Learner Centred
Intake and Assessment
for Literacy Programs
in Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan
Adult Literacy Benchmarks
Levels 1 and 2

Acknowledgements

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Saskatchewan Literacy Network. (2016). *Learner Centred Intake and Assessment for Literacy Programs in Saskatchewan*. Saskatoon, SK: Author.

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Introduction

The *Learner Centred Intake and Assessment* guide offers best practices for a learning environment supported by adult learning principles and strength-based approaches in Level 1 and 2 adult literacy programming.

The Circle of Learning: Saskatchewan Adult Literacy Benchmarks Levels 1 and 2 provides a framework for practitioners working in Levels 1 and 2 adult literacy programming and serves as the foundational document for this guide. For purposes of brevity and ease of reading, this document refers elsewhere to *The Circle of Learning Levels 1 and 2 Adult Literacy Benchmarks* as Circle of Learning/CoL or Levels 1 and 2 Benchmarks, and/or simply as Benchmarks. The Benchmarks provide a foundation for quality adult literacy and essential skills programming in Saskatchewan.

The ideas and examples in this guide may be used directly, but also can be modified and adapted to suit the individual needs of learners and practitioners.

Overview

This guide has been divided into sections:

1. The **Introduction** section includes background information on the Saskatchewan Adult Literacy Benchmarks Levels 1 and 2, adult literacy, adult learning, intake and assessment.

2. The **Learner Centred Intake** section provides important guidelines for learner centered intake and interviewing process.

3. The **Learner Centred Assessment** section describes initial, on-going, exit, formal and informal assessment in adult literacy programming.

4. The **Assessment Tools** section presents a variety of assessment tools used in adult literacy programming.

5. An **Appendix** of suggested resources has been included in this guide.

Terms: In this resource, the term **practitioner** is all-inclusive. It refers to everyone who is involved in planning, supervising or presenting adult literacy programs, whether paid or volunteer, formal and non-formal. The term **learner** refers to all participants in adult literacy programs, regardless of the type of educational program they attend: formal, non-formal, group, individual, etc. **Gender references** to learners (masculine or feminine) alternate between sections and are all-inclusive.

Saskatchewan Adult Literacy Benchmarks Levels 1 & 2

The Saskatchewan Adult Literacy Benchmarks Levels 1 & 2 foundational skills adults need to participate fully at home, at work, and in the community. The Benchmarks provide,

- guidelines to the knowledge and skills that are important for learners to achieve at specific levels;
- standards for program development, instruction, and assessment;
- a broad framework of goals and learning outcomes;
- a means of monitoring and evaluating each learner's progress.

The Circle of Learning (CoL) identifies **10 foundational skills**[1] adults need for the 21st century. The foundational skills are:

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

A complete list of foundational skills their respective Benchmarks and Learning Outcomes are detailed in *The Circle of Learning: Saskatchewan Adult Literacy Benchmarks Levels 1 and 2*.

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[1] Foundational skills are also referred to as Essential Skills. Essential Skills is the term used by the Government of Canada to identify those core or generic skills embedded in all occupations. This term is also used in pre-employment and Adult Basic Education programming.

Intake and Assessment

This guide is organized according to the following **Intake Processes** and **Assessment Types** that may be used with adult learners in a literacy program.

The intake process represents the important first contact potential learners will make with your program.	Initial assessment identifies skills and strengths the learner brings into the program.	On-going assessment assesses learner progress in relation to goals the learner has set in his learning plan.	The exit assessment establishes a record of the skills that a learner now has. It also provides information to inform future programming.
Intake	**Initial**	**On-going**	**Exit**

This separation works well on paper but in practice these assessment types and processes may overlap or take place at various times during the program. Knowing what we know about adult learning theory and practice, we now delve into the complex world of assessment.

Intake and Assessment Processes

Effective intake and assessment processes begin with placing the learner at the centre. This includes prioritizing and planning for the learner during intake process and for the duration of the program. According to Manitoba Advanced Education and Training (2003),

An effective evaluation plan for learner-centred adult literacy programs should include procedures and tools for:
- conducting an initial assessment of the learner.
- determining learner goals.
- determining criteria for good work.
- collecting on-going information about learner progress and instructional effectiveness.
- tracking and documenting progress.

Furthermore, if the philosophy of learner-centred adult education is to be honoured, then the prime considerations in selecting these tools and procedures should be how effective they are at engaging the learner in the particular process, and how effective they are at fostering a collaborative relationship between instructor and learner.

Development of programs, tools and processes used for assessment, should use a variety of techniques to create a holistic view of the learner. "Adults' diverse lives and learning contexts include cultural identities, family situations, and community interactions, as well as their prior learning and work experiences and current learning needs" (SLN, 2016) that includes:

✔ what he knows and can do as part of a family, a community and a workplace
✔ how he views himself as a learner
✔ how he uses literacy skills
✔ his goals as a family, community and workplace member
✔ a realistic action plan that will meet his goals

When literacy skills are embedded in a variety of learner-centered contexts and a holistic view of the learner is created, not only are the learners able to draw on their experiences, skills, and prior knowledge, but assessment takes on a new dimension and focus.
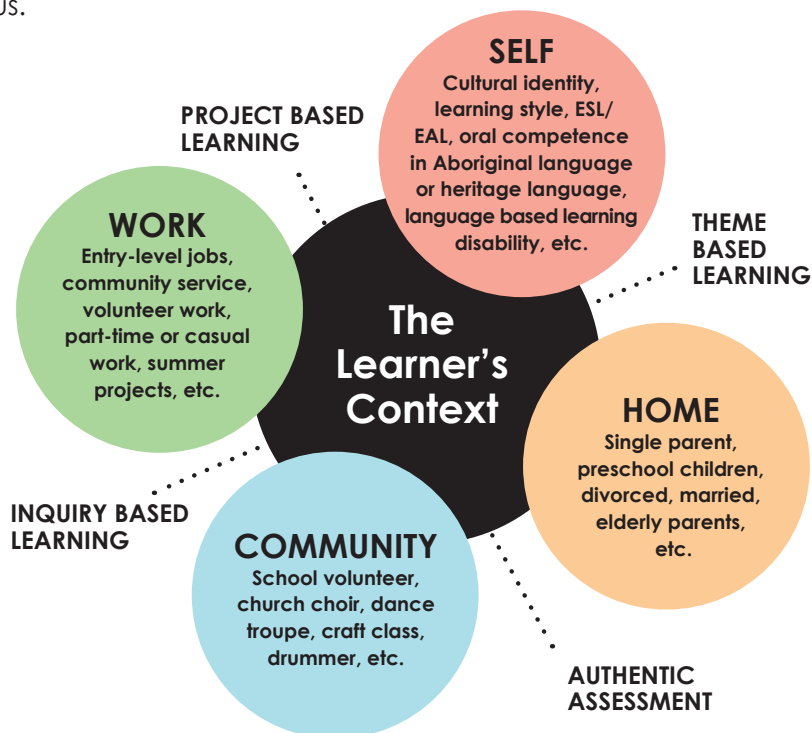
Furthermore, effective intake and assessment also meets the diverse needs of all stakeholders involved including the learners, practitioners, and agencies/institutions.

Effective assessment is important to the **learner** because:
- it helps him decide where he wants to go and what he needs to do to get there
- it tells him how far he has come
- it encourages him to keep going

Effective assessment is important to literacy **practitioners** because it shows them:
- what progress is being made
- the work that still needs to be done
- whether or not the program is working effectively

Effective assessment is important to **agencies** and **institutions** because it:
- provides a framework for program design and delivery
- validates their work to learners, funders and themselves

Reflecting on your assessment processes in alignment with adult education principles and practice is integral to the development of effective tools and processes.

When literacy skills are embedded in a variety of learner-centered contexts and a holistic view of the learner is created, not only are the learners able to draw on their experiences, skills, and prior knowledge, but assessment takes on a new dimension and focus.

Adult Literacy

Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning enabling individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in their community and wider society.

Many people consider literacy to be the same as reading and writing. In today's technologically rich and complex world, literacy is much more. Literacy is both a functional skill, one that enables people to "do," and as "reading the world" or critical literacy, enabling people to engage in a cycle of reflection and action. Moreover, an essential skills framework blended with the power of literacy wields transformative potential for individuals, communities and society.

Adult Learning

Learning must be relevant and purposeful for adults. In other words, learning is more problem based or context driven as opposed to memorizing facts and content. The learning is generally a means to an end, and not an end in itself.

Adults tend to seek out learning opportunities in order to make life changes and motivation for learning is more intrinsic versus extrinsic. Adult learners' prior learning and experience becomes a resource for learning and developing learning plans. Understanding the characteristics of adults as learners will assist practitioners when developing learning plans and choosing appropriate assessment strategies.

The following six principles of adult education describe a learner centered approach to literacy programming (Imel, 1998 as cited in SLN, 2016); a critical consideration for practitioners:

- Involve learners in planning and implementing learning activities;
- Draw upon learners' experiences as a resource;
- Cultivate self-direction in learners;
- Create a climate that encourages and supports learning;
- Foster a spirit of collaboration in the learning setting;
- Use small groups.

Characteristics of Adult Learners

Adult learners share characteristics that have important implications for adult literacy programming and assessment practices. The following "10 Characteristics of Adults as Learners" by Dr. Gary Kuhne provide insight into these traits followed by suggested strategies for practitioners:

Characteristic #1 - Adults Generally Desire to Take More Control Over Their Learning

Adults tend to be self-directed in their lives, although responsibilities with jobs, families, and other organizations can remove a degree of their freedom to act. Adulthood brings an increasing sense of the need to take responsibility for our lives and adults strongly resent it when others take away their rights to choose. This fact is clearly seen in educational efforts among adults. When not given some control over their learning, most adults will resist learning and some will even attempt to sabotage education efforts. They do not like being relegated to a "passive" position.

Implications:
- Always seek to include the adult in the planning of educational efforts.
- Allow for self-assessment and evaluation.
- Understand adult learners desire a peer relationship with instructors, rather than a hierarchical one.
- Recognize that adults also expect greater availability of instructors.

Characteristic #2 - Adults Draw Upon Their Experiences as a Resource in Their Learning

The adult's experience is a key resource in any learning effort. Adults have a greater reservoir of life experiences simply because they have lived longer and seen and done more. This is a critical distinction between adults and traditional learners. Consciously or unconsciously, adults tend to link any new learning to their prior learning, a body of knowledge that is rooted in their life experiences. They evaluate the validity of new ideas and concepts in light of how the idea or concept "fits" their experience.

Implications:
- Take the time to get to know more about the experiences of our learners and seek to help them to link new ideas to such prior learning.
- Encourage discussion on how new ideas fit the experience of learners.

Characteristic #3 - Adult Tend to be More Motivated in Learning Situations

Higher motivation is linked to the fact that most adult learning is voluntary. Adults are making personal choices to attend schooling, even when such schooling is tied to professional development or job skills. Whenever an individual is able to choose to learn, s/he is much more motivated to learn.

Implication:

- Spend less effort trying to motivate adult learners and concentrate our time on facilitating the learning they are already motivated to pursue.

Characteristic #4 - Adults Are More Pragmatic in Learning Than Youth

Adults are particularly motivated to learn information that seems immediately applicable to their situation and needs. They tend to be frustrated with "theory" that needs to be stored away for future use or learning for the sake of learning. Certainly there are exceptions to this principle, but the percentage of exceptions is quite low.

Implications:

- Tie the content of programs to the application needs of the learners.
- Always use needs assessment strategies.
- Weigh the content of education toward the utilitarian, not the theoretical.

Characteristic #5 - In Contrast to Youth, the Learner Role is Secondary for Adults

For most adults, the "student" role is a minor and secondary role. This is in sharp contrast to traditional age learners for whom the learner role is both their primary social role and the main basis for their self-identity. Adults fulfill multiple roles and these multiple roles inevitably create conflicting and competing demands on the adult learner. Multiple roles will cause most adults to have far less time and energy to read, study, or learn.

Implications:

- More flexibility in adult education programs than in traditional education.
- Give assignments far ahead of time.
- Accept that jobs and families can create obstacles for the learner, and be willing to extend deadlines for assignments.
- Accept that the learners will not see their educational efforts as necessarily the highest priority in their lives.
- Accept that learners will be preoccupied at times with other roles and responsibilities.

Characteristic #6 - Adults Must Fit Their Learning into Life's "Margins"

Adult roles take energy and time to fulfill. Everyone faces the reality that there are limits on their energy and time. An important principle to understand is that learning takes time and energy. If an adult is going to undertake a learning activity, s/he must realistically evaluate his/her life and see there is actually room for the added demands of the learning. Adult learners must learn to carve out some margin in their lives to allow learning to occur, a process of priority setting. If the existing demands on an adult require all the energy they possess, then the learning will be compromised.

Implication:

- Adult educators must prioritize student advising to provide guidance to help learners to be realistic about the demands of learning and provide time management and study suggestions.

Characteristic #7 - Many Adults Lack Confidence in Their Learning

Many adults have had somewhat negative learning experiences in their traditional schooling. For a variety of reasons, they feel inadequate when comes to learning through formal educational programs. Still other adults, who may have done well in their earlier schooling, still lack confidence for further schooling efforts due to what they perceive as rusty study skills, poor reading skills, test anxiety, or other such learning barriers.

Implications:
- Employ learning strategies that build higher confidence in adult learners.
- Take the time to teach better study skills and ways of improving reading comprehension.
- Use collaborative learning approaches in the classroom can do much to alleviate anxiety (i.e., turn the classroom from a competitive environment to a collaborative one).

Characteristic #8 - Adults are More Resistant to Change Than Youth

Learning often involves changes in our attitudes or actions. Adults tend to be somewhat resistant to such changes because life itself teaches us that change is not always for the better and that many of the outcomes of change are unpredictable. Youth tend to be more idealistic and are often open to change just for the sake of change.

Implications:
- Adult learners need more explanation of the "why" of changes, not just the "how."
- Link new concepts to older, understood, and accepted concepts for adult learners.
- Seek for incremental changes through our education efforts rather than global changes, allowing the "proof" gained from such incremental change to encourage the adult learner to explore yet more change.

Characteristic #9 - Adults Are More Diverse Than Youth

Adults vary from each other as learners in terms of age and experiences much more than traditional age learners. Such differences can be used as a powerful resource for adult learning. Through collaboration in small groups, adults can benefit from their variety of experiences. Dialogue with other adults enables adult learners to perceive more nuances of application, and possible problems with new concepts, then could ever be gained from private reflection.

Implications:

- Allow more time for interaction between adults to allow learners to network together to sharing of perspectives and experiences.
- Make effort to present material in a variety of ways to accommodate different learning styles.

Characteristic #10 - Adults Must Compensate for Aging in Learning

Aging brings with it a number of physical complications that can impact on adult learning efforts. The percentage of such complications increases with age. As we will see later, such complications are not really due to intelligence. Although the speed of learning tends to decrease with age, the depth of learning tends to increase. In other words, adults tend to learn less rapidly with age, but what they learn is learned at a deeper and more integrative level. As adults age, vision and hearing can also create barriers in educational programs. As adult educators, we must pay much more attention to sound and lighting when dealing with adult learners.

Implication:

- Pay more attention to the physical learning environment to compensate for aging issues.

Reflective Practice

Being and becoming a **reflective practitioner** requires that practitioners reflect on how current assessment practices align or do not align with adult learning principles and/or adult learning characteristics.

To engage learners using adult learning methodologies only to fall back on conventional assessment practices that do not adequately assess specific skills can derail progress. Providing consistency between intake, assessment, and instructional methodologies requires an understanding that it will take practice. Moreover, working toward balance between conventional education practice and strength-based practice is a paradigm shift and requires intentional planning.

In conversation with Lynda Richards (2008), a Saskatchewan adult learner, she shared what she believes is important for practitioners to consider when working with adult learners.

Lynda's suggestions for adult educators include:

- Build a rapport with learners and find out what they have for a support system.
- Create comfort right from the very beginning.
- Identify learning styles of the learner and teach them about how they learn. A lot of times adult learners bring baggage and labels with them thinking they are stupid. Adults have knowledge and specific learning styles. Learners may not have identified their learning styles.
- Take the end goal and break it into smaller goals so that learners can reflect back and feel success, thereby being motivated to keep going.
- Help learners to recognize the skills they already have from life experiences such as being "just" a stay at home mom.
- Include group activities so that learners can build a support group in the program.
- Working only with individualized programs can create a feeling of isolation.
- A program recruiter may not be the best person to help learners set up their programs. They may have a specific perspective and it is important for learners to explore all options.
- Have tutors available when learners need a little extra help. This will help learners get over a difficult patch.

In keeping with adult learning principles, an effective practitioner adopts the role of a facilitator or resource person rather than that of a lecturer or evaluator. They base their practices on adult learning principles.

Practitioner Reflection Questions:

1. How have you integrated a foundational/essentials skills and literacy framework to your program?

2. What do you know about adult literacy?

3. What have you learned from adult learners about adult education practice?

4. How do your current practices align with adult education principles?

5. What have you found most rewarding about adult education?

6. How do you help learners meet challenges and overcome barriers to learning?

7. What characteristic(s) do you often see most often in learners?

8. What strengths do learners bring into the learning environment?

9. How have you helped learners overcome barriers during their program?

10. How does the role of practitioner as facilitator compare with the experience working with adult learners?

Intake Process

The intake process is the practitioners' opportunity to welcome potential learners to your program and determine their needs, goals, skill levels, education, and work backgrounds. Not all programs conduct intake processes in exactly the same way. An effective intake process will set the stage for overall learner and program success.

The examples in this resource describe an intake and assessment processes that operate in the best interests of the learner and provides both the learner and the program practitioners with the information they need. What follows is a **guideline** for intake processes.

A well planned and implemented intake process helps the learner and program staff determine if they are a good match.

What is the Purpose of the Intake Process?

The intake process is an initial information gathering/sharing process for both the practitioner and the learner.

The **practitioner** needs basic information to:
- provide a starting point for exploring learner goals;
- ensure the learner meets the program criteria;
- help the learner plan a program that is appropriate for her individual needs and skill levels.

The **learner** needs basic information to:
- understand how the program works;
- know if the program will work for her and what commitment is required/desired;
- decide if she will enter the program now.

As the **program contact** it is important to:
- understand what your program can and cannot do;
- be aware of other literacy programs that are available in your area;
- be prepared to refer learners to other programs if you cannot meet the needs expressed by the individual learners.

The intake process should provide enough information and reflection time for the learner to decide if this is the appropriate program to meet her goals. A well planned and implemented intake process helps the learner and practitioners determine if they are a good match.

Who is Part of the Intake Process?

Everyone in the agency or institute who has contact with the learner at the start of a program is part of the intake process. This includes the person who greets learners as they arrive, answers the phone, or responds to e-mails as well as programmers.

The intake process begins when the learner first connects with the literacy program. For a learner whose past experience with the formal education system has been negative, her initial contact with your program can be a critical turning point. If a learner experiences an open, positive and encouraging environment in the initial stages of the intake process, she is likely to develop a positive picture of the program. A positive emotional and mental picture can help the learner let go of previous negative experiences, and inspire a new beginning in her learning journey.

It takes tremendous courage for the learner to make that initial contact so it is imperative that it be a positive, affirming experience. Staff members who hold initial contact positions need to understand how important they are to the learner's literacy experience and they should be well trained in your process.

Who are the staff members who hold initial contact with prospective learners? How will you include them in the intake process? Do they understand the importance of their role?
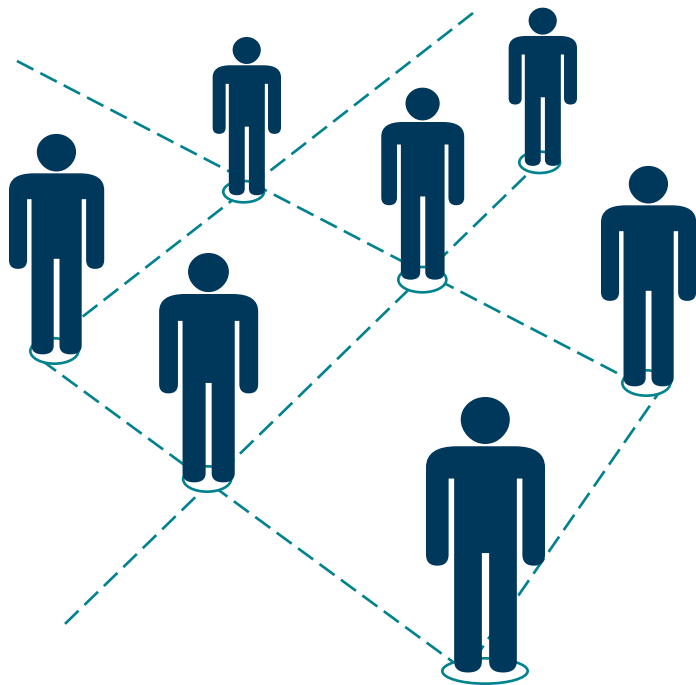
"Everyone in the agency or program who has contact with the learner at the start of a program is part of the intake process."

Guidelines for Intake Interviews

A successful intake interview must take a holistic, learner-centred approach. Engaging learners at the beginning ensures that learners understand what your program can do for them. The following components of the intake process will assist practitioners plan for an effective intake process.

Components of an Intake Interview

Determine learner's goals

Collect purposeful information

Providing program information

Assess skills, knowledge and abilities

Create the environment

Learner

Closing the interview
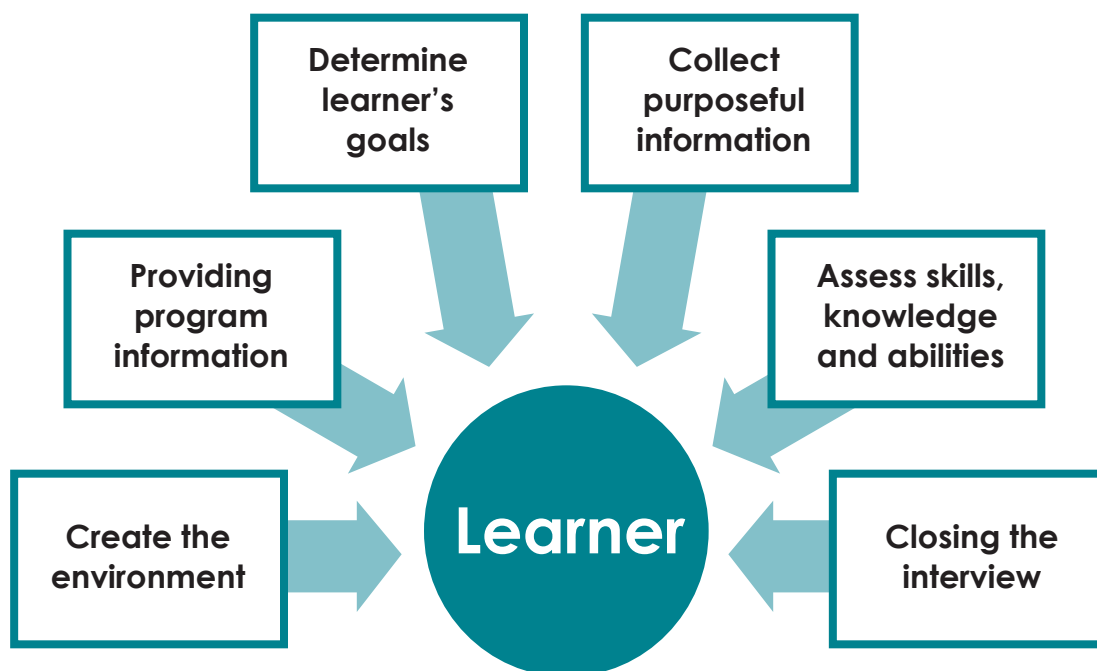
Create the Environment

The learner will feel more comfortable sharing her needs and aspirations in a **safe and respectful environment**.

Tips for creating a safe and respectful environment:

- Hold the intake interview in an area where disruptions are minimized. It is hard to build a sense of trust and safety in the midst of interruptions.
- Titles may put a barrier between you and the learner. When introducing yourself, use the learner's name and invite her to use yours.
- Put the learner at ease by offering her coffee or a cold drink as a show of hospitality. The learner is creating an initial picture of your program and a friendly gesture can go a long way in helping ease any fears or anxieties.
- Let the learner know that the interview is part of the learning process and that she is an equal partner in that process.
- Describe the process of the interview. If you take notes during the interview explain that it is to help you remember not to report on her.
- Encourage the learner to:
    - ask questions
    - pause when needed
    - provide only the information she is comfortable sharing
- Explain your agency's confidentiality policy to the learner.
- Use **clear language** and allow the learner enough time to think about and answer your questions. Clear language is a way of writing and communicating that is clear, free of jargon, and is carefully focused to increase a learner's understanding (SLN, 2014).
- Check with the learner to ensure that the questions make sense and are being interpreted and answered with the same intent as they are asked.
- If the intake interview will include a skills assessment the learner should understand:
    - what the assessment will require of her
    - why it is being done
    - how the results will be used
- The intake interview should not take so long that it overwhelms the learner. Be aware of the learner's physical, emotional and mental comfort. If more time is needed to fully assess the learners' knowledge, skills and attitudes, a second meeting can be scheduled.

"Clear language is a way of writing and communicating that is clear, free of jargon, and is carefully focused to increase a learner's understanding."

Provide Program Information

During the intake interview, describe the program. The learner should be made aware of program goals and what it can offer learners. Some programs can provide individual learning plans to meet learners' specific needs while others cannot. The learner needs program information to make a decision about the program.

- Have a clear/plain language fact sheet that contains key program and contact information that the learner may take home in case the learner has questions after the initial interview is over.
- Have information and contact numbers available for other programs in the area in case your program is unable to accommodate the learner's needs.
- Provide the learner with assistance in contacting other programs if needed.
- Ensure that the door stays open for the learner to come to your program at a later date.

"Provide program content information, in plain language up front, so learners know what to expect and can decide if the program is what they want."

Lynda

Determine Learner Goals

Three little words. When strung together to form a question, they instill terror in the hearts of the strongest people. 'What's your goal?'

Ontario Literacy Coalition, 2000

Determining the learner's goals is a process that will evolve with the learner throughout their time with the literacy program and beyond. Whether the learner comes with goals in mind or develops them as part of the program, her goals will become the starting point for the development of a learning plan.

Some learners come to the intake interview with clearly defined goals in mind. The intake interview then becomes an opportunity to decide if the program is appropriate and to begin discussing an action plan to achieve those goals.

Other learners may have difficulty defining identifying and/or articulating their goals. However, most learners will know the answer to the question: "What do you want to be able to do?" The answer(s) to this question become the learner's goal(s).

It may be helpful to discuss the possible challenges the learner thinks she may encounter during the program. **Using a strength-based approach for questioning to draw out important information can alleviate any anxiety and encourage discussion**. The aim of goal setting is to help the learner map where they would like to go and be able to do by highlighting what she does well and what skills she would like to work on.

The following *sample* questions offer a strength-based approach to draw out a learner's personal goals and plan strategies for challenges:

1. What do you value about yourself?

2. How would you describe your strengths and skills?

3. What would other people who know you say you were good at doing?

4. Tell me about what a good day looks like for you? What makes it a good day?

5. What do you want to be able to do better?

6. What do you find you learn most easily?

7. Tell me one, (or five or ten or more) things you can do well?

8. What do you want to achieve in your life?

9. How have you been able to develop your skills?

10. What kind of supports have you used that have been helpful to you? How did the supports improve things for you?

Atkins, M. (2013). 50 First Strength Based Questions.
Changed Lives New Journeys. Retrieved from
http://www.changedlivesnewjourneys.com/50-first-strength-based-questions/

Defining the skills needed to accomplish the goals then becomes the role of the practitioner. *The Goal Setting Task List* in the *Appendix* can assist with this process. Practitioners may adapt the checklist(s) in this guide and tailor it to the program.

The process of discussing these challenges and planning ways to meet them can create goals in a learner's overall plan. With Levels 1 & 2 learners, a completed learning plan will not likely happen in the initial intake interview as it will require some work by the learner and practitioner to determine learning activities to meet the goals.

It is important for both the learner and practitioner to recognize that goals need to be reviewed and adjusted on a regular basis. Involving the learner in an on-going review of goals and adjustment of the learning plan helps her take charge of the plan. This can start her on the path to becoming a lifelong learner.

Collect Purposeful Data

Collecting data from potential applicants/learners must be purposeful and meaningful. Given the opportunity to collect purposeful demographical data, it may be tempting to ask for 'too much' information in an application or interview. This may lead to asking for unrelated program information and inadvertently discourage learners from attending the program. Collecting the right data will give your purposeful and actionable results.

Primary and Secondary Guidelines for Collecting Data:

Primary:

- Consult with the organization regarding their policies on data collection to assist in planning;
- Consult with the rules laid out by the federal *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA)* on proper storage and use of application information to prevent confidentiality from becoming compromised.

Secondary:

- Ask for information that will be used by the literacy practitioner and learner to make decisions about the learner's program;
- Carefully review all information requested in the application and interview;
- Collect information required by funding or program agencies;
- Decide how the information will be used and what it can tell you about future program planning;
- Decide which questions are necessary for the program;
- Determine what information will be required for the application only;
- Determine what information will be required during the interview only.

Collecting the right data will give you

purposeful and actionable results.

The types of information requested on the application can include:

- Personal Information

  ➤ Full legal name and contact information (address, phone number(s), emergency contact number, phone messages, email)

  ➤ Identification numbers IF required by funders (Social Insurance Number (SIN), date of birth, proof of driver's license, health number, Treaty number or Métis membership card)

  ➤ Source of income (only if required by funder)

  ➤ First language

  ➤ Gender, marital status

- Education History/Academic Skills

  ➤ Last completed grade and date of completion

  ➤ Last school attended

  ➤ Certifications

  ➤ Criminal record check (if required)

- Employment History

- Life Interests /Activities/Reason for interest in program

- Challenges and Accommodations Needed

  ➤ Does she have previously identified learning challenges that may need accommodations?

  ➤ Does she have health issues that might need accommodations?

It is important that your intake forms are clearly written and easy to read.

Assess Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities

If the program can accommodate only learners at a specific literacy level, proper placement assessment must be done during the intake process to ensure that the learner and the program are a good match. Skills assessment may also be part of the intake process or it may be done in the initial stages of the program.

Consider the time and focus involved for the learner. If the interview and literacy skill assessment will take more than 1 to 1 ½ hours, a second interview should be scheduled.

Something to think about…

Many learners experience **test anxiety** and do not perform well in a formal testing situation. If your program requires formal test as part of the intake process you can lower the level of anxiety by,

- referring to the test as an assessment;
- explaining why the assessment is being done, how it will be done (length of time, number of parts, etc.) and how the results will be used;
- ensuring the learner feels comfortable and has time to ask questions;
- starting the assessment as soon as the learner understands and is comfortable with the process.

Closing the Interview

End the interview on a positive note for the learner. Provide the learner with next steps and program information:

- method of contact – letter, email, phone call
- time frame for the contact (for example, 'Sue will call you by the 15th')
- program details (start date, location, start and end times)
- provide an opportunity for the learner to ask any questions
- provide a clear/plain language fact sheet that contains key program and contact information

Encourage the learner to call back or email if she has any questions or concerns. A toll free number or a program's willingness to accept collect calls is of real value to learners living outside of the local call area.

After the Intake Interview

The time between the intake interview and the program start date is important for the learner and practitioner. For some learners this time is filled with anticipation and excitement and for others it is filled with anxiety.

It is essential that the program:

- follow through on any commitments it has made to the learner;
- keep in touch with the learner until the program starts;
- contact the learner to reschedule if appointments or meetings are missed;
- provide support as needed to deal with challenges individual learners encounter.

During any stage of the intake process, consider the following important information:

IMPORTANT: The **Saskatchewan Human Rights Code** protects our rights to equality without discrimination based on the following categories:

- Ancestry, colour, race or perceived race
- Age (18 or more)
- Nationality or place of origin
- Family (parent-child relationship) or marital status (including pregnancy)
- Mental or physical disability
- Receipt of Public Assistance
- Religion or religious creed
- Sexual orientation
- Sex

Individuals, private companies, schools, trade unions, professional associations – plus provincial and municipal governments – are subject to human rights law. If these laws are violated, you could be liable for the harm caused by discrimination.

For Additional Information:
Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission
Toll free: 1-800-667-9249
Phone: (306) 933-5952 (Saskatoon Office)
Email: shrc@gov.sk.ca
Website: www.gov.sk.ca/shrc/

Practitioner Reflection Questions:

▶ 1. Does your agency or program have a welcoming environment?

_____

▶ 2. Is it easy for learners to contact you and receive information?

_____

▶ 3. What is the turnaround time for application approval?

_____

▶ 4. How will acceptance be communicated?

_____

▶ 5. Do all staff members understand how important their role is in creating a positive and encouraging environment?

_____

▶ 6. Are all staff members familiar with the intake process? Is there a pool of staff members who are well-trained in the process?

_____

▶ 7. Is the information gathered during the intake process kept confidential and is the learner aware of this?

_____

▶ 8. Why would it be beneficial to have a good understanding of other programs in your community?

_____

▶ 9. Have you developed a plain language outline of the relevant program details that can be given to the learner during the intake process?

_____

▶ 10. Do your intake and assessment processes assess learners' knowledge, skills and attitudes?

Initial Assessment

Initial assessment starts at the beginning of a learner's involvement with a program. It identifies the skills and strengths that the learner brings to the program and helps him identify and develop his goals.

Initial assessment is the basis for the development of his learning plan. The practitioner will then define the foundational skills and knowledge that are needed to achieve the learner's goals. Any gaps between the foundational skills needed to achieve the goal and the learner's current skills will form the foundation for the initial learning plan.

Practitioners must be mindful that "Assessment should determine what the learner can comfortably do, rather than focus on their shortfalls. It should be encouraging rather than overwhelming" (Community Literacy of Ontario, 2013). If the program can accommodate only learners at a specific level, assessment must be done during the intake process to ensure that the learner and the program are a good match.

The initial assessment uses a variety of formal and informal tools:

- goal setting activities
- interviews
- interest surveys
- inventories – learning styles, essential skills
- checklists with rating scales
- portfolios - introducing the portfolio early in the program can help the learner take ownership of the process
- demonstration of skill – reading signs, completing forms

On-going assessment

On-going assessment, also referred to as formative assessment, is performed collaboratively between the learner and the literacy practitioner throughout the program. Assessment done "with" the learner rather than "to" the learner encourages the development of foundational skills and personal reflection and action.

On-going assessment should be contextually appropriate in that it assesses learner progress in relation to goals he has set in his learning plan. On-going assessment can also help the learner and practitioner integrate new information and adjust the learning plan.

During on-going assessment, the learner can give and receive feedback about adjustments that need to be made for more effective learning. This allows for mobility between literacy levels and provides the learner with a record of how his skills have improved.

It is important for the learner to track and document his progress. Documenting what he has accomplished during the time spent in the literacy program will build confidence in his abilities as a learner.

On-going assessment uses a variety of formal and informal tools:

- Circle of Learning Saskatchewan Adult Literacy Benchmarks Levels 1 and 2
- Circle of Learning Scope and Sequence Chart[2]
- interviews/conferences
- portfolios
- checklists
- rubrics
- journals
- work samples
- dated goal charts with space for revisions and additions
- reflection sheets
- case studies

Assessment done "with" the learner rather than "to" the learner encourages the development of foundational skills that support lifelong learning and personal reflection and action.

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[2] The SLN (2016) Circle of Learning document and Scope and Sequence Chart are available to literacy practitioners and may be downloaded at www.saskliteracy.ca.

Exit Assessment

Learners leave literacy programs for a variety of reasons and at various points throughout the program. Whatever the reason (or timing) for leaving, an exit assessment is a good way for the learner and the program to assess what has been accomplished and what needs to be worked on from both the program and learner's points of view.

For the learner, the exit assessment can establish a record of the skills he now has. Practitioners can provide a consistent standard for learners by describing progress in terms of the Saskatchewan Adult Literacy Benchmarks Levels 1 & 2.

For the program, the exit assessment can provide information to help the program make adjustments to better meet learner needs and can provide reporting information for funders and program managers.

Exit assessment measures learner progress (up until the exit point) in relation to the goals set in his individualized learning plan. As with the initial intake process, the exit assessment needs to be handled sensitively, with the needs of the learner foremost.

Not all learners reach all the goals set out in their learning plan so it is necessary to establish that progress has been made. The exit interview can provide the learner with a framework of action for continuing in another program or to return to yours when he is able. How a learner feels upon leaving a program will strongly influence whether he continues on with his literacy goals and action plans, so it is essential to put the emphasis on strengths and accomplishments rather than on things left yet to accomplish.

When learners leave literacy programs unexpectedly, follow-up with the learner may gather valuable information for the program and may provide encouragement for the learner to continue on his learning path when he is ready.

As in all assessment, gathering and sharing information with the learner as he exits the program is critical. Both the learner and the program need to know:

- what learning has occurred relative to the learner's goals;
- what challenges have been met;
- what strategies worked well;
- what changes are needed;
- what the next step is.

Questions asked in exit assessments such as: "What worked in the program for you?" and "What could we do differently to make it work better in the future?" can provide a basis to make improvements in the program.

Informal and Formal Assessment

There is **no single assessment tool** that will generate all the information needed by practitioners and learners as they create and adjust the learning plan. The learner is better served if the program uses a **mix of assessment tools** to develop a holistic picture of the learner.

There are two general categories of assessment:

1. informal
2. formal

All have advantages and limitations. When working with Level 1 & 2 literacy learners it is recommended that practitioners use a variety of assessment tools, keeping the learner's goals as the focus of all assessment activity.

1. Informal Assessment Tools

Informal assessment tools are developed by a literacy practitioner, program or agency to meet the specific needs of their learners and their programs.

One of the challenges in adult literacy assessment is measuring the skills of level 1 & 2 learners. Most formal assessment tools cannot provide valid assessment for learners with minimal literacy skills, so many literacy practitioners develop tools, such as checklists, rubrics, and portfolio activities that work for them. Interview questions can also be part of informal assessment.

Even an intake form can be an informal tool as you assess how the learner completes it.

- What does she read now (street signs, bus schedules, signs on doors)?
- Can she write her name and address?
- Is there someone in her life who helps her with reading tasks?

When working with Level 1 & 2 literacy learners it is recommended that practitioners use a variety of assessment tools, keeping the learner's goals as the focus of all assessment activity.

Strengths of Informal Assessment Tools:

- can be contextualized for individual learners or groups of learners
- can provide valid assessment for learners with low reading levels
- can be short and very specific
- can be used by learners for self-assessment

Limitations of Informal Assessment Tools:

- can be time consuming to create
- are often used one-on-one so can be time consuming to use
- can be racially, culturally or socially biased

2. Formal/Standardized Assessment

Formal assessment tools are commercially developed and have timed standardized administration, scoring and interpretation procedures. Standardized test scores are usually referenced to specific groups of people or specific sets of skills. They may also require specific qualifications for those administering the assessment tool. Standardized tests often produce grade level scores which programs sometimes use to determine learner placement.

Since grade levels do not show what specific skills the learner has or does not have, grade level scores are not particularly helpful in developing contextual learning plans with learners. **Level 1 & 2 literacy learners are better served by assessments designed to assess specific skills that the individual learner needs to possess to meet their goals.**

NOTE: If for some reason a grade level assessment was conducted to determine placement or literacy level, the learner is entitled to know her result. However, the practitioner should help the learner understand the limitations of standardized testing. The practitioner should convey how the learner can meet goals using a variety of strategies is more important than the label of a specific grade or grade level - "Let's look at your goal, what you want to learn and what we need to do to help you get there."

Strengths of Standardized Assessment Tools:

- are usually an economical way to assess groups of learners
- have high levels of reliability and validity
- can be completed in a short time
- are easy to administer and score

"Each program must decide if formal testing fits with the philosophy of the program and is in the best interest of the learners."

Limitations of Standardized Tools:

- do not provide enough detailed information to plan for instruction
- can be racially, culturally or socially biased
- only measure a select set of skills
- do not acknowledge the functional nature of literacy because they take literacy tasks out of the context of learners' lives
- often intimidate adult learners who have been unsuccessful with them in their past learning experiences

Practitioner Reflection Questions:

1. What formal and informal assessment tools have you used with the learners?

2. If you use standardized tests, do they measure what they are supposed to and are they appropriate?

3. How do the assessment processes you have used in the past based on adult learning principles and best practices?

4. Have the results of the intake or initial assessment been used to shape the learning plan?

5. Does the learner understand why you are using assessment tools and how they work?

6. Do learners have an opportunity to evaluate the literacy program?

7. Do learners have an opportunity to decide or develop assessment tools?

8. How can the results of the exit assessment be used to improve services?

Choosing Appropriate Tools

Because literacy programs vary in scope and purpose, the types of assessment tools chosen will vary widely. Selection of assessment tools will depend on the needs of the learners and the program.

In choosing appropriate assessment tools the following are some things to consider:

- the best interest of the learners

  ➤ are tools and processes contextual?
  ➤ are they at the appropriate level?
  ➤ are they valid?
  ➤ are they reliable?
  ➤ are they culturally appropriate?

- the length and structure of your program

  ➤ does it offer individualized programs at various levels?
  ➤ can individual goals be set for each learner or is there a defined curriculum?
  ➤ is the initial assessment done before the start date or is it part of the program?

- the resources you have available (both human and financial) to purchase or develop tools

- the type of information the program and the learner need to get from an assessment

  ➤ is a grade level required by the program or the funder?
  ➤ are specific tools part of the program outline?
  ➤ what information is needed to plan individual programs?

- staff qualifications

  ➤ is your staff qualified to use any standardized tools you select?

- the age of the test

  ➤ tests that have not been revised in the past 10 years may not be relevant to the learner.

Types of Assessment Tools

Informal Reading Inventories

Informal Reading Inventories (IRIs) are another way to determine a learner's reading level. IRIs can help literacy practitioners determine a learner's grade level for placement in programs, and can highlight the areas the learner needs to work on to improve reading and comprehension skills. An IRI consists of a set of graded word lists, graded passages and a set of factual and inferential questions for each passage.

IRIs measure three reading levels:

- the independent level (the learner is able to read and understand the passage without help)
- the instructional level (the learner can read and understand the passage with help from the practitioner)
- the frustration level (the learner would be frustrated trying to read the passage even with help)

The administration of IRIs can also provide the practitioner with information about how a learner approaches literacy tasks.

Strengths of IRIs:

- IRIs are relatively inexpensive;
- IRIs provide information about how the learner is reading, as well as information about specific areas of difficulty;
- IRIs can provide opportunities for the learner to read orally and to retell the story. This enables you to see how she uses text information and prior knowledge to decode unfamiliar words and to comprehend passages;
- Some IRIs have several passages at each grade level which means that a learner can choose which passage she wants to read within a particular grade level;
- Any passage can be used for assessment because the practitioner is using benchmarks and not grades.

Limitations of IRIs:

- can be time intensive as they are administered individually;
- do not provide valid assessment for beginning readers;
- can be racially, culturally or socially biased;
- only measure a select set of skills.

Portfolios as an Assessment Tool

Portfolios provide a framework for learner self-discovery, for personal record keeping and for on-going assessment of skill development. Portfolio can be a tool for assessment "of" learning, as well as for assessment "for" learning.

The concept of portfolio will be new and challenging to many learners. Introducing the portfolio early in the program can help the learner take ownership of the process. Issues of confidentiality and ownership of the portfolio need to be clearly outlined. While the program may require access to portions of the portfolio that relate specifically to the program, the portfolio belongs to the learner and she has the right to decide how much of her portfolio is shared.

Portfolios can help learners to:

- identify and record personal skills and abilities, accomplishments, growth and new learning;
- assist learners in identifying and articulating specific skills;
- set life, learning and career goals;
- demonstrate skills and knowledge relevant to a specific task, job or academic credit;
- take control of their own learning and assessment.

When using a portfolio as an assessment tool, it is important for the learner to engage in reflection. Reflection puts the focus not only on the experiences, but more importantly, on what is learned and how the learner will use what she has learned.

The portfolio process appears linear, with a starting and end point, but in reality all four stages are on-going as skills are discovered and learners become increasingly self-directed so there is no right or wrong order. A portfolio helps with identifying important elements of the development process:

Documentation

Presentation

| What you know you can do | Collecting & reflecting on artifacts | Artifacts to meet specific purposes | Assessment or recognition |

Identification

Organization
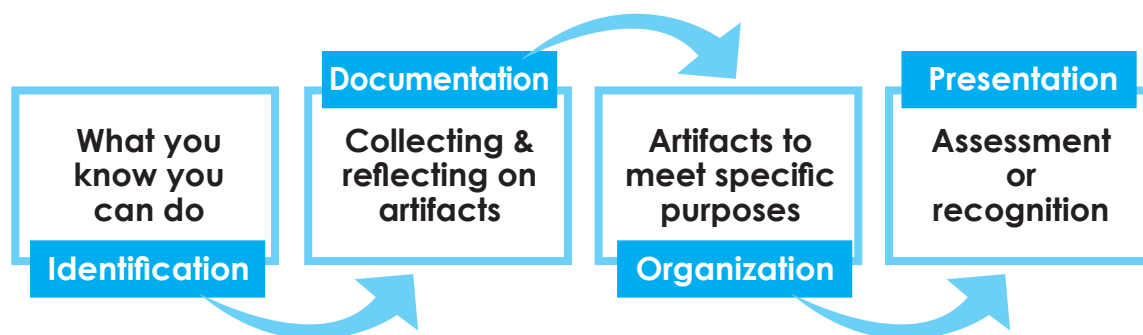
General Content Ideas:

1. Variety of artifacts that provides a relevant picture of the learner as possible.

2. Draft and finished forms of work.

3. Artifacts from inside and outside of the literacy program that provide evidence of Foundational Skills and progress across Levels 1 and 2.

4. Originals or photocopies of work.

5. Portfolios can include more than written evidence. Learners may have photos of projects, tapes, or discs that demonstrate their progress.

6. A portfolio container can accommodate various types of evidence.

7. The learner's choice of artifacts that relates directly to her personal, employment, and learning goals.

8. Written reflections that explain why a specific sample was selected for the portfolio.

Assessing the Portfolio

The following table provides some examples of artifacts that might be used to guide assessment as it relates to specific Benchmarks in the *Circle of Learning*.

Benchmark	Level	Artifact
Communications - Observing and Viewing: "Observe and view actively."	1	Video tape of class discussion, journal entries about body language, labeled collage of visual formats, descriptions of positive and negative body language at a family gathering
Communications - Observing and Viewing: "Observe and view critically."	2	Pictures of participation in a cultural ceremony, taped demonstration of skill learned by watching someone else, set of questions prepared for a political speaker, journal entry that shows understanding of personal biases/ opinions

Benchmark	Level	Artifact
Communications - Listening: "Listen to short messages actively and respectfully."	1	Summary of message left on answering machine, list of reasons for listening to different kinds of speakers, picture of something made following oral directions
Communications - Listening: "Listen to long messages actively and respectfully."	2	Note to summarize message of a speech, journal entry on body language of friend describing a personal problem, list of "books on tape" read, notes to show understanding of fact vs. opinion in speech, tape of class discussion of controversial issue, instructor checklist
Communications - Speaking: "Speak in familiar situations so others can understand."	1	Tape of story told to children, script written for introducing two people, list created of anxiety reducing activities when speaking in public, samples of "I" statements, tape of story reading, script for meeting with children's teacher
Communications - Speaking: "Speak in new situations so others can understand."	2	Script for message to be left at work, tape of small group discussion, video of presentation made to community group, list of strategies to control anxiety over speaking out
Communications - Reading: "Read short paragraphs with understanding."	1	Personal dictionary pages, alphabetical list of friends' phone numbers, diagram showing understanding of short text, lists of words arranged alphabetically, work samples illustrating knowledge of sentence parts
Communications - Reading: "Read 1-2 pages of text with understanding."	2	Samples of fiction and non-fiction with explanation of differences, picture of furniture assembled from written directions

Benchmark	Level	Artifact
Communications - Writing: "Write sentences and a short paragraph that others can understand."	1	Samples of alphabet written and printed, grocery lists, notes to teacher, original and edited samples of paragraphs, instructions written for a craft, sample business letters
Communications - Writing: "Write long paragraphs that others can understand."	2	Personal synonym dictionary, copy of daily work log, copies of different types of written communications, graphs created, job application completed, resume, cover letters
Numeracy - Demonstrate basic numeracy skills: "Solve simple numeracy problems in daily life."	1	Recipes doubled (picture of muffins made), cheque registry, baby weight gain charts, wage comparison charts, map drawn of proposed trip with mileage shown and totaled, copy of completed cancelled cheque, statement from automated teller machine, video of helping child count with blocks
Numeracy - Demonstrate complex numeracy skills: "Solve complex numeracy problems in daily life."	2	Journal entry explaining a math process, floor plan of room with calculations for carpeting and paint, list of prices calculated from an attached percentage off flyer, explanation of pay stub, bar graph of incomes for various jobs, coupons with savings comparisons and calculations shown, scale drawings
Working with Others: "Enhance self-reflection and engage in positive relations with others."	1&2	Journal pages, artwork, tape of job interviews, group skills checklist, tape of group discussions or storytelling, thank-you note
Continuous Learning: "Participate in creating, monitoring and adjusting one's own learning plan."	1&2	Goal setting charts showing adjustments over time, journal entries, tapes of conferences, work samples with reflection of learning shown, skills checklists

Strengths of Portfolio Assessment:

- Portfolio assessment is learner-centered.
- The learner is an active participant in the assessment process. She sets her goals for learning and assesses whether she is achieving these goals. This contributes to the learner's sense of control over her own learning and helps in the development of lifelong learning skills.
- Portfolio assessment allows the learner and literacy practitioner to identify strengths and challenges across a wide range of skill sets.
- Portfolio assessment displays the diversity of literacy tasks learners engage in on a daily basis.
- Portfolios can illustrate even small changes in a learner's literacy development. This encourages the learner as progress is evident in a very short timeframe.
- Portfolios integrate instruction and assessment.
- Portfolio assessment can guide instruction by helping the learner set goals and by providing evidence of progress.
- Portfolio assessment accommodates different cultural backgrounds and learning styles.

Limitations of Portfolio Assessment:

- It takes time to start and maintain a portfolio.
- There is a significant amount of paperwork involved in the creation and maintenance of the portfolio. It may be difficult to ensure confidential and safe storage.
- Training time for literacy practitioners and learners is required.
- The holistic nature of portfolio work may bring out sensitive issues for learners. Practitioners must know their limitations and know where appropriate resources are available in the community.

Reflection:

"After attending the workshop hosted by the Literacy Office, we started a portfolio of skills for each woman. Some of the words we used when teaching the women about the building of a Portfolio were Strength Based, Holistic, Continual, Collaboration, and Learner Centered. When we described the reason for creating a portfolio and why it is an asset to have especially when looking for work or training opportunities to strengthen their inventory of skills, the woman were very encouraged. Many identified that it was a new way for them to look at themselves and it gave them a new found sense of confidence because they knew they had skills and abilities but didn't think they could be used to support their quest for work."

Regina Treaty/Status Indian Services Inc., December 2015
Saskatchewan Community Literacy Fund Project

What has been your experience using the Portfolio as part of your adult literacy practice?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Checklists, Self-Assessment, Rating Scales

Checklists, Self-Assessment, Rating Scales help learners maintain a record of what they know, what they are learning, and plan to learn over time. Adding a rating scale helps learners assess their performance level and encourages self-reflection. Checklists can provide observable progress in the foundational skills and be revisited during the course of the program to document progress.

Sample Computer Skills Rating Scale
1 = needs improvement **2** = satisfactory **3** = very good **4** = excellent

Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Demonstrates appropriate use of the mouse.					
Demonstrates how to use the printer.					
Demonstrates how to save to a memory stick or hard drive.					
Demonstrates correct keyboarding technique (typing).					
Describes the uses of a word processing program.					
Uses a word processing program.					
Describes the uses of a spreadsheet program.					
Uses a spreadsheet program.					
Demonstrates how to open a home page online.					
Demonstrates how to use a search engine online.					
Demonstrates how to send a personal email.					
Describes the purpose for using the computer before performing a task.					
Describes the limitations of using the computer for finding information.					
Describes the limitations of using the computer for communicating via email.					

(SLN,2016)

Assessment Menu

Develop a point system that will allow learners to accumulate points in a variety of ways (Reeves, 2011). All learners have approximately the same obligations for completing work assignments but not necessarily for identical artifacts or assignments. See the following link for a description and consider how you might adapt this assessment:

Reeves, D. (2011). From Differentiated Instruction to Differentiated Assessment. ASCD Express. Retrieved from http://www.ascd.org/ascd-express/vol6/620-reeves.aspx

Cognitive Organizers

Cognitive organizers also known as graphic organizers provide ways for learners to construct meaning from text and for practitioners to gauge learners' comprehension of content. Cognitive organizers actively engage a variety of learners including learners with English as an Additional Language. The use of cognitive organizers not only help learners acquire information but delve into more critical thinking.

According to adult educator, Letendre (2009), "the main reasons to use graphic organizers within the classroom setting are:

- To articulate the relationships between concepts outlined in the graphic organizer.
- To encourage students to contribute their ideas.
- To establish a connection between the material being learned and past learning.
- To refer to upcoming material.
- To encourage structural analysis."

The other benefit of using graphic organizers with adult learners is the connection to brain function - "Graphic organizers are more novel and stimulating than traditional linear approaches to learning that most adults have been conditioned to. Since the brain's attention is selective, it tends to focus more on novelty, while ignoring the routine" (Materna, 2007).

For more information on cognitive organizers:

T/TAC W & M. (2014). Graphic Organizers: Guiding Principle and Effective Practices. Retrieved from http://education.wm.edu/centers/ttac/documents/packets/graphicorganizers.pdf

The Lightbulb (2015). Graphic Organizers – A Highly Effective Learning Tool for Adults. Retrieved from http://www.sc-ccccd.net/Training/Blog/?p=1127

Reflective Writing

Reflective writing has the potential to promote critical thinking emphasizing the learning process rather than product. Reflective writing can help learners understand how they learn and offer another outlet for developing ideas and thoughts. A reflective writing rubric can be developed to assess progress.

Initially, when working with Level 1 and 2 learners, the practitioner may need to provide structure in the form of prompts as a way to assist learners develop their reflective writing skills. For example:

Structure for Reflective Journal Writing

1. Description
   - ☐ What do you understand about the idea or topic?

2. Interpretation
   - ☐ What did you find most important or meaningful?
   - ☐ Make a link between a "personal experience" and the assigned journal topic

3. Feelings and Thoughts
   - ☐ What are your personal feelings or thoughts on what you have learned?
   - ☐ How has this changed or confirmed what you knew about the topic?
   - ☐ What has improved as a result of what you have learned?
   - ☐ What did you find confusing?
   - ☐ What questions remain?

4. Outcome
   - ☐ What have I learned from this that I will do differently next time?
   - ☐ What does this mean for me now or for my future plans?

Assisting learners to gain the skills necessary for reflective learning facilitates self-direction in learners and deepens understanding of practice of daily life and work. Reflective learning assists adult learner transition from passive learning to active learning; to learners who make sense of what they are learning and employ active learning strategies to home, work, and community.

For more ideas on reflective learning activities, please see *Becoming a Reflective Learner* at https://www.tru.ca/__shared/assets/reflective_learner19767.pdf.

Rubrics

Rubrics can be developed collaboratively with learners to evaluate progress.

Guidelines for developing rubrics include:

- Brainstorm a list of criteria related to the objectives to be achieved.
- Generate a list of indicators that specify the types of performances on a graduated scale for each criterion.
- Create a scale that lists indicators of expectations for each criterion.
- Ensure that the expected performance is correlated with the appropriate learning objective.
- Explain to learners the value of the task and the intended objectives.
- Monitor and assess learners' efforts throughout the process.
- Record a list of learners' goals for continuing learning.

Advanced Education and Employment (2013). Rubrics.
Retrieved from http://ae.gov.sk.ca/evergreen/socialsciences/part5/portion03.shtml

The following are sample rubrics to assess a learner's progress in communications – observing and reflecting and writing.

Reflection Journal Rubric (Level 1)

Criteria	1 point	2 points	3 points	4 points
Description	Description lacks clarity and does not show understanding of the topic.	Description is provided but poorly offered.	Description appears well thought out and connected to prompts.	Description is strong and clearly states the main ideas. Ideas show logical thinking and planning.
Interpretation	There is no connection between the topic and personal experience. Ideas appear random.	Limited connection made between the topic and personal experience. Ideas are not completely developed.	Interpretation is provided using the prompts. Ideas are well thought out. Ideas are supported with examples.	Interpretation goes above and beyond prompts. Writing shows presence of critical thinking skills and connects topic to social and work issues.
Feeling and Thoughts	Expression of personal feelings and thoughts lack clarity.	Expression of personal feelings and thoughts are present but do not provide additional information to support thoughts.	Feelings and thoughts about the topic are conveyed clearly.	Feelings and thoughts are explored and supported with examples. Makes useful connections to skill development.
Outcome	There is no outcome provided.	Outcome is provided but does not indicate indication of planning forward.	Description of outcomes show forward thinking. Outcomes appear generic.	Outcome is exceptionally planned and well thought out. Ideas are organized with clear outcome.

Rubric for a Well-Written Paragraph (Level 2)

Categories of Performance	Beginner (1)	Basic (2)	Intermediate (3)	Advanced (4)
Topic sentence/ main idea	No evidence of a main idea. The paragraph lacks clarity and cohesion.	Topic sentence is present but poorly written. The main idea is not entirely clear.	Topic sentence is complete. The main idea is clearly stated.	Topic sentence is strong and clearly states the main idea. Stimulates interest.
Body/ supporting sentences (3-5 related sentences)	Random ideas are hard to follow. Less than 3 complete sentences.	Limited details to establish interest in the topic. Short, choppy sentences that lack flow.	Body contains 3+ sentences. Mostly related details. Not all sentences are complete and focused.	Consistent development of main idea. Creates interest through details and varied sentence structure.
Concluding sentence	There is no concluding sentence that connects to a main idea.	The sentence is incomplete and does not sum up the paragraph.	The sentence is complete and adequately sums up the paragraph.	The sentence is complete and restated he main idea effectively.
Organization/ fluency	Paragraph lacks a clear focus. Confusing order of ideas.	Limited details. Shows effort to create order using simple language to express ideas.	Appropriate choice of words. More care needed to create fluency.	Well-organized with clear topic, body, and conclusion. Flows logically. Consistent focus on topic.
Mechanics/ word choice/ presentation	Many errors in grammar and spelling. Run-ons and lack of punctuation Limited new vocabulary. Disorganized.	More than 5 errors in spelling and grammar. Words not always used correctly. Needs revision.	Less than 5 errors in spelling and grammar. Shows variety of words.	Accurate spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Uses descriptive language. Neat final draft.

(SLN,2016)

Practitioners may also want to check out the following website for ideas on constructing writing rubrics. The key is to adapt the rubrics to align with the program goals and literacy Benchmarks.

Teacher Planet (2011). Writing Rubrics: A complete guide for Educational Rubrics and Assessments. Retrieved from
http://www.rubrics4teachers.com/writing.php

Other Assessment Tools

Diagnostic Adult Literacy Assessment for Beginning Readers (DALA) Kit, Dr. Pat Campbell (2010) – DALA is a user-friendly informal assessment tool, specifically designed to assess the literacy skills of very beginning readers. The primary purposes of DALA are to inform instruction and measure progress. The ten subtests provide diagnostic information that allows you to identify areas of strength and weakness. You can use this information to create an individual profile of and plan effective lessons for each student.

Socrative (so-crat-tive) as a formative assessment tool is a smart student response system that empowers teachers to engage their classrooms through a series of educational exercises and games via smartphones, laptops, and tablets. Socrative is designed in such a way to help teachers make classes more engaging and interactive. For more information, please visit http://www.socrative.com/.

Outcomes-Based Assessments – In an outcomes based assessment, learners progress to the next level only when s/he demonstrates mastery of skills from the current level. A *suggested* assessment tool for this purpose is the Common Assessment of Basic Skills or CABS. Developed by the Literacy Link Eastern Ontario (2000) CABS "offers literacy practitioners a framework for assessments which are based on demonstrations of foundational outcomes. In CABS, the assessment of learning outcomes is accomplished through realistic tasks or problem solving. Students engage in integrated activities (the demonstrations) which are meaningful and relevant to their goals".

CABS is available in print or in an online format. For more information and/or to view a sample of levels 1, 2 or 4 learning outcome demonstrations, please visit: https://www.lleo.ca/assessment.php.

Practitioner Reflection Questions:

▶ 1. What formal and informal assessment tools have you used in your literacy program?

▶ 2. How have you ensured that the assessment tools used in your program are in the best interest of the learner?

▶ 3. Does your personal assessment philosophy align with informal assessment? How is it different?

▶ 4. Do you have a personal portfolio? Can you model the reflection and critical analysis skills needed to maintain an effective portfolio?

▶ 5. How will you encourage the learner to make on-going additions to and reflections on their portfolio?

▶ 6. Do you use cognitive organizers with adult learners?

▶ 7. In what ways have you assisted learners in becoming more self-directed and active learners?

▶ 8. What online assessment tools have you used in your literacy program?

Appendices

Bibliography

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Sample Assessment Tools

The following section includes examples of tools that may be helpful in assessing Level 1 & 2 learners. Many of the tools included here can be used as written or oral activities, with results being written by the learner or scribed by the practitioner, depending on the skill level of the individual learner. Further note,

- This section is not meant to be exhaustive. The tools are intended as a starting point for the literacy practitioner to build on through experience and inquiry. Use them as is, or adapt them so that they work for adult learners and the program.

- When adapting the tools, use resources that are familiar to learners. Using transit schedules may work in an urban setting but reading schedules may need a different resource in a rural setting.

- The skills and goals checklists found in the Circle of Learning can be adapted to develop individual learner's programs. These lists can also be a starting point for creating rubrics or checklists to provide contextual assessment tools that are specific to the learning plans of individual learners.

- Many of these tools can be completed and included in a learner's portfolio with reflection attached. A series of tools (with the date of completion added) could also be used in the learner's portfolio to demonstrate progress towards individual learner's goals.

Tools

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Name of Tool	Page #	Intake Interview	Communications	Numeracy	Interpersonal/ Lifelong Learning	Exit Interview	Portfolio	Benchmarks Level
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Intake Interview Guide

Personal Information

Name: _____

Are you known by any other name?: _____

Address While Attending School: _____

Telephone: (home)_____ (message left)_____

Date of Birth: _____ Sex: ☐ (female)   ☐ (male)

Social Insurance Number: _____

Marital Status: ☐ Single   ☐ Married   ☐ Common Law
                    ☐ Separated   ☐ Divorced   ☐ Widowed

Number of Dependents: _____

Goals:

1. Why have you come to this program?_____

    _____

2. What is it you want to be able to do? _____

3. Do you have a career goal? ☐ Yes   ☐ No

    If yes, what is it? _____

    _____

Education:

1. What was the last grade in school that you completed? _____

2. How old were you when you left school? _____

3. Why did you leave school? _____

    _____

4. What good experiences did you have in school? _____

    _____

    _____

5. What not so good experiences did you have in school? _____

_____

_____

6. What subjects did you enjoy? _____

_____

7. What subjects did you find difficult? _____

_____

8. Did you receive any special help when you were in school (such as tutoring, resource room, and special classes)? ☐ Yes   ☐ No

   What kind of help did you receive? _____

9. Have you ever been told that you had a learning disability?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

   If yes, what kind of learning disability? _____

10. Have you attended any other education or training programs since you left school? If yes, please list them: _____

_____

11. Did you like these programs? Why or why not? _____

_____

Work History:

1. Are you working now? ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Full-Time   ☐ Part-Time

   If yes, what kind of work are you doing? _____

_____

2. What jobs / volunteer work you have done in the past?

   Job _____ Date Began _____ Date Left _____

   Reason for leaving _____

   Job _____ Date Began _____ Date Left _____

   Reason for leaving _____

   Job _____ Date Began _____ Date Left _____

   Reason for leaving _____

3. What jobs did you enjoy doing the most?_____

_____

4. What jobs did you not like to do? _____

_____

_____

5. What kind of work would you like to do in the future? _____

_____

_____

Language:

1. Which language did you most often speak when growing up? _____

_____

2. Which language do you most often speak now? _____

_____

Health:

1. Do you have any health problems that may affect your learning?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

   a. If yes, what are they? _____

2. Are you on any medication that may affect your learning?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

   a. If yes, what medication are you on? _____

3. Do you have any vision problems?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

   a. If yes, what are they? _____

4. Do you have any hearing problems?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

   a. If yes, what are they? _____

Program Fact Sheet Guide

- Name of program

- Address of program

- Phone number

- Name of contact person

- Date and time of program start

- Days and dates of the program

- Length of the program (# of weeks, # of hours /week)

- Supports provided by the program (counseling, daycare, funding)

- Attendance policy

- Confidentiality policy

Goal Setting Task List

Tasks	Can do	Work on now	Work on later	Not interested
Home				
Read labels				
Look up phone numbers				
Follow recipes				
Follow directions for assembly				
Write shopping lists				
Read bills				
Read letters, notes				
Write letters, notes				
Read newspapers				
Read magazines				
Read stories to children				
Help with homework				
Read medicine directions				
Read a lease				
Fill out application forms				
Follow a budget				
Banking				
Open bank account				
Fill out bank forms				
Write cheques				
Keep a bank book				
Balance a bank book				
Understand interest rates				
Understand service charges				
Use a banking machine				

Tasks	Can do	Work on now	Work on later	Not interested
Shopping				
Read signs and labels				
Compare prices				
Count money				
Make change				
Order by mail				
Read a menu				
Getting Around				
Use the phone book				
Read street signs				
Read a map				
Write down directions				
Read bus schedules				
Take a taxi				
Get a driver's licence				
Work				
Read training information				
Fill out job applications				
Prepare a resume				
Prepare a cover letter				
Read a pay check				
Fill out a timesheet				
Read safety information				
Read a memo				
Write a memo				
Write a phone message				
Read a phone message				
Read work orders				

Source: Manitoba Department of Education and Training, Creative Student Assessment (with some adaptations)

Self Awareness Checklist

Name: _____   Date: _____

Reading	Often	Sometimes	Never
I read the newspaper			
I read the bulletin board at work			
I read to my children			
I read religious books			
I read fiction			
I read magazines			
I read every day			
I read menus			
I read recipes			
I read manuals			
I read for pleasure			

Other things I read _____

Writing	Often	Sometimes	Never
I write letters to family or friends			
I write notes to my family			
I write in a journal			
I write business letters			
I write about myself			
I write for pleasure			
I write memos at work			
I write messages at work			
I write by hand			
I use a computer for writing			

Other things I write _____

Setting Realistic Goals: A Checklist

1. Has the **learner** chosen the goals?

2. Can the learner talk about the goals and expand upon them?

3. Are the goals challenging, but possible?

4. Can long-term goals be broken into a series of short-term goals?

5. Have barriers to achieving the goals been identified, if applicable?
   Are there strategies developed in response to the barriers?

Listening Skills Self Check

Skills	I usually do	I sometimes do	I never do
I am able to concentrate on the speaker even when there are distractions.			
I look directly at people when they are speaking.			
I am able to understand what people mean, not simply hear what they say.			
I do not interrupt, correct or complete sentences when others are speaking.			
I understand and control my own biases when assessing what others say.			
I avoid doing things that will distract speakers and others who are listening.			
I listen and show respect to speakers even when I feel I may know more about the subject.			
I ask questions or rephrase the speaker's comments to ensure that I understand what has been said.			
I do not let my thoughts wander when others are speaking.			
I am in control of my emotions when others are speaking.			
I support and encourage the speaker by using gestures, expressions and comments.			

Essential Employability Skills, SIAST Administration

Reading Skills and Goals Self Check

	Yes	No	Would like to
I know the sounds of the letters			
I can understand what I read			
I can find information in what I read			
I can read out loud			
I guess how to say words I don't know			
I sound out words I don't know			
I guess the meaning of words			
I know alphabetical order			
I go to the library			
I can pick out important information in what I read			
I have good study skills			
I can remember what I read			
I can read quickly			
I can read newspapers			
I can read calendars			
I can read magazines			
I can read street signs			
I can read the phone book			
I can read recipes			
I can read menus			
I can read bus schedules			
I can read maps			
I read books			
I can read to children			
I can read report cards			
I can read notes from school			
I can read medical information			
I can read instructions or manuals at work			
I can criticize what I've read			
I read for fun			

Level 1 Reading Signs
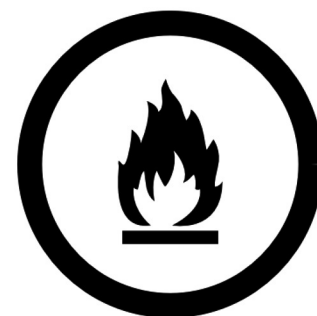
Reading Sample: Level 1

Communication Level 2

Grand Sweepstakes
★ WIN $10,000 ★
Or a Colour TV, or a Camera
No purchase necessary.
Draw will be held on June 6

Here's how to enter:
1. Fill out the entry form.
2. On the entry form, mark "Yes" or "No" to show whether you want to subscribe to GOOD NEWS MAGAZINE.
3. Mail the card with your name and address by March 31

1. How do you enter the contest?
   a) send a drawing
   b) buy something
   c) mail a card

2. The number of prizes is ---
   a) 10,000
   b) 3
   c) 1

3. The name of the magazine you can get is ---
   a) Grand Sweepstakes
   b) TV Guide
   c) Good News Magazine

Communication Success Markers

Phonics Skills	I can	I can not	I want to work on
name the consonants – b, c, d, f, g, h			
name the consonants – j, k, l, m, n, p			
name the consonants – q, r, s, t, v, w			
name the consonants – x, y, z			
say the sound for the consonants – b, c, d, f, g, h,			
say the sound for the consonants - j, k, l, m, n, p			
say the sound for the consonants - q, r, s, t, v, w			
say the sound for the consonants – x, y, z			
name the vowels – a, e, i, o, u,			
say the short sound for each vowels –a, e, i, o, u			
name the alphabet letters in order			
name the alphabet letters at random			
pick out and say beginning consonant sounds			
pick out and say ending consonant sounds			
pick out and say beginning short vowel sounds			
pick out and say middle short vowel sounds			
say the sounds for the consonant digraphs –ch, sh, th			
print words by sounding them out			

Printing Skills Markers	I can	I can not	I want to work on
print lower case letters – a, b, c, d, e, f			
print lower case letters – g, h, I, j, k, l			
print lower case letters – m, n, o, p, q, r			
print lower case letters – s, t, u, v, w, x, y, z			
print upper case letters – A, B, C, D, E, F			
print upper case letters - G, H, I, J, K, L			
print upper case letters - M, N, O, P, Q, R			
print upper case letters – S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z			
print the numbers 0 – 10 using symbols			
print the numbers 0 – 10 using words			
print numbers from 1-100 using symbols			
print numbers from 1-100 using symbols			
print my name			
print my address			
print my telephone number			
copy printed words or names from printed material			

Reading Skills Markers	I can	I can not	I want to work on
pick out a sentence			
tell where a sentence begins and ends			
recognize and name a period			
recognize and name a comma			
recognize and name quotation marks			
recognize and name a question mark			
recognize and name an apostrophe			
recognize and name an exclamation mark			
recognize and name a hyphen			
use a period			
use a comma			
use quotation marks			
use a question mark			
use an apostrophe			
use an exclamation mark			
use a hyphen			
pick out a paragraph			
tell who is speaking in a story			
read aloud a simple sentence to answer a question			
read silently to answer a question			
retell a story orally			
fill in missing letters in words			
fill in missing words in sentences			
find the title page in a book			
find the *Table of Contents* in a book			
find the *Index* in a book			
use the *Table of Contents* in a book			
use the *Index* in a book			

Word Recognition	I can	I can not	I want to work on
uses pictures to learn new words			
tell how many sounds are in a word			
bends letter sounds to read words			
understands sight words in sentence context			
picks out plurals			
picks out ownership when 's is used			

Reading Log

Name: _____

Title of what I read	Start date	Finish date	Type of reading	My thoughts about what I read

Reading Log

Name: _____

What I read	Date I started	Date I finished	Type of reading

Questions to Guide Reflection on Reading

These can be asked by the practitioner or used by the learner to guide the reflection on their reading. Learner responses can be recorded and placed in the learner's portfolio with the name of the reading and the date.

Name of Reading: _____ Date: _____

Why did you choose this reading?

Did you do anything before you started to help you understand it better?
What did you do?

Did you have problems reading this? If so, what were they?
How did you solve them?

What did you learn from doing this reading?

What would you like to read next?

Level 2 Pre and Post Reading Questions

What do you know to be true about the subject before reading this item?	Things you want to remember from the reading (ideas, page numbers, quotes):	How did the reading reinforce or change your beliefs?

Beginner Writing Task: Grocery List

Oral instructions for students:

Give the students the instructions below, one at a time. Stop immediately or skip the particular word/phrase if learner seems overwhelmed or frustrated or unable to perform the task.

1. Write your name on the top, right hand side of the paper.
2. Copy the words "Grocery List" on the top line of your page.
   (Have Grocery List printed where everyone can see it.)
3. Write the numbers from 1-12 in a column on the left hand side of the page.
4. Beside #1 write one item you often buy at the grocery store.
5. Beside #2 write another item you often buy at the grocery store.
6. Now write the items I name beside the rest of the numbers on your page.
   (Dictate items from the list below that identify student's knowledge of initial and final consonants, short vowels some common irregular words and short phrases.)

buns	chips	ten cans of soup	eggs	red pepper
milk	butter	a big box of dog food	jam	ham
pop	salt	a small bag of rice	sugar	fish

Beginner Writing Task – Grocery List Evaluation chart

Skills	Can do	Can not do
Writes name		
Copies words		
Follows directions		
Writes numbers 1 – 10		
Uses capital and small letters		
Recognizes and writes initial consonants		
Recognizes and writes final consonants		
Recognized and writes short vowels		
Writes some phonetically irregular words		
Recognized and writes some consonant digraphs (sh,ch)		
Uses spacing between words		

Notes: _____

_____

Level 1 Writing Task: Writing a Note

Instructions: Using one of the ideas below write a note that is about half a page long.

- Your child has been away from school. Write a note to the teacher that explains why. Explain when your child will return and add any information you think is needed.
- You have to go out and won't be home until very late. Write a note that tells where you are going and when you will return. Add any information you think is needed.
- A machine at work has broken down. It is time for you to leave and your supervisor is on a break. Write a note to your supervisor to explain what has happened.
- A neighbour or friend has invited you to a party next week, but you will not be able to go that night. Write a note that explains why you won't be there. Add any information you think is needed.
- You have to be away from school or work tomorrow. Write a note that explains why. Add any information you think is needed.

Evaluation chart for Writing a Note:

Skills	Can do	Can not do	Needs some work
Content, Organization and Sentence Structure			
follows instruction			
stays on topic			
expresses ideas in sentences			
enough details to fulfill assignment			
correct sentence structure			
Vocabulary/word choice			
correct word usage			
correct and consistent verb tense			
adjectives, adverbs, phrases to enhance sentences			
Mechanics			
punctuation use			
capital letters for sentences and proper nouns			
frequently used words spelled correctly			
legible handwriting			

Notes: _____

_____

Writing Skills Self Check

I Can:	Yes	No	Want to
print the letters of the alphabet			
print capital letters			
print small letters			
use handwriting			
write words			
write complete sentences			
write my name and address			
write the names of my family and friends			
write the days of the week			
write the months of the year			
write lists			
write notes			
fill in forms			
write down telephone messages			
spell most words correctly			
use good grammar			
use correct punctuation			
write ideas in a logical order			
write paragraphs			
write letters			
write in a journal			
write a resume			
write a cover letter			
write stories			
use a computer to write			
know what I want to say when I write			
organize my thoughts			
take tests easily			
enjoy writing			

Writing Checklist

	Occasionally	Usually	Always
Handwriting/printing is easy to read			
Words are well spaced			
Letters are formed correctly			
Spelling is 90 % accurate			
Proof reads work			
Edits work			
Writes in complete sentences			
Uses correct punctuation			
Uses capital letter correctly			
at beginning of sentences			
for names			
Uses complete sentences			
Uses the paragraph form			
Paragraphs stay on topic			
Writing is well organized			
Writing is clear			
Writing is accurate			
Gaining confidence as a writer			
Willing to revise			
Willing to share writing with others			
Able to write for a variety of purposes			
Able to select topics for writing			

Level 2 Writing Task: "How To"

Write an explanation of how to do something.

Instructions:

1. Choose an activity you know a lot about or do often.
2. Plan your explanation.
3. Think about the steps in the activity. Your instructions are for someone who has never done this activity before.
4. Write your explanation.
5. Read over your finished instructions. Make any changes that are needed.
6. Rewrite your instructions if necessary.

Ideas for "How To" task:

How to choose a pet

How to change a tire (or oil in the car)

How to plant a tree or a garden

How to make a birthday cake (or scramble eggs)

How to choose and buy a new car (or new furniture)

How to sew on a button (or hem a pair of pants)

How to play a favourite card game (or computer game)

How to _____ (your idea)

How to change a diaper

How to program a VC

How to wash windows

How to wash a car

How to build a ...

How to fix a ...

Evaluation Chart –Writing a "How To"

Skills	Can do	Can not do	Needs some work
Content and Organization			
details are relevant, specific, and effective			
stays on topic			
clear, logical development of ideas			
uses correct paragraph format			
language/Vocabulary Awareness			
word choice – beyond basic, specific, descriptive			
correct and consistent verb tense			
adjectives, adverbs, phrases to enhance sentences			
transition words and phrases used to connect ideas			
word use – infinitives, prepositions, pronouns			
grammar and Mechanics			
punctuation use.. ? ! ' " : ;			
sentence structure - word order, agreement, articles			
correct spelling - homonyms, suffix rules			
legible handwriting			
complete sentences – no fragments, no run-ons,			
proof reading and editing			

Notes: _____

_____

_____

_____

Rubric for a Well-Written Paragraph

Categories of Performance:	Beginner (1)	Basic (2)	Intermediate (3)	Advanced (4)
Tone	The tone is inappropriate for the writing purpose.	The tone shifts from formal to informal and is not consistent.	The tone shifts occasionally from formal to informal, or vice versa.	The appropriate tone is used consistently.
Opening sentence	The sentence is incomplete and does not state the main idea.	The sentence is complete, but does not state the main idea.	The sentence is complete and adequately states the main idea.	The sentence is complete and clearly states the main idea.
Supporting sentences	Some sentences are incomplete or run-on and do not support the main idea.	Some sentences are incomplete or run-on, but support the main idea.	Most sentences are complete and support the main idea.	All sentences are complete and support the main idea.
Closing sentence	The sentence is incomplete and does not sum up the paragraph.	The sentence is complete, but does not sum up the paragraph.	The sentence is complete and adequately sums up the paragraph.	The sentence is complete and clearly sums up the paragraph.
Organization of ideas	Ideas in the paragraph are disorganized and do not support the main idea, causing a confusion of meaning.	A few ideas in the paragraph do not support the main idea or are out of place, causing a confusion of meaning.	Ideas in the paragraph support the main idea, but could be organized more clearly.	Ideas flow in the paragraph and clearly support the main idea, creating meaning.
Vocabulary or word use	Some inappropriate vocabulary is used and some words are used in the wrong context.	Some words are used in the wrong context.	All words are used appropriately.	All words are used appropriately and there is evidence of some new vocabulary being used.
Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation	There are many errors in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.	There are some errors in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.	There are only a few errors in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.	There are no errors in spelling, capitalization, or punctuation

Taken from the Circle Of Learning, Pages 182-183

Questions to Guide Reflection on Writing

These can be asked by the practitioner or used by the learner to guide the reflection on their writing. Learner responses can be recorded with the title of the writing and the date and placed in the learner's portfolio.

Title of Writing: _____ Date: _____

Why did you decide to write this?

Why did you choose to put it in your portfolio?

Did you have problems writing this? If so, what were they?
How did you solve them?

What did you learn from doing this piece of writing?

What would you like to write next?

Spelling Assessment

Instructions:

Say the word clearly, say the sentence, and repeat the word.

Have the learner write the word.

Stop when you feel the learner is frustrated or makes several mistakes in a row.

Short Vowel sounds:

go	I will go to the store.	go
man	The man is standing over there.	man
pen	Do you write with a pen?	pen
sit	Please sit on the blue chair.	sit
fun	We had a lot of fun at the game.	fun
will	I will finish my work today.	will
thin	That cat is very thin.	thin
last	Who ate the last cookie?	last
wish	I wish I had a cookie.	wish
split	Let's split up the work.	split

Long Vowel sounds:

make	I will make a cake today.	make
feel	Do you feel better now?	feel
bike	Tim rode his bike to school.	bike
boat	We took the boat to the lake.	boat
beach	The sand on the beach was warm.	beach
plate	We used a paper plate for our picnic.	plate
grow	Tomatoes grow in the garden.	grow
toast	We had toast for breakfast.	toast
fight	The boys had a fight over the toy car.	fight

"R" Controlled vowel sounds:

farm	We saw black cows at the farm.	farm
girl	The girl had long, curly hair.	girl
her	Jane rode her bike home.	her
turn	It's my turn!	turn
store	Tom went to the store for milk.	store

Irregular vowel sounds:

come	Will you come to the show today?	come
one	I have one brother.	one
were	We were out shopping yesterday.	were
book	We were reading our favourite book.	book
caught	Tim caught four fish.	caught

Vowels in endings:

needed	I needed a new pen for work.	needed
coming	My aunt is coming for supper.	coming
glasses	My glasses are broken.	glasses
stopped	He stopped at the red light.	stopped

Numeracy Skills Checklist

Skills	Can do	Can not do	Want to do
Money Management/Banking			
Count money			
Make change			
Pay utility bills			
Basic home budgeting			
Calculate bank service charges			
Use an automated teller			
Write checks			
Balance a checkbook			
Deposit money			
Withdraw money			
Understand a pay stub			
Save money			
Invest money			
Dates and Time			
Use a calendar			
Write the names of the months			
Write the days of the week			
Writing the date			
Telling time			
Fill in time sheets			
Use a 24 hour clock			

Skills	Can do	Can not do	Want to do
Numeracy Functions/Computations			
Estimate to the nearest number			
Reading numeracy words in sentences (add, percentage)			
Understand place value			
Use a calculator			
Change fractions to decimals			
Calculate percentages			
Calculate area of a floor			
Calculate the volume of a round container			
Calculate the distance around a fence line			
Use a weigh scale			
Use a tape measure/ruler			
Parenting/Health related Numeracy			
Help children with homework			
Read directions and dosages on medicine bottles			
Double recipes			
Read thermometers			
Calculate bus fares			
Read a bus schedule			
Understand a report card			

Numeracy Goal Setting Self Check

	Yes	No	Would like to
I use math every day			
I can read the numbers to _____			
I can write numbers to _____			
I use a calculator			
I can write cheques			
I can balance my cheque book			
I can check my pay slip for mistakes			
I can figure out a tip			
I can change the size of a recipe			
I can tell time			
I can read a map			
I can fill in my timesheet at work			
I can count money			
I can make change			
I can add numbers			
I can add large numbers			
I can subtract			
I can multiply			
I can divide			
I can use fractions			
I can figure out sale prices when discounts are a %			

Numeracy Use Self – Assessment

Name: _____ Date: _____

How I use numeracy

		Yes	No	Want to
1.	I use math every day	_____	_____	_____
2.	I can use a calculator	_____	_____	_____
3.	I can estimate an answer	_____	_____	_____
4.	I can solve problems in my head	_____	_____	_____
5.	I can sense if my answer is right	_____	_____	_____
6.	I can balance my cheque book	_____	_____	_____
7.	I can figure out savings at sales	_____	_____	_____
8.	I can check my pay stubs for errors	_____	_____	_____
9.	I can figure out how much to leave for a tip	_____	_____	_____
10.	I can double a recipe	_____	_____	_____
11.	I can read a map	_____	_____	_____
12.	I can figure out how much paint I need to paint my kitchen	_____	_____	_____
13.	I can fill out a time sheet	_____	_____	_____
14.	I can calculate how long a trip will take	_____	_____	_____
15.	I understand math words when I hear them	_____	_____	_____
16.	I can set the timer on the stove	_____	_____	_____
17.	I can follow directions on a prescription	_____	_____	_____
18.	I can measure the height of my child	_____	_____	_____
19.	I can read a thermometer	_____	_____	_____
20.	I can follow a knitting pattern	_____	_____	_____
21.	I can fill out a tax form	_____	_____	_____
22.	I can read a bus schedule	_____	_____	_____
23.	I can keep stats for my kid's sports team	_____	_____	_____
24.	I can read and understand my utility bills	_____	_____	_____
25.	I can track mileage for an expense claim	_____	_____	_____
26.	I can make change	_____	_____	_____

Sample Assessment Rubric

Task/Skill	I don't know anything about this task/skill	I know a little about this task/skill	I know some things about this task/skill	I am very comfortable with this task/skill

The list of tasks/skills can be developed to assess learning on a particular topic, a job, a learning task etc..

The levels in the check boxes should describe the levels the learner would go through as they work towards achieving their goal.

Learning Styles (How I Learn Something)

Draw a circle around the letter that best completes the sentence.

1. I remember some things best when I

A - hear it.   **B** - see it.   **C** - touch it.

2. Most of the time I like to

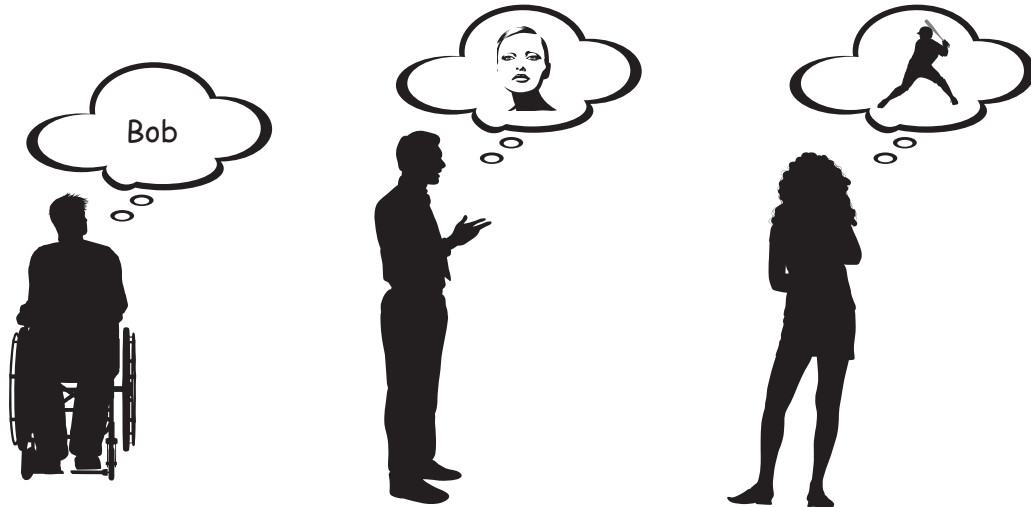**A** - listen to the radio.   **B** - watch TV.   **C** - do things .

3. I remember ... best

A - names not faces.   **B** - faces not names.   **C** - event not faces or names.

4. I can do things best when someone

A -tells me how.   **B** - show me how.   **C** - lets me do it myself.

With you tutor's help decide what your learning style may be.

Count the number of circled **A**'s _____.
Count the number of circled **B**'s _____.
Count the number of circled **C**'s _____.
I have the most number of_____'s.

Using Ways You Learn (Learning Style) pick the way that you learn best.

I learn best when _____.

The way I learn is most likely_____.
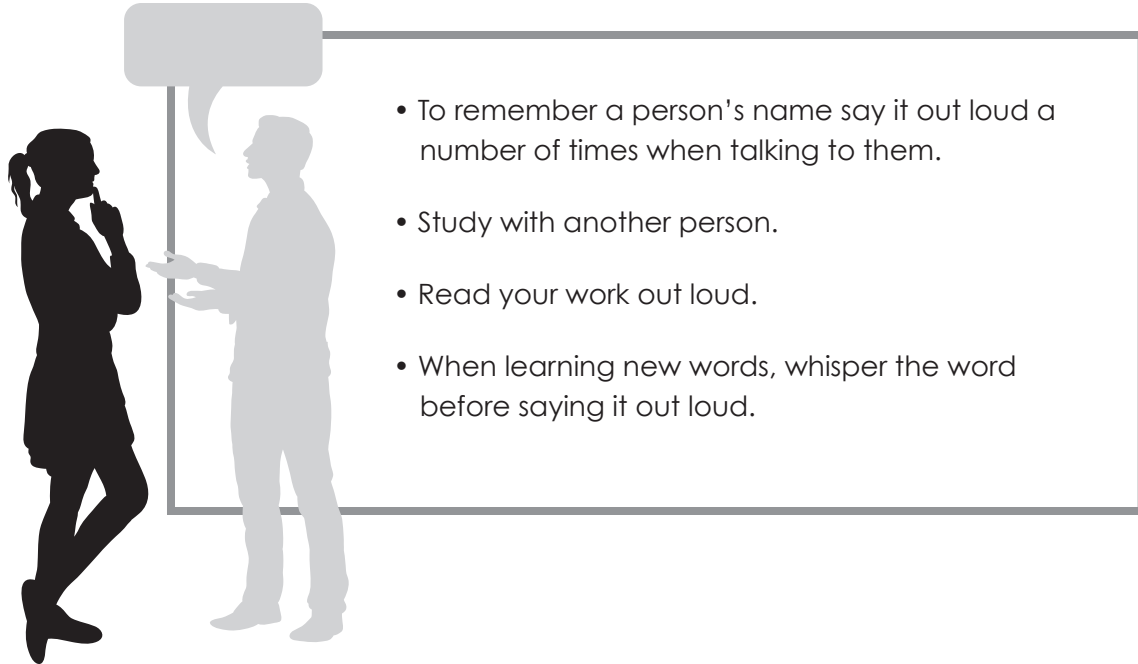
Hearing   **Seeing**   **Doing**

Learning is lifelong.

Ways You Learn (Learning Style)

People may have more than one way to learn but

people with more A's learn best by listening to others (auditory).

- To remember a person's name say it out loud a number of times when talking to them.

- Study with another person.

- Read your work out loud.

- When learning new words, whisper the word before saying it out loud.

people with more B's learn best by watching others (visual).
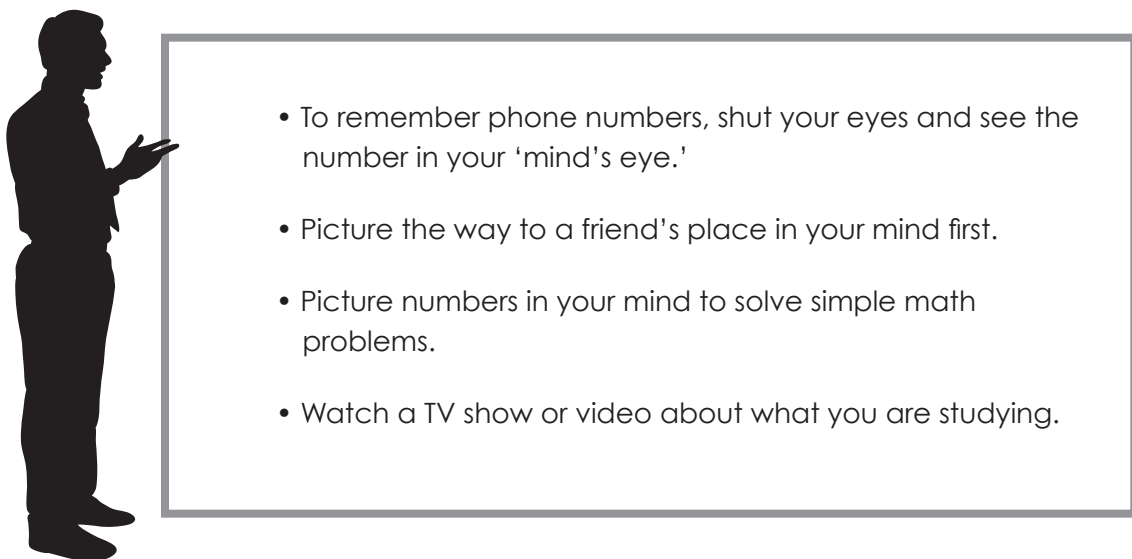
- To remember phone numbers, shut your eyes and see the number in your 'mind's eye.'

- Picture the way to a friend's place in your mind first.

- Picture numbers in your mind to solve simple math problems.

- Watch a TV show or video about what you are studying.

How I Learn Best

1. I learn best
   - ☐ Alone
   - ☐ With one other person
   - ☐ In a class
   - ☐ Some of each

2. I learn best
   - ☐ In a quiet room
   - ☐ With the TV, radio or iPod on
   - ☐ With other people around if they are quiet
   - ☐ Where there is lots of activity around me

3. I learn best by
   - ☐ Watching someone else do it and then doing it myself
   - ☐ Reading about it
   - ☐ Writing down the steps to follow
   - ☐ Someone else telling me how to do it
   - ☐ Just doing it

4. Most of the time I like to
   - ☐ Listen to the radio
   - ☐ Watch TV
   - ☐ Do things

How I Learn Something New

	Often	Sometimes	Never
By myself			
In a group			
When it is quiet			
With music playing			
By watching others			
By trying it myself			
By listening to instructions			
By reading about it			

Other ways I learn _____

_____

_____

_____

Self-management Outcomes: Self Check

Date: _____

Success Markers	Some of the time	Most of the time	All of the time
I come to class on time			
I get my homework done			
I feel good about my learning			
I use what I learn outside of class			
Other people tell me I am reading better			
Other people tell me I am writing better			
I take part in class activities			
I try to work on my own			
I try to correct my mistakes			
I try new things			
I feel good when people tell me I am doing well			
I like to improve my work			
I can correct my own work			
I can help others when asked			

Source: North Bay Literacy Council. Reprinted with permission

Effective Study Skills Self Assessment

Skill	Always	Usually	Seldom	Never
I have enough time to do all that I need to do				
I set realistic goals daily for what I want to accomplish				
I sort what is essential and non-essential to make more time available				
I have a weekly plan for work, study, family, and leisure time				
I schedule time for leisure every week				
I have a monthly plan for key activities and events				
When studying I can concentrate for about 1 hour at a time				
I make efficient use of small blocks of time				
I schedule preparation time for major assignments				
I can confidently approach a trainer for help				
I know how to write tests effectively				
I know how to read to understand text books				
I set aside time every day to review what I learned that day				

Interest Inventory

Name: _____ Date: _____

I like to read about …

I wish I could…

I look forward to…

On weekends, I like to…

I feel proud when …

When I have to read, I…

I'm really interested in learning about…

If I won the lottery I would…

What I really enjoy on TV is …

Personal Skills: Goal Setting Self Check

Personal Skills and Abilities	Can do now	Can not do now	Want to do
Understand my values			
Improve my relationships			
Control my anger			
Improve my decision making skills			
Express myself in groups			
Manage my time			
Set goals			
Follow through on goals			
Understand and express my feelings			
Understand different cultures			
Understand family relationships			
Become employed			
Improve self esteem			
Manage my money			
Use my time efficiently			
Take control of my life			
Do more things for myself			
Organize my life efficiently			
Get stable housing			
Improve my health			
Be a better parent			
Feel more confident			
Accept loss or death			
Communicate cross culturally			
Improve listening skills			

Problem Solving Styles

In general, people try to solve their problems in one of four ways. These are known as problem solving styles. You will probably use a variety of styles, but is still a good idea to know which style you prefer and understand its advantages and disadvantages.

The four styles are: 1. Diplomat   2. Professor   3. Detective   4. Champion

To understand what kind of problem solver you are, complete the following questionnaire.

Rank the words or phrases that are listed under each statement. Use 1 for the most preferred and 4 for the least preferred. There are no right or wrong answers!

1. Things I consider in solving a problem:
   _____ a) views of other people
   _____ b) views of experts
   _____ c) relevant information
   _____ d) personal experience

2. How I usually approach a problem:
   _____ a) explore the background
   _____ b) collect facts
   _____ c) try out a solution
   _____ d) talk to people

3. The way I like to interact with people:
   _____ a) interview them
   _____ b) challenge them
   _____ c) try to convince them
   _____ d) inform them

4. I like problem solving best when I:
   _____ a) take decisive action
   _____ b) weigh alternatives
   _____ c) gather complete data
   _____ d) explore the cause

5. The statement that best expresses my view of problem solving is:
   _____ a) to be successful a solution must be acceptable to everyone involved
   _____ b) we have a lot to learn from our past experiences
   _____ c) solving most problems comes down to figuring out the cause-
       and –effect relationships
   _____ d) in the real world, you often have to solve a problem without a
       complete understanding of what has caused it

To see what your style is, write the scores from the questions above next to the corresponding letters in the following section. Your lowest score on the survey indicates your preferred style. Each of us has some of the traits of each style, although one style usually is dominant and preferred.

1. a) _____	1. b) _____	1. c) _____	1. d) _____
2. d) _____	2. a) _____	2. b) _____	2. c) _____
3. c) _____	3. d) _____	3. a) _____	3. b) _____
4. b) _____	4. c) _____	4. d) _____	4. a) _____
5. a) _____	5. b) _____	5. c) _____	5. d) _____

Total: _____ (D)   Total: _____ (P)   Total: _____ (De)   Total: _____ (C)

SCORES:

(D) Diplomat _____ **my score**

Interested in reaching consensus (when people all agree)

Learns best from talking to those involved

Often values opinions more than facts

Focuses on practical solutions

Can be very persuasive

Needs to guard against missing timelines as a result of taking too much time gathering opinions

(P) Professor _____ **my score**

Interested in theories

Seeks lot of background information

Learns from relationships to other situations

Values detachment from issues (tries to be very objective)

Relates to others by giving and getting information

Needs to guard against indecision and impracticality (always waiting for more information)

(De) Detective _____ **my score**

Interested in finding the cause of the problem

Focuses on relevant facts

Prefers to make direct observations of situations

Tends to follow a consistent method or process

Tries to establish clear cause-and-affect relationships

Needs to guard against inflexibility and insensitivity to people

(C) Champion _____ **my score**

Interested in results

Finds a solution by trying one out

Wants to achieve success without help from others

Trusts his or her instincts

Good in crisis situations and when there is no time for analysis

Needs to guard against impulsiveness and uncooperativeness

Attitude Assessment

These questions can help you discover how positive or negative you tend to be, and what you may want to try to change. Do not think about your responses too long, go with your first reaction.

3 – Mostly Yes   2 – Sometimes   1 – Mostly No

_____ 1. Am I friendly?
_____ 2. Can I stop myself from constant complaining?
_____ 3. Can I be optimistic when others are depressed?
_____ 4. Do I have a sense of responsibility?
_____ 5. Do I control my temper?
_____ 6. Do I speak well of my employer?
_____ 7. Do I feel well most of the time?
_____ 8. Do I follow directions willingly, asking questions when necessary?
_____ 9. Do I keep promises?
_____ 10. Do I organize my work and keep up with it?
_____ 11. Do I readily admit my mistakes?
_____ 12. Is it easy for me to like nearly everyone?
_____ 13. Do I readily admit my mistakes?
_____ 14. Can I stick to a tiresome task without being prodded?
_____ 15. Can I take being teased?
_____ 16. Do I avoid feeling sorry for myself?
_____ 17. Am I courteous to others?
_____ 18. Am I neat in my personal appearance and work habits?
_____ 19. Do I respect the opinions of others?
_____ 20. Can I adapt to new and unexpected situations readily?
_____ 21. Am I tolerant of other people's beliefs?
_____ 22. Do I refrain from sulking when things go differently than I would like?
_____ 23. Am I a good listener?
_____ 24. Am I the kind of friend I would like others to be?
_____ 25. Can I disagree without being disagreeable?
_____ 26. Am I normally punctual?
_____ 27. Do I consider myself a courteous driver?
_____ 28. Do I generally speak well of others?
_____ 29. Can I take criticism without being resentful and feeling hurt?
_____ 30. Do I generally look at the bright side of things?
_____ 31. Can I work with someone I dislike?
_____ 32. Am I pleasant to others even when I feel displeased about something?
_____ 33. Am I enthusiastic about the interests of others?
_____ 34. Do I tend to be enthusiastic about whatever I do?
_____ 35. Am I honest and sincere with others?

_____ TOTAL SCORE

Scoring

Total your score and rate yourself according to the following scale:

95-100 Your positives are terrific

75-94   Your positives are definitely admirable

45-74   Your positives have almost fizzled out. Take a closer look at your attitude. You may need to pay particular attention to those questions you answered with a 1. Can you see room for improvement?

Problem Solving Skills Inventory

(This can be the basis of an oral discussion or a written reflection, depending on the skill level of your learners.)

When I run into a problem, I usually …

I usually feel _____ about problems because …

When it comes to personal problems, I wish I could …

When I have problems at work, I talk to _____ because…

I notice that other people react to problems by…

I usually get help with my problems from …

I can tell when I am making a good decision because …

I can tell when I am making a bad decision because …

What I like the most about discussing problems and solutions with others is …

What I like the least about discussing problems and solutions with others is…

Portfolio Summary Sheet

Name of Item	Date	Where it is in my portfolio

Learner Reflection Sheet

(This can be the basis of an oral discussion or a written reflection, depending on the skill level of your learners.)

Date: _____

This week I studied …

This week I learned …

This week I used what I learned in these places …

This week I spoke with these people about these things …

This week I made these mistakes …

I tried to fix the mistakes by …

My difficulties are …

I would like to know …

Now I want to work on …

Portfolio Conference Guide

Holding a conference to discuss a learner's self-perception of their own learning, helps in planning for instruction. For the beginning learner, the practitioner asks the questions, records the responses, and reads them back to ensure that it is what the learner wants recorded. Level 2 learners could write their responses ahead of the conference and use them for discussion.

What are you including in your portfolio this month (week)?

Why have you selected this item?

What does this item show about you and your learning?

Where else might you use this learning?

What will you work on next?

What help will you need with it?

Exit Assessment Conference Guide

1. Why did you decide to come to the program?

2. What did you hope to learn when you first came?

3. How long did you think it would take to learn what you wanted to learn?

4. How is the learning different from what you thought it would be?
   Slower/Faster? How do you feel about it?

5. Are you enjoying the Process? Or is it frustrating?

6. Why did you keep coming to the program?

7. Have you learned some of what you wanted to learn?
   All of what you wanted to learn?

8. Can you give an example of how you have moved ahead?

9. Do you see a difference in your everyday life as a result of your learning?
   (If the answer to the prompts is yes..ask for an example.)

10. Are there changes in the way or amount that you speak out?

11. Are there changes in the way or amount that you listen?

12. Do you express yourself in different ways than before? (music, art, reading, conversation, writing, hobbies)

13. Do you feel differently about your health? (i.e., do eat, drink, smoke, exercise differently?)

14. How comfortable are you in class? in your community? at home?

15. Do you feel like you have the same, more or less control in your life?

16. Has family or friends commented on changes they see in you?

17. Are you more willing to try new things now?

18. Has your involvement in your community changed since coming to the program? (in your child's school, volunteering, other programs or classes)

19. Have you changed the way you manage your time? (keep appointments better, feel less rushed,)

20. Are there any changes in how you handle or own learning tools? (pens, calculators, computers, books)

Learner Exit: Self-evaluation of Progress

Date: _____

What were your goals when you came to the program? Were they realistic?
Why or why not?

Did you achieve these goals? Did you make progress towards them?
Why or why not?

What are the most significant things you have learned about yourself in this
program? How can you use these things you have learned when you are outside of
the program?

Do you have plans to continue your learning? What are they?
Will you need help with them? Where will you get the help?

Program Evaluation (Exit Assessment)

I understand why this program is offered.   _____ yes   _____ no

My assessment results and processes were explained
in a way that made sense to me.   _____ yes   _____ no

The instructor helped me set my goals.   _____ yes   _____ no

The program was a safe and comfortable place to work   _____ yes   _____ no

What did you like best about the program?

What would you change about the program?

What can the program do to help you with your next steps?

I would like the program to know that ...