

### Global Description

The Foundation Phase describes a small minority of beginning ESL Literacy second language learners who need to develop and practice the specific visual and motor/mechanical skills that are needed in the pre-reading and pre-writing literacy processes. Pre-reading and pre-writing concepts may need to be explained in their first language (L1) by interpreters if learners lack previous reading experience or are unable to make the connection between what is learned in English and what they already know in L1.

### Reading

A Foundation ESL Literacy learner may have limited or no understanding of:

- Reading readiness concepts such as the connection between the real world and oral language and print
- Reading conventions such as left-right or top-down directionality.

A learner in this phase has:

- No understanding of letter/sound correspondence
- No ability to phonetically decode or sound out new words
- Very little or no sight word recognition except for a small number of familiar words in predictable contexts related to immediate needs.

### Writing

A Foundation ESL Literacy learner in this phase has no ability to phonetically encode and write unfamiliar words and may be unfamiliar with:

- The basic mechanics of writing at the level of letter, numeral or word, such as holding a pencil, tracing and copying
- Basic writing conventions, such as where to write on the page or line, and the importance of spacing between letters and words
- Pre-writing concepts, such as the understanding that language can be ordered, structured and captured graphically to make meaning.

### Sociocultural and Linguistic Considerations

The learner will understand (with the help of an interpreter if available):

- The importance placed on the written word in Canada
- The importance of carrying I.D., such as a health card
- The importance of being able to spell name and address in case of a 911 emergency call or finding one's way home if lost
- The relevance of pre-writing activities which provide a necessary base for developing writing skills
- That literacy skills develop along a continuum over a long period of time
- That in a Canadian classroom they may have to deal with:
  - Sitting at a desk or being indoors all day
  - A teacher/student of the opposite sex
  - A young teacher.

## Learning Strategies

Learners in Foundation ESL Literacy classes usually have little or no schooling in their home country. They have developed a number of strategies for coping with survival and everyday living. However, they often lack skills necessary to facilitate successful language learning. At the Foundation Phase, the teacher, perhaps with the aid of an interpreter, will need to encourage learners to adopt strategies, such as:

- Attend school regularly
- Come to school on time, return promptly after coffee breaks, and stay until the end of the class
- Use class time wisely
- Bring school supplies and tools to class
- Bring and wear glasses if needed
- Really believe that it is possible for one to learn to read and write as an adult
- Participate in class activities such as repeating, chanting or singing
- Attempt to listen efficiently and selectively.

In addition, learners at the Foundation Phase, may use a variety of compensatory strategies, such as:

- Check accuracy with the teacher, classmates, family or friends at home, or a written model in class
- Ask for help in first language, body language, or one or two words in the second language
- Go through a silent period during which time the learner observes but demonstrates little measurable contribution.

## Pre-reading strategies

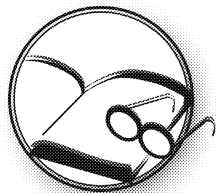
A Foundation ESL Literacy learner is beginning to:

- Use memory to remember letters or numerals
- Use illustrations and symbols as clues to meaning
- Use prior experience to guess answers.

## Pre-writing strategies

A Foundation ESL Literacy learner is beginning to:

- Look back at a model when copying
- Note the placement of letter, word or numeral on the page or line
- Write slowly and clearly
- Attempt to form the letters or numerals carefully and similar to a model
- Practice at school and home.



**Sample Tasks**

**Naming Realia and Pictures**

- Pick up, point to or show realia, pictures/ photos, or geometric symbols or pseudo letters
- Play games such as Simon Says, Bingo, Memory, Tic Tac Toe
- Sing songs or chant
- Cut out / match pictures from flyers, and paste them on a worksheet or poster
- Go on a mini field trip of the site to find same/different items
- Participate in interactive activities to look for items that are different or same/different
- Sort items into piles

**Left-right and Top-down Directionality**

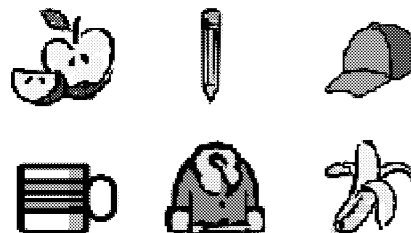
- Arrange pictures according to teacher stimulus, on a boxed grid, to show left-right, top-down directionality
- Cut, paste and arrange visuals on instructor-made worksheets according to model
- Play games
- Listen to teacher and point to or arrange the correct picture showing left-right, top-down directionality
- Listen, point to or arrange pictures to follow left to right, top-down sequencing of events in a story or a story on tape
- Make a class picture book of events based on a field trip or classroom experience, such as making a fruit salad
- Participate in total physical response activities modelled after a series of pictures placed in left-right, top-down sequence, such as miming morning routines

**Letter Names**

- Read aloud the name of letters on flashcards in small groups, pairs, individually, or with a volunteer
- Listen and place / tape / match letters sequentially on a worksheet or into a pocket chart
- Cut out letters from newspaper headlines or flyers
- Match / sort letters into upper / lower case piles
- Go on a walk-about to identify letters on street signs / building
- Play games to reinforce letter names

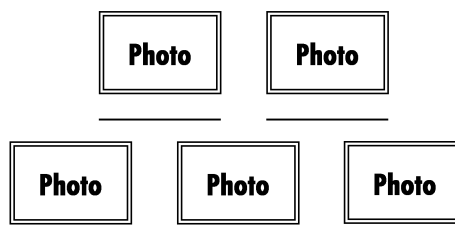
**Examples**

**Arranging Pictures**



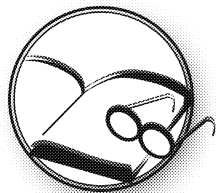
1	2	3
4	5	6

**Making a Class Experience Book**



X	p	t
s	f	o
w	O	a

Language Competencies	Literacy Competencies	Conditions
<p><b>1. Understand the concept that real objects can be represented</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Pictorially on paper</li> <li>· Pictorially on paper in a variety of ways                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Size</li> <li>- Colour</li> <li>- Black and white (outline drawing)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>2. Understand the concept of different with realia</b></p> <p><b>3. Understand the concept of same/different with</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Real objects</li> <li>· Pictures</li> <li>· Geometric symbols</li> <li>· Pseudo letters</li> </ul> <p><b>4. Understand the concept of left-right directionality with</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Pictures (of objects)</li> <li>· Picture stories</li> <li>· Geometric symbols</li> <li>· Pseudo letters</li> </ul> <p><b>5. Understand the concept of top-down directionality with</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Pictures (of objects)</li> <li>· Picture stories</li> <li>· Geometric symbols</li> <li>· Pseudo letters</li> </ul> <p><b>6. Understand the concept of left-right, top-down directionality using lower case letters</b></p> <p><b>7. Identify letters of the alphabet from memory, using lower case letters</b></p> <p><b>8. Identify the letters of the alphabet by name, using upper and lower case letters.</b></p>	<p><b>Match</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Picture to realia</li> <li>· Pictures of various sizes and/or colours</li> </ul> <p>Point to / arrange in order the correct item(s) as visual and/or oral stimulus is given, showing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Same / different</li> <li>· Left-right directionality</li> <li>· Top-down directionality</li> </ul> <p>Recognize / point to and recite the alphabet by rote memory. Read lower case letter names in isolation from memory, in the following order:</p> <p><i>Small letters</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Straight l,v,w,x,z</li> <li>· Circular o,a,c,e,s</li> <li>· Combined r,n,m,u</li> </ul> <p><i>Tall letters</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Straight l,t,k</li> <li>· Circular b,d</li> <li>· Combined h,f</li> </ul> <p><i>Letters extending below the line</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Straight y</li> <li>· Circular p,g</li> <li>· Combined j,q</li> </ul> <p>Match letters that are the same or different in the same order as above.</p> <p>Match lower to upper case letters by using the letter names in the following order :</p> <p>Straight strokes E, F,H,I,L,T                      Slant strokes A,K,M,N,V,W,X,Y                      Circular strokes C,G,J,O,Q,U,S</p> <p>Read upper case letters by name.</p> <p>Recognize letters in different fonts.</p>	<p>Instructions are given with gestures and visual clues.</p> <p>Context strongly supports the utterance, It is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Clear</li> <li>· Functional</li> <li>· Personally relevant</li> <li>· Predictable</li> </ul> <p>Visuals should be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Large</li> <li>· Clear</li> <li>· Uncluttered</li> <li>· Realistic</li> </ul> <p>Oral/aural must be well developed by the teacher in order to ensure the learner's success.</p> <p>Learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· May not necessarily transfer what they may already know in their first language to what is learned in English</li> <li>· May have difficulty with a concept because they have not learned the concept in L1.</li> <li>· Need a lot of repetition to promote adequate learning</li> <li>· May lack ability to check and note own errors</li> <li>· May become easily frustrated if tasks are not appropriate and achievable at their level.</li> </ul> <p>Text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Is clear, easy to read with a lot of white space</li> <li>· Is printed or produced on the computer</li> <li>· Has a consistent font so that significant features of the letters a, g, q, t, and y, are recognizable.</li> <li>· Has a large font which may slowly be decreased over time to 18 pt.</li> <li>· Is not cluttered</li> <li>· A small number of items (3-6)</li> </ul>



**Sample Tasks**

**Examples**

**Recognize and choose own name / address from**

- Pocket chart in class
- Addressed envelopes
- 8 or 9 words used in forms and symbols
- A teacher-made appointment card

Ali	José	Maria
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**Recognize and match form words on flashcards or teacher-made forms in**

- Lower case to lower case
- Upper case to upper case
- Lower case to upper case

name	first	last
last	name	first

**Unscramble word puzzles**

**Practice for 911**

- Spell own name / address
- Read aloud personal information

ad	dress
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**Arrange letter cards to form words**

**Play games to reinforce and match**

- Words used in forms  
*NAME to Name*
- Words used in forms to personal information  
*Name to Ali*

FIRST NAME	address
ADDRESS	first name

**Read aloud simple, completed teacher-made forms**

- Consistent format
- Varied format

**Identify real life survival symbols, such as STOP, HOSPITAL by**

- Going on a walkabout of the building or neighbourhood
- Going on a scavenger hunt
- Taking photos of real signs and making a booklet

**Recognize and point to corresponding symbol as teacher names it.**

**Match symbols in large/small groups, pairs or individually**

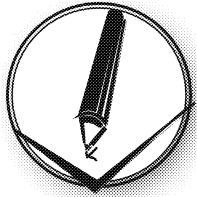
**Play games to help review and develop mastery, such as Bingo**

**Cut out/find/circle/point to/count target words used in forms found in magazines/telephone books**

**Display target vocabulary on word cards/collages/posters around room for reference to practice target words**

First Name	Ali
Family Name	Abdullah
Address	245-95 Ellen

Language Competencies	Literacy Competencies	Conditions
<p>1. Understand the concept that print conveys personal meaning</p> <p>2. Understand the relationship between words used in forms and personal information</p> <p>3. Understand the meaning of common symbols for everyday survival</p>	<p>Recognize in print, learner’s own</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· First name</li> <li>· Family name</li> <li>· Full name</li> <li>· Address</li> </ul> <p>Recognize basic sight words used in forms by providing oral or actional response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· In lower case letters</li> <li>· In upper case</li> <li>· In upper and lower case</li> </ul> <p>Recognize and match</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Basic words used in forms with learner’s personal information</li> </ul> <p>Recognize basic survival symbols and provide oral (or actional) response</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 10px auto;"> <span style="font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold;">H</span> </div>	<p>Learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· May benefit from having language and literacy concepts explained in first language.</li> <li>· Have needs which dictate the level of difficulty of classroom tasks</li> <li>· May need to refer to visual model of spelling such as address on I.D. card</li> <li>· May experience difficulty with letter-sound correspondence in Phase I if exposed too extensively to letter names initially in Foundation Phase</li> <li>· Require repetition to develop pre-reading skills, as they may lack traditional study skills</li> <li>· May lose focus if activity is too long or not personally relevant</li> <li>· May show signs of confusion between the instructions <i>Show me your name.</i> and <i>Show me the word “name”.</i></li> </ul> <p>Teacher-produced flashcards or worksheets are written on lines so that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Learners have continual visual exposure to the letters on the line</li> <li>· The format is consistent</li> </ul> <p>Forms are clear and easy to read with large print or 20 pt. font.</p> <p>Pictures, symbols, and realia are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Common, familiar and relevant to learners’ lives</li> <li>· In context or in a photograph format</li> </ul>



**Sample Tasks**

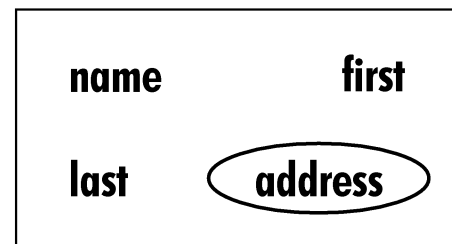
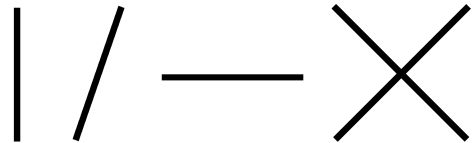
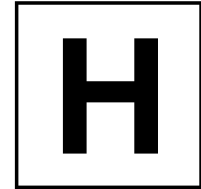
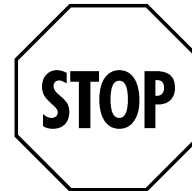
- Demonstrate correct posture and method of holding and using writing apparatus, progressing from
  - Chalk, to
  - Large marker, to
  - Fine marker, to
  - Pencil
- Go on a walk about/search and air draw/ find/trace lines, circles, combination strokes, numerals, letters found on survival symbols and signs
- Practice making strokes on chalkboard and paper (Unlined and then lined)
- Trace or copy strokes, numerals, letters found in
  - Flyers
  - Magazines
  - Newspapers
  - Currency
  - Washing instructions
  - Bottles or cans
- On teacher prepared worksheet
  - Match
  - Underline
  - Cross out
  - Make a diagonal line to
  - Circle

Items that are the 'same or different' to practice visual discrimination and using writing for a purpose

- Play games such as Bingo or Tic Tac Toe to practice strokes, numerals and letters
- Listen and underline or circle the correct numeral/letter from a sequence
- Fill in missing letters of basic personal information vocabulary
- Take a letter or numeral dictation, first with a model then without a model
- Match, trace or draw lines from copy
  - Print upper case to lower case letters
- Print the alphabet on unlined and then lined paper
- Write a sequence of random letters, or letters in basic personal information words, changing from upper case to lower case or vice versa
- Write basic personal information according to teacher stimulus

Fill out a simple basic information form with teacher guidance

**Examples**



Language Competencies	Literacy Competencies	Conditions
<p><b>1. Use oral language to use new literacy concepts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Demonstrate                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Correct chalk holding position at chalkboard</li> <li>- Correct writing posture at desk</li> <li>- Correct method of holding and using writing apparatus progressing from chalk to large marker to fine tip markers to pencils</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>2. Understand the concepts of</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Left/right directionality of strokes</li> <li>· Top/down directionality of strokes</li> <li>· Same/different strokes progressing from air drawing to tracing to copying</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Demonstrate the ability to print</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Lower case letters</li> <li>· Upper case letters</li> <li>· Numerals one to ten</li> <li>· Words used for personal information progressing from copying the model to dictation</li> </ul>	<p>Demonstrate the correct sitting posture and method of holding and using writing apparatus.</p> <p>Air draw/trace/copy strokes or combination of strokes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· In the air</li> <li>· On unlined chalkboard</li> <li>· On unlined paper</li> <li>· On lined chalkboard</li> <li>· On lined paper</li> </ul> <p>In the following order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Vertical lines</li> <li>· Horizontal lines</li> <li>· Diagonal lines</li> <li>· Circles</li> <li>· Combinations- shapes, letters, numerals, words used for personal information</li> </ul> <p>Using left-right and top-down directionality</p> <p>Copy strokes in the following order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Directly under the original</li> <li>· Beside the original</li> <li>· A distance from the original</li> <li>· From chalkboard/flashcard to paper</li> </ul> <p>Copy a sequence pattern by printing the correct items when given a sequence model</p> <p>Trace, then copy lower case letters in the following order</p> <p><i>Small letters</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Straight            l, v, w, x, z</li> <li>· Circular            o, c, a, e, s</li> <li>· Combined          n, m, r, u</li> </ul> <p><i>Tall letters</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Straight            l, t, k</li> <li>· Circular            b, d</li> <li>· Combined          j, q</li> </ul> <p>Trace, then copy upper case letters in the following order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Straight strokes    I, L, E, F, T, H</li> <li>· Slant strokes        A, M, N, V, K</li> <li>· Circular Strokes    O, Q, C, U, J, S, G</li> <li>· Combined strokes   D, B, P, R</li> </ul> <p>Copy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Basic personal information</li> <li>· Basic words used in forms</li> </ul>	<p>Learners may</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Tire very easily</li> <li>· Exhibit tension in shoulders and hands</li> <li>· Not be willing to take risks because of a lack of confidence</li> <li>· Need a lot of teacher guidance and repetition</li> <li>· See initial pre-writing activities as childish</li> <li>· Need supervision and immediate correction</li> <li>· Have difficulty mentally reconstructing the teacher's model</li> </ul> <p>Printing class is interesting and short</p> <p>Instructions are given with gestures and visual clues</p>