

Course
Leisure and Personal Interests
ENG-B125-4

Literacy



“When we engage in what we are naturally suited to do, our work takes on the quality of play and it is play that stimulates creativity.”

Linda Naiman

Presentation of the Course *Leisure and Personal Interests*

The goal of the course *Leisure and Personal Interests* is to help adult literacy learners use oral and written discourse to deal competently with real-life situations related to their leisure time and activities.

This course develops adult literacy learners' language proficiency by involving them in a variety of listening, speaking, reading and writing activities that provide an opportunity to put basic language skills into practice in order to enjoy leisure activities and discover or develop personal interests.

By the end of the course, adult literacy learners will be able to understand and produce basic informative, expressive and aesthetic texts related to leisure and personal interests. They will become

familiar with and use a wider range of basic language skills to construct meaning from oral and written texts, such as posters, simple timetables and short, simple reviews or leaflets. Although still at a functional level, they will increase their ability to communicate both orally and through writing by expressing their thoughts, needs, preferences and views pertaining to their personal interests. In addition, they will be initiated to the creative use of language by reading or listening to short, simple stories and poems and producing some of their own. They will expand their vocabulary and language structures in a variety of real-life situations.

Dealing with Real-Life Situations

Dealing effectively with real-life situations is based on actions. These actions are grouped into categories and make use of a set of resources that include operational competencies and essential knowledge. During the learning process, adults are expected to construct knowledge related to these resources in order to be able to deal appropriately with their real-life situations.

The class of situations, categories of actions, operational competencies and essential knowledge constitute the compulsory elements of the course. These elements are detailed in their respective rubrics.



Class of Situations Addressed by the Course

This course addresses a single class of situations: *Using language for enjoyment and personal interests*.

This class of situations includes a wide range of personal, social and cultural situations in which adults frequently find themselves. In order to deal competently with these situations, they are required to use basic language skills to ask for, obtain and give information, advice or instructions. They also share personal experiences and listen to, read and write short, basic informative, expressive or aesthetic discourse pertaining to learning a new skill, being creative,

and having the opportunity to enjoy ordinary leisure settings or events.

Some examples of these real-life situations include going to the movies, the theatre or the library, planning a party or a trip, participating in a leisure activity or sport, or buying books, magazines or CDs.

Class of Situations	Examples of Real-Life Situations
Using language for enjoyment and personal interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Going to the movies/theatre/museum/sports event▪ Watching television▪ Practising a sport▪ Practising a craft▪ Planning a trip▪ Planning a party▪ Planning a family outing▪ Participating in a leisure activity▪ Going to the library▪ Buying books/magazines/CDs

Categories of Actions

The *categories of actions* are groups of actions that are appropriate for dealing with the real-life situations addressed in the course. *Examples of actions* are provided to illustrate the scope of the category across a variety of contexts.

Categories of Actions	Examples of Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interacting orally for enjoyment and personal interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expresses personal needs and preferences using basic vocabulary and expressions (e.g. types of foods, favourite books, movies or music) ▪ Asks for, obtains and gives basic information (e.g. pertaining to invitations, timetables, schedules, reservations) ▪ Asks for, obtains and gives basic instructions (e.g. pertaining to crafts, leisure activities) ▪ Shares personal experience (e.g. pertaining to restaurants, travels) ▪ Shares thoughts, feelings and personal views and responses (e.g. pertaining to movies, radio and television programs, museum exhibits)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Listening to informative, expressive and aesthetic texts for enjoyment and personal interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Listens for basic, specific information in radio or television shows (e.g. on cooking, gardening, entertainment news) ▪ Listens for basic, specific information in telephone recordings (e.g. schedules of movies, theatre schedules) ▪ Listens to short read-aloud books and simple song lyrics ▪ Listens to short, basic instructions (e.g. workout videos, directions) ▪ Listens to short, simple audio texts (e.g. jingles and ads)

Categories of Actions	Examples of Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reading informative, expressive and aesthetic texts for enjoyment and personal interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reads short, basic instructions (e.g. pertaining to gym equipment use, recipes, book borrowing) ▪ Reads ads and posters to locate specific information (e.g. pertaining to events, location and time) ▪ Reads short, basic descriptions with symbols and illustrations (e.g. pertaining to movies, plays, exhibitions) ▪ Reads basic schedules and timetables (e.g. pertaining to concerts, social calendars, movies, museums, television programs) ▪ Reads magazines, newspapers, videos, CD covers to locate basic, specific information (e.g. headlines, titles, table of contents) ▪ Reads newspapers to locate basic, specific details (e.g. in entertainment section, classified ads and comics) ▪ Reads short, basic friendly letters, postcards, cards/notes ▪ Reads basic maps with symbols (e.g. of provincial parks, camping sites, museums) ▪ Reads short, basic forms asking for personal information ▪ Reads short, basic descriptions in illustrated brochures (e.g. pertaining to travel destinations, museum exhibits, historical sites) ▪ Reads short, basic biographies to locate some specific information (e.g. pertaining to entertainers or public figures) ▪ Reads some high-interest/low-vocabulary stories and children's books ▪ Reads short, simple poems or song lyrics

Categories of Actions	Examples of Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Writing informative, expressive and aesthetic texts for enjoyment and personal interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Writes short, basic friendly letters, postcards▪ Writes short, basic cards/notes (e.g. invitation, thank you)▪ Fills out short, basic forms (e.g. registration for lessons, equipment rental)▪ Writes basic lists (e.g. party guests, supplies, items for travel, names of contacts/resources)▪ Writes short, basic schedules (e.g. personal/family activities)▪ Writes short, simple poems using models and very basic literary devices (e.g. end rhymes)▪ Writes simple stories with basic structure (e.g. beginning, middle and end)▪ Keeps a simple journal

Compulsory Elements and End-of-Course Outcomes

Dealing effectively with real-life situations is based on actions. These actions are grouped into categories and make use of a set of resources that include operational competencies and essential knowledge. During the learning process, adults are expected to construct knowledge related to these resources in order to be able to deal appropriately with their real-life situations.

The class of situations, categories of actions, operational competencies and essential knowledge constitute the compulsory elements of the course.

Class of Situations

Using language for enjoyment and personal interests

Categories of Actions

- Interacting orally for enjoyment and personal interests
- Listening to informative, expressive and aesthetic texts for enjoyment and personal interests
- Reading informative, expressive, and aesthetic texts for enjoyment and personal interests
- Writing informative, expressive and aesthetic texts for enjoyment and personal interests

Operational Competencies

Communicates

- Determines a purpose for communicating
- Listens attentively to the interlocutor
- Maintains conversation by responding appropriately to the interlocutor's interventions
- Adapts language to the degree of formality of the situation

Uses Creativity

- Develops and shares a personal response to an aesthetic text
- Responds to the images and associations suggested by an aesthetic text
- Attends to the harmony created by the sounds and rhythm of the spoken words
- Experiments with sounds, rhythm and images in the creation of simple oral and written aesthetic texts

Essential Knowledge

- Types of discourse (informative, expressive and aesthetic)
- Oral and written discourse cues and features
- Speaking, listening, reading, writing, strategies, techniques and procedures
- The sound system
- The writing system
- Language functions
- Sociolinguistic features
- Grammar and syntax
- Vocabulary related to leisure activities and personal interests

The end of course outcomes describe how adults make use of the compulsory elements to deal with the real-life situations addressed in the course.

End-of-Course Outcomes

In order to deal competently with the class of situations *Using language for enjoyment and personal interests*, adult literacy learners begin to construct and experiment with language for a greater variety of audiences and purposes. Whether they are speaking, listening, reading or writing, adults determine a purpose for communicating.

When interacting orally, adult literacy learners use a variety of language functions to achieve their communicative purposes, such as asking for and giving basic information and instructions, and expressing their thoughts, needs, preferences and views in matters related to leisure and personal interests. During exchanges they use elements of the sound system, such as acceptable pronunciation and intonation to ensure the comprehensibility of their message. They listen attentively and maintain conversation by responding appropriately to the interlocutor's interventions by using some basic strategies, techniques and procedures more confidently, such as focusing on key words and phrases, and by giving some simple feedback.

Adult literacy learners also listen to a limited range of short, basic informative and expressive texts. They use pre-listening techniques, such as setting a purpose or predicting content. While listening to short recorded messages or radio and television shows, they use some discourse cues such as volume, tone, sound effects or images as aids to comprehension.

They read a limited selection of short, basic informative and expressive texts to locate some specific information. To construct meaning from the text, they use decoding strategies, techniques and procedures to read unfamiliar words and recognize discourse features, such as beginning, middle and end. They read titles or tables of content to choose reading materials of personal interest. Examples of such texts include leaflets, short, simple reviews, simple maps or timetables and short, simple biographies supported by illustrations and symbols. While engaged in reading, they use techniques such as surveying illustrations and titles.

They also listen to and read simple aesthetic texts, such as short poems, song lyrics and simple stories, and develop a personal response to the images, associations, rhythm and harmony suggested by the text and share their feelings and reactions with others.

Adult literacy learners produce a limited range of very simple informative, expressive and aesthetic texts, such as lists for personal use, short, simple cards and simple journal entries to record their thoughts, feelings and responses to aesthetic texts. They also begin to experiment with language imaginatively. For example, they create simple stories and poems, using a few common literary devices such as descriptive words and end rhymes. When writing informative texts, adult literacy learners use conventions of the writing system, such as proper spelling and

End-of-Course Outcomes

punctuation, and apply basic rules of sentence-level grammar and syntax. When in doubt about vocabulary, spelling or syntax, they consult a beginners' dictionary or grammar reference book.

Whether they are speaking or writing, adult literacy learners respect the basic sociolinguistic features of discourse by adapting their language to the level of formality of the situation. They also use basic vocabulary related to leisure activities and personal interests.

Evaluation Criteria

- Interacts using basic, common oral texts in routine situations at a functional level
- Understands basic, common oral texts in routine situations at a functional level
- Reads predictable, basic, common texts at a functional level
- Writes short, basic, common texts at a functional level

Operational Competencies

The contribution of each operational competency is described in terms of the actions that are appropriate for dealing with the real-life situations of this course. These operational competencies are addressed in other courses and therefore all of the courses taken together contribute to their development.

In this course, only the following operational competencies are addressed: *Communicates* and *Uses creativity*.

Contribution of the Operational Competency *Communicates*

The operational competency *Communicates* is the capacity to express meaning simply and clearly and to understand the basic meaning expressed by others. It is solicited in all real-life situations in which people exchange meaning and is linked to the class of situations *Using language for enjoyment and personal interests*.

Adult literacy learners exercise their communicative competency by determining a purpose for communicating. When interacting orally, they listen attentively to their interlocutor and maintain conversation by responding appropriately to their interlocutor's interventions. They adapt their language to the degree of formality of the situation in order to achieve their communicative purposes in real-life situations related to leisure and personal interests.

Contribution of the Operational Competency *Uses Creativity*

The operational competency *Uses creativity* involves the capacity to deal with situations in an imaginative and innovative manner. Language users exercise their creativity when they experiment with language inventively and when they use their imagination to make their own connections in a text. This competency is solicited in real-life situations involving aesthetic discourse in the class of situations *Using language for enjoyment and personal interests*.

Whether they are acting as speakers, listeners, readers or writers, adult literacy learners exercise their creativity by developing a personal response to aesthetic texts and by experimenting with language to create their own aesthetic texts. They respond to the images and associations suggested by the text and attend to the harmony created by the sounds and rhythm of the spoken words. When creating short poems or stories intended to please the reader or listener, they use language imaginatively. Thus, the operational competency *Uses creativity* is exercised in situations involving the discovery and enjoyment of language for personal interests and self-development.

Essential Knowledge

The essential knowledge for the literacy level courses is found at the end of the literacy courses.

Attitudes

The following attitudes are provided as suggestions only. The development of these attitudes can help adults to become more competent in dealing with the real-life situations in this course.

Willingness to take risks	Self-confidence
<p>Willingness to take risks involves being ready to experiment and not being inhibited by fear of making errors. This attitude is a crucial factor in language development and depends on recognizing and accepting the fact that learning is a trial-and-error process. It is by showing initiative, accepting new challenges and experimenting with various forms of communication in different situations that adults increase their language proficiency and improve their level of competency.</p>	<p>Self-confidence can be defined as having faith in one's abilities. It is an attitude that allows adults to have positive and realistic views of themselves and their situations and to progress. When adults are self-confident, they show a readiness to learn, a willingness to interact orally with their interlocutors and to undertake new reading and writing challenges. This attitude allows adult literacy learners to reflect upon their achievements, establish new goals, and actively participate in the construction of new knowledge and the development of language proficiency.</p>
Perseverance	
<p>Perseverance can be defined as persistent determination. Adults who persevere continue their language studies even though they may sometimes feel discouraged. They are committed to hard work. This attitude allows adults to learn from their mistakes and to purposefully participate in learning activities to increase their level of competency. Perseverance is a key attitude for the development of language and lifelong learning.</p>	

Complementary Resources

The following resources are provided as suggestions only and consist of references that may be consulted in learning situations.

Social Resources	Material Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Community centres▪ Libraries▪ Non-government agencies▪ Museums▪ Theatres	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Picture dictionaries▪ Beginners' dictionaries▪ Spelling reference books▪ Beginners' grammar reference books▪ Writing models▪ Audio books▪ High-interest/low-vocabulary adult content books▪ Children's books▪ Authentic teaching materials (e.g. schedules, calendars, phone books)▪ Multimedia materials (print and non-print)

Contribution of Other Subject Areas

Essential knowledge from other subject areas is also useful for dealing competently with the real-life situations in this course. While this knowledge is pertinent, it is not subject to formal evaluation in this course, nor does it constitute a prerequisite.

In Literacy, the same situation can be treated in more than one course and can solicit essential knowledge from other subject areas such as Mathematics, Science and Technology.

Andragogical Context

It is understood that for learning to take place, adult literacy learners must perceive it as meaningful and relevant to their life. It is from this perspective that the English, Language of Instruction program of study has been developed. The content of the courses in the program has been organized around the real-life situations of the learners. Consequently, in order to make learning concrete and useful, all learning situations are based on these real-life situations.

Learning situations target the construction of the essential language knowledge and the development of the operational competencies necessary to deal competently with real-life situations. Adults develop these operational competencies with the help of the teacher who calls particular attention to the significant actions associated with them by engaging the adults in meaningful speaking, listening, reading and writing activities. As a result, adults build essential knowledge, solicit the appropriate operational competencies for the given real-life situation, and reflect upon their learning, the strategies used, the reinvestment and transformation of their existing knowledge and the attitudes adopted.

In this learning context, teachers play the role of facilitator, mediator and guide. They establish a safe learning environment for adult literacy learners where mutual respect and trust create a climate conducive to learning. With the support of the teacher, adult literacy learners share responsibility for their learning. They define their learning needs, taking into consideration their existing knowledge and experience. Emphasis is placed on the learning process used to

construct the essential language knowledge and to develop the operational competencies. It is therefore important that the learning situation be linked to the needs of the adult literacy learners. By participating in the learning situation that is linked to a real-life situation, adults perceive the relevance of their learning to their life, which in turn stimulates their motivation and involvement.

The learning situation occurs in the adult's place of learning. It is not specific to the needs of a particular adult; rather it is sufficiently open and global to allow all adults to explore important aspects of language related to dealing competently with the real-life situation. Throughout the learning situation, teachers observe the adult literacy learners in action, whether they are in small or large group discussions or interacting with peers. They guide and advise them on the appropriate strategies for constructing the necessary resources and give specific instruction to individuals and groups as needed. The teacher encourages the learners to make links between new knowledge and existing knowledge, and to reflect on and evaluate their learning process and the degree to which they have developed their competencies.

The courses in the English, Language of Instruction program of study are especially designed to promote adult literacy learners' active participation in their own learning. It encourages them to develop their autonomy by providing them with the opportunity to build the language skills required to function competently in real-life situations.

Learning Situation

The learning situation that follows is provided as an example to show teachers how the principles of pedagogical renewal can be applied in the classroom.

It is authentic, in the sense that it addresses a real-life situation, taken from the class of situations in the course, that adults may find themselves in. It is sufficiently open and comprehensive to allow adult learners to explore several important aspects related to dealing with this real-life situation.

The examples of actions presented in the course help the teacher to identify those actions that an adult would take to deal with the real-life situation. The teacher can then refer to these examples in order to develop pertinent learning activities.

The learning situation is organized in terms of the three steps of the teaching-learning process, namely:

- planning learning
- actual learning
- integrating and reinvesting learning

These steps highlight the principles of pedagogical renewal insofar as they encourage adults to be active, to reflect on their learning and to interact with their peers when the learning context is suitable. They include learning activities and may also include evaluation activities intended to support adults in the learning process.

These activities help learners to construct knowledge related to the compulsory elements of the course that are targeted by the learning situation concerned: one or more categories of actions, essential knowledge and the actions of the operational competencies associated with the categories of actions.

The example provided also refers to certain teaching strategies—pedagogical methods and techniques—that can be selected according to the learners, the context and the learning environment. Certain learning strategies may also be suggested, as well as a variety of material and social resources.

Example of a Learning Situation

Creating a Greeting Card

In the class of situations, *Using language for enjoyment and personal interests*, one of the examples of situations is *Practising a craft*.

In the context of raising funds for the school library, the centre organizes a bazaar where students can sell various handmade artefacts. One class has decided to participate by creating a series of greeting cards for various occasions. Each student will choose a personal greeting card for an occasion of their choice, create a brief, original message appropriate for the selected occasion and then illustrate the card, incorporating details from their own culture. To produce this greeting card, learners call upon their existing knowledge of the type of texts found in greeting cards and the language used to express the message (e.g. descriptive vocabulary, sociolinguistic features, expressive or aesthetic discourse). Students learn to adapt language to a specific audience and purpose and to become familiar with some of the features of expressive and aesthetic discourse. They also learn to organize and display the text according to the design and discourse features of a greeting card. To carry out the learning activities, they will engage in two categories of actions: reading and writing for enjoyment and personal interest. They will also develop their operational competency *Uses creativity* and further develop the operational competency *Communicates* by engaging in the significant actions associated with them.

For the first learning activity, the teacher raises students' awareness of purpose and audience by eliciting from them the many kinds of occasions for which we send cards and the different people to whom

we send them. The teacher then divides the students into small groups and provides each group with a sampling of different cards. In their individual groups, students are asked to look at the front of each card and identify two kinds of information: for whom the card is intended (the audience) and for what occasion (purpose). The teacher then asks them to indicate the expressions and/or illustrations on the front of the card that helped them to answer these questions. They record their answers on a chart designed for this purpose. When all the groups have finished, each group reports its findings to the rest of the class, holding up each card for all to see.

In the second learning activity, students' attention is directed to the message written on the inside of the card, keeping in mind for whom the card is intended and for what occasion. The teacher begins by showing some examples, either using an overhead projector or writing on the board. He or she asks them to focus on the language in the messages and discuss with the members of the group the differences in the messages that helped them identify the intended audience and occasion (e.g. use of polite versus familiar forms of address, use of humour for happy occasions but not for condolences or sympathy). They may also notice differences between a prose text and a poem. The teacher then distributes a photocopy of a variety of messages intended for different audiences and occasions, and in groups, learners identify the possible audience and occasion for each of the messages and to highlight aspects of the written message that indicate this.

Each student then begins the writing process by choosing a person and an occasion that they would like to design a card for. (The teacher ensures that enough different occasions are selected, so that there will be a variety of samples for the bazaar.) Individually, they then explore some ideas about what they want to include on the front of the card (expressions and illustrations) and produce two or three examples. They then share their examples with the other members of their original group. Each member gives and receives feedback on the other members' production, explaining their reasons for their preferences or suggesting alternatives. On the basis of the feedback, each student prepares a first rough draft of the front of their card and edits it for spelling and punctuation. The teacher circulates, asking questions and offering suggestions for improvement.

Individually, students begin to compose a draft of the message they want to include inside the card. They may decide to write a short prose message or a simple poem. They may decide to try their hand at both. In either case, they attend to features of the discourse type in question (e.g. simple prose style, personal vocabulary, expressions of feelings, rhymes or rhythm in a poem). Again, when they are finished, they share their first drafts with the other members of their group for peer feedback. When giving feedback, students indicate their responses to each of the texts: what feelings it evoked, what images it brought to mind, what expressions they especially liked, whether it seemed suitable for the person and occasion it was intended for, and so on. At this point they are not editing for grammar, spelling or punctuation, but simply reacting to the content of the message and the words used to express it.

Learners then work individually to refine their message on the basis of the feedback received from their peers. They also start to pay

closer attention to form, to conventions of the writing system such as grammar, spelling and punctuation which vary depending on whether the text is a piece of prose or a poem. During this time, the teacher circulates among the students, offering pointers or answering questions. When they have completed the process of refining their text, they return to their groups and submit their texts for peer editing. This time they focus especially on the form and conventions of the language used and may consult beginners' dictionaries, grammar reference books, as well as the models they looked at in the second learning activity.

Once they have completed the editing process, the teacher distributes materials such as coloured paper and felt markers and each learner produces the final version of their card, including graphics and illustrations, or perhaps a pertinent photograph. They may do this by hand or use a pertinent computer program in which they can download graphics. When all the students have completed their cards, they can be shared with the whole class for the other students to see. They are then grouped into categories according to occasion (birthday, thank you, congratulations, etc.) for display at the bazaar.

At the end of the learning situation, the adult literacy learners come together in one large group and discuss with the teacher the value of the learning situation. They discuss what they learned about greeting cards, the composing-revising-editing processes they engaged in and any difficulties they encountered. Individually, each learner verifies the achievement of the task by filling out an evaluation grid previously prepared by the teacher. The learner also reflects on the knowledge gained and on the effectiveness of the strategies, techniques and procedures used to facilitate any

reinvestment and adaptation of constructed language knowledge in a new situation that involves writing a personal card.

Elements of the Course Addressed by the Learning Situation

Class of Situations	
Using language for enjoyment and personal interests	
Learning Situation	
Creating a Greeting Card	
Categories of Actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening to informative, expressive and aesthetic texts for enjoyment and personal interests Reading informative, expressive, and aesthetic texts for enjoyment and personal interests 	
Operational Competencies	Essential Knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates Uses Creativity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Types of discourse (expressive and aesthetic) Written discourse features Reading and writing strategies, techniques and procedures The sound system The writing system Language functions Sociolinguistic features Grammar and syntax Vocabulary pertaining to enjoyment and personal interests
Complementary Resources	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginners' dictionaries Beginners' grammar reference books Spelling reference books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing models Multimedia craft materials (coloured paper, crayons, felt markers, scissors, scotch tape, etc.)

