

Need help with basic reading,  
writing and numeracy skills?  
Do you want to help those who  
need assistance with these skills?  
Contact us for information!

## Common literacy terms defined:

**Literacy:** The ability to understand and use printed information in daily activities at home, at work, and in the community, to achieve one's goals and to develop one's knowledge and potential.

**Low literacy skills:** This term is used to describe the skill level of the millions of Canadians who have serious problems with reading, writing and math. These are non-readers who have severe difficulty with any printed material.

**Literacy council:** These are community-based groups comprised of Laubach volunteers, some of whom work to coordinate literacy training in the province and others who work as tutors helping New Brunswickers improve their reading, writing and other literacy skills. There are 14 Laubach literacy councils across the province and approximately 400 trained Laubach tutors.

**IALSS:** The International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS) is the Canadian component of the Adult Literacy and Life Skills study, which was a joint project of the Government of Canada, the US National Center for Education Statistics and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. The IALSS built on its predecessor, the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS), which was the world's first internationally comparative survey of adult literacy.

## Levels of literacy:

The most recent International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS) tested more than 23,000 Canadians on their proficiency in four domains: prose literacy (reading continuous text such as the type found in books, newspaper articles, brochures, instruction manuals); document literacy (reading text that is not continuous such as the type contained in graphs, charts, payroll forms, job applications); numeracy (math skills); and problem solving (analytical reasoning).

The following are the various literacy proficiency levels used in the IALSS research:

**Level 1:** have few basic skills and great difficulty with text

**Level 2:** have limited skills and cannot read well. At this level, an adult can deal only with material that is simply and clearly laid out.

**Level 3:** have a basic skill level but may have problems with more complex tasks. This is considered the minimum skill level for successful participation in society.

**Level 4 and 5:** have high levels of literacy, with a wide range of reading skills and many strategies for dealing with complex materials. Individuals at this level can meet most reading demands and can handle new reading challenges.

The results for New Brunswick in the IALSS are as follows:

**Prose literacy:** 56% of adults and youth over 16 scored in Level 1 or Level 2 (Canadian average in those levels: 48%)

**Document literacy:** 58% of adults and youth over 16 scored in Level 1 or Level 2 (Canadian average in those levels: 49%)

**Numeracy:** 65% of adults and youth over 16 scored in Level 1 or Level 2 (Canadian average in those levels: 55%)

**Problem-solving:** 81% of adults and youth over 16 scored in Level 1 or Level 2 (Canadian average in those levels: 72%)



Laubach Literacy



## Changing lives with Laubach: Teaching adults and youth to read and write

### Questions & Answers About Literacy in New Brunswick

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Laubach Literacy

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# Q&A

with Deanna Allen, Laubach Literacy New Brunswick executive director, and Peter Sawyer, Laubach Literacy New Brunswick board member and long-time “Each One Teach One” tutor and tutor-trainer:



## Q: What is Laubach Literacy New Brunswick?

*Deanna:* Laubach Literacy New Brunswick (LLNB) is a registered non-profit charitable organization that works throughout New Brunswick as part of a national and worldwide effort to help people improve their literacy skills. Through our affiliated literacy councils, LLNB trains and certifies volunteer tutors to teach skills, such as reading and writing, to New Brunswick adults and youth over the age of 16, using the proven “Each One Teach One” method. LLNB has also initiated a program in the province aimed at helping those under 16: Laubach Youth Earlier Intervention. Through this peer youth program, high school students are trained to help younger students improve their literacy skills. LLNB offers other services as well, such as family literacy and English as a Second Language programs. All tutoring is free and confidential.

## Q: What is the vision of Laubach Literacy New Brunswick?

*Deanna:* The results of the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS) were made public in November 2005. They show that the majority of adults and youth in New Brunswick over the age of 16 do not have the minimum literacy skills needed to cope with the demands of everyday life and work. In fact, more than 60% of New Brunswickers rated in the two lowest proficiency levels (Levels 1 and 2) when an average is taken of all four areas of literacy studied - prose literacy, document literacy, numeracy and problem solving. (Level 3 is considered the minimum skill level for

successful participation in society.) The national total saw 42% of Canadians rate in Levels 1 and 2. In Alberta, by comparison, 44% of residents rated in those levels across the four domains.

New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Nunavut were the only provinces in which residents scored below the national average in all four domains.

The vision of Laubach Literacy New Brunswick is to dramatically improve the state of literacy in this province. Our objective is to see that the citizens of New Brunswick embrace the goal of increasing the rate of literacy by 25 percentage points within the next 25 years. That's a 1% increase per year for 25 years. We feel that in a quarter century, at least 60% of the adult population can achieve reading, numeracy and problem-solving skills beyond Level 2.

As part of that goal, LLNB will need to dramatically increase the number of literacy councils in the province. But, LLNB cannot possibly achieve this goal on its own. It will take a broad, committed, long-term, province-wide effort involving every level of government and virtually all of our citizens.

## Q: What are some of the benefits of higher literacy levels?

*Deanna:* Literacy brings so many advantages, both to the individual student and society as a whole. Research shows that adults with higher literacy levels are healthier, less likely to live in poverty, and less apt to be involved in criminal activity. They also have more and better employment opportunities. As for our society in general, there are countless benefits, including improvements to the economy. Research indicates that a 1% increase in adult literacy produces a permanent 1.5% increase per year in gross domestic product. For Canada, that would result in a permanent increase of about \$18 billion per year!

## Q: What is the history of Laubach Literacy?

*Peter:* Canada's first Laubach tutor training workshop was held in Lunenburg County, N.S., in 1970. Laubach training is based on the work of Dr. Frank Laubach, an American who became involved in literacy in the 1930s while serving as a missionary in the Philippines. Dr. Laubach's “Each One Teach One” program has been used to teach approximately 60 million people to read in their own language. Laubach Literacy of Canada, an affiliate of ProLiteracy Worldwide, was incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1981. After more than a decade of pioneering work, Laubach Literacy New Brunswick was formed in 1983.

Today, Laubach Literacy of Canada is the country's largest volunteer literacy organization, with more than 150 community-based councils and over 8,000 active volunteers. In New Brunswick, there are currently 14 Laubach literacy councils and approximately 400 trained Laubach tutors. As well, Laubach Literacy New Brunswick is affiliated with the New Brunswick Provincial Partners in Literacy.

## Q: How can New Brunswickers get help with their literacy skills?

*Deanna:* Just call Laubach Literacy New Brunswick at **506-384-6371** or toll free at **1-877-633-8899**. You will be directed to your nearest community-based literacy council and linked to a trained, certified “Each One Teach One” tutor. You can also contact your local literacy council directly for help. Visit the LLNB web site at [www.nald.ca/lnb.htm](http://www.nald.ca/lnb.htm) and click on “councils” for local information.

## Q: I have a family member or friend who I think would benefit from this training. How should I approach them to discuss this?

*Deanna:* Give them our number and encourage them to call! It could mean huge benefits for their life and work. Assure them that the program is very flexible and designed to meet the individual student's needs. Students learn in a place and at a time that suits them. Also, remind them that they are not alone. Let them know that they are among millions in Canada who face similar problems – and that they will be among millions who have learned to read using this method. Laubach exists to help them learn to read now!

## Q: I'm interested in volunteering as a Laubach Literacy tutor. What does it involve?

*Peter:* Laubach Literacy New Brunswick provides tutors with an orientation to literacy issues, ten hours of basic tutor training, access to a variety of teaching and learning materials and ongoing support from the Student/ Tutor Coordinator. LLNB asks volunteer tutors to commit to working one-to-one with a student for one year, two to three hours a week. There is a great deal of flexibility in the program for both volunteer tutors and students. To find out more about volunteering with Laubach Literacy New Brunswick, call **384-6371** or **1-877-633-8899**.

## Q: Is this a confidential service?

*Peter:* Absolutely. It's completely private and sessions are held on a one-to-one basis. A location for the tutoring

sessions is arranged at a time and place convenient to both the student and the tutor. Typically, the student and tutor will meet once a week, in a location such as a school, church or public library. Tutors use the Laubach “Each One Teach One” program as well as a variety of other supplementary materials that reflect the student's interests and abilities. Some tutors will continue with their students in further academic studies and others will refer individuals to a Community Adult Learning Program (CALP), formerly known as the Community Academic Services Program (CASP), if the student is interested in working towards his or her grade 12 diploma.

## Q: I am a business owner and would like some of my employees to upgrade their reading and writing skills? Can Laubach Literacy New Brunswick help?

*Deanna:* Definitely. Just call Laubach and we'd be happy to discuss a program for your workplace.

## Q: How can I help enhance the goals of Laubach Literacy New Brunswick?

*Deanna:* There are many ways you can help: by signing up as a volunteer tutor or contributing a financial or in-kind donation, or simply by spreading the word about Laubach! Feel free to call us any time for more information: **384-6371** or **1-877-633-8899**.

The New Brunswickers pictured on the cover learned to read through a Laubach tutoring program. The four are featured in a televised public service announcement aimed at increasing awareness of Laubach programs.