

There are several different ways you can help your newly arrived community members connect with language programs and services in your community and online.

### **Language Assessment**

**In NS (and across Canada) we use the Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessment test to assess the skills and abilities of adult immigrant learners in English. For information about what the results mean go to: [www.language.ca](http://www.language.ca)**

**To get an idea what kinds of questions will be asked, you can also register for a self-assessment while waiting for an official assessment. Please register at [www.clb-osa.ca](http://www.clb-osa.ca) to try it.**

1. If the person lives in the city of Halifax, Dartmouth and surrounding areas, they are welcome to have a language assessment at Language Assessment Services of NS. It is located at 6169 Quinpool Road , Suite 204. To register for an assessment, please email [applications@lasns.info](mailto:applications@lasns.info) or call 902-431-8675.

Following the assessment, they will be given information about what their results mean and also choices about language learning schools and programs in their community. Interpretation is available if needed.

2. For people living outside of the Halifax area, please contact Margaret Ryan at 902-464-2868 or [Margaret.Ryan@hrsb.ca](mailto:Margaret.Ryan@hrsb.ca) She will arrange for an assessment in or close to your hometown. Afterwards they will tell you about what classes are available in your area.

After the assessment, each individual will receive information about their language benchmarks and also the programs they are eligible for. They'll be advised about what their child minding options are and also what alternatives exist if for health, childcare or family reasons, they cannot attend a regular English class. Interpretation is available for receiving this information.

For all learners who are waiting for class or who want to practise more English, there are many ways that are available in the community to get extra practise.

Likely there are teachers in your group who may (or may not) have experience teaching English as an additional language (EAL, sometimes referred to as ESL –English as a second language or ELL –English Language Learning) and that is a great resource that your group can offer to the family you are sponsoring.

If not, there are still lots of things you can do to help support the learners' efforts to improve their English language skills.

1. The ISANS website has a lot of resources that are free to use.(check regularly as they are updated)

Go to <http://www.isans.ca/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/PracticeEnglishMarch2009.pdf>

and print a copy of "Practise English on Your Own". It is a guide to internet sites and books that are helpful for learning and practising English on your own (or with supportive friends!)

Also at the [isans.ca](http://www.isans.ca) site, there is a sample lesson plan for tutoring a beginner learner (benchmarks 1-3) that might be helpful to planning learning activities for adults:  
[http://www.isans.ca/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/TutoringStartsHere\\_2016\\_Level-1\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.isans.ca/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/TutoringStartsHere_2016_Level-1_FINAL.pdf)

If one or more of the family members that you are sponsoring has had little or no experience of formal education in their own language, they may be what is called an “EAL literacy learner”. For resources and information you can download the “Hands On: A Collection of EAL literacy activities.”

<http://www.isans.ca/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/CompleteHandsOnCurricula.pdf>

2. **Register for self-guided online courses in grammar, pronunciation and listening at:**  
<http://settlementonline.ca/login/index.php>

For full access to courses you'll need to take a minute to create a new account for yourself on this web site. Each of the individual courses may also have a one-time "enrolment key", which you won't need until later. Here are the steps:

1. Fill out the [New Account](#) form with your details.
2. An email will be immediately sent to your email address.
3. Read your email, and click on the web link it contains.
4. Your account will be confirmed and you will be logged in.
5. Now, select the course you want to participate in.
6. If you are prompted for an "enrolment key" - use the one that your teacher has given you. This will "enrol" you in the course.
7. You can now access the full course. From now on you will only need to enter your personal username and password (in the form on this page) to log in and access any course you have enrolled in.

3. **Check out the library in your community.** Halifax Public Libraries offer free tutoring at various locations around the city. Call Sandy at 902-490-6378 for more information. If you live outside of Halifax, you can request books in Arabic and also books (both fiction and non-fiction) for learning English, just speak to the librarian.
4. **Frontier College** offers a program called “Immigrant Families Learning Together” where kids (5 years and older) and their parents receive tutoring at the same time on Saturday mornings. To register, contact Ramona Clarke at 902-494-7003.
5. **The YMCA** offers a range of wellness programs including conversation circles and exercise classes for permanent residents. Call 902-457-9622 for more information.
6. **Youth** can get free tutoring Thursday evenings at Keshen Goodman library (call Ramona at 902-494-7003 to register)

**The YMCA also offers Youth workshops, volunteer opportunities and field trips.** Call 902-457-9622 for more information.

## Ways to support language learning with the person you are sponsoring or supporting:

### Tips for working with learners of English:

1. Remember, your job is not necessarily to **teach** but to help learners **practise** English.
2. Relevance is key! Adults need the material they are learning to be relevant to their everyday life. There is English to practise (and learn) from telephone bills, letters from school, flyers, use them.
3. Everyone has unique skills and abilities. Let the learner be your guide. If they are more comfortable talking than they are with writing, start with talking and go from there.
4. Be yourself, relax and take your time.
5. Write things, say things, draw things, mime things...whatever works! Show pictures of your family and pets to help introduce language and yourself in a way that is easier to understand.
6. Don't be afraid of silence. At first, as you are getting to know each other, there will be times when it is difficult for the learner to know what or how to say what they want to express in English. Give them time; let them think about the answer to your questions. By respecting silence, you will gradually build trust.
7. Do activities together that do not require language, i.e. chores, a painting activity, a puzzle, cooking, sledding or snow shoeing!
8. For beginner learners, it is good to have routines when you meet that you use the same way every time, i.e. Hello, how are you? How is the weather? How are the children this morning?
9. Speak slowly and deliberately but not exaggeratedly so.
10. Check for understanding by asking open ended questions. i.e. Tell me more about ... or by asking for details i.e. when will I pick you up tomorrow?
11. Avoid using children's books, they can be demoralizing and are unnecessary as there are many fiction and non-fiction books for adults who are learning English available at the library. Also the "news briefs" in the paper are a good source of relevant and current information.
12. Check out the library in your community. The Halifax Public Libraries offer free tutoring at various locations around the city. ([halifaxpubliclibraries.ca](http://halifaxpubliclibraries.ca)) Call Sandy at 902-490-6378 for more information. If you live outside of Halifax, you can request books in Arabic and also books for learning English, just speak to the librarian.
13. Get a copy of the Oxford Picture Dictionary in English to Arabic. It provides a range of non-childish drawings of everyday things that are labelled in Arabic and English to help you to communicate better.
14. Check out the [cbc.ca/Calgary/Learning-English/](http://cbc.ca/Calgary/Learning-English/) site at: [cbc.ca/Calgary/Learning-English/](http://cbc.ca/Calgary/Learning-English/)
15. Both Bedford and Dartmouth HRSB adult EAL schools have what is called a "Computer Business Lab" which is equipped with both an EAL instructor and a wide range of software for practising job specific vocabulary, IELTS and TOEFL prep, writing, reading and listening skills on your own. To contact the Bedford lab, call: 902-421-2688 To contact the Dartmouth lab, call: 902-464-0279

January 2016, LASNS,Ltd.



Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada

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