own ideas and opinions and responding to questions and comments ❑ Uses basic interaction strategies such as opening and closing conversations, asking questions ❑ Recognizes miscommunications in both formal and informal situations and responds appropriately ("Speak up please," "Can you repeat that?") ❑ Observes how some non-verbal communication cues (body language, volume and tone of voice) affect communication (e.g., comments on own responses to different tones of voice) Examples: ❑ Converses with a person or small group about the weather ❑ Communicates to get service (orders food, buys a bus ticket) ❑ Asks for help (e.g., How much does this cost? Where is the…?) ❑ Introduces self to another person in the classroom and initiates conversation	Interacting (one-on-one and in groups) ❑ Listens to others and contributes ideas appropriate to the topic of discussion; expresses ideas and opinions, and provides feedback to others in discussions about familiar topics ❑ Uses interaction strategies such as opening and closing conversations, asking questions, and allowing others to speak and waiting for his/her turn (turn-taking) ❑ Works to repair misunderstandings in communication (for example, asks for repetition or clarification: "Did you say…?", "Do you mean . . . ?") ❑ Uses developing awareness of how non-verbal communication cues (body language, volume and tone of voice) affect communication (comments on cues from others; tries to use a tone that suits the situation). Examples: ❑ Asks and retells directions ❑ Plans a holiday with family or friends ❑ Participates in group discussions on a popular topic (sports, exercise, child-rearing) ❑ Plans end-of-program social event or field trip with class members ❑ Discusses a taped or read story ❑ Participates in focus group to evaluate the program
Listening ❑ Gets the main idea of a simple story or event ❑ Reflects on what is heard ❑ Retells simple information ❑ Uses basic strategies to check understanding (asks questions, asks for repetition) Examples: ❑ Follows one or two single-step oral instructions to complete a practical task (teacher's instructions) ❑ Retells a story told by someone else (family member, friend or another student) ❑ Repeats key information in short announcements (school, sports, store) ❑ Relays simple recorded phone messages to a friend or relative ❑ Discusses the content of taped stories ❑ Discusses the meaning of simple song lyrics ❑ Expresses thoughts and feelings about stories or events on TV	Listening ❑ Gets the main idea of a story or an event and reflects on relevant information ❑ Retells information containing greater detail ❑ Uses basic strategies to check and increase understanding (asks for clarification) Examples: ❑ Calls for automated information (bus schedule, movie listings, pool hours, road conditions) ❑ Follows simple oral instructions to complete an activity, (fitness workout instructions) ❑ Understands the key points of critical radio announcements (school closures, traffic) ❑ Describes highlights of short informal speeches (wedding reception) ❑ Takes notes – records two or three key points from taped announcements, information from radio commercials ❑ Takes messages at home or work

Level 3	Level 4
Presenting ❑ Uses a wider range of vocabulary and selects words to convey intended meaning ❑ Identifies appropriate uses for formal and informal language (knows when to use slang or colloquial language) ❑ Speaks clearly in a focused and organized way when presenting information to others on a variety of topics in familiar and unfamiliar situations ❑ Considers the audience's interests and needs ahead of time when giving a presentation (how big the group is; what to talk about; how long to talk) ❑ Provides specific, detailed information or instructions to familiar and unfamiliar individuals ❑ Makes a case to a familiar person (teacher, friend, family) Examples: ❑ Makes a presentation on a topic of personal interest ❑ Gives more detailed instructions/ directions (gives instructions to the babysitter, explains how to get from one place to another in the community) ❑ Reports the details of an accident ❑ Describes a problem with a car or with E.I. benefits ❑ Negotiates with instructor for extra time to complete assignment	**Presenting** ❑ Regularly incorporates a new and varied vocabulary and selects words effectively to convey intended meaning, using comparisons to develop and clarify ideas ❑ Uses formal and informal language appropriately ❑ Uses transitional expressions to signal a new or important point (My point is . . . , Note that . . . , First . . . , Second, etc.) ❑ Rehearses and revises material before making a presentation (reorders ideas, changes the conclusion) ❑ Is aware of the audience while presenting (notices if people are not listening, responds appropriately) ❑ Expresses ideas and opinions confidently, justifying them with details and evidence, facts and examples ❑ Makes a case with a clear rationale to a less familiar person Examples: ❑ Makes a presentation on a less familiar topic ❑ Gives easy -to-follow, multi-step instructions/ directions (e.g., First Aid) ❑ Report on events or problems effectively and in detail (explains a problem to landlady) ❑ Describes and demonstrates a procedure (how to garden, use e-mail) and answers questions ❑ Presents his/her case to an E.I. or W.S.I.B. counselor
Interacting (one-on-one and in groups) ❑ Listens to others and stays on topic in conversations on familiar and unfamiliar topics, responding with feedback to the ideas of others ❑ Uses interaction strategies to maintain communication, such as encouraging responses from others, asking questions, and turn-taking ❑ Explores strategies for communicating with others in a variety of situations (how to get the information/response that you need in different situations) ❑ Repairs misunderstandings in communication to keep discussion going ("I'm not sure I understand . . . ", "What I mean is . . . ") ❑ Uses increased awareness of how non-verbal communication cues (body language, volume and tone of voice) affect communication (e.g., identifies cues sent out from self and others as effective or not effective) Examples: ❑ Inquires into two apartments for rent and discusses information gathered with classmates ❑ Negotiates for time off from work or school ❑ Discusses short-term learning goals with instructor/counselor ❑ Converses with assessor/counselor at initial assessment, sharing information about educational/employment background ❑ Discusses and evaluates writing samples of others in a group ❑ Performs a mock interaction with a partner focusing mainly on non-verbal communication cues and discusses effects	**Interacting** (one-on-one and in groups) ❑ Listens and contributes to discussion, follows up on the ideas of others, and recognizes different points of view ❑ Uses interaction strategies to facilitate understanding, such as inviting others to contribute, asking questions to clarify a point, and negotiating to find a basis for agreement ❑ Is aware of factors (such as social and cultural differences, different dialects and accents in English, different ideas and opinions) that contribute to the success, or lack of success, of a discussion ❑ Deals with misunderstandings in communication by asking for and using clarification to sustain communication ("Did you say …?" "What I mean is …") ❑ Uses increased awareness of how non-verbal communication cues (body language, volume and tone of voice) affect communication (e.g., uses effective gestures and facial expressions to enhance communication and maintain interest; tries to monitor own non-verbal habits) Examples: ❑ Discusses a current issue in a focus group or class discussion to get different opinions and ideas for solutions ❑ Discusses a concern with a teacher at a parent -teacher meeting ❑ Discusses plans for year-end recognition ceremony as part of student committee ❑ Discusses overall progress and explores career and/or employment options with counselor ❑ Watches video recording of a job interview or T.V. sit-com to discuss different perceptions of verbal and non verbal communication styles
Listening ❑ Gets main idea(s) and lists key points of longer forms of oral communication with some unfamiliar aspects ❑ Draws conclusions about ideas presented in formal situations ❑ Uses strategies to check and increase understanding (takes notes listing unfamiliar vocabulary and key points, replays audio/video tapes, transcribes information from tapes, discusses key points with peers) Examples: ❑ Gets inf ormation from sales demonstrations (job fairs, sports shows) ❑ Gets information from a workshop (career planning workshop, computer skills workshop) ❑ Describes the main idea and key points of a presentation or talk given by another learner ❑ Conducts telephone banking ❑ Follows instructions in computer lab ❑ Responds to more sophisticated (touch-tone) voice answering machines	**Listening** ❑ Identifies the main idea(s) and supporting details and summarizes content of sustained forms of oral communication containing some implicit information and specialized vocabulary ❑ Evaluates information contained in formal talks and presentations ❑ Uses more complex strategies to check and increase understanding (takes detailed notes from oral presentations, rewrites notes to help organize) Examples: ❑ Follows a series of oral directions to get to a destination ❑ Follows increasingly complex oral instructions (e.g., taking a driver's test) ❑ Summarizes the main idea of radio or T.V. programs ❑ Discusses the usefulness of information in a presentation about technology ❑ Takes accurate, detailed messages at work

Level 5
Presenting ❑ Uses an expanded and specialized vocabulary appropriate to the topic and selects words creatively and effectively to convey intended meaning ❑ Uses different levels of formal and informal language effectively ❑ Responds to audience while presenting and adjusts delivery accordingly (changes pace, asks questions, offers to clarify ideas, asks for feedback from audience) ❑ Logically expresses, orders and develops concepts and ideas and justifies these clearly, supplying appropriate evidence ❑ Makes a convincing case with a solid rationale to an unfamiliar person or group Examples: ❑ Makes a formal presentation on a researched topic ❑ Contests a traffic ticket in court ❑ Calls a radio phone-in show to express opinion ❑ Presents opinion at a community event (co-op meeting, community planning meeting, town hall or union meeting)
Interacting (one-on-one and in groups) ❑ Listens to others and contributes collaboratively in discussions by asking questions and building on the ideas of others ❑ Uses interaction strategies to facilitate understanding, such as asking others for clarification, repeating and rephrasing own ideas, paraphrasing the ideas of others, negotiating with others to reach agreement, and dealing with communication misunderstandings ❑ Works to establish clear purposes and procedures for solving problems, making decisions, and completing projects ❑ Analyses factors (such as social and cultural differences, different dialects and accents in English, different ideas and opinions) that contribute to the success, or lack of success, of a discussion ❑ Works toward building agreement and dealing with conflict that contributes to the success, or lack of success, of a discussion ❑ Uses increased awareness of how non-verbal communication cues (body language, volume and tone of voice) affect communication (e.g., uses effective gestures and facial expressions to clarify meaning in conversations and to add expressiveness when speaking or presenting; evaluates overall effectiveness or lack of effectiveness of non-verbal aspect of presentation or speech given by classmate) Examples: ❑ Raises and tries to resolve a health and safety issue with a union representative ❑ Responds to and solves a complaint ❑ Interviews for a job ❑ Discusses long term career choices with employment counselor ❑ Contributes ideas as a board member of a local literacy organization ❑ Participates as a member of a group producing a school newsletter ❑ Debates a "hot topic" in class
Listening ❑ Identifies the main idea(s) and supporting information; summarizes content of sustained forms of oral communication containing implicit information and specialized vocabulary ❑ Evaluates overall content and effectiveness of formal speeches and lectures ❑ Uses a wider range of complex strategies to confirm and increase understanding (takes notes to organize and classify, checks interpretation with other listeners, does further research) Examples: ❑ Follows increasingly complex oral instructions such as instructions to operate a piece of equipment ❑ Summarizes the content of radio/TV documentaries and films providing supporting information ❑ Evaluates the effectiveness of a speech by the mayor

Performance Assessment

The portfolio is the proposed approach to ongoing assessment. Portfolios are collections of the individual's work over time, which reflect effort, progress and achievements.

Following are the steps to portfolio assessment:

1. Define the purpose of the portfolio and appropriate contents based on that purpose.

Assessment Purpose	Portfolio Contents
Continually assess needs	Evidence of student thinking, misconceptions, process, how much and what kind of help was provided to student.
Monitor progress in key areas	Several pieces over time of the same type, possibly of progressive difficulty.
Gather evidence of progress	Notes, drafts, and other evidence of the process; possibly with feedback from peers and the teacher.

2. Define the criteria for judging the work in the portfolio (characteristics of excellent work; scale, e.g., A, B, C, D, E or 100 points; performance standards).

3. Communicate the things students can include in a portfolio, such as:
    *   in-class reading assignments, progress reports, drafts, self-evaluation notes, video and audio tapes, etc.;
    *   examples of literacy outside the class (e.g., copy of letter); and
    *   work that:
        *   shows first efforts, is in progress, or shows different stages in a task;
        *   shows strengths, needs and interests;
        *   is their best, or the most pivotal;
        *   reflects how they think and feel;
        *   shows use of literacy skills outside of the classroom (e.g., a completed application form, or a new driver's license); and
        *   provides evidence that training courses or colleges require (test scores, essays on assigned topics, and assigned projects).

4. Communicate ground rules, such as:
    *   who selects the work that goes in the portfolio;
    *   how and where are portfolios stored;
    *   who has access to them;
    *   how often may students make additions and deletions to their portfolios; and
    *   who gets the portfolio when the program of learning ends.

5. Help the students build their portfolios.

    Make sure students know their goals and the criteria for achieving them.

6. Organize the portfolio (e.g., date each piece and attach a short explanation).

Sample Tracking Form

Student's Name: _____ **Start Date:** _____

Long Term Goal: _____ **Short Term Goal:** _____

Outcomes & Demonstrations	Prior Skills (Can Do)	Goal Requirements	Dates completed	Description of demonstration
Home				
Read Labels				
Read Mail				
Look up Phone Numbers				
Follow Directions				
Write Shopping List				
Read Bills				
Read/Write Letters				
Read Newspaper				
Read Magazines				
Read Stores				
Banking				
Open Account				
Fill out Bank Forms				
Write Cheques				
Keep Bank Book				
Shopping				
Read Signs and Labels				
Compare Prices				
Count Money				
Make Change				
Order Something by Mail				

Appendix A: Original Research

Complete Findings of Original Research

In 1993, the agency within which ALFA is housed — Davenport Perth Neighbourhood Centre or DPNC — conducted an assessment of the needs of young Black adults within its service area. What it found was a population characterized by low educational attainment (only 14.4% of survey participants had completed grade twelve and only 1.5% were presently in school), low workforce participation (31.2% had never worked), and a high level of drug use relative to the general city population (81.6% had used drugs).

Although many of those interviewed noted a lack of accessible re-entry school programs and basic adult literacy programs, none had been using the literacy upgrading services available at ALFA. In order to determine what it could do to better serve this population, ALFA initiated a research project which became the first phase of the Black Youth Literacy Project.

Barriers To Learning

In interviews and discussions with the target group, the project researcher identified a number of barriers which affect this group's ability to access educational programming:

- They are not hooked up to community services, nor are they familiar with what is available.
- Their struggles as Black youth tend to be disregarded by most organizations.
- It is difficult for the younger teenagers to find a regular, legal source of income.
- Selling drugs offers a lucrative alternative to working legally in low-skilled jobs or attending school. As well, addiction affects abilities to concentrate and attend school.
- These youth have difficulty identifying their key areas of concern, talents and skills.
- Black youth (particularly males) often find themselves involved with the justice system, which further curtails educational opportunity.
- Many of these youth are living on the street, so that issues of housing, health and safety need to be explored.
- Black youth are very angry with "no where to vent."

According to this research, Black youth feel "misjudged, distrusted, stereotyped, disbelieved, followed around stores, and expected to underachieve."

Mainstream Schooling And Racism

A starting point in the analysis of how to develop relevant educational programming for this group was to look at how the mainstream high school system was not working for them. Youths interviewed had many negative experiences and perceptions of school:

- not enough Black teachers;
- feelings of isolation because there were few Black students;
- teachers who "make you feel small, stupid, [and] shame you out of the classroom" [and] into Special Education classes; and
- suspensions for "stupid things" — e.g., "I got suspended for walking slow in the hallway." "Most of the Black guys I know have been kicked out for nothing."

Additional research pointed to a sense that members of this group were being:

- discouraged from going on to higher education;
- labeled as behaviourally inappropriate;
- forced into counselling or discussions with social workers that seemed to absolutely blame them or their families for the problems they were having; and
- given inequitable treatment in the classroom in terms of who teachers spent time with, who was allowed to speak, who got picked to work on specific projects, etc.

There was a sense of futility about school associated with "what stream they were in and what that meant for their earning power as graduates." They doubted that graduation from school was going to provide the necessary skills to improve their situation.

Increased conflict with the law and a high incidence of unemployment and poverty also had a devastating impact on this group's relationship with the educational system and other social resources. These youth often felt their choices were limited, and often they did not have the resources or support necessary to attend school regularly and to maintain connections with the educational system.

While the goals of young high school drop-outs were frequently not as long-term as their peers who were still in school, some did outline clear goals and dreams. They expressed interest in being able to access a literacy program to develop their resumes and learn more about job training. They had dreams and hopes for their future, but had difficulty understanding the steps required to accomplish what they wanted.

Drug Culture

The use of crack cocaine and other drugs was quite common in the area around the Davenport Perth Neighbourhood Centre at the time of the initial research. Young people interviewed at this time suggested that for literacy work to succeed, there would have to be strict rules around participating while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Drugs may be used as a 'crutch' to overcome the anxiety of coming to a literacy class for the first time or to the initial intake interview. It should be established after that first meeting that coming in under the influence of drugs or alcohol is unacceptable.

Most Black youth in the catchment area do not experience the drug culture in a full-time way, and students should not be approached with the assumption that they have had this experience. A drug education counselor could be asked to present information to teachers about how best to talk about drug use with students who are involved with drugs.

The young people interviewed suggested that the purpose of alternative educational programming should not be to try to stop people from doing drugs, but rather to offer an opportunity for youth to work on basic skills, to become interested again in schooling, and to begin to understand that there are many alternatives to life in the drug culture. In addition, the self-reliance and business sense required by those youths involved in the drug trade are skills that should be acknowledged and built upon for effective learning.

Target Group Family Dynamics

Family support is an important component of a student's success in school. Giving moral support and encouragement, assisting with homework, taking an interest in material their children are studying, and developing a relationship with their children's teachers are ideals mentioned by Black parents interviewed. However, they also pointed out that various socio-economic factors make these ideals difficult, and sometimes impossible, to achieve.

Many of the youths had witnessed generations of family being denied equitable access to educational opportunities. Others interviewed had parents who did succeed academically but who were denied access to the workforce commensurate with their academic achievements due to racism.

Poor communication among parents and teachers, principals, directors and others was identified by parents as a major problem. They felt that improved communication would mean that students at risk could be identified and helped before the situation got out of hand, as well as helping to avoid the "finger pointing" that Black parents are subjected to when their children get into trouble at school.

Experiences with the law, poverty and negative experiences within the school system itself are factors which cumulatively acted to keep Black youth out of school. As well, the experience of unemployment and poverty were not limited to individual youth, but to their families, and sometimes entire communities. Such conditions often meant that Black students also did not have the social network necessary to attend school. This pattern illustrates the fact that the family cannot help these youths in isolation. The school, community and the family need to work together to achieve the desired results.

There was no consensus among parents on the issue of 'Black focus schools'. While acknowledging the need for relevant and inspiring curriculum, parents feared that schools exclusively for Black students could lead to further isolation of Black youth from mainstream society.

It is also important to note that immigrant parents may have had a very different experience of school than their children. In Toronto, the relationship between school and home is different from that of small communities in the Caribbean where extended family and the community are actively involved in the raising of children.

Another relatively common situation — one with both positive and negative results — was that of young men who had been brought to Canada as teenagers by their mothers who had lived and worked here for years. While some young people adjusted well to school and their new life, others found the transition difficult and disengaged from the education system altogether.

Conclusions

A number of conclusions were made about the kind of literacy programming that would best serve the target group. It was consistently stressed that any such programming should:

- be short term (e.g., 8 to 10 weeks);

- have clear goals and objectives;

- have concrete transferable skills; and

- have a final product.

It was also recommended that:

- youth should be involved with the curriculum/program developer in shaping the program, in creating any rules or regulations, and in conducting outreach;

- healthy snacks should be supplied as hungry Students find it difficult to focus and participate; and

- public transit tokens should be supplied to facilitate the youths' access to programming.

Alternative Learning Models

Five main models were repeatedly recommended by members of the target group, youth workers and literacy workers. These models differ greatly from traditional literacy programming and academic reading and writing curriculum; and it was made clear that this difference is a primary condition for the success of any programming for this population.

Literacy needs to be defined in broader terms than 'simple' reading and writing or work on grammar, punctuation, spelling and basic numeracy. Literacy is the capability to use and create text and other communication media to express ideas, feelings and opinions in a clear manner. Linked to this is the goal of encouraging youth that have been disenfranchised by the traditional school system to become re-engaged through learning.

Five alternative literacy learning models were developed based on this initial research.

a) Video/Cable TV Show

The technology of television strongly attracts and intrigues young people. Teenagers and young adults spend a great deal of time watching television and discussing what they have seen. Many of the youths interviewed were very aware of and discouraged by the derogatory portrayal of Black youth on television. The opportunity to develop a cable television show, where they can positively shape the representation of their reality, is very empowering for the target population.

Literacy skills are an integral part of this model. They are required for and developed through components such as: outlining a proposal for a show, writing letters of request to cable TV networks, script writing, and writing announcements to inform the community about the show.

Developing a script and shooting a show are very large and time-consuming endeavours. In order for this model to be a success (in terms of creating and airing a completed show), it will be necessary for the project worker to have done research beforehand, have the scheduled co-operation of the technical staff of the television network and have a clearly delineated goal. Limiting production time to 15 minutes or producing an add-on to an existing television show would be more manageable. Another option is to create a video on a behind-the-scenes look at how television shows are created.

This kind of program can include talks by Black individuals who are involved in the film and video business doing production, technical support or acting. A tour of a studio, preferably at a station geared toward youth, can be arranged and individuals involved with television shows popular with Black youth can be contacted to speak about what it takes to create the shows.

This model should include a research component about the different employment opportunities that exist in film and television production. Investigation by a team of two to three researchers with a presentation to the rest of the group at the end of the program provides opportunities for skills development in research, problem-solving, oral presentation and public speaking while working on a project that interests them. Topics can include:

- the different jobs in the industry;
- education and other requirements needed to work in television;
- opportunities for apprenticeships;
- openings and training programs available; and
- the real demands of a career in the field.

Candid talks by experienced Black professionals in television about their work experience can serve to broaden the target group's perspective on employment.

Underlying and guiding programs based on this model should be an awareness of the consequences for the youth involved of not realizing their goals. Realistic goals — considering time, energy and resources — must be set.

b) Radio Show

Radio is a medium popular with young people. The co-operative group work required decreases feelings of social isolation. It is also a vibrant mechanism for employing literacy and communication skills. Offering youth an opportunity to have a 'voice' and share their perspectives enriches both the individuals involved and the program listeners.

The process of creating a radio show can include:

- choosing a topic;
- writing a script;
- selecting interview subjects and music play lists;
- deciding how much time to devote to each message; and
- editing the work (tape to tape, either at the radio station or manually on a two-tape cassette player).

Shows can feature dub poetry, rap music, prose, opinion pieces, interviews with Black mentors and service suppliers, as well as music written and created by the youth.

c) Accessing Information Services

Many youth workers interviewed stated that members of the target group lacked confidence and assertiveness skills. This model increases awareness of available community resources and how to access them.

The following issues were identified as important to Black youth:

- housing;
- law and legal issues (e.g., how to get support through the legal processes and what to do about police abuse);
- drugs;
- employment counseling;
- financial assistance;
- cultural awareness and support;
- high school upgrading;
- basic literacy;
- teenage sexuality;
- single parenthood and childcare;
- family issues; and
- peer pressure.

Methods for obtaining and disseminating information about these topics can include:

- a series of forums/workshops, including meetings with Black professionals in different fields;
- a resource bulletin board; and
- research by youth on existing services (including interviews with appropriate agencies, written reports and presentations by program participants).

The emphasis here is on helping Black youth enhance their ability to work within established systems while retaining their unique perspectives. It is essential that participants take the initiative and accept responsibility for helping themselves.

d) One-to-One Tutoring by Black Tutors and Peers

In a society where Black youth regularly experience or perceive racism, having positive, professionally successful role models is an important tool for youth empowerment. This model is based on Frontier College's innovative *Each One Teach One*, a program which pairs disadvantaged Black youth with young Black adults who act as mentors with the following objectives:

- provide role models and mentors to assist in setting goals and to offer advice and guidance;
- make Black youth aware of other organizations which provide services they can benefit from, e.g., counseling, internships, tutoring and scholarships;
- promote literacy and cultural awareness; and
- popularize the idea of volunteerism, working together as a community, helping each other, taking responsibility for themselves.

Mentors in the *Each One Teach One* program do not tutor students unless that need has been established and tutor training received. A literacy program based on this model should try to include Black mentors interested not only in presenting information about their professions, but also in acting as literacy tutors.

e) Booklet Production Based on Mentor Talks

Mentoring is an excellent method for educating youth about the possibilities that exist for them and the educational requirements needed to achieve goals. It would be preferable for the mentor not to be simply a lecturer, but to also have a multi-media presentation. For example, they should be encouraged to bring in tools, pictures, audio/videotapes or other materials, which would provide hands-on experience for the youth. The literacy component could include having youth do research on the presentation topic and prepare questions for the mentor in advance.

As a follow-up, they could create booklets containing the career information they learned from the mentor's presentation. This would be an excellent opportunity to provide youth with training in desktop publishing and computer skills in general. As well, they could be involved in the process of getting their work published and distributed to other programs working with youth.

Mentors working in the following areas were recommended:

- small business entrepreneurs;
- professionals;
- inspirational speakers (e.g., Hurricane Carter);
- authors or dub poets (e.g., Clifton Joseph or Afua Cooper);
- activists (e.g., Dudley Laws);
- socially conscious rappers or dance hall stars; and
- sports stars.

The ELSI Approach

The guidelines and activities presented here are based on an approach known as Experiential Learning and Social Investigation or ELSI. Literacy programs aimed at the target group must consist of highly practical activities that reflect the realities of the students' lives and that help to rebuild (or possibly build for the first time) the students' trust, confidence and self-esteem. Literacy teaching in this environment has to be done almost by stealth.

The basic premise behind ELSI is that social investigation activities, when tied closely to the teaching of basic literacy skills, positively impact overall learning outcomes. The ELSI approach not only acknowledges the experience of Black youth, but does so from the vantage point of how they view and experience the world.

Experiential learning and social investigation provide a framework for Black youth to get involved in an activity, look back at it critically, determine what is useful or important to remember, and use this information to perform another activity. This approach also emphasizes group activities, which are not only more enjoyable, but which also promote a sharing of skills and perspectives between students.

The ELSI approach emphasizes research, analysis and action, encouraging participants to focus on:

1. Naming: What are the issues/problems in my life now? Are things as they should be? How should they be?

2. Reflecting: Why are things this way? What is my role in contributing to and changing this situation?

3. Acting: What can be done? What should be done? What have I done and what will I do?

The ELSI approach is relatively demanding in terms of what it requires of those delivering the program, including both paid and volunteer staff. Everyone involved in such a program must have an understanding of the circumstances that can contribute to the marginalization of many Black youth. In effect, the teacher's task is to bring students into contact with the world in a critical way.

Experiential Learning

Five steps of experiential learning are integral to the ELSI approach:

1. Experience the activity by acting it out using role-playing scenarios or simulations. Learning activities are used to help students name what the issues are and provide a common experience for students. The general objective is to explore and discover.

2. Share the experience by describing what happened. The general objective is to involve everyone and generate data for further processing.

3. Process the experience to identify common themes. Time is spent analyzing patterns and common themes, and examining the shared experience. Questions are asked to encourage students to think about the experience from simple concepts to integrated ideas. The general objective is to build a bridge to new knowledge and skills.

4. Generalize from the experience to form principles or guidelines that can be used in real-life situations. Students are guided to a broader perspective. They focus on the implications of the experience for their own lives and their communities. The objective is to build personal meaning. Inflammatory language that would upset individuals or groups should be avoided here.

5. Apply what was learned to another situation (preferably in real life). Consideration is given to what can be done with the newly acquired information or skill: i.e. how the experience can be used for other tasks/events/activities or how it relates to projects students may be interested in pursuing. The objective is to provide a tool for ongoing use in their lives.

Describing an experience alone does not create experiential learning. The activity is important. The learning comes from the thoughts and ideas created as a result of experiencing or doing the activity.

Social Investigation

Social investigation is the investigation and analysis of social reality by those living it. It promotes:

- collective knowledge — a shared understanding of students' social reality;
- collective analysis — the ordering of information in ways useful to the students in examining their reality;
- critical analysis — determining the root cause of problems and issues; and
- collective action — action geared toward developing effective problem-solving skills and finding solutions.

Social investigation includes all the steps of experiential learning. However, in social investigation, consideration is also given to the following:

1. Initiation and control: Who initiates the theme for discussion? How will it be introduced? How will the problem/issue be defined?

2. Content: What will be studied? Why? By whom?

3. Collective Analysis: How will information be gathered, and by whom? How will the data be analyzed, and by whom?

4. Learning Outcome: What is the expected learning outcome? Who will develop what skills? What are the products and by-products?

5. Uses for Action: How will the results be disseminated? Who will use them? How will they be used? Who benefits?

Appendix B: Resources

Print Resources

Student Reading - All Literacy Levels

The following books can be used with students at all literacy levels. (Students at lower Literacy Levels may need help with reading and comprehension.)

Achebe, Chinua. (1994). *Things Fall Apart.* Doubleday & Company, Incorporated. **Family life**

Black Girls (Editor). (1996). *Black Girl Talk.* Sister Vision Press. **Life as a Black Woman**

Carnegie, Herb et al. (1997) *A Fly In a Pail of Milk: The Herb Carnegie Story.* Mosaic Press. **Autobiography**

Cripwell, K. R. and Jones, Lewis (Eds). *Muhammad Ali: King of the Ring.* Collins English Library. **Biography (Very Easy)**

Eldman, Marian Wright. (1992). *The Measure of Success*. Beacon Press. **Family values**

Hill, Randal C. (1986). *Superstars of Movies & TV*. Steck-Vaughn Company. **Entertainment**

Hill, Randal C. (1990). *Superstars in Action: Sports.* Steck-Vaughn Company. **Sports**

Hornby, John (1991) *Black Islanders: Prince Edward Island's Historical Black Community.* Institute Island Studies. **History**

Jakoubek, Bob. (1989) *Adam Clayton Powell, JR.* Chelsea Printing House. **Biography**

Kunjufu, Jawanze. (1987). *Lessons from History: A Celebration in Blackness.* African American Images. **History, African American**

Maugham, W. Somerset. (1995). *A Marriage of Convenience and Other Stories (Intermediate Level).* Delta Systems Co. **Family**

Pachai, Bridgal. (1987, 1993). *Blacks*, in series *Peoples of the Maritimes*. Four East Publications. **History**

Pennetti, Michael. (1988). *Coping with School Age Fatherhood.* Rosen Publishing Group. **Family**

Rand, Donna et al. (1998). *Black Books Galore! Guide to Great African American Children's Books*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Sadler, Rosemary. (1995). *Tubman: Her Life in the United States and Canada.* Umbrella Press. **Biography**

Schloredt, Valerie and Brown, Pam. (1989). *Martin Luther King (People Who Have Helped The World).* Exley Publications. **Biography**

Wright, Courtini C. (1994). *Journey to Freedom: A Story of the Underground Railroad.* Holiday House. **History**

X, Malcolm. (1992). *Malcolm X: Speaks Out*. Andrews McMeel Publishing. **Biography**

Student Reading — Advanced Literacy Levels Only

Abdul-Jabbar, Kareem et al. (1996). *Black Profiles in Courage: A Legacy of African-American Achievement.* William Morrow. **Biography, history**

Bell, Curtis. (1998). *Travel the Prevention Highway with Road Toad and D-Hawk.* Renascent Foundation. **Youth drug prevention**

Bell, Curtis. (2000). *Playground Politics.* Renascent Foundation. **Violence Prevention/ Resolving Conflict**

Bingham, Howard L. (1993). *Muhammad Ali: A Thirty-Year Journey.* Simon & Schuster. **Sport**

Black Americans of Achievement Series. Chelsea House Pub. **Biography**

Bolden, Tonya. (1996) *Just Family.* Cobblehill. **Family life/situations**

Botkin, B. A. (ed). (1973) *Lay My Burden Down: A Folk History of Slavery.* University of Chicago Press. **Slave life**

Boyd, Candy Dawson. (1988). *Charlie Pippin.* Puffin, Penguin USA. **Family life/situations**

Boyd, Candy Dawson. (1994). Fall Secrets. Puffin, Penguin USA. **Young adult/adolescent**

Boyd, Candy Dawson. (1999). *Circle of Gold.* Bt Bound. **Family life/situations, death**

Bray, Rosemary L. (1995). *Martin Luther King.* Greenwillow. **Biography, civil rights**

Cosby, Bill. (1992). *Childhood.* Berkley Pub Group. **Family life/situations, humour**

Davis, Ossie. (1990) *Escape to Freedom: A Play about Young Frederick Douglass*. Viking Press. **Biography**

DeGross, Monalisa. (1998). *Donovan's Word Jar.* HarperTrophy. **Family life/situations**

Draper, Sharon M. (1998). *Forged by Fire.* Simon Pulse. **Family life/situations, drug abuse**

Eubanks, Toni. (1996). *Journey Home: (Passage to Womanhood Series).* Peoples Pub Group. **African themes**

Feelings, Tom. (1995). *The Middle Passage: White Ships, Black Cargo.* Dial Books for Young

Readers. **Slave life**

Garber, Angus G. (1994). *Boxing Legends: Greatest Boxers… Toughest Fights… Classic Rivalries.* Michael Friedman Publishing Group, Inc. **Sport, history**

Gibbons, Kaye. (1997) *Ellen Foster.* Vintage Books. **Family life, abuse**

Giovanni, Nikki. (1993). *Ego Tripping and Other Poems for Young People.* Lawrence Hill & Co. **Young adult/adolescent situations, poetry**

Gorrell, Gena K. et al. (2000). *North Star to Freedom: The Story of the Underground Railroad.* Delacorte Press. **History**

Greenfield, Eloise. (1992). *Sister.* Harpercollins Juvenile Books. **Family life/situations, memories, death**

Guy, Rosa. (1983). *The Friends (Nonstandard English).* Bantam Books. **Friendship**

Hamilton, Virginia. (1982). *Sweet Whispers, Brother Rush.* Putnam Pub Group Juv. **Family life/situations**

Hamilton, Virginia. (1993). *Anthony Burns: The Defeat and Triumph of a Fugitive Slave.* Laureleaf. **Biography**

Hamilton, Virginia. (1995). *Her Stories: African American Folktales, Fairy Tales and True Tales.* Blue Sky Press (Scholastic). **Fairytales, folktales**

Hansen, Joyce. (1991). *Yellow Bird and Me.* Clarion Books. **Friendship, school**

Harley, Sharon. (1995). *The Timetables of African-American History: A Chronology of the Most Important People and Events in African-American History.* Simon & Schuster. **History**

Haskins, Jim. (1995). *Get on Board: The Story of the Underground Railroad.* Demco Media. **History**

Haskins, Jim. (1997). *Black Eagles: African Americans in Aviation.* Scholastic. **Biography, history**

Hauser, Thomas (1992). *Muhammad Ali: Memories.* Rizzoli. **Sport**

Hennessey, John. (1990). *Mike Tyson.* Smithmark Publishing. **Sport**

Hilliard, David and Cole, Lewis. (1993). *This Side of Glory: The Autobiography of David Hilliard and the Story of the Black Panther Party.* Little Brown and Company. **Autobiography**

Hughes, Langston et al. (1995). *The Block: Poems*. Viking Childrens Books. **Art, urban life**

Jordan, Denise. (1994). *Susie King Taylor: Destined to Be Free.* Just Us Books. **Biography**

Joseph, Lynn. (1996). *A Wave in Her Pocket: Stories from Trinidad.* Clarion Books. **Caribbean**

Karenga, Maulana. (1997). *Kwanzaa – A celebration of Family, community and culture.* Univ of Sankore Press. **Kwanzaa**

King, Coretta Scott (Editor). (1993). *The Martin Luther King, Jr., Companion.* St. Martin's Press. **Art, quotations from speeches, essays and books**

Knappert, Jan. (1993). *Kings, Gods, & Spirits from African Mythology (The World Mythology).* Peter Bedrick Books. **African themes, folktales, legends**

Koranteng, Kwasi. (1994). *Gold Diggers (Junior African Writers Series).* Chelsea House Pub. **African themes, adventure**

Leeson, Robert (1990). *The Cimaroons.* Pluto Press. **Caribbean**

Lester, Julius. (1997). *This Strange New Feeling.* Scholastic Paperbacks. **Slave life**

Lester, Julius. (1998). *Long Journey Home: Stories from Black History.* Puffin. **Slave life**

Levy, Marilyn. (1996). *Run For Your Life.* Houghton Mifflin Co. **Young adult/adolescent situations**

Mathis, Sharon Bell. (1995). *Red Dog, Blue Fly: Football Poems.* Puffin. **Poetry**

McCann, Ian. (1997). *Bob Marley: In His Own Words.* Omnibus Press. **Music, biography**

McKissack, Pat (1996). *The Dark-Thirty: Southern Tales of the Supernatural.* Knopf. **Ghost stories**

McKissack, Pat et al. (1994). *Sojourner Truth: Ain't I a Woman?* Scholastic. **Biography**

McKissack, Pat et al. (1996). *Rebels Against Slavery: American Slave Revolts.* Scholastic. **History**

McKissack, Patricia C. and McKissack, Fredrick. (1998). *Black Diamond: The Story of the Negro Baseball League.* Scholastic Inc. **Sport, history**

Medearis, Angela Shelf. (1995). *Skin Deep: And Other Teenage Reflections.* Atheneum. **Poetry**

Medearis, Angela Shelf. (1995). *Treemonisha.* Henry Holt & Company. **Music**

Michael, D'Orso. (1996). *Rosewood: Like Judgement Day.* Boulevard Books. **History, racism**

Miller, Robert. (1991). *The Buffalo Soldiers: Book Two (Reflections of a Black Cowboy).* Silver Burdett Pr. **Biography**

Miller, William. (1996). *Frederick Douglass: The Last Day of Slavery.* Lee & Low Books. **Biography**

Monceaux, Morgan. (1994). *Jazz: My Music, My People.* Knopf. **Music, biography**

Myers, Walter Dean. (1987). *Motown and Didi: A Love Story.* Laurel Leaf. **Romance**

Myers, Walter Dean. (1989). *The Young Landlords.* Puffin. **City life**

Myers, Walter Dean. (1992). *The Mouse Rap.* Harper Trophy. **Young adult/adolescent situations, adventure**

Myers, Walter Dean. (1993). *Sky Man (18 Pine st No. 5).* Bantam Skylark. **Young adult/adolescent situations**

Myers, Walter Dean. (1996). *Toussaint, L'Ouverture: The Fight for Haiti's Freedom.* Simon & Schuster. **Art, Caribbean, history**

Myers, Walter Dean. (1999). *Darnell Rock Reporting.* Bt Bound. **School life**

Myers, Walter Dean. (1999). *Slam!* Bt Bound. **Young adult/adolescent situations, sport**

Myers, Walter Dean. (1999). *Won't Know Till I Get There.* Bt Bound. **City life**

Naidoo, Beverly. (1997). *No Turning Back: A Novel of South Africa.* Harpercollins Juvenile Books. **African themes**

Naidoo, Beverly. (2002). *Journey to Jo'burg.* HarperTrophy. **African themes, apartheid/racism**

Paulsen, Gary. (1999). *Nightjohn.* Bt Bound. **Slave life**

Potter, Joan. (2002). *African-American Firsts: Famous, Little-Known and Unsung Triumphs of Blacks in America.* Kensington Pub Corp. **History**

Price, Leontyne. (1997). *Aida.* Harcourt Children's Books. **Music**

Pullman, Phillip. (1994). *The Broken Bridge.* Random House Childrens Pub. **Family life/situations, bi-racial**

Radin, Paul (ed). (1988). *African Folktales.* Random House. **African themes**

Rennert, R. S. (1995). *African American Answer Book Arts and Entertainment: Arts and Entertainment 325 Questions (African American Answer Book).* Chelsea House Pub. **History, biography**

Rinaldi, Ann. (1993). *Wolf by the Ears.* Scholastic. **Slave life**

Rinaldi, Ann. (1996). *Hang a Thousand Trees with Ribbons: The Story of Phillis Wheatley.* Gulliver Books Paperbacks. **Biography**

Rivers, Glenn and Brooks, Bruce. (1995). *Those Who Love the Game.* Lippincott Children's Books. **Sport**

Seabrooke, Brenda. (1992). *The Bridges of Summer.* Cobblehill. **Family life/situations**

Sports Great Books Series. Enslow Publishers, Inc. **Biography**

Sullivan, Charles (Editor). (1991). *Children of Promise: African American Literature and Art for Young People.* Abrams Books for Young Readers. **Art**

Taylor, Mildred D. (1991). *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry.* Puffin. **Family life/situations, conflict**

Taylor, Mildred. (1998). *The Well: David's Story.* Penguin USA. **History, racism**

Torres, Jose. (2001). *Sting Like a Bee: The Muhammad Ali Story.* McGraw-

Hill/Contemporary Books. **Sport**

Unk et al. (1998). *Sports Reports Series.* Enslow Publishers Inc. **Biography**

Walker, Alice. (1990) *The Color Purple.* Pocket Books. **Family life/situations, abuse**

Walls, Bryan E. (1980). *Road that led to Somewhere.* Olive Publishing Co. **History**

Walter, Mildred Pitts. (1996). Have A Happy: A Novel about Kwanzaa. Avon. **Kwanzaa**

White, Armond. (1997). *White Rebel for the Hell of It: The Life of Tupac Shakur.* Thunder's Mouth Press. **Music, biography**

Wilkinson, Brenda. (1995). *Definitely Cool.* Apple. **Young adult/adolescent situations**

Williams, Michael. (1994). *Crocodile Burning.* Puffin. **African themes, apartheid**

Williams, Montel. (1999). *Mountain, Get Out of My Way: Life Lessons and Learned Truths.* Bt Bound. **Autobiography**

Williams-Garcia, Rita. (1998). *Fast Talk on a Slow Track.* Puffin. **Young adult/adolescent situations**

X, Malcolm and Haley, Alex. (1989). *The Autobiography of Malcolm X.* African American Images. **Autobiography**

X, Malcolm et al. (1989). *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches.* Pathfinder Press. **Biography**

X, Malcolm. (1990). *Malcolm X on Afro-American History.* Pathfinder Press. **History**

Zeinert, Karen. (1997). *The Amistad Slave Revolt and American Abolition.* Linnet Books. **History**

Instructor Reading

The following books are historical/social activism biographies and other interesting readings for teachers and more advanced level students.

Alexander, Ken & Glaze, Avis. (1996). *Towards Freedom: The African-Canadian Experience.* Umbrella Press.

Angelou, Maya. (1994). *The Complete Collected Poems of Maya Angelou.* Random House.

Angelou, Maya. (1997). *Singin' and Swingin' and Getting Merry Like Christmas.* Random House.

Ashby, Ruth (Editor) et al. (1995). *Herstory: Women Who Changed the World.* Viking Childrens Books.

Atkin, S. Beth (Editor). (1996). *Voices from the Streets: Young Former Gang Members Tell Their Stories.* Little, Brown and Co.

Bell, Derrick. (1993). *Faces at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism.* Basic Books.

Bial, R. (1995). *The Underground Railroad.* Houghton Mifflin Co (Juv).

Bing, Leon. (1992). *Do or Die.* Perennial.

Black Girls (Editor). (1996). *Black Girl Talk.* Sister Vision Press.

Boyd, Herb (Editor) et al. (1996). *Brotherman: The Odyssey of Black Men in America.* Fawcett Books.

Boyd, Julia A. (1999). *Girlfriend to Girlfriend: Everyday Wisdom and Affirmations from the Sister Circle.* Plume.

Brashler, W. (1994). *The Story of Negro League Baseball.* Ticknor & Fields.

Brathwaite, Keren S. and James, Carl E. (1996). *Educating African Canadians. Toronto: Our Schools Ourselves.* James Lorimer & Company Ltd.

Brooks, Bruce. (1985). *The Moves Make The Man.* HarperCollins Children's Books.

Burns, K. & Miles, W. (1995). *Black Stars in Orbit: NASA' s African American Astronauts.* Gulliver Books.

Century, Douglas. (2000). *Street Kingdom: Five Years Inside the Franklin Avenue Posse.* Warner Books Inc.

Cose, Ellis. (1998). *Color-Blind: Seeing Beyond Race in a Race-Obsessed World.* Perennial.

Cox, Clinton. (1999). *The Forgotten Heroes: The Story of the Buffalo Soldiers.* Bt Bound.

Doctor, Bernard Aquina. (1992). *Malcolm X for Beginners.* Writers and Readers.

Elechi, Amadi. (1999). *Great Ponds.* Delta Systems Co.

Ferris, J. (2003). *Go Free or Die: A Story about Harriet Tubman.* Carolrhoda Books.

Ferris, J. (2003). *Walking the Road to Freedom: A Story about Sojourner Truth.* Carolrhoda Books.

Foster, Cecil. (1996). *A Place Called Heaven The Meaning of Being Black In Canada.* Harper Perennial.

Friskey, Margeret and Parker, Margot. (1990). *What is Martin Luther King Jr. Day.* Children's Book Press

Gantos, Jack. (1995). *Jack's New Power: Stories from a Caribbean Year.* Farrar Straus & Giroux (Juv).

Gardner, Howard. (1999). *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century.* Basic Books.

Gardner, Howard. (1999). *The Disciplined Mind: What All Students Should Understand.* Simon & Schuster.

Gilligan, James. (1997). *Violence: Reflections on a National Epidemic.* Vintage Books.

Gordon, Sheila. (1987). *Waiting for the Rain: A Novel of South Africa.* Orchard Books.

Granfield, Linda. (2001). *Canada Votes: How We Elect Our Government.* Kids Can Press Ltd.

Green, Richard L (Editor). (1996). *Salute to Black Civil Rights Leaders.* Empak Enterprises.

Haley, Alex. (1980). *Roots.* Dell Books.

Hamilton, Virginia. (1971). *The Planet of Junior Brown.* Simon & Schuster.

Hamilton, Virginia. (1991). *In the Beginning: Creation Stories from around the World.* Harcourt.

Hansen, Joyce. (1997). *I Thought My Soul would Rise and Fly: The diary of Patsy, a Freed Girl (Dear America).* Scholastic.

Hoffman, Mary & Binch, Caroline. (1991). *Amazing Grace.* Scott Foresman (Pearson K-12).

Hudson, Karen and Williams, Paul. (1994). *The Will and the Way: Paul R. Williams, Architect.* Rizzoli.

Hudson, Wade, and Hudson, Cheryl (Compilers). (1998). *In Praise of Our Fathers and Our Mothers: A Black Family Treasury of Outstanding Authors and Artists.* Just Us Books.

Isadora, Rachel. (1991). *At the Crossroads.* Greenwillow.

James, Carl E. (1992). *Making It: Black Youth, Racism and Career Aspirations in a Big City.* Mosaic Press.

Jawanze, Kunjufu. (1985). *Countering the Conspiracy to Destroy Black Boys Vol I.* African

American Images.

Jawanze, Kunjufu. (1986). *Countering the Conspiracy to Destroy Black Boys Vol II.* African American Images.

Jawanze, Kunjufu. (1990). *Countering the Conspiracy to Destroy Black Boys Vol III*. African American Images.

Jones, Lealan et al. (1997). *Our America: Life and Death on the South Side of Chicago.* Simon & Schuster.

Katz, William (1995). *Black Women of the Old West.* Atheneum.

Kotlowitz, Alex. (1991) *There Are No Children Here: The Story of Two Boys Growing up in the Other America.* Doubleday.

Lyons, Mary. (1993). *Stitching Stars: The Story Quilts of Harriet Powers.* Scribner's.

Marshall, James Vance. (1984). *Walkabout.* Sundance Pubns.

McKissack, Patricia. (1995). *A Long Hard Journey: the Story of the Pullman Porter.* Walker & Co.

Meltzer, Milton. (1987). *The Black Americans: A History in Their Own Words, 1619 - 1893.* HarperTrophy.

Milne, John. (1995). *No Longer At Ease Intermediate Level).* Delta Systems Co.

Myers, Walter Dean. (1995). *One More River to Cross: An African American Photograph Album.* Harcourt.

Myers, Walter Dean. (1998). *Amistad: A Long Road to Freedom.* Dreamworks.

Myers, Walter Dean. (1999). *The Glory Field.* Bt Bound.

Pollack, Willliam S. (2001). *Real Boys' Voices.* Penguin USA.

Rochman, Hazel. (1999). *Somehow Tenderness Survives: Stories of Southern Africa.* Bt Bound.

Shadwick, Keith. (1995). *The Illustrated Story of Jazz.* Book Sales.

Sheed, Wilfrid. (1975). *Muhammad Ali: A Portrait in Words and Photographs.* Ty Crowell Co.

Shukur, Sanyika. (1998). *The Monster: The Autobiography of an L.A. Gang Member.* Addison-Wesley Publishing.

Sikes, Gini. (1997). *8 Ball Chicks: A Year in the Violent World of Girl Gangs.* Bantam Books.

Simon, David and Burns, Edward. (1998). *The Corner: A Year in the Life of an Inner-City Neighborhood.* Broadway Books.

Smucker, Barbara. (1999). *Runaway to Freedom: A Story of the Underground Railway.* Bt Bound.

Solomon, R. Patrick et al. (1992). *Black Resistance in High School: Forging a Separatist Culture (Frontiers in Education Series).* State University of New York Press.

Stanley, Diane. (1994). *Shaka: King of the Zulus.* Mulberry Books.

Terkel, Studs. (1992). *Race: How Blacks & Whites Think & Feel About the American Obsession.* New Press.

Toronto ALFA Centre. (1992). *Freedom to Me.*

Turner, Robyn Montana. (1993). *Faith Ringgold (The Portraits of Women Artists for Children).* Little Brown & Co (Juv Trd).

Washington, Jackie and Strecker, James. (1996). *More Than a Blues Singer: Jackie Washington Tells His Story.* Minn Mocho Press.

Winter, Jeanette. (1992). *Follow the Drinking Gourd.* Knopf.

Quotations

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will NOT be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Every man must ultimately confront the question who am I?

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

A man who won't die for something is not fit to live.

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Oppressed people cannot remain oppressed forever.

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The major key to your better future is you!

- Tim Rowan

You are never given a wish without also being given the power to make it true. YOU may have to work for it, however.

- Richard Bach

Obstacles are the things we see when we take our eyes off our goal.

- Eric Butterworth

Hold fast to dreams for if dreams die, life is a broken-winged bird that cannot fly.

- Langston Hughes

You'll never see, what you refuse to be. The power in the seeing is BELIEVING.

- Stevie Wonder

You were born God's original. Try not to become someone's copy.

- Marian Wright Edelman

No one can figure out your worth but you.

- Pearl Bailey

We need men to stop giving consent, by their silence, to rape, to sexual abuse, to violence.
- *Byllye Avery*

Never wound a snake, kill it.
- *Harriet Tubman*

We can be our own voices of authority.
- *Elsa Barkley Brown*

I tell my children never use the words, "I can't." Say, "I'll try."
- *Ruby Middleton Forsythe*

Literacy means liberation.
- *Septima P. Clark*

No person has the right to rain on your dreams.
- *Marian Wright Edelman*

It is better to protest than to accept injustice.
- *Rosa Parks*

When you kill the ancestor you kill yourself.
- *Toni Morrison*

Software Resources

Microsoft® Encarta® Africana 2000
Manufacturer: Microsoft

The Complete National Geographic CD-ROM Set
Publisher: National Geographic Interactive

The 2000 Canadian Encyclopedia World Edition
Publisher: McClelland & Stewart

Factory Mystery
(An adventure and strategy game with a range of activities designed to improve the user's English-language, calculations and computer skills.)
Publisher: Micro-Intel, 1997
Alpha Plus Literacy Catalogue No: 428.2 F11 (Literacy)

Issues in English
(An interactive multimedia computer program that covers the areas of listening, reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation from beginner to advanced levels.)
Publisher: Hurstbridge, Australia: Preteo Textware, 1996.
Alpha Plus Literacy Catalogue No: 428.2 K133 (Literacy and ESL)

My first Incredible, Amazing Dictionary
("Over 1,000 first words and their meanings brought to life.")
Publisher: DK Publishing; CD-ROM Software edition (1997)
Alpha Plus Literacy Catalogue No: 423.1 M91 (Literacy)

TriplePlayPlus!
(Interactive games and conversations for English language learning fun. Age 8 - Adult.)
Publisher: Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse Language Systems, 1992-96.
Alpha Plus Literacy Catalogue No: 428.34 T673 (ESL)

All Star Typing
The Learning Company Inc. Cambridge, M.A. www.learningco.com

Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing
The Learning Company Multimedia, 1999

Audiovisual Resources

Above the Rim, 1994

A Lesson Before Dying

Amistad, 1997

Angola Prison (A&E)

Autobiography of Jane Pitman

Beloved, 1998

Boyz N the Hood, 1991

Claudine, 1974

Colour Purple, 1987

Coming to America, 1988

Cool Runnings, 1993

Cooley High, 1975

Cry Freedom, 1987

Do the Right Thing, 1989

Driving Miss Daisy, 1989

Dry White Season, 1989

Eye of the Prize (series)

Eye of the Storm

Fresh, 1995

Ghosts of Mississippi, 1996

Great White Hope, 1970

Harlem Shuffle

How Stella Got Her Groove Back, 1998

Hurricane, The, 1999

Immortal Rebel

Juice, 1994

Jungle Fever, 1991

Lady Sings the Blues, 1972

Malcolm X, 1992

Menace II Society, 1995

Mississippi Burning, 1988

Mo' Better Blues, 1990

New Jersey Drive, 1995

Poetic Justice, 1993

Roots, 1976 (series)

Rosewood

School Daze

She's Gotta Have It, 1987

South Central, 1992

Shaft, 1971

Shaft, 2000

Shaka Zulu

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