

PBLA Practice Guidelines FAQ

Supporting Learners - Literacy, Additional Support Requirements, Multi-Level Classes

QUESTION	ANSWER
<p>What is the process for assigning or removing a literacy designation (an “L”) from a learner’s CLB level?</p>	<p>While programs and teachers have experience with literacy and literacy learners, at present, only a trained CLB assessor using an approved literacy placement test can assign a literacy (“L”) designation: <i>“Inputting data for ESL Literacy learners in data management systems ESL Literacy learners should be clearly identified as requiring Literacy supports. Assessors should also provide details of the learner’s previous education and whether she is literate in her first language.”</i></p> <p>In terms of removing an “L” designation, the ESL for ALL document notes that a learner with Reading and Writing CLB 4L <i>“does not have the same underlying knowledge, concepts and strategies as a literate learner”</i> and <i>“may require ongoing literacy support”</i> even if they can function in a regular ESL class (pages 62 & 97). Removing an assessor-assigned L before CLB 5 is therefore not advised until IRCC provides further clarification of the evidence needed and process to be followed to determine that learners do not require any literacy support. The CCLB has asked IRCC for this clarification and process and will update the field when it is received.</p> <p><u>Links</u> -National Placement and Progression Guidelines (August 2013) https://www.language.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/National_Placement_Guidelines_2014-1.pdf</p>
<p>What benchmarks are literacy learners (Foundation to CLB 4L) working toward? How much evidence is needed to assign a completed benchmark to a literacy learner? (from 2019-2020 FAQ)</p>	<p>As guided by the <u>National Placement and Progression Guidelines</u> (page 4) and the <u>ESL for ALL</u> document (page 1), all learners including literacy learners are working toward the benchmark that is one level higher than their placement designation.</p> <p>A learner with a Literacy-Foundation designation in Reading and Writing is working toward CLB 1 in those skill areas and will achieve a designation of CLB 1L when complete, with the L indicating the continuing need for literacy accommodations as guided by the ESL for ALL document. Similarly, a learner with a completed CLB 2L is working towards CLB 3L.</p> <p>Sufficient evidence per skill area (aiming toward 8 to 10 artefacts: balance of skill-using and assessment tasks) is needed to determine a completed benchmark for all learners. Note that the balance of skill-using versus assessment tasks may differ for literacy versus mainstream learners in Reading and Writing. An example can be found in the PLS <u>ESL Literacy Expectations</u>.</p> <p>Further guidance on building Literacy Portfolios can be found in Part 1 Literacy Series: Literacy Tasks Analysis Part 2 Literacy Series: Literacy Portfolio Expectations Part 3 Literacy Series: Identifying Learners’ ESL Literacy Needs</p>

	<p>Links National Placement and Progression Guidelines -https://www.language.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/National_Placement_Guidelines_2014-1.pdf</p>
<p>What accommodations can be made for literacy learners during listening and reading skill-using or assessment tasks? (from 2019-2020 FAQ)</p>	<p>The ESL for ALL Support Kit outlines accommodations and adaptations for literacy learners doing skill-using and assessment tasks in all skill areas. For receptive tasks, for example, questions may be asked orally and answers recorded by the teacher or teacher assistant.</p> <p>Further guidance can be found in the Professional Learning Sessions Literacy Series: Part 1 Literacy Series: Literacy Task Analysis Part 2 Literacy Series: Literacy Portfolio Expectations Part 3 Literacy Series: Identifying Learners' ESL Literacy Needs</p>
<p>What can be done to help overwhelmed literacy learners keep their portfolios organized? (from 2019-2020 FAQ)</p>	<p>Scheduling, routine and taking time to organize portfolios in class are helpful for all learners to build autonomy, and are essential for literacy learners. Further guidance can be found in the Professional Learning Session Part 2 Literacy Series: Literacy Portfolio Expectations (slide 22).</p>
<p>What should be done with a learner who may have an undiagnosed learning disability? (from 2019-2020 FAQ)</p>	<p>First of all, a distinction must be made between a learning <u>disability</u> and a learning <u>difficulty</u>.</p> <p>A learning <u>disability</u> is a neurological disorder. Teachers without specialized training should not attempt to diagnose or teach to a suspected learning disability in a learner. A referral to an agency specializing in learning disabilities should be made for the learner.</p> <p>By contrast, learning <u>difficulties</u> may be associated with literacy needs, age, trauma, health, stress or other factors. Learners with learning difficulties may require more individual attention and time to understand information and demonstrate gains in skills. Program support should be sought to address learners with learning difficulties. For example, volunteers or teaching assistants may be provided, or the learner may be referred to other local resources or agencies for support.</p> <p>Reference -article on learning difficulties: <u>Identification, Assessment, and Instruction of English Language Learners with Learning Difficulties in the Elementary and Intermediate Grades, A guide for educators in Ontario school boards</u> (March, 2014) by Vicki Adelson, Esther Geva, and Christie Fraser</p>
<p>How can we help learners with special needs who are staying in classes for a long time? (from 2020-2021 FAQ)</p>	<p>“Special needs” covers a very wide range of possibilities that can impact learning: age, literacy, physical and mental health, trauma, disabilities (aural, visual, developmental and learning) and even socioeconomic challenges that impact concentration and attendance. Some of these factors may present as learning difficulties while others require a professional diagnosis through referral to a specialized agency. Teachers can make accommodations in class for problems that are observed or</p>

	<p>disclosed by the learner, but should not be referring to formal labels such as “learning disability” that need to be assigned by health professionals. Rather, Admin support should be sought by the teacher to make referrals to community agencies with the expertise to deal with the various medical needs. Note that a Canadian Language Benchmarks document for the Deaf document is available for specialized LINC programs teaching ASL to deaf newcomers.</p> <p>If literacy issues are suspected, teachers can make use of the informal Literacy Diagnostic Tasks (LDT) to determine if ESL for ALL strategies need to be applied: <i>“The Literacy Diagnostic Tasks are intended to be used by classroom instructors to determine the current skills and abilities of their English as a Second Language (ESL) adult literacy learners. Diagnostic information is a critical component of a learner-centred approach, and these tasks can help instructors to identify gaps in knowledge, skills and strategies in order to design lesson plans that target specific needs. ... The LDT includes 20 diagnostic tasks. The tasks are not linked to one another and are not meant to be administered in sequence. Instead, the instructor can pick and choose tasks based on what he or she needs to determine or understand about a learner’s literacy ability.”</i> The LDT can be found by going to the CCLB website and downloading the document here. https://www.language.ca/product/pdf-e-022-clb-ldt/</p> <p>Learners with learning difficulties that do not require a specialized diagnosis often require more individual attention and time to understand information and demonstrate gains in skills. Program support should be sought to address learners with learning difficulties. For example, volunteers or teaching assistants may be provided, or the learner may be referred to other local resources or agencies for support. The ESL for ALL document offers suggestions for accommodations that can also be applied to learners with learning difficulties.</p> <p><u>Reference</u> -article on learning difficulties: <u>Identification, Assessment, and Instruction of English Language Learners with Learning Difficulties in the Elementary and Intermediate Grades, A guide for educators in Ontario school boards</u> (March, 2014) by Vicki Adelson, Esther Geva, and Christie Fraser -CLBs for the deaf https://www.language.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/CLB-Deaf-Addendum_July-2019_FINAL.pdf</p>
<p>What is the expectation for number of levels to assess in a class? (from 2019-2020 FAQ)</p>	<p>The number of levels of assessment in a class is negotiated between a provider and the funder based on the demographics of the area. IRCC guidelines state that where possible, teachers are not expected to assess more than 3 CLB levels.</p> <p>The <u>National Placement and Progression Guidelines</u> provides guidance in placing learners in integrated courses that cover all four language skills (generally, a single level of assessment in all four skill areas). There are Professional Learning Sessions on <u>Supporting Learner Progress</u> and <u>Multilevel Assessment</u> to help teachers when multilevel assessment is required to meet the demographic needs of an area or to benefit learners.</p>

	<p>Links PBLA Practice Guidelines -PBLA Practice Review Framework https://pblapg.language.ca/part-d-pbla-accountability-sharing-responsibility-for-success/supplement-1-pbla-practice-framework/</p> <p>National Placement and Progression Guidelines -learner placement in Courses https://www.language.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/National_Placement_Guidelines_2014-1.pdf</p>
<p>Can a learner be working toward a higher and lower CLB level in one skill area at the same time?</p> <p>E.g. in a LINC 3/4 class, can a learner do skill-using and assessments at both CLB 3 <u>and</u> CLB 4 in writing? When it is time for evaluation are both levels evaluated? Separately or together? (from 2019-2020 FAQ)</p>	<p>Learners can only work toward a single CLB level in any skill area at one time (the single CLB level could be different in different skill areas in a class with multilevel assessment).</p> <p>For the learner in the example, the learner should not be trying to complete CLB 3 and CLB 4 at the same time. Either the learner is ready to be consistently successful at CLB 4 and should be working toward that level, or she should be working toward the original level of placement, in this case CLB 3. Allowing the learner to constantly reach for a level she is not yet ready for creates undue stress and may result in the learner losing rather than gaining confidence in their abilities. As only one level of artefact can be used to determine completed benchmarks during an evaluation, there is no advantage to constantly allowing a learner to work beyond their placement level if they are not yet ready to be consistently successful at that level.</p> <p>That being said, in a multilevel class, during skill-using and assessment, lower level learners may attempt the higher level requirements after completing the lower level requirements of a task. If this is the case, the teacher should ensure the learners clearly know the CLB level that they are working toward and that will be evaluated at reporting time when there is sufficient evidence. If over time it becomes apparent that a learner is ready to be consistently successful at tasks at the higher level and should in fact be working toward completion of that level instead of the lower level, the teacher should have a discussion with the learner to ensure they are agreement. If the learner agrees and is clear that they will now be working toward the higher level, the learner should only be given the higher level skill-using and assessment tasks.</p>
<p>How are multilevel listening and reading assessments scored? (from 2019-2020 FAQ)</p>	<p>Multilevel assessment requires aligning the task criteria to each CLB level assessed. A different number of correct answers to the same set of comprehension questions is not acceptable to determine success in a task for different CLB levels.</p> <p>Guidance on designing receptive tasks can be found in the Professional Learning Session (PLS) <u>Developing Receptive Tasks: A Refresher.</u></p> <p>Guidance on developing multilevel assessment can be found in the PLSs <u>Multilevel Assessment: The Basics</u> and <u>Multilevel Assessment: Developing Productive skills tasks Part 1 and Part 2.</u> Multilevel</p>

modules found in the PBLA Practice Guidelines Resources tab provide examples of differentiated assessment for various multilevel classes.

Further reading on multilevel assessment can be found in Chapter 5 of [Integrating CLB Assessment into Your Classroom \(ICLBA\): Adapting Assessment for Multilevel Classrooms](#)

Links

PBLA Practice Guidelines

-multilevel modules <https://pblapg.language.ca/part-e-classroom-and-professional-learning/multilevel-modules/>

Integrating CLB Assessment into Your Classroom (ICLBA)

-Chapter 5 <https://iclba.language.ca/chapter-5-adapting-assessment-for-multi-level-classrooms/>