Learner Activity

Tutorials Created for Language Learning

Your learners will access your course or activity on their computers, usually alone at their house, in their office, or at the library. When they experience technology or navigation confusion, this is the time when their feelings of being alone and isolated can be heightened. Tutorials can provide immediate help. However, many tutorials that come with the technology, hosted at the technology company's homepage for example, are not targeted at English language learners.

In order to help your learners continue to access your course or activity without frustration, you may find it useful to create your own simple tutorials specifically aimed at language learners, for the technology that you are using. These tutorials do not need to be extensive. They can highlight common problems that prevent learners from accessing the course, summarize main points for using the technology, and supplement existing tutorials.

When you create a simple tutorial for your language learners, consider including the features listed in the following pages. These features are also indicated by the corresponding number in the example tutorial at the end of this document.

> **"Many tutorials that come with the technology are not targeted at English language learners."**

Features to Consider

1. CLEAR, SIMPLE LANGUAGE

Keep the preamble, explanation, and descriptions to a minimum. Use language that is at your learner's language level and lower. The main purpose of the tutorial is to alleviate any problems, not to teach new vocabulary. In the example, the first paragraph simply states the purpose of the Dropbox for the course.

2. MAKE EXPLICIT ANY COMMON PROBLEMS

Making common problems explicit will help your learners know what to watch for as they navigate through the course or use a technology. Previewing these problems will give learners an understanding that when they encounter similar problems, it is likely not their own technology skill or language skill that is causing the problem. In the example, we explicitly mention one problem and offer a few simple ways to avoid the problem.

3. HIGHLIGHT ANY ICONS OR OTHER INDICATORS

Icons throughout a course or activity are an excellent way to lighten the cognitive load experienced by language learners in an online, text-heavy environment. Icons provide a consistent way to recognize tasks and content that use similar technology or have other features in common. Learners may not instinctively recognize these icons at first, but they will benefit from having them pointed out from the onset. In the example, we have shown what the Dropbox icon looks like.

4. USE SCREENSHOTS

When you can, use screenshots to provide visual examples for what learners should see on their screens. Visual examples will lighten the cognitive load by helping learners rely on images rather than language as a way to confirm their understanding and problem solving. In the example, we have used additional red circles to indicate finer details within these screen shots.

5. SHOW HOW LEARNERS WILL CONFIRM THEIR ACTIONS

Highlight ways that your learners will be able to confirm their own actions. For language learners, showing how they can confirm their actions will give them a way to build their sense of certainty while studying in a second language. It can also help to build their independent learning skills. In the example, we have shown the email receipt that a learner should receive after they correctly submit an assignment.

6. ENCOURAGE LEARNERS TO ASK QUESTIONS

Repeatedly encourage your learners to ask questions if they are not sure about a technology or course navigation. Learners will need repeated encouragement to ask questions, especially if they are experiencing feelings of isolation. They might feel alone and they might feel that their lack of language skill is creating problems, rather than a technology that they are not familiar with. In the example, we have encouraged learners to ask a facilitator or a classmate for help.

7. POINT OUT ANY DUE DATES AND REQUIREMENTS
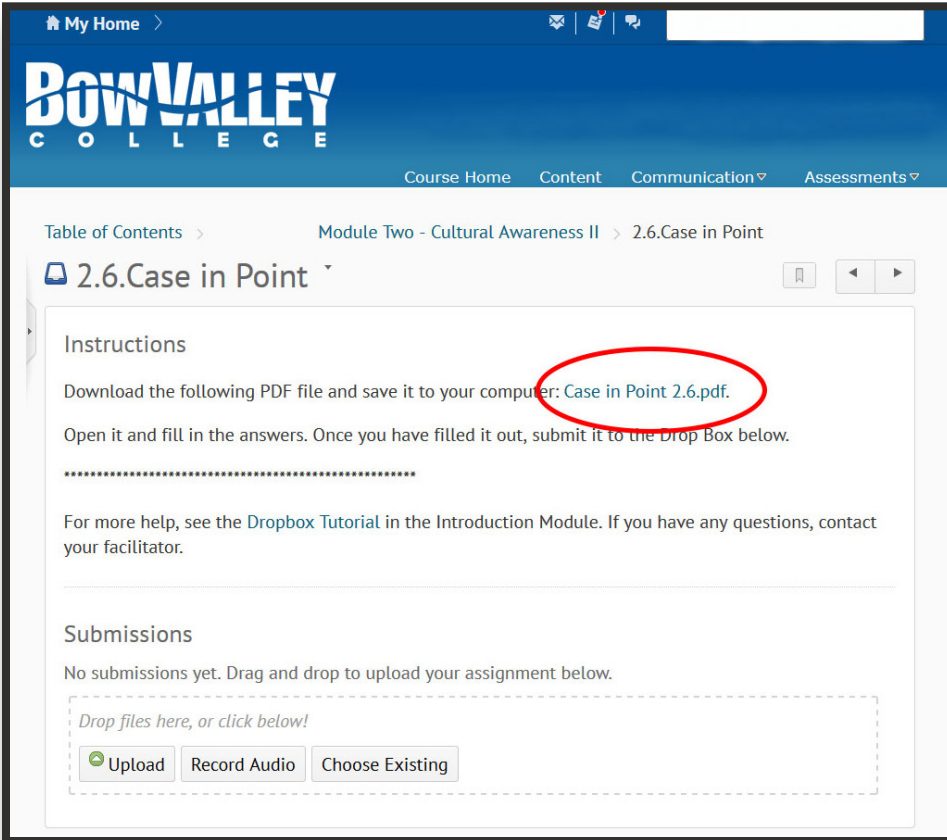
Reinforce course requirements, any pertinent information about instructions, any evaluation criteria, and any due dates. Learners will need to use their working memory for learning and interacting in their target language. Repetition of essential information throughout the course or activity spaces will help to keep this information in learners' mind and lighten their cognitive load. In the example, we have repeated information associated with the Dropbox activities, bolded the text, and centered it to make it stand out.

Dropbox Activities - Tutorial

1 As part of the course requirements you will need to download the *Case in Point* assignments, answer the questions, and submit them into the module Dropbox.

2 We **often get blank or empty assignments handed in** – so please follow these directions carefully, and always remember to save your work! If you prefer to answer questions in a Word Document, it is ok.

3 *Case in Point* activities are noted by this icon:

📥 2.6.Case in Point ▾

4 Once you navigate to the *Case in Point* activity, download the PDF by clicking on it (see the red circle below) and saving it to your computer:

🏠 My Home ›

BOWVALLEY
COLLEGE

Course Home   Content   Communication ▽   Assessments ▽

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📥 2.6.Case in Point ▾

Instructions

Download the following PDF file and save it to your computer: Case in Point 2.6.pdf.

Open it and fill in the answers. Once you have filled it out, submit it to the Drop Box below.

•••

For more help, see the Dropbox Tutorial in the Introduction Module. If you have any questions, contact your facilitator.

Submissions

No submissions yet. Drag and drop to upload your assignment below.

Drop files here, or click below!

⊕ Upload   Record Audio   Choose Existing

The PDF will be fillable, you can type into the fillable areas. Here's an example Fillable PDF:

3. It is wrong for M to feel uncomfortable about shaking hands with a woman.

    a. T
    b. F

4. In Canada, employers must accommodate the personal beliefs of workers as long as they do not cause unfair difficulty in the workplace, such as work disruption or financial loss.
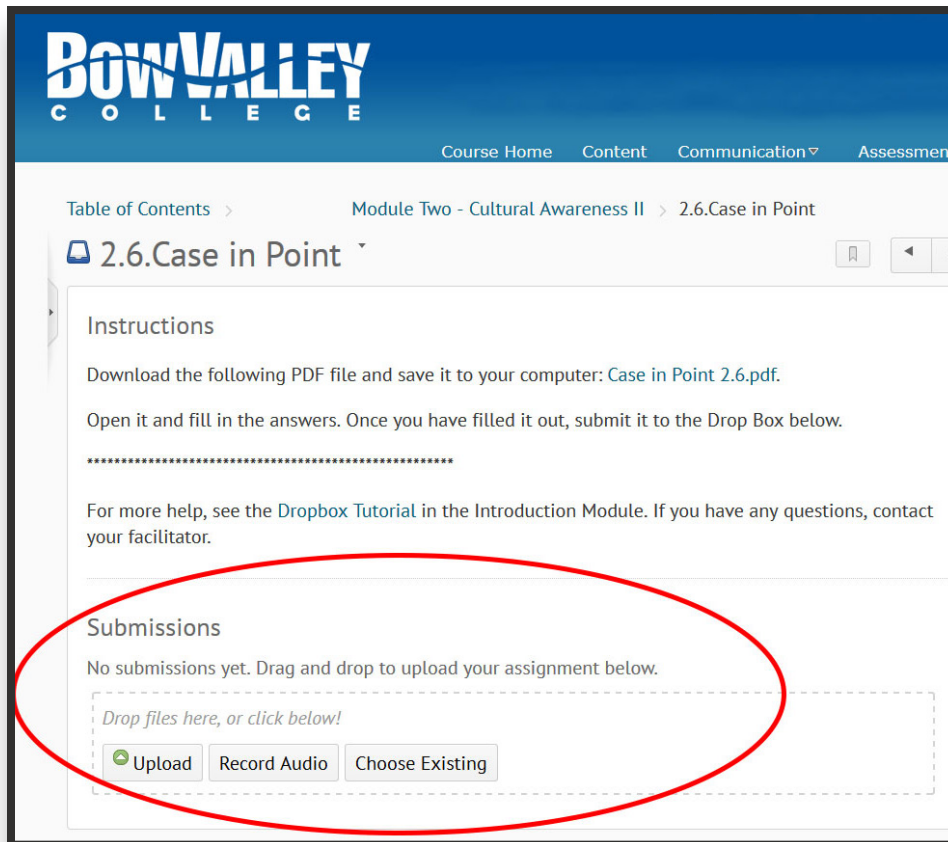
    a. T
    b. F

5. Briefly describe some productive strategies that M can employ to help him learn about respecting differences in Canadian workplace culture.

6. Briefly describe what you might do if faced with a situation where a co-worker felt uncomfortable around you due to cultural beliefs and expectations from his or her country of origin.

Save your filled PDF to your computer and then upload it in the Submissions area:
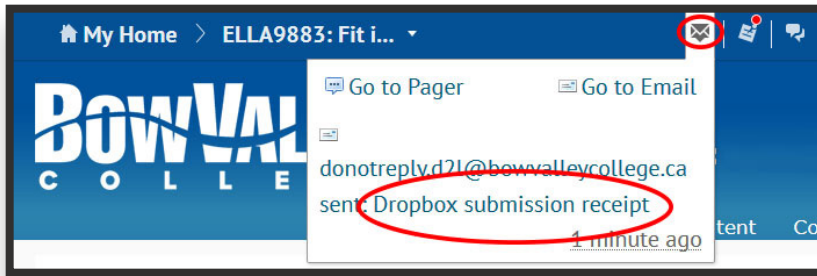

Finally, once you have uploaded your filled PDF you need to click on the "Submit to Dropbox" button.
Don't forget!

5 You will receive an email to confirm submission of your assignment:

You will also receive feedback on your DropBox submission – to view feedback, click on the "Assessments" tab and then on "DropBox":

6 If you have any questions about your feedback, ask your facilitator.

7 *Case in Point* **assignments are required and must be completed to pass the course. They are due on each Monday one week after the Module starts.**