

A man with a beard and dark hair is shown in profile, reading a newspaper. He is wearing a dark jacket over a grey shirt. The background is a bright blue sky with several red maple leaves scattered throughout. At the bottom of the image, there is a field of yellow wildflowers.

# Practise English on Your Own

Self Study Ideas for  
English Language  
Learners



# Table of Contents



<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Canadian Language Benchmarks</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Canadian Language Benchmarks - LEVEL 1 .....	4
Canadian Language Benchmarks - LEVEL 2 .....	6
Canadian Language Benchmarks - LEVEL 3 .....	8
Canadian Language Benchmarks - LEVEL 4 .....	10
Canadian Language Benchmarks - LEVEL 5 .....	12
Canadian Language Benchmarks - LEVEL 6 .....	14
Canadian Language Benchmarks - LEVEL 7 .....	16
Canadian Language Benchmarks - LEVEL 8 .....	18
<b>Websites for Practising English</b> .....	<b>20</b>
General .....	20
Listening Websites .....	22
Reading Websites .....	22
Writing Websites .....	22
Spelling Websites .....	23
Idiom Websites .....	23
Dictionaries Online .....	23
<b>Self Study Ideas</b> .....	<b>24</b>
Ideas for Practising English – Beginners (CLB 1 - 4) .....	24
Ideas for Practising English – Intermediate (CLB 5 - 8) .....	27
Reading and Study Tips .....	30
<b>Self Study Resources/Sites for Professionals and Trades People</b> .....	<b>34</b>
Business English Websites .....	34
Ways to Practise Your Medical English .....	34
Libraries .....	37
<b>Suggested Resources that Can be Purchased</b> .....	<b>40</b>
<b>Standardized Tests of English as a Second Language</b> .....	<b>42</b>
Canadian Language Benchmarks Placement Test .....	42
Academic English Program for University and College Entrance .....	43
English Proficiency Tests .....	43
<b>Your Comments</b> .....	<b>47</b>

# Introduction

This self study resource was developed for adults who are learning English as an additional language\* (EAL). It contains ideas to practise English on your own, at home and in the community. You will find website addresses to help you learn English on the internet. You will also find information about the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) and standardized tests of English as a Second Language (ESL).

In Manitoba, there are free adult English as an Additional Language (EAL) classes for newcomers to the province. To get a list of programs available and registration information, check the website:

[www.immigratemanitoba.com](http://www.immigratemanitoba.com), go to the 'Learning English' section and follow the links in the 'For Learners' section or phone 945-6300 or 1-800-665-8332 toll free in Manitoba.

The ideas contained in *Practise English on Your Own: Self Study Ideas for English Language Learners* are from adult ESL teachers and adult language learners.

The internet is a valuable resource for practising English on your own. If you do not have a computer, contact your local library for information about public access internet use.

The Adult Language Training Branch 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.

Best wishes to you as you continue to improve your English communication skills.

\* Manitoba is implementing a change from the term English as a Second Language (ESL) programs to English as an Additional Language (EAL) programs. Both terms, ESL and EAL, are used interchangeably in this resource. For more information about the change, see the Learning English section of [www.immigratemanitoba.com](http://www.immigratemanitoba.com)

# Canadian Language Benchmarks

In Manitoba, Adult English as a Second Language (ESL) schools use the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) for teaching and testing. The CLB is used in Adult ESL schools all across Canada. It gives information about 12 levels of English listening, speaking, reading and writing. Level 1 students have little or no English. Level 12 students are like native speakers of English. Students at level 9 or above usually have enough English for university, college or professional communication. Many post secondary institutions and employers also refer to CLB levels

The Canadian Language Benchmarks tells what people can do in English in daily communication. Can you answer questions about your name, address and phone number? Can you make a doctor's appointment by yourself? Can you understand a news report on the radio? Can you find a phone number in the phone book? Can you fill out an application form or write a memo in English? Can you write a report for you boss? These are things people can do at different levels of the Canadian Language Benchmarks.

The CLB assessment tools are described in the standardized tests section of this document.

## **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 that you will see in many Manitoba Adult EAL classrooms. These summaries help ESL learners mark language learning progress, articulate goals and understand the Manitoba Adult EAL system. For a more thorough discussion of the levels, please refer to: [www.language.ca](http://www.language.ca). for the *CLB 2000: English as a Second Language for Adults* document.

---

# Canadian Language Benchmarks

---

## 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.

## 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.

## 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:

Name

Address

Phone Number

## 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.

---

# Canadian Language Benchmarks

---

## 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.

## 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.



## 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 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.

---

# Canadian Language Benchmarks

---

## 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 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'.

## 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 understand when a person asks me for something.

I have trouble understanding people on the phone.

## 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.

---

# Canadian Language Benchmarks

---

## 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 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.

## 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 use 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 ask people to repeat when I don't understand.

## 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. However, most of the time, I use my dictionary for new words.

I can get information from charts and schedules.

I 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 use whole sentences with few errors.

---

# Canadian Language Benchmarks

---

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

## 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 catch some inferred meanings in advice, offers, compliments and suggestions.

## 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 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. I can predict what will come 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 choose language and content that are appropriate and relevant to the occasion.

---

# Canadian Language Benchmarks

---

## 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 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 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.

## 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.



## 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 ESL learners, but it is only in English, not my first language.

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 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.

---

# Canadian Language Benchmarks

---

## 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, dissatisfaction, satisfaction and hope.

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

I am comfortable speaking about almost any topic that comes up 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. When I know that people 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 a number of strategies to keep

the conversation going. I can change the topic.

## 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 the people 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.

However, 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.

## 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 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 use an English dictionary for ESL 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 summarize longer texts without losing essential information.

I 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.

---

# Canadian Language Benchmarks

---

## 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.

## 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 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.

## 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 multistep instructions for an established process.

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

I 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.

# Websites for Practising English

There are many good websites for learning English as a Second Language. Try the following websites to practise vocabulary, grammar, and reading. Also try a puzzle, game or quiz.

## General

### **Dave's ESL Café**

Hundreds of ESL activities  
[www.eslcafe.com](http://www.eslcafe.com)

### **5 Minute English**

Free Short Self-Study English Lessons and Quick Tips  
[www.5minuteenglish.com/](http://www.5minuteenglish.com/)

### **Many Things**

Quizzes, tests, exercises and puzzles  
[www.manythings.org/](http://www.manythings.org/)

### **1-Language**

One-stop resources site for learning English  
[www.1-language.com](http://www.1-language.com)

### **Language and Literacy**

Links to dozens of ESL activities and websites  
[www.settlement.org/site/LL/home.asp](http://www.settlement.org/site/LL/home.asp)

### **English Learner**

Interactive tests and exercises  
[www.englishlearner.com](http://www.englishlearner.com)

### **International EFL Café**

Vocabulary, writing, reading, speaking, listening  
[internationaleflcafe.com](http://internationaleflcafe.com)

### **English To Go**

Instant lessons based on news stories  
[www.English-To-Go.com](http://www.English-To-Go.com)

### **Mavis Harper's ESL Website**

ESL activities aligned to Canadian Language Benchmarks  
[www.mavis.ca](http://www.mavis.ca)

### **Volterre Web Links**

ESL with a European flavor  
[www.wfi.fr/volterre/weblinklearners.html](http://www.wfi.fr/volterre/weblinklearners.html)

### **English Student Resources**

Hundreds of ESL activities for all levels  
[www.ohiou.edu/esl/english/](http://www.ohiou.edu/esl/english/)

**Net Grammar**

Grammar activities at various levels

[netgrammar.altec.org/](http://netgrammar.altec.org/)

**ESL Independent Study Lab**

Links to over 250 ESL Websites

[lclark.edu/~krauss/toppicks/toppicks.html](http://lclark.edu/~krauss/toppicks/toppicks.html)

**Aardvark's English Forum**

Interactive exercises, teaching and learning links

[www.englishforum.com](http://www.englishforum.com)

**English Club**

Grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation activities

[www.englishclub.com](http://www.englishclub.com)

**E.S.L. Activities for Students**

Quizzes, tests, exercises and puzzles

[a4esl.org/](http://a4esl.org/)

**English Language Study Zone**

Grammar and interactive practise exercises

[web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/elc/studyzone/grammar.htm](http://web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/elc/studyzone/grammar.htm)

**Learning English with the BBC**

Listening, music, reading, grammar and more

[www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/index.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/index.shtml)

**Resource Centre: ESL Websites**

Links to almost 50 excellent ESL websites and activities

[www.nceltr.mq.edu.au/eslsites.html](http://www.nceltr.mq.edu.au/eslsites.html)

## Listening Websites

These websites are helpful for practising English listening and pronunciation.

[www.soundsofenglish.org](http://www.soundsofenglish.org)

[www.englishlistening.com](http://www.englishlistening.com)

[www.ello.org/](http://www.ello.org/)

[www.esl-lab.com](http://www.esl-lab.com)

## Radio Listening Websites

[www.cbc.ca/listen/index.html](http://www.cbc.ca/listen/index.html)

[www.radio-locator.com/](http://www.radio-locator.com/)

[www.literacynet.org/cnnsf/](http://www.literacynet.org/cnnsf/)

[www.npr.org](http://www.npr.org)

## Songs, Stories and Poetry

[www.efclub.com/](http://www.efclub.com/)

[www.web-pop.com/flashindex.html](http://www.web-pop.com/flashindex.html)

[www.antimoon.com/other/shaggydog.htm](http://www.antimoon.com/other/shaggydog.htm)

## Reading Websites

These reading websites have English reading activities, which are based on current events and news from Canada and around the world.

[www.breakingnewsenglish.com](http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com)

[www.cbc.ca/ottawa/esl](http://www.cbc.ca/ottawa/esl)

[www.english-zone.com/reading/index.html](http://www.english-zone.com/reading/index.html)

## Writing Websites

### **Yes English Guide to Punctuation**

Tutorial covering all aspects of this subject

[www.davidapppleyard.com/english/punctuation.htm](http://www.davidapppleyard.com/english/punctuation.htm)

### **Vocabulary for English Learners**

Graded activities, idioms, vocabulary for special purposes  
[www.ohiou.edu/esl/english/vocabulary.html#VocActivities](http://www.ohiou.edu/esl/english/vocabulary.html#VocActivities)

### **Guide to Grammar and Writing**

Quizzes, sentence, paragraph and essay writing

[www.cctc.commnet.edu/grammar/](http://www.cctc.commnet.edu/grammar/)



## Spelling Websites

These websites are for anyone who would like to improve their spelling in English.

[www.spelling.hemscott.net](http://www.spelling.hemscott.net)

[www.say-it-in-english.com](http://www.say-it-in-english.com)

## Idiom Websites

### ESL Idioms and Slang

[www.iteslj.org/links/ESL/Idioms\\_and\\_Slang/](http://www.iteslj.org/links/ESL/Idioms_and_Slang/)

## Dictionaries Online

### AskOxford.com

Online dictionaries from Oxford University Press  
[www.askoxford.com](http://www.askoxford.com)

### Cambridge Dictionaries Online

Includes Advanced Learners' Dictionary  
[www.dictionary.cambridge.org](http://www.dictionary.cambridge.org)

### Yahoo Dictionary

A source of dictionaries for many languages  
[www.dir.yahoo.com/Reference/Dictionaries](http://www.dir.yahoo.com/Reference/Dictionaries)

### Your Dictionary.Com

English and foreign language dictionaries  
[www.yourdictionary.com](http://www.yourdictionary.com)

### Virtual Library

Over 100 subject areas  
[www.vlib.org](http://www.vlib.org)

# Self Study Ideas

## Ideas for Practising English

### Beginners (CLB 1 - 4)

#### Speaking Activities

- talk to lots of people in the neighbourhood and when you are shopping.
- phone someone else that is learning English and talk in English.
- invite a classmate who doesn't speak your language or a neighbour for tea and speak about your children in English.
- volunteer at a community centre or at your children's school.
- get to know the parents of your children's friends.
- meet a classmate once a week to review the work that you did in English class.
- very quietly mimic every native English speaker that you hear. Challenge yourself to make your stress, intonation and speed match what you just heard – now everyone is your teacher!

#### Listening Activities

- watch T.V. using "closed captions".
- watch the news in English on T.V.
- watch videos in English.
- listen to English songs on the radio, tape recorder or CD player.

- watch English soap operas on T.V.
- listen to English radio.
- listen to the weather information in the Talking Yellow pages (784-9000). When told to enter a four-digit number, enter 6990 for Winnipeg weather or 6989 for Brandon. Look on page 16 of the Yellow Pages for more numbers.

#### Reading Activities

- read flyers in the newspaper.
- look at a picture and read an article about it in the newspaper.
- read signs on the street and on the bus.
- read a book to your children and talk about the pictures in the book.
- go to the library and borrow books for free.
- borrow a bilingual book from the library and read the story in English and your language.
- read a map and learn the names of the streets.



## Writing Activities

- write a message in a card in English.
- write sentences about an interesting family activity.
- write sentences about your favourite family photographs.
- learn one new word or phrase every day and write it in a notebook.
- learn how to use a computer and send e-mails to your friends. Try out the ESL learning sites listed in this resource or others on the internet using a Google search of “learning English”.
- write your grocery shopping list in English.
- practise filling out a form with your name, address and other personal information.

## More Ideas to Practise English

People learn in different ways. The following ideas may work for you.

1. Learn the following phrases and use them when ever you talk with an English speaker:  
Please repeat that.  
What does that mean?  
How do you spell that?
2. When you know you will have to ask a question to get important information, practise what you will say first. Practise additional sentences and questions to use if you don't get the information you need.  
I don't understand.  
Where can I get the information that I need?
3. After someone answers your question or gives you information, check that you understood. You can repeat the important information they said.  
If they say, “Take the 68 bus.”, “You say, “the 68 bus?” or “Did you say the 68 bus?”



4. Practise saying the letters of the alphabet in English. Practise writing the letters. Then do the same with numbers.

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

5. Make a list of new words and phrases that you have learned. Review your list everyday. Add new words and phrases every week. Put the list in a place that you will see everyday, such as on the fridge or by your dresser. Try to use the word in conversation or in writing. When you use the word, put the word on your calendar on the date you used it. Feel good!
6. Set aside 10 minutes a day to speak in English with friends and family.
7. Have an English speaker help you label common items that you use daily and put the name tags on the items. (Example; fridge, mirror, pen). Add phrases and make sentences with your words, such as 'it's in the fridge', 'I lost my pen', etc.

# Self Study Ideas

## Ideas for Practising English

### Intermediate (CLB 5 - 8)

1. If you want to practise your public speaking, **join a Toast Masters Club**. This club focuses on becoming a confident public speaker. For more information about the location of a club, you can call 338-7401 or go to [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org). There are Toastmasters clubs in 90 countries around the world.
2. **Volunteer** with a school, club or organization. This is a great way to meet new people, practise English and gain valuable work skills. You can call the Volunteer Centre of Winnipeg (477-5180) or visit the centre at 510-5 Donald St. You can also call or visit a community centre, hospital, senior centre, etc. in your area and ask about volunteer opportunities.
3. **Take a course** from a local community club or high school for fun. You can take a class in cooking, sports, art, crafts, first aid, dance and so on. They are not expensive, and you can meet people and speak English with them. To find out about these classes, look in the City of Winnipeg's Leisure Guide. There are copies of the Leisure Guide at Winnipeg Public Libraries.
4. **Take a Continuing Education Course** at Red River College (694-1789), the University of Winnipeg (982-6633) or the University of Manitoba (474-9921) or another college in your area. You can sometimes take these courses during the evening or on weekends.
5. **Audit a regular university course**. (This means that you can sit in the classroom and do the assignments, but you will not get an official credit.) Auditing a course costs about half the price of taking the course. You can phone the University of Manitoba (474-8880) or the University of Winnipeg (786-7811) or contact a local university in your area for more information.
6. **Listen to CBC Radio One** (990 on your am radio dial) to practise listening. This radio station has much more dialogue than other stations, and you will hear a lot of interesting topics. Try listening with a friend or family member, and then discussing the topic afterwards.

7. **Use the “closed captions”** feature on your TV. It is a good way to practise listening and reading comprehension at the same time.
8. **Practise listening by using the Talking Yellow Pages** of your phone book. Just call 784-9000 from a touch tone phone. (All local calls are free.)
9. **Read English Stories, Cartoons, News Articles and Books.** Write down new vocabulary. Practise reading to yourself and out loud. After reading ask yourself: Who, What, When, Where, Why and How questions about what you have read.
10. **Set Goals for Learning English -** Learning English requires commitment. Set goals and write them down. Make an agenda or create a plan for your learning. Use a journal or a calendar to help you plan your study time. If you are in class, remember to practise after class.
11. **Keep a Journal, Diary or Personal Dictionary.** Write down words you hear and do not know, look them up in a dictionary and record the meaning. Try to learn a new word each day and write it in your journal (you can do this alphabetically). Try using new words in a sentence you have created.
12. **Form a book club** with some friends to practise reading. Choose a book, practise reading some parts out loud and discuss the book with your group. This will help you improve your pronunciation and reading comprehension.
13. **Record Yourself.** Use a tape recorder and record yourself speaking English. Try imitating native English speakers. Pay attention to stress, pronunciation and intonation.
14. **Listen to English Music.** Try reading song lyrics as you listen (you can find them on the internet by doing a quick search). Singing is an excellent way to practise intonation and stress.

15. **Make an English/ESL Friend.**  
Practise conversation, create dialogues, read together, etc.
16. **Visit a Public Library** in your area. There are many things you can do at the library to improve your English:
- a. You can borrow a “talking book”. This is a book on a cassette tape or CD. You can also borrow the book, and then you can read and listen at the same time. This will help you with your reading and listening comprehension, and help you understand stress and intonation.
  - b. You can read a newspaper or magazine. The Globe and Mail newspaper is very good if your English is at a high level. Community newspapers will also give you a lot of information on free events in your community.
  - c. You can attend a free event at the library, such as a lecture or presentation. There are some free events at the library for parents and children.
17. **Play an English Board Game,**  
Try playing an English board game like Monopoly or Scrabble, Boggle, Pictionary (great for practising idioms), Scattergories, A Question of Scruples, etc. Try playing English card games. Go to [www.pagat.com/](http://www.pagat.com/) for an index of games and complete card game instructions.
18. **Join or create an English Club with Friends.** Create a conversation group and practise. Make an English only rule. Keep an English dictionary handy and record new vocabulary in a club notebook. Phone people from your club and practise your English. Send emails to each other or write letters. Go on field trips, watch English movies, listen to English music, etc.
19. **Use English Recipes.** Make a meal using English recipes. Write your favorite recipe in English. Invite friends to an English only dinner party.

# Reading and Study Tips

## **Organize your time**

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

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

Be sure to give yourself short breaks and reward yourself when you've studied well.

Make your own study schedule. Make a chart of the 7 days of the week (along the top) and the hours of the day, from about 6 a.m. until midnight (along the left side). Use a new chart for each week.

In your chart, write down all the things you have to do, such as work, classes, meals, picking up your children, or special events. Schedule in some study time each day.

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

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

## **Find a good place to study**

Study in a quiet environment at a table or desk that has enough room for everything you will need, such as: a textbook, a dictionary, a notebook and pens, pencils and highlighters.

## **Find a study partner (or a few)**

Sometimes it helps to study with someone else.

You can ask each other questions and quiz each other.

Discussing what you have read with your study partner will 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.

**Learning by listening:** Some people are able to remember things better if they hear information. They enjoy reading aloud or studying with others, listening to recorded books or information, or listening to class presentations.

**Learning by seeing:** Some people remember what they see and prefer written instructions. They like visual sources of information such as videos or the internet. They learn better when they see charts and diagrams, posters, flashcards or textbooks with pictures.

**Learning by doing:** Some people learn better if they do a task themselves. They are “hands on” learners. They understand directions best if they write them down. They remember what they learn if they draw pictures and diagrams, make models, solve puzzles, participate in an activity and use 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, looking at pictures and diagrams. After skimming, begin to read in detail.

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

Write down notes or important points in point form.

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

## **When you find a word you don't know**

There are many things you can do to help yourself understand new and difficult words.

Look again at the word, 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 how it is used in the sentence and what it means.

Look for a prefix. This is a word part attached to the beginning of a word. For example, "tri" means 3 as in "tricycle", which has 3 wheels.

Look for a suffix. This is a word part attached to the end of a word. For example, the "ing" at the end of a word tells you that the word describes a process.

Look for the stem. This is what is left of a word when you take off the prefix and or the suffix. For example, if you remove "de" and "izing" from "decolourizing", you have the word "colour".

Use a dictionary. Sometimes you will find several definitions for one word. Choose the one you think fits the best in the sentence you are reading.

Ask someone else for help. If you have already tried many ways to understand a word and you are still having trouble, ask a co-worker or a friend.

## **Draw some pictures**

Drawing a picture is sometimes a good way to learn because it is very visual. It can help you to organize the information in your mind.

## **Highlight or underline important information**

Underlining, and highlighting help to make importance facts stand out.

You can use different coloured highlighters or pens.

You can also make short notes in the white spaces around the text.

When you review the textbook at a later date, you can read only your highlighted or underlined parts of the book.

## **Use tricks to help you memorize facts**

When there is some information you want to memorize, begin by telling yourself that you will remember it. Think positively and choose to remember.

Break the information into small chunks.

Use mental or hand drawn pictures.

Repeat, repeat, repeat!

## **Use flash cards or posters**

When you are learning new words, you can 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 read them while you are on the bus or on your coffee break at work.

## **Talk out loud**

If it helps you, you can study by reading out loud. Hearing yourself say aloud what you are learning will reinforce the information and help you to remember it.

## **Test yourself**

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

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 it 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. When you have learned new information, 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.

Exercise helps you clear your brain and it helps you breathe more deeply.

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

# Self Study Resources

## Sites for Professionals and Trades People

### **Business English Websites**

[www.bizenglish.com](http://www.bizenglish.com)

[www.measureup.towes.com/](http://www.measureup.towes.com/)

The Measure Up site offers opportunities to practise three Essential Skills needed in all types of occupations

### **English for Engineers Website**

[www.canadianefp.com/](http://www.canadianefp.com/)

This site provides activities for internationally trained engineers to improve their English communication skills as well as many links to references such as McNally Robinson: A Guide to Writing as an Engineer, Amazon.com: English for Specific Purposes - 2 ESL book titles for engineers, Learn 4 Good: Engineering English for Engineers, a list of Technical Language Books and the University of Adelaide Library: Guides: Report Writing for Engineers which is a long list of writing references.

### **Ways to Practise Your Medical English**

Here are some ideas for studying medical English for any medical field (i.e. nurses, doctors, technicians, researchers, etc.).

**Medline** provides tutorials, which are great for practising listening skills. You can check words you do not know in the dictionary and you can use the encyclopedia and the medical news section as well. [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/tutorial.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/tutorial.html)

**English Med** is a website, which provides hundreds of exercises and dozens of animated dialogues and video clips. You can get limited access from the website without a membership; however, with a membership you gain full access to the site. [www.englishmed.com](http://www.englishmed.com)

**The Canadian Medical Association Journal (CMAJ)** has an online version. You can read articles, view videos and animations, find information about health alerts and search for information. [www.cmaj.ca/](http://www.cmaj.ca/)



**Medicine Net** has read and listen segments from conferences, health news, medical topics from A – Z, information on procedures and tests, a medical dictionary, a monthly newsletter etc.  
[www.medicinenet.com/script/main/hp.asp](http://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/hp.asp)

**The Neil John McLean Library** at Health Science’s Centre is a good resource for medical information. To sign out a book, you need to have a library card; however, anyone can go in and read the books, periodicals and magazines.  
**770 Bannatyne Ave. Winnipeg**  
**Phone: 789-3342**

**Health Sciences Centre Bookstore** is located below the Neil John McLean Library on the main floor. It offers the widest selection of medical books for sale in the province. There are books for medical students, generalist and specialist practitioners, dentists, nurses and other medical professionals. There is also a wide selection of medical software, magazines, medical clothing and instruments.  
**770 Bannatyne Ave. Winnipeg**  
**Phone: 789-3601**

If you completed your nursing education in another country and

you speak English as a second language, you may want to consider taking the **Canadian English Language Benchmarks Assessment for Nurses (CELBAN)**. The CELBAN has been endorsed by most RN, RPN and all LPN licensing bodies across Canada as an acceptable option to demonstrate your level of English language proficiency for licensure. The CELBAN will evaluate your proficiency level in all four skill areas (speaking, listening, writing and reading). At the website you can learn about the CELBAN and the CELBAN Readiness Self-Assessment.  
[www.celban.org](http://www.celban.org)

**Medical Licensure Information.** The first website provides information from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba. The second website provides information about the tests that doctors need to take to be able to practise medicine in Manitoba.  
[www.cpsm.mb.ca/](http://www.cpsm.mb.ca/)

[www.gov.mb.ca/health/mlpimj/](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/mlpimj/)

## **Books to Help You Improve Your Medical English**

The Association of Foreign Medical Graduates of Manitoba (AFMGM) has resources available to help foreign-trained doctors study for the Medical Council of Canada exams and the CAPE exams. The AFMGM has established a medical library for members of the organization at the International Centre (406 Edmonton Street in Winnipeg). The library is open every second Saturday and runs on a volunteer basis. For more information on how to become member and access the books and resources in the library, contact Dr. Mostafa Abdel Fattah at 284-8509. Association of Foreign Medical Graduates of Manitoba, 1-1626 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3T 2G2.

The following books are available at Chapters Bookstores or at [www.chapters.indigo.ca](http://www.chapters.indigo.ca)

*Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates English Test*

Author: Rudman

ISBN: 0837350433

*Building a Medical Vocabulary*

Author: Peggy Leonard

ISBN: 0721699422

*English in Medicine: A Course in Communication Skills*

Author: Beverly Holmstrvm

ISBN: 052159569X

*International Medical Communication in English*

Author: John Maher

ISBN: 0472081748

*Grammar and Writing Skills for the Health Profession*

Author: Lorraine Villemaire

ISBN: 140187374X

## Medical Television and Radio

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

Medical news stories can be seen on television stations such as CBC and Global News. More detailed information can be found on the CBC and Global websites. The CBC website has an area called Health and Science where you can listen to live broadcasts of current headlines and news stories ([www.cbc.ca](http://www.cbc.ca)).

There are several Medical dramas and documentaries on television, which use medical terminology and medical situations. Some of these medical dramas are listed below:

- E.R. (Emergency Room)
- House
- Medical Investigation
- Gray's Anatomy
- Scrubs

The Nature of Things on CBC Television often has medical documentaries. The Discovery Health Channel also has a variety of medical health programming.

## Libraries

Libraries are valuable places for ESL learners. You can borrow books and find a quiet place to read, you can use other services or programs to help you and your family make friends and become more aware of community activities.

Library cards are free if you live in the City of Winnipeg. Your library membership card will be valid for three years. If you live outside Winnipeg, you can get a Non-Resident card. You must get a new Non-Resident card each year. Non-resident family membership cards are \$126.00 (+ GST) annually. Some Manitoba rural municipalities may give all or some of this fee back to you. Please check with your rural municipality.

Public libraries provide many different services to children, families and the literacy community. There are twenty library locations in Winnipeg.

Your library card lets you use services within the Library or through the Library Web site. Winnipeg Public Library has many different types of collections and has a variety of materials you can borrow, including: books, audio books, magazines, CDs, videos, and DVDs.

The section that provides material to adults learning English as an additional language (EAL) is located in the Adult Basic Education section of the Millennium Library. There is also a section used by ESL literacy adult learners who have limited reading and writing skills in their original language and are in the process of learning English. Some branches of the library also have collections of dual language books for children (stories in English and another language, including Spanish, Arabic, Urdu and more).

## **At the Library**

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 ESL book, can you help me?”

“Where are the books to learn English?”

“Can you help me locate the English self study books?”

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.”

“How do I place an inter library loan?”



## **Libraries in Winnipeg**

Centennial Library  
251 Donald Street

Charleswood  
5014 Roblin Boulevard

River Heights  
1520 Corydon Avenue

St. Boniface  
100 – 131 Provencher Boulevard

St. James – Assiniboia  
1910 Portage Avenue

St. John's  
500 Salter Street

St. Vital  
6 Fermor Avenue

Osborne  
625 Osborne Street

Pembina Trail  
2724 Pembina Highway

West End  
823 Ellice Avenue West

West Kildonan  
365 Jefferson Avenue

Westwood  
66 Allard Avenue

Windsor Park  
955 Cottonwood Road

Munroe  
489 London Street

Sir William Stephenson  
765 Keewatin Street

Transcona  
111 Victoria Avenue West

Cornish  
20 West Gate

Fort Garry  
1360 Pembina Highway

Henderson  
1-1050 Henderson Highway

Louis Riel  
1168 Dakota Street

## **Directories (National, Regional and Local)**

Canadian Library Directory  
[www.lists.webjunction.org/libweb/  
Canada\\_main.html](http://www.lists.webjunction.org/libweb/Canada_main.html)

Manitoba Library Directory  
[www.umanitoba.ca/libraries/engin  
eering/mla/libdir.html](http://www.umanitoba.ca/libraries/engineering/mla/libdir.html)

Winnipeg Public Libraries  
[www.wpl.winnipeg.ca/library/](http://www.wpl.winnipeg.ca/library/)

# Suggested Resources that Can be Purchased

Most large bookstores carry bilingual dictionaries and ESL grammar books. They do not always stock books to help with functional English. The bookstores at the University of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg carry some ESL books that may be useful for self study. Bookstores will special order books at no extra cost. Here is a list of some recommended books. There are many more resources at the libraries and bookstores. Teachers, language assessors and librarians can suggest other titles for your needs.

## **Basic vocabulary ...**

### **The Oxford Picture Dictionary: Canadian Edition.**

\*available at the library\*  
Toronto, ON: Oxford University Press Canada  
This is a picture-based dictionary. (The dictionary alone is about \$25.00) CDs, audiotapes and student workbooks are also available.

### **English for Everyday Activities: A Picture Process Dictionary**

\*available at the library\*  
Zwier, L., Syracuse, NY: New Readers Press  
This book describes the things you do every day step-by-step, with many pictures and simple

sentences. (The book alone is about \$19.00) CD and student workbook are also available.

### **To practise conversational English and to learn about settling in Canada...**

Each of these books integrates the study of grammar and vocabulary with the many other important aspects of speaking, listening, reading and writing. All have CDs or videos available to go along with the book.

### **Canadian Concepts**

\*available at the library\*  
Berish, L. & Thibaudeau, S.,  
Scarborough, ON: Prentice-Hall  
Canada, Inc.  
This series focuses on English for use in Canadian communities. There are 6 books that range in level from a benchmark 2 (the 1st book in the series) to about a benchmark 7 or 8 (the 6th book in the series).

### **Person to Person: Communicative Speaking and Listening, 3rd edition**

Richards J., Bycina D., Wisniewska I., New York, NY: Oxford University Press  
This series is very good if you want a lot of listening and conversational practice. For self study, it is important to buy the "class CD", which has the



conversations and listening exercises that go with the book. In this series there is a “starter level”, “level 1” and “level 2”. They range from a benchmark 2 to about a benchmark 5 or 6.

### **Canadian Snapshots**

\*available at the library\*

These excellent books will help you work on your speaking, listening, reading and writing skills while learning about Canadian culture. They are based on the Canadian Language Benchmarks. There are only 2 levels right now.

The first book is a Benchmark 3 level: Canadian Snapshots: Linking to the Community by Angst, Bertram, Davis, Johansson and Bonkowski. The second book is a Benchmark 6 level: Canadian Snapshots: Raising Issues by Kingwell, Stephenson, Bonkowski and Holmes.

### **For Pronunciation...**

#### **Pronunciation for Success**

Meyers, C. & Holt S. Burnsville, MN: Aspen Productions  
The kit includes a book, videos and CDs. It is very good for students working without a teacher. It is suitable for benchmarks 5 and higher. (The complete kit is about \$120.00)

### **To learn or review Grammar**

#### **Grammar Dimensions Platinum**

#### **Edition: Form, Meaning and Use**

Riggenback, H. & Samuda, V (2000). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle

This series has 4 books. They range from a benchmark 2 to 8+. The explanations on grammar are very clear and the books give you many chances to apply the grammar in a communicative, realistic way. (Each book is about \$38.00)

The following list of CD ROMs and DVDs have been recommended by both adult ESL teachers and students.

#### **Pronunciation Power**

[www.englishlearning.com](http://www.englishlearning.com)

#### **Rosetta Stone**

[www.rosettastone.com](http://www.rosettastone.com)

**1-800-788-0822**

#### **Tell Me More Pro**

[www.auralog.com](http://www.auralog.com)

**1-888-388-3535**

#### **Pronunciation for Success**

[www.eslvideos.com](http://www.eslvideos.com)

**1-800-805-0631**

# Standardized Tests of English as a Second Language

## **Canadian Language Benchmarks Placement Test**

[www.language.ca](http://www.language.ca)

This is a streamlined assessment tool for CLB levels 1-8 for low stakes purposes only, i.e., results should not be used for hiring or post secondary admissions. Results from the CLBPT can inform decisions about readiness and be included as one of several indicators for potential success on the job, in an academic setting or in vocational training.

In the CLBPT, the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) are assessed through a number of task-based activities. This is the tool used for placement in Adult EAL classes in Manitoba. Test takers are reminded that the assessment is not a grammar or vocabulary test. It is a test to find out what a person can do in English. There is no need to prepare or be nervous about taking the test. In Manitoba, after the assessment, an assessor will discuss the results with the test taker and together they will decide which program or class is the most appropriate.

CLBPT test results are used by classroom teachers as a starting point for the lessons. All government funded Adult EAL programs use the CLB as guide for teaching. Classroom teachers will assess student's proficiency periodically throughout the term. Adult EAL students need not return to the assessment centre for an exit CLB score if the individual has attended a government funded EAL program in Manitoba. At the end of the course or at the end of the school year, the student receives a report. It gives CLB exit scores. If a student leaves the course before the end, he/she can ask the teacher for exit scores.

## **CLB levels are only one indicator of success.**

Although CLB levels can assist in making informed decisions about readiness and potential for success on the job and in post secondary programs, it is important to be aware that CLB levels are only one indicator of success. The CLB was meant to open doors; to allow immigrants access to educational and employment opportunities that may have been denied to them due to an unclear expectation of the level of English language proficiency required. Other

factors can compensate for lack of ESL skills such as ESL supports while in training or on the job, skill level (background knowledge in the subject matter, trade or profession), motivation, and the opportunity to use the first language.

## **Academic English Program for University and College Entrance**

Academic English Program for University and College Entrance (AEPUCE) is not a test but a high level English for academic purposes course offered at the University of Winnipeg, the University of Manitoba and Red River College. It is a bridge course to university and college admissions. The course enables potential college and university students to improve their academic communication skills. On successful completion, students will have met the English requirements for the University of Manitoba, the University of Winnipeg and Red River College.

## **English Proficiency Tests**

The following summary provides some basic information about some of the most commonly used English proficiency tests. It is not a comprehensive list and it is intended as an introduction to

language proficiency tests and not as an endorsement of the tests or their use. Please refer to the websites for the most current information about costs, test sites, descriptions and scoring of the standardized language tests.

The University of Winnipeg admission requirements are found at: [www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/international-engprofqrmts](http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/international-engprofqrmts).

Students can show results from the following tests: TOEFL, CanTEST, IELTS, CPE, MELAB or CAEL.

The University of Manitoba has the entrance requirements posted on [www.umanitoba.ca/student/admissions/guide/esl.shtml](http://www.umanitoba.ca/student/admissions/guide/esl.shtml). U of M also accepts results from the tests listed above.

## **CLBA - Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessment**

[www.language.ca](http://www.language.ca)

This is the original test developed when the CLB was introduced in Canada. The four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) are assessed through a number of task-based activities. This is the tool used for placement in many Adult EAL classes in other provinces. This test can take up to 4 hours. There is an online version being developed for use abroad.

**CELBAN - Canadian English  
Language Benchmarks Assessment  
for Nurses**

[www.celban.org](http://www.celban.org)

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 on line.

**CanTEST - Canadian Test of English  
for Scholars and Trainees**

[www.cantest.uottawa.ca](http://www.cantest.uottawa.ca)

There are several versions of this test. The Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks endorses the CLB aligned versions of the CanTEST. These versions establish a relationship between achievement on CanTEST and CLB levels 7-11. The test is suitable for academic and professional purposes such as university admission, profession accreditation and vocational training. It includes all four skill areas and takes just less than three hours to complete. It is available at Red River College (institutional version), the University of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg.

**TOEFL - Test of English as a  
Foreign Language**

[www.ets.org/toefl/](http://www.ets.org/toefl/)

TOEFL measures the ability of non-native speakers of English to use and understand North American English as it is used in college and university settings. This test is required by many universities in Canada. TOEFL has recently changed the test to be more communicative, i.e. to measure someone's effectiveness in using the language. It is now the TOEFL Internet Based Test (TOEFL iBT). The new TOEFL became available in Canada on October 22nd, 2005 and will be available worldwide in 2006. There are numerous preparation courses and resources available.

**TOEIC - Test of English for  
International Communication**

[www.ets.org/toeic](http://www.ets.org/toeic)

TOEIC measures the everyday English skills of people working in an international environment. There are two sections to the test, listening and reading. There are TOEIC preparation books available.

**IELTS - International English Language Testing System**

[www.ielts.org/](http://www.ielts.org/)

This is a Citizenship and Immigration (CIC) approved test and is used by British universities to assess the proficiency of applicants whose first language is not English. There is a speaking/listening section, a reading section and 2 writing tasks. There are some specimen materials available. The test is not available in Manitoba. There are only 4 test sites in Canada.

**CAEL - Canadian Academic English Language**

[www.cael.ca](http://www.cael.ca)

CAEL assessment approximates the experience of joining a first year introductory university course. There is an oral assessment, a taped lecture to listen to, some reading tasks and essay writing task on the topic of the test itself. There are practise materials online.

**MELAB - Michigan English Language Assessment Battery**

[www.lsa.umich.edu/eli/melab.htm](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/eli/melab.htm)

The MELAB consists of three parts: a composition, a listening test, and a written test containing

grammar, cloze, vocabulary, and reading comprehension problems. An optional speaking test is also available. A variety of English language learning materials is available at bookstores and libraries.

**TOWES - Test of Workplace Essential Skills**

[www.towes.com](http://www.towes.com)

TOWES assesses essential skill competencies in the areas of reading text, document use and numeracy. Test results are correlated to the 5-point scale used in the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) and by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) to determine the complexity or difficulty of tasks associated with specific occupations. TOWES is different from other tests because it uses authentic documents - such as catalogues, order forms, labels, and schematics - as source material. Questions range in difficulty and mimic actual workplace tasks by having the test taker assume the role of a worker who needs to use information embedded in documents. To support the development of essential skills, the creators of TOWES have developed curriculum and training plans designed to address skill gaps.

## **CPE - Certificate of Proficiency in English**

[www.cambridgeesol.org/index.htm](http://www.cambridgeesol.org/index.htm)

Cambridge ESOL exams include a range of assessment tools. The exams are linked to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, published by the Council of Europe. There are several general English tests as well as the CAE (Certificate in Advanced English), an advanced exam, and the CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English) which is a very advanced level exam.

Cambridge also has a skills-based assessment called CELS (Certificates in English Language Skills), which provides modular assessments of the four English language skills (listening, reading, writing, speaking). There are some Business English certificates and the YLE (Cambridge Young Learners English Tests) which is assessment of English of children between the ages of 7 and 12.

## **CELPIP - Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program**

[www.ares.ubc.ca/CELPIP/](http://www.ares.ubc.ca/CELPIP/)

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) has approved the CELPIP tests as measures of English language proficiency, and awards immigration points based upon CELPIP test score levels. It was developed at the University of British Columbia and is a set of computer-delivered English language proficiency tests used to assess functional skills in English for listening, speaking, reading, and writing. There are two test types. A general assessment of proficiency levels consists of five parts and is based on everyday general reading and writing tasks. This general assessment is accepted by CIC and suitable for use in certain post-secondary and employment training programs in which functional reading and writing skills are required. The other test is the Academic assessment for testing the proficiency of beginning college or university-level reading and writing. The academic test consists of four subtests: sentence structure, reading comprehension, English usage, and essay writing. The test is available only in British Columbia and China.



# Your Comments

This is the first version of *Practise English on Your Own: Self Study Ideas for English Language Learners* and we intend to revise it for future editions.

**Please send feedback by email or fax to:**

Leigh Trusler, Adult Language Training Branch,  
Immigration & Multiculturalism, 5-213 Notre Dame Avenue,  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 1N3  
Fax: 1-204-948-2148, Email: ltrusler@gov.mb.ca



**1.** Are you an Adult English as an Additional Language learner?

Yes

No

If yes, are you currently enrolled in an Adult ESL program in Manitoba?

Yes

No

If no, why did you use this resource? \_\_\_\_\_

**2.** Do you live in Manitoba?

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:

---

---

---

---

**The Adult Language Training Branch values your feedback.  
Thank you for completing this form.**





**For more information, please contact:**

Manitoba Labour and Immigration  
Adult Language Training Branch  
5th floor – 213 Notre Dame Avenue  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, R3B 1N3

Telephone: 204-945-2434

Fax: 204-948-2148

Toll free: 1-800-665-8332

E-mail: [ltrusler@gov.mb.ca](mailto:ltrusler@gov.mb.ca)

Website: [www.immigratemanitoba.com](http://www.immigratemanitoba.com)