Speaking the Language: Working Effectively with Clients/Learners at Lower Levels

Presented by: Robyn Cook-Ritchie For the Northern Literacy Networks February 14, 2017

Originally developed by Laubach Literacy Ontario and Literacy Link South Central

Topics

- General overview of challenges and strategies when working with this group of learners/clients
- Numeracy and literacy strategies and resources
- Assessment and learners working at lower levels (best milestones)
- Partnerships ideas and examples between Employment Service agencies and Literacy and Basic Skills agencies

Outcomes

- Employment Services (ES) participants will have a better understanding of the challenges experienced in the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) program as well as some of the strategies that are used. In addition, they will take away ideas about how the LBS program can benefit certain client groups that are also accessing ES.
- LBS participants will learn about strategies, best practices and resources for both literacy and numeracy learners working at lower levels.



Low literacy skills can impact your clients' ability to:

- successfully complete apprenticeship training
- learn during training and upgrading programs
- use a computer
- get and keep a job
- understand documents such as the participant registration form
- budget and manage money
- continue working when job requirements change

- Almost ½ the people of Ontario struggle with literacy. It is a hidden issue.
- Many newcomers to Ontario are learning to speak English. Reading may be a challenge for them.
- No matter what literacy and language skills people have, we can all experience information overload.



Source: http://www.llsc.on.ca/services/clear-writing/clear-writing-myth-vs-truth (last accessed 10Feb2017)

What is low literacy?

- Low literacy is more than a reading problem.
- People with low literacy may also have difficulties understanding oral and written information.
- Many tend to have different thinking strategies and problem-solving approaches.
- People with low literacy skills are likely to understand verbal and written information more slowly than others.
- What seems to be a "bad" attitude may be a literacy problem.

Source: http://policeabc.ca/files/factsheets_englishPDFs/Ch04FactSheet01.pdf (last accessed 9Feb2017)

Signs when asked to read something



- make excuses to avoid the task:
 - "I can't read this because I forgot my glasses,"
 - "I don't have time to read this now. Can I take it home?"
 - "I hurt my hand, so I can't fill out this form."
- read very slowly
- stare at the page they're supposed to read, but do not move their eyes back and forth
- ask questions about things that are clearly stated in the document
- make a lot of spelling or grammar mistakes in their writing, or fill out a form with incorrect information
- bring a friend or relative with them who helps with reading and writing

Signs in an intake or interview situation

- give what seem to be indirect, confused, or irrelevant answers to questions
- act confused or ask questions that do not seem to relate to the problem or situation
- not ask any questions at all (rather than reveal they don't understand what's going on)
- nod to indicate they agree or understand something, but then not do what you expect

Source: http://policeabc.ca/files/factsheets_englishPDFs/Ch04FactSheet01.pdf (last accessed 9Feb2017)

Other Signs...

- not show up for meetings (because they did not understand the instructions on a written notice)
- sign documents that they do not understand (rather than admit they have a reading problem)
- look uncomfortable when someone gives them something to read
- give the impression that they don't understand the next step in the process
- become frustrated and angry easily; they may storm out, or become confrontational

Source: http://policeabc.ca/files/factsheets_englishPDFs/Ch04FactSheet01.pdf (last accessed 9Feb2017)

Possible Effects of Low Literacy

- Development of coping skills: e.g., memory, dependence on others, cover-up.
- Lack of self-esteem or self-worth.
- Tremendous frustration and anger.
- Increased unemployment and need for public assistance.
- Loss of people's talents in the workforce and in the community.
- Accidents and injury on the job, resulting in increased costs to individuals, businesses, and society.
- High number of school dropouts.
- Inability of parents to reinforce the skills their children are learning in school. This creates a cycle of illiteracy.
- Loss of human rights, e.g., the right to vote, the right of informed consent.
- Poor health and resulting high health care costs.
- Is a factor that supports individuals living in poverty to stay in poverty. Education is one of the few ways to really help an individual break the generational cycle of poverty

Source: <u>http://www.laubach-on.ca/teach/members/handbook</u> (last accessed 8Feb2017)



Helping someone you suspect might have low literacy skills

Debilitating Help	Enabling Help
Speaking for or providing answers.	Asking questions and giving time for reflection and response.
Being inconsistent in terms of treatment of errors.	Setting clear expectations and being consistent.
Overlooking errors.	Discussing errors and providing training/coaching for avoiding errors.
Excusing poor performance.	Reviewing expectations and goals.
Avoiding or deflecting issues.	Dealing with issues promptly.
Assigning meaningless or highly repetitive tasks.	Making tasks relevant to real life.
Providing simplistic analysis or explanation.	Putting things in larger perspective; providing context.
Making choices for the student.	Soliciting options; providing structure that enables the student to choose.
Telling.	Asking.

Source: Laubach Literacy Ontario: "Adult Learning" online tutor training course (last accessed 9Feb2017)



- Don't assume someone can fill out a complex form or read a complex document.
- "Would you like me to fill that form out with you, or would you prefer to do it yourself?" can be the standard phrase, instead of "Do you need a pen?"
- If there is room, give people privacy to complete the form on their own or with a reception staff/counselor.

Source: http://www.johnhoward.ca/document/Wall/wall2_8.htm

Clear Writing

Using Clear Writing allows you to make your written materials easier for everyone to understand.

Benefits:

- Increase your marketing advantage and program participation. Clients have a better chance of understanding your promotional materials and what you have to offer.
- Understanding information will decrease your clients' anxiety.
- Make it easy for people to understand policies. Clients will have a greater chance of doing what you need them to do.
- More people will trust what you have to say. Clear messages are powerful messages.

Source: http://www.llsc.on.ca/services/clear-writing (last accessed 9Feb2017)

GOOD WRITING IS CLEAR THINKING MADE VISIBLE.

BILL WHEELER

Clear Writing Myth #1: It will take too much time and be too hard

- Clear Writing can be done one step at a time. Pick a time that is **convenient** to start reviewing how effective your written materials are. Gather feedback about your materials from the people you work with. Ask **staff** for feedback during regular staff meetings. Ask your **clients** for feedback. Everyone likes to offer ideas and it shows you respect their opinions.
- Many Clear Writing tips are just common sense such as "short sentences are easier to read".

Source: <u>http://www.llsc.on.ca/services/clear-writing/clear-writing-myth-vs-truth</u> (last accessed 9Feb2017)

Clear Writing Myth #2: It will make things look plain and boring and "dumb down" our materials

- Clear Writing suggests that "less is more." You can still be creative and use easy to understand words, more white space and graphics that guide the reader.
- Clear Writing shows you how to communicate in a way that is more effective and easier to understand. Your message won't be compromised and more people will understand what you are trying to say.

Source: <u>http://www.llsc.on.ca/services/clear-writing/clear-writing-myth-vs-truth</u> (last accessed 9Feb2017)

Clear Writing Myth #3: We've never had a complaint about our materials so they must be fine

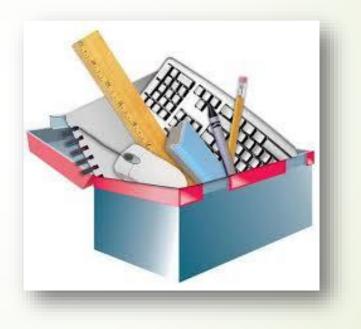
- You might never know how well your materials are understood.
- If people can't understand what you are trying to communicate to them you may never hear from them.
- If something looks complicated or hard to read, people might just ignore it.

Clear Writing Tips

- Maintain good use of margins and white space
- Use upper and lower casing, not all capitals
- Use graphics sparingly. They should reflect your message but not take up important white space.
- When using lists, list items in the same grammatical form
- Introduce one new piece of information per sentence
- Use a contrast of dark ink on a light background (Best combination: black ink on pale yellow background-worst combination is blue ink on a blue background)
- Use the active voice (for example, "We decided" rather than "It was decided")
- Be aware of acronyms
- Keep sentence tenses consistent
- Tell your readers what you want them to do, not what you don't want them to do

Source: http://www.llsc.on.ca/services/clear-writng (last accessed 11Feb2017)

Numeracy/Literacy Strategies and Tools for LBS Providers



- Build comfort and confidence by doing activities to help learners think about the experience they already have working with numbers
- Help learners link their experience with math language and concepts
- Help learners learn to express math concepts and equations in words
- Use games and manipulatives to introduce concepts and reinforce learning
- Use graphic organizers to help learners solve problems

Source: Making Math Manageable Proliteracy Education Network http://courses.proliteracyednet.org

Build Confidence with Prior Knowledge

Sample Activity

- Give learners a handout with whole numbers from 1 to 100.
- Have them work in pairs or small groups.
- Ask them to label as many numbers as they can with something from real life (e.g. 12 cans of pop in a case).
- Discuss the answers as a group.

1	
2. Socks	
3. Drinking boxes	
4	
5	
Etc.	

Link Experience to Math

Sample activity

- Have learners brainstorm a list of all the places they use math in everyday life, at school and at work
- Use that list to create a selfassessment to determine what the learner can already do and what they need to work on



Express in Words

Sample Activity

- Have the learners write a simple math equation/problem.
- Trade the equation with a partner and write or say a math word problem using that equation.
- Practice this technique to help a learner become more comfortable with word problems.

2+2=4

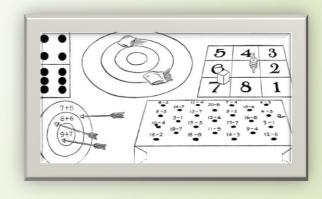
If John buys two coffees and Helen buys two coffees, how many coffees are there altogether?

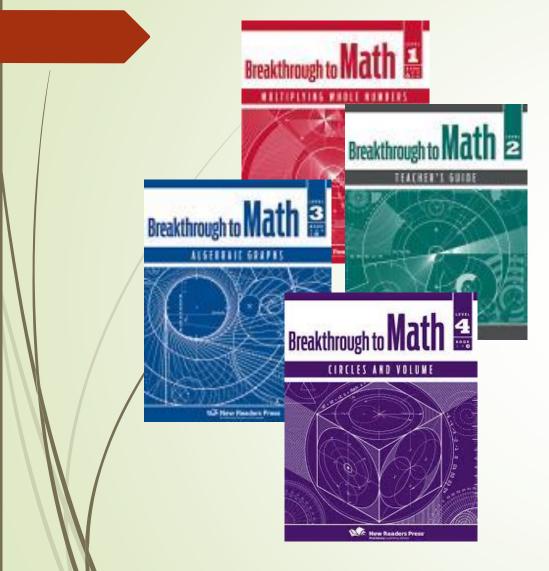
Use Games

- Tablet/Ipad apps there are too many to list!
- Card games
- Dominoes
- Connect 4
- Monopoly
- The Game of Life

Incorporate Manipulatives

- Place value blocks
- Fraction circles
- Clock manipulatives for analog time
- Money
- Pattern blocks
- Egg cartons





Breakthrough to Math New Readers Press <u>http://www.laubach-</u> on.ca/bookstore/breakthrough-to-math

- A four-level series designed specifically to help students overcome learning obstacles and develop math confidence.
- Concepts are broken down and focus on one skill at a time.
- Includes graphic organizers for problem solving.
- Real-life applications are included.



Modern Math Modules

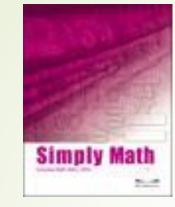
Laubach Literacy Ontario

http://www.laubach-on.ca/bookstore/book/modernmath-modules

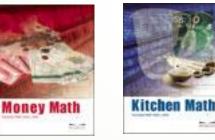
- Module 1: Reading and Writing Real-Life Numbers
- Module 2: Adding Real-Life Numbers
- Module 3: Subtracting Real-Life Numbers
- Module 4: Multiplying Real-Life Numbers
- Module 5: Dividing Real-Life Numbers

Applications are cross-referenced with the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF).

Can be downloaded free of charge!







20.07

Everyday Math Skills Workbooks Series NWT Literacy Council

http://www.nwtliteracy.ca

- This math skills booklet Simply Math is designed to help adult learners with math operations.
- Written in plain language, it covers basic math skills, fractions, decimals, percentages, metric units, and measurements.
- It is to be used with the three workbooks in the NWT Literacy Council's Everyday Math Skills series -Money Math, Kitchen Math and Home Math.
- Free to download

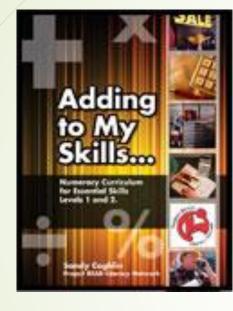


Numeracy in Action

Community Literacy of Ontario

http://www.communityliteracyofontario.ca/numeracyin-action/

- The Understand and Use Numbers Curriculum focuses on the task groups of Manage Money; Manage Time; Use Numbers; and Manage Data and contains 4 – 5 sample task-based activities for each of the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework's level indicators related to this competency.
- Includes suggested modifications for learners working at lower levels.
- Free to download.



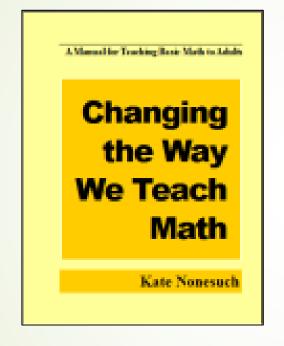
Adding to My Skills Numeracy Curriculum for Essential Skills Level 1 and 2

http://www.projectread.ca/resources/publications

Project Read

- This is a Numeracy Curriculum for learners at Essential Skills Levels 1 and 2. Its main focus is to use real life numeracy activities as a starting point in order to develop skills required in the workplace.
- The curriculum is set up for a six week class, three days per week, at three hours per day, but was also fieldtested as a stand-alone document for each class.
- The learning is also supplemented with many on-line sites and the learning is enhanced through using the LearningHUB with learners. The LearningHUB is familiar with the curriculum and has set up specific learning to assist with individuals going through the various activities.

Free to download.



Changing the Way We Teach Math by Kate Nonesuch

http://katenonesuch.com/resources/ math/

- Research, resources, tips and techniques to teach basic math to adult learners
- Free to download



http://taskbasedactivitiesforlbs.ca

There are currently **142** level 1 Understand and Use Numbers task-based activities on the website.



- Includes text and narrative
- Can access without signing in
- Generic information

http://www.handsonbanking.org/en/



Literacy Strategies

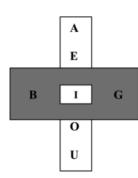
- Build letter and sound recognition
- Increase word recognition
- Improve fluency and expression
- Increase comprehension
- Transfer to real-life applications and situations

Source: LLO Tutor Workshop Handbook- Revised February 2015, Laubach Literacy Ontario http://www.laubach-on.ca/teach/members/handbook

Literacy Strategies

Skill	Strategies			
Letter and sound recognition	Visual puKey word			
Word recognition	IdentifyinDevelopRecogni	 Developing a sight vocabulary Recognizing the shapes of words 		
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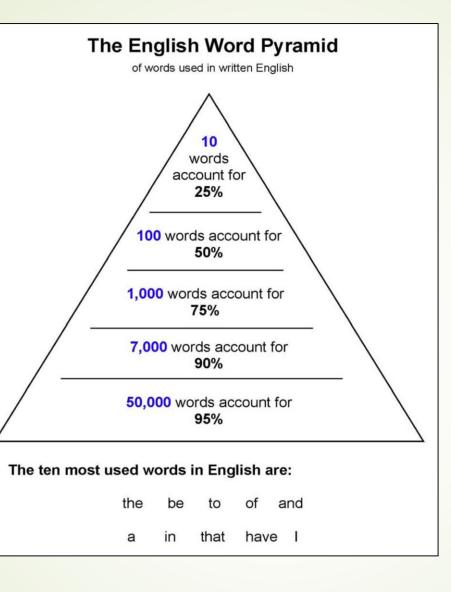
S	9	girl g	g	g
	6	hand h	h	h



work	restaurant	play
Source: LLO Tu	utor Workshop Handbook	_

Source: LLO Tutor Workshop Handbook-Revised February 2015, Laubach Literacy Ontario <u>http://www.laubach-</u> <u>on.ca/teach/members/handbook</u>





89% of all words are spelled according to recognized patterns, the other 11% are learned as sight words.

Sample Activities:

- Create a word bank
- Use flashcards
- Circle or highlight sight words on real-life materials related to the learner's goal path
- Create cloze activities using materials related to the learner's goal path

Source: LLO Tutor Workshop Handbook- Revised February 2015, Laubach Literacy Ontario http://www.laubach-on.ca/teach/members/handbook

Literacy Strategies

	Skill	Strategies
/	Fluency and Expression	 Phrasing Using Punctuation Modeling Duet Reading

Techniques for increasing fluency:

- Choose text that is slightly too difficult for the learner. Read the material together using the Duet Reading method.
- Model reading a sentence or paragraph and then have the learner read it.
- Alternate reading sentences or paragraphs with the learner.

Source: LLO Tutor Workshop Handbook- Revised February 2015, Laubach Literacy Ontario http://www.laubach-on.ca/teach/members/handbook

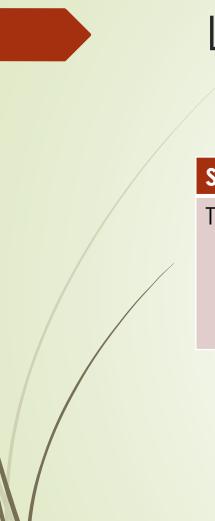
Literacy Strategies

Skill	Strategies
Comprehension	 Active Reading Questioning Relating to Experience Increasing Variety

Techniques for Improving Comprehension:

- Preview the text- point out titles, headings, etc.
- Assess prior knowledge find out what the learner knows about the topic
- Identify the purpose for reading
- Make predictions about what the text will tell you
- Review vocabulary

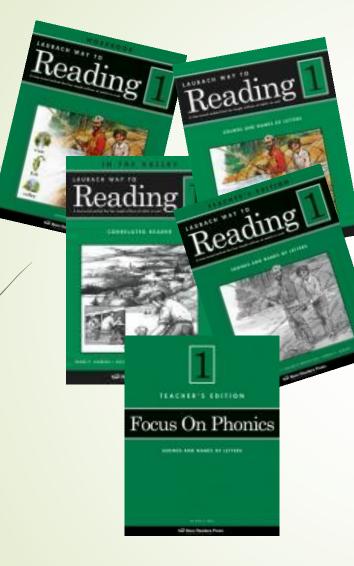
Source: LLO Tutor Workshop Handbook- Revised February 2015, Laubach Literacy Ontario http://www.laubach-on.ca/teach/members/handbook



Literacy Strategies

Skill	Strategies
Transfer to Real Life Situations	 Using everyday materials Generalizing Scanning/skimming Doing task-based activities

Source: LLO Tutor Workshop Handbook- Revised February 2015, Laubach Literacy Ontario http://www.laubach-on.ca/teach/members/handbook



Laubach Way to Reading

New Readers Press

http://www.laubach-on.ca/bookstore/laubach-way-toreading

- The Laubach method was developed specifically to help adults with limited or no reading skills achieve success and become confident readers.
- 4 levels- Each level has:
 - Skill Books: lessons introduce skills step by step, in a structured, familiar pattern to help build student confidence
 - Workbooks: contains extensions of the skill book lessons, and a variety of oral and written activities on vocabulary and grammar concepts
 - Correlated Readers: pick up where skill books leave off, and contain reading passages that give students independent reading practice while reinforcing lessons learned in the Skill Books and Workbooks
 - Teacher's Manuals: available for each level, the Teacher's Manuals offer detailed lesson notes, and reduced student book pages for easy lesson planning
 - Focus on Phonics which complements Laubach Way to Reading by reinforcing sound-symbol relationships.

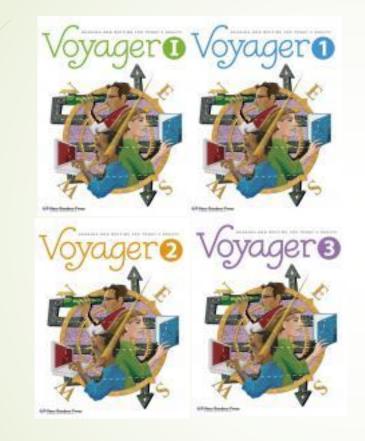


LWR+

Laubach Litearacy Ontario

http://www.laubachon.ca/bookstore/llo-publications

- LWR+ Task-Based Activities are aligned with the competencies and task groups within the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF) including level indicators and performance descriptors.
- They can also be used as standalone activities for learners at (IALS) Level 1 who are not using Laubach Way to Reading skill books.



Voyager: Reading and Writing for Today's Adults

New Readers Press

http://www.laubachon.ca/bookstore/voyager

- Focuses on essential strategies learners need to be successful readers and writers
- Learner interest inventories
- Placement tools
- Skills preview and reviews

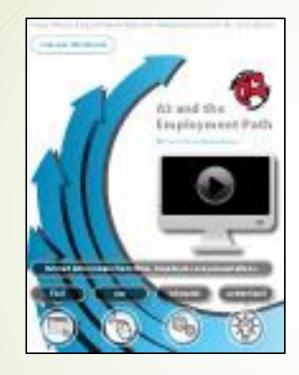


Challenger 2nd Edition

New Readers Press

http://www.laubachon.ca/bookstore/challenger-2ndedition

- An eight-level integrated series that develops reading, writing, and reasoning skills through high-interest fiction and nonfiction stories relevant to today's adults.
- Placement tools
- Puzzles



A3 and the Employment Path

Project Read

http://www.projectread.ca/resources/ publications

- Curriculum created for the OALCF Competency A3 - Extract information from films, broadcasts and presentations
- Instructor Manual and Learner Workbook

Free to download!



Movie Segments for Warm-Ups and Follow-Ups

http://warmupsfollowups.blogspot.ca

- This blog contains a series of movie segments to be used to brainstorm, warm up, and follow up on a variety of different topics.
- Includes the movie segments, lesson plans, and varied topics to foster conversation.
- Great source for A3 activities (extract information from films, broadcasts and presentations).



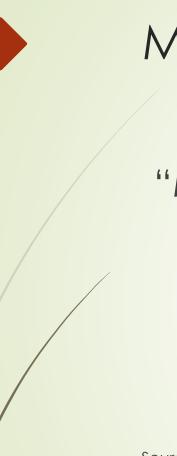
http://taskbasedactivitiesforlbs.ca

Competency	Number of Level 1 Task-Based Activities
Find and Use Information	251
Communicate Ideas and Information	228
Use Digital Technology	86
Manage Learning	24
Engage with Others	6

Milestones

- "Learners will not be expected to perform every milestone task; they will only perform those tasks that are appropriate to their goal path and reflect what they need to focus on in the LBS Program."
- "Furthermore, milestone tasks are not intended to become the sum total of a learner's program; instead, they are intended to support program delivery by informing instructional content and by providing common criteria for tracking learner progress."

Source: Practitioner Guide to Task-Based Programming, Employment Ontario, p. 18



Milestones

"Milestones for Competency E: Manage Learning may be a good place to start in the milestone selection process."

Source: Milestones User Guide, March 2014, Employment Ontario, p. 6

Milestones

- 22 of the 60 milestones are now available in a version adapted to face-toface administration.
- They are identified in the Milestone Index by the use of "-a" next to the milestone number in the milestone file.
- Adapted milestones are intended to support learners with limited reading skills.
- Both the original and adapted versions assess abilities at the same level.
- Practitioners should review both versions to determine which version suits the individual needs of the learner.

Source: Milestones User Guide, March 2014, Employment Ontario, p. 6

Milestones with an Adapted Version

Level 1	Level 2/3	No Level
1,2,8,9,15,18,19,20, 27,28,37,41,45,48, 49,54,57	58, 59	14, 36, 60

Best Milestones to use with Lower Level Learners Identified by Literacy Champions

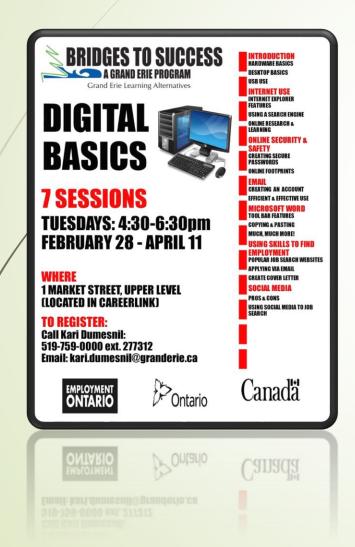
- Milestone 1 or 2 little text to read through and simple searching/locating information
- Milestone 8 or 9 little text to read through and simple searching/locating information
- Milestone 15 oral communication focus
- Milestones 18, 10 or 20 tasks common to daily living
- Milestone 27, 28 using information they are familiar with
- Milestone 36 lots of flexibility
- Milestone 54, 55 common frequently done activities

For more information check out the LNO website http://www.learningnetworks.ca/WesternRegionBestPracti ceInterviews.php

Partnerships between ES and LBS



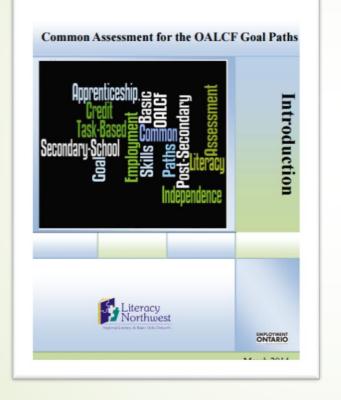








Common Assessment for OALCF Goal Paths Literacy Northwest



Provides assessment tools organized by the five Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework goal paths.

https://www.northernliteracy.ca/ upload/documents/commonassessment/1-ca-oalcfintroduction-resourcepackage.pdf

Free to download!

Similar Suitability Indicators

Indicator	LBS	ES	YJC
Education	Less than grade 12	Less than or equal to grade 12	Grade 12 or lower
Sources of Income	 OW/ODSP recipient OSDP Dependent No source of income Crown Ward 	 OW/ODSP recipient OSDP Dependent No source of income Crown Ward 	 OW/ODSP recipient OSDP Dependent No source of income Crown Ward
Out of school or training	Out of education or training for 6 years or more	Out of school, training six months or more (26 weeks)	N/A
Self-Identifies	Indigenous PersonPerson with a disability	Indigenous PersonPerson with a disability	Indigenous PersonPerson with a disability
Age	 Over 45 and under 64 	 Older than 44 years of age 	N/A

Service Coordination

Referrals in and referrals out between LBS and ES agencies "count" towards service coordination.



