Best Practices in Action

Tools for Community-Based
Adult Literacy and
Basic Education Programs

Project Partners

Best Practices in Action is a joint project of Aurora College, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and the NWT Literacy Council.

Copies of this manual are available from:
- The NWT Literacy Council at the above address, or from our website (see address above).
- Aurora College or the Department of Education, Culture and Employment (see addresses above).

Cover photos courtesy of the Government of the NWT, Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development.

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Contributors to the Resource Manual of Practical Ideas

Many adult educators and literacy practitioners from across the Northwest Territories contributed to the *Resource Manual of Practical Ideas*. Their work at the community level demonstrates best practices in action.

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Contributors to *Examples of Best Practices in Action*

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- Ken Latour, Instructor, Hay River CLC (formerly Adult Educator, Fort Resolution CLC) provided the initial information for the Fort Resolution program.
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Introduction

A Summary of Adult Literacy and Basic Education in the NWT

In the north, the history of adult literacy and basic education spans about fifty years. During that time, many changes have occurred in adult programs as a result of an on-going process of developing, reflecting on, and reviewing goals, activities and outcomes.

In recent years, there have been significant changes, too, in the field of literacy. These include defining literacy more broadly, developing new forms of programs, and promoting the importance of literacy more vigorously. These changes stem partly from interventions related to literacy, such as:

- The Government of the Northwest Territories' (GNWT) Literacy Strategy
- The GNWT's Early Childhood Development Framework for Action, with its emphasis on the role of parents in children's literacy development
- The GNWT's Aboriginal Language Strategy
- The NWT Literacy Council's focus on family literacy
- The increased emphasis on literacy in schools
- The involvement of the private sector in support of literacy.

The changes have brought new opportunities for adult educators to tie programs more closely to learners' needs by expanding the types of programs offered in the north. Today adult literacy programs include:

- Community-based adult literacy and basic education (ALBE) programs
- Campus-based adult literacy and basic education programs
- Aboriginal language programs
- English as a Second Language (ESL) programs
- Workplace literacy programs
- Seniors' literacy programs
- Family literacy programs
- Literacy Programs in correctional facilities.

Best Practices and why they are Important

Our ability to plan, develop, deliver and sustain high quality adult literacy programs depends on our willingness to examine what we do critically: to retain what is effective; to throw out what is ineffective; and to plan and implement changes in areas that we would like to improve or develop. Over the years, through such research and reflection, we have been able to articulate a philosophy of adult literacy learning. Rooted in this philosophy is a set of practices that represent our current understanding of key ingredients that lead to effective programs.

In Britain, educators use the term "good practice" to describe such practices, whereas in North America people are more likely to refer to them as "best practices". Sometimes people use "best practices" and "quality standards" interchangeably. However, they are different. A "standard" is set up and established by a person or an organization with the authority to do so. It provides a rule for a measure of value or quality. Quality standards often form part of a larger accountability or evaluation framework, and may incorporate best practices into them. Best practices, on the other hand, simply describe practices that support our philosophy of adult education—

practices that we know are effective. Collectively, they are an ideal or a goal to work towards.

Defining best practices is useful to both new and experienced adult educators, to policy makers, to funders and to service providers in a variety of ways. They can:

- Be an ideal or a goal to work towards.
- Be a framework for effective practice.
- Be a guide for program planning and development.
- Be a guide to inform and improve practice.
- Encourage reflection on critical issues by those developing, implementing and evaluating adult literacy and basic education programs.
- Transform practice.
- Be a tool to promote programs to stakeholders and other community members.

Best practice statements are *not* meant to:

- Be mandatory or definitive.
- Force all programs to be the same.
- Be a means of formally monitoring or evaluating programs.

There is a risk in codifying best practices, however, and simplifying them to a checklist. It is relatively easy for people to say "We're doing that!" For that reason we are including examples of best practices in action, and specific ways of supporting best practices to try to give a broader view of what best practices might be in reality.

Best Practice Statements for the NWT

In 2002, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Aurora College and the NWT Literacy Council began the Best Practices in Action Project. Representatives from these three organizations were selected to be part of a Best Practices in Action Working Group that would guide the project.

The idea was to create a comprehensive framework of best practices that would encourage literacy providers to reflect on their practice and learn from others. The framework has three tools:

1. **A self-assessment tool for programs**

   This tool consists of 17 best practice statements, followed by several key elements and indicators. Each statement describes a key concept that we have identified as integral to effective programs from current research and from practitioners in the field in the NWT and elsewhere.

   One or more key elements and a range of indicators follow each best practice statement. When implemented, these will help achieve that best practice. Instructors can check off each key element and indicator as a way to gauge the strengths of their programs, and to identify areas where they want to make improvements. This self-assessment tool will serve as a means to continuously improve programs.

   At the end of this tool, readers will find a summary of research on the evolution of literacy best practices, and on how various jurisdictions in Canada and elsewhere address them.

2. **A resource of practical ideas to help support best practices**

   No matter how experienced and skilled practitioners are, they always welcome new ideas. Adult educators across the north have a wealth of experience that everyone can benefit from. Many have shared their "best" ideas with us and we have compiled them into a resource from which everyone can learn.

3. **Examples of best practices in action in NWT programs**

   Many community-based adult literacy programs demonstrate best practices principles. We have selected two as examples of how programs build best practices into their own situation.

Originally, we intended that the *Best Practices in Action* document would be useful for all programs that involved adult literacy, such as ALBE, family literacy and workplace literacy programs. However, as the drafts changed over time, we realized that the manual could not be all things to all people. Much of it is classroom-based, so its focus now is on ALBE programs.

Guiding Principles

The five principles for adult literacy and basic education programs set out in the Department of Education, Culture and Employment's Directive on Adult Literacy and Basic Education underlie the work on best practices. These principles are:

- Learner-centred programming and services
- Accessible programming and services
- Coordinated and integrated programming and services
- Community-based programming and services
- Respect for cultural diversity.

The Directive explains each of these more fully.

NWT Best Practice Statements

In the end, the NWT Working Group, with input from a broad range of adult educators, settled on 17 best practice statements:

- Philosophy
- Program Planning
- Program Evaluation
- Program Accessibility
- Instruction
- Learning Materials
- Learner Assessment
- Respect and Support for Learners
- Transferability of Learning
- Culture
- Community
- Outreach
- Organizational Linkages and Partnerships
- Staff Development and Support
- Funding
- Program Administration
- Accountability

Self-Assessment Tool for Programs

User Guide: A Quick Look at This Tool

People have a tendency to skip the introduction in a document. For the purposes of this document it is important to read the introduction and instructions.

Here is a quick look at how to use this self-assessment tool for programs:

Step 1: Read the introduction.

Step 2: Read over the instructions in the User Guide section.

Step 3: Quickly scan the whole questionnaire to get an overall impression of it.

Step 4: Get together with your colleagues and coordinator, if you have one.

Step 5: Focus on one best practice at a time.

Step 6: Read through the best practice statement. Then look at the key elements and supporting indicators.

Step 7: Put a checkmark beside the indicators that describe your program at present.

Step 8: If you choose "Other", please specify.

Overview of the Tool

This is a support document to help people plan and develop their programs, and at the same time, assess and improve their own practice. We have tried to design this self-assessment tool to fit a range of situations and a range of roles. We believe that much of the information in this document can apply to *all* ALBE programs, whether community-based or campus-based, whether at a fundamental or more advanced level. It applies broadly to programs, rather than to individual courses. We recognize, however, that not everything will apply to everyone, and that campus programs or advanced level programs may have less opportunity for flexibility.

Nor is it only for instructors or adult educators to use. It looks at best practices from a variety of perspectives so everyone with a part in ALBE programs—instructors, chairs, program planners, funders, etc.—can find something in the document that applies to them.

We recognize that the ways in which people use the tool will vary from person to person, and from program to program. However, we highly recommend that, wherever possible, all those involved with the program complete the self-assessment tool together in a participatory way. This might include one or more adult educators, one or more interested learners, a regional coordinator, a Board member (where appropriate) and one or more community members.

Altogether, there are 17 sections or themes. In each section, you will find a best practice statement, several key elements and some indicators that you can check off. Each best practice statement is numbered and covers a different aspect of ALBE and literacy programming, such as Instruction or Program Administration. Each statement is followed by several key elements—major organizers that support the best practice statements. The key element has the same number as the best practice statement and a letter, e.g. 9A or 16C. The indicators consist of activities that support the

Self Assessment Tool for Programs

key element, and ultimately the best practice. Each indicator has a Roman numeral and is followed by a check-off box. At the end of the section is a space for Reflections.

Here is how each section looks:

1. Philosophy

← Section or theme

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program has a clearly stated philosophy and mission that guide its work and practices.**

← Best Practice Statement

1A The program's philosophy and mission are the basis for decision-making.

← Key element

i. The program uses its philosophy and mission to guide its planning. ☐

ii. The program uses its philosophy and mission to define its goals and objectives. ☐

iii. The program reviews and updates its goals and objectives regularly against its philosophy and mission. ☐

← Indicators and check boxes

You will notice that we sometimes include a list that begins with "such as". This list is not meant to be inclusive, but rather gives examples of practices that will produce the best practice. At the end of each list, we have added "Other _____". Here, feel free to add your own examples that are not on the list.

You may note some overlap among the indicators under different best practices. For example, in the one on Community and the one on Organizational Linkages and Partnerships, some of the indicators are quite similar. We reduced as much of the overlap as possible, but decided it was essential in some sections. We think you will find that the focus changes a little according to the different best practices.

Completing the Checklist

1. Quickly scan the whole questionnaire to get an overall impression of it.
2. Now focus on one best practice at a time.
3. Read through the best practice statement. Then look at the key elements and supporting indicators.
4. Put a checkmark beside the indicators that describe your program at present.
5. If you choose "Other", please specify.

Completing the Reflections Section

Once you have completed the checklist, you will come to a Reflections section for that particular best practice. This section will help you plan areas where you would like to improve.

Answer each of the three questions as fully as you can. Be realistic about what you might achieve for the following year.

Self-Assessment Program Profile

Name of program: _____

Date: _____

Participants' names: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Contact: _____

Contact phone number: _____

Glossary

The definitions in this glossary can be debated at length. We have tried to keep them general to reflect the best practices in the document. We also believe that debate about the terms is healthy and useful!

Accountability	An obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one's actions; often used when talking about public funding.
Authentic assessment	Aims to evaluate learners' skills and knowledge in "real-world" contexts. They are asked to apply their skills to "real" tasks and projects, such as writing reports, doing research, etc.
Community	An interacting group of people living in a common location; may also refer to people in a particular place with common interests.
Community-based	Located in the community; specially developed according to the identified needs of the community.
Community development	A long-term process that builds on existing strengths in a community and involves local people in designing and making change, and learning from it.
Confidentiality	Privacy; keeping information private that, if disclosed without the learner's authorization, could be prejudicial to the learner's best interests.
Culture	The way of life and worldview, especially the customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time.
Empowering	Making people feel more confident and more in control of their lives.

Self Assessment Tool for Programs

Glossary (Cont.)

Holistic	Broad-based learning and instruction that is interconnected; not restricted to academic learning.
Modular learning	Learning that is made up of separate, but complete, components that can be rearranged, replaced or interchanged easily.
Outreach	The provision of services to individuals or groups who might otherwise be neglected.
Participatory assessment	A collaborative relationship among learners and staff in determining the goals, texts and contexts of assessment, as well as in judging its outcomes.
Practice-based	Grounded in what actually happens, for example in classrooms, rather than on theory.
Prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR)	The assessment and recognition of people's previous learning, both credit and non-credit, formal or informal.
Program	A plan of activities for achieving something; in this case, the development of activities (often in a carefully planned sequence) that will improve literacy knowledge and skills; the overall program that learners are attending e.g. Academic studies, ALBE.
Self-directed learning	Any study form in which individuals have primary responsibility for planning, implementing, and even evaluating their learning effort.
Special needs	Physical, social, emotional, or mental needs that may require a learner to have additional supports to access equal educational opportunities.
Supports	Resources (equipment, training, specialized instruction, support services such as student housing, daycare etc.) to help meet learner's needs.

1. Philosophy

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program has a clearly stated philosophy and mission that guide its work and practices.**

1A The program's philosophy and mission are the basis for decision-making.

   i.   The program uses its philosophy and mission to guide its planning. ☐

   ii.   The program uses its philosophy and mission to define its goals and objectives. ☐

   iii.   The program reviews and updates its goals and objectives regularly against its philosophy and mission. ☐

1B The program's philosophy is shared with people involved in the program at all levels through its mission, goals and objectives, and practices.

   i.   The program encourages people involved in the program at all levels to participate in developing its philosophy and mission. ☐

   ii.   The program's philosophy and mission are communicated to people involved in the program at all levels. ☐

1. Philosophy

A quality adult literacy and basic education program has a clearly stated philosophy and mission that guide its work and practices.

- The program's mission statement, goals and objectives are clearly written.

- The program displays its mission statement prominently and includes it in communications about the program, where appropriate.

- The program's practices reflect its philosophy and mission.

Reflections

1. What other activities in your program reflect this best practice?
   (If possible, provide specific examples.)

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. What could your program do to improve how it supports this best practice?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. What assistance will you need to achieve this?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. Program Planning

A quality adult literacy and basic education program engages regularly in a program planning process.

2A A planning process is in place to support implementation of the program's philosophy and mission.

i. Planning sessions are held regularly and are based on a schedule, such as yearly. ☐

ii. The program has a planning process that includes items such as:

- Needs and priorities ☐

- Goals and objectives ☐

- Outcomes ☐

- Strategies to support the goals and objectives ☐

- Facilities and infrastructure ☐

- Budgeting ☐

- An implementation plan ☐

2. Program Planning
A quality adult literacy and basic education program engages regularly in a program planning process.

- A promotional strategy ☐

- A process to monitor implementation ☐

- An evaluation process ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

iii. The planning process is cyclical—the plan is developed, then reviewed and revised, or re-done, as necessary to ensure its effectiveness. ☐

2B People involved in the program at all levels are included in the planning process in an effort to meet their needs.

i. People involved in the program at all levels are consulted and have opportunities for input into the plan. ☐

ii. A variety of means, such as focus groups, surveys, questionnaires or individual meetings, is used to gather the input. ☐

2. Program Planning

A quality adult literacy and basic education program engages regularly in a program planning process.

iii.   The needs and priorities of the following groups are determined and included in the plan as appropriate:

- The learners   ☐

- The community   ☐

- The program staff   ☐

- Employers, business and industry   ☐

- Partner organizations and agencies   ☐

- Others   _____ .   ☐

iv.   The plan is reviewed with people involved in the program at   ☐
all levels to ensure it is on track, and if not, what changes
should be made.

Reflections

1. What other activities in your program reflect this best practice?
   (If possible, provide specific examples.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. What could your program do to improve how it supports this best
   practice?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. What assistance will you need to achieve this?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Program Evaluation

A quality adult literacy and basic education program continually evaluates how well the program is meeting its goals and objectives and uses that information to direct future planning.

3A Evaluations are an ongoing, integral part of the program.

i. Evaluation is included in the program planning process and is part of the program design. ☐

ii. Both formative evaluations (throughout the program) and summative evaluations (at the end of the program) are conducted. ☐

3B People involved in the program at all levels are included in program evaluations, and the findings communicated to them.

i. The program gathers feedback from a variety of groups including:

- The learners ☐

- The community ☐

- The program staff ☐

- Employers, business and industry ☐

3. Program Evaluation

A quality adult literacy and basic education program continually evaluates how well the program is meeting its goals and objectives and uses that information to direct future planning.

- Partner organizations and agencies ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

ii. Evaluation reports are prepared and made available. ☐

3C Evaluations are comprehensive and use a variety of evaluation tools.

i. Processes are in place to ensure evaluations cover all aspects of the program, such as:

- Program delivery ☐

- Instruction ☐

- Learning ☐

- Learning materials and resources ☐

- Community support ☐

> ### 3. Program Evaluation
> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program continually evaluates how well the program is meeting its goals and objectives and uses that information to direct future planning.**

- Partnerships, where appropriate ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

ii. The program collects a range of information that includes both:

- Qualitative data, through tools such as narrative reports, and ☐

- Quantitative data, such as program statistics. ☐

iii. A variety of evaluation tools is used to gather a broad range of information, such as:

- Statistical reviews ☐

- Interviews ☐

- Questionnaires/Surveys ☐

- Focus groups ☐

> ### 3. Program Evaluation
> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program continually evaluates how well the program is meeting its goals and objectives and uses that information to direct future planning.**

- Classroom assessment techniques, such as SGIF (Small Group Instructional Feedback) or minute papers ☐

- Anecdotal reports ☐

- Narrative reports ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

| 3D | The information from evaluations is used to inform and improve the program. |

i. The information from evaluations is used to help identify future program needs. ☐

ii. The information from evaluations is used to help set future goals and objectives. ☐

iii. The information from evaluations is used as a basis for ongoing program changes or to develop new initiatives. ☐

Reflections

1. What other activities in your program reflect this best practice?
    (If possible, provide specific examples.)

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

2. What could your program do to improve how it supports this best
    practice?

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

3. What assistance will you need to achieve this?

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

4. Program Accessibility

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program respects differences and is accessible to the broadest range of potential learners in the community.**

4A Program delivery is flexible.

i.   The program offers options that increase flexibility, such as:

- Learners may enter and exit the program at different times, where appropriate. ☐

- A variety of delivery approaches, such as part-time, distance education or evening classes, is available. ☐

- Instruction is offered at times (seasons, days, hours) convenient for learners and potential learners. ☐

- The location of the program is flexible, where appropriate, to meet learner needs. ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

4. Program Accessibility

A quality adult literacy and basic education program respects differences and is accessible to the broadest range of potential learners in the community.

4B Opportunities are provided for all learners to participate equitably in the program.

i. The program's recruitment practices are inclusive of different cultures, race, gender, and special needs.

ii. A variety of promotional materials is used to reach all potential learners.

iii. Enrollment in the program is voluntary.

iv. Guidelines/policies are in place and implemented regarding learners with special needs.

v. Program staff have access to training and information on special needs.

vi. A process is in place to allow learners to appeal decisions related to access.

vii. Processes are in place to identify learners' needs, goals or barriers to learning, and to respond appropriately to them (through referrals, support services, specialized equipment, specialized instruction, etc.).

> **4. Program Accessibility**
> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program respects differences and is accessible to the broadest range of potential learners in the community.**

4C Program facilities are accessible.

i.   Program facilities are safe and well-lit.

ii.   People with physical disabilities can access the program facilities.

Reflections

1. What other activities in your program reflect this best practice? (If possible, provide specific examples.)

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2. What could your program do to improve how it supports this best practice?

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3. What assistance will you need to achieve this?

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5. Instruction

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program offers instruction that enables adult learners to progress towards their goals.**

5A   The program fosters self-direction and ownership in learners.

i.   Learners are involved in decision-making related to their learning.   ☐

ii.   Learners generate guidelines, such as group agreements, for their classroom.   ☐

iii. Learners are partners in managing the learning environment.   ☐

iv.   Learners are active participants in the learning process and assume responsibility for their own learning.   ☐

v.   Learners are involved in developing an individualized learning plan for themselves that reflects their particular needs, goals and learning styles.   ☐

vi.   Program content and delivery support and promote the development of transferable skills and lifelong learning.   ☐

5. Instruction
A quality adult literacy and basic education program offers instruction that enables adult learners to progress towards their goals.

5B   The program respects diverse talents and ways of learning.

i. The program assesses learners' strengths, needs, interests and learning styles. ☐

ii. The program builds on learners' existing strengths, needs, interests and learning styles. ☐

iii. The program actively draws on learners' knowledge and experiences, such as land skills, sewing or storytelling, and encourages learners to share these with others. ☐

iv. The program uses a variety of instructional strategies to accommodate individual needs, learning styles, etc., such as:

- Individual, group, one-on-one work ☐

- Peer tutoring ☐

- Labs, simulations and field trips ☐

- Computer-assisted learning ☐

- Multi-level instruction ☐

5. Instruction

A quality adult literacy and basic education program offers instruction that enables adult learners to progress towards their goals.

- Multi-media resources ☐

- A holistic approach that integrates subjects, including literacy, across the program ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

v.   A variety of delivery models is available to accommodate individual needs:

- Full-time ☐

- Part-time ☐

- Modular learning ☐

- Flexible scheduling ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

vi. Materials and resources are relevant to the needs, interests, culture and learning styles of learners. ☐

> ## 5. Instruction
> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program offers instruction that enables adult learners to progress towards their goals.**

5C The program creates a climate that encourages and supports learning.

i. Peer support and dialogue are part of the learning process. ☐

ii. The program encourages a spirit of collaboration in the learning setting. ☐

iii. High and realistic expectations are communicated to learners. ☐

iv. Learners' successes are recognized and celebrated through awards and special events, such as certificates. ☐

5D The teaching/learning process is dynamic, interactive and cooperative.

i. The teaching/learning process is two-way. ☐

ii. Program staff are facilitators of learning and co-learners with their learners. ☐

iii. Program staff share their experiences, attitudes and values with learners. ☐

iv. Learning activities promote active learning. ☐

> **5. Instruction**
> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program offers instruction that enables adult learners to progress towards their goals.**

5E The program conducts ongoing assessment of learning using a variety of appropriate tools.

    i.   See Learner Assessment (P. 55).

Reflections

1. What other activities in your program reflect this best practice?
    (If possible, provide specific examples.)

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2. What could your program do to improve how it supports this best practice?

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3. What assistance will you need to achieve this?

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6. Learning Materials

A quality adult literacy and basic education program uses a variety of appropriate learning materials.

6A — Learning materials support program goals and objectives.

i.   The program identifies and recommends appropriate learning materials. ☐

ii.   The program has the recommended and supplementary learning materials available, as well as a broad range of additional materials. ☐

iii. Program staff use the appropriate learning materials. ☐

6B — Learning materials respect and reflect the needs, interests, abilities, and diversity of learners.

i.   Learning materials are relevant to learners' experiences, culture, background and concerns. ☐

ii.   Learners have access to a wide variety of learning materials suitable to their needs, such as:

- Career-related materials ☐

- Course-related materials ☐

6. Learning Materials

A quality adult literacy and basic education program uses a variety of appropriate learning materials.

- Artifacts, like specimens, etc. ☐

- Multi-media resources ☐

- A library or wide variety of books ☐

- Locally developed materials ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

iii.   Learning materials are suitable for adults. ☐

iv.   Staff are aware of gender, racial and cultural bias in learning materials and choose resources to teach about bias in the context of the resources, and to generate critical thinking. ☐

v.   Staff are aware of sources for free or cheap learning materials, such as museums, on-line websites, etc. ☐

6C   Learning materials are current.

i.   The program has access to up-to-date books, computer and science equipment, maps, etc. ☐

6. Learning Materials
A quality adult literacy and basic education program uses a variety of appropriate learning materials.

ii.   Learning materials reflect current research and are up-to-date.

Reflections

1. What other activities in your program reflect this best practice? (If possible, provide specific examples.)

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2. What could your program do to improve how it supports this best practice?

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3. What assistance will you need to achieve this?

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7. Learner Assessment

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program monitors learner progress on an ongoing basis through a variety of participatory assessment procedures.**

7A Learner assessments direct instruction and enhance learning.

i.   The program makes learner assessments an integral part of teaching and learning. ☐

ii. Learner assessments are linked to instruction and guide program staff in planning lessons. ☐

iii. Learners' prior learning is documented as part of the intake assessment process:

  • A process to credit learners' prior learning is in place. ☐

iv. Learner assessments identify any special learning needs among learners. ☐

v.   Learner goals are reviewed and modified with learners, based on their assessment. ☐

vi. Learners receive information on why and how they will be assessed. ☐

7. Learner Assessment

A quality adult literacy and basic education program monitors learner progress on an ongoing basis through a variety of participatory assessment procedures.

vii. The importance of "breakthroughs" and non-academic outcomes, such as changes in self-esteem or self-confidence, is recognized. ☐

viii. The program reports learning outcomes/results clearly and provides learners with copies of their progress. ☐

7B Appropriate procedures are used to ensure assessment is effective and participatory.

i. A variety of assessment tools, both formal and informal, are used, including authentic assessment techniques, such as

- Checklists (writing, reading, etc.) ☐

- Portfolios ☐

- Journals ☐

- Instructor/learner conferences (individual and group) ☐

- Learning contracts ☐

7. Learner Assessment
A quality adult literacy and basic education program monitors learner progress on an ongoing basis through a variety of participatory assessment procedures.

- Learner progress logs ☐

- Learner self-assessments ☐

- Group projects ☐

- Presentations ☐

- Peer evaluation ☐

- Simulations ☐

- Observations ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

ii. A variety of assessment tools, both formal and informal are used, including authentic and more traditional assessment techniques, such as

- Tests or exams (e.g. final or exit exams) ☐

- Standardized tests (e.g. CAAT) ☐

7. Learner Assessment

A quality adult literacy and basic education program monitors learner progress on an ongoing basis through a variety of participatory assessment procedures.

- Quizzes ☐

- Essays ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

iii. Program staff meet with learners to discuss:

- Their interests. ☐

- Their goals. ☐

- Their learning styles. ☐

- Their progress. ☐

- Their difficulties. ☐

- Their specific learning needs. ☐

iv. Learners are involved in designing assessment procedures. ☐

7. Learner Assessment

A quality adult literacy and basic education program monitors learner progress on an ongoing basis through a variety of participatory assessment procedures.

7C   Learner assessments are a positive experience for learners.

i.   Learner assessments validate learners' strengths and help develop self-confidence and self-esteem. ☐

ii.   The program ensures the assessment environment has a positive impact on the learner. ☐

iii.   Program staff are sensitive to learners' issues, like test anxiety or special needs, when assessing learners. ☐

iv.   Sufficient time is available to ensure that the assessment and placement processes are thorough. ☐

v.   Assessments are kept confidential and not released without permission. ☐

7D   Learner assessments are ongoing.

i.   Learners receive immediate and meaningful feedback on a regular basis. ☐

7. Learner Assessment

A quality adult literacy and basic education program monitors learner progress on an ongoing basis through a variety of participatory assessment procedures.

ii.   Assessment takes place:

- On intake.

- During the program.

- On exit.

- Other _____ .

Reflections

1. What other activities in your program reflect this best practice?
   (If possible, provide specific examples.)

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2. What could your program do to improve how it supports this best practice?

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3. What assistance will you need to achieve this?

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8. Respect and Support for Learners

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program respects its learners and supports them to achieve their goals.**

8A Structures and supports are in place to facilitate learner success.

i. The environment is safe, orderly, comfortable and conducive to learning. ☐

ii. The program provides information about available support services. ☐

iii. Program activities include learners' families. ☐

iv. The program recognizes learner strengths and builds on them. ☐

v. The program provides information on supports that are available for learners with special needs, such as assessment, specialized equipment, transportation. ☐

8. Respect and Support for Learners
A quality adult literacy and basic education program respects its learners and supports them to achieve their goals.

8B The individual needs of learners are recognized and responded to.

i. A process is in place to assist learners to access support services, where necessary. ☐

ii. The program is pro-active in supporting learners in a variety of ways, such as:

- Program staff identify learners' support needs, such as funding, counselling, childcare and housing, during intake interviews. ☐

- Program staff follow up with learners who are not participating in or attending the program to determine if they are facing barriers and require additional support services. ☐

8C The program respects its learners.

i. The program maintains a good rapport and promotes mutual respect among learners, staff and others involved in the program. ☐

8. Respect and Support for Learners
A quality adult literacy and basic education program respects its learners and supports them to achieve their goals.

ii.   The program creates a supportive learning environment.

iii.   The program uses positive language to refer to learners.

iv.   The program is aware of and sensitive to the multiple roles of adult learners.

8D The program maintains the confidentiality of learners' records and information.

i.   See Program Administration (P. 94).

Reflections

1. What other activities in your program reflect this best practice? (If possible, provide specific examples.)

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2. What could your program do to improve how it supports this best practice?

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3. What assistance will you need to achieve this?

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9. Transferability of Learning

A quality adult literacy and basic education program has procedures and practices in place to help learners transfer their learning to further education, training, employment or community life.

9A Program content and delivery support and promote the development of transferable skills and lifelong learning.

i. The program uses appropriate resources and curriculum guidelines. ☐

ii. The program clearly identifies, documents and communicates to learners what the intended outcomes of the program are.

- Clearly stated outcomes are developed for each course and program. ☐

- Achievement of learners' goals is documented. ☐

- Learners' knowledge and skills are documented when they exit the program. ☐

- Learners' satisfaction with the program is documented. ☐

- Other programs are satisfied with learners' knowledge and skills. ☐

9. Transferability of Learning
A quality adult literacy and basic education program has procedures and practices in place to help learners transfer their learning to further education, training, employment or community life.

- Employers are satisfied with learners' performance. ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

iii.   The program has community and organizational links to help learners move successfully from one program to another, to greater community involvement, to further training or to employment. ☐

iv.   Literacy is integrated into the broader educational and training system. ☐

v.   The program promotes the transferability of knowledge, skills and attitudes that learners acquire in the program. ☐

Reflections

1. What other activities in your program reflect this best practice?
   (If possible, provide specific examples.)

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2. What could your program do to improve how it supports this best practice?

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3. What assistance will you need to achieve this?

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10. Culture

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program appreciates and respects the diverse cultures of the learners and incorporates them into the program.**

10A — The program recognizes the importance of culture to learners' identity and self-esteem.

i.   The program encourages learners to have pride in their culture. ☐

ii. Learners share their cultural knowledge and skills as part of the program. ☐

iii. The culture of learners is incorporated into the program, wherever possible. ☐

iv. Local culture and history are included in the program. ☐

10B — Northern traditional knowledge and language are integral parts of the program.

i.   The expertise of community people, such as elders, hunters, carvers and other artisans, is used in the program. ☐

ii. Some learning activities take place outside the classroom in the context of the culture of the community. ☐

10. Culture
A quality adult literacy and basic education program appreciates and respects the diverse cultures of the learners and incorporates them into the program.

iii.   First language/mother tongue literacy is encouraged:

- Courses/sessions are offered in appropriate NWT official language(s). ☐

iv.   The language of the community is visible in the program in ways such as:

- Materials/resources are available in the language. ☐

- Signs are written in the language. ☐

- Speakers/staff from the language group are involved in the program. ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

10C   Program staff are sensitive to different cultures.

i.   Program staff have opportunities for cross-cultural training. ☐

ii.   Program staff are aware of and sensitive to culturally based communication and interaction patterns. ☐

10. Culture

A quality adult literacy and basic education program appreciates and respects the diverse cultures of the learners and incorporates them into the program.

iii. Program staff are aware of and respond to different learning styles. ☐

iv. Program staff select materials and topics that are culturally relevant for learners. ☐

Reflections

1. What other activities in your program reflect this best practice?
   (If possible, provide specific examples.)

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2. What could your program do to improve how it supports this best practice?

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3. What assistance will you need to achieve this?

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11. Community

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program ensures a strong community focus by being engaged in the community and actively engaging the community in the program.**

11A | The program identifies and responds to the needs of the community.

i.   Community needs are identified through processes, such as:

- A regular community needs assessment process ☐

- Establishing and/or participating in a community training/education advisory group ☐

- Consulting with community groups at all levels as part of the planning process ☐

- Formal and informal communication, such as meetings or conversations ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

ii. The community has opportunities for input into the program. ☐

iii. The program reflects community needs. ☐

11. Community

A quality adult literacy and basic education program ensures a strong community focus by being engaged in the community and actively engaging the community in the program.

11B   The community is actively involved in the program.

i.   The program works closely with other community organizations, where appropriate.   ☐

ii.   The skills and expertise of community members or groups, such as the following, are recognized and used within the program:

- Elders and youth groups   ☐

- Community organizations and governing bodies   ☐

- Education groups   ☐

- Health and social service agencies and groups   ☐

- Employers, business and industry   ☐

- Cultural organizations   ☐

- Others _____ .   ☐

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11. Community

A quality adult literacy and basic education program ensures a strong community focus by being engaged in the community and actively engaging the community in the program.

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iii.   Community representatives are welcome to participate in program events.   ☐

iv.   Learner success is recognized and celebrated with the community through activities such as:

- Newsletter/radio/poster announcements   ☐

- An awards banquet   ☐

- An end of year celebration   ☐

- Other   _____ .   ☐

v.   The program publicly credits the community for its support.   ☐

11C   The program, learners and program staff are actively involved in the community.

i.   The program is involved in community projects and events.   ☐

ii.   The program has field trips into the community.   ☐

11. Community

A quality adult literacy and basic education program ensures a strong community focus by being engaged in the community and actively engaging the community in the program.

iii. The program shares its skills and expertise with other organizations and individuals in the community to assist in community development.

iv. The program contributes to the life and development of the community.

v. The program builds community capacity by training local people, including tutors and volunteers.

vi. Program staff are active, visible and available in the community.

Self Assessment Tool for Programs

Reflections

1. What other activities in your program reflect this best practice?
   (If possible, provide specific examples.)

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2. What could your program do to improve how it supports this best practice?

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3. What assistance will you need to achieve this?

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12. Outreach

A quality adult literacy and basic education program reaches out to the community to attract potential learners and gain the support of the community.

12A | The program uses a variety of strategies to recruit potential learners and volunteers.

i. The program offers a range of programming to meet the needs of adult learners in the community. ☐

ii. The program knows who its target groups are. ☐

iii. The program determines which recruitment strategies are successful in attracting the various target groups and volunteers and uses them. ☐

iv. The program uses a variety of means to publicize the program. ☐

v. The program uses the experiences of former learners and staff to create awareness of the benefits of the program. ☐

12. Outreach
A quality adult literacy and basic education program reaches out to the community to attract potential learners and gain the support of the community.

12B | The program gains support from the community for literacy, the program and its learners.

i. The program advocates in the community on literacy policy and support issues that affect learners, such as:

- For childcare ☐

- For student housing ☐

- Other _____. ☐

ii. The program initiates a public awareness program to share information regularly with relevant organizations and individuals through means such as:

- Posters ☐

- Brochures ☐

- Newsletters ☐

- Reports ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

12. Outreach

A quality adult literacy and basic education program reaches out to the community to attract potential learners and gain the support of the community.

iii.   The program makes and maintains contacts with relevant media. ☐

Reflections

1. What other activities in your program reflect this best practice?
   (If possible, provide specific examples.)

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2. What could your program do to improve how it supports this best
   practice?

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3. What assistance will you need to achieve this?

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13. Organizational Linkages and Partnerships

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program works collaboratively with other organizations and agencies to support the program, the learners and the program staff.**

13A The program is proactive in establishing effective relationships with other organizations and agencies.

i. Where the partnership is formal:

  - Agreements are in place that outline roles and responsibilities. ☐

  - The agreements and partnership arrangements are reviewed regularly. ☐

ii. The program regularly takes part in advisory or interagency groups, or advocates establishing such groups if they do not exist. ☐

iii. The program shares information about community, program, staff and learner successes, challenges or needs with groups, such as:

  - Elders and youth ☐

> **13. Organizational Linkages and Partnerships**
> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program works collaboratively with other organizations and agencies to support the program, the learners and the program staff.**

- Community organizations and governing bodies ☐

- Education groups ☐

- Health and social service agencies ☐

- Employers, business and industry ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

iv.   The program keeps other organizations and agencies informed about activities in which they have a common interest.

- The program reports regularly to its partner organizations and agencies. ☐

- The program invites its partner organizations and agencies to participate in program events, where appropriate. ☐

- Partner organizations or agencies visit the program, where appropriate. ☐

13. Organizational Linkages and Partnerships
A quality adult literacy and basic education program works collaboratively with other organizations and agencies to support the program, the learners and the program staff.

- The program collaborates with other organizations and agencies with common interests to improve coordination and prevent duplication of services. ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

v. The program has adequate time for liaising with funders and other partners. ☐

13B The program draws support from, and provides support to, its partner organizations and agencies.

i. The program receives expertise, resources (materials, facilities, etc.) or other forms of support from, and provides support to, its partner organizations and agencies. ☐

ii. The program works with its partner organizations or agencies to identify emerging needs and respond to them. ☐

iii. The program participates in shared or jointly sponsored projects, such as NWT Literacy Week, or career fairs. ☐

iv. The program receives professional support through its links with territorial and national organizations. ☐

Reflections

1. What other activities in your program reflect this best practice?
   (If possible, provide specific examples.)

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2. What could your program do to improve how it supports this best practice?

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3. What assistance will you need to achieve this?

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14. Staff Development and Support

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program values its staff and places a priority on staff development.**

| 14A | Program staff are familiar with the organization, the community, and the program. |

i. New program staff receive orientation

- To the organization. ☐

- To the program. ☐

- To the community and its available resources. ☐

- To the cultures of the community. ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

ii. Program staff have adequate program information, like curriculum, program manuals, accepted practices, policies and guidelines. ☐

☐

iii. Program staff are proactive in meeting the community.

14. Staff Development and Support
A quality adult literacy and basic education program values its staff and places a priority on staff development.

14B

The program recognizes the value of professional development and training opportunities to ongoing program improvement.

i. Program staff have ongoing professional development and training opportunities, as identified through performance appraisals.

ii. Program staff are aware of and take advantage of training and professional development.

iii. Program staff have opportunities to keep up-to-date professionally, through a variety of means, such as access to current information, publications, videos, etc.

iv. Structures and processes are in place for a "buddy" system to enable experienced staff to provide guidance to new staff.

v. Funding and release time are designated for program staff to participate in training and professional development.

14C

The program values its staff.

i. The program communicates in an open and ongoing basis with staff.

14. Staff Development and Support
A quality adult literacy and basic education program values its staff and places a priority on staff development.

ii.   Processes are in place, such as contact with supervisors, performance appraisals, etc., to support staff. ☐

iii.   The program has strategies to recognize staff contributions and achievements. ☐

iv.   Program staff have opportunities to network with colleagues and other professionals in the literacy field through a variety of means, such as the use of: ☐

- Technology ☐

- Regular regional meetings and/or conferences ☐

- Regular staff meetings ☐

- A newsletter or website to share information with staff ☐

- Monthly teleconferences ☐

- Other _____. ☐

Reflections

1. What other activities in your program reflect this best practice?
   (If possible, provide specific examples.)

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2. What could your program do to improve how it supports this best practice?

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3. What assistance will you need to achieve this?

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15. Funding

A quality adult literacy and basic education program has adequate ongoing funding to run the program.

This section can be used to assess levels of funding and also how accessible it is. If information on funding does not seem easily accessible, we suggest that you talk to your funders and share the information with them.

15A The program has adequate, stable, consistent, ongoing funding to meet its goals and objectives.

i. Adequate funding is available for all aspects of the program, such as:

- Staffing ☐
- Facilities/infrastructure costs ☐
- Materials/equipment ☐
- Operations and maintenance ☐
- Technology (including computers) ☐
- Library/resource materials ☐
- Learner support services ☐
- Contracts ☐

15. Funding
A quality adult literacy and basic education program has adequate ongoing funding to run the program.

- Program planning and evaluation ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

ii. The budget reflects real costs, including in-kind support, where appropriate. ☐

iii. The program receives information about its funding in sufficient time to plan for it and spend it appropriately. ☐

iv. Multi-year funding is available, where appropriate. ☐

v. The program has a diversified funding base, where appropriate. ☐

15B Funding is easy to access, flexible and fair.

i. Funders consult people involved in the program when setting program and funding priorities. ☐

ii. Funders promote the availability of funding. ☐

iii. Funders direct programs to funding sources. ☐

15. Funding
A quality adult literacy and basic education program has adequate ongoing funding to run the program.

iv.   The guidelines/criteria for funding are clear and flexible.   ☐

v.   Information on changes to guidelines/criteria is timely.   ☐

vi.   The application process is simple.   ☐

vii.   Funding supports a variety of programs and activities.   ☐

Reflections

1. What other activities in your program reflect this best practice?
   (If possible, provide specific examples.)

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2. What could your program do to improve how it supports this best practice?

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3. What assistance will you need to achieve this?

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16. Program Administration

A quality adult literacy and basic education program is well-managed and well-run through appropriate policies and procedures.

16A Policies and/or procedures are in place to manage the program.

i. The program establishes and follows policies and procedures related to learners, such as:

- Attendance policies ☐

- Learner assessment ☐

- Intake and exit procedures ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

ii. The program establishes and follows policies and procedures related to program staff, such as:

- Personnel policies ☐

- Staff support, e.g. professional development ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

16. Program Administration
A quality adult literacy and basic education program is well-managed and well-run through appropriate policies and procedures.

iii. The program establishes and follows policies and procedures related to the program, such as:

- A standardized curriculum ☐

- Program accountability ☐

- Other _____ . ☐

16B The program maintains accurate records.

i. The program maintains detailed, orderly and up-to-date records for:

- Learners ☐

- Program staff ☐

- The program ☐

- Program finances and administration. ☐

16. Program Administration

A quality adult literacy and basic education program is well-managed and well-run through appropriate policies and procedures.

ii.   The program reviews its records on a regular basis. ☐

iii.   The program has current job descriptions for all program staff. ☐

16C The program maintains the confidentiality of records and information.

i.   Program staff are aware of and follow the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and associated policies and guidelines. ☐

ii.   The program follows established confidentiality guidelines, such as:

- The program uses a release of information form. ☐

- The program has a signed consent for use of learner materials, photos, etc. ☐

- Learner conferences are conducted in private. ☐

- Learner and program staff records are kept in a secure location. ☐

16. Program Administration

A quality adult literacy and basic education program is well-managed and well-run through appropriate policies and procedures.

- Other _____ . ☐

iii.   The program discusses the issue of confidentiality with staff and learners at the start of the program. ☐

16D   The program is accountable.

i.   See Accountability (P. 99).

Reflections

1. What other activities in your program reflect this best practice?
   (If possible, provide specific examples.)

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. What could your program do to improve how it supports this best practice?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. What assistance will you need to achieve this?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

Self Assessment Tool for Programs

17. Accountability

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program is accountable to the funders, community and partners, who also share responsibility for the program's success.**

17A   Procedures are in place to ensure accountability.

i.   An accountability framework is in place that includes items such as the following:

- Reporting relationships, roles and responsibilities with regard to accountability are clearly defined. ☐

- Accepted criteria and guidelines are established. ☐

- Reporting requirements are established. ☐

- Other _____. ☐

ii.   The program follows the accountability requirements. ☐

iii.   The program delivers what it says it will deliver. ☐

iv.   The program provides information that demonstrates its accountability. ☐

17. Accountability
A quality adult literacy and basic education program is accountable to the funders, community and partners, who also share responsibility for the program's success.

17B   The program is administratively responsible.

i.   The program keeps accurate statistical and financial information related to the program. ☐

ii.   The program operates within its budget. ☐

17C   People involved in the program share responsibility for it.

i.   People involved in the program demonstrate commitment to it, such as:

- Instructors ensure a quality program, provide feedback, communicate success, etc. ☐

- Learners attend regularly, complete work, etc. ☐

- Funders provide funding in a timely manner, etc. ☐

Self Assessment Tool for Programs

Reflections

1. What other activities in your program reflect this best practice? (If possible, provide specific examples.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. What could your program do to improve how it supports this best practice?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. What assistance will you need to achieve this?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Supporting Research

Understanding Literacy

Before we can define best practices for literacy programs, we have to spell out, in some way, our general understanding of what constitutes literacy. The best practices themselves will then articulate our philosophy of literacy in concrete terms and guide our programs.

Literacy is much more complex than it first appears. In today's world, there are many different understandings of it. For example, the dominant model of literacy has been one of a single phenomenon that consisted of an "autonomous, neutral and universal set of skills" (Street: 2003, xiii). In other words, it focused on reading and writing print and numbers, and usually in the dominant national language. More recently, other, more complex, models of literacy have emerged that try to describe the complexity and meanings of literacy in people's everyday lives (Collins & Blot, 2003). These models tend to see literacy as a social practice, embedded in particular cultures. Literacy may change from situation to situation: for example, it may look different in the home, the community, the group to which people belong, the workplace, and so on. These models involve more complex symbol systems that include written-linguistic, oral, visual, audio and gestural ways of making meaning (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000).

The NWT literacy strategy document, *Towards Literacy: A Strategy Framework—2001-2005* (Dept. of ECE, 2001), reflects the north's commitment to maintaining and enhancing the use of the eleven official languages in the NWT (English, French, Cree, Chipewyan, Dogrib, South Slavey, North Slavey, Gwich'in, Inuvialuktun, Inuinnaqtun and Inuktitut). It defines literacy as:

. . . an individual's ability to listen, speak, read, write, view, represent, compute and solve problems in one or more of the NWT official languages at levels of proficiency necessary to function in the family, in the community and on the job. (p. 5)

Literacy, in its broadest sense, is a foundation for wellness. It is empowering. It lets people take control of their lives and participate fully in society. Low literacy, on the other hand, may adversely affect people's lives both directly or indirectly. For example, people with low literacy:

- May not be able to read the instructions on medicine, or contents on food labels.
- Are more likely to have poorer health and live a shorter life.
- May be unable to participate fully and meaningfully in the lives of their families, communities and society.
- May feel ashamed and have low self-esteem.
- May end up in trouble with the law.
- Are more likely to be unemployed or earn less money.
- May not be able to read with their children.
- Are more likely to have children with low reading skills.

In the NWT, low literacy is a concern, because many adults reach adulthood without the knowledge and skills to achieve their personal or career goals.

A Range of Adult Literacy Programs

Learners in adult literacy programs often come with a broad range of needs, not just a need to improve their reading, writing and math skills. They may not have experienced success in school; they may not have completed their schooling; they may have had personal life experiences that have acted as

barriers to learning. Now they need a variety of opportunities to develop literacy and other basic skills that will meet their needs as individuals, as family members, as community members, as employees and as members of society.

Community-based literacy programs that offer a broad range of programs are one way to provide these opportunities. The specifics of these programs will vary according to:

- The community in which the program is offered.
- The needs of the learners in the program.
- The skills and expertise of the staff who deliver the programs.

In recent years, the scope of community-based literacy programs in the NWT has begun to change considerably. Today in a community, you might see any or, ideally, all of the following:

- Community-based adult literacy and basic education programs
- Family literacy programs
- Workplace literacy programs
- Integrated or comprehensive literacy programs
- Literacy integrated into other programs.

Community-based adult literacy and basic education programs are stand-alone programs that are an integral part of the literacy continuum and offer an essential service in the delivery of literacy programs to adults. These programs may include basic literacy, high school completion, academic upgrading, pre-employment and also personal development skills.

Family literacy programs are programs that involve adults and children learning and using literacy together. They may take many forms, but are most effective where:

- Adult education is central to the program

- Adults learn to be literate and to use their literacy in life roles, such as parenting, working or participating in community life
- Adults are encouraged and helped to transfer literacy and learning skills to their children (Dept. of ECE, 2001, p.12).

Workplace literacy programs help people continue to learn while they are employed. They are located in the workplace, and benefit both the employee and the employer. Employees have opportunities to improve their literacy and basic skills, and increase their self-confidence. Employer benefits include improved health and safety, as well as quality of work.

Integrated or comprehensive literacy programs combine existing adult and child learning programs and blend them into a more effective literacy model. An example of an integrated literacy program is the **4-component model**, which consists of:

- Children's learning, where children attend a quality early childhood program or school program every day.
- Adult learning, where adults develop basic literacy skills and life skills, but also develop learning materials to use with their children at home.
- Parent and child time together (PACT), where parents go into their children's class and play with and read to their children.
- Parent time, where parents learn about child and literacy development and community resources, and have time to network and develop mutual support with other parents.

Literacy integrated into other programs means that the program is not a stand-alone literacy program, but that literacy is incorporated into other programs, such as an Arts & Crafts program like jewelry-making. The successful literacy outcomes of these programs relate to hands-on literacy use, such as business planning, marketing, and so on.

Supporting Research

The original intent of this document was to be inclusive, and to cover all these models. The reality, however, is that it is very complex to do so. Perhaps the time has not yet come to be able to describe them in this way. Thus the document focuses on the first type of program: Adult Literacy and Basic Education Programs. We are confident, however, that because all models involve adult literacy, some of the best practices could easily apply to other types of literacy programs. In the *Resource Manual of Practical Ideas* and in the *Examples of Best Practices in Action,* you will see ideas from some of these other programs.

The document builds on work that the Department of ECE and literacy providers began in 1999 to define standards for ALBE programs and also on the *Directive: Adult Literacy & Basic Education*, published in 2000.

The directive identifies five principles for Adult Literacy and Basic Education in the NWT. These same principles are used for this document:

Learner-centred—programs where the needs, interests, abilities and goals of the learners are a priority.

Accessible—programs and services that are broadly available. They support lifelong learning and recognize that learners enter and re-enter learning environments based on individual needs and goals.

Coordinated and Integrated—programs where responsibility, decision-making, and resources, for example, are shared among a variety of agencies and organizations to meet the needs of adult learners.

Community-Based—programs that are responsive to the unique needs and conditions of each community, and that support individual and community development.

Respect for Cultural Diversity—programs that promote cultural diversity and recognize the importance of cultural literacy to the survival, development and empowerment of individuals and language communities. (Dept. of ECE, 2002)

A Comparison of Best Practices from Other Jurisdictions

This project focuses on best practices in adult literacy and basic education in the Northwest Territories. However we are not the first jurisdiction to try to define them. Our starting point therefore was to examine what is "state of the art" in other parts of the country and the world and build on that work.

Adult Literacy and Basic Education

In May 1988, the International Reading Association (IRA) passed a Resolution calling for the development and promotion of "standards for volunteer tutoring programs and the training of literacy volunteer tutors" and "evaluation standards for literacy programs". In its background statement, the IRA acknowledged the contribution of volunteer tutors in literacy work, but stressed the need for well-planned training for them. The IRA attributed the high drop-out rate in part to the lack of qualified tutors and program shortcomings (Thomas, 1989a).

In Canada, work on best practices in adult literacy also began in 1988, when the Executive of the Adult Basic Education Association of BC approved a statement on "Quality Literacy Programs" (Thomas: 1989a). This was followed in 1989 by the development of the *Adult Literacy Volunteer Tutor Program Evaluation Kit* for the BC Ministry of Advanced Education and the National Literacy Secretariat. Programs can use the kit for self-evaluation or can have someone outside the program use it for an external evaluation. It has four components:

- A Program Questionnaire that consists of 17 good practice statements, the conditions that support each statement and a rating scale from 1-5 for each statement.

- A Program Profile that collects quantitative and descriptive data about the program, provides information about the resources available to the program, and other background information to help explain the findings from the evaluation.
- A Tutor Questionnaire that is keyed to the appropriate good practices in the Program Questionnaire.
- A Learner Questionnaire that is also keyed to the Program Questionnaire.

The evaluation leads into program planning, where people determine their priorities and the help they need to achieve their objectives for the coming year.

At the time of its development, the *Adult Literacy Volunteer Tutor Program Evaluation Kit* was considered a leading-edge document. It helped stimulate other initiatives in best practices and quality standards in Ontario and Alberta. The model has since been adapted for workplace, ESL, family literacy and most recently for use with Francophone groups using employment skills as a basis of training (Audrey Thomas, personal communication).

BC later developed the *ABE Program Quality Framework.* This consisted of 15 common components, each of which has a good practice statement followed by a list of relevant indicators. It too leads into program planning.

Also in 1989, the Province of British Columbia and the National Literacy Secretariat sponsored a project to identify and report on exemplary programs and innovative practices for adult literacy across Canada. *Exemplary Adult Literacy Programs and Innovative Practices in Canada* describes a variety of models of institutional, workplace and community-based programs in different locations throughout Canada.

In 1991, Ontario began work on developing an accountability framework. After this work was completed, the province then began to develop quality standards and evaluation guidelines. Representatives from different Ontario literacy organizations were part of the development team. Eighteen standards were identified. In 1994, 13 pilot projects were funded to develop program features and evidence for each standard. Five principles for the development of literacy programming are reflected throughout the core quality standards:

- Belief in learners
- Respect for racial and cultural diversity
- Lifelong learning and adult education
- Adequate and appropriate service provision
- Integrated services.

The GNWT Department of Education, Culture and Employment used Ontario's framework as a basis to develop its draft quality standards in 1999.

In 1995, Manitoba Education and Training produced *Exemplary Practice in Manitoba: Models of Quality in Literacy Programming* to celebrate excellence in literacy programs. It describes exemplary programs in rural, urban, northern and workplace settings each of which " . . . contribute to the development of the principles of Good Practice in Manitoba" (Introduction). It identifies the elements of Good Practice that each program exemplifies.

In 1996, the Saskatchewan Literacy Network began work on developing provincial tutor training materials. As a result of the research for this project, the steering committee decided that a preliminary step should be to articulate what good literacy practice was. In 2000, the Saskatchewan Literacy Network published *Best Program Practices*, which ". . . provides an opportunity for programs to reflect on their current initiatives, identify strengths and plan further improvements" (p.iii). Guiding principles for this project include:

Supporting Research

- Learner-centred programming
- Universal access
- Life-long learning
- Developing pro-active, nurturing learning environments
- Free services
- First language literacy.

The tool consists of three parts: a Program Questionnaire, a Tutor Questionnaire and a Learner Questionnaire. The Program Questionnaire has 13 best practice statements, followed by indicators of success, and sample measures in a checklist format. It also includes questions to guide future program planning. As with similar tools, wherever possible, people work together to complete the Program Questionnaire.

Common Themes

A review of the Canadian documents shows a number of common themes for best practices in adult literacy. These include:

- Philosophy
- Planning and evaluation
- Instruction
- Learning materials
- Assessment
- Accessibility
- Support for learners
- Staff training and development
- Community
- Partnerships
- Program administration

Newer documents include a section on Accountability. None of the documents includes Culture as a separate theme, although indicators

relating to the culture of the learner appear in a number of documents. Similarly, Transferability of Learning does not appear as a separate theme.

We have had to fit indicators from a variety of different best practice themes into our comparison charts. We trust we have managed to reflect those from other jurisdictions as accurately as possible.

Best Practices: A Comparison of Canadian Documents

Best Practice and Indicators	BC Tutor Evaluation Kit	BC ABE Program Quality Framework	Ontario Quality Standards	Saskatchewan Best Program Practices	NWT Quality Standards (Draft Document)
Philosophy					
Philosophy/Mission	●	●	●	●	●
Includes goals and objectives		●	●	●	●
Clearly written or stated; plain language	●	●	●	●	●
Reviewed regularly; updated	●	●		●	●
Participatory process		●		●	●
Communicated to stakeholders, partners, etc.	●	●	●	●	●
Guides decision-making/ reflected in practice		●	●	●	●
Prominently displayed			●	●	●
Used for promotion				●	●
Program Planning					
Goals and objectives consistent with philosophy, needs of learners, demands of funders	●	●		●	
Participatory process	●	●		●	
Occurs regularly	●	●		●	
Communicated to stakeholders, partners etc.	●			●	
Reviewed and updated	●			●	
Includes long-range/strategic plan	●			●	
Involves needs assessments	●			●	
Networks to keep informed of changing needs				●	

Best Practices: A Comparison of Canadian Documents (cont.)

Best Practice & Indicators	BC Tutor Evaluation Kit	BC ABE Program Quality Framework	Ontario Quality Standards	Saskatchewan Best Program Practices	NWT Quality Standards (Draft Document)
Program Evaluation					
Ongoing					
Participatory					
Regular					
Includes quantitative and qualitative data					
Is built into program design					
Results direct future planning					
Includes monitoring learner progress					
Includes learner follow-up					
Includes staff evaluation					
Results communicated to stakeholders etc.					
Celebrates achievements					
Has an evaluation plan that it completes					
Demonstrated satisfaction					
Program Accessibility					
Respects differences			●	●	●
Recognizes different goals and learning styles			●	●	●
Flexible	●		●	●	●
Works towards fair, equitable outcomes			●	●	
Location is identifiable and convenient	●	●		●	
Facilitates access to other learning opportunities	●			●	●
Advertises the program (in plain language)	●			●	
Facilities are physically accessible	●			●	●
Safe; conducive to learning		●			●

Best Practices: A Comparison of Canadian Documents (cont.)

Best Practice & Indicators	BC Tutor Evaluation Kit	BC ABE Program Quality Framework	Ontario Quality Standards	Saskatchewan Best Program Practices	NWT Quality Standards (Draft Document)
Program Accessibility (Cont.)					
Accessible to the broadest range of learners				●	●
Location, equipment suitable for adults, program					
Provides support to overcome barriers				●	
Instruction					
Reflects principles of adult/ lifelong learning		●		●	●
Time reflects needs of learners		●	●		●
Learner-instructor ratio reflects needs/levels of learners		●	●		●
Well-planned					●
Responds to specific goals, needs of learners	●	●	●	●	●
Reviews goals collaboratively				●	
Teaching & learning are participatory, interactive				●	
Promotes the development of transferable skills & lifelong learning				●	
Provides a variety of learning opportunities, delivery models		●	●	●	●
Prerequisites, completion described					●
Takes into account learner's prior knowledge, experience; uses learner skills etc.	●	●		●	
Takes into account initial assessment results	●				
Builds in progress checks; acknowledges achievement	●				
Encourages discussion and critical thinking and integrated communication	●				

Best Practices: A Comparison of Canadian Documents (cont.)

Best Practice & Indicators	BC Tutor Evaluation Kit	BC ABE Program Quality Framework	Ontario Quality Standards	Saskatchewan Best Program Practices	NWT Quality Standards (Draft Document)
Instruction (cont.)					
Follows prescribed curricula					●
Attendance is monitored					●
Plans for individual assessment					●
Helps learners assume responsibility for learning		●			
Provides staff training for new courses		●			
Encourages first language literacy				●	
Learning Materials					
Uses a wide variety of learning materials	●	●	●		●
Consistent with philosophy, goals	●	●	●		●
Appropriate for adults	●	●	●		●
Relevant to learners' needs		●	●		●
Demonstrate respect for human dignity; free of bias except to generate critical thinking	●	●	●		
Culturally relevant					●
Current		●			●
Wide variety of books available					●
Artifacts available	●				●
Canadian content, where appropriate	●	●			
Encourage discussion, critical thinking	●	●			
Produces its own materials	●				
Reviewed regularly	●				

Best Practices: A Comparison of Canadian Documents (cont.)

Best Practice & Indicators	BC Tutor Evaluation Kit	BC ABE Program Quality Framework	Ontario Quality Standards	Saskatchewan Best Program Practices	NWT Quality Standards (Draft Document)
Learner Assessment					
Evaluates learners' progress on an ongoing basis	●		●		●
Assesses learners regularly		●	●		●
Assessments have a positive impact			●	●	●
Assessments are participatory	●		●	●	●
Encourages voluntary assessment				●	
Assessments are linked to instruction	●				●
Assessments are used to develop learning objectives with learners	●			●	●
Helps learners understand procedures and results				●	●
Uses a variety of assessment tools		●		●	●
Identifies special learning needs	●				
Refers learners to programs/agencies as needed	●				
Involves learners in designing assessment procedures	●				
Uses prior learning, challenge and equivalency		●			
Is sensitive to learners' issues re: assessment		●			
Assessment includes non-academic outcomes	●			●	
Provides time for thorough assessment		●			
Follows up on learners		●			
Keeps results of assessments confidential				●	

Best Practices: A Comparison of Canadian Documents (cont.)

Best Practice & Indicators	BC Tutor Evaluation Kit	BC ABE Program Quality Framework	Ontario Quality Standards	Saskatchewan Best Program Practices	NWT Quality Standards (Draft Document)
Respect and Support for Learners					
Recognizes learner needs go beyond literacy and numeracy		●	●		
Assists learners to access available sources of support	●	●	●	●	●
Respects learners' privacy and confidentiality			●		●
Provides a supportive learning environment for learners			●		●
Involves learners in decision-making					●
Learners manage learning environment					●
Informs learners of why and how information is collected					●
Follows up regularly with learners	●	●			●
Provides opportunities for learner networking	●				●
Publishes learner writing	●				
Identifies learners' needs & arranges for appropriate assistance		●		●	●
Provides intake orientation		●			
Provides ongoing support for learners		●			●
Communicates information on learner progress			●		●
Learning materials reflect learners' cultures, needs and interests					●
Recognizes prior learning					●
Uses a variety of delivery models and learning materials		●			●

Supporting Research

Best Practices: A Comparison of Canadian Documents (cont.)

Best Practice & Indicators	BC Tutor Evaluation Kit	BC ABE Program Quality Framework	Ontario Quality Standards	Saskatchewan Best Program Practices	NWT Quality Standards (Draft Document)
Respect and Support for Learners (cont.)					
Involves former learners in assisting current learners	●				
Offers tutorial help as needed		●			
Creates partnerships with human services agencies				●	●
Instructor is an advocate for learners					●
Transferability of Learning					
Outcomes are recognized by other educational programs, business, industry, etc.					●
Learners can progress to further education, training, and employment					●
Programs and program/learner success are promoted					●
Program tracks its learners					●
Has articulation agreements					●
Uses a standardized curriculum recognized by outside agencies etc.					●
Records are available for each learner					●
Community					
Rooted in the community			●	●	●
Creates and counts on community support			●	●	●
Assesses and responds to community needs/helps the community meet its goals	●		●	●	●
Involves learners from the community in decision-making re: community issues			●	●	

Best Practices: A Comparison of Canadian Documents (cont.)

Best Practice & Indicators	BC Tutor Evaluation Kit	BC ABE Program Quality Framework	Ontario Quality Standards	Saskatchewan Best Program Practices	NWT Quality Standards (Draft Document)
Community (cont.)					
Involves community in program planning, delivery & evaluation	●	●			●
Learners are involved in the community					●
Uses a community development approach					●
Reflects the values and culture of the community		●			●
Community recognizes learner success	●				●
Community is aware of & involved in the program		●		●	●
Creates links with community social agencies & educational programs	●	●		●	
Has community advisory committee				●	●
Publicly credits the support it receives from the community				●	
Outreach					
Uses positive and effective strategies to attract learners and other participants			●		
Has determined which recruitment strategies are most successful for learners & staff	●				
Experience of previous staff and learners is used to create awareness	●				
Makes and maintains contact with media	●				
Publicizes program regularly	●				

Best Practices: A Comparison of Canadian Documents (cont.)

Best Practice & Indicators	BC Tutor Evaluation Kit	BC ABE Program Quality Framework	Ontario Quality Standards	Saskatchewan Best Program Practices	NWT Quality Standards (Draft Document)
Outreach (cont.)					
Advocates for literacy and learners in the community	●				
Organizational Linkages and Partnerships					
Has good relationships with other organizations that serve its learners			●	●	●
Is being funded by a variety of partners					●
Has an advisory group					●
Refers learners to other organizations/programs on completion			●		●
Shares projects and resources with other organizations				●	●
Has a variety of guest speakers from partners					●
Learners participate in field trips to other organizations					●
Sponsors visit program regularly					●
Ensures a strong coordinated system			●		
Member of literacy coalition/ provincial network				●	
Submits annual report to provincial network				●	
Sends resources created in the program to public library, SLN and NALD for distribution				●	
Joint activities/resources with schools					●
Supports literacy fundraising efforts				●	

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Best Practices: A Comparison of Canadian Documents (cont.)

Best Practice & Indicators	BC Tutor Evaluation Kit	BC ABE Program Quality Framework	Ontario Quality Standards	Saskatchewan Best Program Practices	NWT Quality Standards (Draft Document)
Staff Development & Support					
Has well-trained literacy instructors	●	●	●		
Support for orientation and training	●	●	●	●	●
Appropriate supervision of staff					●
Recognizes and uses training and expertise of staff				●	●
Knowledge and skills in volunteer management	●				
Staff have opportunities to remain current	●	●		●	
Funding is designated for training/PD		●			
Training is appropriate to the needs of learners		●			
Adequate time is allowed for PD and networking		●		●	
Instructors demonstrate commitment and create positive learning environment			●		
Communicates openly with staff				●	
Funding					
Has sufficient funding for staff, learning resources, infrastructure and student support	●			●	●
Consistent, reliable long-term commitment to funding	●				●
Has promotional materials available	●				●
Has current, relevant learning materials	●				●

Supporting Research

Best Practices: A Comparison of Canadian Documents (cont.)

Best Practice & Indicators	BC Tutor Evaluation Kit	BC ABE Program Quality Framework	Ontario Quality Standards	Saskatchewan Best Program Practices	NWT Quality Standards (Draft Document)
Funding (cont.)					
Student evaluations are positive					●
A growing number of organizations are receiving operational funds					●
No fees charged for tuition	●				
Funds for transportation and babysitting	●				
Funds available for program expansion when required	●				
A diversified funding base, if independent of an institution	●				
Consults stakeholders when setting priorities				●	
Calculates and includes in-kind donations				●	
Networks re: funding opportunities				●	
Financial administration is sound				●	
Students are receiving equitable sponsorship					●
Program Administration					
Hires professional staff	●	●		●	
Resources are adequate for program needs	●			●	
Qualifications for staff are specified and appropriate for adults	●			●	
Commitments are required of tutors and learners	●				
Staff and learner records are kept	●				
Confidentiality of records is assured	●			●	

Best Practices: A Comparison of Canadian Documents (cont.)

Best Practice & Indicators	BC Tutor Evaluation Kit	BC ABE Program Quality Framework	Ontario Quality Standards	Saskatchewan Best Program Practices	NWT Quality Standards (Draft Document)
Program Administration (cont.)					
Develops and maintains sound financial and admin. systems and keeps accurate records	●		●	●	
Has appropriate policies, procedures and accountability mechanisms in place e.g. hiring	●	●		●	
Provides opportunities for staff/learners to have input into decision-making		●			
Recognizes staff achievements, provides support		●		●	
Provides time to liaise with funders, partners		●			
Promotes learner/program achievements		●			
Provides regular reports to funders				●	
Accountability					
Demonstrates accountability to sponsors, funders, partners, community			●	●	
Accountability is shared among learners, staff, funders, sponsors, administrators and practitioners					●
Has appropriate procedures and processes in place for learners					●
Final reports/financial statements are available			●		●
Follows accepted provincial criteria and standards				●	

Best Practices: A Comparison of Canadian Documents (cont.)

Best Practice & Indicators	BC Tutor Evaluation Kit	BC ABE Program Quality Framework	Ontario Quality Standards	Saskatchewan Best Program Practices	NWT Quality Standards (Draft Document)
Accountability (cont.)					
Provides quantitative and qualitative indicators of success				●	
Instruction develops learners' skills for real life				●	
Encourages learners' active participation in learning and evaluation process				●	
Ensures evaluation process allows for learners to measure their own progress				●	
Documents increased learner participation in literacy at home, at work and in the community				●	
Documents staff perceptions of progress				●	
Completes learner and staff evaluations				●	●
Program Commitment to Learners/Learner Commitment to Program					
Helps learners meet their goals			●		
Recognizes that learners' goals are broad			●		
Has structures and supports in place to increase access and equitable outcomes			●		
Helps learners' obtain the skills for everyday life in the community according to learners' goals			●		
Helps learners set goals based on understanding of time and commitment requirements			●		

Best Practices: A Comparison of Canadian Documents (cont.)

Best Practice & Indicators	BC Tutor Evaluation Kit	BC ABE Program Quality Framework	Ontario Quality Standards	Saskatchewan Best Program Practices	NWT Quality Standards (Draft Document)
Documented Outcomes					
Each course has clearly stated outcomes	●				
Achievement of learners' goals is documented	●				
Learners' knowledge and skills are documented on exit	●				
Learner, institution and employer satisfaction with program is documented	●				
Program successes are documented	●				
A system for long-term follow up of learners and graduates exists	●				
Learner-Centred Approaches and Methods					
Encourages learners to share control of the learning			●		
Involves staff and learners in decisions that affect learners			●		
Staff and learners identify appropriate methods and approaches for learners			●		
Respects and accommodates learner differences		●		●	
Encourages learners to become active participants in learning		●		●	
Creates a supportive learning environment		●			
Shows mutual respect for everyone in the program		●			

Best Practices: A Comparison of Canadian Documents (cont.)

Best Practice & Indicators	BC Tutor Evaluation Kit	BC ABE Program Quality Framework	Ontario Quality Standards	Saskatchewan Best Program Practices	NWT Quality Standards (Draft Document)
Learner-Centred Approaches and Methods (cont.)					
Responds to individual learners' goals		●			
Makes referrals sensitively and respectfully		●			
Assures confidentiality of sensitive information		●			
Includes learner membership on advisory body				●	
Uses appropriate assessment procedures to guide instruction				●	
Helps learners with career planning					
Encourages lifelong learning				●	
Facilities and Equipment					
Space is adequate for program needs	●	●			
Space is safe and free from hazards	●	●			
Necessary instructional equipment is available	●	●			
Accommodates people with disabilities		●			
Meets WCB regulations		●			
Participation					
Learners and staff participate in planning and review processes	●				
Learners and staff are represented on advisory body	●				
Learners and staff are involved in community awareness activities	●				
Help plan and participate in program activities	●				

Best Practices: A Comparison of Canadian Documents (cont.)

Best Practice & Indicators	BC Tutor Evaluation Kit	BC ABE Program Quality Framework	Ontario Quality Standards	Saskatchewan Best Program Practices	NWT Quality Standards (Draft Document)
Relevant Curriculum					
Curriculum is adult-oriented		●			
Accommodates a variety of learning styles		●			
Is related to program goals, has clearly stated learning outcomes for each course, and established performance standards		●			
Reviewed regularly and adapted to reflect changing requirements		●			
Combines theoretical, practical and experiential approaches		●			
Is sequenced to enhance learner success		●			
Builds on learner experiences and existing skills		●			
Is related to further education and training		●			
Participants evaluate program components to determine their effectiveness		●			
Outlines are kept on file and available to learners		●			
Designed to address continuous intake of learners		●			

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What is the Resource Manual of Practical Ideas?

T he *Best Practices in Action Resource Manual of Practical Ideas* is a collection of best practices submitted by adult educators and literacy practitioners across the Northwest Territories. It documents the many activities and practices that have proven successful in literacy and basic education programs and illustrates the wealth of knowledge and experience of literacy practitioners in the north.

This resource manual is designed as a "living document" that we hope will continue to grow. As you read through the resource we hope it will spark ideas and excite you to share the best practices that are working in your community. New submissions can be sent to the NWT Literacy Council. The resource manual is available online on the NWT Literacy Council, Aurora College and Department of Education, Culture and Employment websites.

How to Use the Resource Manual of Practical Ideas

T he *Best Practices in Action Resource Manual of Practical Ideas* is a collection of activities and practices. It is meant as a guide to spark ideas and to try to build best practices into your program. You can take these ideas and adapt them to meet the needs of your learners and community.

The submissions are organized in sections based on the best practices they support. You can use the **Table of Contents** to search for a submission. In some cases, a submission supports more than one best practice statement so you can search in the **Index,** which provides links to all the best practices that a particular submission supports.

Each submission in the *Resource Manual of Practical Ideas* follows the same basic format, although not all headings will be included in each best practice. These are the headings:

- **Title**
- **Submitted by** – The practitioner's position when they submitted the best practice.
- **Best practices supported** – Indicates the best practices that the submission supports.
- **Curriculum links** – Where appropriate, the best practices are linked to the Government of the NWT Adult Literacy and Basic Education Curricula.
- **What you need** – A list of supplies you will need
- **How it works** – Provides a description of the best practice and how it is done
- **Web links** – Links to internet sites are given where appropriate

Philosophy

A quality adult literacy and basic education program has a clearly stated philosophy and mission that guide its work and practices.

Sharing our Philosophy

Submitted By

Miki O'Kane, Campus Director, Aurora Campus, Aurora College, Inuvik

Best Practices Supported

- Philosophy

How It Works

At the beginning of each academic year, staff orientation workshops are held for adult educators and instructors in the Inuvik region. During these workshops, the campus director takes the time to review Aurora College's mission, goals and objectives with the staff. This is very beneficial because all staff are able to ensure that their program's practices reflect Aurora College's mission and philosophy.

> **Aurora College Mission**
>
> *Aurora College is dedicated to excellence, leadership and innovation in Northern education and research.*

Mission Statement

Submitted By

Liz Pope, Adult Educator, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Philosophy

How It Works

As you enter the Hay River Community Learning Centre you will see a plaque with the Aurora College mission statement engraved onto it. The mission statement is clearly written and displayed prominently for all to see. This allows all who are involved in the centre's programs to be aware of the mission statement.

Program Planning

A quality adult literacy and basic education program engages regularly in a program planning process.

Computers in the Communities

Submitted By

Marja van Nieuwenhuyzen, Chair, Community Programs, Aurora Campus, Inuvik

Best Practices Supported

- Accessibility
- Outreach
- Funding
- Organizational Linkages and Partnerships

How It Works

Computers in the Community is a special course offered to communities in the Beaufort Delta region. A portable computer lab and technology instructor travelled to several Beaufort Delta and Sahtu communities (Aklavik, Tuktoyaktuk, Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour, Holman, Fort McPherson and Tsiigehtchic) to deliver three-week-long computer courses as part of the Adult Literacy and Basic Education upgrading programs. The computer programs covered varied to match the community needs with the emphasis on Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Publisher and PowerPoint.

The *Computers in the Community* program is an example of flexible program delivery. A creative delivery approach is used to offer the courses to as many communities as possible and makes good use of the technology and instructor. This

approach allows the program to offer a broad range of programming to meet the needs of adult learners in their community even though the community itself may not have the technology or expertise. Another plus is that the community benefits by having computer classes available to them in the evenings and on the weekends.

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment and the Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement (AHRDA) groups funded the program. Communities had to submit a proposal if they wanted to offer the program to adult learners.

Training Needs Assessment

Submitted By

Liz Pope, Adult Educator, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Program Planning

How It Works

The adult educator develops a needs assessment survey to gather information about training needs in the community. The training needs assessment survey is then sent to key organizations in the community, such as businesses, government departments, non-profit organizations, and volunteer organizations.
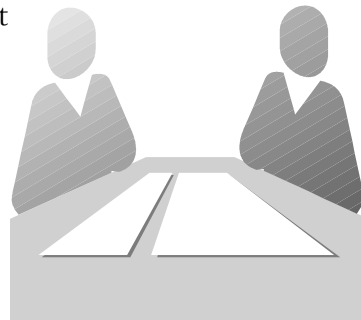
The recipients are asked to fill in the assessment and fax it back to the adult educator. The educator may follow up with the recipients by phone or with an in-person visit to discuss their needs in more detail. Based on the feedback, the adult educator is able to determine the training needs of the community and plan for how the community learning centre can best meet those needs.

Aurora College Hay River

Training Needs Assessment

Labour Market Survey
Aurora College – Hay River requests your input!

Please complete this survey and fax to 874-4201 by February 23rd. The results of this survey will assist Aurora College in determining the training needs of Hay River.

NAME OF COMPANY/ORGANIZATION/DEPARTMENT:

_____

CONTACT:_____

TELEPHONE:_____**FAX**:_____**E-MAIL**_____

 # OF EMPLOYEES:_____ **ANNUAL TURNOVER**:_____

1. Does your company/organization/department have established hiring patterns such as seasonal increases, awarded contracts etc?

   _____

   _____

2. What skills and what education levels do you require your employees to have:

   Occupation:_____ **Occupation**:_____

   Skills:_____ Skills:_____

   Education:_____ Education:_____

   Occupation:_____ **Occupation**:_____

   Skills:_____ Skills:_____

   Education:_____ Education:_____

3. Do you provide your own staff training 'in-house'?

    _____YES _____NO

4. Would your company be interested in **workplace training** programs?
    (i.e. Staff training on company time AT the work-site)

    _____YES _____ NO

5. If **YES**, How many hours/week of training would be acceptable?

    Number of hours: _____ Times: _____

    What type(s) of training:_____

    _____

6. If **NO**, would you be interested in Aurora College training courses/
    programs, workshops or academic courses (i.e. upgrading, trades
    upgrading, computer courses) for any of your current employees this
    fall/winter 2000/2001? _____YES _____ No

    _____Evenings (Times:_____)

    _____Weekends (Times:_____)

7. Would you be interested in any of the following courses for **your
    current employees**?

    _____Academic Upgrading _____

    _____Computer Courses: _____

    _____Business Courses:_____

_____Safety Training (First Aid, Transportation of Dangerous Goods, WHMIS)

_____

_____Communication skills:_____

_____Supervisory skills:_____

_____Personal Development :_____

_____Other (specify any training that your and your employees require)

8. Of the following programs, what would you recommend that the Hay River CLC offer in the **fall/winter of 2000/2001**:

_____Office Administration

_____Management Studies

_____Long Term Care Aide

_____Mine and Industry Trades Access

_____Computer Courses

_____GNWT Staff Training/Professional Development courses

_____Other (be specific:_____)

9. Would your company/department/organization be interested in participating with Aurora College and other government departments in the delivery of required training?

_____YES _____NO

10. Would your company/department/organization be able to provide resources for a training program: (i.e. space – warehouse, ship; on-site training; equipment)

_____

_____

11. Does your company/department/organization plan to hire any new employees in the near future? If so, specify what training is required.

_____ NO   _____YES

Training required:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Individual Learning Plan and One-On-One Programming

Submitted By

Carolyn Coey Simpson, Adult Educator, Wha Ti CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Instruction
- Learner Assessment
- Accessibility

Curriculum Links

- ALBE curricula

How It Works

The adult educator responds to the needs of the learners and the community by providing learners with an alternative to a full-time adult basic education program. By working with individual learners, the adult educator is able to find out what the learners' goals, strengths and areas of need are and then develop an individualized learning plan for the learners.

From that needs assessment they develop a plan and the adult educator works one-on-one with the individual learners so that they are able to meet their needs and make progress towards their goals.

The program provides individualized instruction using one-to-one tutoring; ongoing evaluation of learning objectives and life-long learning goals,

learning needs assessment and individualized curriculum focusing on improving ALBE (Adult Literacy and Basic Education) English levels. The learners are partners in deciding on topics covered, quizzes, exams, assignments and other learning activities, based on their needs and goals.

By working on an individualized plan using one-to-one tutoring, learners gain confidence and competency, which helps them be contributing community members and life-long learners who experience success and fulfillment in life.

FOCUS – Future, Occupation, Career, Upgrading, Skills

Submitted By

Lisa Campbell, Family and Community Development Coordinator, NWT Literacy Council, Yellowknife

Best Practices Supported

- Program Planning
- Instruction
- Culture
- Respect and Support for Learners
- Community

How It Works

The FOCUS program was a unique program designed to support single mothers who had not had an opportunity to finish school and who needed support in their day-to-day living. The program used a holistic approach to learning by including the four components: spirit, mind, body and emotions. The program provided upgrading in English, math and computers, as well as a variety of life skills including: parenting, communication, self-esteem, relationships, cooking, pre-employment skills, resume writing, and family literacy. Participants also did a three-week work placement of their choice. The instructors supported their work through site visits.

Many of the participants had wonderful skills in cooking, sewing and other traditional skills. In the program they had an opportunity to be the facilitator and teach their skills. The instructors were able to learn about different traditions and culture, how to sew wall hangings and how to cook perfect bannock. This practice allowed for participants to feel good about the skills they did have and recognized prior learning experience.

Further, the program encouraged participants to bring their children to the program when there was a professional development day or when the parent couldn't find day care. This provided a perfect opportunity to model parenting skills and help families with family literacy.

As a result of the program, participants decided they would like to have a Kitchen Circle. Every second Saturday, participants and their children would come to class for the Kitchen/Reading Circle where the parents did the cooking and the children participated in a reading circle. Parents spent their time socializing, reading recipes and cooking a nutritious meal for their family. At the end of the session, families took the meal home. They also made a nutritious snack for the children and themselves and joined their children and read together. This particular project was funded through the Health Promotions fund.

In addition the program provided breakfast and lunch to the participants. It was a great way to spend time with learners and it prompted participants to create the Kitchen Circle.

The program instructors always used community resources by having different organizations/people come to the program to deliver workshops, such as:

- Nutritionist came to help with the Community Kitchen
- Health and Social Services – counselling
- Tree of Peace – Drug and Alcohol awareness
- Family Counselling Centre – Parenting
- Victim Assistance Coordinator
- Elders
- NWT Status of Women Council
- The NWT Literacy Council – family literacy.

Each week we ran a parenting program and counselling session for participants. Learners could choose to attend or to work on academic subjects. Most participants chose to attend the sessions.

We also had an advisory committee made up of community members that helped us make decisions about the program.

The FOCUS program evolved from a program in Vancouver. However, the instructors were able to "northernize" it to meet the needs of the participants. The program was truly participant-driven. They decided on what topics they would like for life skills, upgrading etc. The instructors then developed a program that would meet their needs.

Program Evaluation

A quality adult literacy and basic education program continually evaluates how well the program is meeting its goals and objectives and uses that information to direct future planning.

Small Group Instructional Feedback

Submitted By

Donna Mulders, NWT Literacy Council, Yellowknife, NT

Best Practices Supported

- Program Evaluation

Curriculum Links

- ALBE curricula

How It Works

The SGIF (Small Group Instructional Feedback) technique is a great way to get feedback from learners that involves the whole class. The purpose of SGIF is to gather constructive feedback early on in a program to allow changes to be made. Learners use group consensus to tell a facilitator what they like about a course/program and what suggestions they have for improving it. The facilitator then meets with the instructor to discuss the results. Because it is open-ended, based on group consensus, and is usually done early enough in a program, learners who provide the feedback benefit immediately from any changes made as a result of their feedback. The main advantage of SGIF is that it is confidential and initiated by an instructor and the results are shared only with that instructor. The process takes about 20 – 25 minutes of class time and is facilitated by someone other than the instructor.
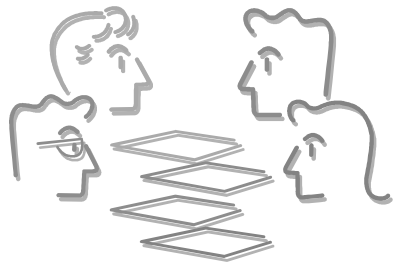
How to do a SGIF:

1. The instructor decides on a person to facilitate the SGIF.
2. Three very general questions are prepared as a handout to learners:
   - What do you like about the course/program?
   - What would you like changed?
   - What suggestions do you have?
3. The instructor may suggest other questions of special interest to them.
4. The facilitator divides the class into small groups and guides the in-class interviews. The small groups work independently and discuss the questions given to them and write down comments where there is consensus. This consensus is important if an instructor is to make changes based on learner feedback.
5. Learners then gather as a whole class and share their consensus comments from the small group. They then say whether they agree or disagree with particular comments. Again, a consensus is sought from the whole class.
6. The facilitator then collects the information from the learners.
7. The facilitator and instructor meet to review what happened in the classroom, review and analyze the comments.
8. The final and most important part is the instructor's plan for responding to the learners.

Program Accessibility

A quality adult literacy and basic education program respects differences and is accessible to the broadest range of potential learners in the community.

Literacy Outreach Centre

Submitted By

Paula LeTemplier, Coordinator, Literacy Outreach Centre, Aurora College, Yellowknife

Best Practices Supported

- Instruction
- Accessibility
- Respect and Support for Learners

How It Works

The Literacy Outreach Program is an all-inclusive community-based program run as a partnership between the Yellowknife Association for Community Living and Aurora College. The program provides an inclusive program where learners with disabilities are integrated with other learners. Because of the inclusive nature, learners work at their own level at their own pace on their own individual program. To help the learners feel a part of the group, class activities are planned that everyone can participate in. Field trips are one way to achieve this. By going to the museum, to the public library, etc., learners get a chance to interact with each other and learn from one another.
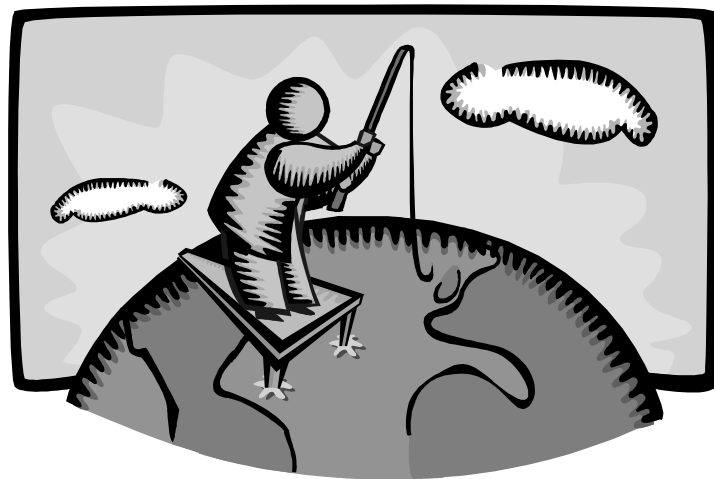
One event involved the Literacy Outreach Centre staff and participants going on an ice-fishing trip. One of the learners in the program acted as the guide. He taught the group how to fillet a fish. It also gave some learners a great northern experience. Events such as these can help a group learn to grow together as a group and to learn to respect and appreciate each other despite any disabilities that one may have. Another way to achieve this is by drawing on the talents of the learners and having them share their knowledge with the rest of the class. They are given the opportunity to share what they know with others. This also improves their self-esteem.

Caribou Outreach Centre

Submitted By

Brenda Green, Coordinator, Caribou Outreach Centre, Aurora College, Inuvik

Best Practices Supported

- Accessibility
- Community
- Organizational Linkages and Partnerships

How It Works

The Caribou Outreach Centre developed a community-based literacy program that has been very successful in the community of Inuvik. Here are several aspects that have led to the program's success:

Tips

- **Connect with other community groups and service providers in your community who already work with your target learner groups.** Get an understanding of what programs are already being offered in the community, tap into what is already there and develop a clear sense of how the learning centre and the programs you might offer can best meet the learners' needs. You might wish to set up informational interviews with the community groups and service providers and get their perspective and input. Attend programs and functions and connect with prospective learners in an informal way and in an environment in which they are comfortable. Ask prospective learners for their input. Find out what their learning background and experience have been, what their goals might be, when the best time to hold a particular class might be.

Seek out and collect information that will give you a fuller picture of the learning needs in your community and develop programs and classes that target the varying needs of the learners.

Range of programs:

- **Start small, build a strong foundation and expand from there.** It's one thing to attract learners to the learning centre, it's another though to keep them coming back. Extenuating circumstances aside, learners will come to school if they are getting what they need. Start small. Build a class around interested individuals, even if that means there is only one or two learners attending the class. Working as an intimate group allows you to get a good sense of the learners' needs and provides an opportunity to best meet those needs, something that can be difficult to assess in a larger class setting. With teaching there is a fair bit of trial and error, hit and miss. In starting out small there is perhaps a better chance of more "hits" than "misses", which is key to keeping learners encouraged, motivated and successful. The learning needs of the few learners you may have are no doubt reflective of the needs of a much larger part of the community. Word of mouth is one of your best forms of recruitment. Build a strong foundation with the success of your learners and they will no doubt be happy to spread the word.

- **Elders' Classes –** Before establishing the Elders' programs at the Caribou Outreach Centre, the instructor both hosted and attended a variety of community functions in order to meet with the target learner group and to get a sense of the varying needs. Functions attended included community dinners, volunteering with the Elders' Day Program at the Regional Hospital, and hosting an Elders' Tea. Ultimately, in order to meet the varying needs of the Elders of the community, the Caribou Outreach Centre developed three differing approaches to Elders' literacy programming: English upgrading classes for those who have some foundational education; one-on-one class time for emerging literacy learners; and the Story Sack project. This project, delivered through the

Elders' Day Program at the Regional Hospital, has elders in the program working together on a Story Sack, a family literacy tool to motivate and encourage children and parents to read together and have fun.

- **Family Literacy** – This class is modeled after the *1-2-3 Rhyme With Me* program developed by the NWT Literacy Council. The program provides the community with a source of social and parenting support, while promoting oral language development through rhymes, songs and stories. We also read books together to promote the fun in reading. The Caribou Outreach Centre partnered with the *Healthy Babies Program* in order to best reach young moms and their pre-school aged children.

- **ESL –** This class targets the needs of newcomers to Canada, for whom language is not the only barrier to participating more fully within our community. Although speaking, listening, understanding, writing and reading English are at the core of the program, the class also provides important social and personal support enabling increased independence and greater self-assurance.

- **Adult Upgrading –** Adult English Upgrading classes are geared toward adult learners with a grade eight to grade ten education. The focus is on improving the skills involved in reading, writing and comprehension, as well as math and computer skills.

- **One-On-One –** Adult learners with lower level reading and writing abilities, for whom the above class is not the best fit, have also been accommodated. After meeting with the learners to assess their needs, one-on-one regular meeting times are set up. Working together one-on-one allows the learner a supportive, non-intimidating environment where they are most comfortable to work at their own level. This helps boost learner confidence and has enabled the instructor to best understand the needs of the learners.

Literacy Outreach Centre Volunteer Tutor Program

Submitted By

Petra d'Entremont, Coordinator, Literacy Outreach Centre, Aurora College, Yellowknife

Best Practices Supported

- Accessibility

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English

How It Works

The Literacy Outreach Centre runs a tutoring program. It relies on volunteer tutors to work with learners one-on-one. With many non-profit organizations in the community vying for volunteers, it can be difficult to get volunteers and this can mean lengthy waits for tutors and a loss in initial enthusiasm by the learners.

The Literacy Outreach Centre has worked to solve this problem by recruiting and training volunteer tutors on a regular basis. By increasing the number of volunteer tutors available, the learners can begin their work while they are mentally ready and while the events in their lives permit it. With more tutors, not only will the learners be served faster, but more learners can be taught.

In order to recruit and train volunteers, the Literacy Outreach Centre has developed a promotional and training plan that attracts and supports volunteer tutors by offering free Tutor Training Workshops, which all volunteer tutors are encouraged to attend.

How to Recruit Volunteers

For any of the following ideas to be successful you must remember:

- You need a contact number, message machine and address to enable people to reach you.
- Have a volunteer tutor position description by the phone for any inquiries.
- Remember to set up a time to meet potential tutors and have them complete a "Volunteer Tutor Form."
- Remember to inform potential tutors of the Tutor Training Workshop.

Some of these ideas may be more appropriate than others for your community.

1) Call local radio stations and ask them to run public service announcements (PSAs). Think about the type of people in your community who might be willing to volunteer and what type of radio station they might listen to.
2) Ask your local newspaper to run a free announcement. If you already have a program running, see if you can get the local paper to write a story

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Sample PSA:

"Literacy tutoring is one of the most rewarding volunteer experiences you can have. When you help someone learn to read, or to speak and read English, you enable that individual to take advantage of a new world of opportunities. Simply put: Literacy changes lives. If you would like to become a volunteer literacy tutor, please contact Petra at The Literacy Outreach Centre at 920-3016."

about you and include the fact that you are looking for volunteers—call up the editor. (If you have the time and energy, stage some kind of event—sometimes the "gimmickier" the better—to attract local media: a poetry slam or a "read-a-thon", or something like that.)

3) Set up recruiting/information tables at stores, community hall, local fairs, etc.—arrange with the manager/organizers, of course. Display posters with colourful photos from your program and have informational flyers (with your phone number, naturally!) to give out.

Sample Flyer

Why Volunteer?

Community Involvement

Volunteers play a vital role in supporting literacy programs throughout the Northwest Territories. By volunteering at the Literacy Outreach Program, you not only lend support to those who are working to improve their literacy skills, but you also become aware of the needs of your own community.

Rewarding Experience

You can find teaching another person to read and speak the English language one of the most rewarding experiences of your life. You will gain a new appreciation of your own skills, and watch as someone grows in confidence and skill before your eyes.

Easily Accessible

Literacy Outreach has a variety of volunteer opportunities in the area of Adult Basic Literacy. As a one-on-one volunteer tutor, you would meet with a student for two to four hours per week. We offer a FREE Literacy Tutor Training Program that will help you prepare for a rewarding experience as a literacy tutor!

4) Make and post flyers all over the place—anywhere you think you might be able to find volunteers: college, library, stores, cultural centres, bookstores, restaurants, coffeehouses, band offices, etc.

5) Make contact with your local public library, not only to allow you to post or give out flyers, but also to see if the librarian has any ideas for recruiting volunteers from its pool of library patrons. You could also make bookmarks (just photocopy and cut) with your local program information on them and ask the librarian to have

circulation clerks give them out to each patron checking out books. (Note: you could try the bookmark strategy with bookstores, too.)

6) See if your local churches, or other houses of worship would be willing to print announcements in their weekly bulletins. Ask if you could visit their congregation (or adult religious study program) and talk about your program.

7) Rack your brain for any type of organization in your community— service organizations, community groups, Rotary Club, YMCAs, etc.

8) If there is some large business/company near you, see if there is some way to make contact with an insider who could put you in touch with someone there who might be willing to recruit volunteers from the company as a public service (good PR for the company!).

9) Call the career development officer and see if they can help you recruit learners. After all, volunteer work is excellent training for future professionals, and college learners are often eager to get this experience.

Forms – Several sample forms are provided:

- Information about the Program
- Volunteer Tutor Application Forms
- Volunteer Tutor Description Position
- Volunteer Tutor Feedback Form

Literacy Outreach

(Yellowknife Association for
Community Living/Aurora College
Partnership)

Aurora College/YACL
Literacy Outreach Program

4509 Franklin Ave.

Box 2753

Yellowknife, NT

X1A 2R1

PH: (867) 920-3016

Fax: (867) 873-8197

Ph: (867) 920-3016
Fax: (867) 873-8197

What programs do we offer?

- **Day Program**
  Monday – Thursday
  9:00 am – 12:00 pm
  1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

- **Drop-in sessions**
  Tuesday and Thursday evenings
  7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

- **Personal Tutor**
  We can match learners with a
  personal tutor who can meet with
  them for two hours per week.

Who We Are

The Literacy Outreach Program is an inclusive community-based, adult basic literacy program.

We provide individualized instruction in Reading and Writing to adults who set their own goals and work at their own pace.

Our students are adults of all ages with low English literacy skills, intellectual disabilities or learning disabilities who want to improve their English skills.

Entrance Requirements:
17 years old

Cost: Free

Change Someone's Life Forever – Become a Literacy Tutor!

- Free, in-depth training in tutoring strategies
- Free tutor handbook
- Access to the resources and materials
- On-going training, feedback and support

For more information call
920-3016

Thank you to all our past and present tutors.

Tutor Requirements

All you need is the ability to read and the desire to help others.

The volunteer tutor will work on a one-to-one basis with an adult to improve their reading and writing skills. They meet once a week for at least 2 hours at a time of mutual convenience. Tutors are expected to keep a written record of the student's progress.

Tutor training is provided early in the fall and winter terms. Training is mandatory for new tutors.

References need to be provided and a criminal record check may be requested. For more information, call 920-3016 or drop by 4509 Franklin Ave. and fill out the application form.

Resource Manual of Practical Ideas

Literacy Outreach Centre
VOLUNTEER TUTOR FORM

Name: _____   Date: _____

Address: _____   X1A _____

Phone: Home _____   Work _____

e-mail _____

Emergency Contact: _____   Phone: _____

Skills and Interests

So that we understand your skills and personal interests, please provide the following information:

1. Describe your educational background:

_____

_____

2. Previous volunteer experience:

_____

_____

3. How did you find out about the tutor training workshop?

_____

_____

4. Current occupation:

_____

5. Why do you want to become a volunteer tutor?

_____

_____

Preferences in Tutoring

In order to assist us in matching you with a potential learner, please indicate which area you prefer to tutor in. Check all that apply.

- Low level or non-reader _____
- Higher level readers _____
- Low level math _____
- Higher level math _____
- English as a second language (ESL) _____
- Special needs learner _____
- Aurora College ABE or other course _____
- Administrative aspects _____
- Other subject areas (specify)

_____

Do you have any additional preferences for whom you would like to tutor?

No Preference: _____ Age: _____ Gender: _____
Smoker: _____Non-smoker: _____ Other: _____

Do you speak/read/write any languages other than English?

Yes   No

If "yes", list them:

_____

Availability

At what times are you interested in tutoring?

Monday day __ eve __

Tuesday day __ eve __

Wednesday day __ eve __

Thursday day __ eve __

Friday day __ eve __

Saturday day _ eve __

Sunday day __ eve __

Other: **Background Check**

Due to the nature of this one-on-one volunteer position, the Literacy Outreach Centre requests that you agree to having the following background checks conducted.

Police Records check: Yes   No

In addition, we request that you provide two references that we may contact:

(Personal)   Name: _____

                    Phone: _____

(Employment)   Name: _____

                    Phone: _____

The Literacy Outreach Centre will only use the above information in determining your suitability for particular volunteer positions and all such information shall be kept confidential.

Are there any physical or medical conditions that might limit your ability to perform certain tasks or that we should be informed about?

Yes   No   If "Yes" Explain

_____

_____

_____

Additional Information (if applicable):

_____

Signature: _____   Date: _____

*Please feel free to contact **Petra** at **920-3016.***
*Or drop in to the **Literacy Outreach Centre** at 4509 Franklin Avenue*

Date of Match:_____

Literacy Outreach Centre/Aurora College
VOLUNTEER TUTOR POSITION DESCRIPTION

The Literacy Outreach Centre is an inclusive, community-based literacy program which offers participants a comfortable and supportive learning environment.

GENERAL ROLE:
The volunteer tutor will work on a one-to-one basis with an adult to learn or improve reading, writing, spelling, or other academic skills agreed upon by both parties.

PLACE/TIME:
Volunteer tutors and learners meet at a time of mutual convenience. It is recommended that they meet once or twice a week for a minimum of two hours. Room 206 at Aurora College is available Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 7 to 9 p.m. Other meeting places and times may be arranged by the tutor and learner according to their personal schedules.

VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT:
The tutor program runs in accordance with Aurora College's academic calendar. Term one is from September 10th to December 21st, and term two is from January 7th to June 25th. Volunteers are expected to be available for at least one term and may continue beyond the fixed academic schedule of the College, if desired.

Tutors are expected to keep a written record of the work attempted as well as student progress.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING:
Tutor training sessions are offered early in the fall and winter terms. Training is mandatory for new tutors. Each tutor receives a complimentary resource manual. Tutors will be trained to meet the learner's goals, needs and interests. The coordinators will provide the tutors and learners with support and resources throughout their learning relationship.

ETHICS:
All tutors are expected to act in a mature, professional manner while tutoring. They are expected to keep the confidentiality of their students and the tutor-student relationship. They will not share any information they may acquire about their students, unless its seriousness dictates the involvement of the coordinators or other

trained professionals. They are not to offer advice to students other than on pertinent topics of study.

- **Please notify the learner or the coordinator if you are unable to attend a scheduled tutoring session.**
- **Call your learner and the coordinator if he/she does not show for a meeting.**
- **Please contact Petra at 920-3016 if you have further questions**

Literacy Outreach Evaluation
Tutor Feedback

1. What did you like about tutoring?

2. What did you not like about your tutoring experience?

3. What suggestions can you make for bringing about improvement?

4. Were resources accessible and adequate?

5. Did the coordinator provide enough support and feedback throughout the year? Explain.

6. Did the workshops meet your tutoring needs?

BHP Workplace Learning Program

Submitted By

- Susan Devins, Adult Educator, BHP Ekati Workplace Learning Program, Yellowknife
- Elke Heinemann, Adult Educator, BHP Ekati Workplace Learning Program, Yellowknife

Best Practices Supported

- Accessibility
- Instruction

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English

How It Works

The Workplace Learning Program is offered through BHP Billiton Diamonds Inc. and is delivered at the Ekati mine site. This workplace literacy program is voluntary and offers continuous intake. Workers are released from work to attend the program for two hours every 2 or 3 days on their two-week workshift. Workers also attend the program on their own time. The program focuses on reading, writing,

math and oral communications. The Workplace Learning Program ranges from pre-literacy to Apprenticeship levels. The program includes individual literacy assessment and one-on-one and group instruction; computer-based literacy training is also used.

Assistive Technology

Submitted By

Donna Mulders, NWT Literacy Council, Yellowknife, NT

Best Practices Supported

- Accessibility
- Respect and Support for Learners
- Staff Development and Support

Curriculum Links

- ALBE curricula

A Guide to

Assistive Technology

To Support Literacy Learners
With Disabilities

NWT Literacy Council
Yellowknife, NT

How It Works

Many types of assistive technology are available to support learners with disabilities or low literacy levels with such things as reading, writing, reading comprehension, planning and organizing. Without supports, learners may struggle and find it difficult to succeed in adult literacy and basic education programs.

The NWT Literacy Council researched assistive technology available to support adult learners, developed a guide and provided training to familiarize adult educators and literacy practitioners with various assistive technology. Due to time constraints, adult educators may not have the time to investigate the types of technology available. By providing a CD-Rom of assistive technology demo software, educators are able to evaluate the various types of assistive technology to see how useful it might be for their learners.
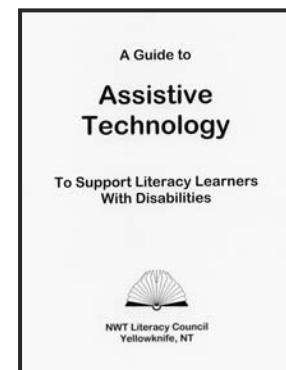
Things to keep in mind when using Assistive Technology

- What are the challenges the individual faces – physical, visual, reading, writing?

- Consider a range and combination of technology options.

- Try technology prior to purchasing whenever possible.

- Will it work for the individual and achieve outcomes?

- Are the individual's challenges and particular needs being assessed?

- Is it easy to learn? Is the individual comfortable with it?

- Does it enhance the individual's strengths?

- Can the individual use this technology independently?

- How effective is it? Is it affordable and cost-effective?

- Is it portable and usable in a variety of settings?

- Ensure that it can "grow" with the individual's needs.

- Have a trial period to confirm effectiveness.

- Is it compatible with other software the individual is using?

- Demonstrate ways that it can become a useful tool for the individual in their school and home life.

- Continually assess the situation and monitor progress.

- Purchase from a reputable source that offers expertise and technical support.

Web Link

- www.nwt.literacy.ca - The complete *Guide to Assistive Technology* is available to download from the NWT Literacy Council website.

Semester Change

Submitted By

Suzanne Robinson, Instructor ALBE/Access, Inuvik CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Accessibility
- Respect and Support for Learners

What You Need

- Supportive administration

How It Works

Most jobs in the oil and gas industries are seasonal and run from January to April. In the Inuvik region, companies in these industries employed a number of learners. In the past, the learners have left ALBE programs or wanted to return to them in the middle of courses. To enable them to complete their courses, Aurora Campus changed its semesters to accommodate them. The semesters now run from September to December; from January to April; and from May to June.

Child Friendly Classroom

Submitted By

Suzanne Robinson, Instructor ALBE/Access, Inuvik CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Accessibility
- Respect and Support for Learners

What You Need

- Toys and books for children
- A safe place to play
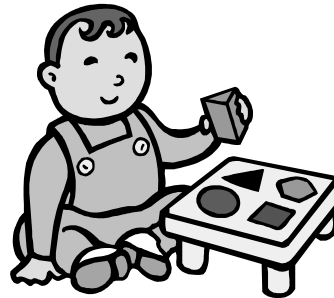
How It Works

Parents often face serious barriers to participating in ALBE programs because of their family responsibilities. There are times when parents need support and some accommodations so they don't have to miss class due to childcare responsibilities. This happens especially after school when the children's classes end before their parent's, and on half-day school professional development days.

In the program in Inuvik, parents do not have to miss classes any more during these times. The classroom is child-friendly. It has a variety of children's toys and books, so the children can come to the program and play quietly and mom or dad can still do their course work. The program encourages family literacy activities and has parents prepare activities for their children, which benefit both the parents and the children. It also supports parents in finding long-term solutions to childcare issues.

Instruction

> A quality adult literacy and basic education program offers instruction that enables adult learners to progress towards their goals.

Sharing their Skills

Submitted By

Suzanne Robinson, Instructor ALBE/Access, Inuvik CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Instruction
- Respect and Support for Learners

Curriculum Links

- ALBE Social Studies
- ALBE English

How It Works

The learners at the Inuvik Community Learning Centre are adult learners and therefore come to the program with skills and knowledge that they can share with the group. As a way to recognize their strengths and skills, half a day each week is set aside and the learners are invited to share their skills with the class. The learners share such things as craft making, fur hat making, cooking skills, and many other things. This is a great opportunity for the instructor and learners to switch roles.

In Social Studies the first activity is to create community posters. Each learner creates a poster about their community and presents it to the class. These are then hung up and remain up all year. Each learner will also be called on to present some aspect of their knowledge of the North and to act as a resource person for another learner for a research project. The idea is for learners to have the chance to showcase their knowledge and learn from each other.

Science and Traditional Knowledge

Submitted By

Gloria Iatridis, Coordinator, Literacy and ABE, Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Yellowknife

Best Practices Supported

- Organizational Linkages and Partnerships
- Community
- Culture
- Instruction

What You Need

- Skidoos
- Sleds
- Camping gear
- Cabin
- Hunting and fishing equipment
- Food
- Workbooks
- Science equipment

Curriculum Links

- ALBE Science
- ALBE English

How It Works

The community learning centre in Tuktoyaktuk offered an on-the-land component for its learners enrolled in the ALBE Science 120 course. Following the curriculum, the learners participated in a variety of assignments, experiments and projects in class and at the end of the course and completed a class project out on the land.

- The project consisted of:
  - Spending 5 – 10 days out on the land at a cabin at Husky Lakes
  - Completing a science journal
    - o Recording the temperature each day
    - o Recording when the sun rose and set each day
  - A Fish Study
    - o Recording the number of fish caught
    - o Measuring the fish
    - o Weighing the fish
  - A Caribou Study
    - o Recording the number of caribou killed
    - o Recording where the caribou were found and killed.

This practice was developed for a number of reasons and there were many benefits from the experience. Because the learners were enrolled in the ALBE Science 120 program and were studying water, weather, land, life and basic ecology and had been doing in-class assignments, experiments and projects, it made so much sense to take their new knowledge and ideas they learned in the classroom and apply them to the real world.
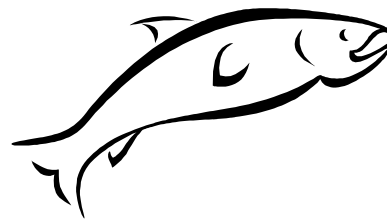
As well, many of the learners were experienced hunters and had many skills that they were willing to share with others. The learners were also interested

in hunting for the elders. We were able to do this and learn about science at the same time.

At the same time, Aurora College had another group of learners from the Natural Resources Technology Program (NRT) camping at a nearby cabin and the ALBE learners were able to talk to them about the NRT program and compare what they were doing with these other learners and they were so proud that their work was comparable. It was a boost of confidence for them.

I was so excited to be camping with my students. I was looking forward to spending time with them in the evenings possibly telling stories, playing cards and enjoying their company. But to my surprise, every evening the group was so involved with completing their journals they didn't seem to have any time to do anything else. This was an assignment that they thoroughly enjoyed working on.

Gloria Anderson
Adult Educator Tuktoyaktuk.

Group Agreements

Submitted By

Alison Barr, Adult Educator,
Yellowknives Dene Adult Education
Program, Yellowknife, NT
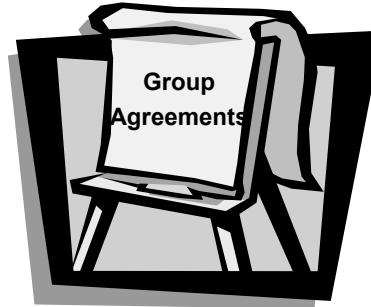
Best Practices Supported

- Respect and Support for Learners
- Instruction

How It Works

The learners in the Yellowknives Dene Adult Education program establish group agreements that help their class run smoothly. In the first class, the facilitator and learners come up with a list of agreements to help the class run smoothly. It is important that everyone takes part and agrees on the agreements. The group agreements are posted in the classroom and referred to when needed. It is important to review the group agreements periodically and ask learners if there are any agreements that need to be added or deleted.

There are many benefits to doing group agreements. The group agreements allow the participants and instructor to refer to the ideas or the agreed upon principles as opposed to focusing on individual behavior or making personal attacks. As well, everyone takes responsibility for their conduct in the classroom and it is not up to the

> *The group agreements are a reminder to respect others during class and to be responsible for ourselves.*
>
> *Participants in the Yellowknives Dene Adult Education*

instructor to "enforce" rules. If something is happening in class that goes against the group agreements, a learner or the instructor can refer to the group agreements and remind the group that this is what we agreed upon.

Our Group Agreements

- Start and end on time.

- Take your turn to tidy up.

- Make phone calls during breaks.

- Talk about yourself, not about others.

- Have respect for one another.

- It is ok to make a mistake; it's how we learn.

- What others do is their own business.

- Be sensitive to other people's feelings.

Yellowknives Dene

Adult Education Program

Other agreements you may want to include are:

- All opinions are honoured
- Equal opportunity for all to participate
- Confidentiality
- The right to "pass" in discussion or reading
- Everyone is a learner.

Message in a Bottle

Submitted By

Debbie Michon-Weir, Chair, Community Programs, Yellowknife Campus, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Instruction
- Learning Materials

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Social Studies

How It Works

Adding enhancement and innovative concepts to adult basic education is a practice that Debbie Michon-Weir has followed in her career as an educator of adults. Debbie worked as the instructor for the Community Skills for Work program in Rankin Inlet in 1996, a program that included basic English, math and work skills. While doing this program, she decided to do a "Message in a Bottle" activity as part of the English component, with hopes that someone in some exotic place might one day find one of their bottles and contact them!

English component: Learners wrote stories about themselves, the program and the community. They visited the local hamlet office and collected information about their community. They included maps of the north and Canada, incorporating Social Studies. They spent several classes writing and

also spent time experimenting which bottles they would use, how they would seal them, and how and where they would launch them etc. They needed to experiment a bit on what type of sealing they would use to keep the bottles air tight and on how much material they could stuff into the bottle.

In order to launch their bottles, the learners had to research someone to take all of them on a boat and they needed to know that the person taking them knew where they should launch them so that the bottles would have the best possible chance of making their way out to sea and to some exotic place.

After much preparation they were set to launch the bottles. They also decided that since they would be close to Marble Island they would make it a real adventure by stopping at the island and having tea. They also researched the history of Marble Island and even saw the sunken ship in the channel!

On a beautiful crisp, sunny fall day, they launched 11 bottles into the waters between Marble Island and Rankin Inlet. According to their guide it was the place to launch. One by one they threw their bottles and watched their hopes bob in the choppy waters of Hudson Bay. They saw them carried out to the open water. Each bottle contained a message, and in the message a little hope that someone would pluck them from the sea and contact them.

Note: About two years later someone in James Bay found one of the bottles and contacted the learner. They were not only surprised but also thrilled that one of the bottles had been found!

Resource Manual of Practical Ideas

Stereotype Search

Submitted By

Vasiliki Aivaliotis, Instructor, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Learning Materials

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English

What You Need

- Pictures of different people and knowledge of their occupations
- Writing paper and pens

How it Works

This practice can be utilized in 130/140 English. It is a good way to introduce stereotypes.

Steps:

- Give learners a sheet with 8 different pictures of "faces" for them to examine.
- Give learners a sheet with a list of "occupations" that match the photographs.
- Have learners try to guess which face matches with which occupation.
- As a class, discuss each picture and have learners reveal reasons behind their matching.
- Introduce the concept of "stereotypes" with a clear definition.

Name: _____   **Date:** _____

Stereotype Search

Look at the photographs on the next page. Read the list of descriptions below. Write the number of the person beside the description. Think about why you selected that person to match the description. We will discuss this as a class.

_____   Hunter

_____   Hockey Player

_____   Prime Minister

_____   Serial Killer

_____   Police Lieutenant

_____   Basketball Star

_____   Scientist

_____   Professor

1

7

8

2

6

3

4

5

Answers:

__6__ Hunter

__2__ Hockey Player

__8__ Prime Minister

__7__ Serial Killer

__5__ Police Lieutenant

__4__ Basketball Star

__1__ Scientist

__3__ Professor

Grammar Jeopardy

Submitted By

Barb Miron, Adult Educator, Fort Resolution CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Instruction

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English

How It Works

The Grammar Jeopardy game is a team activity that brings together the various classes at the community learning centre. It allows the learners to review grammar instruction and strengthen writing skills in a fun and interactive way with the aim of making learning enjoyable. Here is how you do it:

Objective: To review grammar, punctuation, and sentence errors
Materials: overheads of grammar exercises, overhead pens, flipchart pens and prizes.
Procedure:
- Divide the learners into groups of 3 or 4. It is best to mix the levels of the learners so that each team consists of learners from different levels and classes.
- Write the categories and points on the board.
- Write the group names on a flipchart to keep score.
- Have overhead projector, overheads and pens ready.

Game Rules:

There will be three rounds:

- Jeopardy (points $100, $300, $500)
- Double Jeopardy (points $200, $600, $1000)
- Final Jeopardy.

In Final Jeopardy, the group will bet points after the category is given and before the question is revealed. Once the questions are given, if the group answers correctly, the betted points are added. If the group answers incorrectly, the betted points are subtracted.

There are six categories and three points levels for each round.

Once the rounds start, the groups will select categories and points in turn. However, if the group cannot answer or answers incorrectly, the question is open to the other groups. The first person to raise a hand will answer for their group.

The questions will consist of grammar exercises on the overhead. The learners can answer from their seats or come up and make the correction with an overhead pen. Whether you choose to make corrections on the overhead will depend on the type of exercise presented.

In the end the group with the most points wins. Each member of the winning group will receive a prize.

When giving directions to learners, remember to tell them that a few sentences may be correct. If the sentence is correct, they only have to note this to get points. These sentences are like bonuses. If a sentence is incorrect, they have to identify the error and correct it.

Chart to Write On Board for Jeopardy Round:

Punctuation	Agreement Problems	Sentence Errors	Modifier Problems	Passive Voice	Faulty Parallelism
$100	$100	$100	$100	$100	$100
$300	$300	$300	$300	$300	$300
$500	$500	$500	$500	$500	$500

Chart to Write On Board for Double Jeopardy Round:

Punctuation	Agreement Problems	Sentence Errors	Modifier Problems	Passive Voice	Faulty Parallelism
$200	$200	$200	$200	$200	$200
$600	$600	$600	$600	$600	$600
$1000	$1000	$1000	$1000	$1000	$1000

This activity has to take place at the end of the year after learners have received instruction in all of these grammatical topics. It is also very important to have nice prizes to motivate the teams to work towards winning.

This game is highly instructive because the teams become quite competitive and want to make sure that each win by another team is legitimate. This becomes a teacher's dream because they insist on an explanation of the grammar error and the sentence in question when another team wins a point. This is a perfect opportunity to review the principles of grammar with the class.

Barb Miron
Adult Educator

"Beyond the Mask" Project

Submitted By

Cynthia Coughlin, Instructor/Coordinator, Chartrand Homes Adult Literacy Program, Yellowknife

Best Practices Supported

- Instruction
- Learning Materials
- Culture
- Community

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Career/Life Work

How It Works

The "Beyond the Mask" project included literacy, woodworking and vocational components. The learners made a mask, shield, and staff and then created a mask booklet. They researched the history of masks and shields in different cultures, using films and Internet downloads. They wrote poetry, stories, thank you notes, made a personal dictionary of new words, and personal statements.

The project allowed for different learning styles to be accommodated as the learners gained hands-on skills in time management skills, self-directed learning, discovery skills, social learning skills and personal growth. The aim was for learners to reflect on their feelings, experiences, and reality. The

learners were encouraged to express their own individuality. Through this activity, it was hoped that learners would have a better understanding and appreciation of themselves and would increase their positive self-esteem. The project ended with a great celebration, involving music, drum dancing and a feast. The learners' work was also celebrated in the community by being displayed at the NWT Legislative Assembly and at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre.

BEYOND
THE
MASK...

The Gabriel Mask

Tootoo
Hockey
Extraordinary

Goalie
Artist
Blue hair
Red face
Inuit
Expressive
Love

Mario Lemieux
Adult
Sixty-six
King

My name is Gabriel.
My Power Word or Rock Word is
STRENGTH.
STRENGTH
means
being healthy and strong,
learning,
being successful
and winning.
My power animals are
wolverines and wolves.

Gabe's Statement

1. My mask and shield have the #66.
   Mario Lemieux is #66.

2. My shield has two photos.
   One photo is Mario Lemieux.
   One photo is Jordin Tootoo.
   They are my heroes.

3. Hockey is my favorite game.

4. Hockey means power, strength,
   fun, teamwork and good friends.

Drama: The Rez Sisters

Submitted By

Liz Pope, Adult Educator, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Instruction
- Learning Materials
- Learner Assessment
- Community
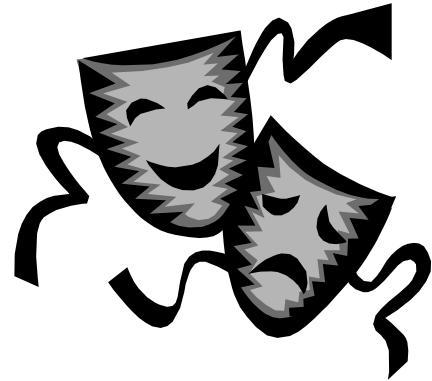
Curriculum Links

- ALBE English

What You Need

- Copies of the play
- Self-evaluation form
- Assignment hand-out

How It Works

The "Rez Sisters" assignment involves:

- Reading the play
- Creating a set
- Choosing/creating props and costumes
- Performance
- Self-evaluation

Depending on the ALBE levels of the learners, the reading of the play could be on an independent basis, a group effort, or a combination of both. Once the learners have read the play, they will receive a handout indicating the nature of the assignment. They then select the portion of the play to perform, learn their lines, choose/create props and costumes, and finally perform the play for a community group.

The activity includes drama, drama terminology, memorizing lines, and reading. There are opportunities for the learners to develop time management skills, to participate in self-directed learning, and engage in personal growth. As well, depending on the diversity and needs of the group, the activity can be modified to fit the needs of the learners.

The 'Rez Sisters' assignment involved the learners reading the play, creating a set, choosing/creating props and costumes, and then doing a performance. This activity was followed by the learners filling out a self-evaluation form on their participation in the project.

The activity was a lot of fun! In addition, the same play evoked different sets, props, and presentations – and allowed for individual/group preferences.

> *The activity includes drama, drama terminology, memorizing lines, and reading. The opportunities to develop time management skills, to participate in self-directed learning, and engage in personal growth are also evident.*
>
> *Liz Pope*
> *Adult Educator*

ALBE English

The Rez Sisters, A Play By Tomson Highway

1. Read the play.
2. Form groups of 3-5 people.
3. Your assignment is to present a portion of the play.
    a. Choose your parts.
    b. Create the set.
    c. Choose your props and costumes.
    d. Presentation on _____.

Note: You will be completing a self-evaluation of your participation in this activity.

Drama – "The Rez Sisters"

Self-Evaluation

Respond to the following statements. Circle the number that describes how you feel.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree

1. I met with my classmates to discuss the assignment and plan the performance.

1	2	3	4	5

2. I helped plan and prepare the set, props and costumes.

1	2	3	4	5

3. I knew my lines.

1	2	3	4	5

4. My group planned our performance together.

1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

- The best thing about this activity is:

- The most challenging part of this activity is:

- 5 words to describe this activity are:

Incorporating Family Reading

Submitted By

Cathy Blake, Family Literacy Coordinator, Fort McPherson

Best Practices Supported

- Instruction
- Respect and Support for Learners
- Community

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English

How It Works

The *Book Bag Home Reading Program* is a family literacy activity that can be incorporated into an adult literacy and basic education program. It can be done through the local public library or with an in-class library of children and adult books.

The activity involves parents and their children. Parents sign up their children for the program and then receive an *Arthur* or *Franklin* book bag. As part of an in-class project, parents can choose to get creative and make their own book bags out of canvas.

Times are set up to visit the library, in-class or the public library, and at each session in the library, the families sign out two to three books along with a reading log. Once they have finished with their books, they fill in the

log with the title, author, date started, date finished and what they thought about the book. Once complete, they return the books and sign out more.

There is no competition in this program. The family reading successes are celebrated by having a party each month. At the parties, families talk about the books they read and why they liked them. Some of the theme parties could include:

- "Here's the scoop on reading" ice cream party
- "Hats off to reading" – hat making at the library
- "Reading is a piece of cake!" cake party
- "Dalmatian hotdog party: 101 reasons to read!"

The result of the program has been that more children and parents are signing out books from the library and reading! Parents are involved by making book bags and reading with their child at home and also taking the time to come to the library with their children.

Cathy Blake
Family Literacy Coordinator

My Reading Log

Title	Author	Date Started	Date Finished	What I thought of the book

Poetry Puzzle

Submitted By

Vasiliki Aivaliotis, Instructor, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Instruction
- Learning Materials

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English

What You Need

- 45 rectangles of coloured construction paper pre-cut into 5" x 8" inch pieces with a variety of different words and/or letters (prefixes and suffixes) printed on them
- Sticky tack (to attach construction paper to the wall)
- Writing paper and pens

How It Works

This practice can be used in any English class. It is a good way to introduce poetry or a good idea to deconstruct poetry for meaning and for poetic devices. It supports learners who feel hesitant about writing/deconstructing their own poetry.

Steps:

- Prior to class, cut coloured paper rectangles.
- Write words on the rectangles. Use words that are suitable for the literacy level of your learners.
- Write individual letters on rectangles for people who may want to make up their own words or who want to use prefixes/suffixes.
- Tack words and letters in a scramble on the board.
- Explain to learners that they are going to write poems using only the words and letters offered on the board. They can use the same words and letters more than once and they may combine words with letters to create new words.
- Remind them that they will share their poetry after they are done.
- Once learners have had a chance to write 2-3 poems, get together as a group and read poem(s).
- If learners have knowledge of poetic devices you can deconstruct each poem.
- Be sure to reinforce the idea that everyone can write poetry and it does not have to be done in a conventional manner.

Note: Any combination of words can be used. By including single letters of the alphabet, learners can make up specific words they want. All letters and words are available to all learners. They may use the letters/words more than once. The end result from any learner is a poem in any shape or form.

Thanks to Cecile Richards of Enterprise
for sharing her poems with us.

The Child Listens

The Child Listens
To a hand
Gentle pain
Eyes lost
At the world
The child listens

Listen

Listen gently child
Time alone come
Happy strong hand
Free love lost
The world today
Greatest am I
To be free

Happy True Am I

Our face is bright
With love like child
Happy true am I
Being gentle free
Very true in hand
Strong world lost
Tells greatest today
Happy true am I

Current Events ~
An Integrated Approach

Submitted By

Evelyn Tregidgo, Instructor ALBE, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Instruction
- Learning Materials

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Social Studies

What You Need

- Newspapers, audio and video recordings
- Handouts
- A world map mounted on a bulletin board, with three signs (Local, National, International)
- String, stick pins

How It Works

This activity was developed as a way to encourage interest in current events. Learners at lower levels do not, for the most part, relate well to current events. One learner stated that she did not understand words used in news reports. Interest in current events develops gradually and requires

considerable vocabulary development and background information on the part of the instructor.

Learners who are at different levels in an integrated classroom can be encouraged to relate to local, national, and international news using the following developmental procedure throughout the semester. Each step in the procedure can be modified to accommodate the needs of the learners over a period of time. Skills are overlapping and increase in difficulty as the semester progresses.

1. **Introduce question words.** Never assume a learner comprehends the meaning of the five Ws. Select a picture or a simple news story from the local paper. Brainstorm and write the answers to the questions – Who? What? Where? Why? When? (See attached handout #1.) Select news items that increase in difficulty over a period of time and work with the learners until they can locate the answers in groups and/or independently.

2. **Listen to taped local news items and identify the main idea of each item**. Tape the 7:30 morning news. Write vocabulary, idioms, and pertinent background information on the board that will not be familiar to the class. Ask learners what they know about the issues/events that will be heard on the tape. Before turning on the tape, write "Subject" and "Did What" at the top of the board. As the first item is being played, write the main idea under the "subject" and "predicate" headings. While the second item is being played, leave the subject blank, but write in the predicate. Leave the third news item blank.
   - Use the first item as an example; explain main idea; clarify the vocabulary words; relate the issue or event to the background information.
   - Play back the news item; learners attempt to fill in the subject and predicate; clarify questions they have.

- Deal with two or three items initially; increase the number of news items gradually.
- Learners become adept at listening and identifying the main idea over a period of time. Consequently, they will feel more confident when asked to write the main idea as they listen to the news.
- Encourage discussion, personal feedback, differing viewpoints and suggestions.

Follow up:
- Learners are responsible for watching the news at home and sharing with their peers.
- Create spelling lists composed of words that learners will encounter.
- Write the main idea of news items on the board leaving key words blank. Learners fill in the blanks during the last class of the day.

3. **Viewing a video relating to territorial/national/international news**: Use the procedures above. Supplement viewing with a writing activity (#2).

4. **Reading, writing and responding.** Instructor and/or learners (individually or in groups) select and photocopy a news item from a local newspaper. Learners take turns reading aloud. Put new vocabulary words on flip chart paper. Discuss the 5Ws + How. Supplement this activity with handouts.

- Sentences: a handout that requires the learner to write answers to the 5W's in sentences; to write their reaction to the article.
- Paragraph writing: The learners will write/type two paragraphs: one describing the news item; the second will state their reaction to the article (#4, #5). Print a hard copy, attach a news item, and post on the bulletin board.

- Oral presentation: Learners will share their description and opinions with the class; learners will evaluate the speaker using Toastmaster guidelines.

5. **Reading, writing and responding (Independent Study).**
   - Learners will select a newspaper or magazine article. Write two paragraphs: one summarizing the event/issue; the second their opinion, reaction, etc. (#8). Print and post on the bulletin board. Present their current event to the class. Discuss.

6. **Writing, viewing, listening, responding, locating information, identifying continents, countries, place names**
   - Select a news item from the newspaper, the TV, video, or radio. Read and discuss the main idea and details. Have the learners do the following:
   - Write the main idea on a slip of paper. Pin the paper under the appropriate heading (Local, National, International) located next to a world map on the bulletin board.
   - Use a stick pin to identify the source of the item on the map.
   - Tie a long string around the stickpin and tack it to the slip of paper. The source of the news item is now linked to the event/issue that is happening in the world. Learners respond positively to this visual approach. Questions that arise during discussions usually result in research skills such as using an atlas, a globe, or other sources.

Reading Comprehension

5Ws (Who, What, When, Where, Why)

Who? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

When? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Where? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Why? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

News Item - Video

WHO or WHAT is this news item about?

_____

_____

WHERE did it take place?

_____

_____

WHEN did it take place?

_____

_____

HOW did it happen?

_____

_____

*WHY is the event taking place?

_____

_____

*HOW long has the event been taking place? *HOW is the event being handled?

_____

_____

Write your personal response to this news item. Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your opinions regarding the event.

_____

_____

*Some news items do not answer these questions.

Newspaper Item

Name: _____

Choose a news article from The Hub, News North or other newspaper. Read the article and answer the following questions in **sentences**.

From what newspaper did you select your article?

_____

What is the date of the newspaper? _____

What or who is this news item about?

_____

_____

Where does the event take place?

_____

_____

When does the event take place?

_____

_____

Why is the event taking place?

_____

_____

How did it happen?

_____

_____

Write your reaction to this story. How does it make you feel? Write your opinion about the event or situation. How does this news item relate to your life experience?

_____

_____

News Item

Name: _____

Cut out a news item from a newspaper. Please answer the following questions in COMPLETE SENTENCES. Attach the clipping to this page.

1. From what newspaper is this article taken?

_____

2. What is the date of the newspaper?_____

3. Who or what is this news item about?

_____

_____

_____

4. Where does this event take place?

_____

5. Why is this event taking place?

_____

_____

6. Write a paragraph describing this news item. In the second paragraph, write your opinion regarding this news item. For example, if it is about a strike, should the people strike? What is your opinion about salaries, workload, etc? How does the strike affect you personally? Please use the back of this page to finish your second paragraph.

_____

_____

_____

Current Events

Read the article keeping in mind the answers to the questions: who, what, where, why, when and how.

Write a paragraph that summarizes this event in your own words. (Please do not copy from the article). Title your paragraph.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Write a paragraph describing your reaction to this article. Why did you choose this article? How did you feel when you read it? In what way does this article affect you? Does the event affect our community in any way? If so, in what way? Do you agree or disagree with any part of the article? Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Check your skills:

Did you:

❑ Indent the first line of each paragraph?

❑ Put a capital letter at the beginning and periods at the end of your sentences?

❑ Write a title with the important words in capitals?

❑ Check your spelling?

Current Events

Name: _____

Date: _____

Choose a news article from a newspaper of your choice.

Write a paragraph using the guidelines: Who, What, Where, When, Why, How

Write a second paragraph stating your reaction to the story. How did the story make you feel? What is your opinion about the event or situation? How does this news item relate to your experiences?

Oral Presentation to the class:
- Use your notes only for reference
- State the main idea first – who or what the item is about
- Give the relevant details – where, when, why or how.
- Give your opinion or reaction to this article.

Oral Presentation Checklist

Names of Students	Uhms & Ahs	Presentation	Organization	Body	Language	Eye Contact
	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5
	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5
	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5
	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5
	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5
	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5

Oral Presentation Checklist

Names of Students	Uhms & Ahs	Presentation	Organization	Body	Language	Eye Contact
	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5
	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5
	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5
	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5
	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5
	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5

Current Events

Name: _____

Cut out an article from a newspaper (News North, The Hub, The Globe & Mail) or a magazine. Read the article keeping in mind the questions who or what, where, when, why and how.

- Who or what is the article about?
- Where does the event take place?
- When does the event take place?
- Why did the event happen?
- How did it happen?

Write a summary of the article using your own words. Be sure to indent the first word of your paragraph.

Write another paragraph describing your reaction to this event. How do you feel about this news item? Does it affect you in any way? What is your opinion about the event? What emotions did you feel when you read it? Be sure to indent.

Attach the article to this sheet, please.

Skills Checklist for Current Events

Name: _____

Article: _____

Key:	✓ = Mastered	**NI** = Needs improvement
	I = Improving	**NC**= Not completed

Write 1 paragraph that answers the questions who, what, where, why, when, how.	Write one paragraph with your opinion.	Indent each paragraph.	Sentence structure	Spelling	End punctuation	

Learning Materials

A quality adult literacy and basic education program uses a variety of appropriate learning materials.

Reading Resources for Adult Learners

Submitted By

Evelyn Tregidgo, Instructor ALBE, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Learning Materials
- Organizational Linkages and Partnerships

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Introduction to Computers

What You Need

- Publishing software such as MS Word or MS Publisher

How It Works

This activity was developed because of the lack of low vocabulary, high interest reading resources for adults. This project helped replenished our adult reading resource library. Learners were taught the writing process. Stories that the learners developed were made into booklets using Microsoft Publisher software. A cover was made with coloured paper using a format similar to published books.

> *Students were proud of their products. We now have a few more resources for low-level students.*
> *Evelyn Tregidgo*
> *Instructor*

Local artists illustrated the stories; one learner illustrated her own product. The instructor developed exercises for each booklet using the following format:

- Vocabulary
- Comprehension
- Inference, drawing conclusions
- Applications.

This was a joint project between Aurora College and the Soaring Eagle Friendship Centre, with the Friendship Centre contributing to the salary of the instructor.

The resources are an excellent example of community-developed resources that are relevant to the lives of learners.

Web Link

The complete series of booklets and activities are available at www.nwt.literacy.ca

Running Scared was written and illustrated by Cheryl Mabbitt, an adult learner at Aurora College in Hay River.

RUNNING SCARED

Cheryl Mabbitt

Cheryl Mabbitt still recalls that fearful night a bear broke into her parent's cabin. That fear remains with her to this day.
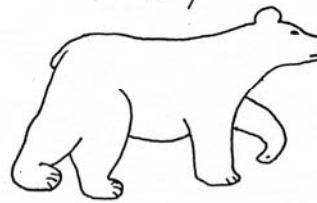
Aurora College, Hay River, NT

Booklets in the series:

- Mr. Magoo's First Trip
- Running Scared
- A Night Without Television
- Living Off the Land
- Fishing on Great Slave Lake
- One Winter Night
- Sensational Science Fiction
- Our Adventurous Trip

Tuktoyaktuk Community Book

Submitted By

Karla Carter, Chair, Community Programs, Aurora Campus, Aurora College, Inuvik

Best Practices Supported

- Community
- Instruction
- Funding
- Organizational Linkages and Partnerships

Curriculum Links

- ALBE Social Studies
- ALBE English

How It Works

The Tuktoyaktuk Community book was a social studies project done by the Adult Basic Education class at the Tuktoyaktuk Learning Centre. The project started in September 1996 and ran until April 1997. Throughout the year, the learners gathered information about the hamlet of Tuktoyaktuk. Guest speakers from the community came to the learning centre and gave presentations to the learners.
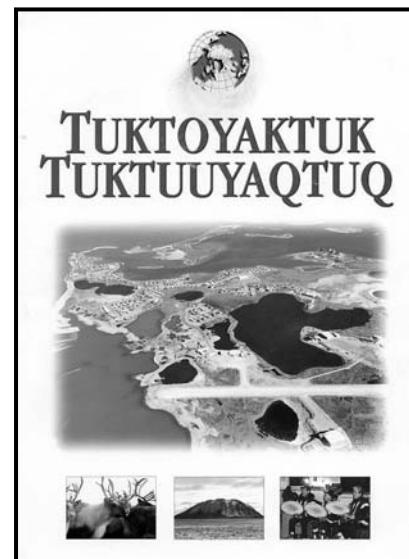
The learners also went on field trips and received information in class. A lot of time and energy went into the making of this book. The learners wrote and re-wrote the material. The final product is one of which each learner was very proud.

Once the learners had written their book, it was published through funding provided by the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development's Community Initiatives Program and by the Inuvialuit Community Economic Development Organization. The money generated from the sale of this booklet goes towards providing educational products for the Tuktoyaktuk Learning Centre.

Internet Research and Bibliography

Submitted By

Liz Pope, Adult Educator, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Learning Materials
- Instruction

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Introduction to Computers
- ALBE Social Studies

How It Works

Learners will identify a Northwest Territories community. The instructor and the learners decide on the parameters for choosing a community to research, such as a community within a specific region, or a community within a certain population range.

The first task in the assignment is for the learners to identify and frame a definition of the community. The ultimate goal is to generate an organized list of all the information available about the chosen community. This should include materials from a wide variety of sources: government documents; archival materials; newspapers or magazines; academic journals; scholarly and popular books; and videos, film or television productions. The learners determine the most effective way to organize the list. They will

not be reading or evaluating all of this material. Their task is only to locate and list/organize the materials.

While the smaller communities may not have comparable library services to the larger towns, learners are given the opportunity to access and utilize the NWT Public Library, the Legislative Assembly Library, Northwest Territories RWED Library, and the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre. Internet research is the main component of this activity. Learners may utilize a spreadsheet program to organize and manipulate the data.

The Northern Edge: Online Literacy Newspaper

Submitted By

Donna Mulders, NWT Literacy Council, Yellowknife, NT

Best Practices Supported

- Learning Materials
- Culture

Curriculum Links

ALBE English

How It Works

The Northern Edge is an interactive online literacy newspaper that has articles and online language quizzes written at a level and in a style that is accessible to a range of learners and with a range of northern content. The newspaper allows the learner to be a "doer" and not just a consumer of information. The learners can hear the article read to them and they can read along following the text as it is highlighted in blue. The text can also be printed for use offline. All of the articles are followed by short online vocabulary and comprehension activities. The topics in *The Northern Edge* are mainly northern themes that will appeal to adult learners on such topics as northern wildlife, NWT elections, buying a big ticket item like a skidoo or using a chat room.

Web Link

The Northern Edge is online at www.nwt.literacy.ca
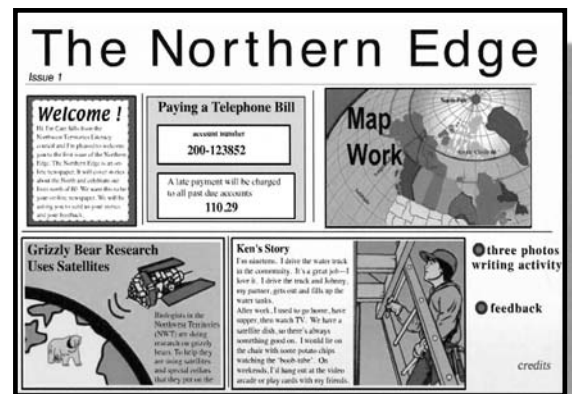
Learners and The Northern Edge

Submitted By

Karen Mercer, Adult Educator, Fort Good Hope CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Instruction
- Culture
- Learning Materials
- Transferability of Learning
- Organizational Links and Partnerships

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Social Studies
- ALBE Introduction to Computers

What You Need

- Willing and enthusiastic learners
- Access to computers and Internet
- Digital camera
- Email

★ ★ **Voices from Fort Good Hope** ★ ★
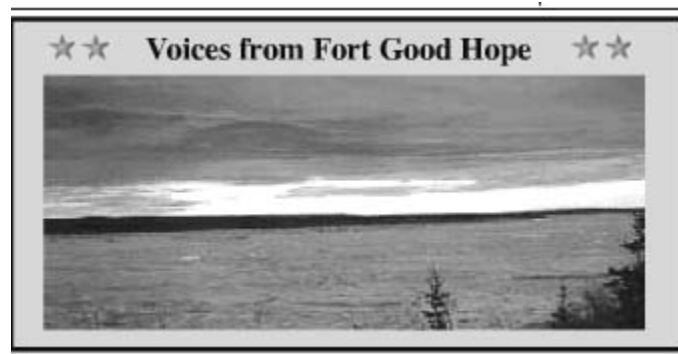
How It Works

Learners at the Fort Good Hope Community Learning Centre did a project for *The Northern Edge*, an online newspaper for literacy learners. This was a multi-media project that involved writing, recording and taking photographs to go on *The Northern Edge* website.

Learners chose to write about life in Fort Good Hope and once the stories were done, they peer edited their work. The learners recorded the stories and took photos of the community. One learner also recorded a sound track to accompany the online text and photos.

Learners were very excited and very proud to see their work on the Internet. Once the issue was launched, announcements, faxes and posters were distributed throughout the community. The website is also the home page on the computers at the Learning Centre. This project was a great boost to learners' self esteem and confidence.

Web Link

Visit www.nwt.literacy.ca to view the online stories from Fort Good Hope.

> *This was a great opportunity for the learners to profile Fort Good Hope and showcase their literacy skills.*
>
> *Karen Mercer*
> *Adult Educator*

Health Check

Submitted By

Helen Balanoff, Researcher, NWT Literacy Council, Yellowknife

Best Practices Supported

- Learning Materials
- Community
- Culture
- Organizational Linkages and Partnerships

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Science

How It Works

Health Check is a literacy and health manual developed for adult and teen learners in the NWT. Stories are at the heart of *Health Check*. The stories, by adult literacy learners from the NWT, are truly northern and make the resource more engaging and relevant for northern learners.

To be able to make healthy choices, people need:
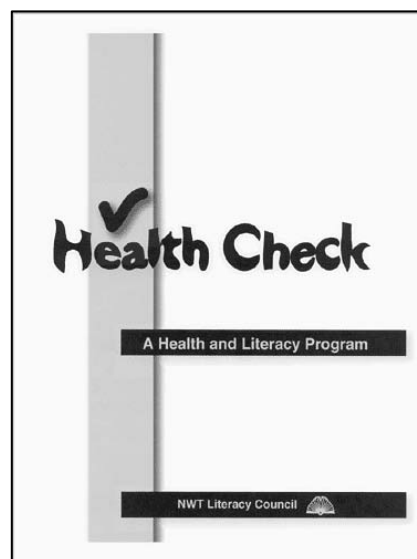
- Information on health topics that affect their lives, presented in a way they can understand.
- A greater feeling of control over their lives.

Health Check presents easy-to-read information on a number of health topics of specific concern to people in the NWT:

- Healthy eating
- Smoking
- Alcohol
- Active living
- Relationships
- STDs and AIDS.

Learners don't learn only facts about these topics. They explore the issues actively by reading about them and reflecting on their own ideas. Then they exchange their ideas with other people who may have different experiences from theirs. By participating actively in this way, they might be better able to see how they can take more control of their own lives—and their own health. All the activities involve literacy—speaking, listening, reading, writing—so as learners learn about health issues, they are also improving their literacy skills.

Each unit includes:

- An introduction for the instructor
- Learning objectives
- A list of resources
- A reflection for learners at the beginning of the unit
- A vocabulary list
- Two stories followed by comprehension questions
- Reflection/discussion on the issues in the stories
- A variety of learning activities related to the topic
- A selection of basic fact sheets about the topic.

Health Check is in clear language and is easy to understand and use. It suggests ways in which learners can go out into the community and explore parts of each unit in its context.

Web Link

Health Check is online at www.nwt.literacy.ca

Community Newspaper

Submitted By

Ken Latour, Instructor, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Instruction
- Learning Materials
- Community

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Social Studies
- ALBE Introduction to Computers

How It Works

The learners in the ALBE program in Fort Resolution published a community newspaper. They researched and wrote stories and took digital photographs to be included in the paper. They did the layout and design of the paper with the help of the adult educator.

The newspaper provided a forum for learners to actively engage in the community, and was an excellent way to cover ALBE English and Computer Studies objectives as well.

Since Fort Resolution does not have a community newspaper, community members responded very positively to this project.

A year and a half after the *Deninu Digest,*

learners are working on another community newsletter, the *Aurora Scoop*. Some of their writing assignments once again take the form of reporting on community events, and the community is again an extension of their classrooms. However, now, learners are doing the layout and graphic design themselves after training on the publishing program, Microsoft Publisher, was incorporated into the Computer Studies program. As a result of changing the approach to producing the newsletter, learners have developed additional computer skills in desktop publishing and word processing skills, the newsletter project is less labour intensive, and learners are able to share their learning with the community.

Free Resources

Submitted By

Ken Latour, Instructor, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Learning Materials

Curriculum Links

- ALBE curricula

How It Works

Program staff take advantage of the wide variety of free material that is available from organizations in the NWT and Canada. There are several places from which instructors can obtain free information such as:

- Resources Wildlife and Economic Development
- Health and Social Services
- Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre
- NWT Public Library Service – Books by Mail
- Libraries – Inter-Library Loans
- NWT Status of Women
- Veterans' Affairs
- Human Rights Commission
- Elections NWT
- Elections Canada

- Teaching and Learning Centres
- Alberta Learning
- NWT Literacy Council.

Learner Assessment

A quality adult literacy and basic education program monitors learner progress on an ongoing basis through a variety of participatory assessment procedures.

CARA

Submitted By

Paul Seargeant, Literacy Tutor, Fort Resolution CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Learner Assessment

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English

What You Need

- CARA – Canadian Adult Reading Assessment

How It Works

CARA is an assessment package that is used with learners in the Fort Resolution Community Learning Centre. CARA stands for the Canadian Adult Reading Assessment, and unlike standardized tests, it gives insight into how someone reads. Four types of reading patterns are identified with CARA:

- Print-based (PB)
- Meaning-based (MB)
- Integrative (I)
- Non-integrative (NI)

Once you know how a learner reads, you will know the type of reading strategies to use and how best to instruct the learner. For example, CARA can tell you how learners decode unfamiliar words.

When doing any assessment, it is important to make the learner feel as comfortable and relaxed as possible. Tell the learner that it is not a pass/fail test, but a test to see how they read. Explain the assessment, why you are doing the assessment and what you will do with the results. There are simple things that an assessor can do when administering CARA that can make a big difference in the comfort level of the learner, such as:

- Maintaining an easygoing style and appearing relaxed.
- Doing simple things, such as getting the learner a coffee before they start the assessment.
- Doing an informal and brief interview for background information.
- Outlining clearly and precisely what the purpose of the assessment is.

When the assessment is completed, the assessor shares the results with the learner. Grade scores do not have to be given, but show the learner their strengths and what they need to work on.

Oral Assessments

Submitted By

Joel McAlister, Instructor ALBE/Access, Inuvik CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Learner Assessment

Curriculum Links

- ALBE curricula

How It Works

In the science program taught at the Community Learning Centre in Inuvik, the learners are given the opportunity to do an oral assessment showing that they know the material covered in the science program. For example, they did a unit on wildlife trapping and learned about the various traps and how to set them. When it came time to do the evaluation, an oral test was given and the learners had to provide the instructor with the answers.

Respect & Support for Learners

A quality adult literacy and basic education program respects its learners and supports them to achieve their goals.

Counselling Services

Submitted By

Liz Dietrich, Counsellor, Aurora Campus, Inuvik

Best Practices Supported

- Respect and Support for Learners

Curriculum Links

- ALBE Career/Life Work
- ALBE Career/College

How It Works

At Aurora Campus in Inuvik, the learners have access to a student counsellor who is available to help learners deal with personal problems and who provides them with referrals to other services in the community.

The counsellor offers support to the learners in a variety of ways. For learners both in Inuvik and attending community learning centres in the communities, counselling on academic, personal and other issues is provided. Some learners may be trying to decide what program they will apply for, or which direction to take with their studies. Other learners may be in need of personal counselling due to family issues or may have a problem happening that is getting in the way of their academic success. For the learners in the communities, this counselling would take place via telephone.

Learners are reminded that the counsellor is not a magician, but will assist any way that she can or will help them to get connected with someone who might be a greater help. Referrals are made to Family Counselling in Inuvik, medical professionals, Social Services, Legal Services and the Inuvik Food Bank, to name a few. A lot of our learners manage to juggle many things in their life as they return to or continue their studies. Sometimes just having someone to listen or to be a sounding board can be of help.

Community Resources

Here is a list of places that you can get help if you need it.

Health Centre .... _____

Food Bank .... _____

Health and Social Services .... _____

Aurora College Counsellor ...._____

Drug and Alcohol Counsellor ...._____

Legal Aid .... _____

Help Line and AIDS Helpline .... *(867) 920-2121*
.... *or 1-800-661-0844*
   Includes AIDS help-line, depression and suicide
   prevention. Volunteers operate this Help Line from
   7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. each night.

Help Line - Kids *1-800-668-6868*
Website…………………………………………….. http://www.kidshelp.sympatico.ca/en/
   Counsellors are available in Canada 24 hours a day, 7
   days a week, all year long. It's free and easy to call
   from anywhere at anytime.

NWT Council for Disabled Persons   *(867) 873-8230 or 1-800-491-8885*
   Website .... www.nwtability.ca

Seniors Help Line *1-800-661-0878*
.... *or (867) 920-7444*

Crisis Line for Abused Women .... *(867) 873-8257*
or 1-800-223-7775
   Alison McAteer House, Yellowknife

Status of Women Council of the NWT .... *(867) 920-6177 or 1-*
      888-234-4485
   Website……………………………………………...www.statusofwomen.nt.ca

NWT Literacy Council .... *(867) 873-9262*
or 1-866-599-6758
   Website... www.nwt.literacy.ca

Victims' Services Program .... *(867) 873-5509*
   Native Women's Association of the NWT provides the
   coordination of volunteers to assist the RCMP in crisis
   situations. Volunteers accompany victims and family
   members to court and other appointments. Services
   include emotional support, assistance, information, and
   referral to resources in the victim's own community.

Learners and Family

Submitted By

Amy Mercredi, Adult Educator, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Respect and Support for Learners
- Program Planning

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English

How It Works

Each month when there were professional development days for the children in the elementary schools in Hay River, Aurora College held a family literacy day where adult learners and staff could bring in their children and do literacy activities with them. This involved having parents and children enjoy books together, do crafts, work on computer games and spend quality family time together.

The program served two purposes, it provided a family literacy program that was meeting the needs of both the parents and the children and it acknowledged the multiple roles of adult learners. Being a learner can be a challenge when you have other responsibilities.

Ice Breakers: Creating a Sense of Community

Submitted By

Petra d'Entremont, Coordinator, Literacy Outreach Centre, Aurora College, Yellowknife

Best Practices Supported

- Respect and Support for Learners
- Instruction

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English

How It Works

Icebreakers or energizers are a great way to create a sense of community in the classroom, make learners feel more comfortable and have fun too. Here are several icebreakers or energizers that can be done with learners.

Crack the Code

This activity is used as an "icebreaker" activity with an ESL (English as a second language) class. This is a great socializing activity that allows learners the opportunity to introduce each other and talk about themselves. This is what you do:

- Welcome the learners to the class and invite them to take a candy from the basket.
- The learners find a rolled piece of paper wrapped around their candy. It will contain a hidden message that they will have to solve individually.
- Tell the learners the aim of the activity, but make it clear that they will need to remember the letters of the alphabet to work out their hidden message.
- At this time, it is a good idea to brainstorm the letters of the alphabet and write them on the board.
- To solve the message, they have to look at the coded message and use the letter that comes before each one. For example, if the coded message reads "TBZ ZPVS OBNF" it can be solved to read "Say your name."

TBZ ZPVS OBNF

SAY YOUR NAME

- Pick up one candy and demonstrate the activity by writing the solution to your code on the board.
- Have the learners solve their messages.
- Once all the codes have been cracked, ask the learners to carry out the instructions relayed in their hidden message.
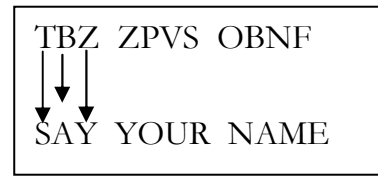
I Love My Neighbour Who...

One person stands in the middle of a circle. Everyone else is seated in a circle on chairs. The person in the middle says, "I love my neighbour who…wears glasses." Everyone wearing glasses stands up and changes places with someone else who wears glasses. The person in the middle must try to sit down on one of the just emptied seats. The person left without a seat becomes the next person in the middle and uses something different to complete the statement "I love my neighbour who…."

Introduce Yourself

Break people into small groups and give each person a penny. Ask them to introduce themselves to the group and talk about what they were doing during the year on the coin.

Man, Bear, Gun

This game is similar to Rock/Paper/Scissors. Divide the group into two equal lines of people facing each other. There are three possible "characters" the group can assume.

- Bear – growl with claws bared
- Man – a "he man" stance with grunt
- Gun – hunter with gun – bang

Each group huddles together and decides (as a group) which of the three they will represent and then they form a line facing the other team. On the signal from the leader, the two groups face each other and assume their stance and sound like in rock/paper/scissors:

- Man wins over gun
- Gun wins over bear
- Bear wins over man.

The Toilet Paper Activity

This requires a roll of toilet paper and a group that is waiting for introductions. The group leader begins by announcing that, unfortunately, there is only one roll of toilet paper here, so in fairness to all we will share it now. Then instructions are given to pass the roll around the table/room and each person is to take what they think they will need. When everyone has some, the leader then

apologizes to the group and says, "I'm sorry; I lied. There is actually lots of toilet paper available but this is a way we will determine how many facts are to be shared by you about yourself, with the group. ONE for each section of paper taken! " NOTE: Facts can be basic…age, birthday, favourite movie, etc. – and a concern for those who took A LOT of paper.

Two Truths and a Lie

This icebreaker works best if you don't know the people in your group at all – a first time introduction, though it can be used with people who know each other only a little. Have participants introduce themselves and give THREE facts that are interesting, TWO of which will be true, ONE of which will be a lie. The others will then decide as a group which one is a lie. Winners are those who fool the group!

Time Capsule

Submitted by:

Marion Storm, Adult Educator, Kugluktuk, Nunavut

Best Practices Supported

- Instruction
- Respect and Support for Learners

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Career/Life Works

How It Works

The time capsule is a great project that works well for any age. Faces will light up after the time capsule is opened one year or six months later. These boxes turn out to be keepsakes after they are opened.

The box itself can be a small to medium size cardboard or wooden box.

- The time capsule consists of a recent picture of the person, their family, or other photo. You can also take a picture of something outside the building, such as a landscape.
- Record the date, time, amount of daylight, and smells in air, activities going on at home or upcoming community celebrations.
- Have the learners write down where they want to be in six months or a year and whenever they think that they will be able to fulfill one of the goals.

- Put these into the box and then have them cover it with pictures of what they want, what they like, or something that is dear to their hearts, like family. Use lots of decoupage glue and have them glue the whole box, including the opening.

- Have them write the date they want to open the box – it could be a birthday, or a day of significance to them. Have learners put words on the box, cut outs from a magazine, that affirm positive thoughts. It could be a quote or something of motivation and inspiration to them. It works!

One young woman shared, after opening her box, that she wanted to get a job, get her GED, and get over her abusive relationship with her long-time boyfriend.

She said that she liked the idea that it was a goal for only her eyes, so that if it didn't work out she wouldn't have to make any excuses to any one.

When she opened the box six months later on her birthday, she was so surprised at how far she had come. She had achieved all of her goals. She showed me her time capsule, beaming with joy. It was a gift that she gave herself, from the past.

Marion Storm
Adult Educator

Valentine's Day Self-esteem Envelopes

Submitted By

Barb Miron, Adult Educator, Fort Resolution CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Respect and Support for Learners

Curriculum Links

- ALBE Career/Life Work
- ALBE English
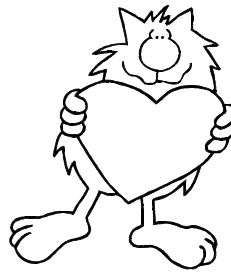
How It Works

The learners were given large 9" x 12" envelopes in mid-January along with a handout explaining this activity and a list of each learner and staff member at the learning centre. The first part of the exercise asked them to decorate their envelopes in ways that expressed who they were as individuals. This part of the activity covers the English 120 – 140 curriculum outcomes related to "depicting".

The learners and staff members decorated their envelopes with artwork, clip art and photos. The envelopes were then posted with the open side facing out on the bulletin boards in the community learning centre. Everybody got to see and comment on everyone else's depiction of his or her individuality. Even this initial activity of expressing oneself in visual

form promoted self-esteem. The variety of expressions and styles on the envelopes was quite amazing.

The learners and staff then had one month in which to reflect and write positive messages about the good points of others and put them in the appropriate envelopes. Each person was supposed to make at least one contribution to everyone else's envelope. The learners were specifically instructed to focus on people's strengths and good points, not on faults. It was a good exercise for the learners to highlight the good points of all the other people around them.

As prearranged, the envelopes were opened on Valentine's Day. Staff members added Valentine's cards and candies to the envelopes. One staff member baked a large cake to make the envelope opening even more festive. Each individual at the community learning centre was then able to read over twenty encouraging, positive messages, pointing out his or her strengths and good points. The results were very powerful. The learners were visibly beaming.

Valentine's Day was deliberately chosen as the time for this activity because staff thought that perhaps the learners might resist it as being too sentimental or mushy at any other time of year. Because it was a special Valentine's Day activity, they readily participated and accepted the positive compliments in their envelopes as sincere and authentic. This activity is very simple, requiring little instructor time or community learning centre resources; so it can be implemented anywhere. All adult learners can benefit from self-esteem boosts, so this activity is relevant in any learning environment.

Self-Esteem Envelopes

Due Date: _____

Step 1: Prepare an envelope. Write your name on both sides, and decorate the envelope with drawings, clip art or photographs that you feel represent who you are as a person.

Step 2: Tack your envelope on the hallway bulletin board by Friday, January 24, 2003. Make sure that the open side is facing outwards.

Step 3: Over the next four weeks, put a message in everybody else's envelope. These messages can be just a few words, or they can be longer. You can write your messages or type them if you don't want anybody to recognize your handwriting. The messages you put in others' envelopes must be positive and encouraging. This activity is like a gift exchange with a twist. We are giving the gift of encouragement.

Step 4: Think carefully about what you want to say about each person. Every human being has faults and good points. This mixture of traits is part of what it is to be human. Most people hear hundreds of comments about their bad points, but they rarely hear about their good points. Do not focus on faults. Think of at least one good point for every person at the learning centre. Write down these good points, and put them into the other people's envelopes.

Step 5: Go through the following list, and make sure to write something for each person on the list.

Step 5: On Valentine's Day, we will open our own envelopes and see our good points, as others see them. This will be a healing exercise for all of us. Your self-

esteem envelopes will become precious keepsakes that will encourage you in the future.
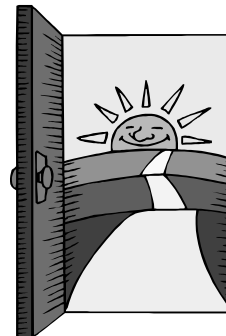
Class List

List all the learners and staff by name. It helps the learners to be able to check off whom they have written a message for.

In the next four weeks, place a positive encouraging message in the envelope of each of these people.

Celebrating Learner Success

Submitted By

- Karla Carter, Chair, Community Programs, Aurora Campus, Aurora College, Inuvik
- Dave King, Instructor ALBE/Access, Inuvik CLC, Aurora College
- Michelle Skanes, Adult Educator, Tuktoyaktuk CLC, Aurora College
- Barb Miron, Adult Educator, Fort Resolution CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Respect and Support for Learners
- Community

How It Works

There are many ways that educators regularly celebrate learners' successes and achievements. They do this by holding monthly awards and having end of the year completion ceremonies.

Learners are given certificates for:

- Most Improved Learner
- Academic Achievement
- Best Attendance
- Continuous effort (Submitted by Dave King)

Other ideas:

- Funny awards such as the "Broken Alarm Clock Award" for the learner who has challenges with getting up in the morning (Submitted by Michelle Skanes)
- Year-end certificates for each learner that recognize a special characteristic they have such as integrity, commitment, trusting (Submitted by Barb Miron).

Most Improved Student

Aurora College
selects

As the Most Improved Student in the Academic Studies Program
2001-2002

Signature

Date

Integrating Family Literacy into Adult Programs

Submitted By

Suzanne Robinson, Instructor ALBE/Access, Inuvik CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Instruction
- Respect and Support for Learners

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English

What You Need

- Children's books
- Art and craft supplies

How It Works

Family Literacy is integrated right into the classroom. There is a bookshelf with a variety of children's books as you walk in the door. The local literacy committee organizes and runs its family literacy evenings once a week in the classroom. Learners are familiar and comfortable with the concept of family literacy and are keen to participate.

Learner of the Month

Submitted By

Nancy Norn-Lennie, Adult Educator, Tulita CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Community

How It Works

Each month a "Learner of the Month" is chosen based on their work, effort and attendance during the month and is recognized by presenting them with a certificate and a small gift and by displaying their photograph in the "Learner of the Month" frame.

Transferability of Learning

A quality adult literacy and basic education program has procedures and practices in place to help learners transfer their learning to further education, training, employment or community life.

Personal Career Portfolio

Submitted By

- Debra English, Instructor ALBE/Access Inuvik CLC, Aurora College
- Michelle Skanes, Adult Educator, Tuktoyaktuk CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Transferability of Learning

Curriculum Links

- ALBE Career/College
- ALBE English
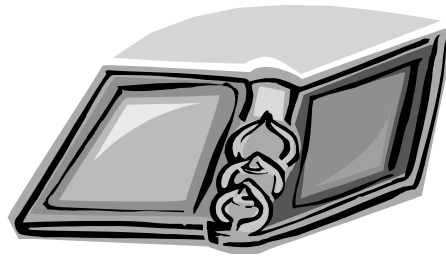
How It Works

The Personal Career Portfolio is designed as a place where learners can keep important information throughout their career that will help them market themselves and set themselves apart from the mass of other applicants when applying for a job. This is a project that can be worked on throughout the year and the learners are encouraged to keep it up over the years.

 A Personal Career Portfolio is a binder that contains an organized collection of work that:

- Provides insight and information on achievements.
- Presents an in-depth picture of skills and competencies.

After the portfolio is created, the learners should be encouraged to review the information in it at least three times per year and remove anything that is outdated. The objective is to keep the career portfolio current.

Guidelines for Portfolio Components

Here are the things you can include in a Personal Career Portfolio:

1. Title Page
2. Table of Contents
3. Personal Statement
4. Resume
5. Cover letters
6. Achievements and Performance
   - Records of certifications (diplomas, professional courses, etc.)
   - Records of honours and awards (school, work, extracurricular organizations)
   - Records of volunteer and extracurricular activities
   - Copies of transcripts and other educational performance
   - Thank you letters or notes from co-workers, supervisors, customers, etc.
   - References/Letter of Recommendation
   - One page with names and contact information (address, phone, fax, email) for 3-5 references
   - At least one letter of recommendation from one of those references (recommendation letters should be recent and on organizational letterhead)
7. Company Research
   - Research three companies that you are interested in and write a paragraph about each.
   - Describe what the company has to offer that appeals to you.

- Provide key facts, figures, and background information about each company.

8. Action Plan
   - Compose a long term career mission statement that articulates where you expect (or hope) to see yourself professionally in three years.
   - Identify at least two intermediate goals for each of the three timeframes: 3-6 months, 6-12 months, next 1-2 years.

9. Notes
   - Put a few sheets of paper in this section and use these to make notes about position openings, contacts, career decisions, etc.

10. Portfolio Summary
    - Use a memo format and keep this summary to one page.
    - Discuss the one most valuable insight gained in preparing your Personal Portfolio.
    - Describe the expected benefits of having prepared a portfolio at this stage of your career.
    - Identify any difficulties or obstacles you encountered in preparing the portfolio.

Culture

A quality adult literacy and basic education program appreciates and respects the diverse cultures of the learners and incorporates them into the program.

Northern Foods Activity

Submitted By

- Susan Devins, Adult Educator, BHP Ekati Workplace Learning Program, Yellowknife
- Elke Heinemann, Adult Educator, BHP Ekati Workplace Learning Program, Yellowknife

Best Practices Supported

- Instruction
- Culture
- Learning materials
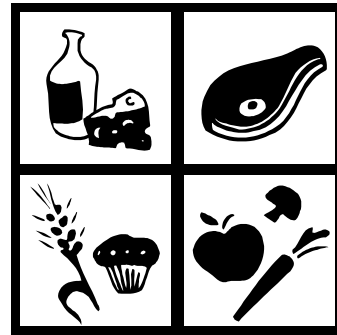
Curriculum Links

- ALBE English 110

How It Works

This activity encourages learners to discuss familiar topics and learn vocabulary. Through prompts and questions from the instructor, workers were able to write about their knowledge of traditional food. Visual aids helped workers articulate specific food names and ways of preparing food. The key literacy words and reading strategies were reinforced as learners used supplemental resources such as the NWT map, laminated food models from the Northern Food Kit (Check with your health centre or borrow it from the NWT Public Library), Ekati menu, newspaper article and Northern Food Group chart.

The Workplace Learning Program focuses on work content, personal interest and Aboriginal content. The program recognizes and supports traditional knowledge and lifestyle of its participants and strives to create a link to enhance literacy skills. The Northern Foods Activity began as a general discussion about traditional foods. Many workers hunt, trap, and fish on their two weeks away from work. Workers talked about their favourite foods, how they prepare food and places they hunt for caribou and other game. The discussion led to developing a formal reading and writing lesson using appropriate resources.

Learners were interested in taking this activity further and writing up recipes for specialty dishes. Learners who had time created a festive dinner menu.

Resource Manual of Practical Ideas

Northern Foods Activity Lesson Plan

Introduction	1. This activity will give workers practice in writing about food that is specific to northern climates or Aboriginal culture. Workers can develop a sight vocabulary list, and work with spelling and phonics
Instructions (Prompt Questions)	2. Have a general discussion about Northern traditional foods. 3. Ask workers what some of their favourite foods are, how they prepare them and where they go hunting. 4. Introduce vocabulary to describe flavour, texture, colour and method of preparation. 5. Talk about the advantages and disadvantages to preparing foods certain ways. 6. Look at the Northern Food Kit and have workers choose laminated food models to write about. 7. Have workers physically rearrange the food models that they are going to write about. Look on the back of the models for food names, method of preparation and food group they belong to. 8. Ask workers to list 8 names of foods and fill in the worksheet that follows. Write the first one as an example. 9. After workers have filled in the worksheet have them read out their writing aloud. 10. Talk about the Northern Food Guide and what they eat from each of the four food groups. 11. Talk about how long foods last depending on how we prepare them. 12. Reference the WOW article and discuss what kind of northern food space astronauts could take with them on an expedition. 13. Discuss food that will help fight disease and illness. 14. Reference the Sodexho Ekati menu and have workers locate the symbols for Northern Foods on the five-week menu. 15. Reference the NWT map and have workers show locations of places they go hunting and fishing. 16. As a group, build vocabulary lists of words to describe ways of preparing food (boil, broil, bake, fry, eat raw, cook over open fire, dry) where it comes from

	(barrenlands, bush, lakes, areas of NWT, stores, friends) and comments to describe taste (salty, sweet, bitter), texture (tough, tender, stringy) and other words such as juicy, oily, specialty food, delicacy. 17. Teach a lesson on first letters of vocabulary, root words, prefix and suffix. 18. Introduce rules for spelling with examples such as dry and dried, fry and fried. 19. Teach a lesson on short and long vowel sounds.

Northern Foods Worksheet

Name of Food	How it is prepared	Where it is from	Comments

Seize the Day Field Trips

Submitted By

- Barb Miron, Adult Educator, Fort Resolution CLC, Aurora College
- Rosy Bjornson, Learner, Fort Resolution CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Culture
- Organizational Linkages and Partnerships
- Community
- Transferability of Learning

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Science

What You Need

- Information about international cultural events

How It Works

In September 2003, the Akaitcho Territory Government and the First Nation Forestry Program sponsored one of the learners at the Fort Resolution community learning centre, Rosy Bjornson, to attend the 12th World Forestry Congress in Quebec City. Four thousand delegates from all over the world came together in these discussions to come up with solutions on sustainable development in the world's eco-systems. Prior to the Congress, the Heron-Wendat tribe hosted the Indigenous Peoples'

Forum on Forestry to develop an action plan to be presented to the Congress. Three hundred delegates attended this forum. Together, they developed and documented what is now known as the Wendeke Action Plan.

Rosy met many indigenous people and environmentalists from around the world, who were all concerned about sustainable development. She was given a voice on issues that concerned her. When she returned, she wrote a report, "Forests: A Source of Life," for her sponsors and an ABE English 140 essay entitled "Indigenous People and the Land They Own." She was also interviewed on the radio about her experiences. This was an incredible learning experience for Rosy, who plans to go into environmental studies.

> *We as people need to have a strong voice on environmental impacts, and any type of development going on in this world. For years indigenous peoples did not have a strong voice on issues and concerns of the forest.*
>
> *Rosy Bjornson*
> *Fort Resolution*

Field Trips to Chipewyan Language and Culture Workshops

Submitted By

- Barb Miron, Adult Educator, Fort Resolution CLC, Aurora College
- Catherine Boucher, Literacy Facilitator, Fort Resolution CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Culture
- Community
- Transferability of Learning

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Career/College
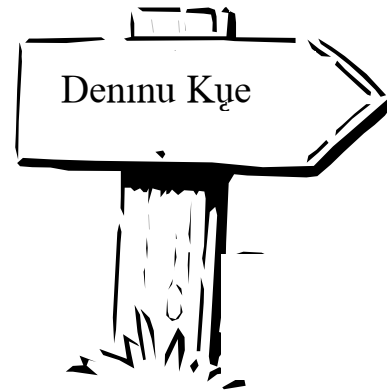
How It Works

The local Chipewyan Working Group often sponsors workshops in the community and invites learners from the learning centre to participate. Learners have taken part in:

- Medical, government and justice terminology workshops.
- Chipewyan writing workshops.
- Work on the Chipewyan alphabet.
- Chipewyan handicrafts.
- Collecting elders' stories.

- Designing Chipewyan instructional materials.
- Collaborating with elders on pronunciation lessons.
- Planning for a fall culture camp.
- Planning for a mini cultural carnival.
- Planning for evening classes in the Chipewyan language.

A future workshop on syllabics is planned.

Cultural events can be linked to ABE curriculum instruction. Catherine's career goal is to be an aboriginal language and culture instructor, so cultural workshops reinforce her professional development. Catherine drew from her experiences at the Chipewyan workshop to write an English 140 expository essay.

Encouraging learners to attend such events demonstrates that the program values the learners' culture and language. It also enables learners to maintain their language and use it in the community.

> *At the cultural camp, both youth and elders learned traditional skills . . . including how to prepare foods, rabbit snaring and fishing. The elders share history stories, their beliefs, and values of the Dene people.*
>
> *Catherine Boucher*

Lessons from the Land: The Idaa Trail

Submitted By

Donna Mulders, NWT Literacy Council, Yellowknife, NT

Best Practices Supported

- Culture
- Learning Materials

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Science
- ALBE Social Studies
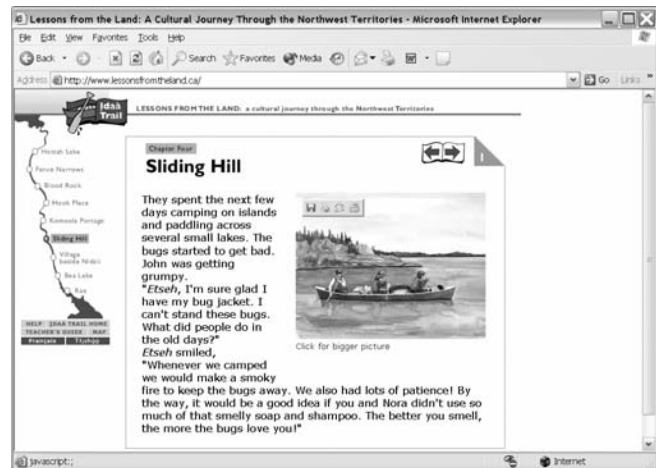
How It Works

Northern and culturally relevant resources can be difficult to find in the north. The Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre developed an online learning resource called *Lessons from the Land* that definitely meets that need. *Lessons from the Land* is a series of virtual trails used by Aboriginal people. The first virtual trail is *The Idaa Trail*, a traditional route Dogrib people travelled from Great Slave Lake to Great Bear Lake. The interactive site allows you to travel the Idaa Trail and learn more about the traditions and culture of the Dogrib people.

There are two ways you can travel the Idaa Trail. You can click on the "Online Story" button at the right to travel the Idaa Trail with a Dogrib

family in an illustrated online story. You will travel with Dogrib elders as they take their three grandchildren on a summer canoe trip up the Idaa Trail. You will stop at important cultural and historic sites along the Idaa Trail and learn about such things as making birch bark canoes, the fur trade, legends, customs, and traditional medicine. The story is available in English, French and Dogrib.

For a more in-depth experience, at the "Idaa Trail Home" you can browse archival photos, video and audio about the Idaa Trail as you explore the historical and cultural significance of eight sites on the Idaa Trail.

This is an excellent way to incorporate local culture and history into an ALBE program.

Web Link

Lessons from the Land website: www.lessonsfromtheland.ca

The Idaa Trail Study Guide

Submitted By

Donna Mulders, NWT Literacy Council, Yellowknife, NT

Best Practices Supported

- Culture
- Learning Materials

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Science
- ALBE Social Studies
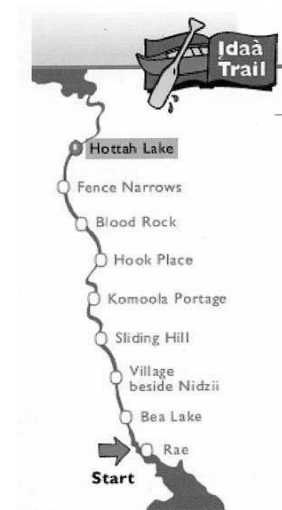
How It Works

The Idaa Trail Study Guide is a resource for adult learners and educators in the NWT. The study guide was produced by the NWT Literacy Council to accompany the first trail on the *Lessons from the Land* website, a northern and culturally relevant resource for NWT learners, developed by the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre. On the website you can take a virtual journey up the Idaa Trail. The study guide has learning activities, comprehension questions, word searches, suggestions for journal writing and in-depth research, learner handouts and lots more. All the activities are linked with the 110 and 120 Adult Literacy and Basic Education (ALBE) science, social studies, and English curricula.

Web Link

Idaa Trail Study Guide—www.nwt.literacy.ca/resource/resource.htm
Or—www.lessonsfromtheland.ca

Genealogy: Your Family Tree

Submitted By

Liz Pope, Adult Educator, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Culture
- Learning Materials

Curriculum Links

- ALBE Social Studies
- ALBE English

How It Works

This activity involves the participants investigating themselves. Learners are to ask themselves the following questions:

- Who am I?
- Where do my people come from?
- How did they/How did I become a part of my community?
- What historical trends or events are embodied in my family's locations and/or movements?

Have the learners draw a family tree that goes back at least three generations. For each relative, answer the following questions:

- What is their name, date, and place of birth?
- What are their indigenous or cultural roots?
- How did they come to be part of the band or community?

This activity involves community and family participation, thus the results can vary depending on individual learners' situations. The learners present their research to the class in a poster and/or essay.

Building on Culture: Reclaiming Our Sinew

Submitted By

Bob Spensley, Adult Educator, Nunavut Arctic College, Rankin Inlet, Nunavut

Best Practices Supported

- Culture
- Transferability of Learning
- Organizational Linkages and Partnerships

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Social Studies

How It Works

"Reclaiming Our Sinew" is a 24-week full-time program, with six core courses. One part of the program prepared learners for further upgrading programs, towards entering the workforce and enhancing their employability. In the other side, learners gained skills in traditional sewing, which allowed them to outfit their families.

Mornings were spent teaching and learning traditional sewing techniques in a large room at Maani Ulujuk School. A large group of elders guided the learners as they learned the art of preparing, tanning, cutting and sewing

skins. By the end of the program, learners had made caribou parkas, pants, mitts, and seal skin pants and kamiks.

Learners spent the afternoons at the Community Learning Centre where they focused on academic upgrading. They received language instruction in English and Inuktitut, as well as math, computers and typing. One of the objectives of this program was to assist in preparing participants to enter the job market and/or develop the skills to enable them to pursue sewing as a means of self-employment.

This holistic program tries to integrate these two parts so that learners will develop practical skills, self-esteem and cultural pride.

The idea for "Reclaiming Our Sinew" came from the Kivalliq Inuit Association and is an excellent example of putting Inuit traditional knowledge into practice. It is also a strong example of partnership between territorial and federal government departments, Inuit organizations, hamlets, schools and Nunavut Arctic College.

> *Since I started the course, I've made caribou pants, parka, mitts, socks, seal skin mitts and three pair of kamiks. I'm proud of my sewing and what I have learned from the elders.*
>
> *Shauna Ussak*
> *Student*

Community

> A quality adult literacy and basic education program ensures a strong community focus by being engaged in the community and actively engaging the community in the program.

Training Advisory Committee

Submitted By

Bruce Green, Adult Educator, Katl'odeeche (Hay River Reserve)

Best Practices Supported

- Organizational Linkages and Partnerships
- Community

What You Need

- Community members with an interest in adult learning

How It Works

A number of years ago, the Katl'odeeche (Hay River Reserve) Dene Band set up the Aboriginal Training Fund Committee. Committee members must have an interest in serving on the committee and an interest in adult learning. The Band selects the members who will sit on it.

> *I'm very impressed with the committee. The members are thoughtful and provide me with good advice. I value their input.*
>
> *Bruce Green*
> *Adult Educator*

Any training money that goes to the adult education program flows through the committee, which has developed guidelines for distributing the funds. The committee provides direction on the kinds of programs that the community needs. As a result, the centre offers a life skills program, a Slavey language program and a cultural component. The committee meets four or five times a year—usually twice before programs start, and once when programs end to review what has happened. The adult educator works closely with the committee and finds the committee extremely helpful. Since the decisions have been made collaboratively with the Band, as a non-Band member, this gives him increased authority.

Community Volunteers

Submitted By

Bruce Green, Adult Educator, Katl'odeeche (Hay River Reserve)

Best Practices Supported

- Community
- Outreach

How It Works

The learners in the Katl'odeeche (Hay River Reserve) program are encouraged to play an active role in community events. Some of the activities they are involved in include:

- Helping set up at community feasts
- Attending planning meetings for the Kamba Carnival, and organizing and running some of the events
- Visiting the Chief Sunrise Education Centre (the local school) once a week to read stories to the children, either one-on-one or in small groups.

A recent innovation involves elders' visits. In groups of two or three, learners first prepare a small gift for each elder—tea, sugar, milk, etc.—then go to visit the elder in his/her home.

Reading Buddies

Submitted By

Margaret Field, Adult Educator, Fort Providence CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Community

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English

How It Works

Every day, learners team up with children in the local elementary school. Half the learners go to the school every second day, and the other half on alternate days. They read a children's story to a small group of children. This activity helps both adults and children to improve their literacy skills.

Connections in Learning

Submitted By

Dianne Dentrey, Adult Educator, Wekweti CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Organizational Linkages and Partnerships
- Community

How It Works

"Connections in Learning" is a community-based program where the adult educator works with the coordinators of other programs being offered in the community. The programs in Wekweti include:

- Wekweti Prenatal Nutrition Program
- After-school Fun Time Reading Program
- Kids on Computers
- Elder Literacy
- Dogrib Literacy
- Women's Craft Night
- Family Activity Nights.

The adult educator also works with coordinators of community events such as Take Back the Night, the Winter Carnival, community meetings and workshops.

The adult educator and the coordinator work together to deliver the session and to have the necessary resources, materials and supplies available. The

adult educator also attends each session with the coordinator as a support person and provides assistance to the coordinator when required.

The coordinator-adult educator team work on various components of programs: brainstorming, organization, time management, long term and short term goals for their programs and themselves, communication skills, and delivery methods. In the future they plan to work on proposal writing, budgeting, report writing, and public relations.
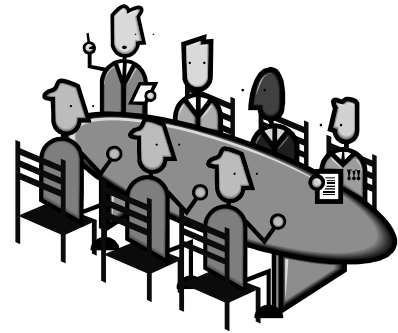
Connections in Learning was very successful in the community of Wekweti. The people who attended the programs were comfortable because the coordinator was born and raised in the community. The coordinator is successful and comfortable delivering the program with the support and assistance of the adult educator. The adult educator has successes because people are coming into the learning centre for the programs, getting to know them and feeling comfortable asking for help with other needs.

Resource Manual of Practical Ideas

Community Writing Contest

Submitted By

Barb Miron, Adult Educator, Fort Resolution CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Community
- Instruction
- Learning Materials

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English

How It Works

A community writing contest was held for different age groups in the community. It involved the learners from the adult learning centre, the school, and other community members. The contests had a profound impact on both the K-12 and the adult education learners in the community. Winning entries were published into booklets, illustrated by local artists. Contest winners also received award certificates and the honour of having their work published as well as the monetary reward of the gift certificate prizes. Contest winners received additional reinforcement when *News North* and CBC Radio ran stories on the writing contests.

After brainstorming the items needed to survive in the bush for a month, I then explained that there is another kind of survival, and writing skills were one of the most important things that they would need in their survival kits as they grew up and took their places in the world.

Barb Miron
Adult Educator

Here is how to do it:

- The writing contest was advertised in the community for 4 – 6 weeks before the submission deadline. Posters were made up, which specified the length requirements and explicitly stated that contest entries would be judged on the basis of grammar and structure as well as content and creativity.

- To increase the incentive to participate, gift certificate prizes were awarded.

- A judging panel of community educators read the contest entries individually and scored them with a rubric that we agreed upon in advance. The members of the judging panel then met to arrive at a consensus about the winning entries. The process of advertising, organizing and judging the contest entries helped facilitate community partnerships.

Seeing the Importance of Writing

The winners of the youth writing contest were announced during an assembly at the Deninu School in Fort Resolution. As a way of introducing the winner, a brainstorming session was done with the learners about what types of equipment they would need to survive in the bush for a month. The learners were quite enthusiastic and came up with a more thorough survival kit than I ever could have devised. I

Winners of the Fort Resolution Community Writing Contest

then explained that there is another kind of survival, and writing skills were one of the most important things that they would need in their survival kits as they grew up and took their places in the world. After this group

brainstorming session, I announced the winners of the writing contest. It was a very powerful moment.

Creating New Learning Material

The booklets of the winning writing submissions serve as examples of and incentives to the development of writing skills. Since the contest winners in Fort Resolution wrote from their own experience, the booklets are fine examples of excellence in writing within a northern cultural context. These booklets will make good reading material for literacy programs in northern communities, and we are more than willing to send out copies free of charge.

Web Link

Visit the NWT Literacy Council website at www.nwt.literacy.ca to find copies of the writing contest booklets.

Writing Contest Scoring Criteria

Organization and Structure – 10 points

- Introduction, body and conclusion for essays.
- Adequate paragraph breaks.
- Introduction, rising action, climax, falling action for stories.
- Conflict and resolution at the end. Extra points for use of suspense.
- Extra points for creative narratives that depart from straight chronological structure.

Grammar, Punctuation and Mechanics – 10 points

- Check subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement and references and run-on sentences.
- Make sure sentence fragments are deliberate for creative expression.
- Check for correct punctuation of quotations in dialogue.
- Check use of commas, semicolons.
- All sentences start with capital letter and end with period.
- Check capitalization, numbers and abbreviations.
- Check the use of apostrophes in possessives and contractions.

Writing Style – 10 points

- Extent of vocabulary.
- Creative and skillful use of words.
- Extra points for use of figurative language.
- Extra points for skillful description.

Creativity: Originality – 10 points

- Fresh imaginative story ideas.
- New angles on familiar stories.
- Original approaches

Creativity: Depth of Insight – 10 points

- Insightful themes and messages conveyed.
- Well thought out stories written for a purpose.
- Knowledge of human character.
- Wisdom, story that touches the reader.

Mother's Day Newsletter

Submitted By

Margaret Field, Adult Educator, Fort Providence CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Community
- Instruction

Curriculum Links

- ALBE English
- ALBE Introduction to Computers

How It Works

The Mother's Day Newsletter was a class project created by the learners of the Fort Providence Community Learning Centre. The learners wrote special greeting to their mothers as a way to recognize their mothers on Mother's Day. This project allowed the learners to create something that would be shared in the community with mothers, grandmothers, aunts and sisters.

The learners wrote the stories and did the word processing and layout of the newsletter. Once completed, they distributed the newsletters in the community.
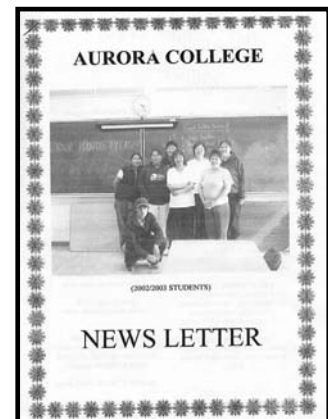
Completion Ceremony

Submitted By

Barb Tsetso, Adult Educator, , Fort Simpson CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Community
- Instruction

What You Need

- Flowers
- Graduation gowns
- Certificates

How It Works

Many adults that return to adult literacy and basic education programs have never had a graduation from high school or any other program to celebrate their successes. In Fort Simpson, the program staff goes all out and plans a wonderful celebration to mark their graduation.

The participants use graduation gowns, are given flowers, and are served a wonderful meal. They are also given certificates. This is truly a community celebration of the successes of these participants as family, community members and college staff take part in the event.

Your Community

Submitted By

Liz Pope, Adult Educator, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Community
- Instruction
- Respect and Support for Learners

Curriculum Links

- ALBE Social Studies
- ALBE English

How It Works

Introducing Community Members

This activity involves learners identifying a community member to introduce to the class. Learners prepare a questionnaire, interview the community member, and introduce the community member to the class. The introduction can be a written introduction (writing assignment) and/or an oral introduction (presentation skills). Group lessons on preparing a questionnaire and interview etiquette are necessary to provide guidance to the learners.

> *When I was new to the community, I wanted to learn about the community – about its resources, employment opportunities, and community members.*
>
> *This assignment allows students to introduce their community and plan a community event while giving the instructor an opportunity to teach and/or assess research skills.*
>
> *Liz Pope*
> *Adult Educator*

To involve the community, this activity includes having the learners organize an open house. As a group, learners and instructor prepare a "to do" list with learners volunteering to take on various responsibilities. The open house becomes what the learners put into it.

Identifying Community Resources

After preparing the open house and introducing different community members, learners then identify and describe community resources. The activity begins as a brainstorming session of resources/organizations in my community. Each learner chooses one resource/organization and writes about it, with the intended audience being someone new to the community.

Mini-lessons may include preparing research questions; locating sources (brainstorming sources, webbing); using the library and Internet to locate information; taking notes, using quotations, preparing a bibliography; and the writing process (outline, first draft, revising, final copy, title page, bibliography). On the other hand, the assignment can be used to assess research skills. In this case, mini-lessons may not be necessary.

Outreach

A quality adult literacy and basic education program reaches out to the community to attract potential learners and gain the support of the community.

Promoting Literacy in the Community

Submitted By

Barb Miron, Adult Educator, Fort Resolution CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Outreach

How It Works

The Fort Resolution Community Literacy program has built literacy awareness and promotional activities into its work in the community. The program keeps people informed about literacy and literacy issues, and about what the program offers. Staff:

- Hold information sessions at bingos.
- Give away books at community events.
- Produce community booklets.
- Develop literacy posters with photos of children in the community.
- Sponsor special community events for children, families and elders.

The program develops promotional materials and does activities to promote literacy in the community. Posters with photographs of local children and parents are posted around the community, conveying the importance of exposing children to print-rich environments. As well, photo collages of family literacy activities are put up in the learning centre and distributed to stakeholders.

Organizational Linkages and Partnerships

A quality adult literacy and basic education program works collaboratively with other organizations and agencies to support the program, the learners and the program staff.

Educating Learner Sponsors

Submitted By

Liz Pope, Adult Educator, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Organizational Linkages and Partnerships

How It Works

For learner sponsors to be supportive of a variety of programs and services offered by an adult basic education program, it is important for them to understand what the program is all about.
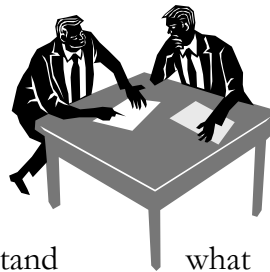
The adult educator in Hay River spends time talking with learner sponsors to discuss the program and the various components. Answering questions and explaining the rationale for community-based projects is an excellent way to build relationships with learner sponsors and for them to understand your program.

In Hay River, this is done informally by phoning or meeting with learner sponsors individually. This is an informal approach but it could be much more structured. If you deal with the same sponsors all the time, you know what issues will come up and what information they are looking for. This is also a good approach if you are new to a community because it is a good way to get to know the sponsors and the partners in the community.

Regional Training Partnership

Submitted By

Karla Carter, Chair, Community Programs, Aurora Campus, Aurora College, Inuvik

Best Practices Supported

- Organizational Linkages and Partnerships
- Funding

How It Works

The Regional Training Committee was formed in the Beaufort Delta among various groups and organizations involved in funding and providing training opportunities for northerners. Its purpose is to make it easier for northerners to participate in training, education and employment opportunities, and for the partners to more effectively fulfill their mandates.
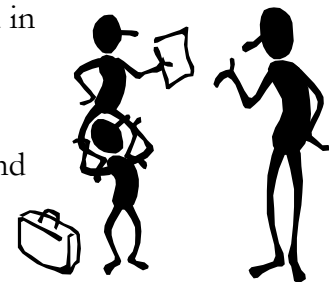
The committee started out very informally by meeting for coffee on Friday afternoons and then became a more formal association. In the process of formalizing the committee, the group discussed partnerships – what they are, what they aren't, and the advantages and disadvantages of partnering. From these discussions a draft partnership agreement, strategic partnership plan and the beginnings of an operational plan and implementation strategies evolved.

The Regional Training Partnership has six main goals:

- Goal #1: To coordinate and facilitate quality opportunities (in all Beaufort Delta regional communities) to meet the identified training, education, and employment needs of northerners.
- Goal #2: To use and manage information effectively, through a communication strategy and information strategy.
- Goal #3: To increase influence and leverage resources.
- Goal #4: To work with others to increase access, appeal and participation in education, training and employment.
- Goal #5: To increase the partnership's recognition and visibility.
- Goal #6: To increase the partnership's organizational effectiveness.

> *The partnership's purpose is to make it easier for northerners to participate in training, education and employment opportunities and for the partners to more effectively fulfill their mandates.*

The committee measures its successes using the following:

- Training, education and employment opportunities are created
- Resources are well utilized
- Participation and completion rates are increased
- Cultural values are reflected in all that we do
- Unemployment rate is reduced
- Increased range of learning opportunities is created (from traditional to conventional)
- More training and learning opportunities at the community level
- Appropriate and well managed information
- Increased resource base/influence for the partners
- Barriers are reduced (to education, employment and training opportunities)
- The partners are well organized, recognized, and self-sustaining.

Inuvik Literacy Committee

Submitted By

Debra English, Career Development Officer, Education, Culture and Employment, Inuvik

Best Practices Supported

- Organizational Linkages and Partnerships
- Funding

How It Works

The Inuvik Literacy Committee started out as the NWT Literacy Week Committee made up of representatives from the community, regional and territorial organizations. The committee started as an informal group of representatives from a variety of organizations that came together in September 2001 and 2002 to organize and deliver in-class, community, family and workplace activities for NWT Literacy Week.

In September 2002, the NWT Literacy Council held a Family Literacy Training Institute in Inuvik, which involved different organizations, businesses, institutions and agencies from Inuvik and other Beaufort Delta communities. As part of this training, the NWT Literacy Council encouraged community groups to explore the literacy activities they would like to have in their community.

The workshop introduced three family literacy programs: *1-2-3 Rhyme with Me*, *Families First* and *Books in the Home*, all excellent resources for starting literacy projects in the communities. The NWT Literacy Council then

offered each community $3,000 to plan and deliver literacy projects in their communities.

The main initiative that encouraged the forming of the Committee was the NWT Literacy Council Family Learning Kit Backpack project. This initiative provided backpacks to children born in 1997/98/99. This project could financially benefit an individual or group. Delivering the backpacks to the children and parents in Inuvik generated $4,000. The participants discussed the idea and set forth to form a committee and distribute the backpacks on a volunteer basis and the funds generated by the volunteer work would go back into the community for purchasing more books, snacks or prizes for literacy projects in Inuvik.

Who is involved in the Inuvik Literacy Committee?
- Inuvik Centennial Library
- Health and Social Service Board
- Human Resources, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
- Human Resources, Gwich'in Tribal Council
- Beaufort Delta Self Government Office
- Ingamo Hall Friendship Centre
- Town of Inuvik
- Inuvik Representative, NWT Literacy Council
- Aurora College, Adult Education Instructors
- Inuvik Child Development Center
- Community/Parent Volunteers

Here are some suggestions on how to start your own community literacy committee:
- Contact all organizations in your community that could support and assist with the committee
   - Schools

- o Library
- o First Nation councils/bands
- o Non-government boards/organizations
- o Non-profit and other private sector groups
- o Government departments – ECE, Health and Social Services
- o Interested individuals
- o NWT Literacy Council.
- Come together and talk about the need for the committee and possible projects the committee could take on.
- Establish a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and 2 Members at large. Also include the Regional Representative from the NWT Literacy Council, if they live in your community.
- Plan and organize literacy events in your community.

Career Fair

Submitted By:

Carolyn Coey Simpson, Adult Educator, Wha Ti CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Organizational Linkages and Partnerships

Curriculum Links

- ALBE Career/Life Work

How It Works

The adult educator, along with key people in the community, organizes a career fair for learners in the community. First they establish a committee to organize the event and then contact organizations in the community such as government departments, private businesses, local government agencies, non-profit and volunteer organizations. Along with local organizations, territorial organizations are invited to attend the career fair. The organizations are invited to set up a display at the career fair and provide information to learners.

A career scavenger hunt is developed and learners have to find the "worker" based on the descriptions provided and get a stamp on their Career Fair Stamp Sheet (sample included) by someone who does that job.

Prizes for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd most interesting, informative and enthusiastic display table are presented at the Career Fair.

Wha Ti Career Fair 2004

These jobs will all be listed at the Career Fair as "real time work" opportunities for future generations! A display table will be reserved for your community job upon your confirmation – our future depends on your generous support!

- Adult Educator – Aurora College
- Literacy Worker – Aurora College or Wha Ti First Nation
- Elementary Teacher – Mezi Community School
- High School Teacher – Mezi Community School
- Janitor –
- Kindergarten Teacher – Mezi Community School
- School Principal – Mezi Community School
- Secretary
- Receptionist
- Education Assistant – Mezi Community School
- Community School Counsellor – Mezi Community School
- Reading Specialist – Mezi Community School
- Manager – LLMDC
- Carpenter – LLMDC
- Boiler Mechanic – LLMDC
- Laborer – LLMDC or WCC

- Dogrib Language Teacher – Mezi Community School
- Loader Operator – LLMDC or WCC
- Carpenters Helper and/or 4th Yr Apprentice – LLMDC
- Gas Attendant
- Band Manager – WFN
- Finance Officer - WFN
- Career Development Outreach Worker – WFN
- Income Support Worker – WFN
- Social Programs Coordinator – WFN
- Community Justice Committee Coordinator – WFN
- Computer Lab Supervisor – WFN
- Sustainable Energy Project Coordinator
- Power Plant Operator
- RCMP
- Outpost Northern Nurse
- Community Health Representative

- Child Protection Worker
- Social Intake Worker
- Store Manager – WFN
- B&B Owner/Operator – AC Store
- Cashier – AC or WCS
- Stocker – AC or WCS
- Air Tindi Agent
- Air Tindi freight handler
- Senior Administrative Officer – WCC
- Recreation Coordinator – WCC
- Administrative Assistant - WCC or WFN or LLMDC
- Hamlet Foreman – WCC
- Water Delivery Driver – WCC
- Water Treatment Plant Operator – WCC
- Fire Chief – WCC
- Volunteer Firefighter – WCC
- Grader Operator – WCC
- Airport Manager and/or Designate - WCC
- Dump Truck Operator – WCC or LLMDC
- CAT Dozer Operator – WCC
- Wildlife/Renewable Resources Officer
- Economic Development Officer – WFN
- Priest

- Missionary
- Jail Guard – RCMP
- Dogcatcher – WCC
- Homecare Worker – Health Centre
- Daycare Supervisor – WFN
- Childcare Worker – WFN
- Cook
- Chief – WFN
- Sub-Chief – WFN
- Councilor – WFN
- Volunteer – WFN (Boys & Girls Club, Men's Group, Women's Sewing Group, Youth Matter Youth Group); WCC (Coach, Hockey/Skating Instructor), Saint Bruno's Church (First Communion Teachers, Parish Councillors, Church Services, Core Couples, Spiritual Leaders)
- Justice of the Peace
- Coroner
- Canadian Rangers
- Community Recreation Hall Supervisor – WCC
- Arena Supervisor/Ice Maintainer – WCC
- Legal Aid Worker
- Community Corrections & Parole Officer

- NWT Disabilities Outreach Worker
- Housing Coordinator – WFN
- Beach Life Guard – WCC
- A&D Worker – WFN
- Interpreter – WCC or WFN
- Translator – WCC or WFN
- Artist – (painter, carver, Dene drummer)
- Craftsperson – (tanner, beadwork, hidework, seamstress/sewing, drum maker)

2004 Wha Ti
Career Fair

Find the worker and get all the Wha Ti careers on your paper!

Helps to get you back into college by organizing classes and many other adult programs in your community. (Answer: Adult Educator)	Stamp 1
Has to know the laws and protects people. I will help you when there is trouble in your community. (Answer: RCMP)	Stamp 2
Helps to get you and your family involved in many social programs in your community. (Answer: WFN Social Programs Coordinator)	Stamp 3
Helps people start their own jobs. (Answer: RWED)	Stamp 4
Works on projects to make our community a safe and well community to live in. (Answer: Community Justice Coordinator)	Stamp 5
Works at getting you and your parcels safely on and off the scheduled plane services. (Answer: Air Tindi Agent)	Stamp 6
Works with people from our community at Diavik Diamond Mine and helps others to explore mining careers. (Answer: Diavik Community Affairs Superintendent)	Stamp 7
Has to know the laws and protects children. I will help you when there is trouble in your family. (Answer: Social Worker/Intake Worker)	Stamp 8

Helps to teach us all about saving energy and respecting the gifts of the land in your community. (Answer: Energy Project)	Stamp 9
Helps people with challenges to find the right job in your community. (Answer: NWTCPD)	Stamp 10
Helps people to find out about how to get a new home in your community. (Answer: Housing Coordinator)	Stamp 11
Helps people find jobs and work on improving job skills (Answer: WFN Career Outreach)	Stamp 12
Works on building and fixing buildings and other jobs in the community (Answer: LLMDC Tradesperson)	Stamp 13
Promotes various construction and maintenance work for local and government customers (Answer: LLMDC Administration)	Stamp 14
Talks to families and other community agencies after a death and makes a report to the NWT Chief Coroner (Answer: Coroner)	Stamp 15
Has to know_____ Answer: _____)	Stamp 16

Community Partnerships

Submitted By

Liz Pope, Adult Educator, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Organizational Linkages and Partnerships
- Funding

How It Works

In the community of Hay River, the Soaring Eagle Friendship Centre delivered a literacy level Pre-Employment/Life Skills Program and Aurora College concentrated on the middle-to-upper level adult basic education levels. However, after governmental changes and subsequent funding changes, securing funding for the continuation of the literacy program became a challenge for the Friendship Centre.

After a lot of thought and discussion, the Friendship Centre executive director and the Aurora College adult educator collaborated and submitted separate and different funding proposals to various funding agencies. The end result was a full-time literacy program. The program was situated at Aurora College and the instructor worked part-time for Aurora College and part-time for the Friendship Centre.

Staff Development & Support

A quality adult literacy and basic education program values its staff and places a priority on staff development.

Bi-weekly Conference Calls

Submitted By

Lin Maus, Coordinator, Academic Studies, Yellowknife Campus, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Staff Development and Support
- Instruction

What You Need

- Speaker phones if more than one participant at a location
- List of participants with phone numbers (including area code)
- Operated assisted conference call set up through telephone company
- Inform participants of time and agenda of the meeting

How It Works

Community programs at Aurora College are delivered at five community locations (Wha Ti, Wekweti, Gameti, Dettah and N'Dilo). Since three of these sites are outside of Yellowknife, a bi-weekly conference call has been set up so that community program staff have a chance to interact. The conference call starts with an update from the various communities (including Yellowknife). Adult educators have a chance to discuss their programs, concerns and new initiatives. There is a portion of the meeting which is agenda driven so that staff can

be updated on college information and recommendations and requests from community programs can be discussed with the supervisor. This conference call has promoted a sense of teamwork and allows the supervisor to have a broader view of programs presented when input is received from all areas at the same time.

The community adult educators are working in isolation. They are often the only college employee in the community. It is necessary to ensure that these individuals feel supported as a valuable part of the college environment. The conference call is a step toward providing the support that is a necessary part of these positions.

Professional Development

Submitted By

Barb Miron, Adult Educator, Fort Resolution CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Staff Development and Support
- Instruction

How It Works

Many of the staff at the literacy program are local people who work part-time. Providing training for them has been a program priority for the Fort Resolution Community Learning Centre. When possible, professional development is provided to both full-time and part-time staff. In the last three years, staff have had the opportunity to participate in a broad range of training, including:

- Tutor training
- STAPLE (Supplemental Training for Adult Practitioners of Literacy Education)
- Lesson Planning
- Program Planning
- Screening for Success
- Proposal Writing
- Publisher/Graphic Design
- PowerPoint
- Academy of Reading

- Eye of the Storm: Teaching Adults with FASD
- Families First: A Northern Parenting Program
- Non-Violence Crisis Intervention
- Family Literacy Training
- Inclusive Early Childhood Education
- Assistive Technology
- Canadian Adult Reading Assessment (CARA)

Building Tutor and Community Capacity

Submitted By

Ken Latour, Instructor, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Community
- Staff Development and Support

How It Works

While working as the adult educator in the Fort Resolution Community Learning Centre, Ken Latour worked to develop local tutors and literacy workers. The guiding philosophy was to involve as many people as possible in order to build community support for the literacy program and to ensure that it would not collapse with the removal of any one participant. To support the project, an overall literacy program coordinator, two tutors, and three family literacy program facilitators were hired. All were part-time, with the exception of the coordinator who was nearly full-time. This strategy worked well as it allowed the program to see who was effective in what capacity, and widened the community network in that every additional person hired had an existing network of support and contacts within the community.

The training software STAPLE (Supplemental Training for Adult Practitioners of Literacy Education) was used to train the community tutors and instructors. This software package was easy to use and was extremely thorough. It was important not to underestimate the amount of training

that people needed to be effective tutors. It was important to make time in the schedule at the beginning of the program to ensure that tutors were not confused or floundering. It may be a completely new field of work for some and they will need guidance. Under-supporting a tutor will harm both the tutor and the learner. The best learning comes through doing. It was important to provide support to the tutors when they were having hard times and accept that this was a natural part of their learning experience.

Peer Appreciation Certificate

Submitted By

Lin Maus, Coordinator, Academic Studies, Yellowknife Campus, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Staff Development and Support
- Community

What You Need

- Microsoft Publisher, Printer, Copier

How It Works

At the end of the year a fellow employee printed Peer Appreciation Certificates and handed them out at the last staff meeting. These were certificates of appreciation that recognized the support staff members had provided during the academic year.

Often in the course of the year we do not take the time to tell fellow staff members how much we appreciate their assistance. The certificate of appreciation is a way of saying thank you to your peers in a very visible way for their contributions.

Staff Orientation

Submitted By

Karla Carter, Chair, Community Programs, Aurora Campus, Aurora College, Inuvik

Best Practices Supported

- Staff Development and Support

How It Works

Aurora College in the Beaufort Delta region provides staff orientation and professional development for its adult educators twice a year.

At the beginning of each academic year, all adult educators gather to meet one another and receive an orientation to Aurora College. At this time, they are provided with program information, like curriculum, program manuals, accepted practices, policies and guidelines. This is a wonderful opportunity for educators to network with others in their region.

In January the educators met again to do professional development. A wide range of professional development was provided – from FAS, family literacy, best practices project, curriculum subjects, traditional knowledge and many others. The highlight of the January training event was that it was mostly staff presenting on training or conferences they had attended and were now passing their knowledge onto their colleagues.

Fall Orientation Fall Launch Community Educator

September 3-6, 2002 Invuik, NT
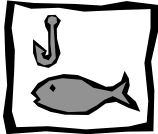
	AM	PM
Tuesday Sep 3	**9:00 -** WELCOME ***NEW EDUCATORS*** -Documentation – FMBS -Campus Tour **RETURNING EDUCATORS** -Curriculum -Prepare presentations to new educators -Groups of 2/3	**1:00** Intro to Aurora College 　　　Campus Director – Lloyd Hyatt 　　　Counsellor – Liz Dietrich **2:00** Sahtu/B.Delta Group 　　　meeting/discussions 　　　　• plans 　　　　• PD 　　　　• report formats 　　　　• communications ***BD*** *– IRC and Self-govt speakers at 2pm*
Wednesday, Sep 4	**9:00 -**ARI Tour (Andrew Applejohn) **10:00　　-**BREAK **10:15　　-**ALBE Curriculum Introduction to each subject	**1:00 -** Proposals, funding, evening courses **2:30 -**Human Resources (Carol Villeneuve) **3:00** -BREAK 3:**15-**Student Records System 　-Placement tests 　-SRS (Anne Marie)
Thurs. Sep 5	Campus Wide Wellness Day **6:00 -** Supper at the Green Briar, Mackenzie Hotel	
Friday, Sep 6	**9:00 -**Computers (Doug McLeod) **9:30 –**Purchasing (Rory/Doug Robertson) **9:45-**BREAK **10:00** -HCSWP (Susan Miller) **-**Distance Ed -Chinook College **11:30 -** Oil/Gas (Rick Clarke/ Neil Flynn)	Sahtu - return to communities - supper meeting BeauDel – shopping or meetings

Winter Adult Educators' Gathering in Deline

Professional Development For Aurora Campus Adult Educators
January 27 – 31, 2003

	Monday Jan 27	Tuesday Jan 28	Wednesday Jan 29	Thursday Jan 30	Friday Jan 31
9-12	Travel morning	Traditional Knowledge – Maureen Social Studies – Suzanne Science – Karla	English – Linda Math – David & John	Team Building event – Facilitator from Winnipeg	Team Building event – Facilitator from Winnipeg
1-5	Best Practices in ALBE – Karla Access Programs – Linda	See the sights of Deline -- cultural event	Trades and Apprenticeships – Karla Family Literacy – Suzanne & Nancy	Team Building event – Facilitator from Winnipeg	Travel afternoon
7-9	Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) – Maureen, Karla, Nancy, Ron	Jam Session – Taig	Team Building event – Facilitator from Winnipeg	Distance Education - Karen & Bernie Sheehan	

SahBeau News

Submitted By

Karen Mercer, Adult Educator, Fort Good Hope CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Staff Development and Support

How it Works

SahBeau is a newsletter by and for Adult Educators in the Sahtu and Beaufort Delta Regions (Aurora Campus) in which adult educators share best practices, resources, anecdotes and other items of interest with their colleagues.

The success of the newsletter is completely dependent on the commitment and willingness of the adult educators to share information. Submissions are solicited and/or requested by the acting editor who compiles them in a newsletter form and emails, faxes or mails them to interested parties. The section titles within the newsletter are kept light-hearted to encourage those people who may be reluctant to make submissions.

- Tricks of the Trade (Classroom teaching ideas)
- Making Einstein Proud (Science)
- I Reeds and Rites Good (English Language Arts)
- Add It Up (Mathematics)
- Making it Work (Career)
- High Society (Social Studies)
- Many Things to Many People (What is happening at the Learning Centres beside teaching)

- Have You Heard? (good old-fashioned gossip)
- I Won't Do That Again (Anecdotes of adventures in adult educationhood)
- Higher Education (Contributions from the administrators and coordinators)

Professional isolation, lack of collegial relationships, lack of on-going communication are issues that affect adult educators in the North, particularly those in the communities. During a team-building session at the annual Aurora College Adult Educator orientation in Inuvik in October 2003, a newsletter was a suggestion as a way for adult educators both in the communities and on campus to continue to share and stay in touch between meetings.

SahBeau News

Newsletter launched

Story to follow

The Whys and the Hows.

Story to follow

Volume 1, Issue 1
Winter 2003

Special points of interest:
- *Tuk Tomatoes*
- *Educator Profile*

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Funding

A quality adult literacy and basic education program has adequate ongoing funding to run the program.

Fort Resolution Literacy Program

Submitted By

Ken Latour, Instructor, Hay River CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Funding

How It Works

The Fort Resolution Community Learning Centre and its partners developed a community-based literacy program that has wide support and recognition in the community. The program, run under the title of the Fort Resolution Literacy Program, adopted a multi-faceted approach (literacy awareness and promotion, adult literacy tutoring, family literacy, and development of local tutors and literacy workers) that allowed them to offer something to almost everyone in the community while building resources and training local people in an effort to build capacity within the community.

In order to take on these new programs and develop local capacity, the adult educator accessed additional funding outside of the regular Aurora College funding for the community learning centre. A proposal to support the expanded, comprehensive program was submitted to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE). The strength of this proposal was that it addressed several areas of literacy programming at once and that each facet of the program built on the others.

From the Funder's Perspective

Submitted By

Debra English, Instructor ALBE/Access Inuvik CLC, Aurora College

Best Practices Supported

- Funding
- Organizational Linkages and Partnership

How It Works

As a funder, it is important to communicate and share information with all groups or individuals on government funding programs that support literacy and adult basic education as well as funding programs available from other agencies.

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment career development officer's goals are to:

- Assist in developing organizational linkages and partnerships with non-government, Aboriginal organizations and other GNWT departments.
- Provide up-to-date information to community agencies, organizations and businesses.

The career development officer did the following to support literacy programs and share funding opportunities:

1. Fax, phone and visit organizations, agencies and businesses to explain and discuss ECE programs.
2. Arrange visits with employers and other organizations to discuss funding programs and how to apply for them.

3. During community visits, make every effort to contact and visit employers or potential applicants at their worksite.

4. Make suggestions about co-funders (Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC), Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC) or Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and how to jointly fund the same proposals.

5. Provide up-to-date information about ECE programs and other non-government programs.

6. Keep in constant contact with partners in developing new ways to plan or organize joint ventures (Aurora College, GTC, IRC, HRDC) in the region.

Program

Administration

A quality adult literacy and basic education program is well-managed and well-run through appropriate policies and procedures.

Accountability

A quality adult literacy and basic education program is accountable to the funders, community and partners, who also share responsibility for the program's success.

Index of Practical Ideas

Resource Manual of Practical Ideas

Program Evaluation

Program Planning

Respect and Support for Learners

Staff Development and Support

Transferability of Learning

Examples of Best Practices in

Action

Fort Resolution Community
Literacy Program

The Community of Fort Resolution

Fort Resolution lies on the southeast shore of Great Slave Lake, a few kilometres west of the Slave River delta. Deninu Kue, its traditional name, means Moose Deer Island[1]. It is part of the Akaitcho Territory Government, or Treaty 8 Land Claims area. Today, approximately 550 people live in the community—over 90% of them are Chipewyan.

Fort Resolution, Northwest Territories (Courtesy, RWED)

Fort Resolution is the oldest community in the Northwest Territories. In the 1820s, it had a considerably larger population than it has today, along with more commercial and social enterprises.

The Northwest Company set up a trading post on the Slave River delta in 1786. A few years later it was moved to Moose Deer Island southwest of the delta. The Hudson Bay Company also had a post there. When the two companies amalgamated in 1821, the post was called Fort Resolution. In

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[1] Moose Deer Island is actually a small, uninhabited island visible from Fort Resolution.

1890, St. Joseph's Mission House also moved there and, in 1913, the RCMP set up a detachment. In 1938-39, a hospital was built to treat people with tuberculosis, but patients were eventually transferred to Edmonton and the hospital closed.

Before the Mackenzie Highway was built in the late 1940s, Fort Resolution served as a commercial, religious and transportation centre for other settlements in the Northwest Territories.

The community has had road access since the 1960s. Today, trapping, hunting and domestic fishing are the primary sources of income.

A Community-Based Approach to Literacy

The Fort Resolution Community Literacy Program operates through the community's learning centre (CLC), and is part of Aurora College's adult basic education and literacy network. By building the capacity of local people, including interested learners who are in its programs, it is able to deliver a broad range of literacy programming to people of all ages. To show how the program incorporates best practices into its work, we have separated the practices out, although in reality they interconnect to create a comprehensive program.

Best Practice #1: Philosophy

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program has a clearly stated philosophy and mission that guide its work and practices.**

One of the first activities the Fort Resolution Community Literacy Program undertook was the development of a mission statement. It now includes this statement in all its program reports and presentations.

Mission Statement

To improve the quality of life within our community by increasing literacy skills, providing employment opportunities and making families stronger

This mission reflects the philosophy behind Fort Resolution's literacy programming. It guides its planning, goals and objectives, activities and decisions. Thus, to achieve improved quality of life, it empowers learners to take control of their lives; it encourages them to reflect critically, to explore topics that are relevant to their lives in a group setting, and to engage in social action. It aims to meet learners where they are and address issues that are relevant to their lives. As you read through this example of Best Practices in Action, you will see how the various aspects of the program reflect its philosophy and mission.

Best Practice #2: Program Planning

A quality adult literacy and basic education program engages regularly in a program planning process.

In spring 2001, Ken Latour, the adult educator at the time, developed a proposal to address several areas of literacy programming at once. His idea was comprehensive: each part of the program would build on the other parts. But his proposal was too ambitious for the $9,000 that he received from the GNWT Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE). Soon after, however, two timely events occurred that would support the program's development.

First, an additional staff member arrived in April, 2001 to teach an Office Administration program. Ken referred to Barb Miron's addition to the Community Learning Centre as "reaching critical mass" in terms of staffing. The two colleagues generated program ideas through ongoing and impromptu brainstorming. Then, in the fall of 2001, an ECE staff person told Ken and Barb that funding was still available for community projects, so they reworked and expanded the original proposal. With the extra funding that they received, they were able to hire three local adult literacy tutors and two family literacy workers. Thus the Fort Resolution Community Literacy Program got underway.

One of the program's objectives from the outset was to build capacity within the community so that local people would be able to deliver literacy programs. Initially, the adult educators micromanaged the process. However, as the program began to achieve its objective of building community capacity, the approach to planning changed: increasingly, the adult educators began to delegate responsibility. Finally, local literacy workers were able to take full responsibility for programs and made many of the planning decisions by themselves. It was an evolutionary process.

At the beginning though, literacy programming was new to everyone, so during the first eight months, planning meetings were frequent and lengthy, with daily operations often discussed in minute detail. Everyone was, more or less, involved in every decision and every aspect of the program. The adult educators still feel that this was necessary during the steep learning curve at the start of the program.

In 2002, when Ken left the community, Barb became the adult educator, and also the program manager. By this time, the literacy workers had grown in confidence and experience, so Barb was able to delegate more and more. Staff still met together as a group, but less frequently and for shorter periods of time. The meetings became a forum for sharing experiences and ideas rather than for reviewing operational details.

With the program now in its third year, program planning has evolved even further. The newest program, the Preschool Reading Circle, is the brainchild of Minnie Whimp, a family literacy worker.

The manager's role has been minimal: writing funding proposals and reports, and tracking the budget. Three weeks before the first session, Barb met briefly with Minnie and the two new family literacy workers to review the funding situation and the budget. Otherwise, they planned the program themselves, discussing goals and objectives, outcomes, how to promote the program, and so on. They come to Barb only with stories from the program and shopping lists. Left on their own, they have demonstrated exceptional competence, resourcefulness, creativity and skill in planning for and facilitating the program. The Fort Resolution literacy workers are now responsible for running their own programs.

Ensuring programs meet the needs of different groups in the community is a key factor in the program's planning process. For example, before beginning Elders' literacy programs, the Elders' literacy tutor conducted interviews with every community member over the age of 55 who was willing to participate, and asked what their needs were. The Elders' literacy program was based on the findings from this needs assessment.

Examples of Best Practices in Action

Best Practice #3: Program Evaluation

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program continually evaluates how well the program is meeting its goals and objectives and uses that information to direct future planning.**

The Fort Resolution Community Literacy Program conducts ongoing evaluations throughout the program. This process not only measures whether the program is meeting its objectives, it also indicates if the objectives need to be revised and what improvements might be needed.

The literacy workers use a range of data to track the progress of the program, to measure its success, and to direct future planning. Quantitatively, they track how many learners stay in the program, how many complete their courses, how many attend regularly and what types of people participate. For example, they know from the numbers of participants that the Reading Circle is successful. Last year, 15 – 20 children attended each session, and this year 30 – 35 children. The fact that teenagers are attending this year, even though it is supposed to be for children from 5 – 12, demonstrates the need for a Teen Reading Circle, or Book Club.

The data also includes information on participant satisfaction. The program conducts exit questionnaires with the learners, the tutors and the family literacy workers. A summary of this information is included in the year-end program report. Here is a sample of the questionnaire that the Fort Resolution family literacy workers filled out in May, 2003:

Exit questionnaire for family literacy workers

1. Overall, how would you assess your learning and facilitating experiences this year?

2. Was the literacy coordinator available and helpful during the year?

3. Was there anything about your employment as a family literacy worker that you didn't like?

4. Do you think the Reading Circle sessions were effective?

5. Would you change the way they were facilitated in any way? If so, how?

6. Describe your most fulfilling experience in this year's family literacy programs.

7. Describe your worst experience in this year's family literacy programs.

8. Do you think this year's family literacy programs were a success?

9. What do you think made them a success (or failure)?

10. What do you think we should do differently next year?

11. Can you think of a better kind of program that would promote healthier families in Fort Resolution?

To ensure everyone's voice is heard, literacy workers are encouraged to speak out when they respond to the questionnaires, and not say only what they think the program manager wants to hear. As a result, responses are usually open and honest. The literacy workers then incorporate many of the suggestions from the responses into their next year's program.

The program uses anecdotal stories and individual case studies to flesh out the numerical information. These detailed narratives provide in-depth information on the progress of representative individuals. They give a rounded picture of the program and also help define the complex issues associated with program effectiveness.

Whenever it can, the program demonstrates its effectiveness by sharing copies of what it has produced. For example, one objective is to produce literacy materials. Last year, the program published four booklets and a variety of promotional posters. Stakeholders could see that this objective had been met, as well as the quality with which it was met, simply by looking at the materials.

Best Practice #4: Program Accessibility

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program respects differences and is accessible to the broadest range of potential learners in the community.**

Program participants cross all age groups, from infants to elders. Staff put a lot of effort into trying to attract people to the various programs. Using photographs of local people, they create colourful posters and post them on community bulletin boards. They advertise the programs regularly on the CKLB radio station in both English and Chipewyan. They also create personalized invitations which they hand deliver to the homes of the target group for each program; for example, to parents of preschool children, or Elders.

To increase access to programs, staff provide free childcare and transportation. As well, the programs are flexible in both time and location; for example, computer classes might be offered in the evening, or tutoring might be available at home. In addition, the adult educator works with

community and regional health professionals to meet the needs of learners with disabilities.

Best Practice #5: Instruction

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program offers instruction that enables adult learners to progress towards their goals.**

T he Fort Resolution Community Family Literacy Program follows the ECE curriculum closely for its adult basic education and literacy learners. The program has successfully managed to overcome the challenge of how to promote self-directed learning, where learners are active participants in the learning process and assume responsibility for their own learning, even when following curricula with set learning objectives. To support learners, it has trained literacy tutors through its adult literacy tutoring program to assist with ALBE 110 – 130 instruction. As a result of shaping learning to the learners, at the end of the 2003 – 2004 academic year, 13 learners were still participating in the ALBE program, compared to 5 or 6 in previous years. Staff also prepare activities that draw on learners' own experiences and encourage them to construct their own meanings while interacting with learning materials.

Instructors rarely lecture. They design problems that help learners construct knowledge; they will take a back-seat and allow learners to discover on their own, yet are available for assistance. Such an approach allows learners to develop problem-

solving and critical thinking skills. For example, instructors/tutors often provide learners with questions to think about as they read a text. After reading individually, they then discuss the questions in a group, where their different perspectives are validated and respected. The end result is that learners learn how to apply information and concepts to new contexts.

The Community Learning Centre provides learners with positive reinforcement. It honours the achievements of all its learners in various ways, instead of singling out only a few learners, or focusing only on academic achievement. During the year, learners receive monthly awards for perfect attendance, for example. At the end of each academic year, at a special celebration of learning, all learners receive individualized certificates that acknowledge their unique personal strengths or assets. The program also publishes learners' writing in the community newsletter, or on the NWT Literacy Council's online literacy newspaper, *The Northern Edge*, another way of honouring learners. Student writing has also been published in *The Hub,* the Hay River local newspaper, and shared with local organizations. For example the Drug and Alcohol program has distributed copies of an ALBE learner's paper on cocaine abuse. As well, staff use good writing, with the author's permission, to instruct others, thereby honouring the author and inspiring the others.

Best Practice #6: Learning Materials

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program uses a variety of appropriate learning materials.**

L earners have access to a broad variety of learning materials in different formats; for example, the program uses multimedia instructional tools, such as AlphaRoute, an online learning environment, and Academy of Reading, a computer-assisted reading and assessment program. Textbooks include the *Sightlines* series, *Inside Stories,* the

Connections series, the *Mathpower* series and a variety of northern content or Aboriginal literature. Samples of learners' writing are used to instruct other learners. As well, newspaper, magazine and Internet articles with current and high-interest content have been very useful. The program also uses a variety of supplementary learning materials, such as *The Spelling Toolbox, LitKit, Lessons in Writing Sentences, Vocabulary Drills, Writing Out Loud, More Writing Out Loud.* Learners especially like the theme units in Aurora College's *LitKit.*

Best Practice #7: Learner Assessment

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program monitors learner progress on an ongoing basis through a variety of participatory assessment procedures.**

S taff use a variety of learner assessment methods. At the beginning of the academic year, learners write Aurora College Math placement tests and writing tests. Staff use these tests to place new learners. Standardized tests, such as the Canadian Adult Achievement Test (CAAT), help give an overall picture of learners' areas of strength and weakness. Informal reading inventories, such as the Canadian Adult Reading Assessment (CARA), not only assess learners' reading levels, but also reveal learners' reading patterns. This lets tutors design strategies specific to each learner, and ties assessment closely to instruction.

Most learner assessment is ongoing throughout the year. Since many learners suffer from high levels of test anxiety, staff prefer to use alternate methods of assessment for all subjects except Math. In Math, learners write pretests that are not graded, to show which areas they need to review, and to build their confidence. Then they complete the unit tests, as required by the curriculum.

In all other subjects, learners work on projects. They receive continuous feedback from instructors. The instructor reviews a draft and makes suggestions for improvement, but does not give the paper a mark. In a one-on-one conference the learner and instructor review the strengths of the assignment and talk about ways to improve it. Learners write four or five drafts, learning more with each revision and conference. This process helps learners to internalize the concepts and skills through repeated hands-on applications, and results in most learners receiving encouraging grades.

Instructor-learner conferences also keep assessment tied to instruction. Learners see the assessment as part of instruction and learning, rather than assessment. By the time learners receive the final mark for their project, they are usually able to self-assess their work. They know they have produced a polished piece of work, and feel good about their achievements as well as their final mark.

Assignments take a variety of forms. As well as formal writing, learners use response journals. They also have the opportunity to do oral and visual presentations and group projects. Recently, learners learned how to prepare multimedia presentations. They can now present information from their research in a creative multimedia format. This not only gives learners various ways to present their assignments, but is also an opportunity for them to expand their computer skills.

Best Practice #8: Respect and Support for Learners

A quality adult literacy and basic education program respects its learners and supports them to achieve their goals.

The Fort Resolution Community Literacy Program is sensitive to the multiple roles of learners and includes their families in various aspects of the program. For example, the program includes

learners' families in special events, such as the Valentine's Day family craft night, family pizza and craft night, the annual Christmas feast, the spring barbeque and year-end celebrations. Many participants in the *Families First* parenting program were learners from the Community Learning Centre. Including their families in the program recognizes the complexity of learners' lives and offers support as they juggle the sometimes conflicting roles of learners, partners and parents.

Staff believe that one of the best ways to support and respect learners is to give them as much choice and control over their learning as possible. Instructors honour the prior knowledge and skills that learners have. They deliver the curricula in a way that respects the priorities of the educational institutions of which they are a part, and those of the learners, who have their own interests, perspectives and opinions. Learners can choose their path to reach an objective. For example, they can choose to work individually or in groups; they can select their assignment topics; and they can negotiate due dates. If no assessment method is specified in the curricula, learners can choose to write a test or do an assignment.

To maintain a safe, supportive, nurturing learning environment, the program manager tries to be both gentle and firm. The gentleness includes providing learners with encouragement, praise, kindness and understanding. As well, staff organize events, such as the Valentine's Day self-esteem envelopes and year-end recognition certificates, that help build learners' self-esteem. At the same time, they work with learners to establish expectations in terms of behaviour, for example. They ensure that everyone is aware of these expectations throughout the program, and try to enforce them consistently. This has proved to be effective. Staff and learners at the Community Learning Centre developed a Code of Conduct, with a zero tolerance policy on violence. After a disruptive incident in 2002, learners took it upon themselves to display the Code of Conduct more prominently throughout the Centre.

Staff have taken training such as Eye of the Storm, Screening for Success and Assistive Technology to enable them to provide improved support to learners with special needs. In addition, because the adult educator networks with other professionals in the community, staff can refer learners to counselling services. A counsellor from Yellowknife visits Fort Resolution every two weeks and holds regular workshops at the Community Learning Centre. As a result of the trust relationship learners have built with her, several access her services in private counselling sessions.

Best Practice #9: Transferability of Learning

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program has procedures and practices in place to help learners transfer their learning to further education, training, employment or community life.**

The Fort Resolution Community Literacy Program tries to ensure that learners acquire knowledge and skills in the program that they can apply in real-life settings and can connect to greater community involvement, to further training or to employment. The program itself provides work experience for learners by employing them as family literacy workers, researchers and illustrators. It empowers them to take on increasing levels of responsibility.

Many programs operate in the community rather than in the learning centre, such as the student council's 2003 Halloween extravaganza. This gives learners the opportunity for greater community involvement. They can transfer the planning, budgeting, marketing and public relations skills that they develop in organizing community events to the workplace. Other

projects, such as the newsletter, also get learners involved in the community and give them transferable skills.

The program incorporates practical skills into regular academic studies. For example, as well as word processing, learners learn other computer applications, such as Publisher, Excel and Power Point. Business communications are included as part of the ALBE English curriculum, and communication skills are taught in the College/Career courses. Staff try to keep learners aware that ALBE is a stepping stone—preparation for further training, employment or community involvement.

The program encourages learners to take advantage of workshops, conferences and training sessions, especially those connected to their career goals. For example, one learner, who is planning a career in environmental studies, attended a World Forestry Congress in Quebec. This experience increased her motivation to achieve her career goals. When she returned, she wrote an essay about the conference and related forestry issues. In addition, she spoke to high school students, thus serving as a role model for other learners.

Another learner, who plans to be an Aboriginal languages instructor, benefited from a Chipewyan language and culture workshop. Like the previous learner, she too wrote an essay about her experiences at the workshop. Another learner, who is entering the health profession, researched cocaine abuse. She shared her paper with the local drug and alcohol counsellors, who found it a very valuable resource.

When learners are more involved in the community, the community becomes an extension of the classroom. A feedback loop develops between their community experiences and their course work. Their course work, in turn, becomes more anchored to real-life experience; and the skills they develop are transferable to other areas of life.

Best Practice #10: Culture

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program appreciates and respects the diverse cultures of the learners and incorporates them into the program.**

At the Fort Resolution Community Learning Centre, all learners are Aboriginal: most of them are Chipewyan. The program recognizes the importance of valuing learners' culture and, most importantly, of listening to learners' own cultural knowledge and perspectives. Most reading material used in the adult literacy program is Aboriginal. Traditional knowledge is taught through the Science and Social Studies curricula. The program encourages learners to take part in local cultural events sponsored by the Chipewyan Language Working Group. Weekly Chipewyan classes have been offered in the past. Learners are free to choose their own topics for writing and research assignments, so many involve Chipewyan culture. Some learners write messages regularly on the white boards in Chipewyan. Elders' storytelling is incorporated into various literacy events, and Elders' stories were collected and published in the 2003 *Echoes* and *Whispers* booklets. The centre has northern content posters and learners' artwork on its walls.

Best Practice #11: Community

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program ensures a strong community focus by being engaged in the community and actively engaging the community in the program.**

One of the most important decisions that the program made was to train community people as tutors and family literacy facilitators. This expanded the network of community people informed about and involved in the program. It also built community capacity around literacy.

In September 2003, the learners at the Community Learning Centre formed a student council and made a commitment to community service. They raised funds for a Halloween extravaganza and transformed the arena into a creative and elaborate haunted house. This event was so popular that long line-ups of children and adults waited to get inside. The learners planned most of this event outside of school hours. They are now planning to sponsor additional community events and volunteer their time to other community projects.

In spring 2002, Ken and the ALBE learners produced a community newspaper, the *Deninu Digest*. It had an impressive layout, and involved creative writing and photographs. This project took the learners into the community to collect information and to distribute copies of the newspaper when it was finished. Community members responded very positively to this project, since Fort Resolution does not have a community newspaper.

The newspaper provided a forum for learners to engage actively in the community. It was also an excellent way to cover ALBE English and Computer Studies objectives. However, it was incredibly labour intensive for staff who did much of the layout. In reviewing the project, staff decided that it would be better to teach learners to do the layout work. Thus learners were

trained to use the publishing program, Microsoft Publisher, as part of their Computer Studies program. Thus learners could develop desktop publishing skills, as well as word processing skills, and many are now quite skilled in that area.

A year and a half after the *Deninu Digest,* learners are working on their own community newsletter, the *Aurora Scoop*. Some of their writing assignments take the form of reporting on community events, and the community is again an extension of their classroom. Learners are now doing the layout and graphic design work themselves. As a result of changing how the newsletter is produced, learners have developed additional computer skills, the newsletter project is less labour intensive for staff, and learners can share their learning with the community.

The program regularly sponsors community events, such as a storytelling stew and bannock luncheon, an Elders' Christmas party, a Reading Circle Christmas party, family fun nights, barbeques and pizza parties. It also includes community groups in its planning.

Best Practice #12: Outreach

A quality adult literacy and basic education program reaches out to the community to attract potential learners and gain the support of the community.

To meet the varied needs of the community, the Fort Resolution Community Literacy Program offers a broad range of programming, targeted towards different groups.
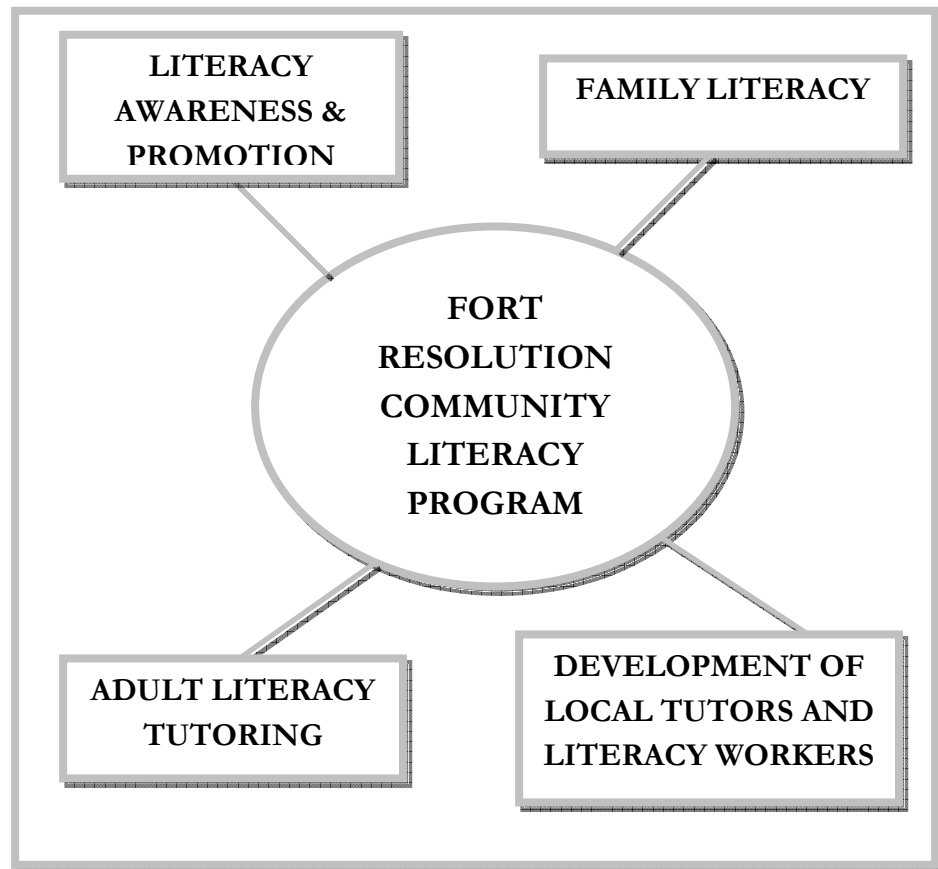
Literacy Awareness and Promotion: The program keeps people in the community informed about literacy and literacy issues, and about what the program offers. For example, staff:

- Hold information sessions at Bingos.
- Give away books at community events.
- Produce community booklets.
- Develop literacy posters with photos of children in the community.
- Sponsor special community events for children, families and Elders.

Family Literacy: Fort Resolution has no community library, and few places to buy books. Family literacy programs are important because they fill a gap in the community: they provide children with opportunities to develop emergent literacy skills, and they give adults opportunities to improve their literacy skill, while supporting their children's literacy development. Family literacy is an integral part of the Fort Resolution program. Family literacy facilitators have organized and run the following programs:

- Reading Circle
- Preschool Reading Circle
- *Books in the Home*
- *Families First: A Northern Parenting Program*
- Special family literacy events.

Many of the program's promotional activities help strengthen the importance of family literacy. Literacy workers put up posters with photographs of local children and parents around the community, conveying the importance of family literacy. As well, they post photo collages of family literacy activities in the learning centre and distribute them to stakeholders. Parents receive photographs of their children participating in literacy activities to reinforce the message that reading skills are important.

The Fort Resolution Community Literacy Program places a very high priority on emergent literacy skills. The school vice-principal and the adult educator are now working together to turn the school library into a public library. At the end of the 2002 – 2003 fiscal year, they used a surplus in one of the literacy program budgets, with the approval of the funder, to

purchase much-needed new books and shelving, along with the equipment to catalogue and bar code the books. The funding also enabled them to hire a person to do the cataloguing.

Adult Literacy Tutoring: One-on-one and small group tutoring helps support the ALBE instruction, and allows the learning centre to offer more comprehensive programming, as well as more individualized assistance to adult learners. Initially, the program hired a full-time literacy coordinator, who also served as a tutor, and two part-time tutors.

As the program matured, the tutors took on more responsibility. In the second year of the program, the Community Learning Centre accepted 22 ALBE students, an unprecedented number. Increased tutor support let staff move away from blanket, multi-level instruction and enabled them to follow the curricula for each ALBE level. The program could also accommodate higher-level ALBE students who wanted to remain in the community.

Now in its third year, the program is attempting to offer the same level of adult literacy services, but with significantly reduced funding and human resources. During this academic year (2003-2004), the program has 18 ALBE students, one part-time English and Computer Studies tutor and one part-time Math tutor. With some volunteer tutors and distance learning courses for ALBE 150-160 learners, the program is still able to offer separate classes for each ALBE 110-140 level and a certain amount of individual attention for learners.

Development of Local Tutors and Literacy Workers: From the outset, the program's philosophy was to involve as many local people as possible to gain further community support and to ensure that the program would not collapse when one key person left. This strategy has worked well as it allows staff to see who is effective and in what capacity. The strategy also gives the program the ability to replace staff members who were not able to

meet the standards it had set for its literacy workers and tutors, an unfortunate, but sometimes necessary, task.

Best Practice #13: Organizational Links and Partnerships

A quality adult literacy and basic education program works collaboratively with other organizations and agencies to support the program, the learners and the program staff.

S taff at the Fort Resolution Community Literacy Program believe that both formal and informal partnerships are necessary to deliver successful literacy programs in northern communities.

The program has formal contribution agreements with its numerous funders that clearly describe the services it will deliver. Its regular reports show if it has fulfilled the agreement. However, even within these formal partnerships, it has informal relationships and shares information and ideas with them.

One of the program's strongest partnerships is with the NWT Literacy Council. This connection enabled staff to access Literacy Council training on Family Literacy, Proposal Writing, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder, Screening for Success, Aboriginal Literacy, Photo-based Literacy and Assistive Technology for Learners with Disabilities. The program also accesses funding for community family literacy projects that is available through the Literacy Council and participates in jointly-sponsored events, such as NWT Literacy Week.

Staff have also formed a strong partnership with the community school. A year after the Fort Resolution Community Literacy Program began, the school formed its own literacy committee. The Adult Educator meets with that committee to share ideas and resources and to work jointly on projects,

such as community writing contests and a Reading Circle. Literacy program staff also read to children in the school and share resources with school staff. The relationship is one of helping and sharing, with suggestions from teachers incorporated into the program.

The formation of a community interagency committee, spearheaded by the school principal, has created an atmosphere of mutual cooperation that has benefited the program in many practical ways. For example, the regular Bingo session was cancelled so as not to conflict with the NWT Literacy Week Family Games Night. And a scheduling conflict that forced children to choose between badminton and the Reading Circle was resolved.

Best Practice #14: Staff Development and Support

A quality adult literacy and basic education program values its staff and places a priority on staff development.

Many of the staff at the literacy program are local people with limited experience of literacy work. Thus providing training for them has been a program priority. Over the last three years, they have had the opportunity to participate in a broad range of training, including:

- Tutor training
- STAPLE[2]
- Lesson Planning
- Program Planning
- Screening for Success
- Proposal Writing
- Publisher/Graphic Design

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[2] Supplementary Training for Practitioners of Literacy Education.

- Power Point
- Academy of Reading
- Eye of the Storm: Teaching Adults with FASD
- Families First: A Northern Parenting Program
- Non-Violence Crisis Intervention
- Family Literacy Training
- Inclusive Early Childhood Education
- Assistive Technology
- Canadian Adult Reading Assessment (CARA).

Two staff members from the Fort Resolution Community Literacy Program have been honoured for their work in literacy. In recognition of the successful literacy programs, Barb Miron, the current Adult Educator, received the 2003 Canada Post Award for Community Leadership. The president and CEO of Canada Post called each winner "a role model of dedication, perseverance and understanding of the importance of literacy."

In 2004, Minnie Whimp, a learner in the program and a literacy worker, received the Ministerial Literacy Award for Tutors from the GNWT's Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Minnie was also seen as a role model for other young people in her community.

Best Practice #15: Funding

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program has adequate ongoing funding to run the program.**

T he staff has become very creative in identifying a variety of funding sources for the range of literacy programs that they offer. Every year, they access additional funding beyond their ALBE allocation. They channel their funding through the local District Education Authority, which is the educational umbrella for the community. This provides for more community ownership and demonstrates the program's commitment to developing local partnerships. The program shares funding information with other community organizations, helps with proposal writing and provides support letters for other community projects. This cooperative attitude is a key factor in the success of this community literacy program.
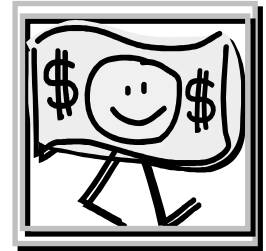
Best Practice #16: Program Administration

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program is well-managed and well-run through appropriate policies and procedures.**

T he Fort Resolution Community Literacy Program tries to keep its administration as simple as possible, so that staff can focus on areas such as instruction and program delivery. The program keeps orderly and up-to-date records of learner achievements and of its finances. Because building community capacity is a key program goal, literacy workers keep their own records as they begin to run programs, allowing them to grow in experience and confidence.

Staff enter learners' grades or financial expenditures into spreadsheets the same day, and review them regularly. Stakeholders receive semiannual financial statements and learner progress reports. Each program funder receives interim and final reports, while Aurora College receives monthly reports of program activities. In addition, the program submits reports, accounting for financial expenditures, learner achievements and program activities to the GNWT Department of Education, Culture and Employment three times a year. The program keeps these reports on file.

Fort Resolution Community Learning Centre follows the newest ALBE curricula closely. Staff maintain a file for each learner. These files contain registration information, placement test results, acceptance letters, transcripts, marks records, progress reports, learner contracts and records of unusual incidents. The contents of these files are kept confidential: learners sign release forms so that information on their academic progress can be shared with their sponsors.

Best Practice #17: Accountability

A quality adult literacy and basic education program is accountable to the funders, community and partners, who also share responsibility for the program's success.

The Fort Resolution Community Literacy Program maintains a high level of financial accountability. Staff enter program expenditures into spreadsheets, and keep all receipts for the purchase of materials on file. They submit interim and final reports, including detailed financial statements, to funders according to their reporting guidelines. In addition, the program channels funding through the local District Education Authority and provides that organization with copies of its receipts, adding another layer of accountability. As well as financial statements and statistical information, the program tries to share its human

side with funders, by including anecdotes of program events, photo collages and copies of posters and publications. In this way, funders are able to see what their funding has achieved and who have benefited from their contributions.

Conclusions

The Fort Resolution Community Literacy Program is successful for a number of reasons:

- The program works because of a team management approach that draws upon the strengths of team members, and integrates their suggestions into program planning.
- The program takes advantage of regional allies, such as the NWT Literacy Council, for assistance in proposal writing, training, funding, encouragement and connections to other literacy programs.
- The program invests time in training tutors and local literacy workers. To offer quality literacy programming, the program believes it is essential to recruit tutors with a minimum of Grade 12 and provide them with additional literacy-specific training. It finds STAPLE, a computer-based tutor-training course, a useful tool for training literacy workers.
- The program believes that support for tutors and literacy workers, especially at the beginning of the program is essential, as is empowering them to work on their own as soon as possible. It is also important to listen to the literacy workers and implement their suggestions.

Publications

Over the last three years, the program has published a number of different materials, which are available upon request:

- Literacy posters
- *Winter Fun* booklet
- *Animals* booklet
- *Deninu Digest* newspaper
- *Winning Stories* booklet
- *Echoes* booklet
- *Writing Well* booklet
- *Whispers* booklet
- *My Community* booklet
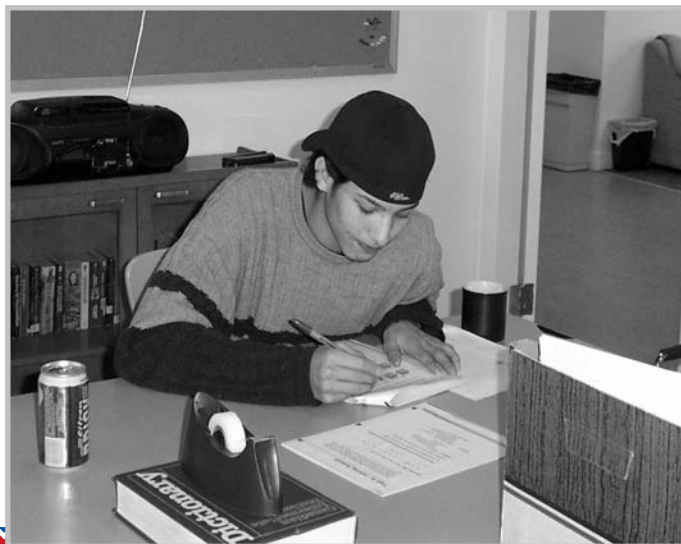- *My Home Town* booklet
- *Aurora Scoop* newsletter.

For more information on the program, contact:

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Native Women's Association of the NWT Training Centre

The Native Women's Association of the NWT Training Centre

T he Training Centre, which is located in Yellowknife, offers training to both men and women. As its title suggests, it is run by the Native Women's Association of the NWT, a not-for-profit organization. The headquarters of the Association are in Yellowknife, but it represents the entire Northwest Territories.

For more than 25 years, the Centre has offered programs to NWT adults to help them improve their lives. In the early days, the program focused on Arts and Crafts, as well as Life Skills. Today, it focuses on career building, adult literacy and lifelong learning. To show how the program incorporates best practices in its work, we have again separated the practices out, although in reality they interconnect to create a comprehensive and holistic program. The descriptions of these best practices in action are not all inclusive, but rather are examples of the kinds of things that collectively help make the program successful.

Best Practice #1: Philosophy

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program has a clearly stated philosophy and mission that guide its work and practices.**

T he Training Centre subscribes to the overall mission of the Native Women's Association of the NWT—to provide education and training programs that will help improve people's lives. It addresses the training needs of both males and females, and Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. The mission statement, which appears on the front

page of a brochure about the Association, spells out clearly the Native Women's Association views about learning.

The Native Women's Association of the NWT

Our Mission ...

To provide training and education programs for native women in the Western Arctic, so that we can function more effectively in areas that affect our lives economically, socially, educationally, emotionally, culturally and politically.

The Training Centre program clearly reflects the philosophy and mission of its parent organization. Staff believe that learning must be holistic for it to be effective. This means that the program focuses not only on teaching the curriculum, but on the social, emotional and cultural needs of learners. Its coordinator, Kimberley Moreside, also notes that the program emphasizes the importance of "growing community."

This philosophy guides its planning, along with its goals and objectives. It helps determine what is included in the program and how the program is delivered. For example, the practice of integrating cultural and social activities and workplace education into the program reflects this holistic view of learning.

Best Practice #2: Program Planning

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program engages regularly in a program planning process.**

The Training Centre is involved in program planning at two levels. First, as part of the Native Women's Association of the NWT, Training Centre programs and services fit into the overall plan for the Association. Board members take a keen interest in Training Centre activities.

Second, the Training Centre plans specifically for its own programs and services, and invites input from a variety of interested people. The Native Women's Association Board, for example, provides input into the plan for the Centre. As regional representatives, Board members know what people in the communities need in terms of training. The program also encourages learners to suggest improvements to the program, based on their experiences. Their feedback is collected through end-of-year surveys and interviews. As well as learner needs, the program tries to keep abreast of the demands of the labour market.

To meet changing needs, the program has moved away from its early focus on Arts and Crafts, and Life Skills. Today it follows the ECE's Adult Basic Education Curricula. In addition, the program includes unique Native Women's Association courses, such as health and exercise, and on-the-land activities. These additional courses support the program's goal of holistic learning, and are also fundamental to learners' goals of improving their lives. As well, work experience is an integral part of the program. In addition, the program now offers support to learners who want to refresh their English, Math and Science to write the NWT Trades Entrance Examinations to enter into an apprenticeship program.

Demand for the program has been so great that plans for this year (2003-2004) included doubling its space. The increased numbers also meant that staff had to change how they deliver the program.

The Centre believes it is important for learners to plan too. To help them do this, the Training Centre provides them with a calendar of events for the program for the whole year. This allows learners to see at a glance what they will be involved in. It also lets them plan their own appointments around program events. As well, learners receive personal organizers/calendars during orientation.

Adult Training Center

Native Womens Association
Box 2321   Yellowknife, NT   X1A 2P7
Ph: (867) 873-5509
e-mail : kmoreside@nativewomens.nt.ca or reception@nativewomens.nt.ca

Adult Literacy and Work Experience Program
Calendar 2003/2004

September	1	Labor Day
	2-5	Orientation Week activities, Potluck Lunch 4th/Birthdays
	8th–30th	*Computer, Math, Career/Life/Work & English classes*
	17 or 24	On the land trip
	26	1/2 day (12:00 Dismissal) *Professional Development*
	30	Annual General Meeting: Native Womens Association; 66
October	1	Day 2 of AGM at Explorer Hotel
	2	Potluck Lunch/Birthdays
	3	Progress Reports and Awards
	6th-31st	*Math, Science, Work Preparation, & English classes*
	13	Thanksgiving Monday Holiday
	24	1/2 day (12:00 Dismissal) *Professional Development*
November	6	Potluck Lunch/Birthdays
	7	Progress Reports and Awards
	3-7th	*Interviews for Work Experience*
	11	Remembrance Day Holiday
	10th-22nd	*Work Experience*
	27th -28	*Yellowknife Educator's Conference –no classes*
December	4	Potluck Lunch/Birthdays
	5	Progress Reports and Awards
	19	1/2 day (12:00 Dismissal) last day before Christmas
January	5	First Day back to School *(Exercise* additional class)*
	8	Potluck Lunch
	23	1/2 day (12:00 Dismissal) *Professional Development*
	26	*Midterm Exams: Math, Science, English*
	27-29	STD's conference
	30	*Progress Reports and Awards/Orientation and Placement*

Best Practice #3: Program Evaluation

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program continually evaluates how well the program is meeting its goals and objectives and uses that information to direct future planning.**

S taff at the Training Centre are always interested in whether the program is meeting its goals and objectives. Thus evaluations of the Training Centre program are very comprehensive. Staff use a variety

of different tools, both formal and informal, to collect qualitative and quantitative data.

An important aspect of evaluation is feedback from learners. Staff conduct end-of-year surveys to determine learner satisfaction with the program. The surveys cover a broad range of topics, including both curricular and extra-curricular activities, and learning materials. This approach provides the program with in-depth qualitative data from the learners' perspectives. Learners are often quite forthright about changes that are needed: they are always listened to. Many of the positive changes that have been made to the program, such as the development of teams, result from learners' suggestions. Partner organizations that support work experience placements provide feedback on that aspect of the program.

In terms of quantitative data, staff keep track of:

- Overall enrolments each semester
- Learner retention numbers and reasons for learners leaving
- The numbers of men and women that enroll each year
- Learner attendance
- Follow up statistics, such as the numbers of program participants who get a job following their training
- Learner progress or coursework
- Learner work experience hours completed
- Learner achievements, awards, certificates, etc.

In 2003-2004, 65 potential learners applied for the program. Forty-four eventually enrolled. Of these, 29 learners were still attending in May 2004. Those who left gave the following reasons for leaving:

- Some found employment.

- Some moved back to their communities or elsewhere.

- Some had difficulty with maintaining babysitting arrangements.

- Some had personal problems that prevented them from returning.

The program also tracks former learners informally—by word of mouth, or when they come back to visit the program. Staff are also able to track them formally through their partnership with the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreement (AHRDA) office of the Native Women's Association of the NWT.

Best Practice #4: Accessibility

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program respects differences and is accessible to the broadest range of potential learners in the community.**

The program fills a niche in the continuum of educational services offered within the NWT. Many of its learners do not fit in to more formal institutional-style programs, such as college or high school programs. They may have been out of school for a number of years and/or may have had personal problems that prevented them from continuing their studies. Thus making the program accessible to as many learners as possible is important to Training Centre staff.

The program has an open door policy. It is open to anyone, both male and female, over the age of 17, from anywhere in Canada, although most learners come from either the Northwest Territories or Nunavut. Over the years, learners from all regions of the NWT have enrolled in the program. Staff send out program brochures to all the AHRDA committees and to other interested organizations. In addition, the program is advertised more extensively in Yellowknife through posters and radio announcements.

The program's downtown location, in the Native Women's Association building, is ideal for most people. Few learners have their own transportation, so this central location means that they can use the public bus system, with bus stops located near the Centre. It also allows them to attend appointments in the downtown area easily.

Potential learners fill out an application form. The coordinator of the program, Kimberley, interviews them and discusses their goals with them. Once they are accepted into the program, they write placement tests for English, Math and Information Technology. The program also organizes a one-week orientation session at the Centre before classes begin. The program often has a broad range of learners, from people who are unable to read to those who perhaps attended college but were weak in one or more subjects.

Best Practice #5: Instruction

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program offers instruction that enables adult learners to progress towards their goals.**

The Training Centre program runs for two semesters. Staff try to encourage learners to enroll in the full 10-month program. They believe that is how learners will derive the most benefits from the program. Because of their previous life experiences, learners in this program need a more structured program to help them get back into a learning situation and achieve their goals. Learners attend classes from 9-4 each day, and have to keep track of their class time. Each class is one hour long. Learners are expected to plan personal appointments outside classroom hours.

Learners follow the NWT Adult Basic Education Curricula. Courses offered include:

- Introductory Computers
- Career Life/Work 120/130; Career College 130/140
- English 110-150
- Mathematics 110-140
- Science 120-130.

"I was scared of computers but now I'm not. I can make cards, posters, write a letter, and email people."

Each course includes current information, cultural relevancy, excellent work ethic, applied learning and self-directed extensions.

In addition to the standard NWT curricula courses, learners are able to take an applied advanced level of computers, as well as a compulsory health/exercise class through a partnership with a local fitness centre. They also participate in on-the-land and cultural activities and a work experience program. Learners may work in large and small groups, as well as individually.

Work experience is considered an important aspect of the program. Staff spend a significant amount of time finding suitable work experience placements, preparing learners before they go, and monitoring the placements. The experience is treated like a real job. Before learners begin their placement, they take part in an interview. They have the opportunity to meet the people they will be working with and to discuss the work they will be doing. They have to update their resumes, including a list of current references, and provide them to the work placement with a covering letter. They also undergo a Criminal Records Check and take an oath of confidentiality. Learner assessment is built into the work placement. Each week during the placement, learners sit down with their supervisor to review what they have done, go over what they have achieved and discuss any problems they might have. They are also encouraged to assess their

own work. At the end of their placement, learners write a letter of thanks (using computers) to their supervisor.

Fostering self-direction in learners is seen as an important approach to enabling learners to take charge of their own learning. The program does this in a variety of ways. For example, each day, learners have one hour of self-study. This is considered accountable time. During that time, learners may:

- Practice typing.
- Finish assignments.
- Conduct research on the Internet.

The program uses volunteers to supplement formal instruction. To date, the program has had tutors for both Math and English—areas where staff and learners consider tutoring is most needed. Before hiring tutors, the coordinator interviews those who are interested. They have to provide a resume and undergo a Criminal Records Check. Tutor training is available for people new to tutoring.

This year, the two instructors have had to adopt a different approach to instruction, because of the increased numbers of learners. Learners rotate through courses in small groups of 10-15. While some are receiving formal instruction, others may be on self-study.

Learners are part of the decision making processes. At the beginning of each year, in September, learners and staff develop group "norms". Everyone agrees on these ground rules, which are then posted in every

class. Suggestions from learners are often incorporated into the program design. For example, at the suggestion of learners, and as a result of studying how teams work in the careers course, a new initiative began in 2003 that sees learners working in three teams:

- A fund raising team to raise money for special events
- A trip planning team
- A student government team to handle disputes or disruptions and to ensure good communication with the Native Women's Association of the NWT.

When conferences in Yellowknife are relevant to learners, the whole group may attend. Last year, as part of their health/exercise class for example, everyone attended a conference on Sexually Transmitted Infections. In addition, learners attended the annual general meeting of the Native Women's Association of the NWT, and the workshops associated with that meeting. These have included Healing workshops and Aboriginal Women in Business. Last year, learners made their participation part of their career course work. They made up questionnaires, interviewed delegates at the Annual General Assembly, and reported back their findings.

Best Practice #6: Learning Materials

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program uses a variety of appropriate learning materials.**

Learners have access to a broad variety of multi-media learning materials. As well as using materials recommended as part of the curricula, they also borrow other resources from Aurora College and from local schools. The program also uses resources that are available free from a variety of local organizations, for example the NWT Literacy Council's photography kit or Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder kit. They

also make extensive use of the public library. The Internet is also a popular source of learning materials for both learners and instructors.

Aboriginal literature is popular among learners. One of the instructors has developed a series of novel studies that include studies for Aboriginal literature, such as *Two Old Women*, a favourite novel among learners. This tale of two old women abandoned by their tribe during a winter famine is based on an Athabascan Indian legend passed along for many generations from mothers to daughters of the upper Yukon River Valley in Alaska. Learners also choose their own novels. Recently one learner wrote a book report on a local book about the bombing at the Yellowknife Giant Mine. A popular resource book in the program is *The Act of Writing*, which includes a variety of short stories.

The local newspaper donates copies of the newspaper three times a week. It is not unusual for learners to arrive at the Training Centre early and start their day by reading the newspapers.

Last year, the program partnered with the NWT Literacy Council when it launched its online newspaper *The Northern Edge*. Some learners have worked with the Literacy Council's resource coordinator to produce the newspaper by recording the voices in the stories.

Best Practice #7: Learner Assessment

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program monitors learner progress on an ongoing basis through a variety of participatory assessment procedures.**

Learner assessments are an integral part of the program, and instructors make sure that learners are fully aware early in the program of how assessments will take place. Staff use a variety of formal and informal learner assessment methods.

At the beginning of the academic year, instructors conduct intake interviews with learners. During the interview, learners' prior learning is documented and their instructional and support needs discussed. The instructors also ask about learners' goals. Later in the semester the instructor and the learner will review the goals together and modify them, if necessary.

Learners write placement tests for English, Math and Computers. Like the Fort Resolution Community Literacy Program, staff also use informal reading inventories, such as the Canadian Adult Reading Assessment (CARA). They like CARA because it helps them to understand how learners read, and lets them design strategies specific to each learner. The Training Centre holds exit examinations in January and June.

Learners are also assessed through project work and oral presentations. More recently, learners have developed the skills to prepare computer-generated presentations. Criteria for projects are clearly spelled out and discussed with learners before they begin. Checklists (from the curricula), observations, self-assessment and group assessments are part of the process.

In addition to academics, the program recognizes the importance of non-academic outcomes for learners, such as improved self-esteem, improved attitudes and a healthier sense of their own potential. It monitors these (usually through observation and learner interviews) as legitimate outcomes of the program.

Best Practice #8: Respect and Support for Learners

A quality adult literacy and basic education program respects its learners and supports them to achieve their goals.

As we have seen, the Training Centre fills a niche for learners throughout the NWT who may have difficulty fitting into more formal educational institutions when they first return to learning. The program helps the target group to re-enter school and achieve their goals, whether those are to improve their lives, to enter a post-secondary institution or an apprenticeship program, or to re-enter the work force with more stability.

"I am given the time I need to learn."

The first week of the program is spent on orientation. During that time, learners find out more about the program and its resources; they spend time doing activities together, such as going out on the land for a day or touring local facilities, such as the public library or the Legislative Assembly. They may have guest inspirational speakers from local organizations, including Aboriginal businesses. The program also provides information on available support services. As well, placement testing takes place during this time. This orientation week helps learners understand what they will be doing for the next 10 months and what supports they might be able to access. It also lets them get to know each other, and begin to feel comfortable together.

Staff believe that the program's supportive environment is a key factor in learner success. They believe that it is important to "grow community"—and that it is through that sense of community that a supportive and collegial learning environment is fostered and trusting relationships develop. If learners are having a hard time, staff often help them by advocating for them, accompanying them to places like the hospital or the Victim Assistance program. They will also help them fill out forms for services. In the words of the coordinator, "If needed, staff go the extra mile for people." Given the literacy levels of some learners in the program, they are likely to end up dropping out of classes if they need services but become frustrated trying to access them. Fortunately, the program has had many learners who are very determined to succeed as well.

"The program has opened all the wonder and opportunity to move forward and continue with my education 10 times stronger."

The program recognizes learner contributions to the program, such as making coffee, donating time for special events and so on. It celebrates learner success. Once a month, learners receive

awards, often donated by a local organization; for best attendance, or for the most improved in Math, English, and other subjects, for example. Recently, the program celebrated the achievement of one learner who

passed the examination of the highest level in the NWT Trades access for the Apprentice Electrician.

As well, the birthdays of learners are celebrated. Food, such as bread for toast, canned items and tea and coffee, is often available in the kitchen for those who may not have had breakfast. Once a month, learners participate in bringing country foods or cooking their specialties for a pot luck lunch.

Best Practice #9: Transferability of Learning

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program has procedures and practices in place to help learners transfer their learning to further education, training, employment or community life.**

The program's work experience component strongly promotes the transferability of learning. This integral part of the program has two purposes. It lets learners develop "real" transferable skills and, at the same time, explore particular careers of their choosing.

For two weeks in the Fall and Spring, learners are placed in local offices and businesses in a work experience situation that matches their strengths, interests and goals. They observe professionals and apply skills that they already have, and learn additional job-related skills in a work setting. Learners have worked in a variety of organizations from stores, to offices, to schools, to construction. Some employers have offered

learners full-time employment in that particular organization following their work experience placement. Some learners go on to take training in a specific field as a result of their experience. For example, two learners who had work placements in schools have both enrolled in the NWT Teacher Education Program at Aurora College. Following the two weeks of work experience, learners gather to share their stories of work experience and pictures in a Power Point presentation.

Learners develop an employment portfolio that they can take with them to job interviews. The portfolios contain items such as:

"I was able to work as a summer student after my work experience."

- Certificates they have earned, such as First Aid or CPR
- Their resume, samples of cover letters, their list of reference people, or reference letters
- Documents from their work experience/practicum session
- Progress reports or evaluations.

They are also asked to identify their career partners—those people who have helped them on their career journey. This might include members of their families, work experience supervisors, teachers or career officers.

As a result of a suggestion that came out of the Career course, learners developed a collage of the employment opportunities in the Yellowknife area. This involved classifying the different types of jobs into primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary industries.

In May 2004, 10 learners, along with their instructors, travelled by bus to visit a number of post-secondary institutions in Alberta. They toured the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT), Fairview College, Grand Prairie College, Grant McEwan College, and the University of Alberta. Their tour was sponsored by a number of local businesses and organizations. Learners kept a budget for the trip. This event helped

learners understand what options for further education might be open to them and their families.

Best Practice #10: Culture

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program appreciates and respects the diverse cultures of the learners and incorporates them into the program.**

Many learners in the program are Aboriginal. The program recognizes the importance of valuing learners' cultures and of giving voice to learners' own cultural knowledge and perspectives.

Integrating on-the-land activities into the program reflects the commitment to incorporating learners' cultures. During on-the-land trips, learners take part in traditional activities such as the feeding the fire ceremony and sharing their stories.

Learners are encouraged to use their own language in class with their classmates—to clarify instructions for example. They are also encouraged to share their cultural knowledge with each other. Some learners bring crafts to class, such as sewing, to do during their lunch hour. Cultural events are held, where learners teach each other traditional skills, such as beading or games.

The program has also accessed funding from Heritage Canada to allow learners to participate in events on National Aboriginal Day on June 21st. This year, they displayed old photographs from Native Women's Association events and asked people to identify who was in them. They offered bannock, tea and coffee to all their visitors. Crafts were sold and other information was available. Learners participated in every aspect of the event.

Best Practice #11: Community

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program ensures a strong community focus by being engaged in the community and actively engaging the community in the program.**

Although the program is in Yellowknife, it attempts to meet the needs of people in communities beyond Yellowknife as well. It does this by consulting with different community groups and organizations. For example, the board of the Native Women's Association of the NWT is made up of regional representatives who bring the needs and concerns of the constituents in their communities to the planning process.

The program works closely with community individuals and organizations. Organizations that provide expertise to the program include health and social service professionals, career development officers, RWED, and representatives of the various trades. Board members from different communities will sometimes visit and encourage the learners. Topics range from inspirational stories to information on what is happening in their community.

Through its work experience program, the program works closely with a variety of community organizations to accommodate all its learners.

As well as receiving from the community, the program attempts to give back to the community. The Centre participates in joint initiatives, such as NWT Literacy Week and Adult Learners' Week.

Last year, for NWT Literacy Week, staff organized a games afternoon for all adult learners; the previous year they organized an Elders' discussion inviting others to join in. Sometimes the learners attend adult literacy functions with other organizations. In 2003, the learners participated in the city's annual winter carnival, Caribou Carnival, working jointly with another organization to make caribou stew and bannock.

Last year, learners fund-raised for money for a Christmas party. However, as it came closer to Christmas, they suggested that they forego their party and go out on the land instead. They then used the money they had raised (approximately $300) to provide a Christmas hamper for a needy family in the community through the Salvation Army's Adopt-a-Family program. This action is all the more remarkable when you consider that a number of the learners' families themselves would receive a hamper due to their own situations.

Courtesy Northern News Services Ltd.

The program celebrates learner success at the end of the year with a public graduation ceremony in various locations. Previously the ceremony was held in the Great Hall of the Legislative Assembly. Another year, it was at

the Native Women's Training Centre, and in 2003, it was held outdoors at the Fred Henne Park.

2004/06/23

Best Practice #12: Outreach

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program reaches out to the community to attract potential learners and gain the support of the community.**
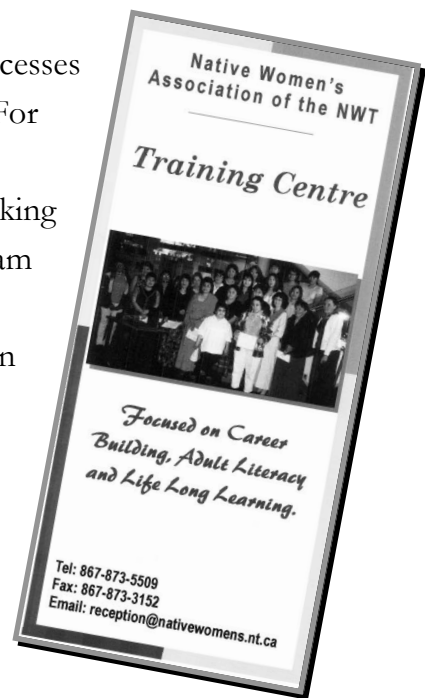
T he program is very clear about its target group. It appeals to learners who, at least initially, do not fit into standard educational institutions.

The program advertises through AHRDA offices, public announcements on the radio and posters. It also produces a simple, clear and attractive leaflet. However, perhaps its former learners are its best promoters: they tell their families and friends about its benefits.

"I really enjoyed my year with classmates, my new friends. We laughed, talked, shared and learned together."

The program tries to raise awareness of its successes by making the media aware of special events. For example, the *Yellowknifer*, the local newspaper, carried the photo and story of the learners packing the Christmas hamper (see P. 388). The program also uses photos to attract potential learners. These photos include special events, such as on the land trips, celebrations of successful learners, work experience activities or out-of-town tours.

Native Women's Association of the NWT

Training Centre

Focused on Career Building, Adult Literacy and Life Long Learning.

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Best Practice #13: Organizational Links and Partnerships

A quality adult literacy and basic education program works collaboratively with other organizations and agencies to support the program, the learners and the program staff.

Situated in the capital of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife has an extensive range of resources. This enables the Centre to develop a broad range of partnerships, formal and informal, with a variety of organizations. Like the Fort Resolution Community Literacy Program, it,

too, has formal contribution agreements with its numerous funders and reports regularly on its activities as required. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment, as well as the AHRDA offices, are important funding partners.

Some of its strongest partners are those organizations that support the program's work experience component. These include:

- Small business
- The Government of the Northwest Territories
- Hotels
- The construction industry
- Retail stores
- Offices
- Schools
- The public library
- Aboriginal organizations, such as the Dene Nation and the Treaty 11 office, bands and AHRDAs.

The program has also formed a strong partnership with the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development (RWED) for its on-the-land program. Wildlife officers from the department take staff and learners out on day trips during the program. Spending time on the land is such an important facet of the program that last year learners opted for another on-the-land trip with RWED staff instead of holding a Christmas party for themselves.

Best Practice #14: Staff Development and Support

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program values its staff and places a priority on staff development.**

The program recognizes the importance of professional development (PD) for its staff. Learners have half a day off each month to allow staff to do PD regularly. As well, staff try to participate in the Yellowknife Educators' Conference, held each year in November. They also try to take advantage of other PD opportunities, offered by local organizations such as the NWT Literacy Council and Human Resources Social Development. Staff have participated in training such as:

- Screening for Success
- Reading and Writing for Adults, and CARA assessment
- Computer-related courses
- Train the Trainer.

Staff are also included in the Adult Literacy Training event organized by Aurora College that usually takes place every two years, and in the Annual General Assembly workshops organized by the Native Women's Association.

Best Practice #15: Funding

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program has adequate ongoing funding to run the program.**

As a non-government, not-for-profit organization, accessing adequate funding for the Training Centre is never easy. Most of the funding for the program from August to March comes from the Government of the Northwest Territories—from programs such as the

Community Literacy fund and the Community Skills for Work fund. The program applies for this money every year. In addition, the program charges tuition fees for each semester. This helps covers costs from April to July. Recently when its government funding was reduced, the program was still able to cover its costs from its tuition fees and AHRDA partners. Learners can apply to AHRDA for tuition and living allowances.

In addition, learners have a fund-raising committee that raises money for specific activities, such as educational events. One of the ways that they raise money is by holding caribou stew and bannock lunches. Staff and learners also contribute personal time and resources to making the program work.

Best Practice #16: Program Administration

A quality adult literacy and basic education program is well-managed and well-run through appropriate policies and procedures.

The Training Centre maintains up-to-date records on the program, which are kept in the coordinator's office. Learner and staff information is confidential. It is locked in a secure location: the program requires a signed release form before it will share information with anyone. Instructors conduct learner conferences in private and learners may ask for private meetings with instructors.

The program has a formal hiring process. It also follows strict procedures when it has to call for proposals for goods or services.

Best Practice #17: Accountability

> **A quality adult literacy and basic education program is accountable to the funders, community and partners, who also share responsibility for the program's success.**

The Training Centre maintains a high level of accountability on a number of fronts. Staff provide regular reports to the board of the Native Women's Association of the NWT on training activities.

They also report as required to their funders. This includes financial statements. At the same time, they send progress reports to the AHRDA committees that provide financial support to learners. They follow the Adult Basic Education curriculum developed by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

Through their efforts to build community, instructors become an integral part of that community. They trust and are trusted by the learners. This means they are very highly committed to the program. They deliver a quality professional program with limited funding.

Conclusions

The Native Women's Association of the NWT Training Centre program is successful for a number of reasons:

- The non-threatening and supportive environment that instructors are able to create meets the needs of the learners in this particular program and is conducive to effective learning.

- The holistic approach to learning ensures that not only academic needs of learners are met, but that learners have the opportunity to develop mentally, socially, physically and spiritually.
- The work experience component is highly effective in developing skills that are transferable to the real world.
- The program demonstrates its commitment to valuing the cultures and languages of learners.

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