



## COMMUNITY LITERACY OF ONTARIO

### Exploring Your Hobbies, Interests & Skills

#### Introduction

Community Literacy of Ontario (CLO) is pleased to share our “Exploring Your Hobbies, Interests and Skills” Resource. To help meet the needs of under-represented groups, CLO has been funded by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development to develop seven curriculum resources that meet the needs of under-represented learners, introduce the Government of Canada’s Skills for Success model, and align with the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework.

Adult learners in Ontario’s Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) programs typically face multiple challenges besides low levels of literacy. From CLO’s perspective, under-represented learners are the adult learners in LBS programs who face additional barriers that make thriving in Ontario more difficult. Factors include but are not limited to:

- Poverty
- Disabilities
- Mental health issues
- Age-related challenges
- Learners who are Indigenous persons, visible minorities, or immigrants
- Gender inequality
- Sexual orientation discrimination
- And other socio-economic inequities

This resource encourages a closer look at how hobbies and interests often involve skills that can be optimized and used in other ways. The **Exploring Your Hobbies, Interests and Skills** resource is designed for Level 1 learners in Ontario’s Literacy and Basic Skills program. It has links to both the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework and the Skills for Success model. A supporting activity which has been articulated to the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework and which outlines the incorporated Skills for Success is included at the end of the resource.

In May 2021, the Government of Canada’s Office of Literacy and Essential Skills (OLES) introduced its Skills for Success model (<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/jobs/training/initiatives/skills-success.html>) as an update to the well-known model of Essential Skills.

CLO looked at extensive research conducted by the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) on the Skills for Success model while developing this resource. For more information, the SRDC’s *Skills for Success Implementation Guidance Final Report* is available at <https://www.srdc.org/publications/Skills-for-Success-implementation-guidance-final-report--details.aspx> and more information is available in their research report to support the launch of *Skills for Success: Structure evidence and recommendations – Final Report* <https://www.srdc.org/publications/Research-report-to-support-the-launch-of-Skills-for-Success-Structure-evidence-and-recommendations-Final-report-details.aspx>

## For Practitioners – More on the Skills for Success

While there are **nine Skills for Success**, in this resource, CLO focusses in part on the entry level skill components of **Creativity and Innovation**.

### **Creativity and Innovation**

Creativity and innovation is your ability to imagine, develop, express, encourage, and apply ideas in ways that are novel, unexpected, or challenge existing methods and norms.

This skill is new in the updated Skills for Success model and, according to the SRDC’s Report, responds to the growing importance of soft and social-emotional skills in the labour market. Being able to think in creative and innovative ways can generate new solutions and ideas, and this is a skill that is becoming desired by employers.

Looking at hobbies, interests and skills through a lens of creativity and innovation offers the opportunity for learners to see how what they enjoy in non-working environments can point them in goal-related directions. Based on personal interests and hobbies and their underlying skills, there can be connections to current and future independence, secondary school, post-secondary school, apprenticeship, and employment goals.

While work is still being done for assessment of Creativity and Innovation, there are general guidelines for proficiency. To correspond with the Level 1 content and activities geared to learners with lower skill levels, we used the following entry level proficiency from the Skills for Success model.



## Exploring Your Hobbies, Interests & Skills

Exploring Your Hobbies, Interests and Skills contains four sections:

1. Overview of Hobbies and Interests
2. Transferable Skills
3. Hobbies and Creativity
4. Supporting Activity

### Section 1 – Overview of Hobbies and Interests

So, you want to explore your hobbies and interests? Here are a few things that are true:

- Hobbies and interests are good for you
- They can get you out in the community meeting new people
- Hobbies help you learn new things and gain new skills
- They can increase your creativity
- Because **you** want to do them, hobbies are fun!



**To be really happy, one should have at least two or three hobbies.”**

**Sir Winston Churchill**

## Types of Hobbies and Interests

There are so many types of hobbies and interests. There are hobbies many people get involved in, such as knitting. There are hobbies that are more unusual, such as model trains. Different hobbies meet the needs and interests of different people. You can do the hobbies you like. That is what makes them so good.

When you are working on your hobbies, you are also building skills. Here are just a few examples of hobbies and skills.

### Collecting things

Many people enjoy collecting things. It could be:

- Stamps
- Coins
- Teacups
- Rocks
- Spoons
- Seashells
- Pokémon cards
- Stuffed animals
- Comic books
- And so much more

Would collecting things be a good hobby for you?  Yes  No  I'm not sure

If you said yes, what would you like to collect? \_\_\_\_\_

### Digital

There are many types of digital hobbies and interests. Here are some examples:

- Creating a blog to share ideas
- Digital photography
- Social media

Would like to have a digital hobby?  Yes  No  I'm not sure

If you said yes, what are you interested in doing? \_\_\_\_\_



## Choosing Hobbies

There are so many types of hobbies to choose from. How might you choose a hobby that best suits you? Remember, there is no wrong choice.

I would choose a hobby that suites me based on: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

One **great** thing about hobbies is you can quit whenever you like. Start one and if you don't like it, just change to another.

Here are some things to think about when exploring hobbies:

- What hobbies did I have in the past that I enjoyed?
- What new interests do I have?
- What am I good at?
- After a busy day, how do I like to relax?
- Is there something I'd like to learn more about?

Write some notes below about what you will think about when exploring hobbies.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## The Cost of Hobbies and Interests

Some hobbies cost more than others. That is something you'll need to think about when exploring a hobby. Here are some examples:

- Hockey is a very expensive sport. Baseball and soccer are much cheaper. That's because hockey equipment and ice time cost a lot of money.
- Knitting is usually cheaper than sewing. This is because with sewing, you need a sewing machine. Fabrics are often more expensive than yarn, too.

There can be ways to make a hobby less expensive. For example:

- Hiking is a cheap hobby. You just put on your running shoes and head out! But sometimes, you might need a car to get to a hiking trail. If you don't have a car, luckily some hiking clubs will share rides. It is also nice to have companions to enjoy the hike with.
- You might like to start a garden, but you live in an apartment. Did you know that there are community gardens? In many cities and towns, you can use a small plot of land to grow a garden.
- If you collect items like fancy teacups it could be expensive to buy them. Even from second hand shops they may cost too much. But you could get great deals at yard sales or on Facebook marketplace!
- You may like to learn about cooking Italian food. Cooking classes can be too expensive, however. You can go to YouTube and find free cooking class videos instead.

What are two ways you can make a hobby less expensive?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Can you think of any hobbies that are completely free? Write one idea below!

\_\_\_\_\_

## Alone or in a Group?

When you explore hobbies, think how you want to get involved. There are many different ways! You can do a hobby alone or as part of a group. It just depends on what you prefer.

- Some people like to work on their hobbies alone. For example:
  - *Sewing*
  - *Painting*
  - *Wood carving*
- Others enjoy being with one or two friends. For example:
  - *Fishing*
  - *Hunting*
- Some like to be in a small group. For example:
  - *Playing cards*
  - *Bowling*
- Some people enjoy large groups. For example:
  - *Playing on a baseball team*
  - *Playing bingo*
- Others enjoy getting involved online. For example:
  - *Gaming*
  - *Joining an online trivia group*

How would you prefer to be involved in a hobby? You might have more than one preference. Choose all that apply!

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alone                   | <input type="checkbox"/> In a large group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> With one or two friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Online           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> In a small group        |   |

## Where Can I Learn More?

You can learn more about hobbies and interests that are available in your community or online. Here are some tips to learn more:

- Ask your family and friends
- Visit the websites of organizations you'd like to get involved with (Kinsmen Club, bowling leagues, community centres, etc.)
- Join community groups on Facebook
- Search the Internet
- Ask a librarian at your public library
- Look at the bulletin boards in public areas such as community centres
- Visit the website of your city or town
- Be curious and creative and look around you with an open mind.



### Something to Think About...

What is one hobby you would like to develop?

Share your thoughts with another learner or practitioner.

## Section 2 – Transferable Skills

Some of us feel that we do not have many skills. This is especially true about skills for school or work. We can feel badly about that. But we often have many more skills than we think. Why? Because hobbies are fun, it is easy to forget that you are learning many skills through your hobbies. These skills can be used in different ways and in different places. These skills are called “*transferable skills*”.

For example, have you ever been in a job interview and didn’t know what to say? Maybe the interviewer asked you to share an example of when you worked with others. It could be hard to think of an answer. It is even harder if you are shy or lack confidence. Sharing an example of when you worked with others during a hobby could be the answer. Your collaboration skills learned during your hobbies are transferable to work.

Here are some examples of transferable skills gained while doing hobbies:

- working out details for a club event
- planning a community garden layout
- deciding on weekly hiking routes with friends
- playing a team sport

Your transferable skills are a great way to impress employers and others. Knowing you have learned and improved them can help you gain self-confidence! Thinking about your hobbies and transferable skills helps you know about yourself. You can see what you like to do and how well you do it. That can help you figure out what jobs or future training you might like.

**Remember – you have more skills than you probably give yourself credit for.**



### Note To Practitioners

For an in-depth exploration of this topic, be sure to review QUILL Learning Network’s excellent resource guide called [Recognizing Life’s Work: Helping Learners Connect their Essential Skills from Home to Work](#).





## Section 3 – Hobbies and Creativity

### What is Creativity?

We've talked about the types and cost of hobbies and interests. We've shared tips for choosing hobbies. We learned that we use transferable skills while doing hobbies. Now it's time to talk about creativity and hobbies!

What do you think creativity means? Describe creativity in your own words below!

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**You might say, “B** **!”. We would say “Yes you are**

Almost everyone is more creative than they think. We just aren't used to thinking about things that way. Often people think of creativity as painting a beautiful picture or writing a book, but it is much more than that.



#### Note To Practitioners

The Skills for Success Framework defines creativity and innovation as:

*Your ability to imagine, develop, express, encourage, and apply ideas in ways that are novel, unexpected, or challenge existing methods and norms.*

ABC Life Literacy Canada defines creativity using clearer language:

*Creativity is the skill that lets you see, hear, or think about things in new and different ways.*

Creativity is actually made up of a number of skills. These are skills that you can learn and practise. Here are some of the skills.

We think of creativity as **making** things, but it is also involves skills such as:

- **thinking** about issues
- **doing** things in new ways.

Here are examples of creative activities that involve Making, Thinking and Doing:

### Creativity = Making

- Design a new craft to give to a friend.
- Put filters on a digital photograph.

### Creativity = Thinking

- Figure out a new way to reduce your family budget.
- Planning a new recipe and different spices you would like to use.

### Creativity = Doing

- Solve a problem at work with a new idea you had.
- Meet with your child's teacher to talk about things you are worried about.

## Tips to be More Creative

Hobbies and interests are a **great** way to be more creative- Hobbies aren't our jobs, our school or our whole life. We can do hobbies without as much fear of failure. It's okay if your hobby's creative objects or ideas don't work out. It is easy to try again with a different idea – or even a different hobby!

- Go into new situations or activities with an open mind. Don't assume different is worse. Sometimes, different is better!
- Use your imagination. Consider different possibilities. Could this turn out better if I tried something new? Stay curious. Ask questions. Think. Wonder. Repeat. Watch and learn from the ideas of others. How do they approach new ideas?
- Be aware that nothing is ever perfect. Don't let trying to be perfect stop you from getting started. **Your ideas are good enough.**
- Know that you will likely have some failures along the way. Don't let that stop you. Failure is a normal part of trying new things. We sometimes come up with the best answers when things are hard.
- Give it a try! Trust yourself. If things don't work out as planned, you still learned helpful things. You've also shown courage to try new ideas or make something new. **That's amazing!**



#### Something to Think About...

Can you think of an example when you used creativity in a hobby?

Share your thoughts with another learner or practitioner.



## Section 4 – Supporting Activity – Mind Map

The following activity incorporates elements of the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework's (OALCF) Competencies with Level 1 and 2 Tasks and Indicators. While the activity also contains other Skills for Success, in this resource we are focussing on **Creativity and Innovation**.

Detailed information about the components and proficiency levels for all of the **nine Skills for Success** is available on the Government of Canada's website at <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/jobs/training/initiatives/skills-success/learning-steps.html>

### Instructions for Practitioners

After sharing the content from this resource with your learner, you can ask them to complete the following activity. This activity is suitable for an individual learner or for a small group of learners.

The OALCF Competency, Task Group and Level indicators, and Skills for Success components and proficiencies can be used to discuss performance, determine skill progression, and identify some possible next steps to further develop learner proficiency.

Tasks 1 - 5 incorporate elements of the following OALCF Competencies:

Competency B: Communicate Ideas and Information

- Task Group: Complete and create documents (B3)
  - B3.1b Create very simple documents to display and organize a limited amount of information
- Task Group: Express oneself creatively (B4)
  - Tasks in this task group are not rated for complexity

Tasks 1 - 5 also incorporate skill components and elements of Skills for Success Entry Level proficiency in the skills of Creativity and Innovation.

### **Creativity and Innovation: Entry Level Proficiency**

You can generate a limited number of novel ideas under guidance and support. You are open to applying new ideas but are quick to revert to norms and habits when the new ideas fail or face uncertainties.

#### **Task 1 – Self-Reflection – no materials required**

Ask the learner(s) to think about their favourite hobby or interest. Allow several minutes for this task.

#### **Task 2 – Materials Required: Blank sheets of paper and pens or markers**

**Practitioners can assist, if needed, by demonstrating an example of the circle (as fancy as you like) with a hobby printed in the centre of the circle.**

Provide the learner(s) with a blank sheet of paper. Ask the learner(s) to draw a circle in the middle of the page and to write their favourite hobby or interest in the centre of the circle.

#### **Task 3 – Self-Reflection – no materials required**

Ask the learner(s) to think about the skills that they use when doing their chosen hobby or interest. Allow several minutes for this task.

#### **Task 4 – Materials Required: Learner’s sheet with their chosen hobby or activity in the centre of a circle.**

**Practitioners can assist if needed by demonstrating a circle with a hobby in the centre and with 3 examples of skills printed outside of the circle.**

Ask the learner(s) to write 3 skills, around the circle, that they use when they are doing the hobby that they chose.

#### **Task 5 – Materials Required: Learner’s sheet with their chosen hobby or activity in the centre of a circle and the 3 related skills outside of the circle.**

Ask the learner(s) to draw a line from each skill to the circle.

Explain that this is called a Mind Map.

**Task 6 – Self-Reflection – Materials Required: Learner’s sheet with hobby and skills linked.**  
Ask the learner(s) to think about whether the skills they identified on their Mind Map could be used to support their goal of Independence, Education, Apprenticeship or Employment?  
Practitioners can delve into these answers further based on the learner(s)’ responses.

This task incorporates elements of the following OALCF Competency:

Competency E: Manage Learning

E.1 Set short-term goals, begin to use limited learning strategies, and begin to monitor own learning

### **Task 7: Materials Required: Creativity and Innovation Components Chart**

This chart encourages self-reflection and reinforces some of the Creativity and Innovation skill components used in the first 5 tasks.

**Practitioner assistance may be required to support the learner(s) with lower skill levels, as they complete the chart.**

This chart can be adapted to reflect the Creativity and Innovation skill components to suit individual learner’s goals and skill levels. The full components list is available at <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/jobs/training/initiatives/skills-success/learning-steps.html>  
The wording of the skill components has been simplified in the following charts to meet level 1 Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework task levels.

Ask the learner(s) to complete the Creativity and Innovation Chart using checkmarks to show how they used creativity and innovation to create their Hobby/Interest Mind Map.

Chart: Creativity and Innovation Skill Components

**Practitioner instructions to learner(s):**

Creativity and innovation are important skills. Earlier, you created a Mind Map that connected skills to your chosen hobby. The questions in this chart ask about how you were creative when you created your Mind Map. Place a checkmark beside each question to show how much you used that skill.

When you created your Mind Map, did you...	A lot	A little	Not at all
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use your creativity?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think about more skills for putting on the Mind Map?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find the Mind Map new and interesting?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approach this as a new way to think about your skills?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think that you might use this Mind Map approach in the future?</li> </ul>			

This chart incorporates elements of the following OALCF Competencies and Task Groups:

Competency B: Communicate Ideas and Information

Task Group: Complete and create documents (B3)

B3.2 a Use layout to determine where to make entries in simple documents

Competency E: Manage Learning

Task Group: No Task Group

E.1 Set short-term goals, begin to use limited learning strategies, and begin to monitor own learning