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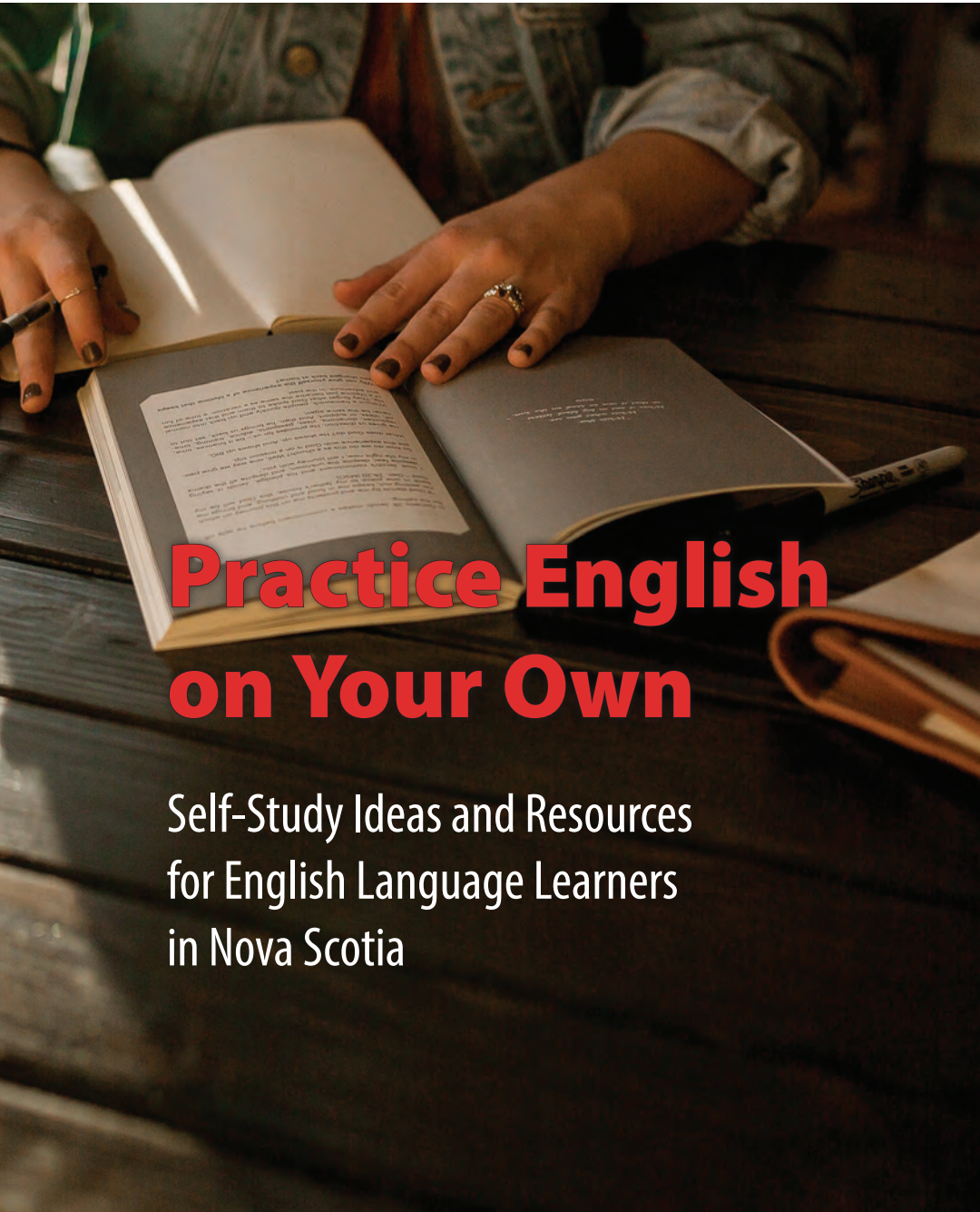

Practice English on Your Own

Self-Study Ideas and Resources for English Language Learners in Nova Scotia

This project is funded by
Nova Scotia Office of Immigration



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Introduction

Welcome to Nova Scotia!

This booklet, *Practice English on Your Own*, was developed for adult immigrants who are learning English as an Additional Language (EAL). It has been modified from a resource originally developed by the Adult Language Training Branch, Department of Immigration & Multiculturalism, Government of Manitoba. ISANS would like to thank Margaret Pidlaski and her team for their generosity in allowing us to share and modify this resource for EAL learners in Nova Scotia.

There are many classroom-based and tutor programs for immigrants in Nova Scotia, but in this booklet you will also find the following:

- ideas to practice English on your own, at home and in the community
- websites that can help you learn English on the internet
- resources to help you learn English
- information about tests of English as an Additional Language
- EAL programs in Nova Scotia
- information about the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB)

The internet is a valuable resource for practicing English on your own. This guide contains many helpful websites and resources. If you do not have a computer, contact your local library for information about public access internet use. Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS) accepts no responsibility for the content or maintenance of the web sites listed in this resource. At the time of printing, they were all active and useful for the purposes identified here.

Learning English is not easy and can take a long time. We hope that this resource helps you in your journey to improve your English communication skills.

Good Luck!

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My English Learning Goals

Making goals for learning English is an important thing for learners to do. It will help you to make a plan and reach your goals.

Some example goals are:
- Understand a news story on television or the radio.
- Tell the doctor about a health problem.
- Write an email to my boss.

Write your goals below:

Canadian Language Benchmarks

Canadian Language Benchmarks

The Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) describe what people can do in English in daily communication. They were created by the Canadian government. They cover 4 skills - listening, speaking, reading and writing.

In Nova Scotia, government-funded adult English as an Additional Language schools use the CLB for teaching and testing. The CLB is used in adult EAL schools across Canada. It gives information about 12 levels of English listening, speaking, reading and writing. CLB 1 is the lowest level and CLB 12 is the highest. Students at CLB 9 or above usually have enough English for university, college or professional communication. Many post-secondary institutions and employers also refer to CLB levels.

CLB Checklists

Included in this resource are summary checklists of CLB tasks at each level. This is the same content that is on the CLB posters you will see in many Nova Scotian adult EAL classrooms. These summaries help EAL learners check language learning progress, describe learning goals and understand the Nova Scotian adult EAL system. For more information about the levels, refer to www.language.ca for the 'CLB English as a Second Language for Adults' document.

Where can I get my language assessed?

In Nova Scotia, Learn English Nova Scotia (LENS) offers Halifax-based, rural and online assessments. You can contact them at (902) 431-8675 or www.lasns.info. All immigrants to the province are eligible for one free CLBPT assessment. Call to make an appointment. After your assessment is completed, a representative from LENS will help you choose a language school or program.

You can do an online assessment of your reading and writing to help you know your level at www.clb-osa.ca. This result is unofficial.

Listening 1

I can understand greetings:

Hello! How are you?

Please come in!

I can understand questions:

What is your name?

How do you spell it?

What is your telephone number?

I can understand information:

I am from Colombia.

It's ten o'clock.

Speaking 1

I can greet people:

Hello!

How are you?

I'm fine, thank you.

I can ask some questions:

What time is it?

Pardon me?

I can give some information:

M-A-R-I-A.

555-6729.

I'm from India.

CLB Levels 1 to 4

Reading 1

I can read the alphabet.

I can read some words that I see often.

I am learning the sounds of letters.

I can read a short sentence with the help of a picture.

I can read:

- Names
- Addresses
- Phone numbers

Writing 1

I can write the alphabet.

I can write numbers.

I can write my name and address.

I can write my telephone number.

I can fill out a simple form.

I can write a short list.

Listening 2

I can understand more instructions:

- Can you show me some ID?
- Please write your name on the line.
- Go upstairs to Room B5.
- Could you repeat that please?

I can understand parts of conversations:

- I understand numbers and letters.
- I understand the time.
- I understand some of the words.

Speaking 2

I can answer greetings:

- Hello, I'm fine. How are you?
- Nice to meet you.

I can ask for help:

- Speak slowly, please.
- Can you help me please?

I can give information:

- I can talk about my family.
- I can describe things.
- I can answer questions about myself.

CLB Levels 1 to 4

Reading 2

I can read words that I see often.

I can read a simple greeting card.

I can read a simple form.

I can read the amount of a bill.

I can match a list to pictures or real things.

I can read very simple, step-by-step instructions.

I can read a simple text and answer questions.

I can understand simple maps, labels and diagrams.

Writing 2

I can write in a birthday card.

I can copy prices at the store.

I can fill out a simple application form.

I can write a cheque.

I can copy information from a schedule.

I can write complete sentences about myself and my family.

I can describe a picture.

My spelling and handwriting are easy to read.

Listening 3

I know when a greeting is formal or informal.

I can understand short sentences when you speak slowly.

I can understand questions about myself.

I can understand instructions including place and measurements.

I can follow directions in the street.

I can get the most important words in a story.

I can understand when a person asks me for something.

I have trouble understanding people on the phone.

Speaking 3

I can say a few simple sentences about familiar, everyday topics: my work, family, daily activities, health, the weather, etc.

I can answer simple questions with single words or short sentences.

I can ask for help or permission.

I can ask short, routine questions.

I can use words like 'yesterday' and 'today', but I don't always use the correct verb tenses.

I know a few words about health and feelings.

I can give basic information about familiar subjects, such as family, weather or daily activities.

I can connect parts of sentences, for example, with 'and' and 'but'.

CLB Levels 1 to 4

Reading 3

I can read and understand a short story or simple news item.

I can follow simple instructions with 1 - 5 steps when there are pictures to help me understand.

I can read about the weather.

I can understand a store flyer and make a list of key points.

I can read words I know in a new context.

I can sound out words in English.

I can read some new words.

Writing 3

I can write a short note or message.

I can write short, simple sentences about my family or a familiar place.

I can fill in a short, simple form.

I can write an invitation.

I can write a greeting.

I can copy information from lists or schedules.

I can describe my daily routine.

Listening 4

I can understand a conversation on a familiar, everyday topic when you speak slowly.

I know what you are talking about because
I understand some words and phrases.

I can understand many simple questions.

I can follow simple oral instructions.

I can understand connecting words like 'and', 'but', 'first', 'next' and 'because.'

I can follow instructions to find something on a map or picture.

I can understand a short phone message if I know what the topic is.

I can ask people to repeat when I don't understand.

Speaking 4

I can introduce two people to each other.

I can participate in conversations that are about what I need and what I have done.

I can ask and answer many simple questions.

I can use short sentences to buy something or talk to the doctor.

I can give someone simple directions.

I can use the past tense with many common verbs.

I have enough vocabulary for everyday conversation.

I can use some connecting words between my sentences, like 'and', 'but', 'first', 'next', and 'because'.

I can use the phone for a very short conversation.

People usually understand me, but sometimes I have to repeat.

CLB Levels 1 to 4

Reading 4

I can read a simple story of 2 - 3 paragraphs.

I can read simple news items.

I can follow simple instructions.

Sometimes, by looking at a whole sentence, I can find out what a new word means. Most of the time, I use my dictionary for new words.

I can get information from charts and schedules.

I can use a bilingual dictionary.

I can understand if I read silently.

I still read slowly.

Writing 4

I can write a paragraph about a personal experience.

I can write a paragraph about my future plans.

I can write a short note, message or letter.

I can fill out a simple application form of up to 20 items.

When I write, I can use whole sentences.

I can copy information from dictionaries, catalogues or manuals.

I can take slow, simple dictation with several repetitions.

I can spell and punctuate my sentences.

It is easy to read my printing or handwriting.

I can write whole sentences with few errors.

Speaking Activities

When you know you will have to ask a question to get important information, practice what you will say first.

After someone answers your question or gives you information, check that you understand. Repeat important information. If they say, "Take bus number 68.", ask: "Did you say bus number 68?"

Practice saying the letters of the alphabet in English. This is important for spelling things like your name and street address.

Aa (ay)	Bb (bee)	Cc (see)
Dd	Ee	Ff
Gg	Hh	Ii
Jj	Kk	Ll
Mm	Nn	Oo
Pp	Qq	Rr
Ss	Tt	Uu
Vv	Ww	Xx
Yy	Zz	

Practice saying numbers and dates out loud.

Phone a friend that is learning English and speak in English.

Speak English with friends and family for 10 minutes every day. Choose one day when everyone speaks English at dinner.

Invite someone to tea or lunch (a neighbour or classmate) and speak about your hobbies, your background and your family in English.

Volunteer at a community centre or at your children's school.

Get to know the parents of your children's friends and talk to them.

Meet a classmate once a week to practice what you did in English class.

Quietly repeat English that you hear every day. Try to speak just like they do. Now everyone is your teacher!

Speak English to people every day. Speak to someone at the bus stop or the receptionist at the doctor's office. Ask questions to store employees when you are shopping.

Practice speaking to yourself in English at home. Talk about everything. When you get comfortable with this, speak louder and with more feeling.

Read directions on how to get somewhere and practice saying them out loud.

Record yourself using a computer or cellphone and listen. How is your pronunciation?

Ideas for Practicing English: CLB 1 to 4

Speak English when you are at school. Ask your teacher lots of questions.

Join a conversation group in your community or start one yourself.

Watch an English movie and then say out loud what happened in the movie. What happened? Who said what? What did each person do?

Read out loud to yourself. Read with punctuation. Stop longer at periods (.). Read sentences ending in question marks (?) and exclamation marks (!) differently than sentences ending in periods.

Call businesses, like stores and restaurants and ask them questions like: "Do you have...?" or "What time are you open today?"

Learn the below phrases and use them when you talk with English speakers:

- "I don't understand."
- "Can you say that again, please?"
- "What does that mean?"
- "How do you spell that?"
- "Where can I get the information that I need?"

Listening Activities

Watch movies or TV shows in English. Listen carefully to what people say to each other in social situations. Replay the videos. You can also find the transcript on the internet and read along.

Watch TV with closed captions or subtitles.

Watch the news and weather in English.

Listen to English songs. Look up the words on the internet and sing the songs aloud.

Listen to English radio in the car and at home.

Call businesses or government offices after business hours and listen to their taped messages.

Borrow audiobooks from the library.

Listen to people speak. If possible, make friends with people who speak English. Listen to them speaking, and ask questions when you do not understand.

Use the internet to listen to English language radio and television programs.

Watch English videos on YouTube.

Go to a public place. In a restaurant, listen to what the waiter asks the customers and what they reply.

Use an online dictionary that has the pronunciation of words. Repeat the pronunciation to yourself. One online dictionary is www.learnersdictionary.com.

Ideas for Practicing English: CLB 1 to 4

Reading and Vocabulary Activities

Read something for at least 15 minutes every day.

Read advertisements and flyers in the newspaper.

Read a short article in a newspaper and write a short summary of the story.

Find news stories on the internet.

Keep a vocabulary notebook of words you don't know. Practice using the words in sentences. Look at the book every day to review the words. An address book works well because it has the letters of the alphabet. Try to learn at least one new word a day.

Read books to your children and talk about the pictures in the book.

Write sentences or questions that you use a lot on flashcards. Practice them whenever you have a chance, e.g. on the bus or waiting in line.

Ask an English speaker or use a picture dictionary to help you label things you use every day. Put the labels on things, e.g. fridge, mirror, pen. Make sentences with your words, such as, "The apples are in the fridge," or "The car is in the driveway."

Make a vocabulary list of new words and phrases. Read your list everyday.

Write new words and phrases every week. Put the list in a place that you will see everyday, e.g. on the fridge or on your bathroom mirror.

Read signs on the street and the bus.

Borrow books and magazines from the library.

Borrow a bilingual book from the library. Read the story in both languages.

Read a map and learn the names of the streets in your neighbourhood.

After you read something, ask yourself the questions, "Who, What, Where, When, Why", for each story you read. Who is it about? What happened? Why did it happen? When did it happen? Where did it happen?

Review your class notes at home after every class.

Read books about Canada.

Writing Activities

Write something every day, e.g., write three things that happened that day or write a note to your family members in English.

Write a message in a card in English and give it to someone. You could write in a birthday card or a "thinking of you" card.

Ideas for Practicing English: CLB 1 to 4

Write sentences about an interesting family activity, your family, life experiences or your favourite family photographs.

Send emails to your friends, family members, classmates or your teacher in English.

Try out the EAL learning websites listed in this resource or others on the internet using a Google search of "learning English".

Write your grocery list in English.

Practice filling out forms, like bank forms or government forms with your name, address and other personal information.

Keep a daily or weekly journal. Write about whatever you want in it. If possible, ask an English speaker to read it and give you feedback on your writing.

Make a list of words or sentences to practice your spelling. Record the words and give yourself a spelling or dictation test.

Practice copying things like instructions, newspaper stories or recipes.

Make a recipe book of your favourite recipes with your friends or classmates.

Write comments on stories on the internet.

Write reviews of products on company websites.

Write emails to the customer service departments or businesses. You can write about what you like or don't like about products.

Listening 5

I can understand conversations if people speak slowly.

I can follow simple, repetitive and predictable speech.

I can catch many words and phrases in informal conversations at a normal speed in audio recordings and on the radio. I can follow the general idea if the subject is personally relevant.

I can understand a range of common vocabulary and a few idioms.

I often have to ask people to repeat, especially when they speak quickly.

I can identify the situation, emotional state and relationship of speakers.

I can understand a simple, predictable phone message.

I can catch some inferred meaning in advice, offers, compliments and suggestions.

Speaking 5

I can join in conversations on familiar topics.

I am beginning to use longer sentences, but sometimes I hesitate or pause.

I know a lot of common, everyday vocabulary and some idioms.

I can use connecting words between my sentences, like 'and', 'but', 'first', 'next', and 'because'.

I can use the phone for a simple conversation, but I still find it difficult.

I feel comfortable using English with people I know in social settings.

I can use formal and casual language.

I can ask for clarification when I don't understand.

CLB Levels 5 to 8

Reading 5

I can understand the main ideas, some details and some inferred meaning of a text 2 - 3 paragraphs long. The topics are familiar and personally relevant.

I can read information that I receive regularly, such as a gas bill, or some items in a newspaper.

Usually, I have to read something more than once to understand it.

Sometimes, by looking at a whole sentence, I can understand what a new word means. However, most of the time, I use my dictionary for new words.

I can follow instructions with 7 - 10 steps. Sometimes I need the help of pictures.

I can understand facts and some inferred meaning in everyday texts, such as memos and e-mails.

I can locate specific details in extensive directories, charts and schedules.

I can use tables of contents, indexes and glossaries.

I can see the connection between paragraphs and predict what comes next.

My vocabulary is mostly concrete, but I know some abstract, conceptual and technical words.

Writing 5

I can write a paragraph about an idea or an opinion and give details.

I can write a short letter, note, or e-mail using appropriate language.

I can fill out an application form with 20 - 30 items.

I can take a phone message with 5 - 7 details.

I can write a paragraph with a main idea and supporting details.

I can write sentences with good control of simple structures, spelling, punctuation and vocabulary.

I can write a paragraph describing an event or an incident.

I can choose language and content that are appropriate and relevant to the occasion.

Listening 6

I can follow a conversation about a familiar topic at a pace slightly slower than normal.

I can listen to a short instructional talk and remember 7 - 10 points.

I can pick out the main ideas, key details and inferred meaning from listening texts of up to 10 minutes.

I can understand some idioms.

I can understand the mood and attitude of the people I am listening to.

I can understand short sets of instructions or directions and follow the sequence of the steps even if they are not in step-by-step form.

I still often ask people to repeat what they have said.

I can understand a short, predictable phone message.

Speaking 6

I can participate in small group discussions where I express my opinion and ask for clarification.

I can provide accurate and detailed information.

I can interrupt politely when it's necessary.

I can keep a conversation going and can hold my own when speaking to a group.

I can use a range of vocabulary, including idioms, phrasal verbs, and common expressions.

I can explain a process or sequence of events.

I can use a variety of complex sentences.

I sound fluent when I speak, and I speak at almost normal speed.

Although I make mistakes, people don't usually have trouble understanding my grammar and pronunciation.

I know how to express and respond to regrets and excuses in a variety of situations. I can make, cancel, or rearrange an appointment. I can give my reasons or apologies.

I can use eye contact, tone of voice and volume familiar to Canadians.

I am comfortable talking on the phone in familiar situations, but I sometimes find it hard to talk to strangers.

I can change my style of speaking for different situations and people.

CLB Levels 5 to 8

Reading 6

I can read a text written in plain English that is 3 - 5 paragraphs long and a little difficult. I can understand the main idea, key details and some inferred meanings.

I can scan an extended chart or schedule for specific information. I can compare information from different texts.

I am beginning to understand the writer's purpose, intent and attitude.

I can read handwritten notes, memos, letters and schedules.

I can learn new information from a text on a familiar topic. The text is well-organized and sometimes has pictures.

The dictionary I use is for EAL learners, but it is only in English, not a bilingual dictionary.

I read mostly about facts and things I can see, but I sometimes read about abstract or technical issues.

When I see a new word, I can sometimes guess its meaning from the context.

I am able to predict what will happen next in the story and retell or summarize the story.

Writing 6

I can write a detailed description or comparison of people, places, objects and routines. I can describe a simple process.

I can write a short letter, note or e-mail using appropriate language and layout.

I can fill out a longer application form with 20 - 30 items.

I can take a phone message with 5 - 7 details. When I write, I have a clear message.

I can include details to support the message.

I think about who I am writing to.

I can take notes from a short presentation without missing important details.

I can write simple sentences with only a few errors in spelling, punctuation and vocabulary.

I can write a structured paragraph in which I give an accurate description, comparison or sequence of events.

Listening 7

I can understand the main points and important details of a conversation as well as inferred meanings.

I can identify the situation, relationship, mood and attitude of those I listen to.

I can understand a formal or informal conversation on familiar topics at a descriptive level, especially if I am involved in the conversation.

My vocabulary is expanding, and I know more idioms.

I can predict consequences and outcomes.

I can understand more complex, indirect questions about personal experience, familiar topics and general knowledge.

I can understand routine, work-related conversation.

I can understand a phone message if I am familiar with the topic.

I sometimes require slower speech, repetition and rewording, especially on unfamiliar topics.

I might still have trouble understanding native speakers when they speak quickly to one another.

Speaking 7

I can participate in a small group discussion and express my opinions, feelings and reservations about a topic.

I can express and respond to gratitude, appreciation, complaint, disappointment, (dis)satisfaction and hope.

I can give clear instructions and directions for moderately complex, familiar, technical and non-technical tasks.

I am comfortable speaking about almost any topic in normal conversation.

I am comfortable speaking formally or informally, on topics involving problem-solving or decision-making. I can make a detailed comparison.

I can research, develop and deliver a 10-minute presentation.

I can use a variety of sentence structures and idioms.

I sound fluent when I speak. If someone does do not understand me, I can correct myself or rephrase what I said.

I am comfortable talking on the phone about familiar and routine matters. I can take a message for someone else and pass it on with specific details.

I]use several strategies to keep a conversation going. I can change the topic.

CLB Levels 5 to 8

Reading 7

I can read authentic text that is 1 - 2 pages long and moderately complex.

I can locate and integrate, or compare and contrast information from a variety of visually complex sources.

I can read for information, to learn English and develop reading skills.

I am also beginning to read for pleasure.

I can follow everyday instructional texts containing 10 - 15 steps.

I can use an English dictionary for EAL learners. Mostly, I use it for confirmation and to be precise.

The language I read is both concrete and abstract, dealing with facts, opinions and feelings.

When I see a new word, I can sometimes infer its meaning by the context or by the use of prefixes and suffixes in the word.

I can paraphrase and summarize the main points of a story.

Writing 7

I can respond in writing to appreciation, complaint, disappointment, satisfaction and hope.

I can write personal and routine business letters.

I can summarize longer texts without losing essential information.

I can write coherent paragraphs on familiar, concrete topics with clear main ideas and some supporting details.

I have a developing sense of audience.

I can write 2 - 3 paragraphs to narrate a sequence of events or give a detailed description.

I have fairly good control over complex structures, spelling and sentence mechanics although my sentences may sound 'foreign' to English readers.

I can write down 7 - 10 points from a clear, pre-recorded phone message.

I can complete moderately complex forms (40 items).

I can write a report comparing two products or describing a process.

Listening 8

When someone is speaking, I can understand the main points, details, purpose, and attitude.

I can recognize different levels of formality.

I can understand some technical conversations, especially about my line of work.

I can understand abstract and complex ideas on a familiar topic.

I can recognize other people's moods, attitudes and feelings.

I can understand many local idioms and expressions and can follow detailed stories of general interest.

I can follow detailed and extended instructions if they are clear and coherent.

I can usually understand phone messages, even on unfamiliar, non-routine subjects.

I might still have trouble understanding native speakers when they speak quickly to one another.

Speaking 8

I am comfortable speaking about almost any topic that comes up in normal conversation in social situations or at work.

I can manage a conversation, check comprehension, encourage others and handle minor conflicts.

I am able to address large groups or participate in group discussions.

I can speak on familiar topics at both concrete and abstract levels (15 - 20 minutes).

I can present information, give instructions, propose and recommend.

I can provide descriptions, opinions and explanations.

I can synthesize abstract complex ideas and hypothesize.

I can ask questions, analyze and compare information in order to make decisions.

I have an expanded inventory of concrete, idiomatic and conceptual language.

People rarely have trouble understanding me.

I am comfortable talking on the phone.

CLB Levels 5 to 8

Reading 8

I can follow main ideas, key words and important details in a text of 2 – 3 pages on a familiar topic.

I can read popular newspapers, magazine articles, popular easy fiction, as well as academic and business materials.

I can find relevant points in a text, but sometimes I need clarification of idioms or cultural references.

I can locate and integrate several specific pieces of information in a table or a directory, or across paragraphs.

I am able to follow an extended set of multi-step instructions for an established process.

I can read in English to get information, to improve my English and develop my reading skills.

I can use a unilingual dictionary for vocabulary building.

I can read about abstract, conceptual or technical topics.

I can infer the writer's intention in messages containing general opinions and assessments.

Writing 8

I can write routine business letters and personal and formal social messages.

I can link sentences and 3 – 4 paragraphs to form coherent texts to express ideas on familiar, abstract topics with some support for main ideas and an appropriate sense of audience.

I can write down a set of simple instructions based on clear oral communication or simple procedural text of greater length.

I can fill out complex forms.

I can extract key information and relevant detail from a page-long text or 10 - 15 minute oral presentation, and write an outline or a one-paragraph summary. I reduce information to the main points with no major omissions.

I demonstrate good control over common sentence patterns, grammar, and spelling.

I have occasional difficulty with complex structures and style.

I can write an effective resume and cover letter.

I can write an incident report or memo.

Volunteer at a school, club or organization. This is a great way to meet new people, practice English and gain valuable work skills. Call or visit a community centre, hospital, senior centre, etc. in your area and ask about volunteer opportunities.

To practice your public speaking, join a Toastmasters club. They can help you become a confident public speaker. To find the location of a club, go to www.toastmasters.org. There are many Toastmasters clubs in Nova Scotia.

Contact ISANS at (902) 423-3607 to ask for a professional mentor. You will be matched with a Canadian in your field who will meet with you regularly to discuss employment practices in Canada.

Take a course in cooking, sports, art, crafts, first aid, dance, etc. at a local community centre. Classes are not expensive and you can meet people and speak English with them. For more information in Halifax, look at the Halifax Regional Municipality recreation guide. View the guide online at www.halifax.ca/recreation or pick up a copy at the library. Outside of HRM, ask for information at your local library or your local municipal building.

Listen to CBC Radio One to improve your listening skills. This radio station has more dialogue than other stations and you will hear a lot of interesting topics. Listen with a friend or family member, and then discuss the topic afterwards. Go to www.cbc.ca/frequency/index.html to find your local channel.

Take a continuing education course at a college or university in your area. Classes are often available in the evening, on weekends or online. You can also audit a regular university class. This means that you attend the classes and do the assignments, but you do not get an official credit for the class. The cost is about half of the regular price.

- Nova Scotia Community College www.nscc.ca / (902) 491-4911.
- Mount Saint Vincent University www.msvu.ca / (902) 457-6788.
- Saint Mary's University www.smu.ca / (902) 420-5400.
- Nova Scotia College of Art and Design www.nscad.ca / (902) 444-9600.
- Dalhousie University www.dal.ca / (902) 494-2211.
- Cape Breton University (Sydney) www.cbu.ca / (902) 539-5300.
- St. Francis Xavier University (Antigonish) www.stfx.ca / (902) 863-3300.
- Acadia University (Wolfville) www.acadiau.ca / (902) 542-2201.

Listen to the Information Station in HRM (97.9 FM). This station has news stories, weather, and community information that repeats every hour. If you do not understand the first time, you can listen again.

Ideas for Practicing English: CLB 5 to 8

Use the "closed captions" feature on your TV. You can practice listening and reading at the same time.

Read English stories, cartoons, news articles and books. Write down new vocabulary. Practice reading to yourself and aloud. After reading ask yourself the "wh" questions about what you have read: who, what, when, why, where and how?

Set goals for learning English and write them down. Create a plan for your learning. Use a journal or a calendar to help plan your study time. If you are in class, remember to practice after class.

Keep a journal, diary or dictionary. Write down new words you hear, look them up in a dictionary and record the meaning. Try to learn some new words each day. Use the new words in sentences and stories.

Form a book club with some friends to practice reading. Read and discuss the book with your group. Practice reading some parts out loud to help you improve your pronunciation and reading comprehesion.

Record yourself speaking English. Imitate native English speakers. Pay attention to pronunciation, stress and intonation. Then listen to yourself.

Make an English speaking friend. Practice conversation, create dialogues, read together, etc.

Rewrite fairy tales, jokes, news stories, recipes or instructions in English.

Visit a public library in your area. There are many things you can do at the library to improve your English:

- Borrow audiobooks. These are books on tapes or CDs. You can even download them onto your phone, tablet or computer directly from the library website. Read the book and listen at the same time. This will help you with your reading and listening comprehension, and help you understand stress and intonation.
- Read a newspaper or magazine. 'Saltscapes' is a local magazine about the Nova Scotian lifestyle. 'Touch Base' is a free Halifax newspaper written for immigrants. Go to https://newspapermap.com to find your local newspaper.
- Attend an activity, lecture or presentation at the library. These are free and there are many to choose from for parents and children.

Listen to English music. Try reading song lyrics as you listen. Singing is an excellent way to practice intonation and stress.

Learn the words to 'O Canada' - the Canadian national anthem. Sing along when you hear it played.

Ideas for Practicing English: CLB 5 to 8

Write letters and emails in English to your friends and family. Try to use the new words and expressions that you have learned.

Listen to sports on the radio or TV and write down words you don't understand. Ask an English speaker who likes sports what they mean. Many Canadians don't understand sports words either!

Join an English Club with friends. The YMCA Centre for Immigrant Programs in Halifax has conversation groups for newcomers, fitness classes, social activities and a women's group. Check www.ymcahfx.ca or call (902) 457-9622 for more information.

Create your own conversation group to practice English. Make an English only rule. Keep an English dictionary handy and record new vocabulary in a notebook. Phone people from your group to practice your telephone skills. Send emails to each other or write letters. Go on field trips, watch English movies, listen to English music, cook food together, etc.

Try cooking using an English recipe. Check out the Canadian Living Magazine at www.canadianliving.com for some excellent recipe ideas. Write your favorite recipes out in English. Invite friends to an English only dinner party.

Start reading magazines and publications that are easy to understand, like: 'Reader's Digest', 'People' and 'Chatelaine'.

Later on, read more challenging news magazines such as 'MacLeans' and 'Newsweek'. These magazines use a higher level of English. They are a good way to improve your vocabulary. They also keep you informed of world events from a North American perspective.

Play board games in English, such as Monopoly, Scrabble, Boggle, Pictionary (great for practicing idioms), Scattergories, etc. You can buy these at toy stores and stores such as Walmart.

Try playing card games in English. Go to www.pagat.com or www.bicyclecards.com for a list of games and instructions.

Try reading out loud so you can improve your pronunciation. Ask an English speaker to listen and correct your pronunciation right away.

Have an "English only" day every week. You can only speak, read or write in English. Your whole family can participate.

Don't be embarrassed if you don't understand someone or if you make a mistake. Most people will try to help you with your English.

Reading and Study Tips

Reading and Study Tips

Organize Your Time

Make a detailed schedule of your week and put some study time into your schedule.

Use a daily or weekly planner to help you schedule activities and events.

Make a chart (put the seven days of the week at the top and the hours of the day from 6:00 am to 11:00 pm on the left side). Create and use a chart for each week.

In your chart, write down all the things you must do, such as work, classes, meals, etc. You should schedule in study time each day. Write down what you will study - listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, etc. Try to change up what you are studying so it doesn't get boring.

If possible, plan to study at the time of day when your brain works best.

Give yourself short breaks and reward yourself when you've studied well.

Don't forget to schedule in some exercise and free time too! Try to find a balance between study, work, family and recreation.

Carry your schedule with you so you don't forget activities or study time.

Find a Good Place to Study

Study in a quiet place that has enough room for everything you will need: a book, a dictionary, a notebook, pens/pencils/highlighters, a computer, etc.

Find a Study Partner

Sometimes it helps to study with someone else. You can ask each other questions and quiz each other. Discuss what you have read with your study partner to help you clarify your thinking.

How Do You Learn Best?

When you know how you learn, you can choose study techniques that will help you to study better. Do the quizzes at these websites to determine your learning style:

- ThoughtCo.'s Learning Style Quiz: www.thoughtco.com/learning-style-quiz-4076781
- What's YOUR Learning Style? www.howtolearn.com/learning-styles-quiz/

Auditory Learners :
Some people remember things better when they hear them. They enjoy reading aloud or studying with others, listening to recorded books or information, or listening to class presentations.

Visual Learners:
Some people remember what they see and prefer written instructions. They like visual information, such as videos or the internet. They learn better with charts, diagrams, posters, flashcards or pictures.

Tactile Learners:
Some people learn better when they do a task themselves. They understand directions best when they write them down. They learn best from drawing pictures and diagrams, making models, solving puzzles, or using their hands.

When You First Open Your Book

Decide what you are going to study.

Skim the section you are going to read by reading headings, subheadings, bold and italic print, and looking at pictures and diagrams. Then, read in detail.

Ask yourself what you want or need to learn about this subject.

Write down notes or important points.

Keep a list of difficult words that you want to remember.

When You Find an New Word

Look at the word again, and say each letter. When you pronounce the word out loud, you will sometimes realize that you already know the word.

Read the sentence containing the word. This might help you to figure out what it means and what part of speech (noun, verb, adjective, etc.) it is.

Look for prefixes (i.e. 'dis' means opposite, like in the words 'disloyal' or 'discomfort') and suffixes (e.g. 'al' means pertaining to, like in the words 'logical' or 'electrical'). There are many prefixes and suffixes. Check www.prefixsuffix.com/rootchart.php to learn more.

Look at the root of the word. This is what is left of a word when you take off the prefix and or the suffix (e.g. if you remove "de" and "ing" from "demystifying", you have the word "mystify").

Use a dictionary. Sometimes, you will find several definitions for one word. Choose the one you think best fits the sentence you are reading. Dictionaries also give you information on pronunciation, part of speech and usage.

If you still don't understand what the word means, ask a co-worker or a friend.

Draw a Picture or Diagram

Drawing a picture or diagram can help you organize the information in your mind.

Reading and Study Tips

Highlight or Underline Important Information

Underlining, circling, and highlighting helps important facts stand out. Use different coloured highlighters or pens. Make short notes in the margins of the page. When you review later, you may only need to read the highlighted or underlined parts.

Use Tricks to Memorize Facts

When there is something you want to memorize, begin by telling yourself that you will remember it. Think positively and choose to remember. Then, break the information into small parts. To remember it, repeat, repeat, repeat!

Use Flash Cards or Posters

To learn new words, use small "index" cards to help you remember them. Put the new word on one side and the definition on the other. These are easy to carry around with you, and you can practice them anywhere.

Talk Out Loud

If it helps, study by reading out loud. Hearing yourself say it out loud reinforces the information so you remember it.

Test Yourself

Each time you study, try testing yourself. You can create questions as you read and answer them.

Look, Cover, Write and Check:
Write down the points you want to remember, then cover them up with your hand. Try to remember them, and write them out. Check to see if you got them right.

Review

There are many ways to review something. You can read the information again or work with a partner and ask each other questions.

Review new information as soon as possible. The sooner you review it, the better you'll remember it.

Reduce Your Stress

Plan your schedule, and be realistic about what you can accomplish.

Go for a walk or play a sport. Exercise helps clear your brain and it helps you reduce stress.

Visualize your success. Imagine your life after you achieve your goal. Tell yourself "I can do this!"

Libraries and Community Resources

Public libraries are important places for EAL learners. You can borrow books and find a quiet place to read. You can use services or programs to help you and your family make friends, and you can become more aware of activities in your community.

Public libraries provide many free services to children, families and learners. In the Halifax Regional Municipality, there are fourteen library locations, as well as a mobile library and a home delivery service (www.halifaxpubliclibraries.ca). Most towns in Nova Scotia have a public library. To find your local library, check www.library.ns.ca/content/nova-scotia-public-libraries.

Libraries have a variety of materials you can borrow including books, audiobooks, ebooks, magazines, CDs and DVDs. If there is a book you would like but it is not available at your branch, you can ask for the book to be sent to the branch closest to you. Some branches of the library also have collections of dual language books for children (stories in English and another language, like Spanish, Arabic, and more).

Your library card lets you use services at the library or on the library website. You can use the website to place a hold on books, or to renew your materials. You can also download audiobooks and ebooks directly to your computer, phone or tablet.

EAL books and materials are located at different branches of the library. In addition, some branches of the Halifax Public Library have EAL classes for adults. If you are interested in this program, you should call (902) 490-5990 to register. Classes are available at:

- Alderney Gate - Dartmouth
- Bedford
- Captain William Spry - Spryfield
- Halifax North
- Keshen Goodman - Clayton Park
- Spring Garden Road

These libraries may have other EAL materials not shown on the main database. The material is available if you ask.

At the Library

You will need a library card to borrow materials from the library. You should bring two pieces of identification. At least one should have your current address. Library cards are free.

You can search for a book on the computer terminals or ask the library staff for help.

Some phrases you can use are:

- "I'm looking for an EAL book, can you help me?"
- "Where are the books to learn English?"

Libraries and Community Resources

If the book you need is not available at your local library, you may be able to have it sent from another library:

- "I'd like to order a book from another library."

Volunteer Programs

Halifax Public Libraries -
www.halifaxpubliclibraries.ca /
(902) 490-5990
Adult EAL Program
One-on-one volunteer tutoring program for adults learning English. Classes take place in the library.

YMCA Centre for Immigrant Programs -
www.ymcahfx.ca / (902) 457-9622
Talking Circles
Conversation circles for building English speaking skills.

Halifax Public Libraries

www.halifaxpubliclibraries.ca

Alderney Gate
60 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth
(902) 490-5745

Bedford
15 Dartmouth Road, Bedford
(902) 490-5740

Captain William Spry
16 Sussex St., Spryfield
(902) 490-5818

Cole Harbour
51 Forest Hills Parkway, Cole Harbour
(902) 434-6177

Dartmouth North
105 Highfield Park Drive, Dartmouth
(902) 490-5840

Halifax Central Library
5440 Spring Garden Road, Halifax
(902) 490-5700

Halifax North Memorial
2285 Gottingen Street, Halifax
(902) 490-5723

JD Shatford
10353 St. Margaret's Bay Road, Hubbards
(902) 857-9176

Keshen Goodman
330 Lacewood Drive, Halifax
(902) 490-5738

Musquodoboit Harbour
Village Plaza 7900
#7 Highway, Musquodoboit Harbour
(902) 889-2227

Sackville
636 Sackville Drive, Lower Sackville
(902) 865-8653

Sheet Harbour
Blue Water Business Centre
22756 #7 Highway, Sheet Harbour
(902) 885-2391

Tantallon
3646 Hammonds Plains Road, Upper Tantallon
(902) 826-3330

Woodlawn
31 Eisner Boulevard, Dartmouth
(902) 490-2636

Books By Mail
60 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth
(902) 490-5599

Library Directories

Nova Scotia Directory of Libraries:
http://listingsca.com/nova-scotia/community_services/libraries

Canadian Library Directory (national):
www.collectionscanada.gc.ca

Websites for Practicing English

ISANS has a number of resources on its website to help you practice English: www.isans.ca

There are many other good websites for learning English. Try the following to practice your skills.

General EAL

a4ESL.org - grammar and vocabulary quizzes, exercises and puzzles
http://a4ESL.org

ThoughtCo - resources for improving your English at home
www.thoughtco.com

BBC - news stories, listening practice, vocabulary and grammar
www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish

Dave's ESL Cafe - a variety of EAL activities and learning materials
www.ESLcafe.com

EnglishClub.com - grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation activities
www.englishclub.com

ESL PartyLand - a variety of EAL activities
www.ESLpartyland.com

Learn English Feel Good - lessons in vocabulary, grammar and listening
www.learnenglishfeelgood.com

Manythings.org - a variety of EAL materials and activities
www.manythings.org

Ohio University Program of Intensive English - EAL activities for all levels
http://linguistics.ohio.edu/opie/?page_id=1201

Settlement.org ESL Corner - EAL materials for newcomers to Canada
http://ESLcorner.settlement.org

University of Victoria's English Language Centre Study Zone - interactive grammar, reading and vocabulary exercises
http://web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/elc/studyzone/

1-language.com - an EAL resource site
www.1-language.com

5 Minute English - short lessons for intermediate learners
www.5minuteenglish.com

Speaking

EnglishClub.com - activities for learning and practicing your speaking skills
www.englishclub.com/speaking/index.htm

English Speak - real world conversations at a variety of English levels
www.englishspeak.com

Websites for Practicing English

ESL Fast - English conversations and activities
www.ESLfast.com/robot

Focus on English - everyday English conversations
www.focusenglish.com/dialogues/conversation.html

Speak English - learn phrases and vocabulary to improve your speaking
www.speakenglish.co.uk

Talk English - speaking activities
www.talkenglish.com

Listening

Breaking News English - English lessons based on news stories
www.breakingnewsenglish.com

Elllo - over 1,000 listening activities
www.elllo.org

Learning Resources - news stories from you can read and listen to
http://literacynet.org/learningresources

Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab - listening exercises to test comprehension
www.ESL-lab.com

Simply Scripts - TV and movie scripts
www.simplyscripts.com

Voice of America: Special English - news stories with transcripts
www.voanews.com/specialenglish

Reading

Bangkok Post - learn to read a daily English-language newspaper
www.bangkokpost.com/learning

BBC Skillswise - reading factsheets, worksheets, quizzes and games
www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise

Extensive Reading - information on extensive reading
www.er-central.com

Nova Scotia Newspapers - read about local, Canadian and international news
Chronicle Herald - http://thechronicleherald.ca
Metro - www.thestar.com/halifax.html?origin=metronews

Skimming and Scanning - information on skimming and scanning with links
www.42explore.com/skim.htm

Writing

BBC Skillswise - writing factsheets, worksheets, quizzes and games
www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/topic-group/writing

Colorado State University Writing Resources - resources to improve writing
http://writing.colostate.edu/learn.cfm

Websites for Practicing English

Gallaudet University English Works - the writing process and types of writing
www.gallaudet.edu/tutorial-and-instructional-programs/english-center

Owl Purdue Online Writing Lab- grammar and mechanics, style, EAL , job search and professional writing.
http://owl.english.purdue.edu

Grammar

Thought - lessons about English grammar for beginner, intermediate and advanced students
www.thoughtco.com/esl-grammar-4133089

English Grammar Lessons - a resource for grammar explanations and practice
www.english-grammar-lessons.com

English Grammar Secrets - grammar explanations and exercises
www.englishgrammarsecrets.com

Englishpage.com - quizzes and explanations for grammar and vocabulary
www.englishpage.com

Guide to Grammar and Writing - rules, sentence, paragraph, and essay writing
http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar

Grammar.net - grammar activities and explanations
www.grammar.net

Spelling

BBC Skillswise - spelling factsheets, worksheets, quizzes and games
www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/topic-group/spelling

EAL Desk - spelling quizzes
http://www.esldesk.com/spelling

Manythings.org - spelling games and quizzes
www.manythings.org/e/spelling.html

Slang and Idioms

Cool Slang: Canadian Slang Dictionary - Canadian slang expressions
www.coolslang.com/in/canadian/index.php

ESL Cafe - a list of slang and idioms with explanations
www.ESLcafe.com/slang
www.ESLcafe.com/idioms

Slang City - website with slang in many categories (contains offensive language)
www.slangcity.com

The Idiom Connection - a comprehensive list of idioms with definitions and examples
www.idiomconnection.com

Websites for Practicing English

Songs, Stories and Poetry

Antimoon.com - stories that you can download and listen to (no transcripts)
www.antimoon.com/other/shaggydog.htm

EnglishClub.com - poetry that you can listen to and read
www.englishclub.com/listening/index.htm

Isabel's ESL Site - songs with activities to practice vocabulary and grammar
www.isabelperez.com/songs.htm

Lyrics.com - song lyrics to popular music
www.lyrics.com

Youtube - a wide range of English songs, stories and poems
www.youtube.com

Pronunciation

itESLj.org - links to pronunciation websites ad activities
http://itESLj.org/links/ESL/pronunciation

Manythings.org - pronunciation activities and videos
www.manythings.org/pp

Racher's English - pronunciation videos and practice with sounds and skills
https://rachelsenglish.com

Reference Material

Cambridge Dictionaries - online dictionary
http://dictionary.cambridge.org

Merriam Webster Online Dictionary - online dictionary, thesaurus and medical dictionary
www.merriam-webster.com

Oxford Dictionaries - online dictionaries
http://oxforddictionaries.com

Wikipedia - online encyclopedia
www.wikipedia.org

YourDictionary.com - online dictionary
http://yourdictionary.com

Resources for Professionals

Professional English

Web Resources

English Club - English for different professions including taxi drivers, hotel staff and medical professionals
www.englishclub.com/english-for-work

Writing Guidelines for Engineering and Science Students - writing guidelines for engineers and scientists
www.craftofscientificwriting.com

Business

Web Resources

The BBC has an audio and written news bulletin section. This is great for listening and reading practice.
www.bbc.co.uk/worldserviceradio

The Times 100 site offers thorough case studies with vocabulary definitions.
http://businesscasestudies.co.uk

ThoughtCo. has articles and lessons in business English, resumes, job interviews and cover letters.
www.thoughtco.com/ESL-business-english-4133088

Business English Site has business English grammar quizzes, vocabulary training, listening and reading tests.
www.businessenglishsite.com

Business English offers information and practice with many free lessons.
www.businessenglishresources.com

English Club has examples and activities for business English.
www.englishclub.com/business-english/index.htm

ESL Gold has articles, vocabulary and videos for learning business English.
https://eslgold.com/business-english

OWL has examples of different kinds of writing for the workplace.
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/681/01/

Engineering

Professional Associations

Engineers Nova Scotia is the licensing and regulatory body for engineers in Nova Scotia. The website has information on registration instructions, professional practice and employment.
www.engineersnovascotia.ca

Engineers Canada (formerly CCPE) regulates the practice and licensing of engineers in Canada. The website has information on the national organization of the provincial and territorial associations.
www.engineerscanada.ca

Tech Nova has information on the Society of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists of Nova Scotia. They help certify and support technical professionals.
www.technova.ca

IEEE is a professional association for the advancement of technology.
www.ieee.org/web/aboutus/home/index.html

Web Resources

Engineers Canada provides information for newcomers seeking employment as engineers in Canada.
http://newcomers.engineerscanada.ca

Engineers Nova Scotia publishes a monthly newsletter that is available online.
www.engineersnovascotia.ca/publications.asp?PageID=10

'The Engineer' is a UK engineering magazine with articles on engineering.
www.theengineer.co.uk

Biothinking.com looks at developing ecology-derived techniques for industrial, organizational and sustainable design.
www.biothinking.com

Books

Strategies for Engineering Communication. Stevenson, Susan & Whitmore, Steve. Toronto: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 2002.

Spring into Technical Writing for Engineers and Scientists. Rosenberg, B.J. Toronto: Addison-Wesley, 2005.

ESL Resource Book for Engineers and Scientists. Campbell, E. Toronto: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1995.

Accounting and Finance

Professional Associations

Chartered Accountants of Canada
www.cica.ca

Chartered Professional Accountants Nova Scotia
www.cpans.ca/web/cpans

Canadian Securities Institute
www.csi.ca

Web Resources

The Globe & Mail's Report on Business
www.theglobeandmail.com/business

CBC Money
www.cbc.ca/news/business

Yahoo Finance Canada
http://ca.finance.yahoo.com

Resources for Professionals

Books

Effective Writing - A Handbook for Accountants. May, Claire & Gordon, S. 5th ed. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1999. ISBN-10: 0131496816.

The Accountant's Guide to Professional Communication. Mckay, Melanie & Rosa, Elizabeth. Fort Worth: Harcourt, 2000. ISBN-10: 0030252520.

Medicine

Licensure

Medical Licensure Information from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia
www.cpsns.ns.ca

The National Assessment Collaboration Objective Structured Clinical Examination
https://mcc.ca/examinations/nac-overview

Web Resources

Medline provides tutorials which are useful for practicing listening skills, checking new vocabulary and using the encyclopedia and medical news section.
https://medlineplus.gov/videosandcooltools.html

English Med provides exercises and animated dialogues/video clips. You can get limited access from the website without a membership or gain full access to the site with a membership.
www.englishmed.com

The Canadian Medical Association Journal (CMAJ) is online. You can read articles, watch videos, find information about health alerts and search for information.
www.cmaj.ca

Medicine Net has a large number of resources including reading and listening segments, images, health news, medical topics, information on procedures, a medical dictionary and a monthly newsletter.
www.medicinenet.com

The W.K. Kellogg Health Sciences Library at Dalhousie University is a good resource for health professionals. Anyone can visit the library and read the medical literature but you need a university student card to borrow books. For an online collection of electronic books:
https://libraries.dal.ca/hours-locations/kellogg.html

Lifewire provides access to medical databases and specialized medical sites.
www.lifewire.com/medical-information-on-invisible-web-3482493

Resources for Professionals

Capital Health - Halifax Region Health Facilities
www.cdha.nshealth.ca

Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness
http://novascotia.ca/dhw

Health Canada - Government of Canada
www.canada.ca/en/health-canada.html

Websites for Medical English

ThoughtCo has articles on English for medical purposes and dialogues.
www.thoughtco.com/english-for-medical-a-physical-examination-1211327

The Calgary Cambridge Guide gives examples of language used during the medical interview.
www.skillscascade.com/handouts.htm

English Club has learning materials including medical vocabulary, quizzes and dialogues.
www.englishclub.com/english-for-work/medical.htm

Hospital English provides free online materials for medical professionals.
www.hospitalenglish.com

Idiom Connection provides medical idioms.
www.idiomconnection.com/medical.html

The University of Saskatchewan has links to medical articles and video presentations.
www.usask.ca/cme/articles

Books

Building a Medical Vocabulary. Leonard, Peggy and Mosby. A Saunders Title; 7 edition, 2008. ISBN-10: 1437701639.

English in Medicine: A Course in Communication Skills. Holmström, Beverly. Cambridge University Press; 3 edition, 2005. ISBN: 052159569X.

Grammar and Writing Skills for the Health Profession. Villemaire, Lorraine. Delmar Learning; 2 edition, 2005. ISBN: 140187374X.

Television and Radio

Watching television and listening to the radio can be good ways of practicing your English. You can improve your listening, vocabulary and pronunciation skills.

You can see medical news stories on television stations such as CBC and Global News. There is more detailed information on the CBC and Global websites.
www.cbc.ca and www.globalnews.ca
There are several medical dramas and documentaries on television, which use medical terminology and medical situations.

Resources for Professionals

Bookstores

The Dalhousie University Health Sciences Bookstore in Halifax offers a wide selection of health-related books. There are books related to medicine, dentistry, nursing, and other health specialties. Phone: (902) 494-3020

Most large bookstores carry bilingual dictionaries and EAL grammar books. They do not always have books to help with functional English. Bookstores can order books for you. Teachers, language assessors and librarians can suggest other books for you. You may be able to find books online on websites such as www.amazon.ca or www.chapters.indigo.ca

Recommended Resources for Learning English

Grammar

Basic Grammar in Use. Murphy, Raymond. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 3rd Edition. 2010. ISBN- 10: 0521133343.
Grammar in Use Intermediate. Murphy, Raymond. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 3rd edition, 2009. ISBN-10: 0521734770.
These are excellent grammar resources with explanations, exercises, an answer key and a CD-ROM with bonus activities.

Basic English Grammar. Azar, Betty Schrampfer and Hagen, Stacy A. New York: Pearson Longman; 3rd Edition, 2005. ISBN- 10: 0131957341.
A practical book for learning grammar. An audio CD is included for listening practice.

Oxford Learner's Grammar: Grammar Finder. Eastwood, J. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. ISBN- 10: 0194375978.
A grammar reference book with practice activities and a CD-ROM.

Dictionaries

The Oxford Picture Dictionary: Canadian Edition. Toronto: Oxford University Press Canada; 2nd Edition, 2009. ISBN-10: 0195431162.
This is a picture-based dictionary. CDs and student workbooks are available.

The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. Pearson EAL; 4th edition, 2006. ISBN-10: 1405811269.
An excellent dictionary with CD ROM for beginner and intermediate EAL students.

Oxford ESL Dictionary. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. ISBN-10:0194316831.
An EAL learners' dictionary for intermediate students.

Longman Advanced American Dictionary. Longman Pub Group, 2007. ISBN-10: 1405820292.
An excellent academic dictionary for advanced EAL students.

Oxford Collocations Dictionary: for Students of English. Oxford University Press, 2009. ISBN- 10: 0194325385.
Helps advanced EAL Students learn what words are commonly used together.

Computer / Internet Programs

Pronunciation Power - a resource to help you improve your pronunciation skills.
www.englishlearning.com

Rosetta Stone - a technology based resource for learning languages.
www.rosettastone.com / 1-800-767-3882

Standardized Tests of English

Canadian Language Benchmarks

The Canadian Language Benchmarks Placement Test (CLBPT) are used for placement in many adult immigrant English as an Additional Language programs in Nova Scotia and other provinces and territories in Canada.
www.language.ca

Many adult EAL programs use the CLB as a guide for teaching. Upon completing the course-work for a CLB level, the student may receive a certificate showing the CLB level completed.

English Proficiency Tests

Here is information about some of the more commonly used English proficiency tests and where they are accepted. It is not a full list as there are other tests. Please look at the websites for the most current information about cost, test sites, descriptions and scoring.

CanTEST - Canadian Test of English for Scholars and Trainees. There are several versions of this test. It is for academic and professional purposes such as university admission, professional accreditation and vocational training. It includes all four skill areas and takes about three hours to complete.
www.cantest.uottawa.ca

TOEFL iBT - Test of English as a Foreign Language. TOEFL measures the ability of non-native speakers of English to use and understand North American English used in college and university settings. It is required by many universities in Canada.
www.ets.org/toefl

TOEIC - Test of English for International Communication. TOIEC measures the everyday English skills of people working in an international environment. There are two sections to the test, listening and reading and speaking and writing. TOEIC preparation books are available.
www.etscanada.ca

IELTS - International English Language Testing System. There is a speaking/listening section, a reading section and two writing tasks. The test is available in Halifax at English Canada World Organization ((902) 429-3636).
www.ielts.org

MELAB - Michigan English Language Assessment Battery evaluates advanced English competence of non-native speakers of English. It is used by students applying to English universities and professionals who need English for work or training purposes.
www.cambridgemichigan.org/melab

Standardized Tests of English

CAEL - Canadian Academic English Language Proficiency Test. This test is used to assess a learner's academic English skills for studying in Canadian universities. Tests are offered at St. Mary's University in Halifax, Acadia University in Wolfville and McKenzie College in Sydney.
www.cael.ca

TOWES - Test of Workplace Essential Skills. TOWES assesses essential skill competencies in the areas of reading text, document use and numeracy. TOWES is different from other tests because it uses authentic documents, such as catalogues, order forms, labels, and schematics as source material.
www.towes.com

CELBAN - Canadian English Language Benchmarks Assessment for Nurses. This is the first national, occupation-specific, CLB-referenced assessment tool. CELBAN is endorsed by most of the licensing bodies that license nurses in Canada. There is a readiness self-assessment available online.
www.celban.org

ISANS provides a "Test-Taking Strategies" course in Halifax. This general course provides strategies for taking all standardized tests of English. Call (902) 423-3607 for more information.

Nova Scotia College / University English Admissions Requirements

You can check at the universities directly to see their requirements:

Saint Mary's University
www.smu.ca/futurestudents/ihs_ESL.html

Dalhousie University
www.dal.ca/admissions.html

Mount Saint Vincent University
http://www.msvu.ca/en/home/beamountstudent/requirements-and-deadlines/default.aspx

Nova Scotia College of Art and Design
https://my.nscad.ca/international/international-applicants.ezc

Nova Scotia Community College
www.nscc.ca/admissions/applying/admission_requirements.asp

University of Cape Breton
www.cbu.ca/come-to-cbu/international-students/language-requirements/

Saint Francis Xavier University
www.stfx.ca/admissions/requirements/international-students

Acadia University
https://admissions.acadiau.ca/other-intl.html

Language Programs for Newcomers in Nova Scotia

Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC)

LINC programs have free English language classes for newcomers to Canada. Before entry into a LINC program you must have a Canadian Language Benchmark Assessment (CLBA). Call Learn English Nova Scotia (902) 431-8675) and you can take one in Halifax, in your local area or online.

Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS) (902) 423-3607
Literacy, LINC 1-7 classes, Transition Language Program. The Transition Language Program is for people who can learn better in small groups with a curriculum adapted to their special needs. Onsite childcare may be available. Full time and part time classes: 6960 Mumford Road, Suite 2120, Halifax.

Academic English

Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) (902) 491-3588
English for Academic Purposes (EAP) is a program to develop skills needed for entry into an academic program at college or university. CLB 6/6/6/6. Institute of Technology Campus - 5685 Leeds Street, Halifax.

Evening Classes

Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS) (902) 423-3607
Ongoing program for newcomers who cannot attend daytime classes. Tuesdays and Thursdays: 6:30-8:30, six classes (CLB 3-8) - 6960 Mumford Road, Suite 2120, Halifax.

Workplace Language

ISANS offers classes in workplace language. There are classroom-based, workplace, as well as distance language classes. There are programs for working newcomers, and also for newcomers who are preparing to work in Canada. Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS) (902) 423-3607 Mumford Road, Suite 2120, Halifax.

Language Programs for Newcomers in Nova Scotia

Face-to-Face Training

Communication for Healthcare Professionals

This 3-month program is an inter-disciplinary course for healthcare professionals. This intensive course focuses on the language skills needed to practice effectively in a Canadian health-care work environment. CLB 6+ required.

Computer Training Classes

Classes are offered in various computer topics such as Microsoft Office, Social Networking and Email. Minimum CLB may be required.

English in the Workplace

Language training delivered onsite at the workplace and customized to the needs of the employee and the workplace. For employed and self-employed newcomers. All language levels.

International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Preparation

This course prepares you for the IELTS test. CLB 6+ required.

Language Learning Strategies

An eight-week program for independent high-level learners to develop learning strategies to improve their language skills. CLB 7-8 required.

Orientation and Communication Skills for Engineers

This program is an inter-disciplinary orientation and communication course for immigrants in engineering and technical professions who want to work in their field in Canada. CLB 6+ required.

Professional Communication Workshops

This series of workshops is for immigrants who want to improve their language skills for employment or self-employment. You can choose which workshops you would like to attend. CLB 5+ required.

Pronunciation and Communication for Work

Sessions are 2 times a week for 10 weeks to improve pronunciation and strengthen listening skills. Intermediate (CLB 5-6) and advanced (CLB 7-8) courses are offered. CLB 5+ required.

Language Programs for Newcomers in Nova Scotia

Facilitated Online Training

These courses are facilitated by a teacher. You need to contact ISANS at (902) 423-3607 to register for the classes.

Clear Speaking Online
This 5-7 week class offers opportunities to improve your pronunciation. CLB 5+ required.

English in the Workplace Online
Language classes are offered online in the employee's workplace and are customized to the needs of the employee and the workplace. CLB 5+ required.

Interview Skills Workshop Online
This three-week workshop will help learners prepare for Canadian job interviews. CLB 5+ required.

Introduction to Business in Nova Scotia Online
This self-study course provides an overview of starting a business in Nova Scotia.

Job Search Workshop Online
This 4-week workshop provides immigrants with information about finding a job in Canada. CLB 5+ required.

Listening and Speaking at Work Online
This 8-week course allows learners to improve their workplace speaking and listening skills. There is an instructor for this course. CLB 6-7 required.

Soft Skills: Working with Others / Soft Skills: Professional Communication
These 4-week courses explore spoken workplace cultural communication. Learners meet with an instructor once a week. CLB 7+ required.

Working in Canada Workshop Online
This workshop covers basic employment topics including contracts, labour standards and organizational culture. CLB 5+ required.

Workplace Writing Skills 1, 2 and 3

These 8-week writing courses are designed to take clients from a CLB 4 to CLB 7 in writing, improving writing skills for the workplace. CLB 4+ required.

Self-study Online Learning

The following is a self-study course.

Grammar Online

This course offers grammar activities that provide the opportunity to practice grammar at your own pace. CLB 5 recommended.

English Programs Outside Halifax

Valley Community Learning Association-Valley EAL (902) 679-5252, www.vcla.ca
22 Cornwallis Street, Kentville, Nova Scotia.

The Valley Community Learning Association (VCLA) offers English language classes in the Annapolis Valley region.

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Your Comments

This is the fourth version of *Practice English on Your Own: Self Study Ideas for English Language Learners*. We intend to revise it again. Please send or email your feedback to:

Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS)
6960 – 2120 Mumford Road
Halifax, N.S. B3L 4P1
info@isans.ca

1. Are you an Adult EAL learner? Yes No
   If yes, are you currently enrolled in an adult EAL program in Nova Scotia? Yes No
   If no, why did you use this resource? _____

2. Do you live in Nova Scotia? Yes No
   If no, where do you live? _____

3. How did you learn about this resource? Where did you receive your copy?

   _____

   _____

4. Was it useful to include the CLB pages? Yes No
   If yes, why? If no, why not?

   _____

   _____

5. What parts of the resource were the most useful to you?

   _____

   _____

6. What are your suggestions for changes or additions to the next edition?

   _____

   _____

7. Other comments:

   _____

   _____

ISANS values your feedback. Thank you for completing this form.

