

LITERACY

ALPHABETISATION



The Movement for
Canadian Literacy

**Box 533, Postal Station P,
TORONTO, Ontario, M5S 2T1
(416) 533-1258**

Rassemblement
canadien pour
l'alphabétisation

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The Movement for Canadian Literacy is a non-profit incorporated group. Its aim is to link together those organizations and individuals who work in the adult literacy field or who have an interest in developing improved solutions to the problem of adult illiteracy in Canada. It is a field-based, membership organization and is eclectic in approach. It does not endorse anyone particular method, for it realizes that many different approaches may evolve at the grass-roots level and be successful in that particular situation.

The views and opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily conform to the views of the majority of the members of The Movement for Canadian Literacy or the Editor. They have been published to share experience or to stimulate interest in the field of basic education and literacy in Canada, consistent with the objectives of The Movement.

Individual membership rate is \$10.00 per year and includes subscription to the quarterly publication, LITERACY/ALPHABETIZATION. Other rates are available for groups and organizations. LITERACY/ALPHABETISATION is only available through membership. Except where previous copyright is indicated, material from Literacy may be used freely. Credit to the authors, literacy and the Movement for Canadian Literacy is required.

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Canadian Library Association

British Columbia

Alberta

NALA

Saskatchewan

Manitoba

Ontario

Nova Scotia

New Brunswick

Newfoundland

PUBLICATIONS

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT - Charles Craig

As indicated by this issue of Literacy the Movement is alive and well and living across Canada. This does not mean that keeping a national organization together and growing is an easy task. We are a volunteer group. In this fact lies both our strength and our weakness, Strength because time freely given implies a dedication to a cause usually impossible to employ, Weakness because all of us have other concerns that place great demands upon our time and energy.

Simply getting the Board together in a country such as ours is no easy task. The last meeting we attempted to have illustrates this point. Fortunately enough people gathered to ensure that the necessary tasks were accomplished.

Beyond those of us who are currently involved at an active visible level in the Movement, there is the great strength of any group the membership. This group must be kept active and involved. One way to keep a sense of involvement is to be a paid-up member a rather round-about way of asking everyone to check their current status and if required to renew as soon as possible.

Have a good summer,

Charles Craig.

STOP PRESS!

Two important 'firsts' for the **Movement** for Canadian Literacy have been born. Contact the Toronto office for further information.

*FUNDING RECEIVED for CANADIAN ADULT LITERACY RESOURCE KIT.

Five parts Over 150 pages.
Will be available this summer!

*DIRECTORY OF ABE and LITERACY PROGRAMS NOW AVAILABLE!

Price: \$1.00. Contact Office

WANTED! Articles, News, Reports, Curriculum Materials, Lesson Plans, Book Reviews, Letters, Comments, Notices of Upcoming Events and whatever else YOU would like to see in this publication.

REMEMBER! This publication is only as good and as interesting as you make it.

NEXT DEADLINE: July 31, 1979

Mail material for Literacy /Alphabetization to:

Audrey M. Thomas

Sub P.O. #26, Golden Mile Plaza

REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN, S4S 3R0

INTERNATIONAL

A newsletter published by the International Reading Association

AUSTRALIAN CONCERN FOR LANGUAGE POLICY

A recent issue of *Society for Mass Media and Resource Technology* stresses the concern of Australian educators for a national language policy taking into account the total range of influences and effects of language. A wide range of administrative and curriculum policies are being studied in the country with a view to reaching the following objectives: a) the use of simple language in official communication and in all areas of public life; b) nationwide minimum curriculum requirements for the teaching of English at the primary level, with strong emphasis on basic spelling, grammar and punctuation; c) the establishment of a lexicon to monitor and designate Australian usage in spelling, syntax, punctuation and grammar; d) a commitment to bilingualism, recognizing Australia as a multicultural society; and e) the cooperation of the mass media in upholding standards of written and oral expression. It is hoped that by adopting such a broad-based approach the quality of language and the level of literacy will be significantly improved in the near future.

“THE RIGHT TO COMMUNICATE”

Such was the theme of an international symposium held in Paris on 13-16 March 1979, with the participation of representatives of some 70 international nongovernmental organizations in consultative status with Unesco. Affirming that "all human beings should have a recognized and guaranteed right to communicate... be able to exercise this right fully and responsibly... and be able to enjoy and be enriched by both the traditional and new arts of communication," the Symposium adopted a series of recommendations intended to guide international organizations, their national branches and individual members in their efforts to meet those goals. A large part of these recommendations is devoted to the cultural and linguistic aspects of communication. Special attention is given to the protection of and respect for different cultural and linguistic identities, the preservation of mother tongues, linguistic equality and nondiscrimination internationally and within multilingual nations, the situation of migrant workers, and the continuing need to develop literacy and post-literacy skills. Unesco itself was requested to intensify its action with respect to language. Particularly regarding linguistic and sociolinguistic research, the relation between language and culture, and bilingual and multilingual systems. Other recommendations relate to the participation of all sectors of the public, the contents of information, the right to information, and other aspects of the New International Communication Order presently under study. The International Reading Association was represented by the Director of the European Office.

THE MOVEMENT FOR CANADIAN LITERACY NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT!

A reminder to renew your membership if you joined before June 10, 1978. *Renew NOW*

Individual Membership is \$10.00

RENEW NOW FOR 1979

**Box 533, Postal Station P,
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from: The Adult Tree

(North York Bd. of Con. Ed.
Newsletter)

FROM THE U.K.:

* Perceptions of Adult Literacy provision in 1979. (ALU, London)

A Summary of recent research by
Professor H.A. Jones & Dr. A.H. Charnley.

* A Strategy for the Basic Education of Adults.

ACACE, 19b De Montfort st., Leicester.

£0.80p (£1.00 post free)

Cash with single orders.

Evaluating functional literacy by H.S. Bhola is
latest training monograph available from
Hulton (see last issue of LITERACY - p. 30.)

PHONICS AND READING: A MARRIAGE ON THE ROCKS

by Professor Arn Bowers
Faculty of Education, University of Toronto

There is so much written and talked about in the media lately about phonics and its place in a reading program. I would like to say something about phonics as a basic skill and how it relates to early reading instruction.

Let's start by defining what we are talking about. Phonics is fundamentally a teaching strategy that is concerned with letter/sound correspondences.

Phonetic analysis has shown us the comparative frequencies with which different English sounds and letters occur in words, and the general ways the sounds are blended and the letters are combined. If one is going to be literate, these basic sounds of our language (phonemes) and their written equivalents (graphemes) have to be known. Some of us have learned them intuitively; others remember being explicitly taught them. This knowledge of the phonemic/graphemic relationships on one's language gives one strong support in writing, spelling and in mediating unknown words one meets while reading. Of course,

people have learned to read, write and spell without having had any phonics instruction at all. (See James Moffett, Student-Centered Language Arts and Reading K-13, chapter 9.) However, these people have likely developed their own unique system for dealing with the countless irregularities in our phonetic system that enables them to meet their communication needs.

Oh, that we had an isomorphic alphabet: I remember studying German and the sheer joy it was to know that when a new sound was learned it would always be written the same way: How relatively easy it was to learn German spelling. Italians and Hungarians have told me the same thing. That is, that their languages have a consistent letter/ sound correspondence and sound-spelling patterns are easily learned; in fact, "spelling" as a subject doesn't appear on the curriculum beyond the primary grades in these countries. Is this one of the reasons that it takes our children almost two years longer to learn to read than European children? Moffett and others claim that, if an isomorphic alphabet like I.T.A. or Unifon could be used in teaching beginning reading, we might avoid the difficulty caused by our inconsistent alphabet and its outrageous sound/letter combinations and help simplify the literacy job of schools so they can get on to higher learning. If you want to read a good case for starting learners on one of these isomorphic alphabets, read Dr. Burn's article entitled "Learning to Read:" The Potential of an Isomorphic Alphabet" in the September 1973 issue of Elementary English.

But we don't have an isomorphic alphabet; we're stuck with one that produces about 40 380 letters and letter combinations spelling a minimum of about 40 sounds. (Envy the Turks with their 27 symbols for their 27 sounds!) And we have to teach children to manipulate this alphabet as effectively as possible in order to satisfy their language needs: more specifically for the purpose of this article to learn to read.

When most children are introduced to the act of reading, it generally occurs at home, before they reach school. The reading is done by someone while the child listens, often sitting on the reader's lap, often following along the lines of print with eyes and finger. Only recently has this look/listen relationship been referred to in the literature as a method of teaching reading: namely, the lap method. Teachers are beginning to include the lap method with the more common approaches to beginning reading of phonics, sight words, and language experience.

Professional experience tells us that some children need phonics instruction and that others learn to read very well by figuring out new words - when they have to - without any apparent phonics instruction at all. This latter group appears to be able to match letters and sounds, to generalize the phonetic 'rules', as they managed to 'analyze speech sounds and match them off with meanings when they were infants' learning to speak. In fact, advocates of the lap method - that is, following a text with the eyes while hearing the text read aloud suggest that, if a student were given words enough and time, he or she might learn to read by this method alone. For the younger learner there could be the real lap of a teacher, parent or aide; for the older student there is the ersatz lap of the tape recorder or phonograph record. All that is needed is a copious flow of words in the context of a meaningful discourse which the student can follow with a moving finger his

or someone else's. If you are intrigued by the possibilities here, you will find a very detailed description of this way to induce spontaneous phonics learning on pages 201-203 of the Moffett text cited above.

Of the approaches to beginning reading I have outlined, the phonics approach because it is based on matching word particles (letters to their possible sounds) is the only approach that isn't a natural language activity for the learner. Whether one uses a 'synthetic' approach of building word particles into words or an 'analytic' approach where whole words are broken down into their component sounds and spellings, these activities are unnatural to the child who has been used to dealing with much larger language units in his everyday communication activities. Fortunately for the beginning reader, few advocates of a method that is basically a phonics approach want to (or are even able to) omit the necessary interaction between the learner and the teacher that occurs in meaningful language units. Most teachers use an eclectic approach to beginning reading that provides the learner with experiences of matching phonemes with graphemes, developing a personal sight-word vocabulary, watching his oral utterances being written, and other language-based activities that eventually encourage the learner to become an independent and fluent reader. There is no doubt that all readers have to acquire some skill in handling the phonemic/graphemic system of the language they are reading; however, they must also be provided with the other cues to meaning that larger language units can give them. As Frank Smith points out in his Understanding Reading, the only way to distinguish the pronunciation of /sh/ in bishop and mishap is to be able to read the word in the first place:

Phonics: quo vadis? Any suggestions for teaching anything comes from long standing experience in and out of the classroom. And experience has taught us that some approaches can help some students sometimes in some aspects of reading. If we keep in mind that our goal in reading instruction is meaning and the bigger the language unit we work with the potentially more meaningful the activity will be, then our eclecticism will be careful, informed and helpful. The best that we can expect from the phonics aspect of our reading program is that it can provide clues to the names and sounds of letters and their configurations that might help the reader when he or she can't deal with these smaller word particles as part of a larger, meaningful language context. However, it is an unfortunate reader who must 'mediate' every word he reads.

The chief disadvantage of phonics is simply that it is not a language arts goal in itself; it is only a means towards our goal which is literacy.

Professor Bowers gave a presentation on this topic to the south central Ontario Group of The Movement in March, 1979. A useful booklet was prepared on the same theme and has many practical aids and hints. Ed.

L EARNING is a human right
I DEAS will bring words into
T HOUGHTS, for man is a thinking animal.
E DUCATION brings man knowledge and
R EADING exercises his mind and improves his ability.
A BILITY is of little account without opportunity:
C REATING opportunity is our literacy task for fulfilling man's
Y EARNING for learning.

Fort Erie Literacy Council's Newsletter

RIDING AND READING

by Lana J. McWilliams
Memphis State University, Tennessee

This article first appeared in the January 1979 issue of the Journal of Reading (Volume 22, No.4) and is reprinted with the permission of the author and the International Reading Association. As the summer vacation period approaches some of our readers may want to check the list of highway signs against those in use in Canada and make any changes. As the list is composed of active vocabulary it is useful for generating lesson themes around experiential learning. Perhaps some of you may be prompted to compile similar kinds of lists appropriate to other areas of daily living and share them with us. Ed.

The energy shortage, although significantly affecting the size of automobiles, has had little effect upon the number of drivers who travel the highways of the United States or the number of miles they travel. In fact, vehicular travel has become one of the most common experiences Americans continue to share. Because of this, we face an increasing need to produce drivers who are well informed and sophisticated in relation to modern driving requirements.

A basic requirement for driving sophistication is that all drivers understand the roadway messages that alert them to information necessary for survival or, at the very least, for making the experience more comfortable. These messages, usually in written form, presuppose a level of reading ability which is not only unrealistic in terms of some drivers' years of formal education, but also in relation to the apparently poor reading skills of many drivers. Stated otherwise, the licensing requirements of most states insure neither that the driver's formal educational background has adequately provided him/her with necessary skills nor that the skills thus acquired are sufficient for understanding the complex messages of the roadside.

On a recent automobile trip across the southern and eastern part of the United States, I observed that reading signs along the highway required skills, knowledge of concepts, and knowledge of polysyllabic words that would represent real stumbling blocks for less able readers, those unfamiliar with the language and terminology, or even those who can read well enough, but too slowly to be able to see the words as a car travels quickly past.

The accompanying list of common highway signs was compiled during several thousand miles of highway travel. Every effort was made to record the signs accurately. Only those considered significant to safety and personal convenience are included here. The list is offered for use by teachers of remedial reading, secondary age students, adult literacy, drivers' education, and English as a second language.

I'VE BECOME WELL READ WHILE TRAVELING, I'VE READ 27 ROAD MAPS, 1,462 BILLBOARDS, 741 ROADSIGNS, AND 4,617 BUMPERSTICKERS!



All Cars (Trucks) Stop	Litter Barrel	Road Closed
Beware of Cross Winds	Loading Zone	Road Construction
Bridge Out	Local Traffic Only	Road Ends Ahead
Caution	Loose Gravel	Roadside Park
C.B. 13 Monitored by Police	Low Clearance	School Bus Crossing
Congested Area Ahead	Maximum Speed 55	School Zone When Flashing
Construction Ahead	Mechanic on Duty	Signal Ahead
Curve	Men Working	Slide Area
Danger Ahead	Merge into Single Lane	Slide AreaSlippery When Wet
Dangerous Curve	Merge Left (Right)	Slow
Dangerous Intersection	Merging Traffic	Slower Traffic Keep Right
Dead End	Minimum Speed	Soft Shoulders
Deer Crossing	Narrow Bridge	South
Detour	Next Gas	Speed Checked by
Dim Lights	Next Right	Detection Devices/ Radar
Dip		Speed Limit

Divided Highway	No Dumping	Speed Limit 15 When Children are Present
Do Not Block Walk	No Left Turn	Speed Zone Ahead
Do Not Enter	No Parking This Side	Steep Grade
Drive Slow	No Passing	Stop
East	No Passing When Solid	Stop Ahead
Emergency Parking Only	Line Is Right Of Center Line	Stop for Pedestrians
Emergency Vehicles Only	No Right Turn on Red Light	Stop While School Buses Load or Unload
End Construction	North	Truck Escape Ramp Unless Otherwise Posted
Entrance	Not a Through Street	Truck Route
Exit	No "U" Turn	Trucks and Combinations
Exit Only		Trucks Entering Highway
Exit Speed 25	One Way Do Not Enter	Trucks Over 11'6" Height
	One Way Street	Two way Traffic
Falling Rock		
Feet	Parkway	Unlawful to Block Intersection
Fine for Littering	Pavement Ends	Unloading Zone
Flooded	Pedestrians,	Use Low Gear
Fog Area	Non-Motorized	
Food	Traffic, Motor	Vehicles
Four Way Stop	Driven Cycles	
Freeway	Prohibited	Warning
	Pedestrians Prohibited	Watch for Ice on Bridge
Gasoline	Pending	Watch for Loose Gravel
Go Slow	Police Jurisdiction	Wayside Park
	Private Road	Weigh Station
Hill--Trucks Use	Put on Chains	Weight Limit 8 tons
Lowest Gear		
Historical Marker		West
Hospital Zone	Radar Checked	Winding Road
	Railroad Crossing	Wrong Way
Ice On Bridge	Ramp Speed 25	
Information Center	Reduce Speed Ahead	Yield
Intersection	Resume Speed	Yield Right of Way
Interstate	Right Lane Must Turn Right	
	Right Turn Only	
Junction	Right Turn on Red	
	After Stop	
Left Lane Ends		
Left Lane Must Turn Left		
Left Turn on Signal Only		

MATERIALS EVALUATION GUIDE: READING

(c) David Harrison, 1979

(Not to be published in any other form without permission of the author.) *

The following Materials Evaluation Guide was developed by David Harrison, of Malaspina College, Nanaimo. It is for ABE instructors to use in screening basic reading textbooks. It may also have other applications, such as providing guide- lines to writers, publishers, or teacher trainers.

The Guide has been specifically validated for basic (grade 0-4) adult reading instruction materials. It was based on a review of the research on adult learning and reading instruction. Content validity was checked by ten university professors of adult learning or reading education who were also familiar with ABE. Its reliability and usability were field tested by a sample of ABE instructors from BC community colleges.

David stresses that the only sure evaluation of any ABE text is done by the students. Does this text truly help them learn to read? However, he hopes the Guide will help us improve the quality of material we present to them.

He would welcome your comments and suggestions for improvement. Please address them directly to: David Harrison, ABE Centre, Malaspina College, Nanaimo, B.C. V9R 5S5.

Many Movement members from outside B.C. will remember David from the ABLE Conference in Toronto in 1976. They will be interested to learn that he has just successfully completed his Ph.D. from the University of Arizona. The title of his dissertation is: The Development of an Instrument for the Evaluation of Published Materials in Adult Basic Reading Instruction. The full text of the dissertation will be available later this year through Xerox Microfilms International.

Congratulations Dr. Harrison:

* In addition to its reproduction in this issue of Literacy, David has also given permission for the Guide to be reproduced in the literacy resource kit which the Movement is publishing this summer.



By the Sea

Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc. 1979 Annual Conference will be held **October 16.18, 1979** (note change of dates) at the beautiful Wentworth by-the-sea in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Situated on the Atlantic Ocean, this grand turn-of-the-century hotel is less than 2 hours away from seventy-five percent of all New Englanders, and only one hour from Logan International Airport in Boston.

Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc.
Room 623, Midtown Plaza 700 East Water
Street Syracuse, N.Y. 13210

This year's Conference will offer not only the stimulating seminars and meetings similar to previous years, but also the opportunity to enjoy, before or after the Conference, the beautiful New England fall foliage, historic Portsmouth (with its restored Strawberry Banke) and Wentworth's golf course, tennis courts or swimming pool.

In an attempt to keep Annual Conference exciting and yet cost effective, the LVA Field Services Committee has negotiated a 10% reduction in the usual Conference prices from Wentworth. Conference registration remains at \$10, the same as last year.

Adult Basic Education

MATERIALS

EVALUATION

GUIDE: READING

A systematic way to evaluate published materials for possible use in adult basic reading programs

INSTRUCTIONS TO EVALUATORS

1. Become familiar with the general form of this evaluation guide.
2. Become generally familiar with the instructional materials you intend to evaluate.
3. Go through all three parts of this guide, on PRODUCT DESIGN, ADULT LEARNING, and READING INSTRUCTION, evaluating the instructional materials against each item. Complete the summary ratings for each section as you go.

NOTE: For each feature (such as I - GENERAL FORMAT AND CONTENT) there are four YES/NO questions. These are to guide your review of the materials, but not dictate your summary rating on the 6-point scale. For example, you might respond YES to all four questions, but give a summary rating of 3 (mediocre).

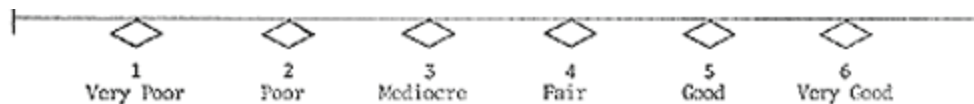
4. Complete the OVERALL RATING of the materials, on page 6, adding your extra comments about the materials.

PRODUCT DESIGN

I. GENERAL FORMAT AND CONTENT

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Is the material under review intended for adult basic reading instruction? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Are the physical features such as size, type legibility and page layout acceptable? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Is the general <u>content</u> , including illustrations, likely to be <u>acceptable to adult learners</u> ? (Check for inappropriate ethnic emphasis, stereotyped sex-roles, social class bias, etc.) | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Does the format or content display any qualities of <u>artistic or literary merit</u> ? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |

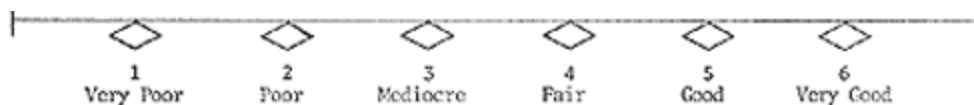
SUMMARY RATING: Summarize your rating of the quality of the GENERAL FORMAT AND CONTENT. Mark an X in ONE of the boxes below.



II. INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Could a teacher obtain adequate information on rationale of the materials (including objectives and scope) either from a teacher's manual or by reviewing the instructional text? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Does the material include provision for evaluating student achievement before and after instruction? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Does the material appear to require an unusual amount of specialized teacher training or preparation? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Does the material require special equipment not normally found in adult education settings | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |

SUMMARY RATING: Summarize your rating of the quality of the INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES. Mark an X in ONE of the boxes below.

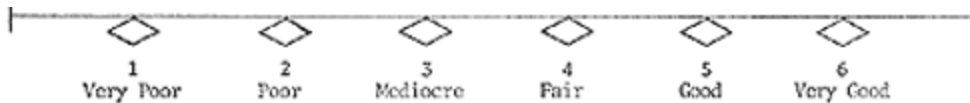


ADULT LEARNING

I. MOTIVATION

1. Do the materials have an adult appearance (e.g. avoidance of covers or titles which mark the learners as illiterates)?
YES NO
2. Does the content adequately reflect the probable interests and needs of the adult learners in your class?
YES NO
3. Is the level of difficulty sufficient to challenge but not frustrate the adult learners in your class?
YES NO
4. Do the materials encourage successful completion or learning tasks (e.g. by clear objectives, manageable units of study)?
YES NO

SUMMARY RATING: Summarize your rating of the quality of the provision for MOTIVATION. Mark an X in ONE of the boxes below.



II. INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

1. Do the materials provide for the range of learning abilities of adults in your class (e.g. for 'slow', 'average', or 'fast' students)?
YES NO
2. Does the material provide for the interests of adults of different age groups?
YES NO
3. Are there opportunities for the adult to apply previous, knowledge and experience to the new learning tasks?
YES NO
4. Does the material provide for learning through more than one sensory mode (reading, writing, speaking, listening)?
YES NO

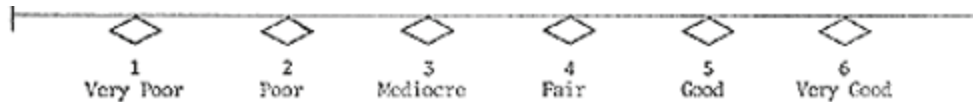
SUMMARY RATING: Summarize your rating of the quality of the provision for INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES. Mark an X in ONE of the boxes below.



III. PRINCIPLES OF INSTRUCTION

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Is the instruction consistently <u>presented</u> in a way that the adult learner can readily understand? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Are <u>adequate examples</u> of concept and skills given? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Is there adequate provision for Practice of new learning <u>in a variety of contexts</u> ? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Can the adult learner independently obtain <u>feedback progress</u> through means such as answer keys, self - scoring tests progress charts? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |

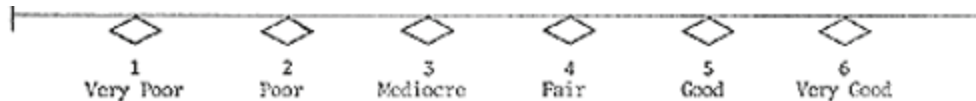
SUMMARY RATING: Summarize your rating of the use of PRINCIPLES OF INSTRUCTION. Mark an X in ONE of the boxes below.



IV. RELEVANCE

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Does the content include material directly relevant to <u>vocational and career interests</u> ? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Does the content include material directly relevant to <u>social interests</u> (e.g. voting, sports, hobbies, TV)? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Does the content include material directly relevant to personal <u>coping 'survival' skills</u> (e.g. reading medicine labels, reading supermarket ads)? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Is there a significant amount of <u>information</u> in the text that could be relevant and useful to many adults (e.g. how your tax dollar is spent, how to make long distance phone calls cheaply)? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |

SUMMARY RATING Summarize your rating of the quality of the RELEVANCE. ONE of the boxes below.

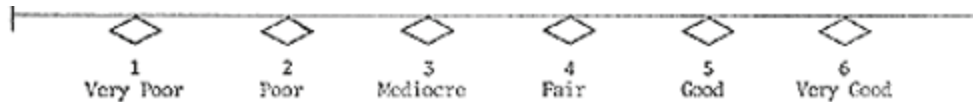


READING INSTRUCTION

I. WORD RECOGNITION

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Does instruction begin from basic sight words that the learner probably knows already? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. When new sight words are introduced, have they apparently been " selected because of frequency in adult use | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Is the word recognition vocabulary introduced and used in the context of meaningful passages? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Is the learner taught more than one approach to word recognition (e.g. use of cues from passage meaning/ passage structure, or word structure). | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |

SUMMARY RATING: Summarize your rating of the quality of the WORD RECOGNITION instruction. Mark an X in ONE of the boxes below.



II. WORD ANALYSIS

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Does the material provide instruction in any method of <u>systematically 'decoding' words?</u> | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Does the program <u>place emphasis on decoding isolated letters or syllables out of context?</u> | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Are there <u>adequate examples and practice</u> of word analysis skills? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Are word analysis skills taught that may be used <u>often and reliably</u> in actual continuous reading? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |

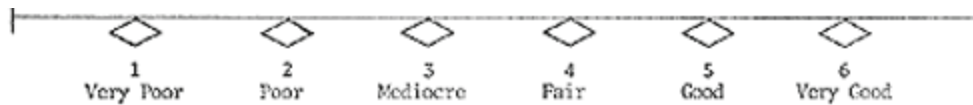
SUMMARY RATING : Summarize rating of the quality of the WORD ANALYSIS instruction. Mark an X in ONE of the boxes below.



III. COMPREHENSION

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Are practice comprehension passages included at the appropriate level of difficulty for the stage reached in instruction? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Do the materials deal adequately with ways of reading for a variety of different purposes (e.g. for enjoyment, for information, for person-to-person communication)? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Is the learner required to look for meaning beyond the literal level (e.g. at the inferential level, critical reading, 'between and beyond the lines')? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Are the reading tasks frequently related to the goal of comprehension of the whole passage? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |

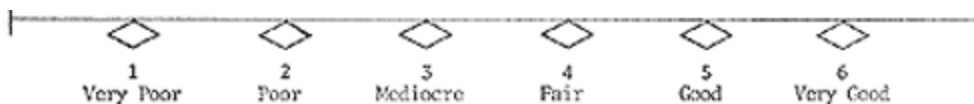
SUMMARY RATING: Summarize your rating of the quality of the COMPREHENSION instruction. Mark an X in ONE of the boxes below.



IV. ASSESSMENT

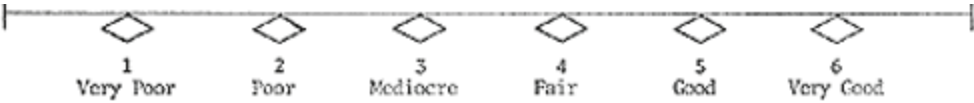
- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Is an adequate placement test, formal or informal inventory, or other <u>assessment method</u> recommended or supplied to establish the <u>starting point of instruction</u> ? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Would it be clear to an average teacher, after reviewing the instructional materials, what <u>prior competence</u> a learner would need to begin the program? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Are progress tests, unit tests or mastery tests included or recommended, which <u>relate directly</u> to the instructional material? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Is there assessment of how the students can use their reading ability <u>in real-life situations</u> ? | YES
<input type="checkbox"/> | NO
<input type="checkbox"/> |

SUMMARY RATING: Summarize your rating of the quality of the ASSESSMENT. Mark an X in ONE of the boxes below.



OVERALL RATING

Please indicate your OVERALL RATING for the material under review, in terms of potential for successful use in adult basic reading instruction, by (a) marking an X in one of the boxes on the scale below, and (b) adding your subjective comments.



Comments:

CANADIAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION ORGANIZES FOR ATTACK ON ILLITERACY

Jean Orpwood, Chairperson of CLA's Action for Literacy Committee has asked the Presidents of the Provincial Library Associations for their assistance in letting her Committee know what is happening within each of the provincial associations and within the province in relation to literacy activities.

The Committee has established a seven point program which it will be "vigorously pursuing for the rest of 1979 and on into 1980." The Committee plans to set up a clearinghouse newsletter for use by all CLA members and members of the provincial Library Associations. For any further information contact:

Action for Literacy Committee, c/o Gwen Liu, Toronto Public Library, 40 Orchard View Blvd., Toronto, Ontario, M4R 1B9.

Canadian Library Association policy statement passed by Council, February 21, 1979:

CLA recognizes its responsibility, through its members, of cooperating with, supporting and sponsoring programs which promote literacy.

OBJECTIVES of the Canadian Library Association Action for Literacy Committee:

1. To lay the foundations in CLA for an ongoing action program that addresses the problem of Canadian literacy.
2. To heighten awareness of the problem of literacy (and the legitimacy of library involvement in this problem) among Library Boards, Chief Librarian, Trustees and library staff and institutions of library education.
3. To join with existing agencies to heighten public awareness of the literacy problem.
4. To devise a mechanism for coordinating and disseminating information about ongoing literacy programs.
5. To promote the development and evaluation of suitable literacy materials.
6. To relate and cooperate with other CLA Committees and other library associations which have common concerns about literacy; to coordinate CLA Committee activities;
7. To formulate a plan of approach to both Provincial and Federal governments which will insist that they recognize and acknowledge publicly the problem of literacy in Canada, and that they act on this acknowledgment by providing appropriate funding.

NEWS FROM... BRITISH COLUMBIA

ACTION B.C.

In the spring of 1978, Adult Basic Educators in British Columbia entrusted a caretaker committee with the establishment of a provincial association for individuals interested in Adult Basic Education. In February of 1979, the Registrar of Societies approved the Association's Charter. members of the Caretaker Committee are Ron Bowcott, Fraser Valley College, Barbara Bawmar, Douglas College, Ron Fussell, Vancouver City College, Dan Henslow, CEIC, Bob Irvine, Capilano College, Nora Minogue, Douglas College and Donna Stainsby, Delta ,School District.

Memberships are currently being offered to adult basic educators in B.C. Colleges and School Districts, and the First Annual General meeting will be held on May 31, 1979 at the Richmond Campus of Douglas College. Election of Officers will take place at that time.

Barbara Bawmar,
Douglas College,
P.O. Box 2503,
New Westminster, B.C.
V3L 5B2

Gerrie Jackson,
College of New Caledonia,
2001 Central Street,
Prince George, B.C.
V2N 1P8

In conjunction with the First Annual General meeting for the Adult Basic Education Society of British Columbia, The Ministry of Education will re sponsoring an ABE workshop".

In this workshop the ABE discussion paper will be discussed and specialized training will be offered in the areas of teaching the adult handicapped and the Native Indian.

David Thomas of Northern Lights College, Gerrie Jackson of the College of New Caledonia and David Harrison at Malaspina College have agreed to act as contact persons outside of the Lower Mainland. Any adult basic educators who are interested in joining the association or in getting more information about it can contact these individuals outside the Lower Mainland or the members of the caretaker committee.

David Thomas,
Northern Lights College,
10908 - 100th Street,
Fort St. John, B.C.
V1J 3Z6

David Harrison,
Malaspina College,
900 - 5th Street,
Nanaimo, B.C.
V9R 5S5

ALBERTA



Alberta Educational Communications Corporation

THE ALBERTA LITERACY PROJECT RESEARCH IS
COMPLETE AND THE REPORT IS IN.

WE WISH TO THANK YOU FOR THE IMPORTANT
CONTRIBUTION WHICH YOU MADE TO OUR
RESEARCH.

Peter Messaline, Miriam Newhouse
Researchers

Michele Welsh
Project Coordinator

NALA NEWS

New Council: Florenceville

Northern Carleton Literacy Council
Frances Crompton, Chmn.
Box 65
Florenceville, N.B., E0J 2B0 Inverness
Inverness

Area Literacy Council
Rankin MacDonald, Chmn.
Box 573
Inverness, N.S. B0E 1N0

Fort Erie

Adult Literacy Council of Fort Erie
Verna Teal, Chmn.
499 Ridge Road
Ridgeway, Ontario, L0S 1N0
Sussex

Sussex and Area Literacy Council
Erma MacCaulay, Chmn.
14 Hillside Crescent
Sussex, N.B., E0E 1P0

EASTERN CANADA REGIONAL CONFERENCE

This biennial event is all set for HAMILTON, Ontario. The locale is McMaster University and the dates are June 1-3, 1979.

It's hard to believe that two years have elapsed since the last conference in HALIFAX.

The host council The Hamilton and District Literacy Council are looking forward to a great event.

Incidentally, the Council has a new office address:

Hamilton and District Literacy Council
Suite 202
212 James Street South
HAMILTON, Ontario
L8P 3B1

SASKATCHEWAN

UPDATE ON LITERACY PROJECT - SASKATOON

by Roy Bourk

The Audrey Thomas study "Adult Basic Education and Literacy Activities in Canada 1975-76" has suggested that there is a large segment of the Saskatchewan population that is not functionally literate. According to the study, there are 200,000 adult in the province with less than a Grade 9 education of which approximately 20% has less than Grade 5.

On December 11, 1978 a meeting was held to examine the issue of adult literacy in Saskatoon. Those participating wanted to see some further action take place to assist those adults in our community who might want to learn to read and write. As a result a steering committee was formed to carry out the recommendations of the meeting.

The plan is to train volunteer teachers and match them with individual who want to learn how to read. A campaign to reach non-readers, potential volunteers and to generally heighten public awareness of an illiteracy problem that exists, will utilize public service announcements on radio and T.V. The Program Development Branch, Dept. of Continuing Education recently provided funding for the production of 6 video shorts and 6 audio shorts (1 min. each) that could be used in an advertising campaign. Sask Media in conjunction with the Community College, have just completed the production of these tapes.

Presently in Saskatoon the Community College utilizes approximately 25 volunteers to instruct non-readers, and the Public Library has increased its collection of Basic Learning Materials.

Now funding is needed to hire a project coordinator. We will begin when we have sufficient funding for the first year of operation. The job description is:

1. Advertise including use of Sask. Media produced T.V. and radio promotions the opportunity for non-readers to learn to read with a volunteer tutor and the need for volunteers.
2. Select, train and supervise volunteers. A short training course for trainers of volunteers should be a prerequisite.
3. Match volunteers with learners on a one to one basis. Provide materials and follow up for each match.
4. Promote literacy campaign to city agencies and solicit funding.
5. Review and order materials.

The Aid Centre in Saskatoon has offered to provide 24 hour phone answering service to receive callers who respond to the literacy advertising campaign.

SASKATCHEWAN

34 Literacy conference The Leader-Post Regina, Saskatchewan **Friday, May 4, 1979**

Secrets of the written word revealed in unique project

**By Wesley Dearham
of The Leader-Post**

YORKTON - About 20 conference delegates in a classroom waited expectantly Thursday as a nervous Minnie Podhanuk and her confident pupil, a man in his late 30s, took their place at the front of the room.

The tutor and pupil had worked together for 80 hours in past months to give the man an ability that is almost certain to open up a new world of experience to him.

With confidence, some effort and occasional coaching from Mrs. Podhanuk, the man read:

"My name is Philip..." Charting his way across the hand printed passage with a pencil for a pointer, he pronounced the words deliberately, clearly with but an occasional stumble until he finished:

"In the morning. I go for mail. I meet my friends; I talk to them. I have a very good life."

The small conference broke into enthusiastic applause since, before November, Philip was unable to read or write.

Now, he wrote on the blackboard words which Mrs. Podhanuk dictated to him, carefully considering the sound that each letter represents. "Now watch my mouth," the teacher said, drawing out her pronunciation of a word for emphasis: "j-u-m-p."

"Philip wrote that word and a few others. More applause. Philip, who for years has suffered the frustrations of a learning disability with little benefit of remedial education, as well as being illiterate, has begun to unscramble the once-mysterious code which most people today take for granted - the written word.

The teacher and pupil were guests at the first provincial literacy conference which continues today at Yorkton Regional High School. Their hometown and Philip's last name are not mentioned here to maintain some degree of confidentiality because many students are shy about their illiteracy.

First of its kind

These two are among some 40 pairs of volunteer tutors and students throughout the region of Parkland Community College who are participants in Saskatchewan's first rural program to teach illiterate adults how to read. The conference is intended for delegates to use their knowledge gained about teaching methods employed in the Parkland pilot project, to start similar projects elsewhere in the province.

Regina and Saskatoon have had literacy projects for a few years. However, Verna Scott, literacy project coordinator for Parkland Community College, pointed out there are special problems in trying to organize a literacy project in rural areas, specially in matching volunteers with students and coordinating the program where travel distances are great.

Delegates were from several Saskatchewan community colleges. Canada Manpower Centre here, the Saskatchewan continuing education. department and agencies interested in job skill-training such as the Parkland Educational Employment Coordinating Committee and the Saskatchewan Council for Crippled Children and Adults.

Among the intentions of the conference is to establish a provincial organization that can assess the problem of illiteracy province-wide and attempt to solve it.

Dr. Alec Guy, deputy minister of continuing education, pointed out the re- search work on literacy by Audrey Thomas of Regina reveals Illiteracy still is a great problem.

"Her findings should make us all somewhat uncomfortable. In comparison with developing nations, Canada is a land of great wealth. Yet it appears we still have a serious problem with approximately 40 per cent of our population defined as functionally illiterate. The extent of the problem is likely similar in Saskatchewan.

But he said Saskatchewan's unique system of community colleges is an advantage in trying to help illiterate adults.

Students will benefit from a literacy project in a number of ways, Guy said. "They will learn to read and write, they will qualify for better employment opportunities, they will enjoy personal growth.

"The tutors, while they may occasionally become frustrated, will derive great personal satisfaction from their unselfish, direct, personal service to others." Mrs. Scott, who for eight months has coordinated the Parkland project, said Thursday she discerned considerable interest at the

conference in forming a provincial organization.

However, events on Friday afternoon will determine if one is to be formed. One of the main fears she and others have expressed is whether such a large-scale venture would have adequate funding.

SASKATCHEWAN

The Leader-Post Regina, Saskatchewan Friday, May 4, 1979, p.34

Literacy Program will Continue

YORKTON (Staff) - A report on the progress of Parkland Community College's literacy pilot project will be completed in June, project coordinator Verna Scott told the first provincial literacy conference Thursday.

The conference, which lasts through Friday, is to exchange ideas about how to run similar projects to overcome illiteracy in other parts of rural Saskatchewan.

Mrs. Scott; who recently was informed she will be re-hired to coordinate the project for a second 10-month period starting in September, told The Leader-Post that even though 40 pairs of volunteer tutors and students have been matched since the first ones began their lessons in November, there still is a constant demand from illiterate persons in the region who want to be included in the program.

She said the project to date has been successful.

Can be anyone

Mrs. Scott told the conference the volunteer tutors need no previous teaching experience to become tutors. Some elementary school teachers even have found the preparatory workshops of the literacy project to be beneficial in their school work.

All volunteers are trained using a method pioneered by Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) which started in Syracuse, N.Y. in 1962 through the efforts of a housewife, Ruth Colvin, who was concerned about illiteracy in her neighbourhood.

LVA now has more than 80 affiliates and associates, with well over 10,000 students, in North America.

Last year, Parkland Community College became an affiliate in partnership with Parkland Regional Library and the Saskatchewan continuing education department.

LVA provides a training method for tutors, achieved through workshops, materials and instruction of testing methods but the organization allows tutors to use any technique that works for an individual student, as long as basic guidelines are followed.

"LVA has good solid techniques," Mrs. Scott said when considering whether a Canadian method

is needed. However, she added there is a need for Canadian variations on the program which provide statistics on illiteracy and references to everyday life in teaching materials which are relevant to Canada.

"A Canadian movement is essential also to make it known to the Canadian public what problems exist," she said.

When advertising for tutors, they should be made aware of their obligations as volunteers, Mrs. Scott told the conference.

They have an obligation to keep their student-tutor relationship confidential, to attend a training workshop and to provide instruction for at least 50 hours a year, excluding summer months. That usually is spread out over two hours per week.

She outlined several items in considering the costs of running such a program.

A program coordinator is needed to do ground work, train tutors and match students even though some projects in North America have been run entirely with volunteer help.

She said volunteers need someone to consult when they have questions. Instructors' fees are nonexistent, although it is estimated that if tutors were paid it would cost a total of \$32,000 over 10 months.

Support costs are minimal if secretarial staff already exists in a college which can handle the extra load but Parkland college has one person working part-time on administration of the project.

Cost of materials and resources was \$1,100 with the continuing education department and regional library splitting the cost evenly.

Students normally are asked to supply their own writing materials but there other cost to them.

Other Colleges which have expressed interest or have already started volunteer tutorial programs include:

*Mistikwa
Cumberland
Carlton Trail
Coteau Range
Cypress Hills
and South East Region.*

There is also support from several regional libraries.

Item: The Saskatchewan Library Association held a literacy work shop as part of its annual conference on April 27 in Saskatoon.

Item: The six video shorts mentioned by Roy Bourk in his article were previewed at the parkland literacy conference. They should be ready for use soon.

Item: At a recent community college conference a resolution was passed which called for the government and the colleges to examine the full implication of the right of all adults to an education to the grade 12 level .

Item: The university of Saskatchewan in cooperation with Regina plains Community College has been offering an off campus credit course in Adult Basic Education. Instructor: Audrey M. Thomas

HUMAN INTEREST STORIES

Learning to read

Anew Lease on life

**By Ken Cuthbertson
of Weekender**

Phyllis Ripplinger will remember her trip to Chicago as long as she lives.

It was last April when the 74-year-old Regina resident flew to visit her daughter, who lives near the Windy City. She arrived at the O'Hare International Airport in the couple of hours it normally takes to fly there from Regina. And then the trouble started.

It took her four hours to find her way out of the terminal. It wasn't that the building is any more confusing than any other large airport complex.

No, the problem was that Mrs. Ripplinger was unable to read and understand the exit signs. It sounds crazy like a situation from a bad television comedy - but for Mrs. Ripplinger it was more of a nightmare than a laugh. "I was nervous, so nervous, and my face was sweating. I was really scared," she recalls. "People I asked directions from kept pointing and saying to look for such-and-such a sign. One young student said he was in too much of a hurry to show me the way himself, but he offered to write down the directions."

Written directions would have been little help to Mrs. Ripplinger or, for that matter to millions of other Canadians.

Since 1973, 106 volunteer tutors in Regina have been trained to work one-on-one with the 126 persons who have requested help in learning to read or in upgrading rusty basic skills.

They've ranged in age from the early 20s to Mrs. Ripplinger's 74 years.

Phyllis Ripplinger, one of 12 children, was born and raised on a farm near Odessa (41 kms. east of Regina). Her German-speaking immigrant parents were from the Crimea-area of Russia.

"My mother and father were pioneers and they had a hard life. They worked five from five in the morning till seven or eight o'clock at night. My parents needed us to work on the farm with them. Everybody worked, so there wasn't much time for schooling or reading. I only went to school to Grade 2," Mrs. Ripplinger says.

She married and moved to Regina in 1944. Like her mother, she was too busy raising a family to enjoy the luxury of reading.

But reading isn't only a luxury; it can also be a necessity. Think what it's like to be unable to read signs, newspapers, books, even the simple instructions on a food package.

Mrs. Ripplinger got by, though. Whenever there was anything to read, friends, neighbours and her eight children helped out.

"All my life, I wished I could read and do things for myself," Mrs. Ripplinger says. "When my children grew up and moved away they wrote me letters. I couldn't read them myself, so I had to get someone to answer them for me."

Mrs. Ripplinger's wishes were granted when her teacher-son, Hank, heard about the library's adult-reading program. He encouraged his mother to join and she was all for the idea.

That was a year ago. Today, Mrs. Ripplinger can read. Her tutor, Elsa Turek, who meets her for an hour or so each week, says Mrs. Ripplinger is at a Grade 3 level and learning fast.

Being able to read Grade 3 readers might not impress some people, but it's a start and Mrs. Ripplinger, her friends and family are justifiably proud of her. At last, she's got her toe in the door to the world of reading.

excerpted from The Weekender

Regina Leader-post, Saturday, May 19, 1979

MANITOBA

Excerpt from letter of student in the Reading and spelling program of the International Centre, Winnipeg, to the Citizenship council of Manitoba

...I am thinking back to the time we came to Canada. Entering Winnipeg my heart was beating very much. I thought, "How will it be, how will the future turn out, I don't understand the language, I don't know how to read and write..." All the students like the system, the plan, the way they are teaching at the centre. I am sure if the system would be changed, our class would shrink totally and that would be the end. It is nice to be able to read the newspaper and take part in the needs and enjoyments of our country.

It's nice to read a good English book, it's nice to write English letters and receive some in the same language and it nice to be a good citizen, but all this wouldn't be possible if we wouldn't know how to read and how to write.

I personally love Canada from the depth of my heart. I love the people in Winnipeg and I really love the teachers at the centre. I am so thankful for our government which keeps the Centre alive, where hundreds and hundreds foreign people learn the English language in writing, reading and conversation. With our coming to Canada we chose the best country in the world.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

Type of work: Volunteer Reading Aide - Winnipeg

Purpose: To help an English-speaking adult learn basic reading and writing skills in a one-to-one tutoring relationship.

Training: A ten-hour Volunteer Reading Aides workshop, plus later in-service training opportunities.

Place of work: In a reading center (such as a school, church or library), in student's or tutor's home, or in some other place mutually agreed upon by the student and tutor.

Hours: Meet twice weekly, if at all possible; each session should be one to one-and-a-half hours long.

Duration of job: Approximately one year, minimum.

- Duties:
1. Attend a ten-hour Volunteer Reading Aides workshop.
 2. Tutor at least once (preferably twice) a week, 1-1½ hours a session.
 3. Provide support and encouragement to your student however possible.
 4. Work to meet the immediate needs and interests of your student.
 5. Report to student-tutor coordinator on student's progress once a month.
 6. Keep a written record of student progress and hours tutored.

Qualifications: Dependable and prompt, interested in others and able to relate to persons of different backgrounds than yours, willing to prepare lessons and tutor regularly; not easily discouraged; a sense of humor is helpful.

Benefits: Heightened perception of the world and persons around you, deepened understanding of values and lifestyles differing from your own, making of new friends.

ONTARIO

Ontarians are busy with committee work, organizing new groups, putting out local Newsletters and the usual consciousness-raising. TV Ontario continues to be interested in adult literacy and librarians are pushing for collection, acquisition and production of materials. (See last page of this issue for more on the latter.)

** One new, interesting group which has formed is The *Lorman Association*, a self-help group for adults with learning and perceptual difficulties. Many of these adults have known the pain of illiteracy caused by their special handicaps.

The group has a membership pamphlet and established objectives. For further information write to: The Lorman Association, 2 Grandstand Place, Suite 202,
TORONTO, Ontario, M4H 1E2
or phone: (416) 423-1116

** The Literacy Committee of the London Council for Adult Education has started a Literacy Newsletter and Project Operation Literacy has received full funding from the Young Canada Works program to employ three persons to search out and write material for adult new readers.



FRONTIER COLLEGE INNOVATES IN URBAN TORONTO:

The College is nearly eight decades old. It is Canada's oldest adult education institution, and to everyone's surprise, the College has maintained a record of significant innovation decade after decade a unique achievement in Canadian history. Because we are small, we often lose sight of the importance, and the impact, of the model that Frontier College has set for people and institutions over these years.

Early in February, Frontier initiated yet another experimental program with a new constituency - Injured Workers. On a pilot basis, Rafael Ramirez is coordinating a volunteer program to: (a) provide literacy/upgrading opportunities in the Workmen's Compensation Hospital in Downsview in the evenings, and (b) on release to arrange for a local contact person to work with the injured worker to develop an appropriate educational program to meet their personal requirements. There is significant concern about health and safety in the work place across Canada. If for no other reason than the fact that Canada loses six times as many work days per year through injuries as it does through strikes, and we lose many thousands of man years to strikes. The problem costs hundreds of millions of dollars. Our program is a germ of an idea that may be a small portion of the solution to the short term requirements of some injured workers.

from *The Best of Chimo*

NOVA SCOTIA

In Nova Scotia, the Task Force on Adult Literacy submitted a proposal early in the fall. During the month of march the Task Force began its Meetings with the interest groups, agencies and organizations in the Truro area who are in frequent contact with adults having low literacy skills. Through our discussion with them we attempted to define literacy in terms of skills and competency levels required for effective functioning in society.

Many groups were represented: school boards, the children's Aid Society, social services, the local literacy council, police Departments, legal aid, parole service, Native peoples, organizations and the clergy. The interest displayed was impressive.

The task force intends to meet with interest groups in five other regions of Nova Scotia within the next few months and from these meetings they hope to define the needs so that a suitable approach to literacy education can be made.

Early in March a one-day workshop for literacy teachers was held in Halifax. Teachers from Manpower programs, volunteers and teachers in school board operated programs took part. There were about twenty five people in attendance.

Sessions were held on constructing materials, learning disabilities in the adult, the language experience approach, methods of adult education and developing Reading comprehension . At the dinner, Mr. Thomas M Jones, Director, Adult Education spoke on "The Future of Literacy Education in Nova Scotia

* * * * *

NEW BRUNSWICK

In January of 1976, Thelma Blinn and Ann Haughan came over from Halifax to Saint John to put on a literacy workshop at the request of a church social worker, Ruth Wilson. This marked the beginning of adult basic literacy work in New Brunswick, through volunteer Laubach literacy councils. The last two years have shown an amazing interest and awareness in the problems of illiteracy in our province with an ever-growing number of volunteers, both tutors and students becoming actively involved. The statistical fact, that New Brunswick has 59,000 adults over the age of fifteen with less than grade 5 education, is reaching the public including human service groups, education classes, libraries, churches and the man on the street - both the non-reader and the reader.

Presently there are thirteen literacy councils across New Brunswick, with a regular need to train more volunteers as the students come forward. The chairman of the Fredericton Literacy Council, Joyce Astle, recently commented on how remarkable it is that they have over 50 pairs working now, compared to the fall of 1977 when the New Brunswick Community College offered a beginning readers' course in Fredericton and only had six

applicants which was an insufficient number to merit a course.

With a large population of French-speaking non-readers, the need has naturally come for a French parallel. A program from Montreal has been adopted and somewhat modified in order to provide a similar service for French-speaking New Brunswickers. This program is presently in use in the Grand Falls and Moncton areas.

Councils across the province are either being approached by the media, or are being welcomed when they approach the media. This includes television, both local and provincial stations, radio, newspapers and so on. In Saint John, the United Way approached the council about covering our financial costs and gave us \$2400.00 for our work in 1979. This total excludes the cost of the Laubach materials which New Brunswick Community College covers for each literacy council in the province. The College supports the councils in this matter because they recognize that they could not feasibly provide such a service at this time. For example, in Saint John with over 6,000 non-readers, there is one BJRT program with a capacity of 15 to 20 students. Although an individual could improve his basic reading and writing skills in this program, the emphasis is on more general life-skills and social preparation for the work force.

Since January 1976, the council in Saint John has trained close to 170 volunteers to be tutors. Of these 170, there are a number who are no longer actively involved because, for one reason or another they could not undertake the commitment and responsibility. At the present time, however, we have over 80 active student-tutor pairs of whom we are very proud. There has been a noted increase in the awareness when measured in terms of the number of personal and agency requests for tutoring and those willing to tutor.

At the end of a recent training workshop in Saint John, two tutors handed in some interesting written comments. One, a fellow in his late twenties, came because he had left school early without learning to read and write. He wanted to help someone to learn, because there was no one around to help him when he was struggling to teach himself. The other person, a young single parent on social assistance, wrote-as part of her evaluation of the workshop-the following comments. "I think that what is most helpful is how the Literacy Council is organized and the materials the government is supplying also. This course makes you feel you are here for a purpose. This is better than taking a course through manpower. Anyone that can read and write can teach someone that can't. Because you're getting right down to facts.

" Providing the opportunity for people to learn how to read and write, if they so desire, i.e. adult basic literacy, is at times a very stimulating and exciting movement in which to participate. There is no disputing that enthusiasm and energy grow and multiply with the contact from others in sharing similar concerns and desires, whether as the local, provincial or national level.

-Cathy Wright

NEWFOUNDLAND

"TO BE A CITIZEN IS TO READ" -Conference held March 9-11, 1979.

40% of Newfoundland Adults have less than a Grade 8 education. Statistics Canada '76.

This was one of the many facts brought out at the weekend conference on Literacy and Human Rights sponsored by the Bay St. George Branch of the Newfoundland and Labrador Association for Adult Education.

The provincial conference brought together 53 participants representing three major groups: the government/business sector, volunteer associations, and people who have reading problems. Held at the Bay St. George Community College in Stephenville, the conference featured a simulation maze that gave participants a feeling of what it is like to be a non-reader in today's society, & discussion on literacy and human rights which featured panelists Norman Whalen of the Newfoundland & Labrador Human Rights Association; Fred Coates provincial Human Rights Commissioner; Tom Grace - President of the N.T.A. Reading Council and Charles Craig President of The Movement for Canadian Literacy.

** Does Newfoundland Society Place Enough Emphasis on Adult Literacy? Jury Rules an Emphatic 'NO' **

A Mock Trial was held on Saturday afternoon and heard from eleven witnesses representing many government agencies, voluntary organizations and non-readers themselves. The remaining conference participants heard their testimony and voted an emphatic 'no' to the question posed.

** Non-Reading Delegates Make Greatest Contribution

A wide variety of both government groups and voluntary associations were represented at the Conference. However, the greatest contribution to the conference was made by participants who are presently in the process of overcoming their reading problems. This group, represented by adult students from Labrador and all parts of Newfoundland, including the Northern Peninsula brought personal examples of problems encountered by people in a society that places great emphasis on literacy skills.

Among the various recommendations from this conference, was one that stressed the need for a major awareness effort to be directed towards the general public, government, private and voluntary organizations.

The conference was funded by the Secretary of State Department.

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A letter from Ann-Marie Downie included this paragraph on Newfoundland:

They are doing interesting things in Newfoundland in literacy. I was over for a few days this month and viewed some adult evening classes. The division of Adult and continuing Education has placed Adult Literacy Training on the top of its priority list for this year and they show a definite commitment to this. A new Adult Basic Reading program was developed and it began operation in the fall. It is designed for classroom use with a maximum of six students whose reading level is below Grade V. The program uses no hardware and a minimum of resources, so it is very portable. At present, there are about 40 classes in operation throughout the province

PUBLICATIONS

Review of the "Procedures Manual of the Adult Right-to-Read project of the Vermont Adult Basic Education Program 1975-1978 Addison and Rural Chittenden Counties, Vermont"

This project was funded by the Right-to-Read Project of the U.S. Office of Education and was part of the state of Vermont Adult Basic Education Program. It attempted to deliver individualized home instruction in reading, writing and related life skills to adults in a rural setting. The manual focuses on the organizational patterns used, not on the pedagogical techniques employed; essentially it answers the question of how to start and maintain a program to meet these needs. There are honest descriptions of what did work and what didn't work. One impressive point about the project was its suitability to the local conditions of geography, climate and culture.

After setting the stage in general terms and describing the staffing pattern, the first two parts of the manual deal in detail with the main actors: the students and the volunteer tutors. The remainder of the manual describes the support services of publicity, record keeping, staff development and instructional materials. Each section provides enough detail, including relevant quotations from people involved in the experience, to enable the readers to follow the developments and probably to duplicate the experience if desired.

A basic assumption of the project was that the responsibility for deciding what, when and how to learn was the student's. Related to this was the belief that the total problem belonged to the community and that community support was essential for success.

The basic staff pattern was to employ home tutors and coordinators of volunteers. The former group worked mainly locating the students and initiating their learning and the latter with the community volunteers. Everyone in the project was expected to do some teaching in order to keep in touch with the problems. Few ground rules were enforced: only confidentiality was insisted upon. Although the manual does not attempt to describe the pedagogical techniques, basically the experience approach was used.

The section dealing with students contains eleven parts describing all of the procedures used: from the recruitment of students, the initial contacts, diagnosis of students' goals, scheduling sessions, a "side trip down the garden path of motivation", the tutors' role in student motivation, materials, confidentiality, relationships and communication with local schools, small classes/groups and problems inherent in home tutoring.

A lot of useful detailed information is given in the section on locating, training and supporting volunteers. The original assumption was that the beginning student would be better off with a volunteer tutor rather than with a staff home tutor. This was found not to be the case. In general volunteers worked better with highly motivated students in relatively stable home situations.

Training procedures for volunteers evolved away from the formal pre-service orientation towards individualized training in the volunteers' homes, mainly after they had begun to work with a student. There was recognition of the fact that using a system of volunteers there was no guarantee of uniformity of instruction. These, and other limitations and strengths of using volunteers are

Our GOALS are: to inform publishers about adult illiteracy and its extent in Canada
to review currently available ABE reading materials
to indicate potential rise of Canadian ABE materials in Canadian programs and organizations
to ask publishers to respond to need for more Canadian ABE materials.

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