

Professional Development in the Comfort of Your Home

NorQuest College is offering three professional development workshops in an online format: One-On-One Instruction, Teaching Pronunciation, and Teaching Strategies. The online format includes video segments of workshops delivered at NorQuest College, handouts you can print, and further information provided through slides. You will be able to access the workshops on or after April 15, 2007 by going to <http://webct.edu.norquest.ca/public/eslworkshop/>. There is no charge, but you will have to register.

Coming Soon ERPAC Mini-Modules

NorQuest College has developed the ERPAC Mini-Modules—a set of 10 lessons that can be taught over a 10-week period. All lessons are built on the Canadian Language Benchmarks. Each lesson has been developed for benchmarks 2 and 4, so that you could use parts of each lesson in a multi-level setting. The lessons are fully developed and include a warm-up, teaching activities, accompanying handouts, and/or recommended resources. This resource has just been piloted and will soon be available for instructors and tutors to use. We will send out notice of how to access the resource as soon as the revisions are complete.

Teaching Tip

The homework assignment is a very important part of your lesson plan. Since the purpose of teaching English is to develop learners' language skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing, you should try to incorporate opportunities for learners to practise real world tasks independently. Set up homework activities that ask the learners to apply what they have been learning in a meaningful and relevant way. For example, in a unit on recreation, learners could practise their listening and questioning skills by calling the recreation centre to find out the schedule for public swimming. Learners may have expectations around doing homework that go back to their childhood experiences. You can help them recognize that the real world tasks you assign as homework are an important part of developing their language skills.

Teaching Technique

Eating together is always a way to promote interaction among learners. Everyone likes to have a potluck at the end of an eight- or ten-week session. People are usually happy to bring in something from their country for a group meal. You can also use food in other ways. For example, bring in a tray of food that none of the learners have tried before, such as rhubarb or blueberries, and let learners test them. Encourage them to expand their vocabulary

by describing the taste or texture. (Make sure to write the new vocabulary on the flip chart or on flash cards for later use.)

Another way to help learners develop vocabulary is to cook or prepare food together. If you have access to an oven, you could bake a carrot cake. If you don't have an oven, you could make a fruit salad. Introduce as many food preparation verbs as possible, such as slice, shred, grate, mix, sift, etc. Assign different tasks to different people and have them describe what they are doing, or what they did. Have a conversation with the learners as you eat the food you have prepared.

Literacy, ESL Literacy, and ESL

What is an ESL Literacy learner? ESL Literacy learners are not to be confused with people who are learning English but are literate in their own language.

ESL Literacy Learner versus ESL Learner

If ESL learners have no or low literacy skills in their first language, *then* they are ESL Literacy learners.

If ESL learners are literate in their first language, *then* they are ESL learners.

If ESL learners use a different alphabet but are literate in their first language, *then* they are ESL learners, but will need to learn the Roman alphabet.

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English can be a funny language! From the mouths of ESL Learners:

*Do you like this food?
I made it from scratching!
I probably should have gone
to the doctor one ear ago.*

*It is dangerous to smoke
while you are becoming
pregnant.*

*I never liked mushrooms,
but now they are starting to
grow in me.*

Teaching tips for working with ESL Literacy learners:

- Modify your expectations. Progress can be slow and uneven.
- Keep learners aware of their accomplishments, no matter how small.
- Provide a lot of repetition and reinforcement. Use varied formats.
- Start with familiar words and structures; use the students' own vocabulary as much as you can.
- Help learners develop learning and organizational strategies.
- Understand that activities that are not "literacy specific" may still use literacy skills (e.g., using a phone book, organizing notes, practising numeracy skills).

Focus on Resources

Support for your ESL programs is still available. Contact Lorene Anderson (lorene.anderson@shaw.ca) or Dawn Seabrook de Vargas (vargas@telusplanet.net) for assistance in professional development, choosing resources, or other program needs. You can also have your tutors or instructors contact Lorene or Dawn directly with questions.

Resources for ESL Literacy

CLB 2000: ESL for Literacy Learners lays out the progression of reading, writing, and numeracy skills for ESL adult learners with little or no literacy skills in their first language. It is also useful to inform programs for ESL learners who are literate in a non-Roman alphabet, and who may need help learning reading and writing basics in English.

ESL Literacy Benchmarks are designed to be used with the listening and speaking benchmarks in CLB 2000: ESL for Adults Benchmarks.

ESL Literacy Benchmarks are divided into a pre-reading and pre-writing phase, called the Foundation Phase, followed by Phases I, II, and III.

For more information go to Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks at www.language.ca

The Literacy Placement Tool (LPT)

The LPT Volume 1 and 2:

- contain reading, writing and numeracy tasks
- scores on an easy to use LPT scoring log
- provide standardized instructions for consistent, fair assessments
- facilitate placement into ESL literacy programs from Foundation to Phase II
- provide a checklist of reading, writing, and numeracy skills
- help plan more targeted literacy training

For more information go to Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks at www.language.ca

The ABCs of Practical Literacy

This resource is referenced to the CLB 2000: ESL for Literacy Learners. It is full of content-based activities for ESL students who are literacy learners. It provides practical activities for these areas of learning:

- Economic literacy, which includes money, banking, and consumer transactions

- Employment literacy, which includes job search, workplace vocabulary, and safety
- Personal management literacy, which includes family and housing, education, transportation, and health

The resource is reproducible and is available from Bow Valley College. Contact Diane Hardy at Bow Valley College at 403-410-3409.

Adult ESL Literacy Resource Survival Guide for Instructors

http://www.elsanet.org/pdf/literacy_guide.pdf

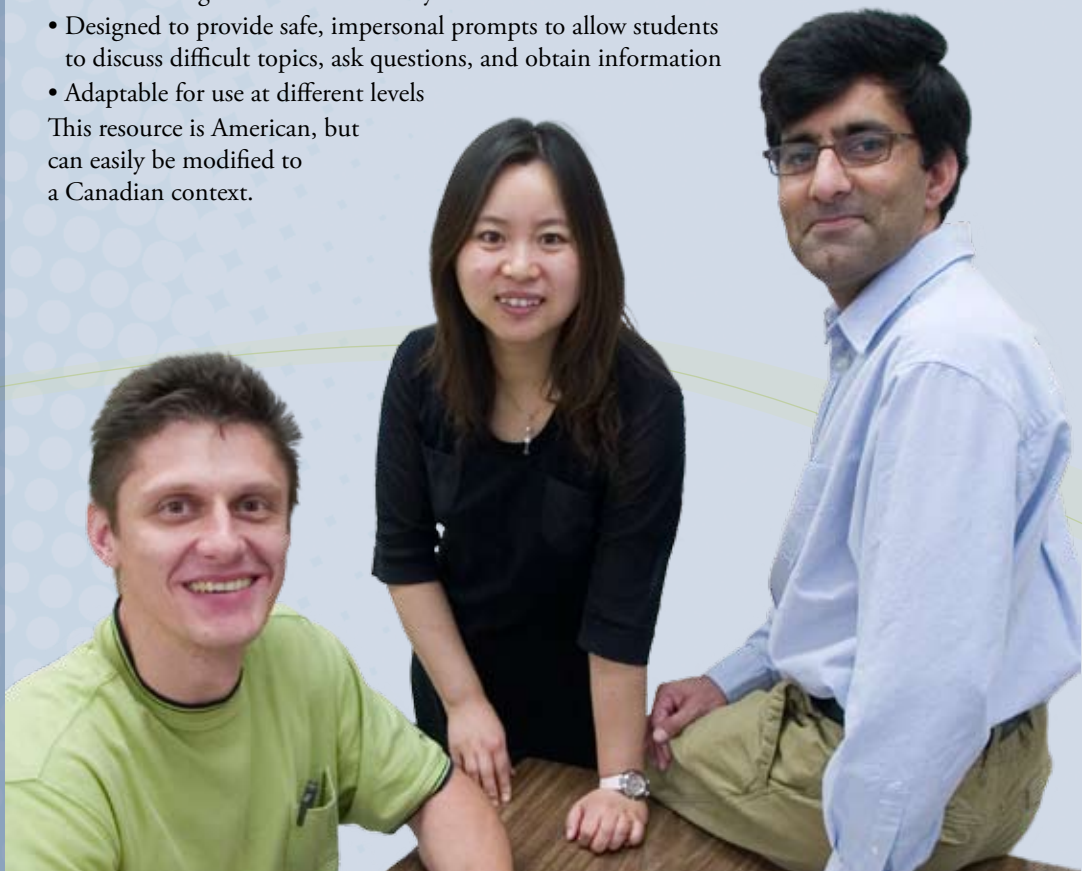
Picture Stories for Adult ESL Health Literacy

http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/Health/healthindex.html

These picture stories have the following characteristics:

- Designed to help instructors address topics that affect the health and well-being of their students
- Useful for beginner and low-literacy students
- Designed to provide safe, impersonal prompts to allow students to discuss difficult topics, ask questions, and obtain information
- Adaptable for use at different levels

This resource is American, but can easily be modified to a Canadian context.



Supporting Rural Communities in Welcoming Newcomers

Spring is in the air . . . and two new projects are sprouting in and for rural Alberta! NorQuest College has received funding to work with communities to help support the settlement and integration of immigrant newcomers. Both projects support the Welcoming Communities strategic direction in Alberta Human Resources and Employment's policy on supporting immigrants and immigration to Alberta.

ESL Curriculum

The first project will result in a ready-to-use ESL Curriculum for immigrants in the community who are isolated and do not have access to regular community programs. This group of people may include women and seniors. The ESL Curriculum will build on resources available in the ESL Resource Package for Alberta Communities (ERPAC). It will be designed to support ESL instructors and volunteers so that they feel prepared and confident in the delivery of ESL training that considers the learner's language and cultural needs. The design will reflect intercultural communication practices and strategies and take into account the culture of the learner and the process of cultural adjustment. The ESL Curriculum will have a companion instructor guide that will include the following:

- A framework of strategies to identify and address the needs of the hidden ESL population
- A cultural needs assessment tool
- A framework for developing programs
- Programming ideas for using the curriculum

English/Integration in the Workplace Guide

The second project, the English/Integration in the Workplace Guide, sets its focus on workforce challenges and needs resulting from Alberta's booming economy and the increase in numbers of newcomers choosing to move to rural communities for work. Many Alberta companies, in filling employment gaps by hiring increasing numbers of immigrants and temporary foreign workers, have underestimated the special needs of these new workers. NorQuest College is responding to this Alberta workplace need by developing an English/Integration in the Workplace Guide. The guide will provide a process model—an easy-to-follow, step-by-step guide—to walk companies through the process of setting up English in the Workplace training to meet the needs of their ESL employees. This practical guide will be a tool that community organizations can use to help companies in their community to take the following steps:

- Start an EWP program
- Build a structure for the program
- Create content
- Deliver the program

While we are developing this guide we will be looking for input from communities to help identify and target local needs. We will seek guidance and feedback from a rural advisory committee and from focus groups, and will work closely with service providers. We look forward to hearing from you about any questions or concerns that will help us prepare the most practical and applicable products possible. If you have suggestions or comments, please contact Sarah Apedaile or Karen Berg.

NorQuest Intercultural Education Programs

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Look for project updates in this newsletter in the months to come!



ESL Rural Routes

This newsletter is funded by Advanced Education and Technology, Community Learning and Literacy Programs.

Has anyone developed a great resource that you would like to share in this newsletter?

Contact

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or

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We'll feature it in an upcoming issue of Rural Routes newsletter.