

Curriculum Resource

Getting Involved in Your Community

This resource provides an overview of how you can engage with your community and strategies to make it happen. The Getting Involved in your Community resource is designed for Level 1 learners in Ontario’s Literacy and Basic Skills program. It has links to both the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework and the Skills for Success model. A supporting activity which has been articulated to the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework and which outlines the incorporated Skills for Success is included at the end of the resource.

OALCF Alignment

Competency	Task Group	Level
Competency B - Communicate Ideas and Information	B1. Interact with others	1
Competency B - Communicate Ideas and Information	B2. Write continuous text	1
Competency B - Communicate Ideas and Information	B3. Complete and create documents	2
Competency B - Communicate Ideas and Information	B4. Express oneself creatively	N/A
Competency E - Manage Learning	N/A	1

Goal Paths (check all that apply)

- Employment
- Apprenticeship
- Secondary School Credit
- Postsecondary
- Independence

Embedded Skills for Success (check all that apply)

- Adaptability
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Creativity and innovation
- Digital
- Numeracy
- Problem Solving
- Reading
- Writing

Notes: B3.2a

COMMUNITY LITERACY OF ONTARIO

Getting Involved in Your Community

Introduction

Community Literacy of Ontario (CLO) is pleased to share our “Getting Involved in your Community” resource. To help meet the needs of under-represented groups, CLO has been funded by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development to develop seven curriculum resources that meet the needs of under-represented learners, introduce the Government of Canada’s Skills for Success, and align with the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework.

Adult learners in Ontario’s Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) programs typically face multiple challenges besides low levels of literacy. From CLO’s perspective, under-represented learners are the adult learners in LBS programs who face additional barriers that make thriving in Ontario more difficult. Factors include but are not limited to:

- Poverty
- Disabilities
- Mental health related issues
- Age-related challenges
- Learners who are indigenous persons, visible minorities, or immigrants
- Gender inequality
- Sexual orientation discrimination
- And other socio-economic inequities

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The Government of Canada’s Office of Literacy and Essential Skills’ (OLES) introduced its Skills for Success model in May 2021 as an update to the well-known model of Essential Skills. CLO has looked at extensive research conducted by the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) on the Skills for Success model. For more information, the SRDC’s *Skills for Success Implementation Guidance Final Report* is available at

<https://www.srdc.org/publications/Skills-for-Success-implementation-guidance-final-report--details.aspx> and more information is available in their research report to support the launch of *Skills for Success: Structure evidence and recommendations – Final Report*

<https://www.srdc.org/publications/Research-report-to-support-the-launch-of-Skills-for-Success-Structure-evidence-and-recommendations-Final-report-details.aspx>

While there are **nine Skills for Success**, for the purpose of this resource, CLO has focussed on the entry level skill components of **Collaboration** (formerly Working with Others in the Essential Skills model) and **Communication** (formerly Oral Communication).

For Practitioners – More on the Skills for Success

As mentioned, in this resource, Community Literacy of Ontario has focussed on the entry level components of the **Collaboration and Communication** skills. The revised Communication and Collaboration skills reflect the increasing diversity and inclusivity of the Canadian workforce and Communication now includes broader concepts, such as non-verbal communication.

Assessments of skill levels for **Collaboration and Communication** typically rely on self-reporting. While further work is still being done in skill assessment, there are general guidelines for proficiency. To correspond with the Level 1 content and activities geared to learners with lower skill levels, CLO used the following entry level proficiencies for the Skills for Success to develop the content and supporting activity for this resource.

Communication

Communication is your ability to receive, understand, consider, and share information and ideas through speaking, listening, and interacting with others.

Communication: Entry Level Proficiency

You can speak and listen to a narrow range of subject matter, using factual and concrete language in predictable and familiar context, interacting one-on-one. You can use and interpret straightforward non-verbal cues. For example, through:

- facial expression
- eye contact

Collaboration

Collaboration is your ability to contribute and support others to achieve a common goal.

Collaboration: Entry Level Proficiency

You can interact with familiar people or a small number of diverse unfamiliar people to share information to complete routine independent tasks. You can maintain cooperative respectful behaviours toward others and minimize conflict.

You can read about the definitions, components and proficiency levels for the **nine Skills for Success** on the Government of Canada's website at

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/jobs/training/initiatives/skills-success/learning-steps.html>

For more information about the proficiencies, you can also read the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation's (SRDC) *Skills for Success Implementation Guidance Final Report*, at <https://www.srdc.org/publications/Skills-for-Success-implementation-guidance-final-report--details.aspx>



Getting Involved in Your Community is designed for Level 1 learners in Ontario's Literacy and Basic Skills program.

Literacy practitioners can verbally share the content with learners with Level 1 skills. Learners with higher skill levels could use this resource independently.

Getting Involved in Your Community

The **Getting Involved in Your Community** resource contains four sections:

1. Benefits of Community Involvement
2. Getting Involved in Your Community
3. Teamwork Tips
4. Supporting Activity

Section 1 – Benefits of Community Involvement

Getting involved in your community has many benefits to your community. It can also be good for **you!**

Here are some of the things getting involved can do for you.

- **Meet New People**

Getting involved in your community can help you to meet new people. It is a great way to make new friends. You can also get together with people who have the same interests and values.

- **Learn More About Your Community**

As you get involved, you will learn a lot more about your community. You'll probably be surprised at how much you learn!

For example, you might learn about:

- Interesting new hobbies or sports
- Fun activities for you or your kids
- Community services and supports
- The history of your community
- Museums
- Walking trails
- Parks and playgrounds
- And so much more!

● Build New Skills

By getting involved in your community, you will gain many new skills. You can also improve and practice skills you already have.

Here are a few examples of some of the skills you could learn or improve:

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Organizational
- Customer service
- Digital

To find out more about these skills, talk to your instructor.

● Develop Job Skills and Connections

The “Build New Skills” section above notes that through community involvement, you can improve skills such as:

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Organizational
- Customer service
- Digital

Employers find these skills very important for their employees to have. Learn and practise these skills by getting involved and working in your community. Better job skills will make you a better employee. Better employees keep their jobs longer.

Getting involved in the community can also help you get a job. You can connect with people and places who might help you find work. They may even employ you themselves. They may give you a good reference to help you get work. You can put your activity in the community on your resume. This shows work skills and also impresses employers.

● Increase Your Self-Confidence

You did it! Community involvement requires you to step out of your comfort zone. You need to try new things, meet new people and gain new skills. These actions can be hard at first, but they usually result in more self-confidence.

- **Learn About Diversity in Your Community**

Getting involved is a great way to meet people and hear other viewpoints. It is an opportunity to learn about respect for others. Respecting diversity is important in the community and at work. Diversity means everyone is accepted and treated equally even if they:

- come from different backgrounds or countries
- have other religious beliefs
- have different cultures
- have different gender identities
- are persons with disabilities
- have different values, ideas and so much more



Something to Think About...

Do you think that community involvement would help you to gain self confidence?

Share your thoughts with another learner or practitioner.

Section 2 – Getting Involved in Your Community

Why get involved in the community?

People have different reasons to get involved in their community.

Here are some examples:

- Meet new people
- Learn new skills
- Get out of the house
- Get involved with activities
- Give back to the community
- Build job skills and connections
- Increase self confidence
- Get some exercise
- Try something new
- Learn about the community
- Stay active with the kids
- Hear new ideas
- Share skills with others
- Have some fun!



Something to Think About...

What is your top reason for wanting to get involved in your community?

Share your thoughts with another learner or practitioner.

Ways to Engage in Your Community

We talked about the many reasons people have for getting involved in the community. You thought about one or two reasons for you to get involved. There are also different ways to get involved in your community. The sky's the limit!

Here's a list of a few of the ways people get involved in their communities:

Take part in personal interests

- Get involved in a hobby or interest
- Play a sport
- Participate in a faith community

Help in the community

- Join a service club
- Participate in a walk or run for charity, such as the Terry Fox Run

Build skills and connections

- Participate in a woodworking group
- Join a small business networking organization

Learn about the community

- Join a nature group and walk local hiking trails
- Attend city council meetings
- Go to community events and activities at your library
- Attend activities at a local community centre



Something to Think About...

Think about ways you are involved in your community now.

Share your thoughts with another learner or practitioner.

Learning about which groups or activities might best suit YOU

So, you've thought about **why** you want to get involved in your community. You also thought about some **ways** you could get involved.

But how do you find out how to get started? Who do you contact? Where do you go? Have a look at the list below. These are some of the best places to look for more information. You don't need to do them all! Try one or two ways that will help you. You can:

Visit Websites

- Visit the websites of organizations or activities that interest you.
- Search around and learn more about them. Do you like what you see?

Use Facebook

- Check out the Facebook page of several organizations or groups. It's a great way to learn more. It is likely more up to date than their website, too.
- Do their stories, pictures and videos of activities look interesting?
- Is it something you'd like to be involved with?

Search Online

- Search the website of the amazing *Ontario 211* for information about community services and resources. (<https://211ontario.ca/search/>)
- Visit the website of your city or town and search for activities.
- Look at the website of your Community Centre or Parks and Recreation service.
- Do a Google search for what you want to learn about.

Contact Organizations or Groups

- Call or email the organization or group you want to get involved with. (You can find their phone number and email on their website or on their Facebook page).
- It is okay to ask them questions about getting involved.

Go to your local community centre

- Your community centre will have information about activities.
- They will also have information on their website.

Go in Person

- Don't be afraid to go in person.
- You are their customer, new member or volunteer. They will be happy to tell you about their service or activity.

For example:

You've decided to join an exercise class at the YMCA. Go to their building and ask to learn more about the program. They may even give you a tour or a free class!

Ask on a Community Facebook Page or Group

- Most cities and towns have Facebook pages. There may also be community groups.
- On these pages and groups you can see postings for current activities.
- They welcome questions. So, ask!
- Post a question, such as, *"I'm thinking about learning how to knit. Are there any clubs or groups where I could learn this?"* You are sure to get some great ideas!

Visit the Library

- The public library will often have information on community activities.
- They may have a place with community brochures.
- Or they may have a binder with printed information.
- A librarian knows a lot about the community. They can help you do an online search.
- Libraries usually have excellent community bulletin boards!

Ask Your Friends and Family

- Your friends and family may have some good ideas for you.
- They might have great suggestions that will suit you well.



Something to Think About...

Which way would you choose to learn more about your community?

Share your thoughts with another learner or practitioner.

Section 3 – Teamwork Tips

Being involved in your community often requires good teamwork skills. In fact, good teamwork skills are needed everywhere. They are certainly important when playing sports. They are also needed at home, school or work. It is important to be able to work well with other people. So, teamwork is a skill we should learn.

Here are seven tips to be a good team member.

1. Communicate by listening and sharing

Communication is a key part of being a good team member. Communicating well with others includes listening carefully and with respect. This is important even if their opinions are different from yours. But communication isn't one sided; it also includes sharing **your** ideas in a helpful way.

There are many reasons that you may have to communicate. For example, share with others, if you:

- are having difficulty completing a task
- need training or support.

2. Be flexible

On a team, plans can easily change. Try to be open and flexible when changes happen. Usually, change happens because of something unexpected. Some examples of things that happen unexpectedly in teams are:

- someone gets sick
- a team member's car breaks down
- the meeting space gets cancelled.

Change happens in little and big ways all the time. We need to be flexible and adjust to the changes, whenever we can. We can do this by working with the team. Sometimes, changes end up being unfair. If changes seem unfair, it is okay to speak up. You can talk about that with other team members.

3. Be reliable

A team needs every member to do what they say they will. Here are some examples:

- **You say you will** show up at 10AM,
 - **then you need to** show up at 10AM
- **You say you will** post on social media about a community event by Friday
 - **then you need to** do the community event posting by Friday.

4. Treat others how you would like to be treated

It's not unusual to like some people better than others. You may find some people annoy you. But on a team, you are working together. You have a common goal. It's important to treat all team members with respect. Would a sports team do well if players fought with each other? Even if you don't like someone you can treat them with respect.

Sometimes, you will come across people who bother you. It may be because they ignore you. Maybe they don't answer you nicely. It isn't always because they don't respect **you**. Perhaps, they were upset because their mom is very sick. Understanding, kindness and respect go a long way to getting along with others. You may find that difficult person isn't so difficult after all.

5. Follow team rules

Your team probably has some rules. Basic rules can make a team work better together. Rules help keep everyone organized. Then, the team can focus on a common goal. Some example rules include:

- *We meet every Wednesday at 7pm*
- *There is no smoking allowed on the property*

Learn your team's or group's rules and follow them. You may have ideas to make the rules better. It is fine to suggest changes to the rules. But, as we said earlier, you must do it with respect. Not everyone may agree with your suggestions for change.

6. Value team diversity

In all communities, people come from different cultures, backgrounds and religions. They will have different abilities, customs and opinions. It's important to respect and value the diversity of team members. Working well with others means accepting others and not being judgemental. It is helpful and maybe even interesting to learn about their lives. Getting involved is a great way to learn more about the rich diversity of your community.

7. Minimize conflict

Try to minimize conflict. That means you should try to have as little conflict as possible. You can help to minimize conflict when you practise good teamwork. Remember the other skills that can help you with teamwork:

1. Communicate by listening and sharing
2. Be flexible
3. Make sure others can count on you!
4. Treat others with respect
5. Follow team rules
6. Value team diversity

Conflict may still happen even if you work on these skills. You may not be sure what to do. You can get ideas and support from the leader of your team. Also remember that you deserve to be treated with respect, too. You **do not** have to stand for others treating you poorly. It's okay to tell your leader if you are being treated unfairly. If that doesn't help, you might need to even leave and find another group.



Something to Think About...

What is one way you could be a better team member?

Share your thoughts with another learner or practitioner.

Section 4 – Supporting Activity

The following activity incorporates elements of the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework's (OALCF) Competencies with Level 1 and some Level 2 Tasks and Indicators. While the activity also contains multiple Skills for Success, in this resource, we are focussing on **Collaboration and Communication**.

More detailed information about the components and proficiency levels for all of the **nine Skills for Success** are available on the Government of Canada's website at <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/jobs/training/initiatives/skills-success/learning-steps.html>

Instructions for Practitioners

After sharing the content from this resource, ask the group or individual learner to complete the following activity. Learners may require practitioner assistance with tasks within this activity.

The corresponding OALCF Competency, Task Group and Level indicators, and Skills for Success components and proficiencies in this activity can be used by practitioners to discuss performance, determine skill progression and identify some possible next steps to further develop learner proficiency.

Step One: Task – no materials required

Ask learners to think about how getting involved in the community could help them with their learning goals.

This task incorporates elements of the following **OALCF Competency**:

Competency E: Manage Learning

E.1 Set short-term goals, begin to use limited learning strategies and begin to monitor own learning.

Step Two: Task 2 – Dialogue Sharing – no materials required

Ask learners to break into pairs or work with their tutor or instructor. Practitioners will provide a time for each partner to talk. Each partner will exchange ideas about different ways they could get involved in their community. Encourage partners to ask questions, if needed, to understand each other's ideas. Allow ten10 minutes for this task.

This task incorporates elements of the following OALCF Competency and Task Group:

Competency B: Communicate Ideas and Information

Task Group: Interact with Others (B1)

B1.1 Participate in brief Interactions to exchange information with one other person.

This task also incorporates some Collaboration skill components and elements of Entry Level proficiency (Skills for Success).

Collaboration: Entry Level Proficiency

You can interact with familiar people or a small number of diverse unfamiliar people to share information to complete routine independent tasks. You can maintain cooperative respectful behaviours toward others and minimize conflict.

This task also incorporates some Communication skill components and elements of Entry Level proficiency (Skills for Success).

Communication: Entry Level Proficiency

You can speak and listen to a narrow range of subject matter, using factual and concrete language in predictable and familiar context, interacting one-on-one. You can use and interpret straightforward non-verbal cues. For example, through:

- facial expression
- eye contact

Step Three: Task 3 (this could be done on paper or on the computer)

Ask learners to write a journal entry (up to one paragraph) to their future self about one way that getting involved in their community will help them to reach their learning goals.

This task incorporates elements of the following OALCF Competencies and Task Groups:

Competency B: Communicate Ideas and Information

Task Group: Write Continuous Text (B2)

B2.1 Write brief texts to convey simple ideas as factual information

Task Group: Express oneself creatively (B4)

Tasks in this task group are not rated for complexity.

This task also incorporates skill components and elements of Entry Level proficiency (Skills for Success) in the skills of Writing, and Creativity and Innovation.

Creativity and Innovation: Entry Level Proficiency

You can generate a limited number of novel ideas under guidance and support. You are open to applying new ideas but are quick to revert to norms and habits when the new ideas fail or face uncertainties.

Writing: Level 1 Proficiency

Write less than a paragraph to: organize, remind or inform.

Step Four: Task 4

The following **three** charts highlight the Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity and Innovations Skills for Success used in the first three tasks. As the Writing Skill aligns with the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework's (OALCF) Communicate Ideas and Information Competency, a chart has not been included. **One or more charts can be completed depending on the individual learner's progress and your preference.**

Practitioner assistance may be required to support learners with lower skill levels as they complete the charts. While the tasks contain multiple Skills for Success, these charts focus on the skills of Collaboration, Communication, and Creativity and Innovation.

In these charts, you could adapt which skill components are used to suit individual learner's goals and skill levels. The wording of the skill components has been simplified in the following charts to better meet Level 1 Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum skills.

Chart 1 – Communication Components

Practitioner instructions to learner(s):

Earlier, we talked about how important communication is for teamwork. You exchanged ideas about how to get involved in your community. The questions in this chart ask if you used good communication skills. Place a checkmark beside each question to show how much you used that skill.

When exchanging ideas with your partner about different ways you could get involved in your community, did you...	A lot	A little	Not at all
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pay attention to what your partner was saying? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask questions to make sure you understood your partner’s ideas? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Speak clearly? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Speak slowly so that your partner could process your ideas? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make eye contact when you were speaking? 			

This chart incorporates elements of the following OALCF Competencies and Task Groups:

Competency B: Communicate Ideas and Information

Task Group: Complete and create documents (B3)

B3.2a Use layout to determine where to make entries in simple documents

Competency E: Manage Learning

Task Group: No Task Group

E.1 Set short-term goals, begin to use limited learning strategies, and begin to monitor own learning

This chart encourages self-reflection and reinforces some of the Communication skill components and proficiencies used in Tasks 2 and 3.

Chart 2 – Collaboration Components

Practitioner instructions to learner(s):

Collaboration is important for good teamwork. Earlier, you exchanged ideas about how to get involved in your community. The questions in this chart ask about how you collaborated. Place a checkmark beside each question to show how much you used that skill.

When sharing your ideas and working with your partner to discuss different ways you could get involved in your community, did you...	A lot	A little	Not at all
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support each other and work together? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Listen to opinions that were different than yours? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Respond to ideas without making judgement? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have helpful discussions? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resolve and differences in opinions in a positive way? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support and motivate your partner to share ideas? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use your partner’s feedback to make your solutions better? 			

This chart incorporates elements of the following OALCF Competencies and Task Groups:

Competency B: Communicate Ideas and Information

Task Group: Complete and create documents (B3)

B3.2 a Use layout to determine where to make entries in simple documents

Competency E: Manage Learning

Task Group: No Task Group

E.1 Set short-term goals, begin to use limited learning strategies, and begin to monitor own learning

This chart encourages self-reflection and reinforces some of the Collaboration skill components and proficiencies used in Task 2.

Chart 3 – Creativity and Innovation Skill Components

Practitioner instructions to learner(s):

Creativity and innovation are important skills. Earlier, you wrote a journal entry to your future self about how getting involved in your community helped you. The questions in this chart ask about how you were creative when writing your journal entry. Place a checkmark beside each question to show how much you used that skill.

When you wrote your journal to your future self about one way that getting involved in your community helped you, did you...	A lot	A little	Not at all
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use your creativity? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask yourself questions about how the future could be? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Write more than one sentence about one way your involvement in the community helped you? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Think that you might follow up on this idea to get involved in your community? 			

This chart incorporates elements of the following OALCF Competencies and Task Groups:

Competency B: Communicate Ideas and Information

Task Group: Complete and create documents (B3)

B3.2 a Use layout to determine where to make entries in simple documents

Competency E: Manage Learning

Task Group: No Task Group

E.1 Set short-term goals, begin to use limited learning strategies, and begin to monitor own learning

This chart encourages self-reflection and reinforces some of the Creativity and Innovation skill components used in Task 3.