

# ESL & e-learning – A guide for Rural Alberta



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## Introduction

Large urban centres have historically received the majority of immigrants in Alberta and have consequently had larger ESL programs and more settlement services and organizations than smaller centres. In recent years, increased numbers of immigrants have been choosing smaller rural communities. In these communities, language and settlement programs are provided primarily through Community Adult Learning Councils (CALCs), Volunteer Tutor Adult Literacy Programs (VTALs), and colleges. The term *rural* can apply to a large range of communities. A multitude of definitions exist for this term, and many of these definitions have changed over time. A definition commonly used by both the federal and provincial government is the “the population living in rural municipalities and small towns and villages of fewer than 10,000 people, beyond the commuting zones of larger urban centres.” (MLA Steering Committee report on rural development, March 2004, p. 3) However, when approaching the issue of defining *rural*, Statistics Canada recommends, “that the appropriate definition should be determined by the question being addressed (Plessis, Beshiri, Bollman, & Clemenson, November, 2001, p. 1). With this in mind, the definition used in this section is extended to include small cities with populations under 100,000 people.

Through consultations with instructors and program directors in rural Alberta, we found that the reality of ESL in rural Alberta varies vastly from one place to the next, as do the technological resources available to implement e-learning in ESL. For this reason, a broad definition of e-learning, used earlier in this guide, is employed for this section: the use of technology for learning. One of the key findings from our consultations with rural communities was the large number of ESL literacy learners who are currently seeking language and literacy instruction in smaller communities. *The Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000: ESL for Literacy Learners* publication defines ESL literacy learners as “individuals who are learning English as a Second Language and who are not functionally literate in their own language for a variety of reasons” (p. 11). Using e-learning to facilitate ESL literacy learning presents unique opportunities and challenges. *ESL & e-learning - A guide for Rural Alberta* was designed to support ESL literacy instructors, volunteers, and programs coordinators who are endeavouring to use technology with ESL literacy learners.

These guiding principles were informed by an extensive review of the literature in ESL literacy instruction and e-learning. In particular, the *Learning for LIFE: An ESL Literacy Handbook* produced by Bow Valley College, was instructive.

The document is divided into the following sections:

Access and Institutional Support

Orientation to using Technology with ESL Literacy Learners

ESL Literacy Pedagogical Considerations

Learners

Instructors

Appendices

### **Access and Institutional Support**

1. Program providers and instructors are aware of issues related to ESL literacy learners' capacity to access technological resources outside of ESL literacy classes.
2. ESL literacy learners are provided access to computers and other technologies outside of class time through open access centres, computer labs, or the loaning of laptop computers, where possible.
3. ESL literacy learners have access to technological support and/or tutor support when using computer labs or open access centres.
4. Access to computer labs, outside class time, is provided through straightforward and clear procedures and schedules.
5. Equipment, such as computers and printers, is reliable and properly maintained.
6. Overall access to the organization's online services such as student e-mail accounts, upcoming events, and available courses, are kept simple and easy to access for learners with limited literacy skills.
7. Icons and folders are presented to learners using consistent naming protocols, and, where possible, the same versions of programs are used.
8. Computer labs are designed in a way that makes it easy for instructors and volunteers to move around helping learners, and for learners to help each other.
9. Technicians and/or tutors providing learner support are sensitive to the needs of ESL literacy learners.
10. When using computer labs with groups, the number of learners is kept to a minimum.

### **Orientation to using Technology with ESL Literacy Learners**

11. The e-learning environment is supportive and non-threatening.
12. Learners are reassured that they need not feel concerned about damaging equipment.
13. Care is taken to ensure that the initial learning curve for learners is not too steep.
14. Orientation programs are comprehensive and respond to the differing levels of ESL literacy and technological knowledge of the learners.

15. Learners' first experiences with e-learning are positive and learning activities are designed to provide learners with chances to be successful.
16. During the orientation phase of using technology, learners are explicitly provided with the basic technological vocabulary that they will need.
17. A needs assessment is conducted to discover what technological skills would be most appropriate and beneficial for ESL literacy learners.
18. Learners are explicitly introduced to the technological skills they will need to access e-learning materials for language and literacy development.
19. Instructors are more likely to be able to meet language learning needs and technological skill development of ESL literacy learners with the support of volunteers when using computers to provide as much one on one support as possible.
20. Classrooms contain different types of technology, such as computers, TVs, CD players, etc.
21. The role technology plays in employment and socializing in Canadian society is explored.

### **ESL Literacy Pedagogical Considerations**

22. E-learning needs for literacy learners are recognized as being distinct from that of mainstream ESL classrooms/learners.
23. Language learning outcomes are based on the *Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000: ESL for Literacy Learners* and the *ESL Literacy Framework*, Bow Valley College (2011).
24. Technological competencies are described as a part of language and literacy competencies; in this way, an outcome will embed these considerations (e.g., a phase III learner should be able to "read and understand formatted and unformatted messages" which includes e-mail).
25. Language learning outcomes are optimized when e-learning is combined with face-to-face instruction.
26. Combining e-learning with traditional ESL literacy teaching methods achieves language learning outcomes most effectively.
27. Collaborative learning utilizing technology is encouraged among ESL literacy learners and learning with computers is viewed as a social activity.
28. E-learning lesson plans for ESL literacy learners utilize clear language, literacy, and/or technological aims and objectives.
29. E-Learning lesson plans for ESL literacy learners are mindful that learners' technological skill levels may vary widely within a ESL literacy benchmark level.
30. Learning activities are designed so that technological skills which have a relevant and practical application to learners' lives, are developed.

31. Where possible, e-learning activities connect to learners' real lives and communities.
32. New concepts using technology are introduced slowly, incrementally, and systematically.
33. E-learning allows ample time for repetition and practicing of new skills.
34. E-learning is not limited to computers, but includes any technological devices of practical relevance to learners, including smart phones, digital cameras, etc.
35. Using thematic instruction is an effective and meaningful way to introduce new technological concepts to learners.
36. Technology use with ESL literacy learners does not distract from other language and literacy learning goals.
37. Learners are given frequent formative assessments (e.g., checklists, Q and A sessions) to evaluate and demonstrate progress with learning technological skills.
38. Learners are supported in making personal goals relating to working with technology.
39. E-learning activities aim to enable learners to become autonomous technology users.
40. Instructors seek regular feedback from learners about their experiences with technology.
41. Assessments of learners' progress with using technology do not require learners to use new or unfamiliar language.
42. Learners' small incremental achievements with technology are noticed and celebrated.
43. Technological skills are considered a type of literacy, not a skill separate from literacy.

### **Learners**

44. Learners have appropriate levels of support for their literacy level and technological skills.
45. Learners are given opportunities to develop technological skills that match their personal goals, settlement needs, and plans for the future.
46. Learners are introduced to free websites and online resources appropriate for language learning that they could use to practice language skills outside of class.
47. Learners feel that their religious and/or cultural beliefs about technology are respected.
48. Learners are encouraged to share their own knowledge of, and experiences with, technology and to help each other with technological difficulties.
49. Learners are encouraged to share online discoveries with each other.
50. Learners are given strategies for dealing with technological difficulties.

### Familiarization & Development stage

51. Learners at the familiarization stage have developed basic literacy skills before being introduced to technology.
52. Introductory training includes very basic practice in using a mouse, keyboard, etc.
53. Learners are given strong instructional support when using technology with their instructor and/or tutor helping ease frustrations with technology.
54. Learners are introduced to navigating basic technologies needed for everyday life, such as operating microwaves, ticket vendors, ATMs, and cell phones.
55. E-learning activities that are fun and emphasize aural skills, such as videos and simple online games are included.

### Application stage

56. Learners are shown how to access materials in their first language, if such materials are available.
57. Learners are introduced to different types of online communication and discourse styles.
58. Learners are made aware of different online social conventions, including proper netiquette for email, forums, comment boxes, etc.
59. Learners are given information about the potential risks of using online technology, such as phishing scams and identity theft.
60. Learners are given strategies for maintaining online security and privacy.
61. Learners are shown how to access different types of online resources outside of school such as Skype and language learning websites.
62. Learners are encouraged to find information and answers to their questions online.
63. Learners are encouraged to discover how to find and learn to use novel technological resources autonomously.
64. Learners are introduced to online social networking sites such as facebook and Twitter and made aware of the differing social conventions and protocols that underlie different types of online social networks.

### **Instructors**

65. The instructor is given professional development opportunities and training in using technology with ESL literacy learners.
66. Adequate time for preparing materials combining technology and language learning outcomes is provided to the instructor.
67. The instructor has access to resources for ESL literacy and e-learning (see appendices for a list of online resources).

68. The instructor is aware of the different types of media and online learning opportunities available to ESL literacy learners.
69. The instructor has access to a professional community for sharing resources and ideas about using technology with ESL literacy learners.
70. The instructor models a positive attitude towards using technology and shares enthusiasm for technology with learners.
71. The Instructor uses technology in his or her own teaching, such as using PowerPoint presentations in class or showing online videos.
72. Instructors are aware that ESL literacy learners require large amounts of repetition in learning situations and this is likely to be the case in learning to use technology.
73. The instructor works to reduce anxiety and frustration for learners who may be unfamiliar with using technology.
74. The instructor understands the importance of maintaining an interpersonal connection to the ESL literacy learner when technology can emphasize individualized study.
75. The instructor respects the religious and cultural beliefs of the ESL literacy learners in regards to the use of certain technologies and works with them to provide opportunities to engage with technology appropriate with those beliefs.



## Appendix A

### Who are ESL literacy learners?

One of the greatest challenges in creating a set of guiding principles for using technology with ESL literacy learners is the wide range of abilities, skills, and cultural backgrounds that ESL literacy learners bring to the classroom. *The Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000: ESL for Literacy Learners* publication defines ESL literacy learners as “individuals who are learning English as a Second Language and who are not functionally literate in their own language for a variety of reasons” (p. 11). These learners fall into three main categories: learners who come from a language and cultural background that does not have a written form (referred to as preliterate learners), learners who are not literate but who come from a literate society (referred to as non-literate), and finally, learners who have some literacy skills in their first language but whose ability to read and write is limited (referred to as semi-literate).

In the recently published, Bow Valley College *ESL Literacy Framework* (2011), learners with ESL Literacy needs are defined as adults who have less than 10 years of formal education and who are simultaneously learning English and learning to read and write. In addition to language development, all learners described in this framework require focused instruction that develops literacy skills, due to their limited or interrupted formal education. Learners with interrupted formal education have unique learning needs and these will differ based on the extent of their formal education, the environments from which they come, and their familiarity with literacy.

Research has demonstrated that the amount of time it will take learners to reach a certain level of English is strongly tied to the amount education that they have in their first language (Gardner, Polyzoï & Rampaul, 1996). Furthermore, ESL literacy learners learn differently than ESL learners who are fully literate in their first language.

## Appendix B: Why Use Technology with ESL Literacy Learners?

“Best practices in the ESL literacy classroom include encouraging learner motivation, maximizing progress, preparing learners for the real world, and bridging learners into life-long learning. The incorporation of technology into the classroom allows a multi-pronged approach to achieve all of these goals”

– Bow Valley College, 2009

Using technology with ESL literacy learners, particularly computer classes, can be difficult and frustrating. Anyone who has taken a class of low-level literacy learners to a computer lab for the first time knows the challenges! However, “literacy, language and numeracy skills in the 21st century include proficiency with digital technologies and practices, including e-learning.” (Davis & Fletcher, 2010). Technology is not simply important; it is inextricably linked with literacy. Words on paper are now just one type of literate practice in a world of multimedia communication (Snyder, Jones, & Bianco, 2005).

In Canada, there are now very few jobs that require no computer use at all. Without training at school, it may be very difficult for ESL literacy learners to pick up these technological skills on their own. It is common for ESL literacy learners to feel very nervous about using technology for the first time, and to be unsure of what to do when technological problems occur. Furthermore, ESL literacy learners are less likely to have access to computers and the Internet at home when compared to the general population (Warschauer & Liaw, 2010). It is not unreasonable to say that, in order to fully participate in Canadian society, most ESL literacy learners will need some technological skills and that the easiest way for them to get those skills is in their literacy classes.

Furthermore, technology has the ability to create social and informational links that that would otherwise be closed off to learners. With access to the Internet, it is possible for learners to see the street where they used to live before they came to Canada using Google Earth. They can have a telephone conversation for free with anyone else who has an internet connection. They can find news from home and communicate with other people who came from their country and are having similar experiences. A small amount of technological know-how can make the planet a lot smaller and friendlier.

As well as having value in and of itself, technology can also be an excellent support to learning language and literacy skills (UNESCO, 2006). There are many good technological resources available to ESL literacy programs. Learners can listen to a story while reading along and repeat the story as often as they like. With the technology available to instructors, it is easy for classes to have audio and print versions of their own stories. Literacy and numeracy activities and games on the Internet can be fun for learners, while providing them with immediate feedback on their progress. Learners can work together to make collaborative projects using video cameras, PowerPoint, blogs, or photo programs.

Despite the opportunities available, there are also some potential challenges to using technology with ESL literacy learners. If instructors are not given adequate resources and time to prepare, learners can waste time on activities that will have a minimal impact on their language, literacy, and technological skills. Furthermore, if classroom computer use is stressful, and activities are at an inappropriate level, learners may become frustrated and develop a negative attitude towards technology. The guiding principles to using technology with ESL literacy learners are designed to help programs avoid these potential pitfalls and successfully integrate technology with ESL literacy teaching.

## Appendix C Online Resources

### Online professional development resources for ESL providers

In rural areas it can be challenging to access TESL training. Professional development is an area about which many survey respondents from rural Alberta said they would like to receive information. The links below have been chosen to help instructors, volunteers, and coordinators who would like to learn more about ESL and ESL literacy. We recognize that many of the people involved in ESL in rural settings are involved on a part-time or volunteer basis and may not be able to take online courses that are expensive and/or time consuming. For this reason, we have not included fee-based intensive training, such as online post-secondary programs. Instead, the links below are for free online resources that will help individuals learn more about the field, but which are easy to access, free, and do not require large time commitments. The list includes free online journals, databases, and resource websites run by reputable sources such as government departments or university initiatives. Many of these sites are Canadian, but there are several from other countries as well. The list of ESL language and literacy websites at the end of this section titled “online resources” also has a large number of websites that have informative articles for teachers. The list here is for sites specifically related to pedagogy, research, and/or professional development.

Name of Resource	URL and Description
TESL-EJ	<p><b><a href="http://www.tesl-ej.org/wordpress/">www.tesl-ej.org/wordpress/</a></b>            Tesl-EJ is free online journal. It is for teaching ESL and has interesting articles and reviews on a wide range of topics.</p>
The AMEP RC	<p><b><a href="http://www.ameprc.mq.edu.au/">www.ameprc.mq.edu.au/</a></b>            This is the website for MacQuarie University’s Australian Migrant English Program (AMEP) research centre. The AMEP is similar to LINC in Canada, and this centre has created a number of resources that are teacher friendly and pedagogically sound. Their facts sheets, in particular, are likely to be of interest. They have information sheets on subjects that many rural practitioners face, such as working with ESL literacy learners, and dealing with continuous intake.</p>

Best Practices for Adult ESL and LINC Programming in Alberta	<p><b><a href="http://www.atesl.ca/cmsms/resources/best-practices-2/">www.atesl.ca/cmsms/resources/best-practices-2/</a></b></p> <p>This link takes you to the site for ATESL's Best Practices for Adult ESL and LINC Programming in Alberta. The guide is available as a free PDF in both full and summary form and is a great place to go if you are looking for guidance as to what makes a successful ESL program.</p>
The Centre for the Canadian Language Benchmarks	<p><b><a href="http://www.language.ca/">www.language.ca/</a></b></p> <p>This is the website for the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks. You can find information relating to the benchmarks here and download free PDF manuals of some of their publications, including ESL for Literacy Learners. They will also send you paper versions of these manuals for free. People wanting more in depth knowledge of the CLBs, can enrol in a free online course.</p>
Teaching Pronunciation: A handbook for teachers and trainers	<p><b><a href="http://www.dest.gov.au/archive/ty/litnet/docs/Teaching_Pronunciation.pdf">www.dest.gov.au/archive/ty/litnet/docs/Teaching_Pronunciation.pdf</a></b></p> <p>This link will take you to a very nicely written manual on teaching pronunciation. It was written by Helen Fraser, an expert in the field, and is completely free. It is also divided into different sections depending on the level of your learners.</p>
ERIC	<p><b><a href="http://www.eric.ed.gov/">www.eric.ed.gov/</a></b></p> <p>Eric is a free online database that receives public funding in the United States. It is not exclusively for ESL, but there are many ESL resources available if you search for them.</p>
The ATESL Resource Database	<p><b><a href="http://www.atesl.ca/cmsms/resources/esl-resources-database/">www.atesl.ca/cmsms/resources/esl-resources-database/</a></b></p> <p>The ATESL resource database is excellent if you are looking for materials that have been developed in Alberta, and have been developed with government funding.</p>
Centre for Intercultural Learning	<p><b><a href="http://www.intercultures.ca">www.intercultures.ca</a></b></p> <p>This website was developed by the Canadian Government and provides information about intercultural education. While their online courses cost money, they have a lot of free resources, including information about the communication styles of different countries, research articles, and an intercultural magazine.</p>

The Language Portal of Canada	<b><a href="http://www.noslangues-ourlanguages.gc.ca">www.noslangues-ourlanguages.gc.ca</a></b> This website is from the Government of Canada. It is a website about language in general, but it includes a section for English as a Second Language and also has information about language use.
Reading in Foreign Language	<b><a href="http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t794297791~db=all">www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t794297791~db=all</a></b> This journal is published for free on the Internet twice a year and has articles related to teaching and researching reading for second language speakers.
Reading Online	<b><a href="http://www.readingonline.org/">http://www.readingonline.org/</a></b> This journal is published by the International Reading Association and has an extensive collection of articles relating to reading and literacy.
The Reading Matrix	<b><a href="http://www.readingmatrix.com/journal.html">www.readingmatrix.com/journal.html</a></b> This is a free international online journal that focuses on second language reading and literacy.

### Helping Learners Find General ESL Courses

In our survey, respondents indicated that their centres sometimes received learners whose learning needs did not match available ESL programming, but who may benefit from taking a course on their own via e-learning. These learners are often at a high benchmark level, looking for advanced courses or test preparation. The list below is intended to be a starting point for helping these learners to find suitable classes. The resource list in the following section has links to many websites that are suitable for self study. This list is a place to help direct learners to a more substantial formal program.

Name of Resource	URL and Description
eCampus Alberta	<b><a href="http://www.ecampusalberta.ca">www.ecampusalberta.ca</a></b> eCampus Alberta is a website that allows learners to search online courses available at 15 different colleges and institutes in Alberta.
Athabasca University	<b><a href="http://www.athabascau.ca">www.athabascau.ca</a></b> Athabasca University is a distance education university based out of Athabasca. They are an open university, and have a number of courses for ESL learners.

LARCC Directory of ESL programs and services	<p><b><a href="http://www.catholicsocialservices.ab.ca/Content_Files/Files/esl_directory.pdf">www.catholicsocialservices.ab.ca/Content_Files/Files/esl_directory.pdf</a></b></p> <p>This guide lists ESL programs available in Edmonton and several other centres including Ft. McMurray, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge County, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Parkland County, and Red Deer</p>
Immigrant Services Calgary ESL directory	<p><b><a href="http://www.immigrantservicescalgary.ca/esl-directory">http://www.immigrantservicescalgary.ca/esl-directory</a></b></p> <p>This guide lists ESL programs available in Calgary.</p>
ETS (Educational Testing Services)	<p><b><a href="http://www.ets.org">www.ets.org</a></b></p> <p>This is the website for the organization responsible for the TOEFL and TOEIC among other well-known tests. Learners can purchase practice tests and prep materials.</p>

### Online Teaching Resources

One of the main recommendations that came out of the literature on e-learning and ESL in rural areas was the need for opportunities to share ideas and resources with other instructors and programs. Anyone who has gone online looking for materials knows how difficult it can be to find free online resources with the types of activities or information being sought. However, there are some truly wonderful websites available that can save instructors time and spice up their teaching. In order to facilitate resource sharing between rural practitioners, we asked our people involved in ESL in rural communities to tell us which online resources they thought would be good for ESL teaching. We also consulted with non-rural ESL instructors and did our own searches. After visiting each recommended site, some were discarded because they were not related to English teaching specifically, or because they required a fee for use. The remaining websites are listed below with a description for each. There is also a checklist to help you locate the type of materials you are looking for quickly.

CLB levels are indicated for most sites, but these are approximations as there are few websites that use CLBs as reference points. Websites with the student box checked are suitable for learners to use in a computer lab or for independent study. It should be mentioned that a website's placement on our list does not necessarily mean that we are endorsing it. Most free online websites have strengths and weakness. We visited each site to make sure that it fit our parameters and was not a purely fee-based site. However, determination of the quality of each site was left to the instructors who recommended them. There are many great websites listed, but as with any online resources, it is important to approach them with a degree of caution.

We hope that these will be useful and time saving for instructors who are providing ESL with limited resources. Further, while we did not limit these resources to ESL literacy learning, there are several websites that have activities that can be used with literacy learners, and we have added a checkbox for these sites to make them easy for instructors to find.

Website URL and Description	CLB 1-4	CLB 5-8	ESL Literacy	Teachers	Students	Canadian
<p><b><a href="http://www.cbc.ca/edmonton/eal/">www.cbc.ca/edmonton/eal/</a></b>            This website provides weekly and monthly lessons for ESL learners based on Albertan CBC radio podcasts. The weekly lessons are shorter and are for lower level learners. Each weekly lesson has 3 news stories read by CBC's Don Bell at a slower pace. The monthly lessons are longer and more detailed and good for higher levels. These resources are good for independent study or classroom use. Answer keys and transcripts accompany the lessons.</p>	√	√		√	√	√
<p><b><a href="http://www.esl.about.com/">www.esl.about.com/</a></b>            This site has a wide variety of information and materials for teachers and/or learners. Offerings include grammar explanations, lessons plans, etc.</p>	√	√	√	√	√	
<p><b><a href="http://www.thewclc.ca/edge/issue1/index.html">www.thewclc.ca/edge/issue1/index.html</a></b>            This links to an interactive online newspaper designed for literacy learners. It has a Canadian focus and reinforces literacy and numeracy. Learners can listen and read at the same time and choose their difficulty level.</p>	√		√		√	√
<p><b><a href="http://www.bogglesworldesl.com">www.bogglesworldesl.com</a></b>            This website, known as Lanternfish, has ESL materials for all levels and ages. The free resources include lesson plans, worksheets, phonics, games, etc. It also has articles about teaching.</p>	√	√	√	√	√	



Website URL and Description	CLB 1-4	CLB 5-8	ESL Literacy	Teachers	Students	Canadian
<p><b>www.eslcafe.com/search/</b> Called Dave's ESL cafe, this website is best known as the major resource for teachers looking for work overseas. However, it also has a huge range of teaching resources and includes separate sections for teachers and learners. Most resources do not require membership, though some (e.g., the forums) do. Membership is free.</p>	√	√		√	√	
<p><b>www.languageguide.org</b> This website is an ongoing project that creates pages with vocabulary images that have a person saying the words in natural English. Users can create a free account and save words that they want to study later to their account. It is good for independent vocabulary study for beginners.</p>	√		√		√	
<p><b>www.englisch-hilfen.de/en</b> This is a Dutch website but it is all in English and is for teachers and students who are learning English. There are good resources for independent learners at higher levels, including daily lessons, quizzes, exercises etc. There are also materials that can be used by teachers including a large number of worksheets. The site also has quick reference materials for grammar.</p>		√		√	√	
<p><b>iteslj.org/</b> This is the link for the Internet TESL Journal. It has articles for professional development for teachers, as well as a large number of other teachers resources, including lesson plans, teaching techniques, and links to more resources.</p>	√	√	√	√		

Website URL and Description	CLB 1-4	CLB 5-8	ESL Literacy	Teachers	Students	Canadian
<p><b>www.manythings.org</b> Much like its name suggests, this website has many different things for ESL learners, including pronunciation practice activities, typing practice for people learning to use computers, and all sorts of games and activities. This a good place to visit with low level and literacy learners.</p>	√		√		√	
<p><b>www.esl-lab.com</b> This site contains a large number of listening activities that come with listening comprehension quizzes. These are designed for self study, as learners answers are scored online. This resource is free. Each listening also gives information about the length, topic, and level, so teachers and learners can choose appropriate listening activities to meet their needs.</p>	√	√	√	√	√	
<p><b>www.cbc.ca/manitoba/eal</b> This website provides weekly and monthly lessons for ESL learners based on CBC radio podcasts. The weekly lessons are shorter and are for lower level learners, while the monthly lessons are long and detailed and good for higher levels. These resources are good for independent study or classroom use. Answer keys and transcripts accompany the lessons.</p>	√	√		√	√	√
<p><b>www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish</b> This free resource from the BBC is a comprehensive site with a wide variety or resources, news stories, blogs, quizzes, etc. all designed for English language learners. The site is updated regularly and has an easy-to-use layout. Of course, being from the BBC, these materials use British English.</p>	√	√		√	√	

Website URL and Description	CLB 1-4	CLB 5-8	ESL Literacy	Teachers	Students	Canadian
<p><b>www.breakingnewsenglish.com</b> This site has reading/listening lessons based on news stories. It is updated regularly and as such is good if you are looking for topical lessons.</p>	√			√	√	
<p><b>www.teflgames.com/games.html</b> This website is largely an advertisement for an ESL game. However, they do have a large list of instructions for games that can be played in class, many of which are labelled to indicate their level. There are also interactive vocabulary games learners can play for independent study.</p>	√	√	√	√		
<p><b>http://www.eslpartyland.com/</b> This site has a separate sections for teachers and students but is really geared more towards teachers. It offers lesson plans in different skill areas, at different levels, and on different topics. It also has supplementary materials, such as conversation cards and tips in different aspects of teaching such as “tips for using authentic texts with low-level ESL classes”</p>	√	√		√	√	
<p><b>www.esl-library.com</b> This is a resource site for ESL teachers that has ready-made lesson plans and flashcards. They charge a membership fee for full access but they have samples that you can view for free.</p>	√	√	√	√		
<p><b>http://www.idiomsite.com/</b> This is simply a site with a large number of idioms listed alphabetically by the first word with a definition written for each.</p>	√	√		√	√	
<p><b>http://pages.uoregon.edu/leslieob/pizzaz.html#Poetry</b> This is a small website with writing activities for teachers, including scaffolded poetry activities, etc.</p>	√	√	√	√		

Website URL and Description	CLB 1-4	CLB 5-8	ESL Literacy	Teachers	Students	Canadian
<p><b><a href="http://www2.actden.com/writ_den/tips/paragrap/">www2.actden.com/writ_den/tips/paragrap/</a></b>            This website offers simple explanations of how to write basic paragraphs and includes information on types of paragraphs, topics sentences, editing, etc. While this site could be used for independent study, many learners would require some guidance.</p>	√			√		
<p><b><a href="http://literacynet.org/cnnsf/home.html">literacynet.org/cnnsf/home.html</a></b>            This website is part of a literacy project from Literacyworks that provides videos from CNN and CBS 5 along with online learning activities, transcripts, etc.</p>		√		√	√	
<p><b><a href="http://dictionary.reference.com/">dictionary.reference.com/</a></b>            This resource is an online dictionary with a translator feature. It also has interactive flashcards designed for specific tests such as TOEFL. It is good for students looking for extra test preparation practice.</p>		√			√	
<p><b><a href="http://www.idiomconnection.com/">www.idiomconnection.com/</a></b>            This site has idioms indexed both alphabetically and by topic.</p>	√	√		√	√	
<p><b><a href="http://www.ets.org">www.ets.org</a></b>            This is the website for ETS (creators of TOEFL, TOEIC, GRE, SAT, etc.). It is a good place to go to find information about these tests and there is some free test preparation material.</p>		√		√	√	
<p><b><a href="http://www.btinternet.com/~ted.power/index.html">www.btinternet.com/~ted.power/index.html</a></b>            This is a British site with games and pronunciation and reading activities. It also has worksheets for literacy learners.</p>	√	√	√	√	√	
<p><b><a href="http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/">idioms.thefreedictionary.com/</a></b>            This site is part of The Free Dictionary and it allows users to search for idioms by keywords.</p>		√		√	√	

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<p><b><a href="http://www.onlinetutoringworld.com/lessonplans/music.html">www.onlinetutoringworld.com/lessonplans/music.html</a></b>            This site provides lessons for teachers/tutors using videos from YouTube.            Warning: some lessons do not work because the video is no longer active.</p>		√		√		
<p><b><a href="http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/">www.teachingenglish.org.uk/</a></b>            This website is from the British Council and the BBC. It has free lessons and activities and also has forums, blogs, and professional development materials. It has articles by well known people in the field of second language acquisition such as Michael Swan. Full access requires membership, which is free.</p>	√	√		√		
<p><b><a href="http://www.esl-lesson-plan.com/">www.esl-lesson-plan.com/</a></b>            This is an ESL instructor's ESL lesson-planning blog. It doesn't have ready made materials. Each blog post discusses an aspect of teaching.</p>				√		
<p><b><a href="http://wilderdom.com/games/icebreakers.html">wilderdom.com/games/icebreakers.html</a></b>            This is a site for icebreaker activities.</p>	√	√	√	√		
<p><b><a href="http://eastsideliteracy.org/tutorsupport/ESL/ESLTips.htm">eastsideliteracy.org/tutorsupport/ESL/ESLTips.htm</a></b>            This is a website for tutors working with literacy students. It has advice, lesson plans, and suggestions.</p>			√			
<p><b><a href="http://www.eslflow.com">www.eslflow.com</a></b>            This website has many free resources including a large number pdf worksheets, pictures, flowcharts, etc.</p>	√	√		√		
<p><b><a href="http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/essential_skills/general/toolkit.shtml">www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/essential_skills/general/toolkit.shtml</a></b>            This a website from HRSDC is called the Essential Skills Literacy Toolbox. It has resources for working with literacy learners including computer skills.</p>	√		√	√		√

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<p><b>www.eslsite.com</b> This website is made by ESL instructors for ESL instructors. It is free and has activities sorted into a number of different categories including grammar, business English, speaking/listening, beginning students, etc. They also have a section for teacher development and an image bank for instructors looking for pictures to use.</p>	√	√		√		
<p><b>www.superteacherworksheets.com/</b> This site is designed for K-12 teachers but has some good resources for literacy instruction, particularly in the area of numeracy.</p>			√	√		
<p><b>www.esl-galaxy.com</b> This site has a number of standard resources, such a printable worksheets, etc. It also has an e-learning section for learners with online quizzes. It can be a little be confusing navigating around the advertising.</p>	√	√		√	√	
<p><b>www.englishpage.com</b> This page has a collection of online ESL exercises for learners. The activities are designed to be done online and are good for independent study. The website gives learners feedback on their answers.</p>	√	√			√	
<p><b>www.nwt.literacy.ca</b> This website is from the NWT literacy council. It has information, resources, and links for literacy teachers</p>			√	√		√

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<b>www.advancededucation.gov.ab.ca/englishexpress/</b>			√		√	√
This Albertan resource is an online newspaper for ESL literacy learners. It has easy to read stories that learners can hear and read. It also has word games, links to other resources, personal stories, and a page for teachers. It is no longer an active sight, but all of the materials that were on the site are still there.			√	√	√	√
<b>www.literacycenter.net</b> This website it good if you are looking for computer activities that teach very basic literacy skills such as letter formation.			√	√	√	
<b>www.literacyconnections.com</b> This website if for literacy in general, not only adult ESL literacy, but it has a section for adult ESL with useful links and resources.			√	√		
<b>www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/courses/computer-basics/</b> This website has very basic interactive lessons in computer skills. This is a good website for learners who have no computer skills at all and are looking for help in basics such as using a mouse. It also has a very slick, easy to use, interface.			√	√	√	
<b>www.cdiponline.org/</b> This website comes from California Distance Learning Project. It has short, informative stories on a wide range of topics, and each story has audio read at slow speed.			√		√	

Website URL and Description	CLB 1-4	CLB 5-8	ESL Literacy	Teachers	Students	Canadian
<p><b>www.enchantedlearning.com/Home.html</b> This website has a K-12 focus and requires membership for full access. However, they have a number of resources that are free to non-members including worksheets that would work well for literacy learners.</p>	√		√	√		
<p><b>www.livemocha.com</b> This is a large language learner community. It has free and pay versions. Learners can interact with other learners online. It is for people from different language backgrounds and is for people who want to learn different languages. When you sign up you indicate your native language, target language, and level.</p>	√	√		√	√	
<p><b>abclifeliteracy.ca/</b> This website is for literacy practitioners in Canada. It has information about literacy in Canada including current topics and news in Canadian literacy.</p>			√	√		√



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