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ABSTRACT

This guide provides teachers and administrators with advice on implementing Alberta Learning's five-level English-as-a-Second- Language (ESL) Senior High School Program of Studies in their classrooms and schools. It draws from the collective expertise of senior high school ESL specialists and classroom teachers and from classroom-based research in the fields of first and second language acquisition. The five chapters include the following: (1) "ESL Students" (e.g., learning ESL, second language learning, developing communicative competence, and language proficiency profile); (2) "Students and the ESL Program" (e.g., ESL Senior High School Program of Studies goals, rationale, philosophy, and organization and levels profiles); (3) "Planning the ESL Program" (e.g., placing ESL students, curriculum connections, cross-curricular units, adjunct language instruction, and language learning strategies); (4) "Planning for Teaching and Learning" (e.g., linking language and content, planning models, and language learning tasks, activities, and exercises); and (5) "Assessment: Putting the Puzzle Together" (e.g., purposes, principles, and kinds of assessment and assessment through the five levels). The guide includes sample forms and units from classroom teachers across Alberta as well as student writing samples. (SM)

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Guide to Implementation

Senior High

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Guide to Implementation

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INTRODUCTION

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- ESL Senior High School Program of Studies
- ESL Senior High School Guide to Implementation
- ESL Learning and Teaching Resources
- ESL Policy and Funding
- Alberta Learning Web Site

Focus

These pages focus on the Senior High School ESL program in Alberta.

ESL IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

ESL STUDENTS IN ALBERTA

English as a Second Language (ESL) students are those students whose level of English language proficiency precludes them from full participation in the learning experiences provided in Alberta schools, without additional support in English language development. ESL students may have recently immigrated to Canada or they may have been born in Canada and live in homes in which the primary spoken language is not English.

Alberta's schools have always included students who must learn English as a second language. Many people who have lived in Alberta all, or most, of their lives will tell you that they learned English after they entered school. Children and their families immigrate to Alberta from every corner of the world. Many students who come to Canada from other countries speak languages other than English, and have varying levels of English language proficiency when they enter Alberta schools. Linguistic and cultural diversity is a characteristic of schools and communities throughout the province. ESL students are an important and integral part of our school community.

Over the years, however, we have changed the way we meet the needs of students who are learning English as a second language. In the past, there was often an assumption that students would "pick up" the language as they sat in classrooms. And some students, particularly younger ones, did learn English "by the way" and go on to participate fully in workplaces and communities throughout Alberta. However, many students—native English speakers as well as those whose home language was not English—dropped out of formal schooling before completing senior high school. A Grade 6 or Grade 8 formal education was often considered an adequate level of literacy for a job.

Today, the situation is quite different. Young people entering post-secondary education or seeking employment generally require a senior high school diploma. There are very few jobs available that do not require advanced levels of many kinds of literacy; and, most employers will consider only those applicants who completed senior high school, even for entry-level jobs.

Literacy skills have become a priority for all students. For ESL students in particular, English language proficiency is no longer simply a by-product of other classroom learning. It is an essential skill for successful learning and employment, as well as for active participation in the community.

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ESL SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM OF STUDIES

Alberta Learning's English as a Second Language Senior High School Program of Studies, 1997 provides schools with a formal framework in which to develop programming to meet the needs of ESL students. It sets out the program rationale and philosophy as well as general and specific outcomes. These outcomes are related to curriculum outcomes in other subject areas taught in senior high schools. In addition, the program of studies provides a list of suggested grammatical concepts and structures related to each group of specific outcomes.

Five course credits can be earned for successful completion of each of Levels 2, 3 and 4 of the senior high school ESL program. No course credits can be earned for Levels 1 and 5 of the senior high school ESL program.

ESL SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL GUIDE TO IMPLEMENTATION

The purpose of the *English as a Second Language Senior High School Guide to Implementation* is to provide teachers and administrators with practical advice on implementing the English as a Second Language Senior High School Program of Studies in their classrooms and schools.

The guide to implementation draws from the collective expertise of senior high school ESL specialists and classroom teachers, and from classroom-based research in the fields of first and second language acquisition. It includes practical and useful information, sample forms and units from classroom teachers across Alberta, as well as student writing samples.

The purpose of the guide is to:

- provide teachers with a clear understanding of who the ESL student is, as well as basic information about second language learning
- provide suggestions for the reception and orientation of senior high ESL students and the identification of language proficiency levels
- help teachers place students in the appropriate levels of the senior high school ESL program and provide appropriate activities
- help teachers and administrators plan for ESL programming that meets the needs of students in their schools and makes connections to Alberta's senior high school programs of study
- provide suggestions for effective and appropriate learning strategies and experiences at all levels of the ESL program
- assess and evaluate student learning and progress in relation to the ESL senior high school program of studies.

Program organization and delivery may vary considerably among Alberta's senior high schools, depending on factors such as:

- students' levels of proficiency
- students' previous learning experiences and knowledge
- students' network of support for learning
- number of ESL students in the school

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- resources available in the school, within the school jurisdiction and in the community.

The chapters that follow offer practical suggestions for teaching the ESL program in senior high school, keeping in mind the wide variety of circumstances under which this program is offered.

ESL LEARNING AND TEACHING RESOURCES

Alberta Learning selects, acquires, develops, produces, translates and authorizes the best possible instructional materials for the implementation of approved programs of study. The resource authorization categories are:

- basic student learning resources
- support student learning resources
- authorized teaching resources.

Basic learning resources are those student learning resources authorized by Alberta Learning as the most appropriate for addressing the majority of outcomes of the course(s), substantial components of the course(s), or the most appropriate for meeting general outcomes across two or more grade levels, subject areas or programs as outlined in provincial programs of study.

Support learning resources are those student learning resources authorized by Alberta Learning to assist in addressing some of the outcomes of the course(s) or components of course(s); or to assist in meeting the outcomes across two or more grade levels, subject areas or programs as outlined in the provincial programs of study.

Authorized teaching resources are those teaching resources produced externally to Alberta Learning (for example, by publishers) that have been reviewed by Alberta Learning, found to meet the criteria of review and to be the best available resources to support the implementation of programs of study and courses, and the attainment of the goals of basic learning. Teaching resources, such as this guide to implementation, produced as service documents by Alberta Learning are authorized by definition.

Alberta Learning strongly recommends that teachers read all selections in the student texts and all activities in the teacher guides prior to using them with students. Careful consideration should be given to the sensitivities of both the student audience and the community.

A complete listing of all resources authorized for senior high school ESL is found in the *Learning Resources Centre Resources Catalogue*, or electronically through the:

- LRC Web site at <www.lrc.learning.gov.ab.ca>.

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Resource listings can also be accessed through the:

- Authorized Resources Database at <www.learning.gov.ab.ca> under Kindergarten to Grade 12, Curriculum, Curriculum Resources.

ESL POLICY AND FUNDING

Information about ESL policy and funding may be found on the Alberta Learning Web site at <www.learning.gov.ab.ca/polandreg/default.asp>.

Alberta Learning sets, develops and approves policies, through a consultative approach, that give direction to school authorities on providing the best possible education for all Alberta students. Second language policies provide opportunities for students to pursue a language or languages that are not their first language. The English as a second language policy states:

- to facilitate the integration of the student into the regular school program at the earliest possible opportunity, Alberta Learning will assist school boards in providing English as a second language programs to Alberta students who were born in Canada but who are not fluent in English, and to those who have recently arrived in Canada and whose first language is not English.

ESL funding is provided to assist students who have insufficient fluency in English to achieve grade level expectations in English language arts and other subject areas.

A school jurisdiction may receive ESL funding for each eligible funded student in grades 1 to 12. It is expected most students would have sufficient fluency in English to access regular programming after three years, although some students may require additional time.

Foreign-born students eligible for ESL funding:

- have recently immigrated to Canada
- have minimal English or are non-English speaking
- are receiving ESL services.

Canadian-born students eligible for ESL funding:

- have homes in which the primary spoken language is not English
- have minimal English or are non-English speaking
- are receiving ESL services.

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School jurisdictions that claim ESL funding must provide services to ESL students that:

- address their linguistic, cultural and academic learning needs
- enable them to access regular programming and become integrated in the school and community environment
- are quantifiable; e.g., a special class, pull-out service, identifiable services provided in a regular classroom and adapted for the individual student. A reduction in class size, by itself, is not an ESL service.

Students enrolled in home education, blended programs, outreach programs or online programs are not eligible for ESL funding.

ALBERTA LEARNING WEB SITE

Information covering all areas of ESL in Alberta, including curriculum and resources, is available through the Alberta Learning Web site at <www.learning.gov.ab.ca> under Kindergarten to Grade 12, Curriculum.

The Alberta Learning *Policy, Regulations and Forms Manual* and the *Funding for School Authorities Manual* are also available through the Alberta Learning Web site at <www.learning.gov.ab.ca/polandreg/default.asp>.

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ESL Students

CHAPTER ONE

- Learning English as a Second Language
- Second Language Learning
- Developing Communicative Competence
- Reception and Orientation for ESL Students
- Background Information
- Language Proficiency Profile
- Placing Students in Appropriate Levels of the ESL Program

Focus

This chapter discusses identifying the language proficiency levels of ESL students and preparing them to learn English.

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ESL STUDENTS

LEARNING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

The experience of ESL students differs—in significant ways—from that of English-speaking students who are learning another language. ESL students do not have the luxury of learning a language out of interest or in anticipation of future career advantages. They are learning English out of an immediate need to communicate, learn, and participate in a society that in most cases is as new to them as the language itself. For these students, the learning experience is complicated by several factors. Some of these factors are advantages for ESL students; others present students with unique challenges to overcome.

Advantages for ESL Students

Most students who are learning to communicate in English know that what they are learning is relevant and applicable in their everyday lives. The importance of learning English can provide students with strong motivation as well as a rich context for learning. Their learning is purposeful and directed. Students learn English in order to function in society, establish and maintain relationships, communicate, explore concepts—and as a source of satisfaction and delight.

In the Alberta school context, ESL students are surrounded by all forms of English language. In the community, these language learners are also surrounded by their new language. They are exposed to written and spoken English every minute of the school day—in hallways, cafeterias, chemistry labs, mathematics classrooms, Career and Technology Studies (CTS) workshops, as well as in the gymnasium and on the playground. There are ample opportunities for students to interact in English and rich sources of language on which to draw. We cannot assume, however, that simply immersing students in this context guarantees they will automatically learn the kind of English that will enable them to be successful in senior high school classrooms.

ESL students also have knowledge of at least one other language—their home or community language—and the knowledge and understanding of the world that they gained prior to arriving in Alberta schools. This can be both a learning advantage and a source of frustration. They may possess sophisticated knowledge about many aspects of the world, but struggle to find ways of expressing this knowledge in a new language. They may well understand the role language plays in their learning, but struggle with finding ways to gather information and pursue new concepts in an unfamiliar language. ESL students might also experience value and cultural conflicts between their home language and culture, and the English language and culture in which they are being immersed.

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Challenges for ESL Students

Usually, children learn their first language in a context that encourages learning. Consciously and unconsciously, adults make concessions to young children as they actively learn to construct language. Their first language coaches are often parents, family members and other individuals who are indulgent, unconsciously modifying their own language as they interact with the language learner.

The one-on-one language coaches who are available to very young first language learners are not available for adolescent second language learners in Alberta's schools. Yet, ESL students require a similar degree of focused assistance, support and encouragement for language learning. Unlike the context in which they acquired their first language, few concessions are made to these second language learners in their daily interactions in school and the community.

Young children's use of language develops at the same time as their knowledge of the world increases. Adolescent second language learners are in an environment where they are expected to acquire ever more sophisticated and complex knowledge and understanding of the world around them. They are expected to express that knowledge and understanding in a level of English language that is comparable to that of their native English-speaking classmates.

SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Whether ESL students come into classrooms in Grade 7 or Grade 10, they already have an established first language for communicating—aside from any exceptional cases. Depending on age and/or background, English may be the second, third, fourth or even fifth language they will learn.

The term second language refers to a language that is learned after the first language is relatively well-established. By the age of five, children have control over most of their first language grammar. Any language they learn subsequently is filtered through their previously learned language(s). In this way, second language learning is qualitatively different from the first language learning process. Nonetheless, both first and second language learning are developmental processes in which the learner is actively testing hypotheses about the new system being learned.

Second Language Learning Principles and Their Implications for the ESL Student

Language and concepts are developed together.

Second language learning cannot be separated from learning experience. Language is best learned in a functional/experiential context, not in isolation as an end in itself.

Second language learning, like first language learning, takes place within and across subject areas, as students use language to think and learn.

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Students' cognitive development proceeds similarly across cultures, so ESL students are often ready to explore the same concepts that their age group is exploring, unless they experienced developmental delays or gaps in their schooling.

In language learning, the processes of listening, speaking, reading and writing are interrelated and mutually supportive. The mastery of one is not necessary before encouraging development of the other three. A person's second language, like the first, develops holistically, not linearly, in a specific sequence of structures and vocabulary.

Focus is on meaning versus form.

ESL students must be engaged in meaningful learning activities with native English-speaking students in which the students talk with each other, pose questions and solve problems together.

ESL students are highly motivated to seek meaning in their learning experiences so they can learn to communicate with others to establish relationships.

Second language learning builds on previous knowledge and experience.

ESL students come to the second language learning process with a functional language already in place and previous learning experiences to share.

Successful second language learning is dependent on the continual maintenance of first language literacy, which is achieved when parents or friends listen to, read and talk about stories in the first language.

ESL students develop second language competence at individual rates, which are influenced by their first language background, their previous literacy and school experiences, and their own abilities.

Students learn more effectively when they use language for a purpose. Language is learned through social interaction.

Becoming communicatively and academically competent involves the practical understanding of the turn taking and rhetorical conventions of the English language. Such understanding is developed through implicit and explicit demonstrations provided by the interaction of ESL students with teachers and peers.

Second language students need opportunities to read material at their individual levels. Writing activities need to be closely integrated with conversation and reading. Those aspects of language both inform and are informed by students' writing.

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Experience with a wide range of literature, varied narrative genres and content-area material, helps the ESL student use language in a variety of contexts.

A supportive environment is key to learning a second language.

A structured, cooperative group learning environment, characterized by groups working together with mutual trust and respect, encourages the second language learner to take risks, explore and experiment with conversational and academic language.

Independent second language learning is facilitated when second language learners are provided with initial support and ongoing monitoring of their linguistic, academic, cultural, emotional and physical needs. These things provide second language learners with the self-confidence they need for writing and discussing their own ideas and opinions.

In and of itself, language can be a source of satisfaction and delight.

The acknowledgement of first languages, in oral and written forms, is important to all ESL students and their classmates.

Enhancing awareness of the richness and diversity of other languages and instilling the value of maintaining a first language is beneficial for all students.

Language must be adjusted so students can understand what is being communicated.

Second language learners, especially beginners, need language presented in conjunction with such things as visuals, objects, gestures, body movements or facial expressions, in order to facilitate their comprehension of the subject matter.

Modified teacher talk, or comprehensible input, immediately engages ESL students in learning and boosts their self-confidence.

Language skills develop gradually.

Like learning a first language, second language learning takes time. ESL students do not have five years to learn English as they had with their first language. They are older and cognitively more mature, and feel tremendous pressure to acquire new vocabulary, sentence structure, body language and the subtle complexities of the new language and culture as soon as possible.

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Factors Influencing Second Language Learning

Factors influencing the rate of learning a second language are:

- age and time of entry into the second language learning environment
- personality and learning style
- attitude and motivation to learn the new language
- possession of a natural talent or ear for learning languages
- language abilities in the first language
- the similarity of the first language to the second language
- previous educational background
- previous exposure to and experience in the second language and the new culture
- physical and emotional health
- adjustment and supportiveness of the family toward the new language and culture
- community interest, resources and parental involvement in school programs
- the perceived respect for and acknowledgement of the home language and culture by the new community
- maintenance of students' first language in and out of school
- supportive learning environments and skilled teachers who use a wide range of appropriately applied strategies.

DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

Regardless of how and when ESL students learn to become proficient English speakers, they must all develop the skills required for communicative competence. Students who are communicatively competent can speak English grammatically and appropriately. They know when to speak and when not to, what to talk about with whom, where to talk and in what manner. Such competence implies control over grammar, vocabulary (conversational and academic), turn-taking skills, timing, directness, and using one's voice and body language in a culturally and socially acceptable ways.

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)[1]

Generally, after two years in an integrated Canadian classroom where ESL students are learning in a cooperative environment with their English-speaking peers, they develop very functional language skills for carrying on everyday, basic conversations. These Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) make them appear to have mastered many aspects of English. They are able to discuss, joke and socialize with classmates. Often, they can write independently and read narrative stories fairly well.

However, when expected to deal with more demanding content-area material, such as reading expository text or writing research reports, their BICS are insufficient. There is a considerable difference between the language required for academic purposes and that required for daily conversation.

[1] Cummins, 1989.

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Good research indicates that acquiring sound Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) takes five to eight years for most second language students. In terms of program planning, it is important to realize that adolescent second language learners in schools will take five to eight years, on average, to become as proficient in using English in an academic context as their peers for whom English is a first language. This does not mean that these learners should be placed only in an English language learning program until they are fully fluent, nor does it mean that they should be placed in immersion situations without support and assistance with their language learning. Research and teacher observations are reminders that language learning is a complex process that takes time.

One teacher shares her thoughts about what helps students become successful language learners.

Put Yourself in the Shoes of Another, And if the Shoe Fits—Wear It!

If you plunked me into a Grade 10 class in Mallorca, Spain tomorrow, this is what I would need from the outset to be a successful language learner.

- *I would like to be formally introduced to my school and my classmates, regardless of when I arrive during the school year.*
- *I would need a school tour to get my bearings.*
- *It would be helpful to have a Spanish-born buddy to help me become familiar with my locker, washroom etiquette, necessary school supplies, my class schedule, the ins and outs of school life, and so on. I would need to rely on this person to build my confidence, to provide guidance, to speak slowly, to point things out visually, to draw pictures for me, and to explain greetings, expressions and idioms. This buddy could be "trained" beforehand to be sensitive to my needs and the needs of others like me, perhaps in a "buddy system" Career and Technology Studies (CTS) course.*
- *I would need to be placed age-appropriately with my peers so I can fit in sooner, rather than later.*
- *I would need a bilingual dictionary so I could begin to translate signs and posters. I would carry it to every class to begin to build my Spanish vocabulary. I could demonstrate my Grade 10 mathematics capabilities if I could translate the teacher's instructions from Spanish to English. I could look up difficult concepts in social studies, such as "feudal system" and "investment." In literature classes, the not-so-concrete concepts of "fantasy" and "imagination" in fiction could be defined in my language.*
- *It would help if I were seated mid-centre in my classroom. I wouldn't want to be at the front—the centre of attention. That would be embarrassing and intimidating. I wouldn't want to be in the booth in the back in the corner in the dark—forgotten and diminished, behind my Mallorcean classmates. Mid-centre would suit me just fine and be quite conducive to learning.*

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- *I would need to see visual aids all over the classroom every time the teacher introduces something new or changes topics. I'd probably catch the teacher's drift if there were pictures, posters, charts, graphs and graphics with text. If my visual arena had labels on everything, I'd be able to attach Spanish words to the concrete objects I'm already familiar with in my first language.*
- *I would need access to an English-speaking Spanish person for counsel, conversation, confidence and congeniality. Perhaps, this could be another student, an interpreter or an adult volunteer. It would be an important option to me, personally, in case I am subjected to ridicule or misunderstanding. (By the way, I find it exhausting to be attentive all day in the classroom, in a foreign language when I only comprehend bits and pieces. Please keep that in mind.)*
- *I would need some keyboarding experience to open the world of learning computers have to offer.*
- *I would need a pronunciation program to work on at my own pace, to target areas where my first language differs from my second.*
- *It would be helpful if my new school had thorough documentation about my previous education or life experiences. My new teachers need to know my family situation, whether I'm first language literate or not, if I have specific education needs that require support, and so on. They need to have examples of my work in my first language, my old report cards, and possibly, a sample of my limited oral Spanish on cassette, upon arrival. If I came from another country without my documents, my new teachers would need to use alternative assessment tools, such as journals, observation checklists, samples of my performance as it progresses, and a portfolio of my work in my second language.*

  These are some of my basic, immediate needs. Above all, I would need a sensitive, knowledgeable Spanish as a second language teacher who would smile at me and greet me by name in the morning. My teacher would include me in spontaneous conversation, check that I'm dressed appropriately for my new climate, "clue me in" to cultural experiences for which I have no background, and lastly, encourage me to listen, speak, read and write daily.

Now translate all of this into the Alberta senior high school ESL experience. And "Aqui está. If the shoe fits—wear it!"

RECEPTION AND ORIENTATION FOR ESL STUDENTS

ESL students come from a wide variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds. They arrive at school with a mixture of language capabilities, education and life experiences.

Some will have begun learning the English language in schools in their countries of origin. Some will have had no exposure to English at all—except perhaps to have heard English language pop songs and subtitled or dubbed movies. They also bring with them varied experiences with formal schooling. There will be students whose background in some curriculum areas surpasses that of Canadian students, and in some areas will be more limited than their Canadian-schooled peers.

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Some students will not have had prior experience with English, while others may have had several years of instruction. Some may be able to understand formal written English, such as that used in textbooks, but be unable to understand informal, spoken Canadian English. Others may be able to understand spoken English in face-to-face conversations but be unable to comprehend English used in more abstract, decontextualized, academic situations. Each student will present a different profile of abilities to interpret meaning through listening and reading, and to express meaning through speaking and writing.

In addition, ESL students' cultural and life experiences will differ from those of other ESL students and of their new school peers. The Canadian government participates in international humanitarian efforts to resettle refugees. Their schooling may have been interrupted and sporadic. Psychological trauma and culture shock are common, and the implications of these experiences will be different for each student.

Students arriving from other countries may have physical and learning challenges apart from any language learning challenges they face. There are many questions to consider when students first arrive at school. For example:

- what kind of program should be provided for a hearing impaired 16-year-old student who has minimal language
- how do you determine if a student's apparent learning difficulties are simply because of a lack of English language proficiency, or if there are learning disabilities, developmental delays or speech problems that compound the challenge?

Procedures for Entry to School

It is important that schools establish clear procedures for working with newly arrived students. Decide what information is required, who is responsible for various parts of the procedure, how the information will be recorded and organized, and how decisions about initial placement will be made.

Interpreters and Cultural Liaison Workers

Interpreters provide a valuable initial connection between students and their parents, and school administrators and teachers. There may be bilingual individuals in the community who can be of assistance to schools when students and their families first arrive. If interpreters or bilingual individuals are not available, try to identify individuals who have backgrounds similar to the newly arrived families. Even if they cannot overcome the language barrier, they may help ease the difficult transition to a new culture.

Agencies that provide services to immigrants are another source of support for language and cultural transition. These agencies have experience working with newly arrived families, helping them settle into the community. They often maintain lists of people who speak various languages.

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When working with interpreters or cultural liaison workers:

- Try to locate an interpreter who is familiar with the educational system in Canada as well as that of the student's country of origin. Families and students generally have many questions about their new schools, and they often make assumptions based on their experiences elsewhere that are not relevant to schooling in Alberta. For example, one mother was quite insistent that her daughter attend a school far from where the family lived. She believed that her daughter would not have a chance to enter university unless she went to the "right" school. She changed her mind when it was explained that universities in Canada only look at the student's achievement—not at the particular senior high school that student attended.
- Try to ensure that the language and dialect of the new student and the interpreter are the same. For example, not all speakers of languages that originate in China speak the same language or dialect.
- Be clear about the time involvement and the rate of pay for various services.
- If the school is unable to pay for these services, try to organize some other way of recognizing the contribution of time and talent that these people are making. They may be taking time off work to be of assistance.
- Bilingual students can help new students become accustomed to their new surroundings. It is not appropriate, however, to ask a student's peers to interpret at information-gathering interviews and subsequent parent–teacher interviews, or conferences dealing with discipline or attendance issues. In addition to confidentiality, there may be issues related to appropriate roles for young people in different cultures.

Cultural and Political Considerations

In preparing to welcome new students to the school, find out as much as possible about their linguistic and cultural contexts. Many countries have a complex linguistic environment. For example, students from India may use two or three languages regularly. Many of these students have experienced ongoing English instruction, and may have attended English language schools in India.

In some cases, language is the basis for political strife between groups of people. Using the language of government or industry gives people exclusive access to power in some multilingual countries. In such cases, language use can be a highly emotional issue.

Be particularly sensitive to political issues. People who have been on opposite sides of political disputes in the past may now be living side by side in Canada. Usually, they leave their political differences behind them, but in some cases long-standing rifts between groups of people can affect the way they regard one another.

Do not assume, because two students come from the same general geographical area, that they have a language and culture in common. They may have very different backgrounds.

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Avoid stereotypical thinking about a student's background, abilities and preferences. Every country, culture and language group also has diversity within it. Learn from your students and their families about their previous experiences, goals, expectations and abilities. Listen with an open mind. Be prepared to learn.

Peer Support

Peer support can help transcend cultural barriers and introduce ESL students to their Canadian counterparts. Peer support programs pair ESL students with non-ESL students in the ESL classroom, as well as in other classes. The non-ESL students receive credits for special projects and the ESL students receive much needed one-to-one support.

Students who participate in this program come from all grade levels and have a variety of backgrounds. Try to pair an ESL student with a non-ESL student who has strength in an applicable curriculum area. If such a student is not available, look for an outgoing person who will not be afraid to ask the teacher for help on the ESL student's behalf.

Students involved in leadership classes make excellent peer helpers. After ESL students proceed through their senior high school program, they often come back to the ESL classroom to offer their services as peer helpers. School counsellors can often assist in locating students who will work well in a peer support program.

Peer support activities might include:

- recording oral instructions
- reading examinations or tests aloud
- being a living dictionary
- orienting students to the school
- speaking with ESL students daily
- assisting with activities and assignments that are language intensive
- defining idioms
- seeking assistance for ESL students.

Making friends is often a hard task for new students, and is compounded by a lack of English communication skills for the ESL student. Being paired with a non-ESL student is a step toward feeling at home. After pairing non-ESL and ESL students for a number of semesters, an added benefit becomes apparent. The non-ESL students develop a greater appreciation for the struggles of ESL students, and the background and experiences of ESL students often amaze Canadian students. Many students enjoy taking part in peer support and return to the program for several semesters.

ESL students benefit greatly from the peer support program, as do classroom teachers. Integration, which is a goal for ESL instruction, involves placing students into English-speaking classrooms. Having peer support helps ESL students make this transition more smoothly.

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Gathering Information at Intake

Gathering intake information means collecting information about the ESL student, making judgements about current oral and written language proficiency, and placing students appropriately in levels of the ESL program. Usually, this occurs shortly after the student arrives in Canada. The stress and dislocation of moving, and the possible effects of jet-lag may interfere with obtaining an accurate picture of the students' skills. As well, many students approach testing situations with nervousness and trepidation.

Often, students do not understand the purposes of gathering intake information and fear that if they do not do well, they will not be allowed to enter school. Parents are also often nervous about the futures of their children. Provide as much information as you can—if possible, in the language the student and parents understand. It is important that the purpose and nature of any information gathering procedures be carefully explained to students and parents. Let them know that this is an information gathering exercise to assist the school in providing an appropriate program for the student.

- Set aside a quiet space for gathering intake information.
- If possible, do not gather all the information on one day as this can be an exhausting process for the student.
- Provide orientation to the school at a different time than the intake information sessions. Finding their way around the school, determining where lunch is eaten and learning about school hours and timetables can be confusing and stressful for students.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Many school jurisdictions have found that gathering background information before ESL students enter the classroom helps both students and teachers. Students can be better prepared for the process of adjusting to new surroundings and teachers are better able to provide a productive learning environment for students. The students' initial contact with the school sets the direction for future experiences. The time taken initially to gather information ensures an educational program that is directly relevant to ESL students' backgrounds and learning needs.

Information can be gathered in a series of sessions. The first session can be used to discover whether interpreters are needed. It is also an opportunity to discover first language features, such as particular writing systems that might cause additional English language learning difficulties. This session can explore:

- which language(s) the student speaks, reads and/or writes
- which language the student learned first (LI)
- which language(s) does spoken at home
- which language is most frequently used at home
- which language(s) the parents use to communicate with the student.

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The second session can be used to discover the personal and educational history of the student. Often, the session needs to be conducted through an interpreter, using documentation provided by the student, the parent or sponsor.

This session can explore:

- the student's immigration status
- whether the student or family is being sponsored, and by whom
- experiences the student has had with formal education
- whether the student has experienced periods of interrupted attendance at school
- the student's literacy skills in the first language
- the student's level of proficiency in the first language
- the student's and parents' (sponsor's) goals and expectations—both short- and long term
- what support for student learning will be provided at home.

The third session can be used as an orientation to the school. Students might find the orientation confusing, so it should be conducted slowly. Perhaps another student could be of assistance. New students need to know where to go each morning when they arrive, where the lockers are, where they eat lunch, where the washrooms are, how to use the telephone, and how and where to get help. Many students require ongoing assistance with learning school customs over several weeks.

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY PROFILE

It is important to develop a profile of the students' proficiency in English. Use a range of strategies to learn about students' oral language (listening and speaking) and written language (reading and writing) proficiency. Strategies that may be appropriate for students who studied English in Hong Kong for six years will not be appropriate for students who have never been exposed to formal English instruction.

If students appear to have no previous experience with learning English, and are unable to answer basic questions or write responses to simple questions, proceed no further. These students are beginners who might be intimidated if the session continues.

If there are ESL students in more than one school in the jurisdiction, try to coordinate language assessments. Meet with other teachers to discuss strategies and procedures.

Oral Language Proficiency

The purpose of an oral language proficiency assessment is to gather information about students' abilities to understand spoken English and be understood when speaking.

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Record students' spoken English in response to any of the following activities. This provides a record of their initial competencies. Teachers can listen to the recording later for specific information about students' language problems.

Oral Interview

Develop a basic information-gathering interview to be conducted one-on-one with the student. Use picture prompts and maps if necessary.

- What is your name?
- Tell me about your family.
- Describe your previous school.
- Describe your family's trip to Canada.

Picture Prompts

- Use pictures of activities that might be familiar to students—a family eating a meal at home—and ask students to talk about the picture.

Recorded Prompts

- Listen to a recorded sample of oral English or a commercial recording developed for ESL instruction. Play the recording two or three times. Then ask comprehension questions. Use recorded prompts with a group of students or individually.

Video Prompts

- View part of a videotape or television show. Ask questions about the segment. Ask students to describe what they saw. Prompt with vocabulary if necessary. An educational documentary works best because television dramas and situation comedies are culturally saturated. As some students may be familiar with North American television, this can bias the assessment procedure.

Written Language Proficiency

The purpose of a written language proficiency assessment is to gather information about students' abilities to read and write English.

Standardized Tests

Standardized tests for English-speaking students are based on linguistic and cultural norms that are inaccurate for ESL students. However, it is possible to make judicious use of standardized tests.

- If there's an established ESL population in the school or jurisdiction, administer standardized tests to a sample of ESL students at several different levels of proficiency. Base your evaluation of new students on how current ESL Level 2, 3 and 4 students do on these tests.
- Do not directly equate test results to grade levels. Instead, record the results on a scale of 1 to 10.

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- Use standardized tests in conjunction with other forms of assessment.
- Use tests developed specifically for the ESL population.

Questionnaires

- Have students fill out a questionnaire about themselves.

Picture Prompts

- A picture story works well for assessing narrative writing skills. Discuss the story with students and note vocabulary on the board if that seems appropriate. Then, ask students to write the story.

Video Prompts

- Use a video segment of an educational documentary. Discuss background to the segment and note vocabulary. Ask students to write about what they have seen.

PLACING STUDENTS IN APPROPRIATE LEVELS OF THE ESL PROGRAM

The background information gathered on each student, together with the language proficiency profile, is used to place each student appropriately into a level of the English as a Second Language Senior High School Program of Studies.

The program describes five levels of English language proficiency. Students may enter the senior high school ESL program at any proficiency level, depending on their prior experiences.

Level 1 is intended for students who are acquiring literacy for the first time or who have had significant gaps in previous schooling. As a result, they may not have acquired complex literacy skills in their first languages and are acquiring initial literacy skills at the same time as they are learning a new language. In addition, these students lack formal backgrounds in other curriculum areas, such as science and mathematics.

Level 2 is intended for students who have little or no experience with English prior to entering Alberta schools.

Level 3 is intended for students who have some competency in English and need a program focused specifically on language development for academic learning.

Level 4 is intended for students who are able to succeed in most senior high school courses with consistent support in English language development for academic learning.

Level 5 students receive assistance with subject-specific language development in a variety of ways, such as peer coaching, learning centres and teacher assistance.

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Students and the ESL Program

CHAPTER TWO

- ESL Senior High School Program of Studies
- Levels Profiles

Focus

This chapter discusses how individual ESL students fit the levels and outcomes of the ESL senior high school program of studies.

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STUDENTS AND THE ESL PROGRAM

ESL SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM OF STUDIES

Alberta Learning's English as a Second Language Senior High School Program of Studies and this guide to implementation provide schools with a context in which to offer rich language learning opportunities. The basis for ESL programming is a clear understanding of each ESL student's needs. The senior high school ESL program of studies recognizes that ESL students have varying levels of English language proficiencies but have some common needs to be met so they can access the full range of senior high school curriculum and services.

Goal of the ESL Program

The goal of the English as a Second Language Senior High School Program of Studies is to provide ESL students with planned systematic instruction and support that will enable them to speak the English language fluently, further their education, and become productive and contributing members of society.

Rationale and Philosophy

The rationale and philosophy set out the following assumptions that provide the basis for the ESL senior high school program of studies.

- **Students come to the English language learning classroom with a wealth of previous knowledge and experience to share, and upon which to build.**

  ESL programs should provide a bridge between students' previous language and learning environments, and their new environment. All learning, including language learning, is more effective when students are able to connect what they already know with their new learning.

  Students have knowledge of how to communicate in their first language. In some cases, they also have experience with learning a second or third language. Students bring knowledge and understanding of other subjects, and they have used their first language to create bonds and clarify meaning. Often, they have experienced being part of a school and connected to the learning process.

  Bilingual support in the school can help students, especially those at the initial levels of English language development, build on their previous knowledge and experience.

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- **A supportive school environment that reinforces and encourages student pride in home, community, language and culture will lead to greater student success.**

  A supportive environment for ESL learners can be created by the school, within the community and within the curriculum itself. School administrators, teachers and students can create a safe school environment where people of all races, cultures and language backgrounds are represented, valued, celebrated and respected.

  Community participation in all aspects of school life enhances the students' sense of academic and personal efficacy.

  Curriculum and support resources must acknowledge and accurately represent the histories and contributions of world cultures.

  All students who are recent arrivals in Alberta schools require some orientation to their new surroundings—school, community and culture.

- **Students require differing periods of time to adapt to school and life in Canada.**

  In some cases, students' previous schooling was similar to that in Canada and their adaptation will be quick. In other cases, students go through culture shock as they attempt to reconcile previous expectations and experiences with those of their new environment.

- **Students learn English at different rates, depending on such factors as their previous school experiences and their ability to listen, speak, read and write in the first language.**

  Different kinds and levels of support are required at different stages of the second language learning process. More intensive, sheltered support is appropriate at the beginning stages. At later stages, immersion in content-area programs and a high degree of interaction with English-speaking peers is required. At all stages, the appropriate program is determined by the needs of the students within the context of a specific school.

  A few students will not have had the opportunity to develop literacy in their first language. This has an effect on their English language learning. In the school environment, they are acquiring literacy for the first time in a language that they are just beginning to learn. This is very different from learning to read and write a language you already speak. These students require special attention, and programs may need to be developed specifically for them.

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Consider setting up one-to-one peer support for the learner. In addition to monolingual English speakers, identify peers who are bilingual in the language of the student and in English. These students may be a valuable source of support for newly arrived students.

- **Meaning is central to language learning. Students learn language most effectively when programs are relevant to their experiences, interests and prior knowledge.**

  Students' capacity to use English to express their understanding of the world around them emerges gradually. When students are learning a new language in the senior high school context, they are often striving to understand new concepts at the same time as they are trying to express their understanding through the medium of a new language.

  As students grow in their ability to understand and express themselves in English, the language learning support program should reflect a balance between encouraging students to express themselves using all their current English language resources—and correctness or accuracy in their use of English. A focus *only* on correctness or grammatical form denies students the opportunity of expressing meanings that are important to their ongoing learning. A focus *only* on comprehensible meaning leaves students unaware of conventional and accurate use of English.

- **English language learning is an active process in which students participate by: striving to link new learning to what they already know, developing and experimenting with hypotheses about the new language and culture, interacting with native English speakers and reading authentic English language texts.**

  Specific conditions support students' active involvement in the language learning process. A goal of the ESL program is to enable students to develop independence in language learning. Students need opportunities to decide on their emerging learning goals and collaborate actively with others in achieving these goals.

  It is important for students to have access to the full range of curriculum and services in senior high school, as their language proficiency levels permit.

  Subject-area teachers and ESL teachers can benefit from sharing instructional strategies that are effective for students with a range of language levels. Some strategies used by ESL teachers, such as providing contextual support (visuals and hands-on activities) are useful for all subject-area teachers to include in their instruction.

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Program Organization

The program is organized into five levels. Level 1 is intended for students who are acquiring literacy for the first time or who have had significant gaps in previous schooling. Level 2 is intended for students who have little or no experience with English prior to entering Alberta schools. Level 3 is intended for students who have some competency in English and need a program focused specifically on language development for academic learning. Level 4 is intended for students who are able to succeed in most senior high school courses with consistent support in English language development for academic learning. Level 5 students receive assistance with subject-specific language development in a variety of ways, such as in learning centres, from peer coaching and with teacher assistance.

General Outcomes

Throughout the five levels, students are expected to grow in their ability to demonstrate the following general outcomes.

Students will use spoken and written English to:

- gather, interpret and communicate information
- establish and maintain relationships
- make decisions, solve problems, and plan and carry out projects
- explore, respond to and extend ideas and experiences.

The general outcomes represent different, but interrelated, dimensions for learning in the ESL program. Although the general outcomes are stated separately, they are not mutually exclusive; but rather are meant to be developed in conjunction with one another.

Specific Outcomes

Specific outcomes are listed in five columns, one column for each level. They state what students are expected to know and be able to do by the end of each level.

Following each group of specific outcomes is a list of suggested grammatical concepts and structures related to the specific outcomes in the group. By learning and applying these grammatical concepts and structures, students will be better able to demonstrate the outcomes of the program. The grammatical concepts apply to all five levels as student grammatical knowledge and competence develops gradually through subsequent levels of the program.

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LEVELS PROFILES

Each of the following levels profiles describes the typical characteristics of students upon entry to that level. Examples of the kinds of learning support students require are provided along with appropriate learning activities.

Level 1: Profile on Arrival

It is difficult to describe the learning needs of Level 1 students because these students come from such a wide variety of backgrounds.

▶ In a senior high school context, Level 1 students are almost immediately identified as being at risk because they have not developed an age-appropriate level of literacy in their first language or have had significant gaps in previous schooling.

The oral English proficiency of Level 1 students might be quite similar to that of Level 2 students. The difference is that Level 1 students are illiterate or have few literacy skills in their first language. They might not have the basic concepts of literacy—that written symbols represent spoken words. Often Level 1 students have been in school for sporadic periods of time. Consequently, their level of literacy in their first language resembles that of much younger students.

> *Profile A is a 17-year-old refugee. He had been out of formal schooling for three years when he arrived in Canada. Initial assessment revealed he had very limited understanding of mathematics and science concepts. His reading and writing skills were also limited. He does have the advantage of basic literacy in his first language. However, placement in senior high school courses is going to be difficult.*

These students may have spent time in refugee camps or in flight from one country to another. Their families may have experienced disruption and disorganization because of war and economic or personal problems. For whatever reasons, these students arrive in Alberta unable to read and write at age-appropriate levels in their first language. They have not had an opportunity to learn concepts related to mathematics, science or social studies. In some cases, students may have spent time in refugee communities where they attended school—but the schooling may have been limited and sporadic—with instruction provided by untrained volunteers.

In the most extreme cases, these students do not have a realistic concept of school, because of limited experiences in school generally. That is, they may operate on half-understood ideas about what school is. They may not have been in large group situations where they are expected to sit and work quietly for periods of time.

These students often expect to learn English and finish senior high school before they are 20 years old. Since they have experienced disrupted lives, they usually have not had opportunities to think about their futures in more than general and vague terms. Asking them what they would like to do when they finish senior high school may be difficult for them to answer.

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Parents of these students have often experienced the same disrupted lives. Their expectations are usually that Canada will offer opportunities for their children to restore some semblance of normalcy to their lives. They are unfamiliar with the Canadian context, often unaware of the requirements for a senior high school diploma, and perhaps even unaware of the limitations presented by their children. Many parents have experienced great losses in their own lives and may wish only that their children will be able to make up for some of the losses that the family has collectively suffered.

In some cases, students are living in Canada with relatives, friends or families who have agreed to assist by taking responsibility for someone else's children. These living situations sometimes create their own problems that affect the learning context in the school for the student.

Support for Learning at Level 1

The challenge for teachers of Level 1 students is to provide interesting, challenging language and content-learning opportunities, using resources and materials that do not insult or bore students. Their English language skills may be equivalent to those of much younger English-speaking students. Their concept development may also be similar to much younger students. However, they have similar interests to other adolescents and in many ways may have more knowledge of the world than students whose lives have been sheltered.

These students benefit from working on learning tasks that are experiential and hands-on. Integrate language learning with every aspect of the students' day in school, from learning what food is available in the cafeteria to what they need to bring for physical education class.

Progress may appear to be slow at first, but engaging students in group activities creates a common base of experiences on which to build language. These students will be acquiring new academic concepts at the same time as they are learning a new language. It often takes some exploration and experimentation to discover what they understand about science, social studies, mathematics and technology. A teacher who is knowledgeable about students' backgrounds, communities, cultures and world events will be able to determine what is familiar to the student. It is important that students move from the known to the unknown.

Bilingual support—teachers, teacher assistants and peers who speak the students' first language and English—can assist these students in their learning and adjustment to Alberta schools.

Suggested Activities for Level 1 Students

Consider the following activities for Level 1 students.

- Demonstrate the names of objects orally and with printed labels. Use pictures of adults or adolescents (not from elementary school books).

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- Help students become familiar with the school. Use school maps to teach directions and identify areas, such as cafeteria and library. Teach students the names of people in the school. Develop photograph guides with pictures of administrative staff, librarians, cafeteria workers, school secretaries and teachers.
- Develop simplified guides that describe the school. Use these guides for reading practice. Teach school routines, timetables and schedules.
- Conduct basic science experiments that demonstrate and teach the language for instructions, sequencing, cause and effect, procedure. Use concrete, observable situations.
- Teach the names of parts of the body. Use diagrams and models from the science or career and life management program to discuss internal organs, skeletal structure and body processes.
- Demonstrate mathematics problems, using objects found in the senior high school classroom. Alternatively, use Cuisenaire rods and other manipulative materials used in elementary schools, but that are essentially age-neutral.
- Apply labels to everything in the classroom and use them to practise reading and writing.
- Take photographs of places and people around the school, starting with ESL students. Write photograph stories about everything and everybody.
- Develop stories together. Write the stories on newsprint flip charts and have students copy the stories into notebooks. Publish stories and booklets to use for reading practice.
- Find out what students will be doing in physical education, and bring equipment and diagrams into the classroom to give students a preview, and teach them the names of equipment.
- If students are able to communicate information about their countries of origin, journey to Canada, and their families, develop these stories orally, transcribe them in writing and use them for reading practice.
- Give students explicit handwriting instruction and opportunities to practise.
- Use music that appeals to adolescents. Learn the words to songs. Provide written information about well-known movie stars, singers and sports figures.
- Show narrative films, films about regions of Canada and tourist sites, with the sound turned off. Develop written descriptions together with students. Transcribe portions of the sound tracks of films or television shows. Use them for reading, cloze exercises and listening practice.

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- Avoid spending time on traditional topics related to adult interests: shopping for food, renting an apartment, getting a job. Generally, these topics are not relevant to the immediate lives of senior high school adolescents.

Level 2: Profile on Arrival

▶ Students in Level 2 have little or no experience with English but have had formal schooling and have developed an age-appropriate level of literacy in a language other than English.

Level 2 students have little or no formal experience with English prior to arriving in Alberta schools. However, their previous schooling has equipped them with a wide range of knowledge and skills, and an age-appropriate level of literacy in at least one language other than English.

Profile B is a student from Korea. She completed Grade 10 in Korea. She was exposed to a limited amount of English in her Korean school. She is shy about speaking English, even in a small group.

She has grade-appropriate skills in mathematics and science, although her limited understanding of oral and written English creates a barrier for her. In mathematics, she relies on Korean speakers to assist her. This facilitates her mathematics and her English language learning but she is required to demonstrate her own knowledge on tests.

ESL students will arrive with differing educational backgrounds. They will have strengths in some areas of the school curriculum and weaknesses in others. Because of their enhanced educational backgrounds, Level 2 students will probably acquire English more quickly than students in Level 1.

Support for Learning at Level 2

At this level, students may be in an intensive ESL program for as much as 50 to 75 per cent of their time in school. They may move relatively quickly into curriculum areas in which they have the knowledge background, for example in mathematics and sciences. Their success depends on every teacher giving priority to their English language learning needs. Peer support programs, orientation programs and bilingual support also help these students succeed.

The task of learning a language and using it in an academic context can be daunting. It is important that learning outcomes and expectations are made clear to students. If these are not clarified, students may begin to feel that they are not making progress and will never be able to achieve their academic goals. They may not understand what English language skills are necessary for success in the senior high school context.

Languages are structured differently. The structure of English needs to become an explicit part of the ESL program. For example, many languages do not use word inflections (changes in the form of the word) to indicate tense and number; e.g., man, men; child, children. If this is a new concept to students, they need to see the patterns in English in order to learn effectively and efficiently.

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Sound systems also differ from language to language. Sounds that are differentiated in English (b/p) may not be differentiated in other languages. Therefore, students will not automatically hear the differences. Tones are used in many Asian languages to differentiate meaning but are not used in this way in English. Students from these language backgrounds may be confused by hearing rising and falling intonation patterns in English that carry across the whole sentence.

Suggested Activities for Level 2 Students

Consider the following activities for Level 2 students.

- Develop learning units based on content from Alberta's senior high school or junior high school programs of study in order to provide language learning that is relevant to students. These students have acquired academic concepts in mathematics, science, history, geography, social sciences and language. In many cases, they are learning how to comprehend and express these concepts in a new language.
- Maintain a balance between developing oral fluency and skills in written English.
- Focus on learning how English is structured (grammar) in the context of content-focused learning.
- Analyze written and oral information that students will be using and identify the grammatical structures required for comprehension and writing. For example, learning about Canada's history will require the use of various past tenses. Learning about Canada's geography will require the use of simple tenses. In science, general laws are stated using the simple present tense; e.g., The Earth rotates around the Sun once a year. Plants need water and sunshine in order to grow.
- Make strategies for language learning and use an explicit focus for teaching.
- Support written and oral English with pictures, maps, charts and concrete objects to assist students in the initial stages of language learning.
- Present grammatical concepts in meaningful contexts to illustrate how and when they are used in English.
- Use field trip opportunities for language learning. Preview and preteach. Have students fill in charts and label pictures on the trip.
- Select easy reading material related to school subject areas, such as biology, nature, technology and history. Look for well-organized, clear texts with lots of pictures, charts and other graphics. Avoid anything that contains pictures of elementary school-aged children. Avoid materials written for students with limited literacy. These materials make assumptions about the knowledge of the English language that are inappropriate for students learning a new language.

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- Show narrative films, films about regions of Canada and tourist sites, with the sound turned off. Develop written descriptions together with the students. Transcribe portions of the sound tracks of films and television shows. Use them for reading and listening practice.
- Use a video camera to film classes in progress in the school. Develop written text or sound tracks that describe what is happening in the film. Use the film for orientation for other new students.

Level 3: Profile on Arrival

▶ Level 3 students have developed some competency in English and need to focus specifically on language development for academic learning.

Level 3 students have acquired some competence in English, either in Canada or elsewhere. They may be in ESL settings for 50 per cent of their time in school. These ESL classes may include science, social studies and English language arts focused courses designed to prepare students for senior high school courses.

Profile C is from China. This is his second year of school in Canada. Prior to arriving 1 1/2 years ago, he had limited exposure to English in school—and no informal exposure. He understood no oral English and his written English was limited to individual words that had been learned in class. He is now in Level 3. He is still hesitant to speak in English. Although he is shy, he can carry on a conversation with English-speaking peers. He is doing well in the Career and Technology Studies course, Drafting/Design Fundamentals, is registered in Applied Mathematics 20, and is struggling with Science 10. His science background is limited. His spontaneous writing still shows some basic grammatical and structural errors, but he writes several paragraphs in response to assignments on topics studied in class. He understands conversation that is slightly slower than normal. His vocabulary enables him to understand—with some instruction and assistance—simple stories and well-organized, expository text that is supported by graphics and vocabulary explanations (glossary). He refers to his bilingual dictionary frequently. He has a basic understanding of English grammatical structures—tenses, pronoun system, punctuation, sentence structures with some complex sentences.

Support for Learning at Level 3

Level 3 students have basic English language competency and need to acquire the language skills necessary to further their learning in a variety of subject areas. They need instruction and practice in language skills that will help them learn successfully.

Level 3 students require assistance with verb tenses, sentence patterns, syntactical structures and paragraphing skills. They need to learn and practise all aspects of the writing process; e.g., brainstorming, outlining, editing. They need to learn and practise a variety of writing formats used in various subjects; e.g., letter, journal, report, personal narrative. They also need to develop organizational strategies, including charting, outlining and note taking. Strategies for learning new vocabulary are also important. In addition, they need practice in participating in class discussion, working in pairs and groups, and expressing personal opinions.

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Teachers can provide support by giving oral and written instructions, using visuals, repeating and rephrasing to clarify meaning, and using models or examples. Relating instruction to topics of interest and using authentic texts is also helpful. Taking time to build background knowledge is essential. English dictionaries and thesauri, as well as bilingual dictionaries, provide added support. Teachers need to provide additional time and assistance for practice, studying language models, discussion and revision of work.

Suggested Activities for Level 3 Students

Consider the following activities for Level 3 students.

- Have students research information about a physical region of Canada and draw maps to convey information about location, climate, vegetation, population density, resources and industry, using a legend. Have them present their maps to the class while describing the region.
- Have students bring items that have significance for their families to class. Ask students to write descriptions of the items, including explanations of their significance. Create a museum with items carefully displayed. Include written descriptions in the display.
- View a film based on a novel or short story. Have students complete a character inventory and write a character sketch for one of the characters.
- Have students attend a school event and write a detailed account of the experience using appropriate linking words and phrases.
- Have students use visual organizers, such as timelines, to depict important events or passage of time and present them to the class.
- Have students write poems, narratives or dialogues about important events and convey what happened and the effect on people, events or ideas.
- Have students write the steps in a game, dance or craft on a series of cards and teach the activity to the class, following the steps.
- Have students recreate events in history by retelling them from the point of view of a fictional character.
- Have students read a scene from a play in pairs or in small groups. They should discuss the characters' motivations, values, intentions.
- Discuss the pros and cons of a controversial social issue. Have students write letters to a local newspaper, taking a stand on the issue and suggesting a plan for change.

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Level 4: Profile on Arrival

- Level 4 students are able to succeed in most senior high school courses, but need consistent support in English language development for academic learning.

Level 4 students can comprehend instruction in most senior high school courses, but may have difficulties in social studies and English language arts that require wider vocabulary, and more cultural and background knowledge. Success in these courses may depend on students' previous knowledge in the area of study and on sufficient assistance with language learning.

Profile D is from Mexico. She is an inquisitive and enthusiastic learner. Although she has been in Canada only 18 months, she has made great progress in her comprehension and use of English. She has high expectations of herself—and her family expects that she will go to university and study medicine. She has developed precise vocabulary to describe personal experiences and feelings and joins in discussions on a variety of topics. Her writing is well-organized and she is developing a good grasp of English grammatical and sentence structures. When she makes errors in English, she asks for clarification. She reads in English for information and enjoyment and uses a variety of strategies, including prior knowledge, language and context cues, to comprehend meaning.

She has successfully passed Science 10 and is achieving marks in the 60s and 70s in English language arts 10-2 and Social Studies 13. She needs additional support for the cultural and context-based content of these courses. She works independently and asks for help from peers who speak both Spanish and English.

Support for Learning at Level 4

About 25 per cent of Level 4 students' time may be spent in an ESL setting. Support may take the form of one-on-one tutoring and assistance with specific aspects of their courses.

In Level 4, instruction should focus on consolidating students' knowledge of the structure of English. This can be done most successfully within the context of topics related to the curriculum, such as Canadian history, the geographic and economic regions of Canada, science labs, and novel and short story studies.

In general, resources should not be modified or simplified for ESL students. However, special teaching strategies can be used to support students in their efforts to comprehend oral and written texts. For example, teachers can focus on new vocabulary, assist with figuring out the meaning of complex grammatical structures and use graphic organizers to illustrate the organizational structure of texts.

Since most texts in curriculum areas are technical and complex, students need to be taught specific reading strategies that enable them to comprehend new concepts. They also need assistance with expressing ideas in concise written English, using conventional report and essay formats.

Provide assistance to Level 4 students so that they can learn to do independent research. For example, help them determine topics, select resources, write in response to reading and paraphrase (not copy) ideas

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from source material. Help students read many genres and encourage them to read narrative and expository texts extensively. Have a selection of texts on topics of study readily available.

Teachers can provide support to Level 4 students through ongoing liaison with students' subject-area teachers. Subject-area teachers can explain objectives of the topic of study, important concepts and vocabulary. In turn, ESL teachers can share effective teaching strategies and explain the kinds of support Level 4 students need to be successful in the subject-area classroom.

Level 4 students should learn a variety of formats for presenting ideas; e.g., reports, oral presentations, interviews, debates. They should also read a variety of texts; e.g., myths, poems, biographies, editorials, letters, reports, articles and essays on a variety of topics.

Level 4 students require extra time and assistance with assignments. Opportunities for discussion and guided practice should precede independent work.

Suggested Activities for Level 4 Students

Consider the following activities for Level 4 students.

- Using a display of science apparatus; e.g., compound light microscope, Bunsen burner, triple balance beam, have students develop oral presentations to teach classmates about each piece of equipment. Students should identify parts of the equipment, using appropriate vocabulary, and describe the function of each part. On index cards, have students draw each piece of equipment and label the parts. They may also write descriptions of the ways the equipment is used.
- Work with students to create portfolios of poems that use the following poetic devices: simile, metaphor, personification, alliteration, paradox. In journal entries, have students comment on the effectiveness of each example.
- Ask students to describe and narrate personal experiences.
- Ask students to write plot summaries of various narratives.
- Have students fill in a prepared outline while listening to a well-organized, slow-paced oral presentation or interview.
- Ask students to write three or four paragraphs on a familiar topic using description, narration and explanation. Students should use some complex sentence patterns; cohesive devices, such as time sequence, comparison and contrast; and basic punctuation including periods, quotation marks, possessive markers, capital letters.
- Ensure that students develop an extensive repertoire of learning/presenting/organizing strategies; e.g., brainstorming, charting, outlining, note taking, flow charts, PowerPoint, overhead slides.

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- Working in pairs, have students explain the steps to take in case of an emergency. They should focus on brevity, clarity and proper sequence.
- Working in groups, have students plan and conduct surveys related to school issues. They should negotiate roles within the group, and make decisions regarding timelines and methods of gathering and recording data. Have them conduct the surveys, analyze the results and write them up for the school newsletter.
- Have students read brief biographies of modern day scientists and create webs or other formats to organize the information. Ask them to give brief oral presentations on the scientists' lives and contributions to scientific research.

Level 5: Profile on Arrival

▶ Level 5 students can study senior high school subjects in the regular classroom with assistance in subject-specific language development.

Students at Level 5 are able to learn in regular senior high school classrooms with limited support in English language.

Profile E is from Taiwan. She is a serious and inquisitive student who enjoys learning. She arrived in Canada at a Level 3 English proficiency and has been in Canada for three years.

She makes an effort to meet and speak to English-speaking students, and often studies in the library with English-speaking friends. She has attended summer school for the past three years and plans to attend university.

Profile E achieves high marks in science and mathematics, and is studying English Language Arts 20-1 and Social Studies 20. She is not happy with marks in the 60s and 70s in English, and works hard to read and write at the level required in English Language Arts 20-1. She still asks for help with tasks like the format for research papers and the interpretation of sophisticated fiction that is culturally situated; e.g., a W. O. Mitchell story set in rural Western Canada, which refers to the bounty on gopher tails!

Her spontaneous writing still contains errors, but these only rarely interfere with her expression of ideas. Her speech is slow and careful. She often searches for appropriate words but usually manages to convey her ideas.

Support for Learning at Level 5

Most Level 5 students are integrated with their native English-speaking peers in the regular classroom. While they may do quite well in some subjects, such as mathematics and the sciences, they often require assistance with other subjects, such as English language arts and social studies. There will be times when these students require assistance from the ESL teacher. For example, they may come with a question when reading complex prose or technical material.

Level 5 students are still consolidating the more complex aspects of the English language, especially reading and writing. Usually, difficulties in oral communication are related to unfamiliar vocabulary and concepts.

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Although Level 5 students want to be considered fully integrated, it is important that the ESL teacher monitor their progress, keep in touch with the subject teachers, and provide flexible scheduling and programming strategies to enable these students to access the assistance they require.

Assistance is best provided on an individual or small-group basis through:

- self-access learning centres
- computer-assisted instruction
- resource teacher assistance
- peer tutor programs
- drop-in resource centres
- informal programs, such as homework clubs
- adjunct instruction.

Suggested Activities for Level 5 Students

Consider the following activities for Level 5 students.

- Have students read two descriptions, one in poetry and one in prose, on the same topic, and compare the language used, purpose of each type of description and the effectiveness of each.
- Have students choose an aspect of schooling, such as parent–teacher interviews, and ask teachers, counsellors, administrators and other students why things are done this way in Canadian schools. They should write two explanations—one for fellow students and the other for parents of students who came to Canada from another country.
- Have students read a short story in which the main character changes significantly, and describe the character's physical characteristics and personality. They should record information on charts to show how the character changes and explain what causes the character to change.
- Invite community members to be on a panel discussion relating to an issue. Have students research the issue and prepare questions for the panel members. Have students take a stand and write journal entries listing their reasons. Class members should introduce and thank panel members.
- Have students develop a learning plan, to identify their strengths and needs, and access help with reading and writing in all subject areas.

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Planning the ESL Program

CHAPTER THREE

- Placing ESL Students
- Curriculm Connections
- Cross-curricular Units
- Theme- or Project-based Language Instruction
- Adjunct Language Instruction
- Sheltered Content Instruction
- Other Methods of Organizing for Instruction
- Strategies for Language Learning
- Planning for the Integration of Technology

Focus

This chapter discusses planning the ESL program in connection with the senior high school curriculum.

PLANNING THE ESL PROGRAM

PLACING ESL STUDENTS

How ESL students are placed depends on the nature of a school's program and the number of ESL students in the school. School staff, based on their knowledge of ESL students in the school, must determine the best way to organize for instruction.

Generally, students are placed in age-appropriate grades. The students' abilities in English also determine what courses, other than ESL, they will enroll in. For example, students with a strong background in mathematics, and with moderate to intermediate ability in English, can often succeed in general mathematics classes that are appropriate to their age and achievement level. Mathematics teachers can often judge students' levels of achievement if they have access to the mathematics texts that students used before they came to Alberta.

Language is learned best in a context that is meaningful, interesting and motivating for learners. In senior high schools, students learn English in order to participate in every school subject. The context and content for language learning, therefore, needs to reflect the outcomes of the programs of study for each subject.

Students arrive in Alberta with widely varied backgrounds and experiences. In some cases, students might have more extensive knowledge of a subject than their Alberta peers. In other cases, they have less. In order to facilitate students' full participation in senior high school, the ESL program integrates language and content instruction in ways that reflect the outcomes of both the ESL program of studies and the program of studies for each subject.

The senior high school ESL program assumes that the most effective and efficient approach to language learning integrates all aspects of English language learning with academic content.

This integrated approach provides:

- rich input of the language being learned
- content that focuses students' attention on meaning, as well as language
- language use in a context of analytical activities that require particular language forms, functions and patterns.

In order to determine the most effective way of organizing to teach ESL students, consider such factors as:

- information gathered during intake
- general and specific outcomes of the ESL program of studies
- knowledge of the levels
- the outcomes and topics of the subject-area programs of study

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- the number of ESL students in the school and their distribution across the five levels
- the resources of the school and community
- the timetable and organization of the school
- the ability and willingness of subject teachers to adapt instruction to meet the needs of ESL students.

Some teachers use charts, such as the one provided below, to record information about ESL students, the school and the community to assist with organizing the ESL program.

Organizing Information about ESL Students

Considerations	Comments
How are students grouped: • by proficiency level • in mixed proficiency levels • in ad-hoc groups as necessary?	
What language proficiency levels are represented?	
What are the students' previous educational experiences: • in their countries of origin • in Canada • in this school?	
What other subject areas are students participating in?	
What resources—human, print, media, technology—are available in the school?	
What space is available in the school?	
What community resources are available: • educational programs and resources in other community institutions • organizations (museums, zoos, environmental organizations, libraries)?	
What collaborative possibilities are available?	

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CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

The learning outcomes of the ESL program of studies are inherently related to all other senior high school programs. Language is the essential vehicle for conveying the concepts, knowledge, skills and ideas of all senior high school subjects. The following lists identify some of the connections that ESL students should make between their developing English language proficiency and the content of their other senior high school studies.

In mathematics, students:

- read and restate problems
- interpret graphs and charts
- make lists and charts
- gather and organize data
- ask questions
- make generalizations
- communicate mathematical ideas
- present ideas
- document solutions and processes
- use appropriate group behaviour
- paraphrase.

In science, students:

- record data
- formulate questions for inquiry
- classify information
- compare and contrast information
- recognize relationships, such as sequence, cause and effect
- express data in charts, graphs, maps
- explain
- generalize
- summarize and communicate findings
- make decisions
- establish criteria
- work in groups.

In social studies, students:

- locate, gather, interpret and organize information
- state issues
- synthesize, evaluate and analyze information
- express and present information and ideas
- speak, demonstrate and write
- interact with others
- propose solutions to problems
- make decisions
- write persuasively
- use reference materials
- use context to gain meaning
- read for a variety of purposes
- recognize relationships, such as sequence, cause and effect.

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In English language arts, students:

- use language to talk about language
- use appropriate language for audience, purpose, situation
- write to clarify and share
- talk to organize, interpret and communicate experience
- use reading strategies appropriate for particular purposes
- write letters, reports, narratives, arguments, reflective essays.

When planning the ESL program, teachers use many strategies to integrate content and language instruction.

CROSS-CURRICULAR UNITS

One way to integrate learning English and subject-area content is through units that reflect the Alberta curriculum, but that also take into account the international background and specific requirements of ESL students. The ESL program cannot duplicate the whole senior high school program of studies, nor is it possible to design a program that makes allowances for every student's background and knowledge on arrival in Alberta. However, teachers can make choices within general areas that reflect subject areas in the senior high school curriculum.

The following are suggested general content areas within which thematic units can be developed:

- Orientation
- Language Studies
- Global and Canadian Studies
- World Literature
- Career and Technology Studies
- Mathematics, Science and the World
- International Fine Arts.

These content areas can be addressed at all levels of the ESL program. They are generally reflective of the Alberta curriculum, and the international background and requirements of ESL students. These units can be adapted for use at all levels of the ESL program. They can be used to meet the outcomes of both ESL and subject-area programs of study.

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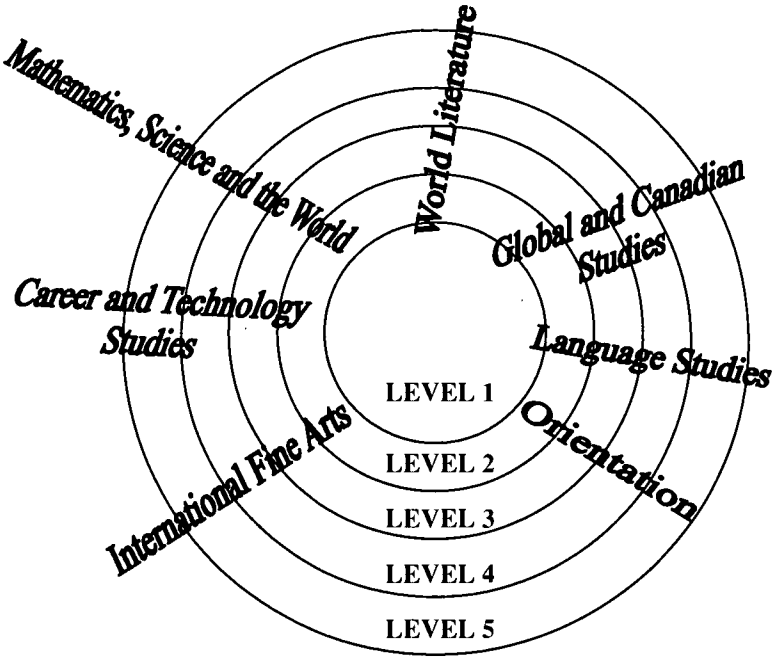

The following charts demonstrate how cross-curricular units can be used to enhance the integration of language and content learning.

Cross-curricular Unit	Units of Study	Learning Objectives	Examples
Orientation	Units of study within this content area should: • orient students to all aspects of the school—physical layout, functions of people and departments, yearly schedules/holidays • provide students with knowledge of what is required to complete an Alberta High School Diploma • assist students to make program choices that are appropriate for individual learning goals • familiarize students with expectations and procedures in school.	The learning objectives in these units of study enable students to: • become familiar with Canadian culture and schooling • understand themselves and their families in relation to their new communities.	The orientation program might take the following forms: • part of a peer-assistance program in the school or in specific classrooms • formal programs involving parents to provide information about Alberta schools—requirements, choices, services, structure • formal information about the services and programs available to students within the school • informal group meetings where students reflect on the new culture and environment • modules about specific aspects of Albertan and Canadian culture and schooling.

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Cross-curricular Unit	Units of Study	Learning Objectives	Examples
Language Studies	Units of study within this content area should: • focus on language development relevant for specific groups of students.	The learning objectives in these units of study enable students to: • explore and consolidate their emerging understanding of the English language and gain an understanding of language in general.	• Units of study may be developed that help students understand the ways English signals formality or informality within the school context • Emphasis on listening, oral presentations, pronunciation, learning a second language • Modules could also be designed as language adjuncts to specific courses.

Cross-curricular Unit	Units of Study	Learning Objectives	Examples
Global and Canadian Studies	Units of study within this content area should: • reflect students' previous knowledge and understanding of world history and geography, Canadian history and geography, and issues common across political and cultural boundaries; also includes issues related to immigration and the immigrant and refugee experience • reflect those aspects of the junior and senior high school social studies programs that are most appropriate for students from an international background and that relate Canadian issues to an international context.	The learning objectives in these units of study enable students to: • develop English language competencies for learning and participating in senior high school social studies classes • develop background knowledge for topics addressed in senior high school social studies programs.	• Immigration and emigration—movement of world populations • Conflict in the world: current issues; Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Central America • Canada as a multicultural society • Economic changes—China in the 1990s, Europe in the 1990s, urbanization and traditional societies.

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Cross-curricular Unit	Units of Study	Learning Objectives	Examples
World Literature	Units of study within this content area should: • reflect students' prior knowledge and understanding of literature themes, forms and conventions • reflect those aspects of the English language arts program that are most appropriate for students from an international and/or multilingual background, and relate Canadian issues to an international context.	The learning objectives in these units of study enable students to: • develop English language competencies to learn and participate in senior high school English language arts classes • connect students' prior understanding of literature from various cultural traditions to understanding the literature themes, forms and conventions addressed in the senior high school English language arts program.	• Folktales: similarities and differences from many cultures • Novel study • Autobiography and family stories • Short stories • Plays • Poetry from many cultural traditions and traditional societies • Biographies.

Cross-curricular Unit	Units of Study	Learning Objectives	Examples
Mathematics, Science and the World	Units of study within this content area should: • reflect students' prior understanding of scientific principles and issues that affect and underlie physical and technological processes and events in the world • provide opportunities for students to learn basic mathematics skills that enable them to participate in the senior high school mathematics program • reflect topics and issues in the junior and senior high school science program • reflect the language and skills required for competence in the senior high school mathematics program.	The learning objectives in these units of study enable students to: • develop English language competencies for learning and participating in senior high school science classes • connect students' previous understanding of scientific principles and issues to those addressed in senior high school classrooms.	• Pollution and economic development • Disappearing rain forests • Nutrition and health • Climate and geography: international comparisons.

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Cross-curricular Unit	Units of Study	Learning Objectives	Examples
Career and Technology Studies	Units of study within this content area should: • reflect students' previous understanding of concepts and skills related to the areas of business, technology, the workplace and the practical arts • reflect areas in senior high school career and technology studies courses that are most appropriate to a specific group of students.	The learning objectives in these units of study enable students to: • develop English language skills to learn and participate in career and technology studies (CTS) classes in senior high schools • develop an understanding of the concepts and skills for participation in CTS classrooms.	• Clothing as a manifestation of cultural values • The relationship between clothing and climate • Housing construction—an international comparison • Entrepreneurship in China, Hong Kong, Eastern Europe, Alberta • Adjunct modules to any of the CTS courses.

Cross-curricular Unit	Units of Study	Learning Objectives	Examples
International Fine Arts	Units of study within this content area should: • reflect students' prior knowledge experience and interests in the areas of music, drama and visual arts • reflect topics in senior high school art, drama and music programs that are most appropriate for students from international backgrounds.	The learning objectives in these units of study enable students to: • develop English language competencies to learn and participate in art, drama and music classes in senior high school • connect students' prior knowledge of concepts and skills with those addressed in the fine arts program.	• Comparative dance forms across cultures • Mime as an expression of cultural conflict • Readers' theatre • Cross-cultural influences on contemporary Canadian music • Chinese opera in a Canadian setting.

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THEME- OR PROJECT-BASED LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

Another way to integrate content and language learning is to use a theme- or project-based approach.

In this approach, the language class is structured around themes or projects. Often teachers begin with an orientation theme aimed at the world of school. Students learn to cope with the school, life and the community. Other themes and projects relate to science, social studies, language arts, career and technology studies, separately or in combination.

Students engage in several activities on the same theme. They read textbook passages and newspaper articles, listen to audiotapes, take notes and conduct interviews. They also write summaries, reviews, reports and opinions. Sometimes they engage in debates or group discussions based on research into various topics.

In this approach, teachers use a variety of thematic materials that adequately reflect the academic requirements of the subject area. Some materials may be designed specifically for ESL students but many are designed for general audiences and need to be adapted or modified for ESL students. Texts that are too difficult lead to frustration and do not accomplish the purposes of teaching language or content. Texts that are too easy do not provide rich stimulation for either language or content learning.

Keep in mind the following points when planning theme- or project-based instruction.

- Ensure that texts move from simple to more complex throughout the theme or project. As students become familiar with the vocabulary associated with a theme or project, their ability to understand complex language structures and ideas will develop.
- Include a variety of text types and activities. Students need opportunities to read, speak, listen, write, represent and view. Texts can be personal responses, factual reports, summaries and formal expressions of opinion. Fiction and nonfiction can often be used in the same theme. Nonfiction sources provide context and background information, while fiction sources lead to personal responses.
- Allow enough time with a theme or project for students to acquire understanding of significant concepts and issues. Students can read with understanding and write with conviction only if they are engaged in learning.

Thematic and project-based units can be used in multilevel classrooms. Teachers use a variety of texts and plan a variety of activities to meet a variety of language proficiency levels. Students often work collaboratively, helping each other complete activities. Advanced students are good role models for others. Such units can also be used in single level classrooms. The following unit was developed for students completing Level 3.

An ESL teacher who had many girls enrolled in her class used International Women's Day as the theme for an instructional unit. She planned a variety of activities that integrated language learning and knowledge of the role of women in society. Students planned an International Women's Day celebration to which they invited guests, including students, teachers, parents, relatives and community representatives. During the celebration, they shared their learning through presentations and by distributing an illustrated booklet of student writing.

International Women's Day
A Thematic/Project-based Instructional Unit

- *Read biographies and watch videotapes about famous women. Interview local women who have overcome challenges in their lives.*
  - *Learn nouns, verbs and adjectives to describe these women.*
  - *Write cinquain poems about the women using the following form:*
    Line 1 – Title (name)
    Line 2 – Description (2 adjectives)
    Line 3 – Action (3 words)
    Line 4 – Action (4 words)
    Line 5 – Synonym to restate topic (1 word).

    Sample student response:

    Marie Curie
    Devoted, determined
    Discovering radium
    Making my spirit strong
    Scientist

  - *Select samples to include in celebration booklet.*

- *Students write a skit using provided information. For example, an ESL student, who wants to be a doctor, is discouraged. One night she has a dream in which several famous women visit her and offer words of encouragement. Students use their knowledge of the biographies and women in their lives to write the parts.*
  - *Students memorize their parts, add simple props and rehearse the skit in order to perform it at the International Women's Day celebration.*
  - *Students take pictures of the skit and write a description to include in the celebration booklet.*

- *Write letters of invitation to the celebration of International Women's Day.*
- *Invite women from the community to visit the class to talk about challenges they have faced. Include a variety of women, such as: young and old women, women with traditional and nontraditional careers, physically challenged women, women with a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Record the visitors' stories.*
  - *Have students work in pairs to transcribe the recordings.*
  - *Choose the parts to be included in the celebration booklet.*

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  - *Edit the transcript.*
  - *Write the introduction, "joining" and concluding paragraphs to connect the parts of the speech together.*
  - *Include these stories of women role models in the celebration booklet together with the students' stories of challenges they have faced.*
- *Role-play telephone conversations inviting someone to the celebration or asking someone to provide information. Make the actual telephone calls.*
- *Write speeches for the presentation at the celebration. Speeches will be needed to welcome visitors, introduce speakers, explain the significance of International Women's Day, thank people for coming.*
  - *Revise the speeches, practise reading them, get pronunciation help and deliver them at the celebration.*
- *Write a rap song.*
  - *Read newspaper articles about International Women's Day and find lines that could be used in the song.*
  - *Interview women in the school to get the names of famous women and adjectives or phrases to describe them.*
  - *Incorporate the ideas in a song.*
  - *Practise the song and perfect pronunciation.*
- *Students were told there would be a mystery guest at the celebration. Some students were to present the guest with flowers. The students wrote short speeches to say as they presented their flower; e.g., The pink flower reminds us to be patient and persist; the white flower reminds us how important it is to be well.*
- *The students wrote two more verses to the song "Singing for Our Lives" and sang it at the celebration.*
- *During the celebration, each student was responsible for showing a guest the classroom displays and for teaching him or her to make a paper crane. On each crane they wrote their own names and the name of the guest, together with an inspirational word, such as determination, perseverance, talent, courage, wit, confidence. The cranes were suspended under the words "Fly with Us."*
- *Videotape the celebration, take pictures, do write-ups for a souvenir booklet.*

ADJUNCT LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

Adjunct language instruction is another way to integrate language and content learning. It requires a high degree of collaboration between ESL teachers and subject teachers. There are several ways to institute adjunct language instruction, including the following.

- A science teacher and an ESL teacher might work together in the Science 10 classroom. The ESL teacher uses language learning strategies to enhance instruction for ESL students.
- Alternatively, ESL students in Science 10 might spend additional time with an ESL teacher who provides instruction on language specifically related to science—assisting with reading and writing strategies and vocabulary.

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The following account offers an ESL teacher's thoughts on how she used adjunct language instruction to enhance language and science instruction in her senior high school.

Adjunct Language Instruction ESL/Science Collaboration

The Problem:
In a large urban city high school, one of our current challenges is to meet the academic needs of Level 2 students who come primarily from countries of the Pacific Rim. They have completed at least nine years of education in their home countries and, although they require ESL support at Level 3 or 4, they have the prerequisites for senior high school mathematics and science courses. Their computational skills are often one or two years ahead of their Canadian peers but they find their English proficiency a barrier to doing well in other aspects of mathematics and science, such as:

- *problem solving*
- *written responses to questions*
- *the efficient use of textbooks.*

The Response:
The question raised by staff in our school was how to use the expertise of ESL specialist teachers to provide support for Level 2 learners and their teachers in the general classroom. The collaboration between ESL and science teachers was one response that has had some promising results.

Science teachers had expressed concerns about the low levels of language skills in their classes, especially as exhibited in the written response questions on Grade 12 diploma examinations. The Science Curriculum Area Plan stated that teachers intended to increase the emphasis placed on reading and writing in science classes. The ESL teachers were already aware that some of our work should focus on language development in the integrated setting and that this would involve a high degree of collaboration with other teachers. We also felt that many of the learning and teaching strategies used to support Level 2 learners would be beneficial to all learners. A proposal for collaboration between ESL and science was developed, which included clearly defined goals, practices and roles for the participants.

The Goal:
The goal was to improve the quality of students' written responses in science classes through collaboration between science teachers and an ESL teacher. The ESL teacher had acquired some experience with the expectations of the science curriculum by co-teaching a sheltered Prep-Science 10 class for ESL students, and by working with individual science teachers and students on specific assignments. Some of the trust and confidence that is crucial to collaboration between teachers was developed through these contacts.

We identified the following six practices that we felt would give focus to our work.

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Goals/Practices	Role of the ESL Teacher	Results
1. *Study the characteristics of good questions, and work at making our questions clear and direct.*	• *Identify phrasings and constructions that interfered with understanding the intent of questions.*	• *Clear and focused questions.* • *Clear and focused student writing.*
2. *Include prewriting activities in classroom instruction. These strategies are not new to students and those who are competent writers use them all the time. However, there are students who do not automatically access this metacognitive knowledge and need opportunities within the structure of the lesson to integrate them in their work.*	• *Design and facilitate these lessons. Science teachers were interested in the process but appreciated some modelling to become comfortable, including the activities in their own lesson plans.*	• *The activities attended to three tasks: understanding the question, gathering information and organizing information.*
3. *Use rubrics to assess student performance. One of the concerns expressed by science teachers was that they were unsure how to respond to student writing beyond the content of the assignment. They could identify strong and weak written responses but were not sure how to give appropriate feedback to students.*	• *Use the rubrics from the diploma examinations to show students and teachers the characteristics of proficient and competent written responses.*	• *Rubrics were used in a variety of ways to illustrate what descriptors might look like in particular responses. Later, teachers designed new rubrics for specific assignments, including some that would be used by students for peer evaluation.*
4. *Explicitly teach the characteristics of expository writing as required by a specific writing task. Help students understand how they can organize their ideas to address the question.*	• *Identify patterns of organization—compare/contrast, cause/effect, sequence, main idea and detail.* • *Discuss how a writer develops coherence.*	• *Student writing that is well-organized, coherent and focused on the topic.*
5. *Provide opportunities in class for students to write, revise and edit their work.* *Science teachers generally have difficulty making this kind of time available because of the tremendous pressure to cover the curriculum. However, in order for students to improve their writing skills, they must do some meaningful writing and receive constructive feedback.*	• *Work with small groups of students on development of specific language skills and revisions of drafts.*	• *Over a period of time, teachers may become convinced that students need to write to learn and may see ways of reducing content without sacrificing the integrity of the course.*

Goals/Practices	Role of the ESL Teacher	Results
6. *Provide students with a variety of vocabulary and learning strategies.*	• *Teach strategies, such as semantic mapping, classification, use of visuals, small group rehearsals, brainstorming.*	• *Students are in control of the content, the task and the process skills.*

Collaboration is not easy, but we have attended to some important concerns that have helped us feel we are having an impact on the quality of learning. Good planning is key to effective collaboration so arranging planning time within the school day is a high priority. We were able to do this by organizing our ESL timetable to give an ESL teacher unassigned resource time that was used either for planning or teaching in the science area. Arranging common prep time for the ESL and science teachers is another alternative.

SHELTERED CONTENT INSTRUCTION

Occasionally, it makes sense in a school setting to teach a content course to a group of ESL students.

This is similar to the way French immersion programs are organized—with Anglophone students grouped together to receive instruction in French that is directed specifically at students of a similar proficiency level in the language. In this situation, teachers can provide directly for language learning and can make modifications in teaching that will benefit the language learner. Students are expected to achieve similar outcomes, however, the teaching process and classroom activities may be adjusted to meet the needs of the specific group of students.

For example, a school may have a sufficient number of students at more or less the same level of English language proficiency who find it difficult to be in Science 14 with non-ESL students. Sometimes, a sheltered setting provides such students with opportunities to focus on both language and content learning so that they will be successful in higher levels of the course. A sheltered Social Studies 13 course might enable a group of students to move successfully to Social Studies 10, and then on to Social Studies 20 and Social Studies 30. The sheltered course provides an extra step and more time for language development to occur.

OTHER METHODS OF ORGANIZING FOR INSTRUCTION

Cross-curricular units, theme- or project-based instruction, adjunct language instruction and sheltered content instruction are the most commonly used strategies to integrate language and content instruction. There are a number of factors influencing choices, including: the number of ESL students in the school, the goals of other students and teachers in the school, time for teacher collaboration, the goals of ESL students, the skills and abilities of the teachers, and the school timetable.

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Often, ESL teachers make accommodations to offer effective programs that meet the needs of students, teachers and schools. Teachers might use a combination of two or more methods for integrating language and content, depending on the content to be taught, the proficiency level of students and existing conditions in the school environment.

Multilevel Classrooms

Some schools have relatively small ESL populations. They find it useful to have all the ESL students in one class for at least part, or, in the case of Level 1 and 2, all of the school day.

The following selection describes one teacher's multilevel classroom.

One Teacher's Reflection on Multilevel ESL Classes

Multilevel classes can be fun and promote language learning. Teaching a class of 25 ESL students with many different proficiency levels is always a challenge. I teach these students for one hour twice a day. For the remainder of the day, students are integrated into regular classes, such as mathematics, physical education, science or computer studies.

I am the link between ESL students and other teachers. My role ranges from discussing timetable changes to encouraging students to relax and share experiences with their new friends, as well as discussing problems they may be having.

The multilevel classroom offers students unique opportunities as they make the transition between language levels. For example, a Level 4 student who is reading a novel at that level, writing a response journal, writing a plot outline or discussing a character, may also present a book review to the class and answer questions from Level 2 and Level 3 students.

Assign activities according to students' abilities, to pairs or groups that are homogeneous or heterogeneous. At times, I invite stronger students to help weaker students. Or, have beginning students complete less-demanding activities.

For example, a unit on Anne Frank could focus on writing a play based on her story. Advanced students could do background research on Anne Frank and the Holocaust. They could also write character analysis essays. Beginning students could list adjectives that describe the character they are going to play in the final production. They might also list props, draw background scenes and keep diary entries. Once all the background work is complete, the students learn their parts and act the script. Arrange for a sympathetic audience to see the final production, or videotape it. As a final treat, students may watch a movie of the Anne Frank story.

Most students can work on the same or similar activities based on varying degrees of support. The same writing assignment can be given to beginning, intermediate and advanced students. From the advanced group, I expect a well-written essay including proper planning and drafting. From the beginning group, I expect simple sentences based on learned vocabulary with a pattern provided. These students require a great deal of support to complete the task. The theme or topic is usually the same for both groups.

This approach to multilevel classes works for a number of reasons.

- *The class is manageable. I write three or four different exercises on the board and list names underneath to organize students. Then, I rotate from group to group as needed.*
- *Evaluation isn't difficult. I look at students' work based on the premise that they should be performing at an individual best. I learn within the first month of school what to expect from individuals. Keeping a student's ability in mind, I ask what percentage of that student's ability shows in a particular piece of work. Several times throughout the semester, I measure students' achievement against curriculum-level expectations. I keep in mind that students can be in different levels in reading and writing.*
- *Students help each other. The incidental learning in the multilevel classroom is wonderful.*
- *The higher level students never complain that they lack challenge since the expectation for their performance is the true challenge. Expect one student to use several references, while another student may write a personal narrative.*
- *The multilevel classroom has a terrific atmosphere.*

I have let go of the old belief that all students progress as a group. Language learning is a continuum and language instruction in the multilevel classroom reflects the continuing complexity with which we approach language assignments.

ESL Resource Teachers

Senior high schools with low ESL populations may use ESL teachers in an advisory or resource teacher role. These teachers might work in a classroom with a subject teacher, pull a few students out for special assistance or help subject teachers develop strategies for enhancing the learning of ESL students.

The following article provides reflections from an ESL resource teacher.

ESL Resource Teachers

Being an ESL resource teacher in senior high school is a wonderful teaching experience. Many schools do not have the ESL population to justify a separate program, yet have students in need of an ESL resource teacher. It becomes the responsibility of the resource teacher to encourage students to seek help as they need it and to work closely with other teachers to implement an ESL resource service. Here are some suggestions to help resource teachers develop support for ESL students.

Start out on the right foot.

To start out on the right foot, the program needs a good image. Even the program name can influence perceptions. ESL may have negative connotations for students who perceive it as an easy class unrelated to other programs in the school.

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Comparing ESL students to "normal" students, or referring to the acquisition of language as "low level" might connote intellectual ability, not language level. A presentation to staff about the negative effects of such terminology helps teachers and administrators understand the need for accurate and non-threatening ESL terms.

A fresh program name can help challenge those perceptions. The new name or acronym should be used in all print materials, such as newsletters and program booklets, as well as in all discussions with teachers, parents and students. These simple measures can go a long way toward creating a positive attitude with students and teachers alike.

Use ESL resources to enhance student learning.

The ESL program is for the education of students whose first language is not English. ESL resource teachers are there to enhance students' learning, and share responsibility for this with subject-area teachers. The ESL program may include preteaching, review or reteaching, supplementary teaching of concepts and subject matter from the regular classroom.

The resource teacher's focus is usually on English and social studies, although they may provide help in all grade and course levels, and for many subjects. Students should be expected to participate in regular classroom learning and group activities, which are invaluable for socialization, cultural understanding, and becoming part of the class community.

Use policy, diplomacy and patience to establish program parameters.

ESL resource teachers work with a variety of students at different language levels and with teachers from many disciplines. A program that has the right attitude about itself and its clientele can help make teaching and learning rewarding.

Self-contained ESL Programs

Sometimes, senior high schools have extremely large populations of ESL students. In such cases, ESL instruction can be offered in a "school within a school"—as self-contained ESL programs.

Although ESL students usually need to progress rapidly in both English language and content learning, some teachers find advantages to focusing on long-range learning before moving into the subject areas. The following account describes how a self-contained ESL program can be organized.

A Self-contained ESL Program

A large, self-contained program prepares ESL students for courses across the curriculum. The program's aim is to prepare students to enter mainstream classes as quickly as possible. A self-contained program can accommodate student intake at any time of the year, at all levels of English proficiency as well as varying academic abilities.

Sample Program Profile

Level 1 and Level 2 ESL students:

- *remain with the ESL teacher all day*
- *study survival skills as well as beginning academic language instruction*
- *work in language labs, classrooms, field trips and role-play situations*
- *use all the communication strands (reading, writing, listening, speaking).*

When students can speak English reasonably well, ask and answer questions, and write a reasonable paragraph with four or fewer errors, they move to Level 3.

Level 3 ESL students:

- *are introduced to academic subjects (mathematics, science and social studies)*
- *concentrate on preparation for mainstream classes*
- *focus on all communication strands as well as Canadian culture, citizenship and recreation*
- *audit a regular class if they have the English skills to cope.*

In Level 3, a counsellor assesses students' previous education. Students' school documents are reviewed and credits for equivalent courses are approved.

Level 4 ESL students:

- *study in mainstream classes for half the day*
- *concentrate on English language and composition*
- *read and discuss all genres*
- *are involved in essay writing and public speaking*
- *usually enter English Language Arts 10-2.*

Literature Units (80 minutes)

- *biographies (2 weeks)*
- *traditional stories (4 weeks)*
- *short stories (4 weeks)*
- *novel (3 weeks)*
- *poetry (3 weeks)*
- *plays (2 weeks)*

Skills Mini-units (80 minutes)

- *punctuation and capitalization*
- *library orientation*
- *irregular verbs*
- *subject–verb agreement*
- *conversation and communication*
- *reading words in context*
- *sentences and paragraphs*
- *presentations*
- *pronunciation*

- *Level 4 is offered in two 80-minute blocks for one semester. ESL students take regular courses in the remaining two blocks.*

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Integrating ESL Students in the Regular Classroom

In schools with relatively small ESL student populations, or when ESL students have reached a level of language proficiency to be integrated into regular high school courses, teachers may face particular challenges.

One English teacher describes a challenge related to the integration of ESL students into an English 30 class.

Integrating ESL Students in the English Classroom

I had an English 30 class that included ESL students who were not passing English 30 and were not picking up the nuances of the English language. These students tended to remain in their own cluster and viewed the English 30 course primarily as an experience to help them succeed on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). An accumulation of knowledge of definitions and structures was their approach to literature.

Upon reflection, I came to the conclusion that these ESL students were not approaching the English language arts course in the manner in which they would be tested—through personal response to the text. To change this, I deliberately matched ESL students with native English-speaking (Level 1) students.

Both groups followed a structured format with carefully chosen questions for journal response entries to poems and stories I had chosen.

Journal Response 1
After the initial reading of a poem or story, students responded independently in writing in their journals. They then shared their responses with other members of their group. Students discussed the following questions.

- *What is your first response or reaction to this story/poem?*
- *What image was called to mind? Describe it briefly.*
- *What memory does this text call to mind—people, places, events, sights, smells, feelings or attitudes?*
- *What ideas or thoughts were suggested by the text?*

Journal Response 2
After a second reading, students responded in writing in their journals to the following questions.

- *What are the more difficult words in the text? List them.*
- *What are the most important words or phrases in the text? List them.*
- *Summarize the selections as best you can.*

After the second stage of the journal responses was completed, the ESL and Level 1 students met. They asked questions about the text and vocabulary, stated their opinions and negotiated meaning.

Journal Response 3
After working in the response groups and rereading the poem or story, students answered the following questions independently in their journals.

Now that you have had an opportunity to discuss the literary selection with other class members and to reread the selection, respond to the following questions in your journal.

- *How did your understanding of the text or your feelings about the text change as you and other group members talked?*
- *How did you feel about contributing to the group discussion on this literary selection? How did group members respond to your insights?*
- *Does this text remind you of any other poems or stories you have read? If so, explain their similarities.*

The collaboration of ESL and Level 1 students led to a realization among the ESL students that there was much more to literature (and the English 30 class) than an accumulation of knowledge of definitions and structures. They began expressing their own views and thoughts, and no longer remained in their own clusters, but instead, interacted with the Level 1 students.

I found that group discussion helped ESL students clarify their ideas about the poems they read. It also enabled them to reflect on text from a personal point of view. Level 1 students gained respect for ESL students as individuals and as learners.

STRATEGIES FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING

ESL students require structured support to help them cope with the language demands of learning in a school context.

In a literature-based classroom, where textual materials of all kinds are used to promote language learning, reading provides the foundation for enriched language and concept development for all students.

Reading and writing are inextricable processes, especially for ESL students who feel a need to communicate in the new language no matter what the grade level. Learning to read and write simultaneously helps students learn about our writing system and how we organize our ideas for writing.

Teaching students the conventions of language, including grammar and spelling, can occur effectively during a variety of written and oral assignments.

Literature

Literature is an integral part of language learning and students benefit from frequent opportunities to experience and respond to a wide variety of texts. Through reading, students have opportunities to extend their knowledge and use of language, experience enjoyment and personal satisfaction, and deepen their understanding of the cultural diversity and common values of Canada.

Reading provides students with a means of accessing the ideas, perspectives and experiences of others, and responding in a personal and critical way.

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Reading and writing are powerful and interrelated ways of communicating and learning. Through writing and response to literature, students can learn to clarify thought, emotion and experience; share with others and become sensitive to different purposes and audiences.

It is important to remember that reading serves various purposes in different cultures and that ESL students bring different cultural and social perspectives to their reading of English. These differences affect the meaning they bring to and receive from the text.

ESL students are constantly expected to process new information regarding the English language and culture and make associations with knowledge others assume they have. However, due to cultural differences, they may not have this knowledge. Comprehension breakdown may be mistakenly attributed to deficient language processing skills or poor vocabulary, when in fact, it may be students' inability to relate information from the text to their existing background knowledge.

The following teaching ideas related to literature have been contributed by teachers.

Self-directed Reading

To encourage regular at-home reading, I developed a self-directed reading program in which ESL students of all levels take part.

Frequent reading:

- *reinforces core vocabulary*
- *helps students develop:*
  - *a sense of story*
  - *familiarity with the themes and conventions of English literature*
  - *orientation to the cultural norms, idioms and interests of Canadian teens.*

Selecting Books

I offer students a variety of choices, including simplified, annotated ESL readers; juvenile literature; high interest-low vocabulary teen novels and authentic novels. The reading level of the texts is at a level students can manage independently and without translation. I teach students to select books using the "five-finger rule." They open the book to a page at random and read, counting the number of words they don't know. If there are more than five, the book is too difficult and I encourage them to choose something simpler.

Reading Process

I ask students to read on their own time at least three times a week for half an hour. After each session, they are to record their progress in a reading log.

READING LOG

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Page Numbers: _____

Content Summary (brief explanation of what happened)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Personal Response (your own ideas about the characters and events)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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Developing Personal Response

Some of my students come from educational backgrounds in which literature has been studied critically, so the notion of personal response is quite new to them.

I introduce personal response by showing examples of other students' responses, by modelling my own thinking as I read aloud, and by providing students with a series of prompts to get started. The prompts give students ample choice in making appropriate personal responses and provide a context for practising the vocabulary and language structures related to literature. Examples of prompts are provided below.

FEELINGS (emotions)

I like _____ because _____

I don't like _____ because _____

I felt (angry, frightened nervous, pleased, relieved, sorry ...) when _____

REFLECTIONS (opinions, thoughts)

I don't understand why _____

Now I understand _____

The most interesting character is _____ because _____

The best part of the story is where _____

It is not fair when _____

I agree with _____ when he/she says _____ because _____

I think _____ is realistic because _____

PREDICTIONS (using clues)

I think _____ will happen next because _____

My guess is that _____ will _____

_____ is the kind of person who will probably _____

Personal Connections (seeing similarities in your own or others' experiences)

This reminds me of _____

I know someone like _____

When this happens to me, I feel _____

I can relate to _____ because _____

A similar thing happened to _____ when _____

In my (culture, family, neighbourhood) we would _____ in this situation

I learned that _____

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IMAGINATION (taking ideas further)

If I were _____ I would _____

I wish I could _____

I hope that _____

I wonder about _____

Now I really want to find out more about _____

Expectations

As students grow in their language proficiency, I expect less content summary and more insight and reflection in their personal responses. I do not evaluate grammar and language usage, but I do offer suggestions if linguistic errors are interfering with the communication of ideas. I write replies to students including my own reflections and queries. Some class time is used to read in groups, discuss books or write peer responses to each other's reading logs.

Encouraging ESL Students to Read

Here is another way to encourage ESL students to read, without making reading a chore!

Shortly after the start of the school year, I inform all ESL students that by the end of the school year they are responsible for reading five books outside of class and completing a personal reading log for each book.

In addition to reading logs, students prepare and present an oral book review (5 to 10 minutes in length) for each book. Before their presentations, students complete and review their reading log for that particular book. A sample reading log format follows.

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PERSONAL READING LOG

Name: _____ Period: _____ Class: _____

Title: _____ Fiction: Non-fiction: _____

Author: _____ Genre: _____

Target Date for Completion: _____ Start Date: _____ = _____ Days to Read

Total pages to read _____

Total pages ÷ days to read = _____ pages to read each day.

Date	Reading Time	From Page	To Page	Total	Best Event of this Section

Actual Completion Date: _____ Total Reading Time: _____ hrs. _____ mins.

Special questions or observations I have about this book are:

-
-
-

Here is a short re-telling of the part of the story that impressed me the most:

I liked this (circle one): Not At All! OK A Lot Totally!

In my opinion, this book deserves a: 1 2 3 4 5 Star Rating, because ...

Class Presentations

My students know their presentation dates a month in advance. This allows me to ensure their reading logs have been completed.

Level 2 ESL students do a reading report while Level 3 and Level 4 students do a book talk/review. I tell students what I will be looking for during their presentations. The points listed in the book talk evaluation below are helpful to communicate what will be evaluated during students' oral presentations.

I encourage students to use props, music or visuals to enhance their presentations.

Book Talk Evaluation

When preparing and presenting your oral book talk/review, think about:

- interaction (sense of audience)
  engage or involve the audience with eye contact, stance (posture) and gestures
- voice skills
  read with expression conveyed through varied tone of voice, volume and pace—project voice effectively; pronounce correctly and confidently
- knowledge of book chosen
  display an interest in the novel chosen; be able to answer questions about the novel in a clear and concise manner
- overall quality of the presentation
  includes effort, organization and resources or materials used.

During each presentation, I keep the student's reading report and book talk evaluation on hand for evaluation purposes. I comment on whether or not the student is meeting the criteria outlined in the book talk evaluation. After each presentation, the audience asks questions. Part of the presentation mark is based on the presenter's ability to answer the questions. When all the presentations are complete, I meet with students individually to discuss their presentation marks.

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Getting Into the Spirit of a Short Story

Each ESL student comes to the classroom with a unique personality and a diverse background. Many are accomplished language learners who know more than one language. They have a wealth of knowledge that they are quite willing to share.

One assignment that motivates students in Level 4 is to ask them to write short stories. Focus on specific outcomes from the program of studies, such as:

- *understanding of story structure*
- *recognizing point of view*
- *using literary techniques in their own writing*
- *using effective writing strategies to fill in gaps in a short story.*

To help students write well, I provide a climax for a story and they construct the rest so that the climax fits. One example of a climax I have provided is from Black Water: The Anthology of Fantastic Literature *by Alberto Manguel (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1983, p. 7).*

> *"How EERIE!" said the girl, advancing cautiously. "—And what a heavy door!" She touched it as she spoke and it suddenly swung with a click.*
>
> *"Good Lord!" said the man, "I don't believe there's a handle inside. Why, you've locked us both in!"*
>
> *"Not both of us. Only one of us," said the girl, and before his eyes she passed straight through the door, and vanished.*

I have used this assignment with students at various levels. By the end of a short story unit, students have studied the various parts of a short story and have had practice with character development and theme. They have discussed irony, foreshadowing and surprise endings, and have been introduced to literary techniques, such as simile, metaphor, onomatopoeia, personification, hyperbole and alliteration.

Having the climax of the story provided gives students a framework and focus for writing. All they have to do is fill in the missing pieces. To generate ideas, I ask questions, such as: Where might the story take place? Who is the man? Who is the girl? What are their backgrounds? How did they meet? Why are they in the room together? What happens next?

Students enjoy sharing their stories. They look at the development of character and setting, discuss the conflict and decide who the main characters are. They discuss the way the story resolved. Students enjoy hearing what their classmates have done with the same story climax. They make suggestions on how each story could be improved.

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Speaking Journal

As a break from written journals, and as a way to practise speaking, I ask students to do a spoken journal. They pair up and spend 5 to 10 minutes telling each other what they did the previous evening. I encourage students to choose their own topics. For variation, I have listeners make notes and report back to the larger group. It is fun and a nice change of pace.

Hear Your Mistakes

Reading essays aloud can help writers hear their mistakes. Many students, who are at a level where they can communicate, recognize grammatical errors. By reading their work aloud, they are able to identify writing problems. Sometimes I read students' essays into a tape recorder if we are not going to have time during the actual class. An advantage to taped reading is that the students can repeat the reading several times. I have not had as much success with students reading each others' work aloud. I believe that this may be due to interference from accents. Reading aloud is not as exact as a good grammar marking, but it does give students direction.

Homework Ideas

This homework assignment doesn't add to your marking pile! Have the class members exchange telephone numbers. Students must call one or two people in the class and spend 5 to 10 minutes talking on the telephone. The next day, ask the people receiving the telephone calls to report on their conversation. Repeat this homework assignment throughout the beginning of the semester. This is a simple way to ensure students spend a few minutes speaking English after school. You may want to assign telephone partners if you think students will use their first language instead of English. If some students are too shy to call, make sure someone in the class calls them. It doesn't take long before everyone is in on the action.

Grammar and Spelling

The English as a Second Language Senior High School Program of Studies provides a list of suggested grammatical concepts and structures related to each group of specific outcomes. The grammatical concepts apply to all five levels, as student grammatical knowledge and competence develops gradually through the five levels of the program.

By learning and applying grammatical concepts and structures, students are better able to demonstrate the outcomes of the program. When learning a new language, students need both formal instruction in aspects of language (grammar and other language features), and informal opportunities to use written and spoken language in meaningful situations. Instruction draws learners' attention to routines and patterns in language. Formal instruction and structured opportunities to practise help students to learn the language more quickly and reach higher levels of proficiency.

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Teachers may take several approaches to incorporating the teaching of formal aspects of English language and skills into their teaching.

When planning a teaching unit and selecting specific outcomes to focus on, include related grammatical concepts and structures.

For each thematic unit, choose aspects of English grammar that will be part of that unit.

- Present grammatical concepts and structures in meaningful contexts. Illustrate the patterns in English. Give students opportunities to practise. Assess their learning and provide further opportunities to practise.
- Keep track of student progress as part of regular assessment.

Choose grammatical concepts and structure that help students understand, speak and write about the topic.

For example, students:

- can develop an understanding of and practise using the past tense, in a thematic unit on Canada's Aboriginal people
- learn how to form questions, and use direct and indirect quotations when interviewing people and recording information
- can examine complex sentences from a text to discuss and understand the formation of complex sentences.

As students work on written and oral assignments, some grammatical errors occur regularly. Error patterns depend on students' first language backgrounds and their stage of language learning. Teach the grammatical concepts and structures that present problems for students.

How and when to correct students' written errors depends on the stage of language development they have reached and the type of writing they are doing.

Initially, all students need to get their intended message down on paper without being overly concerned about mechanics. When the intended meaning is obscured by garbled grammar and incomprehensible spelling, teacher–student conferencing during several rewritings is necessary to help students communicate more clearly.

With ESL students, it is important to limit the focus of error correction to one or two points at each stage in the revision process. Too much correction is overwhelming and students will not retain explanations. Once the organization and the intent of the writing is clear, attention can be given to grammar, especially verb tenses, which take a long time to master. Selecting the most appropriate vocabulary may be the next priority, followed by refining the use of articles and prepositions. Spelling errors can be left until the final stages.

Most of students' explicit learning about grammar and spelling arises from writing-conferencing time. This is also the best time to point out the positive aspects of each student's work.

Spelling Strategies

Many ESL students are concerned about spelling everything correctly right from the start. As with English-speaking students, there should be a gradual movement away from invented spellings toward conventional spellings over a period. ESL students have not had prolonged exposure to English print like their English-speaking classmates, so they often feel pressured to catch up with classmates who have already experienced the early developmental stages of spelling.

Asking a beginning ESL student to "sound out" as a strategy to find the spelling of a word is often frustrating, because a sound in the student's first language may not have a corresponding sound in English. This renders it impossible for the student to recognize the sound and find the sound–symbol correspondence. It takes time for students to learn to hear the difference and begin to use sounding out as a spelling strategy.

Nonetheless, ESL students can use invented or temporary spelling approximations quite successfully with initial support from teachers and peers. Picture-word dictionaries, word banks, labelled classroom objects, rhymes, songs and chants on wall charts, and plenty of reading, help ESL students develop awareness of how the spelling system works and provide them with a jump start to spelling and writing.

Students may be encouraged to draw a straight line or a wiggly line in place of whole words or parts of words they cannot spell. They should be encouraged to write at least one letter for a sound they can hear. They may also want to write the word in their first language or use rebus pictures.

Conventional spellings should be provided during editing time. Once oral language fluency and comprehension develop, and ESL students become more confident with spelling, they may want explicit strategies to help them catch up with their peers.

Teach them to:

- look for patterns—word families; e.g., look, book, took; common combinations; e.g., -ough, -ight; structural patterns; e.g., doubling consonants before adding such endings as -ed, -ing
- use resources—dictionaries; thesauri; room resources, such as charts, theme words, stories in their journals, personal word lists
- consider context—for example, with homonyms; e.g, they're, their, there.

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For spelling quizzes, words can be pulled from:

- students' daily writing
- content words being used in all subject areas
- function and signal words; e.g., unfortunately, because, although, however
- students' personal lists of spelling words, including words that are especially difficult for them to hear
- teacher-written passages that include examples of specific spelling patterns or rules.

Independent learning centres, appropriate software and diagnostic assessment can help pinpoint areas of difficulty, and provide instruction and practise.

Pronunciation

ESL students may be fluent speakers, but sometimes communication breaks down because students have problems mastering the English sound system.

The amount of difficulty or phonetic interference depends to a large extent on the pronunciation patterns of students' first languages. For example, a student who speaks a first language that has few final consonants tends to drop word-final consonants in English.

POSSIBLE PHONETIC INTERFERENCES OF FIRST LANGUAGES IN LEARNING ENGLISH

Language	First Language Sound	English Example	Explanation
Vietnamese	k/kl s/sh -/f -/th	cass/class sue/shoe kni/knife ma/math	– these initial consonant clusters do not occur in Vietnamese – limited number of final consonants in Vietnamese
Mandarin	s/th f/th	sum/thumb baf/bath	– [th] does not exist in Mandarin
Korean	b/v	biolin/violin	– no labiodental sounds [f/v] in Korean
Japanese	r/l	fry/fly	– [l] does not exist in Japanese
Arabic	b/p	baber/paper	– voiceless stops are voiced in Arabic before vowels
Spanish	b/v	balentine/valentine	– no labiodental [v] in Spanish
Cree	s/sh	sip/ship	– [sh] does not occur in Cree
Serbo-Croatian	t/th	tink/think	– [th] does not occur in Serbo-Croatian
Polish	t/d	bat/bad	– consonants are devoiced in word-final position

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Ways to Practise Pronunciation

Flawed pronunciation may cause misunderstanding but determining when, how and if pronunciation is to be corrected is a sensitive issue. After listening carefully to ESL students, determine which sounds require extra practice. Suggestions for practising pronunciation follow.

- Work one-on-one with ESL students during conferencing to isolate sounds that are causing difficulty. Then have students practise those sounds within the context of reading words, phrases and sentences in both familiar and new texts.

- Readers' theatre is an excellent way for ESL students to practise pronunciation, because individual students are not singled out. Choral reading allows for repetition and consistent exposure to English stress and intonation patterns that are crucial in conveying an accurate, natural-sounding message. Reading along with audiotaped books is another private, unthreatening way to practise at home or at school.

- Structured, cooperative learning situations allow ESL students to converse with their English-speaking peers. Through this kind of interaction, ESL students note when their pronunciation causes misunderstanding. They learn to respond to their peers' feedback cues and acquire the self-monitoring skills necessary to work out their specific pronunciation problems.

Many ESL students are unnecessarily referred to speech–language pathologists because of problems directly attributable to the first-language interference. It is important for teachers to be aware that it takes students time to learn to hear new sounds before they can pronounce them properly and use them in conversation and spelling.

To determine whether or not a student requires speech-language intervention, listen to the student speaking in his or her first language with a peer, ask the student's parents or request an assessment in the student's first language, if possible.

PLANNING FOR THE INTEGRATION OF TECHNOLOGY

The growth of technology has great potential to enhance ESL instruction. Technology enhanced learning dovetails with current trends and practices in language teaching.

The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Program of Studies for Kindergarten to Grade 12 provides a broad perspective on the nature of technology, how to use and apply a variety of technologies, and the impact of technology on self and society. Although the ICT curriculum is intended to be infused within core courses and programs, it can provide guidance to ESL teachers on technology outcomes that enhance second language learning.

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Using computers for a variety of purposes engages students in gathering, interpreting and communicating information, in problem solving and decision making, and in experimenting with creative uses of language. ESL pedagogical practices that benefit from computer technology include:

- writing composition
- individualized learning
- content-based language instruction
- interaction and collaborative learning
- task-based learning and assessment.

Teaching Ideas Related to Technology

The following ideas have been provided by teachers.

Writing Composition

Word processing is a logical way to introduce students to the complex nature of the recursive steps involved in writing.

Computer technology provides tools for:

- *brainstorming*
- *prewriting*
- *outlining.*

Word processing with its ability to revise easily and enhance presentation helps ESL writers focus on:

- *generating and clarifying ideas*
- *managing ideas and information*
- *structuring texts in a variety of ways*
- *revising, editing and improving style*
- *targeting presentation for particular needs and audiences.*

Computer tools, such as spell checkers, grammar checkers and thesauruses, provide students with instant access to knowledge about style, grammar and mechanics.

Some programs include bilingual dictionaries and grammar checkers specifically designed to address the most frequent errors made by second language learners.

Some word processors have speech capability, pronouncing words as they appear on screen. Although teachers will need to help students understand the uses and limitations of such features, more careful editing and increased knowledge of conventions results from their use.

Word processing supports significant gains in the development of effective writing strategies, particularly when combined with other technological tools, such as networking and desktop publishing. An important part of the writing process is feedback from readers

during the prewriting and revision phases to generate, order and shape ideas. On-line chat groups within the school allow students to formulate ideas and type at their own pace. Group members have a chance to review the comments and the text file remains a permanent record.

Desktop publishing programs allow students to produce written work in a variety of forms and genres for real audiences in a professional-looking final form. Desktop publishing software easily allows students to produce school or class newsletters, cookbooks, family histories, photo essays, postcards.

Individualized Learning

Computer technology is well-suited to variations in learning styles, proficiencies and preferences. Multimedia software allows for comprehensive, individualized instruction in all the language strands simultaneously—listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Many programs include testing and record-keeping capabilities to track student progress.

Software for language learning can provide listening input accompanied by a search apparatus so that students can:

- *click on a word or phrase to hear it repeated*
- *look up words in mono- or bilingual dictionaries*
- *analyze grammar*
- *see related picture or video clips*
- *read related texts.*

Speech recognition software allows students to record answers to questions and judge the accuracy of responses against the computer's aural or visual model.

Pronunciation packages offer graphic representation of intonation and stress patterns, mouth movements and extensive opportunities for practice and feedback.

While it is possible to have students access such materials independently, teachers may offer assistance by suggesting strategies for their use, interpreting computer-scored assessments or providing supplemental language practice.

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Content-based Language Instruction

A variety of software supports the blending of content and language instruction, and is applicable for multiple proficiency and various grade levels. Most combine video sequences, animation, graphics, sound effects and text, and offer remedial support to students lacking background knowledge.

Research skills are applicable to all subject areas, and the ability to choose and limit research projects, take notes, and organize and synthesize information from various sources is aided by access to electronic resources.

Interaction and Collaboration

A major premise of ESL pedagogy is that authentic language for real purposes is the best mode for developing oral and written language skills. Authentic communication involves using language to learn collaboratively—to engage in any activity where success depends on group cooperation and the use of language. One of the most useful applications of technology is to set up situations for authentic communication to occur.

Simulations and Internet exchanges are two areas of computer technology that encourage student interaction. Simulations are available in software packages or on the Internet. Students take part in such activities as creating or maintaining a city or ecological system, creating a business enterprise, travelling to famous destinations or exploring in space. They participate in complex adventure games or solve logical puzzles. They learn the typical vocabulary and structures of the content being manipulated. They play with or against other individuals or teams, report on their experiences or compare notes with others. Simulations can be played by e-mail or over the Internet.

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Planning for Teaching and Learning

CHAPTER FOUR

- Linking Language and Content
- Teaching Units
- Planning Models
- Themes
- Topics
- Language Learning Tasks, Activities and Exercises
- Sample Units

Focus

This chapter provides examples of individual ESL units.

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PLANNING FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

Once teachers have outlined their programs for the year, they need to consider ways to plan for instruction. This chapter provides:

- models for unit planning
- units developed by ESL teachers
- additional ideas for units and lessons.

LINKING LANGUAGE AND CONTENT

The English as a Second Language Senior High School Program of Studies states that in order to benefit fully from schooling, ESL students should have:

- enriched and supportive instructional programs that appropriately develop English language proficiency
- access to the full range of curriculum and services available to all students in Alberta schools.

A strong, supportive link between language and content—learning language, and using language to learn—is assumed.

- The general and specific outcomes of the ESL program are learned and applied through subject-area content.
- Meaningful language use reflects the way language is used in the school and community.
- The language learning focus is on meaning and content, not on language forms.

The content-based approach used by many teachers in ESL classes involves the concurrent teaching of academic subject matter and second language skills.

The sequencing and selection of specific language outcomes are often determined by the requirements of academic content. At times, the content is chosen because it offers opportunities to focus on specific language learning areas.

Examples follow.

- Students at Level 2 might be learning about some aspects of Canadian history in their ESL class. Reading and writing about historical events requires use of past tenses. Students will also meet ESL learner outcomes by describing situations or events in short oral or written presentations.
- Students at Level 3 might be studying the process of photosynthesis and conducting experiments that require use of passive voice in reports. They will also meet ESL learner outcomes by describing steps in processes and stages in the cycles related to photosynthesis.

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Planning for ESL instruction is more complex than planning for subject-area instruction because of the need to combine language learning with subject-area content. Content is the basis for instruction and ESL outcomes are learned through content. Planning can be further complicated by the ability range of students in the class, whether the class is single or multilevel, sheltered or adjunct, and by timetabling.

When planning for instruction, it is useful to gather data and do some preplanning. The following focus questions can be used to make initial decisions about planning for instruction.

- Are the topics relevant to students' lives and to the requirements for integration into courses in senior high school? What are the crucial topics that students need to know? How does language learning fit into these topics?
- How do the topics relate to similar topics that are taught in the general senior high school program?
- How can units address learners' needs at their current levels of language proficiency, while taking into account topics, processes and strategies that will help students realize their short- and long-term goals?
- What resources are currently available at the levels of students? How can optimum use of current resources be made?
- How can teachers avoid duplicating what is offered at other levels (if the school has more than one level and more than one teacher)?
- How can teachers prepare students for other levels?

As ESL students need to develop academic conceptual knowledge and language skills simultaneously, the most useful framework for instructional planning consciously integrates language and content instruction.

Often, teachers like to begin with a formal structure for planning. Later, they adapt it to suit personal style and the needs of students and the school.

TEACHING UNITS

Planning teaching units based on a broad theme, a set of topics and a series of related tasks helps conceptualize a content-based approach to language instruction.

Units can be adapted to fit a variety of structures and a range of proficiency levels. With some modifications, learning resources and materials are readily available. Units may be short in duration, such as a few class periods or extend into several weeks of study.

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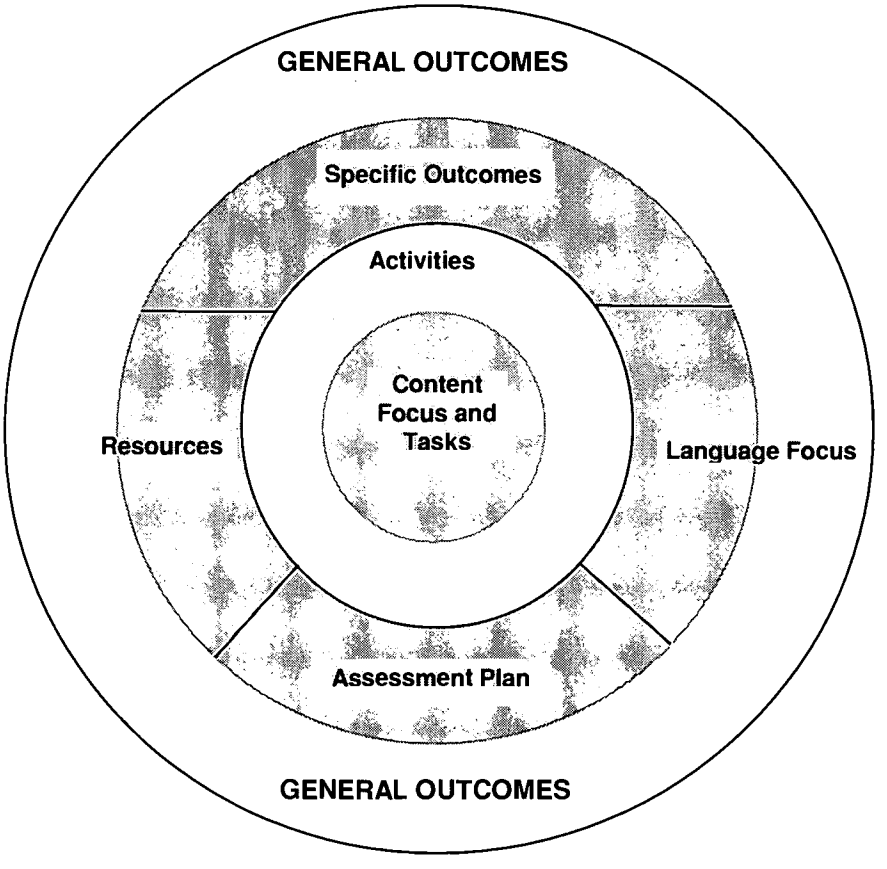
Units can be developed in a variety of ways:

- in one content area (social studies, science, English language arts)
- at one proficiency level
- in one content area for several proficiency levels (multilevel class)
- with multidisciplinary content for one proficiency level or multiple proficiency levels; e.g., a unit on Clothing in Society can focus on the social function of clothing, relationship to geographical factors, clothing and culture; styles across the years, design of functional clothing, marketing of clothing
- building around a course, such as Science 10, to provide additional background knowledge and support
- using a particular resource for language development, such as a science, social studies or ESL text.

PLANNING MODELS

Planning models and charts can be helpful graphic organizers to collect thoughts and perspectives on planning a unit.



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Unit Planning Models

Module	Text/Source	Activities	Language Focus			
List specific topics within the theme	List the oral or written texts that will be used; e.g., reading, videotape, audiotape		Language structures	Exercises for practising specific aspects of language	Strand: Reading Writing Speaking Listening	Specific outcomes from the ESL program of studies

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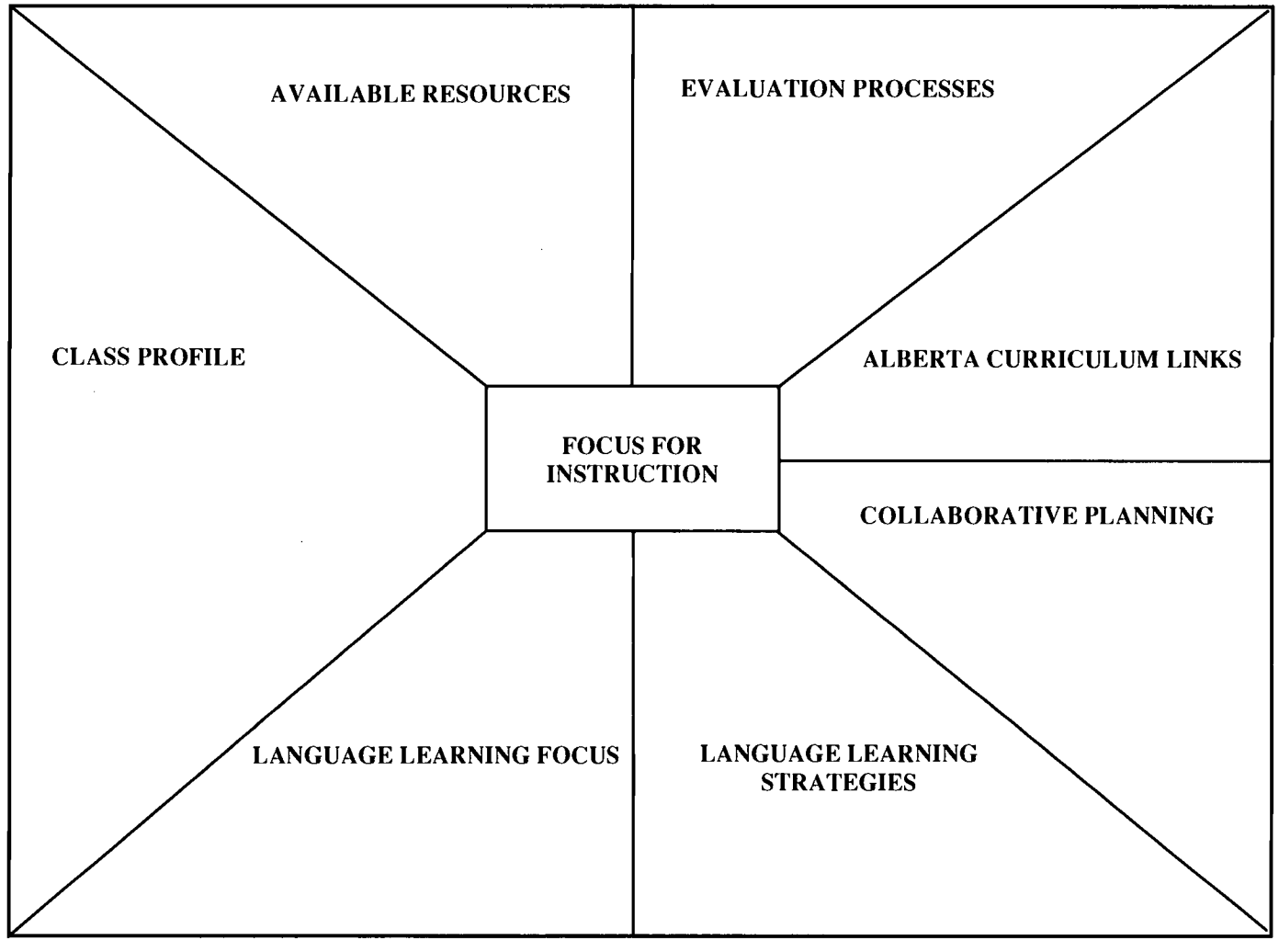
Unit Planning Models

Unit _____ Dates _____ Class _____

	Unit Focus	Resources	Activity	Assessment
Week 1				
Week 2				
Week 3				
Week 4				
Week 5				

Unit Preplanning



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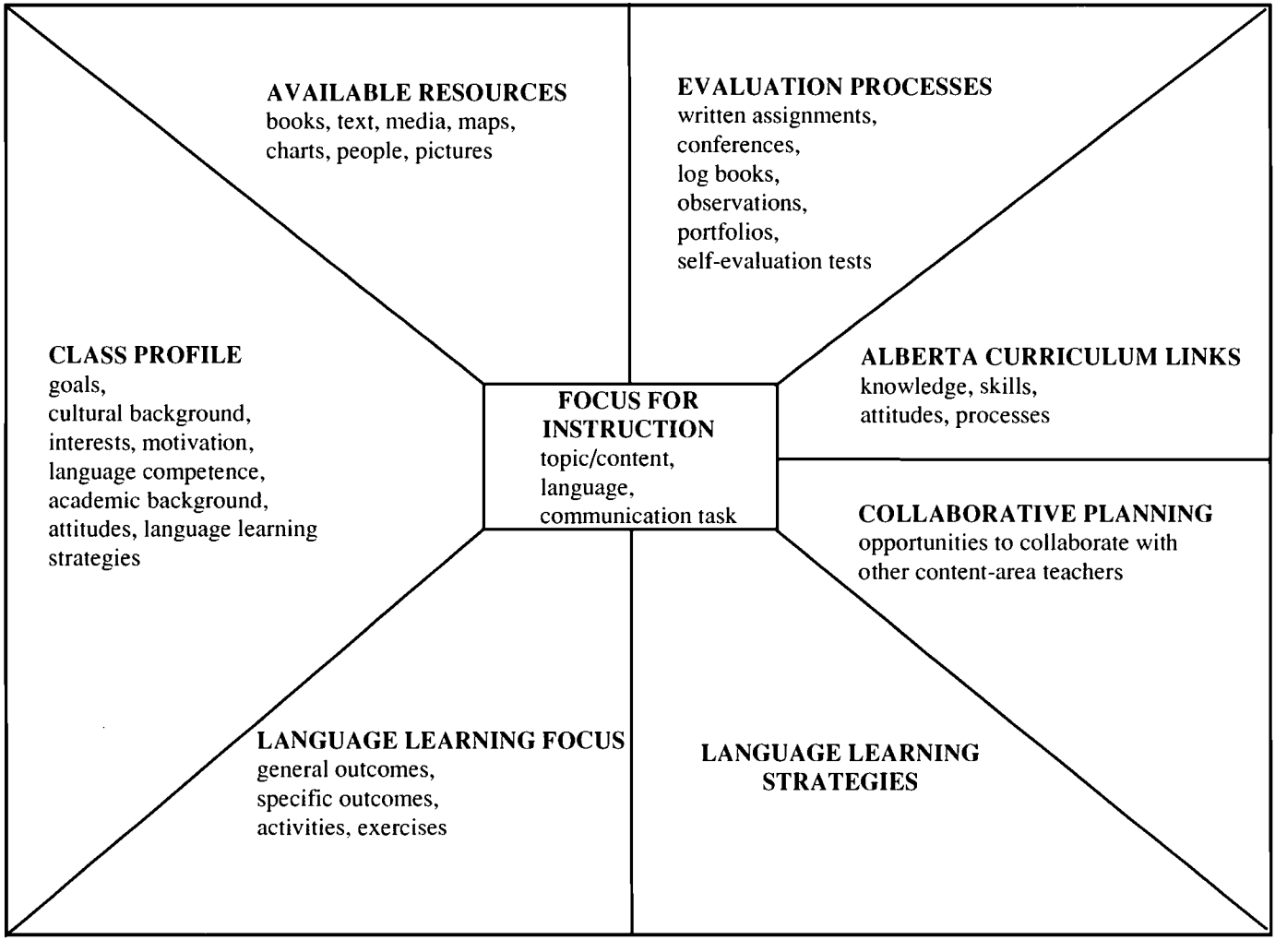
Unit Preplanning



THEMES

Themes are the central ideas that organize major curricular areas into functional units of study. They should be appropriate to students' needs and interests, consider program resources and suggest linkages to core content. Themes may be chosen from broad areas, such as:

- Global and Canadian Studies
- World Literature
- Mathematics, Science and the World
- Career and Technology Studies
- International Fine Arts
- Language Studies
- Orientation.

They may be related to the interests of students or planned around school events, special days or current events.

When themes are cross-curricular, their related topics provide content linkages to other subject areas, such as science, social studies, career and technology studies, mathematics, career and life management, fine arts and English language arts. Even though themes are often chosen to orient students to Canadian content, they should allow students to draw upon personal experience and prior knowledge.

Whatever the choice of thematic unit, it should:

- build on student interests and knowledge
- link to learning the content of other subject areas
- provide opportunities for language development.

TOPICS

Topics within a thematic unit explore specific aspects of the theme. They are organized to provide coherence within the thematic unit and opportunities for students to develop both content knowledge and language proficiency. Topics can provide cross-curricular connections within thematic units. Some cross-curricular thematic units and related topics follow.

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Theme	Topics
Weather	• local weather conditions and weather reports • world climate patterns, prevailing winds, ocean currents • weather maps • satellite technology and weather forecasting • safety during severe weather conditions • causes of typhoons, tornadoes, thunder storms, chinooks, hail
Food and Nutrition	• recipes and demonstrations • processes of food growth, production, storage and marketing • comparison shopping and consumer savvy • advertising • nutrients and the body • food imports and exports • agricultural production of various countries
Water	• physical and chemical properties of water • observations and experiments about density—freezing, boiling • world distribution of water resources • water pollution, oil spills and cleanup • marine plants and animals • hydroelectric power • water cycle
Automobiles	• history of automobile industry • car parts and functions • getting a driver's license • rules of the road
Forests	• vegetation zones • species identification • flora and fauna • deforestation and rainforest destruction • forest products • lumber and paper production

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Theme	Topics
Crime and the Law	• court system—trials, careers in law, criminal and summary convictions • human rights legislation • *Young Offenders Act* • police services • crime stories and mysteries • forensic science—fingerprinting, blood typing, identikits, DNA testing • family violence
Space	• astrology compared to astronomy • solar system—characteristics of planets • human exploration in space • life on a space station • biographies of astronomers, astronauts
The Arctic	• daily life in northern communities • Klondike gold rush • adventure tales • natural resource development
Environmental Issues	• pollution • global warming • ozone depletion • garbage and recycling • endangered species • urban environment • environmental design
Aboriginal People	• native groups—languages and geographical distribution • myths and legends • culture, arts and traditions • contrasts between Aboriginal groups
Immigration	• personal experiences • biographies and autobiographies • demographic patterns and trends • settlement of Alberta • Japanese internment

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Theme	Topics
Health Care	• procedures at doctors offices, clinics, emergency rooms • communicable diseases and vaccinations • bacteria, viruses and microbes • personal safety and injury prevention • cancer risk factors and self-examination • health and active lifestyles
My Community at Work	• payroll deductions, CPP, EI, income tax • profiles of various workers • businesses in the vicinity • entrepreneurial skills • post-secondary education • job-shadowing

LANGUAGE LEARNING TASKS, ACTIVITIES AND EXERCISES

Effective language learning tasks involve learners actively using language in ways that reflect students' language use inside and outside the classroom.

Integrated tasks are meaning-focused work involving learners in comprehending, producing and/or interacting in English.

Tasks are instructional activities and exercises in which students are engaged individually or in groups. They are specific activities for developing vocabulary, language structure, communicative interaction, academic discourse skills and conceptual understanding.

Tasks

Tasks:

- are structured and organized to meet the requirements of learners' schedules
- state what learners will be able to do as a result of taking part in the task; therefore, learner participation can be evaluated
- involve learners in risk taking with language
- require learners to rehearse, rewrite and polish initial efforts.

Tasks arise quite naturally from topics and may include:

- reading and writing in various genres
- viewing videotapes
- listening to audiotapes or speakers
- interpreting maps, tables and graphs

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- completing graphic representations
- holding discussions
- giving demonstrations
- completing problem-solving activities
- conducting library searches
- holding debates
- conducting interviews and surveys
- creating questionnaires
- going on field trips
- creating art projects and posters
- writing reports and booklets.

Tasks can be adapted to meet the learning needs of a range of students within a particular class.

Consider the following when planning appropriate tasks for a thematic unit.

Balance the demands on language learners.

Require learners to use what they already know and can do in English, and stretch their language learning into new areas.

Tasks should:

- involve learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing and interacting in English while their attention is principally focused on completing tasks
- allow learners to rehearse language communication skills they need in the real world
- activate the psychological and psycholinguistic processes of learning
- be multidimensional—involving both language and cognitive skills.

Motivate students to participate and interact.

Learners should be challenged by the tasks and rewarded by successful participation.

Tasks should:

- be based on authentic or naturalistic source material
- involve learners in solving problems; reaching conclusions
- use the community as a resource
- enable learners to use language for authentic purposes.

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Develop social and management skills.

Provide opportunities for learning as students engage in cooperative interaction.

Tasks should:

- involve learners in sharing information
- allow learners to think and talk about language and learning
- allow participation by students at different levels of English language development.

Develop personal strategies for language learning.

Focus on the goals of learners.

Tasks should:

- enable learners to share in the planning and developing of tasks
- give learners choices about what they do and the order in which they do it.

In the following example of tasks related to a thematic unit, the teacher and students chose to focus on government, citizenship and voting procedures because it was election time. The teacher designed tasks to help all students in the multilevel class develop new concepts in social studies, expanded vocabulary and greater confidence in expressing their opinions.

Thematic Unit: Government and Elections—Multilevel Tasks

LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3 AND LEVEL 4
• Use newspaper articles to: identify issues from headlines; create vocabulary lists; identify candidates, political parties, issues and levels of government.	• Identify and discuss the responsibilities of each level of government, party platforms and issues relevant to their community. • Compare and contrast party platforms. • Organize a forum in the classroom. Students who are less confident in oral skills can ask prepared questions, introduce and thank the candidates. More advanced students can prepare speeches, take positions and research issues. • Role-play candidates at a forum. • Students, working in pairs or groups, are responsible for tracking candidates' opinions of one issue as it develops during the campaign.

LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3 AND LEVEL 4
• Use vocabulary to classify, define and describe. Interact with peers or adults to gather opinions on election issues.	
• Create an opinion poll. Visit other classes to conduct the poll. Compile results.	• Read a chapter on government in the social studies resource. Create key visuals from the text and present them to class.
• Present oral and written reports on the results. • Present own opinions orally or in writing.	• Read the newspaper to look for samples of informal writing and differing opinions. • Create a "Student Forum Page," complete with photographs, visuals and personal opinions with explanations.

Activities

Tasks are accomplished through activities that are linked to the purpose of the task. Language develops from, and is determined by, demands of tasks and the activities. Using several activities to learn and practise a common aspect of language gives students increased control and understanding of that particular language focus.

For example, in order to accomplish the task of organizing the celebration of International Women's Day (see page 54), students had to complete the following activities:

- brainstorm and choose activities
- send letters of invitation
- telephone for information
- greet and chat with guests
- create a bulletin board display
- write and perform a skit
- make speeches
- evaluate the event.

Teachers can determine the language focus by predicting what is needed to accomplish specific tasks and activities. Also, as students engage in the activities, language needs will emerge that might not have been predicted.

The selection of activities depends on the English language levels of students in the group. Students should be able to accomplish the activities, but the activities should also require language competence just slightly beyond students' current capabilities.

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Exercises

Exercises emerge from the needs of students as they attempt to complete activities. Exercises provide opportunities for focused practice of specific aspects of English language. Exercises also focus on the language skills students are developing: reading strategies, writing skills, pronunciation, spelling conventions.

As teachers plan programming, they predict the specific language learning needs of students and plan appropriate exercises to meet those needs. Needs may also be identified as students attempt to engage in language tasks and activities. Exercises should be related to various aspects of English language development—vocabulary, language structures, skill development (reading, writing, listening, speaking), discourse structures and conventions of language use.

During a unit on food and nutrition that included interviews, group discussions, speakers and presentations, students used the following language exercises:

- rehearsing telephone conversations
- rehearsing small talk, introductions and thank-you's
- building vocabulary relating to the topic
- practising pronunciation
- learning to role-play
- learning to write various forms of letters
- learning the current forms and tenses of verbs.

Tasks, activities and exercises work together to contribute to students' language learning and concept development.

Tasks	Activities	Exercises
• Involve learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing and interacting in English while their attention is focused on a topic or completing a task, rather than on the form of language.	• Tasks are accomplished through activities.	Exercises emerge from the needs of students as they attempt to complete activities.
• Are multidimensional and involve many skills.	• Activities involve an active and purposeful use of language.	Exercises involve a focus on form, skills and strategies.
• Engage learners in the use of authentic language that crosses the four general outcomes of the ESL program of studies.	• Activities are linked by a common focus, theme or concept.	

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For example, one class chose the task of producing a class book as the culmination of a unit. The following chart illustrates the relationship of tasks, activities and exercises.

Task	Activities	Exercises
• Producing a class book.	• Interview staff and students. • View videotapes. • Write to a guest speaker and ask questions. • Take a field trip. • Write in a variety of forms and genres for the book. • Discuss symbolism of book cover.	• Learn how to take notes from an oral presentation. • Practise listening. • Practise pronunciation. • Practise verb tense. • Build vocabulary. • Read for the main idea. • Form questions. • Express opinions. • Edit writing.

Task Difficulty

There is no simple way to measure the difficulty of language tasks. Teachers need to judge students' needs and gear students' work to the correct level. Whether or not a specific task is difficult for a particular learner depends on the interaction of a number of factors.

Task difficulty relates to:

- **Text factors**—the complexity of the text (oral or written), grammatical factors, discourse factors.
- **Support factors**—the factors available to support learners as they attempt the task.
- **Learner Factors**—previous experience with similar tasks, background knowledge.
- **Task Factors**—the characteristics of the task itself.

The following chart shows a continuum of task difficulty related to the four factors.

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Text Factors

Easy →	Difficult
• Explicit, clearly signaled rhetorical organization	• Implicit organizational structures, not clearly signalled with conventional signals or words
• Short texts (oral or written)	• Long complex texts
• Small amount of information recycled in a number of ways (redundancy in the text information)	• Densely packed information, little recycling or redundancy
• Use of high-frequency, common vocabulary	• Use of technical, low-frequency, uncommon vocabulary
• Relatively slow speech	• Fast pace of speech
• Few number of speakers	• Many speakers in complex, interactive situations
• Turn taking in conversations clearly signaled	• Turn taking in conversations not clearly signaled

Support Factors

Easy →	Difficult
• Headings and subheadings provided in written text	• Dense text not separated with headings or other cues to comprehension
• Photographs, drawings, tables and graphs provide contextual support and a framework to assist comprehension	• Few visual supports, visuals not integrated with text
• Descriptions and simple stories	• Abstract discussions, expressions of opinion and attitude
• Familiar topics, concrete referents	• Unfamiliar, abstract topics
• Tasks broken down into manageable parts	• Complex tasks, presented as whole, not structured into parts

Learner Factors

Easy	Difficult
• Activities relate to experiences learners recognize easily; the information is known to learners	• The language or activities are outside learners' experience; the information is unknown to learners
• Confidence	• Lack of confidence
• Motivated to learn and use English; feels accepted by English speakers and wants to interact	• Unmotivated to learn English; alienated from English-speaking context
• Knows more than one language	• Little experience in learning other languages; little linguistic knowledge of first language
• Knowledgeable about culture of new environment, including culture of schooling	• Little awareness or knowledge of culture of new environment

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Task Factors

Easy	Difficult
• Relevant; meaningful tasks	• Tasks not relevant or meaningful to learners
• Few steps involved in tasks	• Many complicated steps involved
• Little information needs to be processed in order to accomplish tasks	• Much information needs to be processed in order to accomplish tasks
• Context jointly developed with learners; much context provided; little prior knowledge is assumed	• Little context provided; assumption made that students have prior knowledge
• Tasks introduced extensively	• Little introduction provided
• Much assistance available to learners from teacher or others, audiovisual aids available	• Learner expected to accomplish tasks independently
• Sympathetic, known listener who is willing to take time to negotiate meaning with learners and is tolerant of non-standard English	• Impersonal; unsympathetic; unknown listener who does not take time to negotiate with learners and is intolerant of non-standard English
• Learners not expected to be accurate or fluent, errors expected and tolerated (corrected in supportive way); little precision required	• High degree of accuracy and fluency expected; little tolerance of errors; precision required
• Relatively long length of time available to carry out tasks	• Little time available to carry out tasks
• Concrete	• Abstract
• Tasks are highly predictable; situations have conventional patterns (daily greetings, requesting food in the cafeteria); language is easily understood because of context; language is closely defined and concrete	• Little predictability; situations cannot be predicted; language has fewer contextual clues; activities are open-ended and abstract
• Static situations—learners need to describe or understand verbal descriptions of objects that are stable	• Dynamic situations—learners have to describe changing events and activities
• Little cognitive processing involved; little translation required	• Application—solving life-like problems that require identification of issues, and selection and use of appropriate generalizations and skills
• Analysis—solving problems with conscious knowledge of the parts and forms of thinking	• Synthesis—solving problems that require original, creative thinking

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SAMPLE UNITS

The following units were provided by teachers in senior high school ESL classrooms. The thematic units demonstrate cross-curricular learning, multilevel approaches, the linking of language and content, and the use of students' prior knowledge and personal experiences.

Zoo School

One teacher had the opportunity to take her class to Zoo School—an intensive week of study at the local zoo. The teacher developed a Zoo School unit related to science, social studies and English language arts, that met all the requirements of a cross-curricular unit.

- It was of immediate interest to students.
- It built on students' previous knowledge and experience.
- Students at all levels of the ESL program could be included.
- It provided links to other subject areas.

Thematic Connections

The teacher identified the cross-curricular and ESL learning outcomes. Science, for example, places considerable importance on observation. During the Zoo School visit, students learned to observe animals closely for up to an hour each day, and at different times of the day. Studies have indicated that most zoo visitors spend only about 30 seconds viewing one animal before moving to another.

As well as observing animals, students viewed videotapes, looked at pictures and read articles. They learned about the work of some animal experts. Through practical experience, they learned about the scientific processes of hypotheses, observation, comparison and conclusions. They learned about animal adaptations and different habitats.

As they studied maps to determine animals' ranges, they became familiar with world geography. The study of habitats also increased their knowledge of the world.

The Zoo School unit also provided many opportunities for language learning. Students viewed videotapes and took notes, filled in charts, wrote riddles and poems, compared animals and people, learned songs and games, made journals and read literature.

Task

After a cross-curricular unit is chosen, it is important to select one large culminating task to work on throughout the unit.

For the culminating task in the Zoo School unit, the students developed a journal of their research and visits to the zoo. The journal was divided into tabbed sections, including:

- map, schedule, groups
- Zoo School activities
- drawings and observations of animals
- drawings and observations of habitats
- daily journal of sketches and writing

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- glossary and lists of words
- people related to animal studies
- poems, stories, myths, legends, riddles related to animals.

Activities

In order to accomplish the task of developing a journal of their research and observations during Zoo School visits, students were involved in many activities, including:

- viewing documentaries about animals
- reading articles and viewing videotapes about famous scientists, such as Jane Goodall, Jacques Cousteau and Biruté Galdikas
- reading newspaper articles and recording answers to W5 questions
- drawing animals and their habitats
- writing riddles and poems
- interviewing zoo guides, zookeepers and friendly visitors
- reading and responding to animal poems, folk tales, myths, legends and stories
- recording observations of animals
- writing reports
- estimating the height and weight of animals
- filling in charts about animals under the headings: description, habitat, food, young, behaviour in winter, interesting facts.

Exercises

Language learning exercises focus on skills students are developing in the areas of reading, writing, listening, viewing, speaking and representing.

In the Zoo School unit, some students required specific assistance in these areas:

- organizing notes into headings and charts
- spelling and pronunciation of related vocabulary
- writing and asking questions for interviews
- finding resources for research and drawings
- organizing reports into introduction, description, food, related behaviours, care of young, adaptations, conclusions
- using topic sentences, details, cohesive devices
- using structures, such as haiku and cinquain to create poems
- discussing and planning activities
- reading signs or following directions at the zoo
- organizing ideas
- setting up oral presentations in groups and taking turns speaking and answering questions
- using relative clauses for writing riddles; e.g., I'm thinking of an animal that is adapted for winter, has feathers and hunts at night. What is it?

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Teacher Reflections

I loved Zoo School. It was an opportunity to get to know students better. We had lots of interesting chats on the way to and from the zoo, and while observing the animals. The students learned a lot. For more than half of them, it was the first time they had ever been to a zoo. The preparation we did before going was important. Visiting the zoo in the winter was a new experience for me. It was great having the place mostly to ourselves. I now choose rainy or cold days for an outing to the zoo. But, the most important thing I learned, was to ***slow down and really look****.*

Here are some thoughts on how I would do the unit differently next time.

- *We would start writing in our journals earlier and try to find more time for writing in journals at the zoo.*
- *I would go to the zoo and spend time observing the animals before Zoo School.*
- *I would read more about animals before doing this unit.*
- *We would have enough cameras for each group to have one.*
- *We would take more video footage of the animals. I would try to find a helper to do nothing but videotape. When making videotapes, try to focus on one thing rather than making constant sweeps. The fade-out feature is good. Learn to edit videotapes.*
- *I would write a short letter to students each evening to recap the day and comment on the day to come.*
- *I would try to find more time to talk with volunteer group leaders ahead of time about ways of generating talk and building vocabulary.*
- *I would develop more guides for note taking, perhaps charts or incomplete outlines.*
- *I would try to find time for more stories and legends.*

The Zoo School unit may be designed on a chart like the one that follows.

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Unit: _____

Tasks	Activities	Exercises	Learning Outcomes	Resources

New Kids in Town

One teacher found a particular text related to the interests and prior knowledge of her students. Using the text, the teacher developed activities and exercises to further student learning in content and language.

The teacher describes the unit she built around New Kids in Town.

The Immigrant Experience

Teaching ESL, I am always searching for resources related to new immigrant experiences. New Kids in Town *(Oral Histories of Immigrant Teens) by Janet Bode, is just such a resource. Published by Scholastic Inc., this collection of 11 biographical accounts discusses young people's experiences with settling into a new culture, and reconciling their native cultures and traditions with those of their new homeland.*

The experiences range from that of 17-year-old Abdul who leaves Afghanistan and resettles in Brooklyn, New York, to 13-year-old Xiaojun (Debbie) who leaves her village farm in rural China and immigrates to New York's Chinatown. These accounts are written by students ranging in age from 13 to 20 who come from a variety of countries, such as Mexico, South Korea, Greece, the Dominican Republic and India. ESL students will see something of themselves in these young people and may realize that they are not alone in the trials and tribulations they have faced in carving out new lives in a new world.

The approach I take to studying this resource with more advanced senior high school ESL students, Level 3 and Level 4, varies. For a fairly intensive book study, the activities cover a variety of areas, such as listening, speaking, viewing, drawing, reflecting and synthesizing. So, a book study requires a fair amount of time, both on the part of the teacher and students. Quality is sometimes better than quantity! Activities range from having students reflect on their own thoughts and feelings in a thought response journal to designing a billboard. Reading New Kids in Town *as a class provides ample opportunity to discuss such issues as assimilation, discrimination, propaganda and role reversal. Activities, such as writing dialogues and letters, are also incorporated to invite students' feelings and opinions.*

In addition to questions, there is a list of vocabulary words for each story. These are words that students may be unfamiliar with. Though some words present difficulties for some students, on the whole, this book can be easily understood and interpreted by most Level 3 and Level 4 ESL students. Room for creativity is built into many activities, to allow students to openly express their feelings about a given story, as well as their own immigrant experience.

The final New Kids in Town *activity involves having students reflect not only on their own immigrant experience, but on that of others as well. For this assignment, students interview an immigrant. Some questions are predetermined while the students come up with others themselves. Following the interviews, students analyze, interpret and synthesize the immigrant stories in the* New Kids in Town *with their own personal experiences and with those of the person they interviewed. This way, students are able to view the immigrant experience through the perspectives of others.*

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New Kids in Town *is a book that will appeal to ESL classes composed of students from many different countries. Students are exposed to a wide array of immigrant experiences which, in some cases, are similar to those of friends and relatives, and ultimately, to their own. ESL students come to realize that the immigrant experience is not something to be viewed negatively, but rather, something that contributes not only to their own diversity but to the diversity of their new homeland.*

Thought Response Journal

A sample entry in students' thought journals might be:

My thoughts and feelings about what I have just read are (include events, people you liked or disliked, any predictions you may have) ...

Questions on each chapter include vocabulary, comprehension and thought-provoking questions. Examples follow.

- *What is culture shock?*
- *How do you think Debbie had to adjust?*
- *Do you think you would have been able to adjust? Why or why not?*
- *What similarities did you see between the story "Emilio" and the videotape "Listen with Your Heart"?*
- *How do you 'learn' another culture?*

Sample Final Assignment

Interview someone who is an immigrant—a peer or someone older. Record the interview with a videorecorder or tape recorder. Questions could include physical description, personality traits, details of his or her early life, an interesting event, family history, role models and achievements.

Sample Final Analysis

- *Reflect on the interview. What would you do differently next time?*
  - *What did you learn from the person you interviewed? How could you apply what you learned to your own life?*
  - *Did the experiences of the person you interviewed remind you of any of the stories from the book,* New Kids in Town*? Which story was similar and why?*
- *What was the most important thing that you learned from* New Kids in Town*?*
  - *Would you recommend that other students read this book? Why or why not?*
- *Ten years down the road, your son or daughter has to interview you for a school assignment dealing with immigration. What would you tell him or her about the immigrant experience as seen through your own eyes?*
- *Assuming that your children will be born and raised in Canada, what advice would you give them in terms of dealing with recent immigrants? What would you ultimately want your children to learn from interacting with others who are from cultures different from their own?*

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CHAPTER FIVE

Assessment: Putting the Puzzle Together

- Introduction
- Checklist for End of Level 1
- Checklist for End of Level 2
- Checklist for End of Level 3
- Checklist for End of Level 4
- Checklist for End of Level 5

Focus

This chapter discusses assessing ESL students and determining when they are ready to move to the next proficiency level.

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ASSESSMENT: PUTTING THE PUZZLE TOGETHER

INTRODUCTION

When ESL students arrive at school, it is important to gather intake information about their English language proficiency, academic achievement, interests, and short- and long-term goals. Intake information helps determine what students need to learn, what level of the ESL program to place students in, and the appropriate way to organize ESL instruction in the school.

Once students are placed in appropriate levels, teachers use the English as a Second Language Senior High School Program of Studies, and student interests and goals to plan units and instructional strategies. Teachers also assess student achievement and growth, provide feedback to students and their parents or sponsors, evaluate student achievement for report card purposes, and decide when students are ready to progress to the next level of the ESL program.

This chapter provides information about assessing student achievement and growth during and after instruction. It also provides indicators that help teachers determine when students are able to move from one level to the next. Finally, it provides samples of student writing at each level.

Purposes of Assessment

The purposes of assessment in ESL are similar to those in other subjects.

Assessment is used to:

- identify strengths and weaknesses of individual students
- adjust instruction so that it builds on students' strengths and alleviates weaknesses
- monitor the effectiveness of instruction
- provide feedback to students and parents or sponsors
- make decisions about the advancement of students to the next level of the program.

However, assessment in ESL serves additional purposes.

Through assessment:

- students are able to understand the expected outcomes at each level of the ESL program and can begin to set appropriate goals for language learning
- parents and sponsors can be helped to understand the progression of the language learning process
- teachers of other subjects can obtain information about student achievement and growth, and provide appropriate levels of support for students in their classes

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- teachers and administrators obtain the necessary information for grouping students within the school context
- everyone who works with an individual student can determine the language and content the student needs to master.

Principles of Assessment in ESL

- Assessment provides information about how well students are able to demonstrate the general and specific outcomes of the English as a Second Language Senior High School Program of Studies.
- Assessment should meet the requirements of the school and jurisdiction.
- Assessment information should be communicated to students and their parents or sponsors.
- Parent/student conferences are a vital part of communicating student achievement and growth.
- Assessment should be used to provide information that enhances instruction and student growth.
- Assessment should be constructive, recognize students' achievements and be respectful of student worth.
- Assessment should include a record of students' accomplishments, samples of work, evaluations, summaries of student achievement to date and goals for further learning.
- Assessment should indicate patterns of error in language and literacy acquisition so they can be addressed during future instruction.
- Assessment should provide information about process, product and attitude.

Kinds of Assessment

The kinds of assessment used in ESL are similar to those used in other subjects. The following chart includes a variety of assessment tools used in ESL classrooms.

Observation of Process

Students immersed in:
- Reading
- Writing
- Speaking
- Listening

Observation of Product

- Learning logs
- Reading logs
- Selected pages from notebooks or journals
- Audiotapes
- Videotapes
- Writing folders
- Group work logs
- Projects

Classroom Measures

- Test-related activities
- Teacher-made tests
- Comprehension questions
- Homework

Decontextualized Measures

Criterion-referenced tests, such as the Secondary Level English Proficiency (SLEP) test

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Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is ongoing assessment that monitors students' strengths, weaknesses, attitudes, interests and ability to work independently. It provides feedback to students and teachers about student growth and next steps in learning.

Students use feedback from formative assessment to improve their learning. Teachers use it to improve their teaching. Formative assessment can be done through:

- classroom observation
- anecdotal records
- checklists
- journals
- reading/learning logs
- audiotapes and videotapes
- portfolios
- homework assignments
- feedback on students' written work
- assisting students as they complete in-class assignments.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment is usually conducted at specific times—after students have had opportunities to practise, at the end of a unit or semester, or at the end of a reporting period. Summative assessment provides information to students, parents and sponsors about how well students are achieving relative to the outcomes of the English as a Second Language Senior High School Program of Studies. Many schools and school jurisdictions require summative assessment in order to determine report card grades, provide helpful comments and set learning goals.

Summative assessment can be done through:

- paper and pencil tests
- standardized tests, such as the Secondary Level English Proficiency (SLEP) test
- unit tests
- grading of student assignments, presentations and projects
- grading of student portfolios.

Assessment Contexts

The context in which the assessment takes place, whether formative or summative, should model the integration of language and content learning assumed in the English as a Second Language Senior High School Program of Studies. The ESL program should assess language proficiency while students are demonstrating knowledge, skills and attitudes related to subject-area learning.

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Assessment activities should:

- focus on meaning
- relate to student interests and the content of academic subject areas
- involve complex language competencies
- include listening, speaking, reading and writing activities
- take place in a variety of contexts.

Many of the suggested activities for each level provided in Chapter 2 can be used as legitimate assessment activities.

Assessment through the Five Levels

One of the purposes of assessment is to determine when students are ready to advance to the next level of the ESL program. The checklists following provide information about the kinds of tasks students should be able to accomplish before they move to higher levels.

CHECKLIST FOR END OF LEVEL 1

Listening and Speaking

Students are ready to move from Level 1 to Level 2 when they:

- ❑ understand and participate in conversations about routines and procedures in school
- ❑ ask and answer basic questions about themselves, school activities, family and other familiar situations; responses are usually limited to short sentences
- ❑ convey information about basic needs and problems in the school context (illness, non-comprehension)
- ❑ relay simple invitations and respond to comments about the weather, school
- ❑ provide short oral descriptions and narrate events that they experienced personally
- ❑ re-tell narratives discussed in class
- ❑ understand deliberate, slow, clear speech related to concrete objects in context
- ❑ remember language passages that were learned in class
- ❑ speak in such a way as to be comprehensible to a sympathetic native speaker of English who is willing to take the time to listen and request clarification; topics may be limited to what was learned in school.

Reading and Writing

Students are ready to move from Level 1 to Level 2 when they:

- ❑ recognize and name all the letters of the alphabet
- ❑ read text developed and learned in class
- ❑ copy short passages of text developed in class or other familiar text
- ❑ write short descriptions and narrations of events with vocabulary learned in class and English structures learned in class
- ❑ recognize words in a new context that were previously learned
- ❑ memorize and correctly spell short lists of words and simple sentences related to topics studied in class

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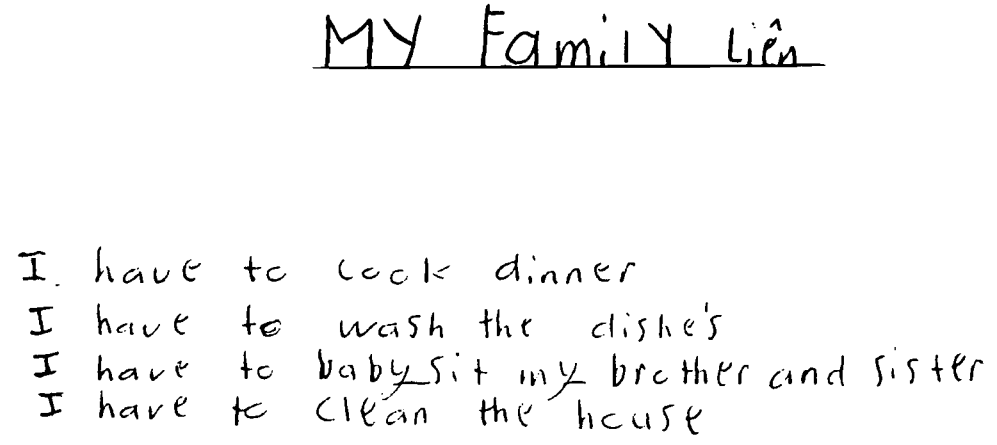
- ❑ fill out simplified forms with basic information about self and family (address, names, telephone number, country of origin, language spoken)
- ❑ recognize that English requires markers for present and past tense, plurality and pronoun gender, but may not use these markers consistently.

Level 1 Writing Sample

The following sample was written in response to a unit on the family in which students discussed responsibilities. Students were asked to write about their household chores, and those of their brothers and sisters.

The writing sample is an edited second draft. Editing was done by the teacher. The student is 17 years old and has been in school in Canada for 18 months. She had 2 years of schooling prior to arrival in Canada. Her first language is Vietnamese.



CHECKLIST FOR END OF LEVEL 2

Listening and Speaking

Students are ready to move from Level 2 to Level 3 when they:

- ❑ understand instructions of three to four steps for classroom tasks
- ❑ interact orally with native speakers of English in most school-based situations, using strategies, such as indicating understanding, requesting repetition
- ❑ carry on comprehensible oral conversations, with few repetitions, about everyday topics with sympathetic native English speakers
- ❑ participate in classroom discussions on topics of study in the classroom
- ❑ respond to oral presentations of information: ask questions for clarification, answer oral and written questions with short sentences
- ❑ give five-minute oral presentations on topics studied individually or in class
- ❑ participate in group work with other students in ESL class and, to a limited degree, with native English-speaking students who are patient, sympathetic listeners

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- ❑ use vocabulary that goes beyond what was studied in class to comprehend and express basic ideas related to school situations
- ❑ use bilingual dictionaries and/or learners' dictionaries regularly to increase vocabulary.

Reading and Writing

Students are ready to move from Level 2 to Level 3 when they:

- ❑ independently read and understand the main idea of descriptive, narrative and expository prose several paragraphs in length, that is:
  - clearly structured
  - composed of simple sentences and familiar tense structures and sentences patterns
  - supported by visuals and graphics
  - accompanied by a glossary
- ❑ demonstrate some ability to predict the meaning of unfamiliar words from the written context
- ❑ write three to four paragraphs on familiar topics using some complex sentence patterns
- ❑ use a limited number of cohesive devices to show comparison/contrast, sequence and coordination
- ❑ give relevant written answers with some degree of accuracy
- ❑ fill in outlines from well-organized, slow-paced oral presentations or interviews
- ❑ use basic punctuation, such as periods, quotation marks, possessive markers, capital letters.

Level 2 Writing Sample A

The following sample was written in response to a discussion on the family and family responsibilities. The sample is a second draft, edited by the teacher. The writing level is at the end of Level 2.

The student is 18 years old and has been in school in Canada for 5 months. She had 12 years of school in Vietnam prior to arriving in Alberta.

Tang Story

This is the Story of the Tang family.
The three boys are Quan, Tuyen and David.
And the Girl are Lam, Linh and Bonnie.
We live with our parents, Mr. and Mrs. Tang.
Quan has to clean the Sidewalk.
Tuyen has to take out the garbage.
David has to dusts.
Lam has to Washes the floor.
Linh has to Washes the dishes.
Bonnie has to cleans the table.

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What Chores I do At home.

At home I cook Supper.
Clear the table and Wash the dishes.
Then I have to dry the dishes and put the dishes away.
Some time I have to make the beds and change the beds.

Level 2
Writing Sample B

This sample was written at the end of a unit on the environment. The class includes Level 2, Level 3 and Level 4 students. The sample is an edited second draft. Students began with prewriting questions, brainstorming, outlining and then writing. The teacher edited first drafts using a marking code and direct corrections.

The student is 17 years old and has been in school in Alberta for 1 year. The student had Grade 5 level of schooling in El Salvador prior to coming to Canada.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Marine turtles

The marine turtles have a big
Problem because many people stay
on beach allersnight to see
The turtle lays her eggs
The people watch from the dunes
and steal her eggs.
The Government give many tickets
because it is concerned about
turtle Population.
The People keep going because
People like the turtles eggs.
The men make moneys selling
the turtle eggs.

CHECKLIST FOR END OF LEVEL 3

Listening and Speaking

Students are ready to move from Level 3 to Level 4 when they:

- ❑ participate in casual conversations, interviews and discussions about topics of current public and personal interest with native English speakers
- ❑ use communicative strategies, such as requests for repetitions, pauses, conversation fillers and circumlocutions in order to prolong conversations
- ❑ pronounce English vocabulary in a way that is comprehensible to most native English speakers, with some repetition and negotiation
- ❑ communicate facts, opinions and attitudes in response to questions
- ❑ understand and express main ideas and details of descriptions, narrations, explanations that are set in different time frames (present, past, future) on a variety of familiar topics beyond the immediate context
- ❑ give well-organized, comprehensible oral presentations on research topics, using cohesive devices, such as pronoun reference and signal words to indicate comparison/contrast, sequence
- ❑ take notes from a teacher presentation that is well-organized, slower than normal pace and accompanied by graphics or other devices to clarify meaning.

Reading and Writing

Students are ready to move from Level 3 to Level 4 when they:

- ❑ understand two or three pages of factual, expository and technical prose in areas of study
- ❑ often determine meanings of unknown words from context in short passages of text
- ❑ comprehend details relating to who, what, when, where and why, and simple inferences from texts that are not heavily influenced by unfamiliar cultural references
- ❑ respond to reading with interpretations and reflections
- ❑ understand abstract topics in familiar contexts
- ❑ paraphrase and summarize short factual articles that were read and discussed in class
- ❑ write plot summaries of narratives
- ❑ describe and narrate personal experiences
- ❑ carry out structured research using designated sources and write one to two page reports using basic report format
- ❑ use bilingual dictionaries and English-only learner dictionaries
- ❑ consistently use basic grammatical structures accurately in simple sentence structures.

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Level 3
Writing Sample A

The following sample was written as part of a folk tale unit. The students read *Three Magic Oranges* together in groups and discussed vocabulary. A class discussion recapped the main points of the story. Students could choose to write letters or dialogues, or draw pictures accompanied by paragraphs. The students were given two class periods for peer editing of initial drafts and word processing.

The student is 17 years old and has been in Canada for 3½ years. In China, the student had completed 6 years of schooling.

Three Magic Oranges

Dear Uncle:
How are you? My lovely wife, my queen, she was gone. I don't know where did she go, but i miss her so much. I'm so unhappy and I wanted to find her, but it still can't found her.

I remember in one year age. I was rode out into the world in seach to find a wife, and I came to a green forest, I saw an golden oranges on the orange tree, I plucked three of oranges from the tree, and continued on the way. Ofter a moment I was thirsty and there no strean or spring, and I take out one of the orange out it, when I cuted the orange there was a very beautiful maiden to beg me for drink of water, but I did't have any water, than she was vanished. In the second time I was thirsty again and I have no water, and I took out the scond orange, I cuted it, than it was the same thing all over again, and she also vanished again. I get some water and I open the third orange, and there was a beautiful maiden begged a water again and I gave her a water, but the evil witch impresoned her in that magic orange-until such time as a king's son should break the spell, and that was was me, I was fall in love with her, and we got a married. And lived out span of years my father died, I became a king and my wife became a Queen. But after that oneday I can't found my Queen she's gone. I don't know where did she go, I used many things to find her, but it still can't found.

Uncle although I can't found her for one year, I will found her for two, three and forever. I must found her and I know I can found her at soon.

Your Nephew

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Level 3
Writing Sample B

The following sample was written as part of an initial assessment of the student. This sample represents writing at the upper end of Level 3.

The student is 17 years old and recently arrived in Canada. He was in school in the Punjab in India for 10 years prior to arrival in Canada.

School uniform

Uniform is a (six) letter word but with a big meaning. Uniform means dress or clother. Like a Grammar sentence Covered all the important thing ie. (Subject, verb etc) similarly uniform Covers the whole parts of the human body.

Every one in the world needs to wear uniform. but their choices are different some of them like new fashion and some of them like old fashion. person who wear a proper uniform always looks nice. Every religion have different religious beliefs and thinkings. that is when a person talks like that then we Could know that from which religion he belongs to. similarly when a school student wears a ~~proper~~ school uniform

(continued)

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then we could know that from which school he belongs to. Every school must have to have a different type of uniform. so that it is easy to know about the students from which school they are. At last In my opinion every school should have one different uniform.

CHECKLIST FOR END OF LEVEL 4

Listening and Speaking

Students are ready to move from Level 4 to Level 5 when they:

- ❑ communicate in a wide variety of everyday situations in school and the community
- ❑ discuss concrete topics relating to particular interests and special areas of personal competence
- ❑ use communicative strategies, such as paraphrasing and circumlocution in order to prolong conversations
- ❑ communicate fine shades of meaning using broad vocabulary and appropriate intonation
- ❑ support opinions with detail, and form and state hypotheses
- ❑ show fluency and ease of speech.

Reading and Writing

Students are ready to move from Level 4 to Level 5 when they:

- ❑ read expository prose on unfamiliar topics with almost complete comprehension and at normal speed
- ❑ read a variety of literary texts
- ❑ read a wide variety of prose for pleasure
- ❑ use English-only dictionaries
- ❑ read all patterns of discourse commonly found in senior high school texts, such as hypotheses, argument and supported opinions
- ❑ comprehend grammatical patterns and vocabulary (with some support for technical vocabulary) normally found in senior high school texts

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- ❑ match reading strategies, such as skim, scan, close reading to the purpose
- ❑ express themselves effectively in writing as required in senior high school classes with some errors in word form and other aspects of English grammar
- ❑ write short research papers and position statements in science, social studies, English language arts
- ❑ use organizational patterns, such as sequence, cause/effect, comparison, thematic development
- ❑ take notes reflecting key points from an oral presentation, lecture, film or interview
- ❑ write summaries of long stretches of text
- ❑ show control of full range of structures, spelling conventions and have a wide general vocabulary
- ❑ write without making errors that interfere with communication of ideas.

Level 4 Writing Sample A

The following sample was written during a unit on Chinese New Year. Students read their Chinese horoscopes and discussed the wide range of personal characteristics outlined in them. After much discussion, they wrote compositions using the information to describe themselves. The sample is the edited third draft. Editing was done by the teacher. The assignment was completed at the end of a three-week unit.

The student is 18 years old, has been in Canada for slightly more than 2 years and has received 2 years of ESL assistance. The student was in school for 9 years in the Philippines and the first language was Tagalog.

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CHINESE HOROSCOPE

My Chinese horoscope is the Rabbit. Rabbit years are 1927, 1939,1951, 1963, 1975 and 1987. The Chinese horoscope accurately describes me as sensitive,ambitious, and talented. I think I'm a sensitive person. Because I cry easily, when my sister or brother bothers me. I'm an ambitious person too. When I was 13 years old, my ambition was to teach martial arts and go to University. My sister told me, that I'm talented doing crafts. She was teaching me to combine colour, and make my own design. When I finished, my sister told me that I was talented doing those crafts.

However, there are a few characteristics in my Chinese horoscope that do not accurately describe my personality. For example, I'm not a gambler or melancholic. I don't think I'm a gambler, because I don't know how to play the lottery, not even the 649. When my friends teaches me to play, I'm still not interested in it. Besides not being a gambler, I'm not a melancholic person. I know my self. I'm a happy, cheerful person, even when I have a problem.

Some characteristics that my horoscope didn't include were short-tempered, impatient, curious, helpful and imaginative. I know I'm a short-tempered person because my blood boils when I hear something bad about me, or my friend. I'm also impatient. I remember, when my friend told me that we were going out and then she was late, I felt I wanted to say bad words to her. I wasn't patient to wait for her. Another characteristic is my curiosity. For example, when I meet a new person, then I want to know who she is and her personality. I'm also very helpful. For instance, when my friend has a problem I always help her. I was also helpful when the Mount Pinatubo erupted. I was a volunteer to help the people and give food to them. We contributed money, shelter and food for them. Besides being helpful, I'm imaginative,too. I imagine that I was a popular martial arts and karate teacher, sometimes, I used to dream about my crush on someone. I still dream about my future.

The most important things that describe my personality are being sensitive, ambitious, not a gambler, impatient and short-tempered. These are the main characteristics that described my self .

Level 4
Writing Sample B

The following sample was written after a unit on expository writing. Students were given a choice of topics. The topic chosen by this student was "What are the characteristics of a true friend?" Students brainstormed characteristics, chose the most important ones and explained why they were important.

This sample represents an edited third draft. Editing was done by the teacher. The assignment was completed as part of the course requirements over 2 months.

The student has been in Canada for 1 year and was in school in Hong Kong for 10 years prior to arrival in Alberta.

A Friend

Someone once said, "A friend is better than wealth, but if we meet bad friends, then it is worse than poison." This means that if we meet bad friends, they will lead us to sadness; if we meet good friends, they will lead us the right way. What are the characteristics of a true friend? First, a true friend should have a similar character and age to mine; therefore, he will be able to understand me and to communicate with me easily. Also, he needs to take care of me. When I am sick, he will ask me, "How do you feel today?" Thirdly, when I have a ~~some~~ personal problem, he can share my unhappiness, encourage me and help me. Therefore, my problems will be solved. In addition, he must always be willing to tell me his feeling and ideas so I can understand him. Finally, he must be able to speak Chinese; then, I can express my opinion more easily. But the most important thing is my friend's personality must be better than mine. Then I can follow him and lead the correct way. By his voicing, I can avoid doing wrong things; With his help, I can solve all my difficulties.

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CHECKLIST FOR END OF LEVEL 5

Listening and Speaking

Students have completed Level 5 when they:

- ❑ understand the main ideas and most details in most oral presentations given at a normal pace that may include digressions
- ❑ understand cultural connotations, jokes, idioms, colloquialisms and shifts between formal and informal tone
- ❑ understand the underlying organizational structure of a lecture
- ❑ speak with sufficient accuracy to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social and academic topics
- ❑ discuss special areas of interest in senior high school classes
- ❑ use a broad, though not always idiomatic or precise vocabulary
- ❑ support opinions, persuade, describe in detail, narrate and use the language of argument.

Reading and Writing

Students have completed Level 5 when they:

- ❑ read fluently and accurately most styles and forms of the language on topics required in the senior high school context
- ❑ understand sociolinguistic and cultural references even though some explanation may be required occasionally
- ❑ express ideas using accurate and specific vocabulary
- ❑ usually comprehend new vocabulary from context and other textual aids, such as definitions within the text and glossaries
- ❑ use dictionaries judiciously, relying on English-only dictionaries for the most part
- ❑ comprehend main ideas and supporting detail, including underlying patterns of organization in most grade-level written material
- ❑ understand much of the connotation in written materials
- ❑ read grade-level journal articles, literary materials and subject-matter materials
- ❑ support points of view, defend hypotheses
- ❑ write short, coherently organized research papers
- ❑ control the full range of structures in writing, even though they occasionally exhibit a foreign style of expression.

Level 5 Writing Sample

The following sample was written after a discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of wearing school uniforms. The student had 1 hour to complete the writing assignment. The sample is a second draft edited by the student.

This student is 15½ years old and has been in Canada for 8 months. Prior to coming to Canada, the student completed 9 years of school in the Punjab in India.

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The School Uniform

The schodl is the sourse from where you can easily tell a student's attitude Some students like to wear uniform and some not In my opinion, students have to wear schod uniforms.

Many rich shidents are waisting their parents's money by using fashionable clothes and many poor students, who cant afford these clothes, are also baying to be like them Fashion is increasing in school life. Mostly gisls like fashion. They spend more time to decorate them than on studies. This fashionable clothing is also impressing other students who are intelligent or working well in the area of studies. These problems can be solved by using the school uniform.

(continued)

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The word uniform is made from two words 'uni' and 'form'. 'Uni' means one. If all of students would be in only one dress then there wouldn't be any type of difference between the students of same school. The school uniform has to be cheap because it can creats problems for poor people. By using school uniform we don't have to tell anybody our school name.

All of this means that we can solve a lot of problems in school with school uniform.

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