

*“An understanding heart is everything in a teacher, and cannot be esteemed highly enough. One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feeling.”*

**C. Jung**

*“Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goal; nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong mental attitude.”*

**Thomas Jefferson**

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## Field Trips and Guest Speakers

Arranging for field trips and/or guest speakers for your ESL learners is a lot of work. However, the rewards will make your efforts worthwhile.

Both field trips and guest speakers are excellent ways to achieve the following:

- Incorporate authentic materials into your lesson
- Introduce learners to local community businesses and recreational opportunities
- Help bridge the gap between the community and your program, showcasing your program to people who may not even be aware of your services

Field trips are appropriate for the tutor who works one-on-one with an ESL learner, and for the instructor with an ESL class. Use them to introduce new topics, reinforce what has been covered in a lesson, and give the learners hands-on opportunities to practise their English. Guest speakers are practical for a class situation and can provide the same opportunities for ESL learners.

Here are some questions to ensure the success and relevancy of your field trips/guest speakers.



- 1. How does this field trip/guest speaker fit with the concepts you are covering in your lesson?**  
**How will this event help learners absorb the information you are teaching, or practise the concepts you have taught?**
- 2. Will this be an opportunity for learners to practise their English? Gather information? Summarize a unit? Demonstrate mastery of language skills and concepts?**
- 3. What information, skills, or materials will ESL learners need prior to the event?**
  - » Vocabulary?
  - » Background information?
  - » Listening and speaking practice?
  - » Role playing?
  - » Checklists, maps, contact information, schedules?

4. **What partners can you ask to be involved in this field trip? What permissions are required and who needs to be contacted?**
5. **What are the risk factors associated with this field trip? How will you reduce these risk factors?**
6. **What logistics need to be arranged?**
  - » How will learners get to the field trip location?
  - » Who will help in transporting learners from one location to another?
  - » Who will help with disseminating information during the field trip?

For either activity, you will need to ensure your field guide or classroom speaker is aware of the learners' English levels. You can increase the benefits to learners by providing the field guide or speaker with the necessary information on communicating to ESL learners. Encourage the guide or speaker to speak slowly, choose plain language vocabulary, use visuals to help with understanding, eliminate unnecessary words, etc. Even more important, remind speakers and field guides to remain on topic! Speakers who wander off topic may confuse learners rather than enhancing their language skills.

**The following table provides brief examples of field trips or speakers, and suggested corresponding concepts.**

## Example Ideas for Field Trips

Theme	Field Trip or Speaker	Language Concepts	Considerations
 <b>Banking</b>	Tour the local branch: safety deposit boxes, teller stations, vault.	Practise role playing in the classroom prior to field trip. Put these skills to use during field trip.	Discuss with the branch manager what will be included on the tour and what to leave out. Be specific. Prepare the learners in advance.
	Invite a teller, branch manager, or loan officer to the class to explain what he/she does.	Introduce the relevant vocabulary. Have learners create questions prior to the speaker's visit.	Ensure the speaker understands the learners' level of English. If possible, record the talk to review later.
 <b>Shopping</b>	Tour the local grocery store, clothing store, or big-box store.	Practise asking for directions to find certain items, paying for purchases, returning an item, etc. Then try out the skills during the field trip.	Discuss with the manager what aspects of "shopping" you are reinforcing, practising, or assessing. Be specific. Prepare the learners in advance.
	Invite the baker or meat cutter to class to explain skills he/she uses on the job.	Introduce relevant vocabulary to learners. Ask learners to create questions. Have learners compare the baking or meat cutting profession and techniques in Canada to those in their own countries.	If possible, record the speaker's talk to review later. Encourage the speaker to bring some tools of the trade.



Theme	Field Trip or Speaker	Language Concepts	Considerations
<b>Nature, hobbies, gardening, lifestyles</b>	Tour the local greenhouse, hobby farm, farmers' market, arts and crafts market.	Types of farms in Alberta include bison, elk, grain, beef, dairy, pig, ostrich, etc.  People are involved in many different types of arts and crafts.  Exploring these topics will broaden ESL learners' vocabularies and give them an excellent opportunity to practise conversational skills.	List types of crafts and food you will find at the market. Prepare learners for what they will see. If you are visiting a unique hobby farm, carefully consider all potential risk factors. Ensure that learners understand any special conditions (e.g., no loud noises, etc.).
	Invite a forestry warden, naturalist, horticulturalist, artist, etc. to visit the class.	These jobs require special terminology. Preview new vocabulary with your learners.	



Please send me a description of any field trips you have taken your ESL learners. Describe the concepts the field trip reinforced, and the success and challenges you experienced. We can share this information with everyone to expand on examples given here.

Please email your information to: [martha.urquhart@norquest.ca](mailto:martha.urquhart@norquest.ca)



## Learning English with CBC

**Learning English with CBC** is a joint project with CBC Edmonton and the Government of Alberta. This site uses CBC Edmonton radio news and feature stories as tools for Albertans learning English. The stories are actual current news items heard on CBC Radio One: 93.9 FM and 740 AM.

Each news and feature story has a lesson attached. An English as a second language (ESL) instructor has prepared all lessons. The stories and interviews used in these lessons are a great way to help ESL learners find out about being Canadian. They give ESL learners a sense of the province's culture, which helps learners integrate into their communities.

**The Newscasts** are shorter clips that focus on the current events of the day. They are suitable for ESL learners at a CLB level of four or higher. **The Monthly Feature Stories** are longer clips that feature items of general interest. They are suitable for learners at a CLB level six or higher.

The audio files are in MP3 format and the lesson plans are PDF files. The audio clips and lesson plans can be saved to personal computers and used freely.

Because the Newscasts and Monthly Feature Stories relate to actual news items, new stories are added regularly. To access this new resource, visit <http://www.cbc.ca/edmonton/eal/>

## ESL Literacy Network

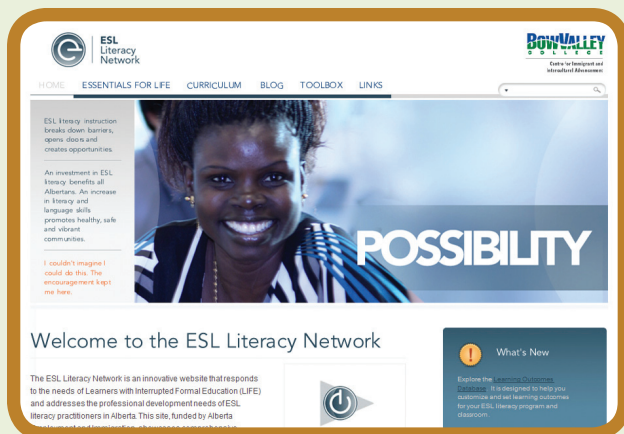
The ESL Literacy Network, developed by Bow Valley College, is an innovative website for professionals who serve the needs of ESL learners who have had their education interrupted for any reason, such as war, famine, displacement, natural disasters, etc. It is funded by Alberta Employment and Immigration and showcases comprehensive research-based information, resources, and tools.

Bow Valley College's ESL and Languages faculty and staff contributed to the creation of the ESL Literacy Network in coordination with an advisory board that included representation from the Government of Alberta, other ESL literacy educating institutions, and immigrant serving agencies.

Check out the "Toolbox" where you can find information, resources, and tools designed for ESL literacy programs and providers. Newly developed resources include Financial ESL Literacy Toolbox and ESL Literacy Readers.

The ESL Literacy Curriculum Framework is a tool for ESL providers to use when designing curriculum. Professional development workshops for ESL providers will be posted in the section "Upcoming Events."

To access this valuable resource, visit: [www.esl-literacy.com](http://www.esl-literacy.com)



## Connections

Do you have unique tidbits to share on how you've met your community's needs, or resources that you've developed? If so, send them to Martha Urquhart to be posted in this newsletter!

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