The Circle of Learning

Saskatchewan Adult Literacy Benchmarks
Levels 1 & 2

General Information

Benchmarks are:

- standards for Adult Literacy, Levels 1 & 2
- points of reference for assessing learner performance

Benchmarks are not:

- curriculum
- equivalent to grade levels

Benchmarks provide:

- an outline of foundational skills adults should be able to achieve at Literacy Levels 1 & 2
- an integrated process for learners to acquire skills across content areas
- a holistic approach that values learners' goals and needs
- examples for curriculum development with aims, goals, and learning outcomes
- checklists to record each learner's acquisition of foundational skills for Saskatchewan Adult Literacy Levels 1 & 2

Benchmarks outline foundational skills in:

- communications – reading, writing, document use, oral communication, observing
- numeracy
- computer use and digital technology
- critical thinking and problem-solving
- working with others
- continuous learning

Benchmarks include guides to:

- create intake and assessment tools
- plan topics, materials, and activities for specific contexts
- integrate multiple literacies: e.g. basic skills, health, media, technology, etc.
- empower learners to set goals and re-assess progress over time
- collaborate with learners to develop special projects
- develop theme-based learning units with learner input
- use checklists to record knowledge and skills achieved at each level
- create portfolios to document achievements over time
- celebrate learning

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What is contextualized learning?

- Contextualized learning acknowledges and uses the learners' contexts in order to set realistic goals and plan relevant activities to reach those goals.
- Adult learners seek personal relevance for acquiring new knowledge and skills.

What is theme-based planning in the context of the Benchmarks?

- Theme-based planning focuses lessons on a topic, issue or concern identified by learners as important to them.
- Practitioners/tutors and learners select relevant learning materials and activities.
- Theme-based planning can integrate a variety of skills across all content areas.

What assessment tools are appropriate for use with the Benchmarks?

- formal, norm-referenced assessment tools administered by a specialist
- informal reading, writing, and numeracy inventories administered by a practitioner
- portfolio assessment to demonstrate knowledge and skills acquired over time

Note: Samples of informal intake assessment tools are available in the Intake and Assessment Processes manual published by the Saskatchewan Literacy Network.

What is authentic assessment?

- Authentic assessment evaluates the application of knowledge and skills in real contexts, such as a mock job interview or a demonstration of a task.

Is there a time limit for completion of each level in the Benchmarks?

- The time frame to complete Levels 1 and 2 will vary.
- A time limit may depend on financial or time constraints of a literacy program.

How is a learner's completion of a level determined?

- Benchmarks provide expected learning outcomes a learner is expected to achieve.
- Benchmarks provide checklists to record satisfactory mastery for each level.

Are literacy learners working on the Benchmarks eligible for PTA?

- A learner enrolled in a literacy program approved for Provincial Training Allowance (PTA) s subject to the same rules as other PTA recipients.
- Refer to http://www.economy.gov.sk.ca/PTA for eligibility requirements.

Who issues certificates to learners upon completion of Levels 1 & 2?

Program Completion Certificates will be issued by the delivery organization.

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