

Course
ENG-3102-2
English and the World of Work

English Language Arts



Introduction

We live in a fast-paced information age, and this is particularly apparent in the workplace. Before even venturing into the job market, we need information on the qualifications required for the jobs/trades that interest us and we need to know how to find this information. We also need to know how to conduct ourselves at job interviews and how to write standard, professional-looking business texts. All of this knowledge increases our chances of selecting and securing suitable employment. As for those of us who are already employed, we need up-to-date information on the training or educational programs that will enable us to upgrade our skills and compete in a constantly shifting work environment.

In this 50-hour course, the second of three courses in Secondary III, adult learners participate in a variety of learning situations and activities to develop their ability to discuss and analyze a variety of work-related texts, including assorted job literature, business letters, résumés and job interviews. Although these texts belong primarily to the Informative genre, whose main social function is to provide a reliable and neutral account of events or situations, they may contain persuasive, explanatory and narrative elements as well. (See the explanation on social functions and their corresponding genres in Chapter 1, Section 1.2.)

The course helps adult learners broaden their knowledge of the communication conventions used in various work-related texts. By the end of the course, adult learners will be able to apply this knowledge when they produce résumés and letters of application and participate in simulated job interviews. They will also be able to make oral presentations on jobs they have chosen to research.

Subject-Specific Competencies

Competencies are developed and demonstrated through the mobilization and effective use of various resources. Among these resources are language processes, strategies and textual and linguistic knowledge. The two subject-specific competencies targeted in the course *English and the World of Work* are shaded in the table below.

Competencies	Key Features		
Uses language/talk to communicate and to learn (C1)	Develops resources for communicating orally and for learning	Interacts with others in different contexts	Interprets how speakers shape an oral message to create a relationship with the audience
Reads and listens to written, spoken and media texts (C2)	Develops resources to make sense of various written, spoken and media texts	Extends understanding of various written, spoken and media texts	Interprets his/her relationship to the text and the context
Produces texts for personal and social purposes (C3)	Develops resources to produce written and media texts	Follows a process to produce written and media texts	Creates a relationship with his/her audience suitable to the text and context

Although only C1 and C3 are targeted in this course, C2 is implicit as reading activities complement the learning situations.

For more information on the subject-specific competencies, refer to the following sections:

- *Uses language/talk to communicate and to learn (C1)*, Chapter 3, Section 3.2
- *Reads and listens to written, spoken and media texts (C2)*, Chapter 3, Section 3.3
- *Produces texts for personal and social purposes (C3)*, Chapter 3, Section 3.4

Processes and Strategies

Language processes are series of actions or operations that support competency development. In other words, they are important resources that adult learners may use to become more effective speakers, listeners, readers, viewers, writers or producers of texts. In all, there are four language processes (Research, Reading, Writing and Production); the processes suggested for this course are illustrated in the table below.

Processes	Phases
Research	Planning task at hand Mobilizing resources Reflecting on the resources employed to achieve the task
Reading	
Writing	

Communication and learning strategies are actions, behaviours, steps and techniques that enable adult learners to overcome obstacles, attain goals and achieve success. They are additional resources that adult learners may use to become more effective speakers, listeners, readers, viewers, writers or producers of texts. The communication and learning strategies suggested for this course are illustrated in the table below.

Strategies	
Communication	Verbal and nonverbal Rhetorical Organizational Writing
Learning	Cognitive Activating prior knowledge Meaning-making Listening Reading/viewing Information-gathering Interpretation Note-taking
	Socioaffective Feedback Collaborative
	Metacognitive Feedback Self-evaluation

Additional information on processes and strategies is provided in the following sections:

- Chapter 3, Section 3.5
- Appendix (Inventory of Strategies)

Cross-Curricular Competencies

The cross-curricular competencies are generic skills that can be developed and applied outside the school setting. They are developed in tandem with subject-specific competencies. Given the nature of the course *English and the World of Work*, the shaded cross-curricular competencies listed horizontally could easily be developed simultaneously with the shaded subject-specific competencies listed vertically. Since teachers have the option of choosing learning situations other than the ones suggested in this program, they may also decide to develop cross-curricular competencies other than those shaded in the table below.

Cross-Curricular Competencies →									
↓ Subject-Specific Competencies	Uses information	Solves problems	Exercises critical judgment	Uses creativity	Adopts effective work methods	Uses ICT	Cooperates with others	Achieves his/her potential	Communicates appropriately
Uses language/talk to communicate and to learn	■				■				■
Produces texts for personal and social purposes	■				■				■

For more information on the key features and manifestations of the cross-curricular competencies, refer to the Diversified Basic Education Program.

Subject-Specific Content

The subject-specific content includes knowledge and cultural references.

Knowledge

The prescribed textual and linguistic elements, necessary for the development of the competencies targeted in this course, are listed below in alphabetical order.

<p>Textual Elements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ audience and communication context ✓ coherence, cohesion and conciseness ✓ consistency or logical presentation of ideas ✓ facts and opinions ✓ layout of business letters (block format, modified block or semi-block) ✓ layout of different types of résumés (e.g. biographical, chronological and functional) ✓ main and supporting ideas ✓ methods of organization (e.g. analogy, cause/effect, chronological order, comparison/contrast, example, explanation, listing of ideas) ✓ paragraphing ✓ relevant vs. irrelevant details ✓ social function(s) of text ✓ sufficient vs. insufficient development of ideas ✓ textual features of business letters: date, sender’s name and address, inside address, formal salutation, body of letter, formal closing, typed signature and written signature and/or identification initials, legible font and standard size paper ✓ textual features of résumés: headings/subheadings, bullets/dashes, legible font and standard size paper, information presented in note form
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Linguistic Elements

- ✓ abbreviations
- ✓ agreement (of person, subject and verb, verb tenses, pronoun and antecedent)
- ✓ body language (gestures/movements/facial expressions/eye contact)
- ✓ capitalization and punctuation rules (commas, colons, end punctuation)
- ✓ common sentence errors (e.g. fragments, dangling modifiers)
- ✓ commonly misspelled or confused words
- ✓ language (neutral, connotative)
- ✓ language functions (contextualizing, summarizing, rephrasing, asking questions, e.g. open-ended, closed-ended, leading, follow-up, rhetorical)
- ✓ language tone and register (style/level of language suitable to context)
- ✓ oral communication features (voice tone, speed, volume, emphasis, enunciation, pronunciation)
- ✓ parallel structure
- ✓ simple and compound sentences (coordinators and subordinators)
- ✓ synonyms and antonyms
- ✓ syntax
- ✓ time and sequence markers

Cultural References

In this course, teachers may decide to have adult learners explore the sociolinguistic aspect of culture by considering in detail the formal tone, register and style required in business letters, résumés and job interviews. When adult learners examine the use of formal and non-personal language in these texts, they discover that it is connected to the social hierarchy that characterizes the workplace. It is apparent that employers or bosses have more status than those who work under them; employees are expected to show the required deference by addressing their superiors in language that is polite, proper and formal. In addition, employees are expected to observe certain social boundaries. For instance, it is inappropriate for employees to relate details of a personal nature to their superiors except when necessary, as in the case of illness, injury or jury duty, and they should maintain a business-like attitude even in such cases. Furthermore, although business letters and résumés are clearly more formal than oral texts such as job interviews, interviewees are still expected to avoid casual or familiar language. Taking a tone that is too familiar can in some cases cost them a potential or an actual job.

By considering how the differences in language formality and content are connected to the roles the above texts play in our society, adult learners become aware of how social conventions govern or influence the language used in specific texts and communication contexts.

Alternatively, teachers may decide to focus on the aesthetic or the sociological aspect of culture. (See Chapter 4 for additional information on the three cultural aspects.)

Families of Learning Situations

The term “families of learning situations” refers to groupings of learning situations that vary in style and complexity but share some common characteristics. The families of learning situations targeted in this course are shaded in the table below.

Families of Learning Situations	
Exploring and creating literary diversity	
▶	Seeking and imparting information
▶	Developing and supporting a stance

Seeking is associated with the communication purposes of gathering, understanding, interpreting and relaying information from a variety of common work-related texts in order to determine the training, education, personal skills/attributes required for specific jobs. It is also associated with the communication purpose of asking employers for information about the positions advertised. **Imparting** involves the transmission of research information on a chosen job to teachers or peers, and the transmission of pertinent personal information to prospective employers in business letters, résumés and interviews.

Developing is associated with the communication purposes of preparing to present oneself as a suitable candidate for the chosen job. **Supporting** involves providing sufficient evidence to demonstrate one’s suitability to a prospective employer.

Broad Areas of Learning

The table below illustrates the broad areas of learning. These five areas are selected on the basis of their importance to society. Each comprises an educational aim and focuses of development that help teachers delineate the knowledge that can be explored in specific learning situations.

Broad Areas of Learning →	Health and Well-Being	Career Planning and Entrepreneurship	Environmental Awareness and Consumer Rights and Responsibilities	Media Literacy	Citizenship and Community Life
Subject-Specific Competencies ↓					
Uses language/talk to communicate and to learn		■			
Produces texts for personal and social purposes		■			

As demonstrated in the previous chart and the example of a learning situation below, Career Planning and Entrepreneurship is a broad area of learning well suited to this course.

When adult learners focus on Career Planning and Entrepreneurship, they may develop:

- familiarity with the world of work, social roles and occupations and trades (e.g. knowledge of occupations and trades related to different school subjects or to the immediate community)

Other broad areas of learning could also be selected to create different learning situations.

For more information on the broad areas of learning, their educational aim and focuses of development, refer to the Diversified Basic Education Program.

Example of a Learning Situation

A Job Fair and Training Expo

In this learning situation, adult learners are presented with the following scenario:

As you are reading the Saturday edition of the newspaper, you see a full-page ad about a job fair and training exposition that will be held in your area. This event is sponsored by your school board's vocational training centre, together with a popular student electronic job magazine, your local employment centre and Emploi-Québec. You realize that a job fair is an opportunity to get labour market information, meet potential employers, talk to recruiters and brush up on the latest trends in résumé writing. Since you are currently looking for employment, the timing for this fair could not be better. You decide to go and to take notes on any jobs or job leads you learn about.

End-of-Course Outcomes

By the end of the course, adult learners will be able to:

Discuss and analyze

- **assorted job literature** (e.g. job postings/ads; literature on experience/education/skills needed for specific jobs/trades; and literature on workers' rights/responsibilities and job interview protocol)
- **business letters** (e.g. letters of application, follow-up letters, letters of resignation)
- **résumés** (e.g. chronological, functional, biographical or other standard résumé types)
- **job interviews** (e.g. one-on-one interviews, panel interviews, telephone interviews, videoconferencing interviews)

When adult learners discuss assorted job literature, they identify how to locate and interpret various types of job ads and how to select jobs that might be suitable for them. In other words, they discuss jobs that correspond to their own work-related interests, preferences and personal assets. Adult learners also discuss workers' rights and responsibilities. For example, they discuss policies that employers adopt concerning sick days, holidays, on-the-job safety, sexual harassment, overtime, punctuality, absenteeism, dismissal or resignation. They then analyze the practical or ethical reasons for such policies. In addition, they discuss and analyze interview protocol, i.e. interview dos and don'ts.

When adult learners discuss different types of business letters, they focus on the letters' social function(s), target audience and communication conventions, and adopt a suitable reading stance. They discuss the texts' formal language and tone and understand how this is connected to the target audience. They identify the standard parts of a business letter: date, sender's name and address, inside address, formal salutation, body of letter, formal closing, typed signature and written signature and/or identification initials; and the three layout styles: block format, modified block and semi-block. They analyze the letters' organizational structure and the differences in the letters' informational content. They also discuss the letters' persuasive, explanatory or narrative elements.

When adult learners discuss types of résumés, they focus on the résumés' social function(s), target audience and different text types, such as chronological, functional and biographical. They identify the differences in the content and layout of each résumé type. They discuss standard textual features, such as the use of headings, subheadings, bullets, dashes, and, in most cases, the presentation of information in note form. They identify the methods of organization used, e.g. chronological order, example, explanation and listing of ideas. In addition, they compare and analyze the respective advantages or disadvantages of each résumé type. They identify any persuasive, explanatory or narrative elements in the résumés.

When adult learners discuss various job interview types, such as face-to-face interviews, panel or telephone interviews and videoconferencing interviews, they consider the special requirements as well as any advantages or disadvantages associated with each interview type. When they view a selected interview, they identify the different types of questions posed (e.g. open-ended, closed-ended, follow-up). They analyze the effectiveness and suitability of the interviewer's questions and the candidate's answers; the positive or negative aspects of the candidate's appearance, manner, word-choice and body language; and the possible reasons for any communication breakdowns during the interview. They also discuss and analyze questions that are permissible and non-permissible in a job interview. Lastly, adult learners evaluate and informally debate the overall interview performance of the candidate, providing several reasons for their evaluation. In the process, they identify any persuasive elements, for example, indications that the candidate is trying to sell his/her personal qualities or qualifications.

Present orally

- **a report on a chosen job/trade**

When adult learners present their research, they begin by identifying the job/trade they have chosen to research. They provide detailed information on relevant aspects such as required training, education, aptitude, skills; starting salary; working conditions; tasks or duties; and employment opportunities. They indicate where they obtained their information and how recent it is. They conclude by summarizing the main requirements/positive aspects of this job and their reasons for thinking the job would suit them. In addition, they use a variety of oral communication devices such as appropriate body language, clear diction and varied voice tone/speed/emphasis.

Text length: 2-3 minutes

Communication context: unfamiliar or familiar audience; fairly formal tone and register suitable to the text type and target audience

Produce

- **a résumé**

When adult learners write a résumé, they select the job they are applying for and one of the standard résumé types (e.g. chronological, biographical or functional). They include concise and accurate information on several of the following areas: personal information; education; relevant work or life experience; achievements as well as any other pertinent information concerning personal assets, including language abilities and technical skills. Adult learners provide required dates, job/diploma titles, names and addresses of employers/companies, and so on. They present this information in a manner that is suitable to the résumé type selected (i.e. they incorporate standard textual features), using legible font and standard size paper. They use formal language throughout and a consistent, concise style.

Text length: 1-2 pages (typed)

Communication context: unfamiliar audience; formal tone and register suitable to the text type and target audience

Produce

- **a cover letter**

When adult learners write a cover letter, they use formal, concise language and formal punctuation. They include all standard business letter parts (date, sender's name and address, inside address, formal salutation, body, formal closing, typed signature and written signature and/or identification initials). They present these parts in the correct order, using standard size paper and legible font as

well as an appropriate layout such as block format, modified block or semi-block. They organize their text so as to achieve clarity and economy of style.

In the first paragraph, adult learners identify the position they are applying for and, if applicable, the job ad they are responding to as well as the date and name of the magazine or newspaper in which it appeared. They indicate their suitability for the position. In the second paragraph, they indicate willingness to come in for an interview and specify their availability. They provide contact information such as their e-mail address and/or telephone number.

Text length: 150-200 words

Communication context: unfamiliar audience; formal tone and register suitable to the text type and target audience

Interact orally

- **in a simulated job interview**

When adult learners participate in a simulated job interview, they present themselves as candidates for a job they have selected and researched. They prepare for the interview by anticipating possible questions and bringing any necessary documentation. They respond to the interviewer's questions in an appropriate manner. They rephrase an answer when clarification is requested. They use suitably formal language and project a confident and friendly attitude. They use oral communication devices such as clear diction and varied voice tone/expression/speed.

In addition, adult learners demonstrate a knowledge of interview protocol: they dress appropriately, shake hands, wait to be seated, adopt good posture, smile, make eye contact and thank the interviewer for his/her time. They show interest by volunteering pertinent information and asking some questions about the job for which they are applying.

Text length: 3-4 minutes (this varies, depending on the position and the type of interview involved; also, the interview may be live or filmed)

Communication context: unfamiliar audience; formal tone and register suitable to the text type and target audience

Teachers need to ensure that adult learners use planning tools such as brainstorming, lists, outlines and discussions as they begin creating their texts. Teachers also need to ensure that adult learners actively reflect on what they learned and how successfully they communicated in the texts they created. For example, adult learners may use self-evaluation checklists or feedback discussions to appraise how clearly they communicated when they presented their report on a chosen job, wrote their résumé and cover letter, or presented themselves as candidates in job interviews. They may use the same type of evaluation tools to determine how effectively they used various learning and

communication strategies and to reflect on what they learned from discussing and creating these texts.

Evaluation Criteria for the Competencies Targeted by the Course

Competencies	Evaluation Criteria
<p>Uses language/talk to communicate and to learn (C1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective communication of ideas • Effective communication for learning • Appropriate use of language conventions
<p>Produces texts for personal and social purposes (C3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective organization of texts to communicate • Appropriate adaptation of language to audience and purpose • Appropriate use of structures, features, codes and conventions of texts • Correct application of language conventions (usage and mechanics)

