

ESL Rural Routes news

"Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards."

- Søren Kierkegaard

"I am a writer of books in retrospect. I talk in order to understand; I teach in order to learn."

- Robert Frost

In this issue:

- 1 Canadian Culture Class
- 2 A Helpful List of Canadian ESL Resources
- 4 Take Time to Reflect
- 5 Goodbye from Lorene

Canadian Culture Classes

This article highlights a responsive class developed by the Lethbridge Public Library "Read On" program. For more information, contact Lil Radley at Lillian.Radley@lethlib.ca.

Students in the Read On adult literacy program often have questions about terms, expressions, events, and references that pertain to life in Canada, and therefore could be considered part of Canadian culture. The Canadian culture classes were developed to help students broaden their understanding in these areas.

All four classes were facilitated by a Read On volunteer, and were limited to five students in order to allow maximum class participation. The following topics were chosen for the classes:

1. **Canadian holidays and celebrations** that occur throughout the year
2. **Canadian symbols**, such as those seen on money and stamps, as well as on national and provincial flags, flowers, and coats of arms
3. **Weather vocabulary and terms**, such as chinook, tornado alley, raining cats and dogs, etc.
4. **Foods common or unique to Canada**, such as buffalo burgers, poutine, pumpkin pie, saskatoons, tourtiere, etc.

General thoughts about the classes:

1. The outcome was achieved: students were able to broaden their understanding in the areas discussed. All students were enthusiastic; they agreed that the classes were worthwhile, and that they had a better understanding of these aspects of Canadian culture.
2. Future classes should be scheduled for longer than an hour in order to allow ample time for discussion.
3. The number of classes could be extended to cover a larger range of topics such as recreation and sports, transportation, places, etc.

A Helpful List of Canadian ESL Resources

The following list includes three of the top sites to visit for CLB-referenced resources. There are many more, and we would love to hear from you about your top picks for websites and resources. Sharing this knowledge will help all our programs grow stronger. Email your favourite website to Susan.Oguchi@NorQuest.ca and we'll include it in the Fall newsletter.

From the Canadian Language Benchmarks Website (www.language.ca) – Resources available for download as well as a website filled with great information.
The Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000: English as a second language for adults
The Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000: ESL for Literacy Learners
The Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000: Theoretical Framework
The Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000: Additional Sample Task Ideas
Developing Occupation-Specific Assessments
The Canadian Language Benchmarks Literacy Placement Tool (LPT) – Volume 1
The Canadian Language Benchmarks Literacy Placement Tool (LPT) – Volume 2
Summative Assessment Manuals
Integrating CLB Assessment into your ESL Classroom
CLB 5–10 Exit Assessment Tasks
Relating Canadian Language Benchmarks to Essential Skills – A Comparative Framework
CLB Posters
CLB "Can Do" Checklists
Companion Tables to the Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000
CLB for Study and Work – Free electronic version
CLB for Living and Working in Canada- Free electronic version
Work Ready: For Counsellors and HR Professionals – Free electronic version
CLB and Essential Skills publications

continued >

From the Settlement at Work website (http://wiki.settlementatwork.org/wiki/LINC_documents). This website is filled with great information, including resources available for download.

Curriculum and Instructional Materials

[Canada Works 2nd Edition - ESL Teacher's Resource Guide / Through the Looking Glass Workbook](#)

[Computer Assisted Language Learning: A Software Guide for the LINC Classroom](#)

[ESL Toolbox for Tutors: An Instructional Guide for Teaching English as a Second language to Newcomers](#)

[LINC 1-4 Classroom Activities](#)

[LINC 1 - 5 Curriculum Guidelines: a Computer Integrated Curriculum based on Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000](#)

[LINC 4 & 5 Curriculum Guidelines](#)

[LINC 5-7 Curriculum Guidelines](#)

[LINC 5-7 Curriculum Guidelines: In the Classroom](#)

[LINC 5-7 Classroom Activities: Volumes 1 & 2](#)

[Looking for Work in Canada: strategies for New Canadians: An English as a Second Language interactive three-part resource](#)

[Steps to Employment for Newcomers](#)

TESL Canada Teachers Resource Centre (http://www.tesl.ca/TESL_Canada_Bulletin/Teachers_Resource_Centre_TRC_.htm)

Many resources available for download as well as a website filled with great information including access to research and journals.

Take Time to Reflect



Many programs have a break during the summer months. With that in mind, we would like to encourage a moment of reflection for coordinators, instructors, volunteers, board members, and all the community members who contribute to supporting English Language Learners in your area.

The following questions should stimulate your thinking for this process. We hope you can take time out of your busy schedule to ponder where you are and where you've been. Share your successes with people who support you. Consider writing out your thoughts and feelings.

Reflect upon what you did, how you felt, what you liked and didn't like, and what you learned. Try to look at the progress you made and at your experience with as much objectivity as possible.

Here are some suggestions to get you started in reflecting on the past year with your learners.

1. What did I learn? (skills, knowledge, awareness, etc.)
2. What did they learn? (skills, knowledge, awareness, etc.) Pull out the work you did in the first weeks with your learners. Celebrate the progress.
3. What would I have done differently? Why? What would I like to try next year?
4. What did I do right? What do I feel especially good about? What was my greatest contribution?
5. What were the fun things I/we did? What projects or activities did not turn out as well?
6. What were my learners' biggest challenges? What challenges to learners should I focus on in the coming year?

After reflecting, it's time to celebrate! You have helped newcomers arrive at some outstanding accomplishments! We look forward to continuing to support you in whatever way we can as you enhance your program.

Goodbye from Lorene

Many of you already know that as of June 30, 2012, I will be leaving Rural Routes. I have been with this project since its inception 12 years ago. It started with two consultants—Dawn Seabrook de Vargas and myself—and two communities—Brooks in the south and Two Hills in the north. Since then it has grown to include up to five consultants and a project manager, and encompasses the entire province. Rural Routes has worked closely with the Community Adult Learning Councils (CALCs) and Volunteer Tutor Adult Literacy Services (VTALS) of Alberta to be responsive to community ESL needs.

On a personal note, I have been very fortunate to have had the opportunity to engage in such interesting work with so many truly amazing people:

- The dedicated, inspiring people from community programs and organizations all over Alberta
- The amazing, supportive staff at NorQuest College
- And, of course, the incredible, enthusiastic team of consultants who work with Rural Routes. I leave you in very good hands.

A big thank you to Alberta Enterprise and Advanced Education, and Alberta Human Services for their continued support for and involvement in this project.

Connections

Do you have any unique tidbits to share? Have you developed resources or found ways to meet your community's needs? If so, contact **Sue Oguchi** so you can share your knowledge and ideas in this newsletter! Phone 403.331.0030 or email Susan.Oguchi@NorQuest.ca