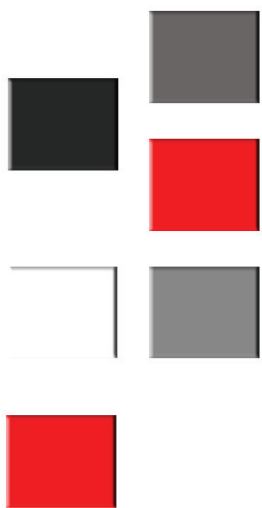




Practitioner Introduction



Practitioner Introduction

Workbook titles in this series include:

My Dream Career

Examining My Online Identity and Digital Media Use

How I Communicate in Different Places

My Role Models



Literacy Link South Central

Email: literacylink@bellnet.ca

Phone: 519-681-7307

Web: www.llsc.on.ca

This resource can be downloaded free of charge at www.llsc.on.ca. Organizations are encouraged to copy this resource; however, reproducing this resource for a profit is prohibited.

All websites links were accurate at the time of printing- March 2013.

**EMPLOYMENT
ONTARIO**

This *Employment Ontario* project was funded by the Ontario government.

2013

This curriculum was developed to increase the engagement of single males (18-29 years old) in literacy programming who are also accessing Ontario Works.

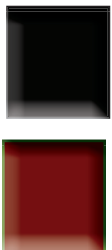
The modules have been specifically developed to meet the needs and expectations of this target group. In order to determine the curriculum content and delivery method, a literature scan was completed and focus groups were held with the target group.

The information from the focus groups and the results of the literature scan were used to develop a curriculum that matches the content and delivery method most likely to engage and retain single male literacy learners.

Although the curriculum was designed for a specific target audience, it can be used with other clients. The topics included are current and they all have a connection to building employability skills.

The curriculum consists of four modules:

1. My Dream Career
2. Examining My Online Identity
3. How I Communicate in Different Places
4. My Role Models



Each module has a Learner Workbook and a Practitioner Overview. The materials were developed for delivery in a small group setting to facilitate discussion and working with others. However, with a little creativity, the modules can also be used in a one-on-one setting. A Learner Workbook should be copied for each learner.

The Learner Workbooks include white space and areas to capture responses. Each workbook also includes a series of badges that the learner works towards completing, as he/she completes the activities. Progression through the activities is noted throughout the workbook with a progress bar. The badges, and the progress bar are “gamification” (see in Part 3) concepts that have been integrated to engage this particular target audience.

Accessing information through digital technology is included in many of the activities. Internet access is required throughout all four of the modules.

The project was funded by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) to develop curriculum for the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Program in Ontario.

The LBS Program uses the Ontario Adult Curriculum Framework (OALCF). The Practitioner Overview includes an OALCF Connection section. In this section, the relevant indicators from the six competencies of the OALCF are included to support practitioners working in agencies funded through the LBS Program. “Levels” are also indicated in this section. The levels are either beginner, intermediate, or advanced:

- Beginner is an approximate equivalent to OALCF Level 1 or Essential Skills Level 1
- Intermediate is an approximate equivalent to OALCF Level 2 or Essential Skills Level 2
- Advanced is an approximate equivalent to OALCF Level 3 or Essential Skills Level 3

The majority of activities in each module fall into the beginner to intermediate range.

Engaging Youth

One of the central themes of this curriculum is the engagement of youth in the learning process. The content and delivery methods will help build programming that will support this particular client group. There are many driving forces that support the engagement of youth in the learning process. Youth want:

- To have a vision
- To feel competent
- To have responsibilities
- To be recognized
- To have influence
- To be supported
- To be creative

Practitioners who work with this population should be mindful of the driving forces of engagement.

Be clear on what the learning outcomes are for each module. The curriculum encourages discussion and participation as often as possible. Never miss an opportunity to ask participants to share an opinion. Although the curriculum does have set activities, allow for creativity from the participants.



Adultism

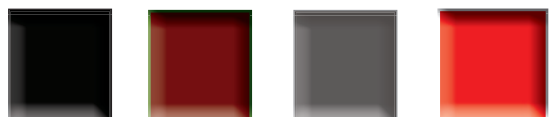
Adultism is prejudice and accompanying systematic discrimination against young people.

Source: Wikipedia, last accessed January 27, 2013

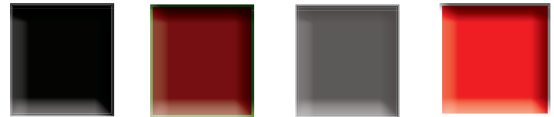
Like many forms of discrimination, many people don't even realize they are discriminating against young people. Adultism has been identified as one of the significant barriers to youth participation and engagement.

Here are some tips to help you avoid being "adultist":

- Keep an open mind.
- Don't make assumptions based on appearances.
- Don't hold youth to a higher standard than adults.
- Don't give youth too much leeway just because they are youth. Your expectations can and should be high, but they should also be reasonable for the developmental stage of the youth. Just because learners are in an adult program, doesn't mean they are at the maturity level of an adult, yet.
- Remember that youth are individuals and do not represent the voice of all youth. Don't ask them to.
- Don't interrupt. This will shut down youth immediately. Give youth an opportunity to participate in discussions.
- Use open-ended questions to encourage discussion.
- Don't impose your opinion.
- Keep in mind that your role is that of a partner or facilitator and not of a "teacher".
- Don't move too fast. Youth are learning and you may need to take time to explain or to let youth process information.



Generational Differences



Understanding the impact of generational differences can help foster an environment of mutual respect. In Module 3, generational differences are included in the curriculum content, especially with respect to the impact on communication. Most of the research on generational differences focuses on the impact that it has in the workplace. These differences can also have a significant impact in a learning environment. Learning more about generational differences can improve a practitioner's ability to instruct youth.

Watch this great TED talk video about the generational differences between Generation X and the Millennials (Generation Y):

www.youtube.com/watch?v=P-enHH-r_FM



When you are setting up programming geared to youth, it is important to consider the learning environment.

Orientation

Providing the learners with a comprehensive orientation to the program's expectations is critical. Using a learner contract can be helpful in establishing expectations.

Recognize Prior Knowledge

Each module starts with a self-evaluation to allow learners to identify things they already know or are able to do. The next activity involves discussion to help draw out the prior knowledge of the participants. This is an important first step to help this target group feel comfortable and to want to learn. Make sure that you set aside enough time for the prior learning discussion. Using a K-W-L (know, want and learned) chart or a concept web can be an effective way to help learners think about prior learning.



Keep It Fresh

The curriculum is organized by activities. Keep in mind the attention span of the audience. The materials can be delivered over a period of time that makes sense for that learner or group. Each activity has a suggested amount of time for completion but this is really an estimate and can vary from group to group or learner to learner. Although the content is prescribed, there are many opportunities for learners to bring in their own content or to draw from their own knowledge to help keep them engaged.



Gamification is the use of game design elements in non-gaming environments such as learning environments. Gamification isn't the same thing as "gaming". It doesn't refer to learning done through an online game.

Gamification focuses on the mechanics of online games and their application to learning content. The goal of gamification is to improve the retention and recollection of skills; and to encourage the application of skills by engaging the target group with concepts they can relate to. Digital games, especially on gaming systems such as Xbox and PS3, are very popular with the curriculum's target audience. This group tends to behave differently from other generations. They are less concerned about privacy, share openly, and are highly engaged with mobile or digital devices. This includes computers, cell phones and gaming systems. The content of Module 2, in particular, focuses on thinking about how this behaviour can affect this group of learners and their future.

Source: www.upsidelearning.com/blog/index.php/2012/11/14/gamification-in-learning/

Gamification in learning content can:

- Provide ways for learners to show or see their status
- Provide ways for learners to compare or rank their performance
- Provide clear levels of progression
- Invoke healthy competition
- Provide learners with as much digital immersion as possible

Many of these concepts have been integrated in the curriculum through the use of badges, progress bars, inclusion of videos, etc.

The target audience for this curriculum is young males who are on Ontario Works. This group is typically considered to be living below the poverty line. This can have a significant impact on this group's with a learning program. Understanding the extent of this group's lack of resources is critical.

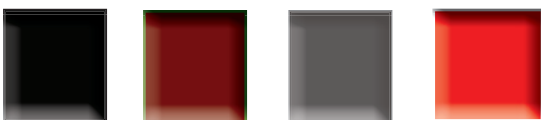
The Bridges Out of Poverty movement provides strategies for professionals and communities to help them support individuals who fall below the poverty line. Various types of resources may be lacking when an individual is living in poverty. Being aware of the lack of resources can help foster better communication with this group in a learning environment.

This lack of resources can include:

- Financial resources
- Mental resources
- Spiritual resource
- Physical resources
- Support systems
- Relationship or role models
- Knowledge of hidden rules
- Coping strategies



Source: *Bridges Out of Poverty Strategies for Professionals and Communities* (p.17)



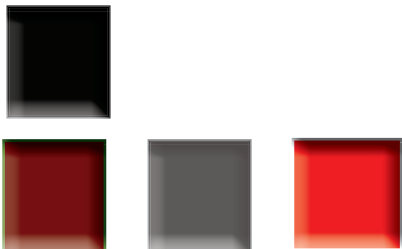
Different technologies are utilized throughout the curriculum.

- References to different websites are included
- YouTube videos are used frequently to support or reinforce learning
- Some activities suggest the use of software such as Microsoft Word or PowerPoint
- Each module has a self-reflection component that can be done in an online environment such as a wiki or blog

Practitioners should be comfortable utilizing the technology that is integrated into the curriculum. Because web links often move, change or disappear, practitioners should also be able to problem solve and provide substitutions where necessary.

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Digital
Media



Technology	Examples	Where can you learn more about this?
<p>Online Videos</p> <p>The term is usually used to describe any short video less than the length of a traditional television program.</p> <p>YouTube is a video-sharing website on which users can upload, share, and view videos. You can search for videos using the search feature.</p>	<p>YouTube</p> <p>www.youtube.com</p>	<p>YouTube has a help page where you can learn how to upload, view, troubleshoot, etc.</p> <p>http://support.google.com/youtube/?hl=en</p>





<p>Blogs</p> <p>A website on which an individual or group of users can record opinions, information, etc.</p>	<p>WordPress</p> <p>http://wordpress.com</p> <p>EduBlogs</p> <p>http://edublogs.org</p>	<p>WordPress has a great “Getting Started” page:</p> <p>http://codex.wordpress.org/Getting_Started_with_WordPress</p> <p>Edublogs has a series of video tutorials:</p> <p>http://edublogs.org/videos/</p>
<p>Wikis</p> <p>The term wiki originated from the Hawaiian word for "quick." A wiki is a software tool that allows users to freely create and edit hyperlinked web pages using a web browser.</p>	<p>PBworks</p> <p>http://pbworks.com/education</p> <p>Wikispaces</p> <p>www.wikispaces.com</p>	<p>PBworks has an educational wiki-based online manual:</p> <p>http://usermanual.pbworks.com/w/page/11632089/Home</p> <p>They also have webinars that you can access on the website.</p> <p>Wikispaces has a wiki-based help page:</p> <p>http://help.wikispaces.com/home</p>
<p>Common Software Applications</p> <p>Computer software designed to help the user perform specific tasks such as creating documents or presentations.</p>	<p>Word</p> <p>PowerPoint</p>	<p>Learn how to use a variety of common software applications at www.gcflearnfree.org</p> 