

Chapter 16 Outline

The Phase III Learner

The CLB Literacy Phases

Introduction: Phase III

When is a Learner Ready for Phase III?

Phase III Outcomes

Approaches and Activities for Phase III

Materials for Phase III

Classroom Routines for Phase III

Sample Theme Unit for Phase III

Lesson Planning for Phase III

Sample Lesson Plans for Phase III

Conclusions



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Phase III

Objectives

To recognize Phase III learners and their skills and needs

To identify the outcomes and expectations for Phase III

To share effective practices in the Phase III classroom

Learner Profile: Phase III			
An at-a-glance profile of adult ESL literacy learners at Phase III All skills are measured according to the Canadian Language Benchmarks and the Canadian Language Benchmark Literacy Phases			
Years of Formal Education	Reading and Writing Skills	Range of Listening and Speaking	Range of Numeracy
6-10 or previous ESL literacy	Phase III	CLB 3-6	Phase I-beyond Phase III
Typical Age Range		Gender	
adults of all ages, but mostly in their 20s and 30s		usually fairly balanced	
Common Challenges in the Classroom	Common Strengths in the Classroom	Common Barriers to Learning	
increasing use of formal learning strategies becoming independent learners developing abstract vocabulary developing accuracy and attention to detail taking responsibility for learning	collaborative learning prior practical knowledge survival skills often highly motivated to learn viewing education as a privilege	poverty lack of adequate housing lack of childcare lack of transportation some ability to access help issues may be serious before learner receives help	
Typical Social and Political Background		Indicators a Learner is Ready for Phase III	
learner can come from any country in the world rural villages or urban areas oral or literate societies learner may have spent time in refugee camps or in additional countries before immigrating learner may have experienced war, famine, displacement, poverty, or social or political unrest		learner can copy accurately learner can read and understand a simple paragraph on a familiar topic learner can find information in a variety of formatted texts learner can recognize a relatively large bank of sight words, 600+	
Typical Educational Background		learner can consistently use capital letters and sentence-end punctuation marks learner can write simple sentences with few errors learner can write a simple paragraph on a familiar topic learner can fill out a form with 10-15 items	
6-10 years of formal education formal education has been interrupted or cut short any previous formal education may have been in a second language any previous educational setting may have lacked resources, facilities, or educated teachers			

The CLB Literacy Phases

The Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB) has published two documents that provide a set of outcomes for ESL and ESL literacy learners in Canada. The first document, *Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000: English as a Second Language for Adults*, divides language learning into twelve different levels, called Benchmarks, in four different skill areas: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. This document is NOT intended for use with Learners with Interrupted Formal Education; it assumes a previous formal education, even at the lowest benchmarks. The second CCLB document, *Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000: ESL for Literacy Learners* (the CLB Literacy Document), focuses on ESL literacy and LIFE. It sets outcomes for four different levels, called Phases, in three different skill areas: reading, writing, and numeracy. ESL literacy programs who use this document measure their learners' levels by using the Phases for reading, writing, and literacy, and by using the Benchmarks for listening and speaking. Each Phase can further be broken down into Initial, Developing, and Adequate stages, and it is important to note that the difference among the stages is considerable.

At Bow Valley College, we use the CLB Literacy Document and the literacy Phases in our ESL literacy programs. There are two clear advantages to this document: there has been a considerable amount of material produced by the CCLB to support the Benchmarks and the Phases, and this is a national standard, so learners can more easily “transport” their education from one institution to another or from one province to another. We strongly recommend that any Canadian ESL literacy program look into using the CLB Literacy Document in their program. If you are not familiar with the CLB literacy Phases, Section Three of the handbook can still be useful to you; it provides a thorough introduction to ESL literacy at each of the four Phases, which are equally applicable to learners of different levels no matter what the levels are called (Foundation Phase, Phase I, Phase II, Phase III; Beginner, Intermediate, Upper Intermediate, Advanced; ESL literacy 1,2,3,4, etc.).

Introduction: Phase III

Phase III is the last of the literacy Phases as defined by the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, and Phase III learners have the most advanced literacy skills of all Learners with Interrupted Formal Education. Since they have stronger literacy skills and often speak at a relatively high level, they are also the ESL literacy learners most likely to be overlooked and (mis)placed in either mainstream ESL classes or mainstream Adult Basic Education. However, to place these learners in the mainstream, and particularly without additional literacy and/or ESL support, is to do them a disservice. Many Phase III learners have come up through literacy programs and continue to need to develop their literacy skills; others enter the program at Phase III with a stronger academic background, with generally around eight to ten years of education, but still lack the skills and the strategies necessary to thrive in the mainstream. Mainstream ESL classes tend to move too quickly for most Phase III learners, while mainstream ABE classes do not give them the language support they need. Phase III programs recognize that ESL literacy learners require long-term continued support as they simultaneously develop their literacy skills and their abilities in spoken English.

Phase III learners, indeed like all LIFE, come from extremely diverse backgrounds, and have diverse needs and goals. LIFE in Phase III typically have between six and ten years of education in their native language, although learners who have transitioned from Phase II may have less formal education. In many cases, LIFE have been educated in a second language, not their native language, such as speakers of a number of African languages who receive some education in Arabic. As is the case with all LIFE, this education has often been interrupted or cut short by war, famine, displacement, or changing political climate, and/or characterized by a lack of resources. Phase III learners can have a wide variety of goals, from settlement to employment to further education, and these goals should be kept in mind when developing a course.

Learners enter Phase III with a sight word bank of around 600 words or more, and an ability to read most simple prose, understand a variety of formatted text, and write paragraphs on familiar subjects with basic control over structure and spelling. Over the course of Phase III, learners are moving towards increased use of strategies for learning, reading, and writing; independent study skills and the ability to take responsibility for their own learning; a more abstract understanding of structure; and the development of abstract vocabulary as well as the conceptual knowledge behind that vocabulary. It is still important to note, however, that throughout Phase III, the context for all learning should be personally relevant to the learners, and instructor support and guidance is almost always necessary. The most important things a learner can take away from Phase III are a variety of strategies for reading, writing, and learning, and an increased ability to learn independently.

Khadir's Story

A Phase III learner

At first glance, Khadir looks like he is well into his sixties, but he is actually about 45. Originally from Afghanistan, he also lived in Tajikistan and Russia before coming to Canada. Khadir completed high school in Afghanistan; however, he is struggling immensely with learning English and his education has gaps. Khadir has good problem-solving skills, a very intelligent, dry sense of humour, and a particular desire to be treated as an adult.

Khadir has a wife and six children. He is on a waiting list for subsidized housing, but because of his large family and subsidized housing regulations, he must wait for one of the very few five-bedroom subsidized homes in the city to become available. In addition, Khadir suffers from recurring nightmares and severe headaches as a result of past trauma. There are days when he tells his instructor that he simply cannot think.

Khadir speaks at a CLB 5, although he has many near-fossilized structural errors in his spoken English. One of his greatest issues in learning English is his lack of strategies for approaching words he does not understand. His approach to learning English is to keep very long lists of vocabulary words with their translation into Farsi. He stares at these lists whenever he gets the chance but rarely attempts to use them in speaking or writing.

As a reader, Khadir is very slow, and seems to be translating into Farsi as he goes. He works entirely from the bottom-up, trying to assemble all the meaning of the text from the meaning of individual words, and does not use very many top-down reading strategies, such as prediction, the use of format or pictures, or guessing from context. If he comes across a word he does not understand, he tends to lose the meaning of the entire sentence. Khadir has slightly stronger writing skills than reading skills, but the structural errors that are evident in his speech are also present in his writing, and his writing shows evidence of translation from Farsi.

During the semester, Khadir makes good progress with Phase III tasks as his instructor gently guides him away from his lists and into more authentic speaking and listening situations. Khadir also learns some strategies for dealing with words he doesn't know. He is surprised and pleased to discover that there are many things he can try before reaching for a dictionary.

When is a Learner Ready for Phase III?

In general terms, a learner who is ready to enter Phase III is capable of reading and comprehending most simple, familiar prose; understanding a variety of charts, graphs, forms, and other formatted text; writing simple paragraphs on familiar subjects with basic control of structure and spelling, and with some organization. Phase III learners have some overt strategy use and are becoming increasingly independent, although instructor support is still required in almost all areas.

Learners are ready for Phase III when they can write simple sentences with fairly good control over spelling, punctuation, and structure, and they can string these sentences together into basic paragraphs. Similarly, learners ready to enter Phase III can read and comprehend simple paragraphs on familiar topics.

Although the literacy Phases do not specifically mention listening and speaking skills, these are also critically important to the development of learners' ability in English as well as their development in literacy. Since ESL literacy learners generally move from oral to written ability, their reading and writing are never better than their oral skills. This means that a learner who is ready to enter Phase III must have a wide enough vocabulary and a strong enough sense of the structures of spoken English to support this development. Most learners who enter Phase III are CLB 4-6 in speaking and listening.

It is important to note that while learners might be Phase III in reading and writing, this rarely means that they are Phase III in numeracy. A Phase III learner in reading and writing can be anywhere from Phase I to beyond Phase III in numeracy. However, if learners are ready to enter Phase III in numeracy, they can understand numbers found in texts, perform basic operations with ease, understand money management and banking services, and read and construct charts and graphs.

Nyanath is a Sudanese woman in her thirties. She came to Canada three years ago with her four children; Canada is their third country since leaving Sudan. She began ESL literacy in Phase II and is now in Phase III Initial. Nyanath sees education as an immense privilege. She completes all her homework and struggles to understand each lesson, although she does not always understand the purpose of what she is learning. She is methodical and conscientious, but if she is faced with a new format or task, she requires extensive support from the instructor. This means that she has difficulty with much of the reading material in the class. She can decode individual words, but has difficulty comprehending the meaning of an entire text. Nyanath is doing very well with her writing; she is a slow, methodical writer who favors short, simple sentences, but she has a good understanding of form and rarely makes structural errors. She seems to write best when she has complete control over content. Nyanath is a clear example of a Phase III Initial learner.

Phase III Outcomes

Outcomes describe what learners are able to do when they complete a unit, level, or program. The CLB Literacy Document provides a list of outcomes for each Phase, as well as conditions for these outcomes. When working with these outcomes, or basing classroom outcomes on the CLB Literacy Document, it is essential to recognize the conditions as well. The conditions describe in what circumstances a learner will be able to complete an outcome and are just as critical as the outcomes themselves. Conditions may state, for example, how much support is allowed and required from the instructor, how long a text should be for reading, or how relevant and familiar a topic should be for writing. At all literacy Phases, conditions ask for considerable instructor support and familiar circumstances for all reading and writing tasks.

Specific outcomes for any Phase III class should be in line with the general goals of Phase III. Phase III learners are moving towards increased use of strategies in reading, writing, and learning; an increased understanding of abstract concepts; a sight word bank of 1000 words or more; an ability to write a variety of formatted and unformatted texts; the ability to read and understand most familiar formatted and unformatted texts; and strategies for approaching anything that is unfamiliar. Outcomes do not change significantly across the Initial, Developing, and Adequate stages of Phase III, but the complexity of the language involved and the level of instructor support do, as

learners become comfortable with increasingly complicated language and become more independent. Outcomes should also be in line with the direct needs of the learners.

Amira, a young woman from Ethiopia who now lives with two of her brothers in a basement suite, is an eager and motivated learner and reads extensively in her spare time but has great difficulty with her writing. She tends to use extremely short sentences and sentence fragments. In addition, Amira struggles with spelling, often spelling words in several different ways in the same paragraph. Her instructor finds that a dialogue journal and a spelling dictionary, created by Amira and her instructor, are excellent ways to help with her writing. Amira gets practice in putting her thoughts into writing and gradually builds a feel for a correct English sentence. Her instructor gives the class models to follow when learning to write a paragraph, and Amira is able to meet the outcomes for her class.

The CLB Literacy Document sets outcomes in three areas: reading, writing (including reading and writing strategies), and numeracy. Depending on the program, instructors may choose to set outcomes in other areas as well, including learning strategies, vocabulary, and life skills. In the following chart, there are examples of outcomes in each of these areas. There are hundreds of possible outcomes to set in a program; this chart provides samples to give an idea of what outcomes look like at this level. For more information on setting outcomes, please see Chapter Three.

Sample Outcomes for Phase III			
Reading	Writing	Vocabulary	Numeracy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use knowledge of phonics to decode unfamiliar words • identify the main idea and supporting details of a text • locate a piece of information on a schedule • read and follow directions • find locations on a simple map and follow directions to a specific location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • copy with a high degree of accuracy • convey a message such as a thank you note, invitation, email, birthday card, etc. • fill in a form with up to 25 items • write a paragraph about the past or the future • write a paragraph that expresses an opinion • write a text from a simple dictation • record information on processes or instructions, such as a recipe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognize and comprehend a sight word bank of about 1000 words • recognize and use some abstract vocabulary • alter a familiar root word to fit the structure of a sentence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make change • pronounce large numbers correctly • perform multi-digit operations • use language and numbers to describe time and temperature • compare costs, temperatures, and measurements • create and use a simple budget for a family
Reading Strategy	Writing Strategy	Learning Strategy	Life Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use pictures and format to understand a text • use prediction to aid comprehension • identify whether a statement is fact or opinion • use context to guess the meaning of new words • identify the author's purpose • identify cause and effect • reach conclusions based on inference • identify organization of a text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use knowledge of oral language to improve writing • alter tone and message depending on the audience • use a methodical writing process to write a text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ask for help when needed • plan time effectively to complete tasks in class and meet deadlines for homework • self-correct • organize school papers and books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ask for help before a problem becomes a crisis • access medical care, legal advice, and financial help when needed • plan to prevent future problems • avoid unwanted applications and subscriptions • understand credit and manage credit cards

Approaches and Activities for Phase III

An ideal Phase III classroom is a very dynamic place, where the instructor responds to the needs and the interests of the learners, and the learners are constantly challenged, while receiving the support they need to meet those challenges. In a Phase III classroom, learners should be encouraged to work and think as independently as possible, to problem-solve, and to take responsibility for their own learning. To encourage this, consider:

Fluency Writing: Learners at this level need time to write, preferably uninterrupted time, provided in class. Learning to write well happens with lots and lots of actual writing practice, just like learning to swim happens in the water. Fluency writing is different from the sort of writing that is taken in and corrected; an instructor may respond to fluency writing, but the instructor does not correct grammatical mistakes or spelling. The point of fluency writing is the practice in forming ideas in words on paper. Some instructors are concerned that this reinforces mistakes, but there is actually very

little evidence that returning work to learners with corrections has an effect on their writing. This is particularly true with LIFE; immediate oral feedback is far more effective than comments made in pen a few days later. One form of fluency writing that is extremely effective at this level is a dialogue journal. For more information on fluency writing, please see Chapter Eight.

Make writing correction effective. Many traditional teaching practices encourage the instructor to correct writing and return it to learners a day or two later. Learners are expected to read the corrections and apply them to future situations. This is not very effective when working with LIFE; instead, choose to focus on one or two kinds of errors for each learner. Highlight these errors and give time in class for editing. Allow learners to draw on any resource they have to fix these errors themselves – the instructor, dictionaries, their notes, or other learners. Learners are far more likely to internalize the correct form this way.

Ba Htoo is a Karen man from Burma. He has been in Canada for four months with his wife and two pre-school sons. His only formal education was in a refugee camp over the Thai border, but he has progressed very quickly through the levels of ESL literacy and now is in Phase III. Ba Htoo struggles with reading at this level because of his limited vocabulary, but he is better at writing than he is at reading, probably because he can control the topic. He enjoys writing in his journal very much, and mostly chooses to write about his experiences before he came to Canada. He tends to retell the same stories, but he increases detail with each telling. He has less control over structure, especially tenses, but he attempts complex sentence patterns and is very willing to take risks.

Have Learners Edit their own Mistakes: When learners hand in a piece of writing for correction, choose one or two specific kinds of errors to focus on and highlight these rather than correcting every single spelling, punctuation, usage, or structural error. Give the learners a chance in class to correct these errors themselves, drawing on any resource, including the instructor, dictionaries, notes, and each other. This technique dramatically improves learners' ability to identify and correct their own errors, as well as stop making them in the first place.

Reading for Pleasure: Whether you build up a classroom or school library or make regular trips to the public library, build reading for pleasure into the course. You might want to choose a series of books intended for adult ESL learners rather than books for children or young adults. These books can be very helpful in practicing reading strategies, learning new vocabulary, increasing reading speed, learning content matter and new concepts, and, above all, allowing learners to follow their interests in reading. The key to this kind of reading is pleasure; discuss the novels, write about the novels, learn from the novels, but avoid tests or other activities that will put pressure on the reading.

Teach Writing from Models: Create models of the kind of writing you are teaching your learners. Remember that many LIFE favour concrete examples and learning by doing, rather than listening to an abstract explanation. Begin with a model, then allow the class to write a guided sample together with the instructor acting as scribe, before expecting learners to write something individually.

Have Learners Copy Notes from the Board to Make their own Textbook: For LIFE, reading textbooks as a method of learning content is often very ineffective. These learners should be learning to read, not reading to learn. Instead, teach any new material orally. When learners are comfortable with the material, write notes on the whiteboard which the learners can copy into a notebook. In this way, the learners learn the concepts before working with print, get practice in copying, have a much better chance of internalizing the information that is contained in the notes, get involved in creating their own textbook which they can keep and read again, learn organizational strategies, and build self-esteem.

Amira is a bright young woman typical of a Phase III class. She has had very few opportunities to study formally in her life. She loves attending school, reads voraciously outside of class time, and enjoys puzzles, quizzes, and games – anything her instructor can think of to challenge her active mind. She is curious and seems to absorb information like a sponge.

Teach Language Structure and Grammar Effectively: Keep grammar real. You can overtly teach grammar and sentence structure, especially in Phase III, but do it in a way that keeps learners generating their own sentences using their own vocabulary. Often, traditional grammar textbooks and workbooks use vocabulary or situations with which the learners are unfamiliar. When teaching grammar, limit the lesson to grammar, and allow the learners to generate the

vocabulary and situations. For example, in teaching learners the present continuous, you can ask them to name five things that are happening in the classroom right now, e.g. *Sakina is laughing, the computer screen is blinking, the instructor is scratching her nose, Deng is looking at his cell phone, Anab is writing in her book*, etc. Words written on cards and given to the learner to arrange is a good way of teaching all elements required in a structure, including the often-missed auxiliary verbs.

Use Word Games and Puzzles: Simple (and then increasingly difficult) word games and puzzles are excellent ways to practice spelling, accuracy, and using clues to guess meaning, as well as strategies such as process of elimination, logic, and deductive reasoning. Sudoku is a wonderful tool for building logic.

Set High Expectations and Provide Lots of Support: Learners in Phase III, like all literacy learners, and perhaps all learners of any kind, need to build their confidence. Do your best to show your learners that they are learning. Choose activities that have high expectations but are also highly supported so that they can achieve success. Break larger tasks into smaller pieces.

Let Them Learn from their Mistakes: The end product of teaching is learning, not a final assessment. Let learners learn from their mistakes; encourage them to study tests or assignments to understand what they did well and where they need to improve, then give them the chance to try again if they want (or, if they would rather, try again on the next task). Learners who have the opportunity to learn from mistakes often do considerably better when faced with new tests or tasks.

Overtly Teach Strategies: Make the use of strategies transparent and overt. Draw learners' attention to strategies when they are using them or when they could be using them. Choose one or two strategies to focus on at a time and build from there, continuing to draw their attention to the strategies they have already learned. For more information on strategies, please see Chapter Eight.

Use Creative Repetition, or Spiralic Learning: Repeat skills and strategies, building on what you have learned before, using a new theme or topic. Be careful, however, that this repetition does not feel boring; keep changing the nature of the task or the topic, so that something is always new and different.

Materials for Phase III

Learners in Phase III are better able to handle commercially-produced mainstream ESL materials than any of the lower Phases, but selecting, adapting, and using materials in this level still requires extra thought and preparation. Choose reading texts that are interesting, relevant, and that focus on developing reading strategies. Phase III learners are working on several different skills over the Phase, and it is a very good idea to choose materials that target only one of these skills at a time. If you want to work on a specific strategy, such as inference, choose a text with relatively easy vocabulary so that learners aren't distracted by trying to decode. If you want to teach learners to guess from context, choose a text that has several new words, but where the rest of the language is straightforward. It is not possible to guess the meaning of a new word from context unless you know about 90% of the words in a text. When teaching writing, models are highly effective. Most of these will probably need to be instructor-created in order to model exactly what you want to teach.

There is no need to alter the font size or type in Phase III; learners should be able to handle fonts with serifs and can read smaller type. However, it is still a good idea to make instructions for a task very clear, especially if learners are expected to read and understand the instructions without going through them orally. Additionally, try to eliminate too much clutter on a page. Expose learners to various formats, such as the columns in a newspaper, but remember not to expect learners to take in too much new material at once. If the format is new, then keep the language relatively easy and accessible. For more information on creating and adapting materials, please see Chapter Nine.

A spelling dictionary is an excellent resource for Phase III learners. This is a small notebook for each learner with a page for each letter of the alphabet. Learners add words to the notebook that they find difficult to spell and are encouraged to refer to the book as a support for writing. Learners who complete a task quickly can also spend time with their spelling dictionaries, practicing their own challenging words.

Suggested materials:

- *Basic Reading Power, Reading Power, More Reading Power, Advanced Reading Power* (Longman)
- *Canadian Concepts 3-5* (Prentice Hall)
- *Milestones in Reading B-D* (Curriculum Associates)
- *What a Life!* series (Longman)
- *What a World!* series (Longman)

- instructor-created materials, including writing models, worksheets, notes on structure, stories, flashcards, manipulatives, crossword puzzles, word searches, codes, etc.
- *Penguin Easy Readers*, Levels 3-5 (Penguin)

See the following pages for examples of materials suitable for Phase III. These materials are available in “clean” copies for photocopying in the back of the handbook. Please feel free to adapt these materials to suit the needs of a particular group of learners. They are examples only and can be changed depending on level, theme, or program outcome.

Vocabulary: Find and Define

TASK: Use the dictionary to find the meaning of these words. Write a sentence for each word.

1. lawyer

3. crime

4. judge

5. illegal

Tips for Use ▼

Can be modified for all themes or an increase in complexity

Provides vocabulary and dictionary use

Encourages learners to put vocabulary into context

Here are my sentences:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

My Pleasure Reading Log

Date: _____	Title: _____
Author: _____	Start page: _____
Reading Time: _____ minutes	End page: _____

Tips for Use ▼

Although pleasure reading should be for *pleasure* only, this gives learners some support and gauges learner response

Guides learners toward reading strategies

My Reading Response Paragraph...

I'd like to write one paragraph about:

- ☐ what I like so far
- ☐ what I don't like
- ☐ new words I learned and what they mean
- ☐ a character that I find interesting (description)
- ☐ what is happening in the story (the plot)
- ☐ how the story is like something I have experienced
- ☐ what I think might happen next

Model Paragraph: Expressing an Opinion

Instructions: Read the paragraph. Underline the topic sentence and the concluding sentence. Write your own paragraph with a topic sentence and a concluding sentence. Use this paragraph as a model.

Tips for Use

Paragraph development
for higher literacy Phases

Uses vocabulary specific
to lesson objectives

Wonderful Calgary

Calgary is a really nice place to live. There are several reasons for this: the weather is beautiful and sunny, there are lots of jobs, and the mountains are close by. First, the weather in Calgary is beautiful and sunny. Many newcomers to Canada think that Calgary is cold, but at least the sun is shining. Calgary gets more days of sunshine each year than any other city in Canada. Second, there are lots of opportunities in Calgary. Many companies are hiring and it is fairly easy to find a job. If you walk down the street, you will see many places have “hiring” signs in the window. Third, the beautiful Rocky Mountains are less than an hour away from Calgary. You can see the mountains on a clear day from anywhere in the city, and there are lots of fun things to do in the mountains. You can go for a hike, enjoy photography, go mountain biking, or take a ride in the gondola and see the spectacular views. Calgary really is a great place to live.

Tips for Use ▼

Presenting both sides for opinion practice

Layout models writing expectation for student submissions

Model Paragraph: Expressing an Opinion

Instructions: Read the paragraph. Underline the topic sentence, concluding sentence. Answer the questions about the paragraph.

A Big City with Big Problems

Although many people are moving to Calgary from all over Canada, the city has many problems. It is not a nice place to live. There is too much traffic, it is too expensive, and it is getting dangerous. First, there is a real problem with traffic in the city. Calgary has grown quickly in the last ten years, so there are many more cars on the roads. Rush hour lasts longer each day and many people find that they are stuck in traffic for hours. Deerfoot Trail, what is supposed to be a fast route through the city, can be very slow for many hours each day. Second, Calgary is very expensive. The cost of rent has skyrocketed in recent years, in many cases doubling or even tripling. Buying a house is not better; Calgary now has some of the most expensive houses in Canada. Third, as the city grows, crime is growing too. There are more and more murders in Calgary and the chief of police recently warned the city of a possible gang war. Calgary is becoming a big city, and getting big city problems.

1. Does the author like Calgary?

2. Name two reasons why the author feels this way.

3. Do you agree with the author? Why or why not?

Classroom Routines for Phase III

Phase III learners may have had up to ten years of formal education, although this education has often been interrupted; thus they are usually quite comfortable with the expectations of the classroom. They might not know the specific conventions of education in their new country, but these can generally be cleared up through a class discussion that compares teachers, classrooms, schools, and education systems in different countries. For example, many learners will not be comfortable with the Canadian convention of calling an instructor in an adult education setting (such as ESL literacy) by his or her first name. Conventions such as making space for others in a crowded room, watching the instructor, and facing the board, however, are generally understood and followed. Learners are also likely to bring the necessary materials with them to class, such as pens, binder, books, etc., although some will need to be reminded. It is usually a good idea to overtly teach organization strategies for sorting their handouts and notes in their binders. Routines that are effective at Phase III teach learners to be increasingly independent and to take responsibility for their own learning. The following ideas work well at Phase III:

Ba Htoo seems to learn best with a pen in his hand; he takes notes when the instructor is speaking (almost unheard of in the rest of the class) and he likes it when the instructor organizes new information in charts or diagrams. He is a very visual learner and his writing is progressing faster than his speaking. Nyanath, on the other hand, finds reading a challenge and needs to hear things in order to remember them. She has learned this way her entire life, listening to her mother, father, and extended family, and watching what they did. Amira is active and learns best by moving and doing; her instructor likes to send her on information hunts around the classroom, where she compares her answers with her classmates in order to find the best response. It is the instructor's challenge to meet the needs of all of these learners.

Change Activities Fairly Often: While Phase III learners are better able to sit for long periods of time and concentrate on one thing than in the other Phases, it is still a good idea to change activities fairly often, interspersing challenging written work with an activity that allows learners to talk and move around. Most Phase III learners should not have to focus on an activity for longer than 30-45 minutes.

Be Aware of Learning Styles: Not all learners learn in the same way. Many LIFE are aural learners or kinesthetic learners rather than visual learners. Include activities that appeal to these learning styles as well.

Keep a File for Missed Handouts: Encourage learners to take responsibility for their learning. Keep a file box in the classroom with a file for each day of the week. If a learner misses a class, put his or her name on any missed material and put it in the file for the appropriate day. Teach learners it is their responsibility to check for materials they missed.

Build Time in Class for Reading and Writing: Don't assume that learners have enough quiet time for reading and writing outside of class, and don't assign the majority of reading and writing to be done as homework. Give learners time in class to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to work on their reading and writing in a quiet, supported environment.

Homework Should be Review and Practice Only: Keep homework tasks simple. Learning should be done in the classroom, with considerable instructor support available. Homework tasks should practice things that have already been learned, to reinforce skills and strategies, and to build confidence.

Set Up Rules, Guidelines, and Routines: Teach routine by following a routine. Set up and enforce rules (such as mutual respect for the instructor and all learners), guidelines (such as no cell phones), and routines (such as phoning the instructor if you are going to miss class). This helps learners understand the structure and expectations of the Canadian educational system.

Give learners time in class for reading and writing. Learners need support for both of these skills and need a supported environment. Don't assume that they have a quiet place outside of class.

Help Learners Learn Organization: Help learners put together binders with dividers to keep their papers organized. After completing a task, as a group file the papers in the appropriate sections.

Sample Theme Unit for Phase III

A theme unit is a series of connected lessons, taught over a longer period of time, from a week to several weeks. There are many advantages to teaching in theme units; it is an excellent way to introduce vocabulary and concepts, and it means that the instructor can recycle outcomes without the lessons feeling repetitive to the learners. For more information on theme units, see Chapter Ten.

In this unit, learners read short biographies and then produce a biography or autobiography of their own, type it on the computer, publish it in a self-made book, and share it with other classes. The learners move from reading a biography of a historical figure to reading an instructor-made autobiography (as a model) to writing their own autobiographies.

This is an example of an effective unit for a Phase III class because it is a little bit different from the kinds of units that are often taught in lower-level ESL literacy classes, and because it involves a series of projects that are increasingly challenging. Learners are motivated to take part in the unit by a personal desire to discuss their own lives or the lives of people they admire, giving them an opportunity to practice their reading, writing, and strategy use, especially sequencing. Seeing their life stories in print, alongside the biographies of historical figures they have read, increases self-confidence and the sense of worth of their lives and reinforces the value of the written word.

This unit is appropriate for Phase III Developing, although it can be adjusted up or down, and should take at least two weeks of full-time class to complete.

Sample Theme Unit for Phase III: Life Stories

Introducing the Theme: Reading and Summarizing Life Stories

Reading & Writing Outcomes

- read a simple two-page biography; identify main idea and details
- summarize the biography

Speaking & Listening Outcomes

- retell a story orally

Strategic/Life Skills Outcomes

- sequence
- predict
- identify main idea
- identify details
- summarize
- recognize life stories as a valid subject for writing

Brief Lesson Descriptions

1. Introduce the idea of life stories. Brainstorm whose stories are “worth” telling (historical figures, leaders, etc.) Suggest that everyone’s life is worth recording and has value for someone (grandparents telling their stories to children, etc.) Brainstorm what events should be recorded in a biography.
2. Present a short biography of a historical figure. Predict what will be included. Have a learner read the biography aloud. Give time to read the biography silently. Have learners find and underline sequencing and time words. Brainstorm these words on the board. Have the learners retell the story to each other.
3. Discuss the difference between important ideas and events and less important details. In groups, have the learners brainstorm the main ideas of the biography. Share these as a class and discuss. Put the main events/ideas on the board.
4. Have the learners write a summary of the biography. Share and compare. Revise, edit, and make a good copy.

Developing the Theme: Creating a Timeline

Reading & Writing Outcomes

- read a simple two-page autobiography; identify main idea and details
- create a timeline for the main events of the biography
- create a timeline for the major events in own life

Speaking & Listening Outcomes

- tell major experiences in life

Strategic/Life Skills Outcomes

- sequence
- predict

Numeracy Outcomes

- represent time on a timeline
- order events based on date

Brief Lesson Descriptions

1. Hand out an instructor-created model of a biography or an autobiography. Keep it real – this is a model for the learners so that they can create a real autobiography/biography. Have a learner read it aloud. In pairs, have learners retell the story to each other.
2. In pairs, have learners find sequencing and time signals. Draw attention to tense (simple past). Brainstorm what the simple past looks like (positive, negative, interrogative). Practice talking about the past. Have learners find verbs in the simple past in the story.
3. Introduce the idea of a timeline. As a class, brainstorm things that happened that day in class. Record this as a class onto a timeline. In small groups, have learners brainstorm the major events of the model life story. Have the learners create a timeline for the story.
4. Have learners create a timeline for their own lives.

Final Product: Writing and Publishing a Life Story	
<p>Reading & Writing Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write a short biography or autobiography • make a book • type the autobiography <p>Speaking & Listening Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • share autobiography orally <p>Strategic/Life Skills Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sequence • organize writing into paragraphs • identify key events in a life • word processing • accurately copy • use fine motor skills: cutting, pasting, drawing, punching holes 	<p>Brief Lesson Descriptions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce the idea of writing a biography or an autobiography. Respect the fact that everyone should be allowed to choose how much they share about their lives. Have learners break into small groups and share their ideas orally. 2. Recall sequencing language on the board. Remind learners of tense clues to show time; remind learners orally of how we can tell if something is in the past. 3. Have each learner write a biography/autobiography. Share. Revise. Edit. 4. Have each learner type their story on the computer. Assist with formatting and anything else required. 5. Book-making workshop: begin by examining books as a class. Brainstorm the parts of a book: cover, title page, publishing information, etc. Brainstorm what goes on the cover and title page: title and author's name. Bring in supplies for making books. Show learners how to select a piece of card and several pieces of paper, fold the card and the paper so that it forms a book, punch two holes in the spine, and stitch together using yarn or string. Have the learners create and decorate their own books. When they are finished, have them cut and paste their typed stories into the books. 6. Share the stories with each other, with the learners' children and families, or with another class.
Tools	
<p>New Vocabulary & Concepts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sequencing words • what is included in a biography/autobiography • creating a timeline as a visual representation of events 	<p>Language Structures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simple past • imperative, for giving instructions
<p>Resources and Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a simple biography, such as one from the <i>What a Life!</i> series (Longman) • an instructor-created autobiography • materials for making books: paper, card stock, string or yarn, scissors, glue 	
<p>Assessment</p> <p>The learners are assessed throughout the unit in their abilities to meet the outcomes. Where suitable, they can choose one or two tasks to be included in their portfolios. For further information on portfolios, please see Chapter Eleven.</p>	

Lesson Planning for Phase III

Lesson planning for Phase III means creating meaningful, effective lessons that help learners reach the outcomes of the class. Lessons at Phase III should be relevant to the lives of the learners, but depending on the goals and outcomes of the program, may also include more general information in order to prepare learners to transition into further academic programs. As in the other Phases, lesson plans for Phase III are often connected to a wider theme unit. The first of our sample lesson plans is connected to the sample theme unit, while the second is not.

Lesson plans for Phase III should follow the general guidelines for planning for ESL literacy; they should scaffold, recycle, and spiral learning, giving learners an opportunity to take in the lesson, meet the outcomes, and make the skills and information their own. Phase III learners are very capable of meeting challenges and indeed should be challenged in their class, but they should also be given the support to succeed. A good Phase III lesson plan challenges learners, gives them the tools they need to succeed, but also only challenges them in one or two new ways. Don't try to introduce too many new things at once.

There are several key features to an effective Phase III lesson plan:

- No activity takes longer than 30-40 minutes.
- Learners are given a chance to discuss an idea orally before reading and writing about it.
- Strategies are taught overtly and explicitly.
- Reading texts focus on one new skill or one new area of vocabulary.
- Writing techniques are introduced through a model and read several times before learners are expected to write independently.
- Learners compose paragraphs orally and together (with the instructor acting as scribe) before they are expected to write independently.

Sample Lesson Plan for Phase III: Life Stories

Part of Theme: Introducing the Theme

Level: Phase III Developing

Lesson Objectives:

- identify life stories as a valid topic for writing
- predict and check predictions while reading
- read a life story and identify the main ideas
- summarize a life story

Timing	Activity Description
20 minutes	Warm-Up: Greet learners. Introduce idea of life stories and write two words on the board: <i>biography</i> and <i>autobiography</i> . Discuss what they mean. Discuss whose life story is worth telling. Brainstorm historical figures on the board. Ask learners about people in their own lives who have told them stories (parents, grandparents, friends, etc.) Suggest that everyone's life story is important.
5 minutes	Practicing Prediction: Hand out a short, simple biography. Before reading, look at the title and any images included. Predict what will be in the story (what kind of information is included in a biography?). Make a list of predictions on the board.
30 minutes	Reading a Biography: Read the biography out loud to the learners. Have the learners read it out loud to each other in pairs or small groups. Have the learners read the story silently.
5 minutes	Check Predictions: As a class, check predictions – were you right? Were there any surprises?
30 minutes	Introduce Main Idea vs. Details: Discuss the difference between main ideas and details in a story. Give examples from your own life and elicit examples from learners' lives, e.g. "Asha lived for six years in Egypt" is a main idea; "Asha spent two days in Toronto before coming to Calgary" is a detail. In small groups, have learners brainstorm the main ideas from the biography. Put these on the board and discuss as a class. Together, choose the most important main ideas.

30 minutes

Write a Summary: Explain that a summary tells the main ideas of a story in your own words, just like when we retell the plot of a movie or television show to our friends the next day. Have learners write a summary of the biography, referring to the notes on the board as necessary. Have the learners share the summaries in small groups; notice how everyone's summary is a little different, but all include the most important details. Revise, edit, and make a good copy.

Sample Lesson Plan for Phase III: Opinion Paragraphs

Part of Theme: Final Product

Level: Phase III Developing

Lesson Objectives:

- read model paragraphs and identify elements of the writing: topic sentence, supporting arguments, and concluding sentence
- practice a several-step writing process: choosing an idea, making an outline, and writing a draft
- write a simple structured paragraph that expresses an opinion and contains a topic sentence, three supporting arguments, and a concluding sentence

Timing	Activity Description
15 minutes	Warm-Up: Greet learners. Discuss why we write; discuss writing in order to argue a point; remind the class of the difference between fact and opinion; brainstorm ways to convince people that you are right.
25 minutes	Present Idea: Introduce the idea of writing a paragraph to express an opinion. Show model (instructor-created, should be relevant to the class), for example: “Calgary is a Great City.” Give a copy to each learner and put a copy on the overhead. Have a learner read it aloud. Give time to read the paragraph quietly. Ask: what is the author saying? What does he or she think of Calgary? How do you know? What are the reasons? As a class, underline the topic sentence, supporting arguments, and the concluding sentence.
20 minutes	Learning from a Writing Model: Hand out a second model (instructor-created, should be relevant to the class): “Calgary: Too Many Problems.” Have a learner read the paragraph aloud. Discuss how this is arguing the opposite idea as the last model. Reinforce the idea that it’s okay to have differing opinions. Assure learners that you don’t care what their opinion is, as long as they can support it. In small groups, have learners underline the topic sentence, supporting arguments, and concluding sentence. Walk around, check, support, and answer questions. Encourage learners to compare and discuss their answers with each other.
30 minutes	Group “Oral” Writing: Bring attention back to the whiteboard. As a class, write an opinion paragraph. Choose a topic which is very easy to argue, such as “Canadian Winters are Hard.” Let the learners decide if they are for or against a topic; they may prefer to argue “Canadian Winters are Not So Bad.” Guide the learners through writing the paragraph, writing down what they say on the whiteboard. Help them to write a good topic sentence, three supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence. Discuss how they have proven their point. Show them what they did well.

30 minutes

Independent Writing: Put three topics on the board. They should all be highly relevant and easy to argue. Reinforce that they are going to write paragraphs that express an opinion. Have the learners each choose a topic and brainstorm their supporting arguments. Circulate as they do this, helping where needed. When learners are ready, they can write their paragraphs.

Conclusions

Phase III is an exciting time in a learner's development of literacy and the English language. Learners enter Phase III just as they are beginning to be able to string sentences together; by the time they reach Phase III Adequate they are capable of writing paragraphs and a variety of formatted and unformatted texts. As learners reach the end of Phase III, they have the skills and strategies to deal with a wide range of literacy tasks, as well as strategies for dealing with unfamiliar language or formats. Learners are more independent and have learned to take responsibility for their own learning, including setting goals for themselves.

As learners approach the Phase III Adequate stage, both the instructor and the learners should be aware of these goals, and the possibilities once they are finished ESL literacy. Transitioning to the next stage should be on everyone's mind, and the instructor should work with the learners to determine what each learner will do next. Some learners will want to enter (or continue in) the job market; they might also consider entering a trade program or a work-readiness program of some kind to improve their

chances of getting and keeping a job. Other learners will want to transition into Adult Basic Education and possibly go on to complete a high school diploma. Whether or not a learner is ready for ABE is not simply a question of their literacy level, but also of their abilities with English. Learners' chances of achieving success in ABE are directly related to their abilities with language, and generally speaking, the more ESL literacy a learner can take before transitioning to ABE, the better. Learners who are not ready for ABE may wish to move to mainstream ESL first. LIFE face two challenges in living in western society: they have low literacy levels and they are learning a new language. Even after completing Phase III, it is likely that learners will still require extra support, especially in the academic world, and the best programs are programs that recognize and provide this support, meeting the dual needs of these learners.

Khadir, Nyanath, Amira, and Ba Htoo work hard and enjoy their Phase III class. Khadir works on getting away from his lists and engaging in the class orally, building the understanding that this will support his written language more than anything else. Nyanath begins to develop an understanding of format and learns some strategies for reading comprehension. Amira works on her writing, and while her spelling still isn't great, she is able to write longer, more accurate sentences. Ba Htoo continues to absorb everything around him, wearing a big smile most of the time; he thrives in the Phase III class but is still working on his vocabulary and his speaking. After several semesters in Phase III, all four learners are ready to move on to new challenges. Although they have "graduated" from ESL literacy, they will continue to need some level of ESL literacy support as they move into the workplace or on to further education.