



Support Document

Learning for LIFE: An ESL Literacy Curriculum Framework
THEME UNIT AND LESSON PLANNING GUIDE
AND TEMPLATE

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Learning for LIFE: An ESL Literacy Curriculum Framework outlines a process for curriculum development in five stages:

- *Stage 1: Understand Needs*
- *Stage 2: Determine Focus*
- *Stage 3: Set Learning Outcomes*
- *Stage 4: Integrate Assessment*
- *Stage 5: Demonstrate Accountability*

Each stage includes information, guiding questions and suggestions for instructors.

These **unit and lesson planning** templates are designed for instructors and are based on the principles outlined in *Stage 3: Set Learning Outcomes* and *Stage 4: Integrate Assessment*.

Effective theme teaching requires planning and intentional instruction. It is more than a loosely-connected series of lessons or activities. In the *ESL Literacy Curriculum Framework* instructors are encouraged to consider **six elements** when planning for theme units:

1. theme
2. learning outcomes
3. assessment (**for** learning, **as** learning and **of** learning)
4. content pillars
5. tasks
6. materials

Developing a thematic unit is not a linear process; you may find that you need to move back and forth between the elements as you plan. It is essential, however, that everything included in the theme relates to the learning outcomes you have identified.

The purpose of this tool is to help instructors:

- understand how components of a thematic unit are tied together
- plan effective thematic units

This tool can be used:

- by individual instructors
- in a professional development or team-building setting to develop skills in thematic unit planning
- in a course guide or curriculum package, including the information relevant to your program

This tool includes 2 parts:

- A guide to developing a theme unit plan. This guide outlines considerations in completing a unit plan, and highlights the relationships between different sections of the unit plan.
- Theme unit and lesson planning templates. These are provided to guide you in the process of developing an ESL literacy theme unit and corresponding lesson plans.

For a sample of completed unit and lesson plans, please see the **Sample Theme Units** provided for Foundation, Phase I, Phase II and Phase III in the ESL Literacy Toolbox.

Developing a Theme Unit Plan

Developing a unit plan is not always a linear process. Move back and forth between the sections of the unit plan in order to ensure everything is linked.

Select a theme. Some instructors prefer to determine the theme first, and then choose outcomes that fit the theme.

Note the CLB Literacy Phase of the learners you are working with, or whether it is a multi-level class.

Select learning outcomes. Some instructors prefer to determine the outcomes first, and then choose a theme that provides a context.

Limit the number of **new** outcomes to be introduced in your unit. Ensure that you plan to introduce, recycle and spiral **all** the required outcomes over the course of the term.

Choose **listening** and **speaking** outcomes from your curriculum or see *Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000: English as a Second Language for Adults*.

Select outcomes in **reading, writing, literacy strategies** and **habits of mind**. Refer to your curriculum or see Stage 3 in the curriculum framework. Remember to plan assessment(s) for each outcome you include.

Refer to the **proficiency descriptors** for each of the outcomes you have chose in reading, writing, literacy strategies and habits of mind. These will help you understand the expectations for this outcome at your level. See Stage 3 for the proficiency descriptors and the learning outcomes.

Consider which of the **content pillars** you will focus on in the unit. The content pillars can help guide you in your choices of materials and tasks. See Stage 3 (planning for theme-based teaching) for more information.

Plan how you will **assess** each of the outcomes targeted in your theme unit. Provide a short, basic description that will guide you when you design the actual assessments. Consider whether you will conduct assessment **for, as** or **of** learning. See Stage 4 in the curriculum framework for more information.

Some instructors prefer to design the assessments before the lessons, and other instructors prefer the reverse. Whichever you choose, ensure that **each outcome** is assessed in your unit.

Unit Plan					
Theme:			Level:		
Content Pillars: <input type="checkbox"/> Rights & Responsibilities <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Resources & Opportunities					
Strand	Outcomes	Assessment			
		for	as	of	Description
Listening					
Speaking					
Reading					
Writing					
Literacy Strategies	Reading Strategies				
	Writing Strategies				
	Spelling Strategies				
Habits of Mind					

List the main tasks or types of tasks you plan to include. Keep in mind that the purpose of tasks is to help learners achieve the **proficiency** expected at their level, for each outcome. Refer back to this list as you plan your lessons.

Choosing Content

As you determine the types of tasks and materials for your unit, refer back to your choice of **content pillar**. Ensure that your tasks and materials address at least one of the following areas:

- rights and responsibilities
- cultural expectations
- resources and opportunities

Consider the grammar functions that learners will need in order to complete the tasks and achieve the learning outcomes in this unit. Grammar instruction for ESL literacy learners needs to be highly contextualized and supported.

Main Tasks	Materials
Grammar	Materials
Vocabulary	Materials
Pronunciation	Materials
Numeracy	Materials
Technology	Materials

Make a note of the materials or resources you will develop or gather for each kind of task. This will guide you as you plan individual lessons and allow you to create some of your materials in advance.

Remember to link materials to your chosen content pillar and ensure that all materials target one or more learning outcomes.

Consider the kind of vocabulary necessary for the theme. Plan learning tasks that will help introduce, recycle and spiral the vocabulary.

Consider how you will integrate pronunciation, numeracy and technology in this theme. Note the skills you will focus on as well as tasks to help build those skills.

Sample unit plans

Sample theme units at Foundation, Phase I, Phase II and Phase III are provided in the ESL Literacy Network toolbox.

Unit Plan

Theme:

Level:

Content Pillars:

Rights & Responsibilities

Cultural Expectations

Resources & Opportunities

Strand	Outcome	Assessment			
		for	as	of	Description
Reading					
Writing					
Literacy Strategies	Reading Strategies				
	Writing Strategies				
	Spelling Strategies				
Habits of Mind					

Main Tasks

Materials and Resources

Grammar	Materials and Resources
Vocabulary	Materials and Resources
Pronunciation	Materials and Resources
Numeracy	Materials and Resources
Technology	Materials and Resources

Lesson Overview:	
Theme:	Level:

Content Pillar:			
Strand	Outcome		Proficiency Descriptor
Reading			
Writing			
Literacy Strategies	Reading		
	Writing		
	Spelling		
Habit of Mind			
Lesson Resources			

Lesson Sequence:		
Theme:	Level:	
Learning Outcomes	Learning Tasks	Assessment

		for	as	of	Description

Next Steps					