



English as a Second Language Council

of The Alberta Teachers' Association

Accent

Volume 27, Number 1

September 2023

President's Message

by Joan Miles



At the start of each school year, I reflect on what we accomplished in the last year and marvel at how quickly that year passed. It feels like only yesterday that we were gathering for our annual general meeting, electing new members to the council, and embarking on a series of projects designed to support teachers across the province working with students who are English-language Learners (ELL). We shared information about our council with preservice teachers in both Edmonton and Calgary, offered professional learning sessions, updated resources and documents to share with teachers, published a fall issue of *Accent*, initiated new projects that will carry into this school year

and conducted a very successful English as a Second Language Council (ESLC) conference in lovely Lake Louise, Alberta!

I would like to acknowledge the following table officers and executives for their hard work on the council in 2022–23: Diane Pham, Gaylene Mackay, Angela Skene, Christien Perrault, Lisa Smith, Youssra Badr, Heather Kennedy, Annie Fung, Laura-Lee Toews, Nancy Musica, Sarah Semaine and Peter MacKay. A special thank you goes out to the 2023 conference team, who worked tirelessly to organize a wonderful weekend of learning for our specialist council members. Lisa Smith directed this year's conference with the support of her colleagues Luisa Zimich, Paulina Nowak, Dina Alexander, Carrie Tousignant and Stacy Itterman. If you were able to partake of this event, I hope that you enjoyed the thought-provoking keynote presentations and breakout sessions while also taking the time to enjoy the restful and rejuvenating surroundings in Lake Louise.

Inside This Issue

Editor's Note	3
2022/23 ESLC Executive.....	4
Enhancing Academic English in High School	5
My Journey Towards Truth and Reconciliation in the Classroom ..	7
Shelter Programming Meeting the Needs of Entry-Level English as an Additional Language Middle School Learners	9
Building Vocabulary in 3D.....	11
Book Review.....	14
What's New in Your ATA Library?	17
Amazing Kits for Your Classroom	20

With the unfolding of the new year, I would like to thank each of you for your dedicated support of the cultural, social, emotional and linguistic needs of students new to Canada. Last year, the public school board in Calgary, where I live, welcomed approximately 650 students who identify as newcomers per month, and I would guess that this was a similar story in many other districts. These numbers fuel the need for effective classroom routines and innovative strategies to help students achieve academic success, especially in schools with limited ability to offer congregated settings for learners with low Language Proficiency (LP). ESLC exists to support you in that complex and demanding work, so please continue to visit our website (at www.eslcata.com) and read your email *Tidbits* for new ideas and resources.

Our next AGM will be held near the end of October 2023, so please watch for details about that. At that time, we will hold elections for new council members, and as always, we encourage any of you who are interested to put your name forward for consideration. It has been my honour and privilege to serve as president of the council since 2017, but the time has come for me to step aside. Our current president-elect, Gaylene Mackay, will be stepping into the president's role and will spearhead some new changes that the council initiated this year. Please keep an eye out for information about the AGM when school begins again, and if possible, join us in person to enjoy a free PD session and to elect the council that you would like to represent your interests in the 2023–2024 school year.

Editor's Note

by Annie Fung



Hola to you all! Happy Fall! I was hoping to complete this editor's note prior to my trip to visit family in Spain, but year-end wrap-up at the office and different *life* priorities pulled me in the other direction. So, here I am,

sitting in my husband's condo in Spain, writing to you! We are near the Cantabrian Sea, which is on the northern coast of Spain, bordering France. The weather here has been lovely, with temperatures below 23 degrees Celsius so far!

Every time I visit here, I am reminded what it was like as a student with English-language learner (ELL) background myself when I arrived in Canada many years ago. While our son is now attending the Spanish bilingual program and improving his Spanish by leaps and bounds, I continue to work on my spoken Spanish, which is probably equivalent to an EAL (English as an Additional Language) level one. My listening is much better, and I try to join in on the *habloing* (speaking) when I can, and I find inventing one's own Spanglish interesting. For example, I used to overapply a language rule as a beginning learner by adding *-o* to all nouns. I assumed if *zumo* was juice, "snack" would be *snacko*. Despite the numerous times my husband expressed his exasperation when I did this, I firmly believe that learning a new language involves experimentation and maintaining a sense of humor. I am fortunate to have my little walking translator with me (aka *my child*), as well as patient family and friends and leisurely time to pick up the language. My language learning experience reminds me of the current pressures our students with ELL backgrounds feel in the classroom—pressures to fit in, to perform academically and so on—and it reinvigorates my

hopes to learn how to assist them better when I return home.

This fall edition of *Accent* has many articles that will help you design EAL programming to target explicit instruction for vocabulary and language structure—among other concerns—in English learning at the middle school and secondary levels. Joan Miles' article is about the Calgary Board of Education's locally developed course (LDC), which you may find helpful in bridging the learning gap for your advanced students who are English language learners, as they begin attending mainstream academic courses. Our other colleague, Angela Skene, describes how she and her colleagues work to provide intensive language learning intervention for middle school levels in their excellent *shelter program*. In addition, how may we become more reflective of our practice *and* more culturally responsive in our classrooms? How may we integrate technology that is fun and engages students in STEM and language learning? Then why not read Sarah Semaine's journey on learning about reconciliation and Mandy Hutchinson's article on using 3D pens in different subject areas to target curricular and language goals to find out?

As usual, I salute you on your continuous dedication to working with our students with ELL backgrounds and supporting their families. Please reach out to me if you have ideas or article suggestions—for example, I am currently intrigued by using ChatGPT to support students who are English language learners, while learning what the roadblocks and caveats might be.

Your submissions about EAL topics are most welcome. What you find fascinating in the EAL world is probably worth sharing with many more members; this is what the community is about: creating sparks and making connections! I hope you've had a wonderful start of the school year, and we will see you at our upcoming AGM or a PD event!

2022/23 ESLC Executive

At the ESLC annual general meeting on October 23, 2022, the membership elected a new executive for 2022/23.

President—Joan Miles

President-elect—Gaylene Mackay

Treasurer—Diane Pham

Secretary—Angela Skene

PD director North—Nancy Musica

PD director Central—Sarah Semaine

PD director Edmonton—Youssra Badr

PD director South—Vacant

PD director Calgary and Conference 2023 director—Lisa Smith

Conference 2023/24 director—Vacant

Publications director—Annie Fung

Webmaster—Heather Kennedy

ATA staff advisor—Terra Kaliszuk

Provincial Executive Council liaison—Peter Mackay

Alberta Education representative—Sharon Seward

If you are interested in joining the executive, visit www.eslcata.com/council-executives/ and apply for a vacant position.

The ESLC thanks all of those who have served on the executive over the years.

Keep in touch with the English as a Second Language Council



[www.facebook.com
/ATAESLC](https://www.facebook.com/ATAESLC)



[@ESLCATA](https://twitter.com/ESLCATA)

Enhancing Academic English in High School

by Joan Miles

Chinook Learning Services (CLS) is a unique program within the Calgary Board of Education, with a focus on providing high school completion and upgrading opportunities to students who have already finished three years of high school. A large number of Chinook students are those with English-language learner (ELL) backgrounds who were unable to complete all of their required high school courses before *aging out* of their community schools.

The early exiting of students from high school has been a persistent challenge to overcome for the staff at CLS. Many students come to CLS determined to pursue college diplomas or university degrees; however, they are unable to access postsecondary programs because entrance requirements include good marks in English Language Arts (ELA) 30-1 or 30-2. These are courses that students who are English-language learners often struggle to complete or excel in while in high school because they need additional time to develop academic English and overall English language proficiency.

In 2016, some innovative teachers at CLS decided that it would be helpful to give students this additional time by pairing the traditional five-credit ELA course with a locally developed course (LDC) that would be designed to support the development of academic English language proficiency and overall communicative competence across different content areas. Such a course did not exist, but as a new assistant principal at Chinook, fresh from four years of serving as an English as a second language (ESL) specialist for the Calgary Board of Education, I was in a good position to create one. I gathered together a small team that included experts in ESL and ELA, and together, we took on the task of writing the LDC. We called the course Academic Achievement through English Language Development (AAELD).

AAELD 15, 25, and 35 were approved for use in 2017 (and revised in 2021). Now, students can be offered AAELD as adjunct support for academic core content courses, or they can be enrolled in the LDC as a stand-alone three- or five-credit course. The courses are not sequential, so students can be enrolled in whichever course is appropriate to their level of English proficiency, as determined according to the Alberta K–12 ESL benchmarks. There are five general guiding questions for the LDC, each with multiple learning outcomes attached. The expectations for the achievement of each outcome increase at each succeeding level (15 to 25 to 35). The questions are designed to help teachers focus on the specific skills that students require to listen, speak, read and write fluently in English in order to effectively comprehend and create a variety of academic texts across different content areas. The pedagogical underpinning for the development of communicative competence was provided by Dutro and Moran's English Language Development (ELD) framework (2003), which calls for explicit English language instruction for students who are ELLs in inclusive classroom settings. This explicit instruction targets the function (purpose), form (grammar and vocabulary) and fluency that students require in order to achieve the learning outcomes for a given task.

At Chinook Learning Services, AAELD is offered as an adjunct to ELA 20-1 and ELA 30-1. This is accomplished by increasing classroom time each week by about 3.3 hours, thus enhancing the regular curriculum. By completing both the ELA course and its adjunct, students can earn eight high school credits. In each of these enhanced courses, the specific outcomes of AAELD are woven into the curricular content for the ELA course, although the instructor evaluates the outcomes for the two courses separately. The teacher covers the regular ELA curriculum but, based on the language proficiency of

their students, can modify course expectations to a certain degree. In some cases, this means slowing the learning process and taking more time to build skills that were not thoroughly ingrained earlier in the students' educational journey. This paced approach can mean that the teacher chooses to explore fewer texts, opting to go deeper rather than broader. Other modifications can include a differentiated approach to marking written work, more opportunities for formative assessment and the introduction of texts that are more engaging for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The teacher draws attention to challenging linguistic structures, frontloads vocabulary, is intentional about including multiple opportunities for oral practice and carefully scaffolds the writing process so that the organizational patterns of different text genres are transparent. While this approach has proven to be very effective for student with ELL backgrounds at LP3, 4, or 5, it was also intended to benefit students who are non-ELLs and who require extra language support. Generally, in the enhanced courses, there is a healthy mix of students with ELL backgrounds and students who are native English speakers. At CLS, suitability for enrollment in ELA 20E and 30-1E is determined during the registration process in consultation with the student and using the student's

detailed academic record (DAR) as evidence of past achievement. Adult learners have agency over their educational choices, so it is always the student's prerogative to choose whether or not to take an enhanced ELA course.

I'm sure that many teachers are looking for novel ways to improve academic outcomes for high-school-age students who are ELLs. I hope that by sharing this short description of the enhanced ELA courses at Chinook Learning Services, I can encourage teachers to take bold action by exploring and piloting their own new ideas. As an alternative, teachers might want to ask their leadership about acquiring the Calgary Board of Education (CBE)-created LDC—Academic Achievement through English Language Development (AAELD)—for their own use. When it comes to learning language, time is crucial, and if teachers can find ways to add time, they will give their students a valuable and lasting educational gift.

Reference

Dutro, S, and C Moran. 2003. "Rethinking English Language Instruction: An Architectural Approach." *English Learners: Reaching the Highest Level of English Literacy*. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association. Available at https://archive.org/details/isbn_9780872074552 (accessed August 31, 2023).

My Journey Towards Truth and Reconciliation in the Classroom

by Sarah Semaine

Upon reflecting on readings and my personal experiences, I come to a simple realization: my foundational knowledge about Indigenous Peoples is emergent at best. I am currently on a learning journey of discovery. I seek to “gain a knowledge and understanding of, and respect for, the histories, cultures, languages, contributions, perspectives, experiences and contemporary contexts of First Nations, Métis and Inuit” (Alberta Education 2020, 4). At the same time, I am looking at how I fit into all this. Where do I stand? What can I do? What is my connection to this land and its people?

On my journey, I have learned that holistic, truthful and historical facts require pursuing, digging and uncovering. They are not readily available. My experience is similar to what Sharla Mskokii Peltier comments on: I am a teacher “experiencing the personal and professional journey of discomfort towards wakefulness and engagement in residential school education,” hoping it will take me further on my journey towards truth and reconciliation. Reconciliation is key to the healing process of relationships and school improvement for Indigenous students (Madden 2019, 284).

My lack of knowledge does not stop me. For this reason, I connect with Armstrong’s (2013) “storied approach to change” (p 51). As a starting point, I “embrace[] the printed stories, learning from them, and using them in [my] classroom[]” (p 60). Authors lend me their voice to help educate both my students and myself. I am learning alongside them, connecting with the characters in these stories and their personal experiences of trauma, disconnect and horrors of residential schools.

These stories also teach me about the unyielding determination and unrelenting resistance against colonial oppression. Change is happening, one story, one teacher, one lesson at a time (Armstrong 2013, 58). These stories give my students an understanding

of Indigenous representation. They are empowering and hopeful. The more stories I read, the more aware I become of this “null curriculum” that ignores and suppresses the Indigenous experience (Armstrong 2013, 52).

Because I did not grow up in Canada, these stories make me connect with, and reflect on, other countries and communities that share similar experiences.

Visiting Algeria this summer, I discovered that different generations of its people spoke different languages. The oldest generation only spoke French. I also learned that during the French colonization, children were not allowed to learn to read and write Arabic. My mother-in-law in fact had to learn to read her native language in secret every morning at 4 AM, before going to her French school. Algerians, like Indigenous Peoples, struggled to hold on to culture, tradition and language. After 132 years of French colonization, Algerians reclaimed their land and started to relearn their Algerian ways and language. On April 2, 2022, “Algeria’s Ministry of Culture announced that it is banning French language in official correspondence, dealings and activities, and circulating the use of Arabic” instead (Hamed 2022).

Again, these stories make me think of the Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities living in China today. Evidence shows that the Chinese government is operating a vast system of internment camps. The sole purpose of these camps is to strip these minorities of their culture, language and religion under the guise of “vocational training centers designed to stamp out religious extremism and terrorism” (Tuysuz, Damon and Laine 2021). Why does history continue to repeat itself?

Where Do I Go from Here? What Can I Do?

As a teacher, I am fearful and hesitant to integrate Indigenous ways of knowing into my

classroom. Not because I don't want to, but because I don't know how to. I don't want to make mistakes such as appropriation and hegemony (Armstrong 2013, 56). I also understand that "an intricate connection exists between culture and students' learning" (Ramirez et al, quoted in Kanu 2002, 99). To build a welcoming school community and foster positive relationships, I, as an educator, need policies and supports that will educate me in the why and how of taking up Indigenous education ways respectfully (Restoule 2017, 7).

In my classroom and school, I wish to be part of creating an "ethical space where positive relations between Indigenous and Western systems can be nurtured" (Battiste 2011, 294). I commit to work towards "understanding the historical, social, economic and political implications of treaties and agreements with First Nations legislation and agreements negotiated with Métis[,] and residential schools and their legacy" (Alberta Education 2020, 4). At the same time, this curriculum needs to change; it needs to be decolonized and redeveloped in a way to teach the whole child, intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically (Battiste 2011, 301). For me, that starts with a story.

References

- Alberta Education. 2020. *Leadership Quality Standard*. <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/b49851f6-d914-4f28-b5d5-199b028beeca/resource/cf0fede2-3895-4ed5-a2d9-23610dccb2d9/download/edc-leadership-quality-standard-english-2020.pdf> (accessed August 31, 2023).
- Armstrong, H. 2013. "Indigenizing the Curriculum: The Importance of Story." *First Nations Perspectives* 5 no 1: 36–64. <https://events.ufv.ca/tlc/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2014/10/Indigenizing-the-Curriculum-The-Importance-of-Story-1.pdf> (accessed August 31, 2023).
- Battiste, M. 2011. "Curriculum Reform Through Constitutional Reconciliation of Indigenous Knowledge." In *Contemporary Studies in Canadian Curriculum: Principles, Portraits, and Practices*, ed D Stanley and K Young, 287–312. Brush Education.
- Hamed, A. 2022. "Why Did Algeria Ban the Usage of French Language?" *El-Estiklal*, www.alestiklal.net/en/view/13006/why-did-algeria-ban-the-usage-of-french-language (accessed August 31, 2023).
- Kanu, Y. 2002. "In Their Own Voices: First Nations Students Identify Some Cultural Mediators of Their Learning in the Formal School System." *Alberta Journal of Educational Research* 48 no 2: 98–121. <https://doi.org/10.11575/ajer.v48i2.54917> (accessed August 31, 2023).
- Madden, B. 2019. "A De/colonizing Theory of Truth and Reconciliation Education." *Curriculum Inquiry* 49 no 3: 284–312.
- Restoule, J P, Chaw-win-is. 2017. "Old Ways Are the New Way Forward: How Indigenous Pedagogy Can Benefit Everyone." In *Canadian Commission for UNESCO's IdeaLab*. Available at <https://gcedclearinghouse.org/sites/default/files/resources/200708eng.pdf> (accessed August 31, 2023).
- Tuysuz, G, A Damon and B Laine. 2021. "These Children Escaped Xinjiang, But Their Parents Are in China and Cut Off from the World." *CNN*, March 29, www.cnn.com/2021/03/29/europe/uyghur-istanbul-children-china-intl/index.html (accessed August 31, 2023).
- UAlbertaArts. 2021. "Truths About Indian Residential Schools - Episode 3." October 14. YouTube video, 00:12:24. www.youtube.com/watch?v=BOPNyq7xTkU (accessed August 31, 2023).

Shelter Programming Meeting the Needs of Entry-Level English as an Additional Language Middle School Learners

by Angela Skene

The shelter programming was implemented in the school in 2022–2023; however, it is not continuing into the current school year.

St Patrick's Community School is a K–9 school located in Red Deer, Alberta, and like many of our Albertan schools, a buzz of different languages can be heard through the halls and classrooms. In fact, nearly 70 per cent of our school community identifies as a 301, 303 or a 600 learner. It was early in the school year when the English as an additional language (EAL) team realized that to meet the needs of our new English as an additional language learners, and to give our middle school students the most equitable learning experience possible, we needed to go back to the drawing board and detour from the traditional classroom setting. After analyzing data, we identified the need to create a language program specifically for our pre-Level 1 and Level 1 benchmark students. The result: our *shelter program*.

The *shelter program* is a unique learning opportunity where our beginning English language students are immersed in language literacy for a large part of their morning. In this small group setting, the focus is on intensive language instruction and building skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking. The language presented is accessible, vocabulary and phonics instruction are explicit, and activities are hands-on and catered to meet the ZPD¹ of each learner.

We start with phonics and phonemic awareness, incorporating strategies from the *science of reading*. In addition to building phonics fluency, we practice survival school vocabulary (eg, pen, pencil, notebook) and key phrases (eg, I do not understand? May I go to the bathroom? Can I get a drink?).

Giving students the skills to advocate for themselves is crucial as it helps build students' confidence and assists in communicating with their teachers and peers.

Students transition from repeating sounds and phrases and identifying words to pictures to identifying sounds in CVC (Consonant, Vowel, Consonant) and CVCC (Consonant, Vowel, Consonant, Consonant) words. However, it is imperative that each term includes a visual because visuals help students to connect to their own experience with the term (background knowledge) and increases comprehension. Language learners require vocabulary instruction that is rich and includes multiple perspectives and differentiated materials to increase vocabulary learning and comprehension. It is important that approaches to language instruction are filled with enriched experiences, offer multiple exposure, and contain high quality activities and methods. One way we do this is by incorporating vocabulary terms in sentence frames and sentence stems. This supports language development by modeling structure and assisting expression of thought. In fact, the growth we have seen in our students is amazing. In as little as eight months, we have seen students go from listing single words they recognize in a picture prompt, to writing in simple sentences, to now writing in detailed compound sentences. As a result of small group targeted instruction in all four language strands, students have strengthened their reading and comprehension skills.

And we can't forget games! Games are such a great way to get our students to interact with each other and build language skills. Games like Charades, Scattergories, Pictionary, Go-Fish, Bananagrams, I Spy, sentence puzzles and matching

games are such an important part of the classroom. The beauty of this program is that it creates a safe space for students to learn, to make mistakes, to laugh and to create friendships. An additional benefit is that students are encouraged by peers who understand the challenges of language acquisition and adjusting to a new culture and environment. Over the course of the school year, over 20 Ukrainian, Russian and Spanish-speaking middle school students have been supported on their language acquisition journey in this empowering

classroom environment. I am so proud of the students' hard work and the dedication of our school's EAL team to ensure our older beginning English language learners are receiving the best educational opportunity to foster future success!

Notes

1. Zone of Proximal Development, a key construct in Lev Vygotsky's theory of learning and development.

Building Vocabulary in 3D

by Mandy Hutchinson

As you may already know, Almadina Language Charter Academy (ALCA) is a public charter school in Calgary that is dedicated to supporting students who are learning English as an additional language. Part of my role as a learning coach at ALCA's K–4 Mountain View Campus is supporting our teachers to integrate technology in meaningful ways. In our unique school setting, the driver of technology integration is always students' English language development. In the 2022–2023 school year, an especially powerful tool—3D printing pens—gained popularity.¹



In this article, I will share the process of our exploration with 3D pens and how our teachers have used 3D printing to increase student engagement and improve uptake of tier three vocabulary.

First, we began with an introductory lesson so that students understand how to operate the pen. Through this, students learned vocabulary such as switch, button, filament and nozzle. We discussed troubleshooting techniques such as cleaning the nozzle, checking for filament and the quintessential *turn it off and turn it back on* technique. From there, students began to grasp this new medium: they created different types of lines and shapes, and they learned how to use the heated filament to connect pieces (think hot glue gun but with really thin, colourful glue sticks). We also discussed techniques such as anchoring (creating a base from which to print vertically), smoothing filament while it is still warm, and printing most components flat then connecting them using heated filament. Once students were comfortable with the functionality of the pen, they created something of their choosing. An accessible introduction project is printing a ring; I am the proud owner of numerous 3D rings printed by myself and our students!

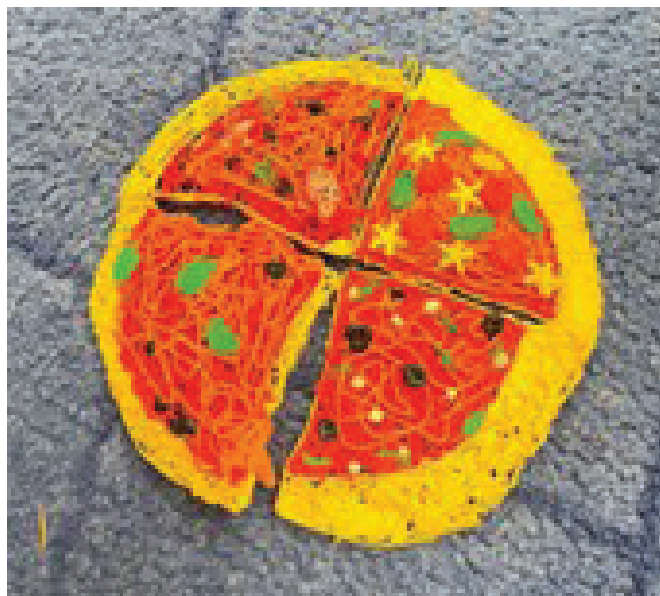
After the introduction, our teachers have reached for the 3D pens to create projects related to learning outcomes. By doing so, students are able to create physical representations of concepts, making tier three vocabulary tangible and meaningful.

Grade 4 teachers Trevor Goodman and Jane Tyrrell had their students create anatomical flowers complete with stems, leaves, sepals,



stamens, pistils and petals. Tyrrell observed that “students were able to reason that their stem would not hold their flower and connected this to real life in which the stem must be strong enough to hold a flower and carry out its purpose.” She shared that printing each part and connecting the parts together enabled her students to better understand the purpose of each part, as opposed to just labelling a diagram.

Grade 3 teachers Sandy Oakley and Sara Vickers utilised the 3D pens to teach parts and wholes at the beginning of their fractions unit. Students 3D printed a slice of pizza which fit into a larger whole pizza. After they made their slice, they were able to explain that their slice of pizza was only one *part* of a whole pizza. After printing their part, they had to find the other parts that completed the whole. Oakley observed that her students were “very excited when they got together with the other students who had created the same size of slice or part and found that they now had a *whole* pizza. By having a visual



representation that they could manipulate, they could determine that their part was one of four parts to make a whole, or one of six, and so on.”

In Riograce Palanca’s Grade 4 class, students designed and 3D printed catapults; the 3D filament has the right amount of give to shoot a pom-pom across the room! Palanca shared that building the catapults gave students the opportunity to interact directly with the three parts of a lever (fulcrum, load, effort/force). Students were able to name the type of lever (class one, two or three) and justify the type through observing the catapults in action. Palanca noted that this project led to a greater variety of verbs (launch, sling and toss) in students’ written reflections. She added that students sought out less commonly used adjectives (stable/unstable, rickety,



wobbly, slanted and droopy) to describe the structure and build. This class also had the option to design and 3D print wheels for their car projects in science. Students discussed the difference in having wheels with spokes compared to filling in the wheel completely; some opted for spokes due to the strength that triangles bring to a structure and to be more resource conscience since filling in those wheels requires a lot of filament, whereas others filled in their wheels for improved stability.

Three of our Grade 3 classes used 3D pens to print bridges. Throughout their time printing, Oakley overheard students spontaneously and verbally

identifying key bridge structures; here are some quotes from her students:

"I'm working on the arches right now."

"There are so many cables on this bridge!"

"The trusses are a whole bunch of triangles put together!"

In Vickers' class, students were heard discussing how when they use 3D pens to build bridges, the filament is both a fastener and building material. They compared this to other projects, where the fasteners and building materials differed from each other.



At the time of writing this article, I'm supporting a Grade 2 class to 3D print either insects or arachnids. Students are expected to create a model and to be able to explain whether it is an insect or arachnid; this means that they must anatomically print their creature, ensuring the proper number of body parts and correct placement of wings, legs and antennae. Students shared that they learned more about insect/arachnid parts through 3D printing because they actually got to build the parts. In another classroom, students are 3D printing spider webs; one student exclaimed that the 3D pen was like a spider's spinneret! I imagine many more



classes will be inspired by the 3D creatures showing up in our Grade 2 hallway.

In our experiences, the ongoing process of designing and 3D printing models results in students inherently employing tier three vocabulary as they discussed the parts they were working on or as they attached components together. We look forward to utilizing this tool in innovative ways as our students and teachers become increasingly confident with 3D printing. For instance, we just received new moulds that will allow students to create tracks for marble runs. Another mould will enable students to create ball and hinge joints for outcomes related to simple machines. I highly recommend getting 3D pens in the hands of your students and empowering them to design, build and create with this powerful medium.

If you have any questions about these projects or our experiences with 3D pens, please feel free to email me at ahutchinson@alca-calgary.com. If you are a fellow Charter School teacher, I will be hosting a 3D printing pens session at the October Charter School's Conference, hosted by ALCA. I hope to see you there!

Notes

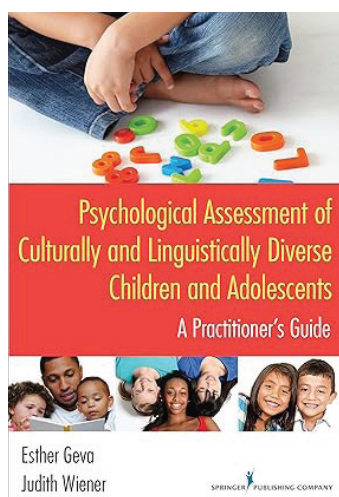
1. The 3D pens we are using are 3D Start Pens from 3Doodler (available from <https://the3doodler.com>).

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the following teachers for having me in your classroom and/or sharing your insights about the value of these tools for our students learning English: Trevor Goodman, Nicole Moores, Sandy Oakley, Riograce Palanca, Amanda Thompson, Jane Tyrrell, Sara Vickers and Thomas Wood. Thank you to our Principal, Shakila Raja, for recognizing the value of 3D pens and bringing these into our school!

Book Review:

Psychological Assessment of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Children and Adolescents: A Practitioner's Guide



by Esther Geva and Judith Wiener
Springer Publishing, 2015
Reviewed by Nancy Musica, PD Director North

In the past, the term *normal* was used in education and, unfortunately, students who did not conform to this standard were labeled with derogatory terms. Then the word *typical*, and its opposite, came into play. More recently, I'm hearing terms like *expected* and *unexpected* as we try to figure out our students, their learning, literacy skills and behaviour. Whatever the term,

determining what can be expected when learning a new language and whether students possibly fall into a special needs category is not always easy!

Providing the best educational opportunities and approaches in very busy and diverse classrooms for all students is essential. This brings us to another handy term we educators like to use: *complexity*. It describes our work, as well as our students.

As students who are English language learners enter our classrooms, *figuring out* students gets more challenging. Typical assessment methods we have come to rely on suddenly don't make much sense. In addition, there tends to be a sense of urgency as these students do not always start school on the first day of kindergarten. They enter school at all ages and various points in the September to June school year. Time is often not on their side, considering how long it takes to learn a new language. They may not be

highly proficient in English and can be well behind their peers academically. Then, there are adjustments needed in order to navigate the school environment and new culture. For families, any move can be stressful, but some immigrants may be coming from difficult circumstances. There can be learning and health concerns, including trauma, that may impact students as they enter school.

With English language learners, if a teacher encounters the *unexpected*, there needs to be a plan, and it needs to be fair and well thought out. In my career, assessing English language learners and subsequently developing optimal instructional approaches has been a complex process and often frustrating. Some methods traditionally relied upon can actually be harmful for a variety of reasons. This is why I highly recommend Geva and Wiener's 2015 practitioner's guide, *Psychological Assessment of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Children and Adolescents*. The authors are experienced clinicians, researchers and (as a bonus) Canadian. This book offers language learning and literacy information regarding learners who are Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD), as well as guidelines and best practices in assessment. Tips and tools for assessment processes, methods to better understand and work with students, how to communicate with their parents, as well as case studies are included. I snapped this book up shortly after learning of Geva's research in her 2015 TESOL presentation entitled "Assessing L2 Children Who May Be at Risk for a Learning Disability."

This very *readable* book is a must for psychologists, reading specialists, consultants, teachers and administration staff working with English language learners. It is a guide to ensure we are not *over* or *under*identifying our students for special needs services. In my career, I've seen both trajectories occur due to an incomplete understanding

of students. This can lead to a lack of equity among students in our school systems and ultimately students not getting what they need in order to be successful.

I'd like to share what makes this book useful for educators and professionals working with students who are CLD and their families.

Here's a quick rundown of chapters:

1. Introduction: you can read the first chapter provided by Springer Publishing at <https://connect.springerpub.com/content/book/978-0-8261-2349-7/chapter/ch01>;
2. Demographic, policy and socioeconomic context of CLD;
3. Research on the development of language and literacy skills of L2 learners: implications for assessment;
4. Gaining an understanding of the individual and family context;
5. Assessment of oral language proficiency;
6. Assessment of intelligence;
7. Assessment of academic achievement;
8. Assessment of behavioral, social and emotional functioning;
9. Communication, advocacy and consultation; and
10. Putting it all together.

The appendix features six case studies detailing a variety of student issues, a variety of approaches to assessment, resulting recommendations, feedback to family, as well as school and community consultation and collaboration.

Each chapter opens with a common myth regarding assessment of English language learners and some related *truths* and guidelines.

Throughout the book, checklists, rating scales, *dos & don'ts* lists and charts with relevant questions for clinical decision making are included to guide educators and psychologists through steps to support assessment and consultation. To provide an idea of what's included, here are a few titles of charts that are included for quick reference in the book:

- Risk factors and protective factors for academic achievement, education, attainment and well-being of children and adolescents with CLD backgrounds;

- Fundamental questions psychologist should consider while conducting assessments for L2 learners;

- Parent interview questions to determine sources and quality of social support;
- To do or not to do: assessing oral language proficiency;
- Learning strategies interview; and
- Organizing assessment data.

The chapter on assessing *oral language* should be of particular interest to educators. The authors mention five areas that should be considered when determining oral language ability: phonology, semantics, morphology, syntax and pragmatics. Included in this chapter are some actual assessments and checklists that could be helpful when assessing individual students. Response to intervention and dynamic assessment are recommended methods to discover more about a student's language and learning, as compared to standardized testing. Three methods for dynamic assessment are discussed. Interestingly, characteristics of a student with a language delay or disability tend to be very similar to characteristics of students learning a new language, such as English. This emphasizes the need for teachers to be able to gather accurate information about oral language abilities in order to know when additional professional/diagnostic support may be needed from a school psychologist or speech language therapist.

A chapter of the book is devoted to the assessment of *behavioural, social and emotional functioning*. It is essential to note that language and culture may influence how children and parents interpret items on behavioural rating scales, and some of the items may not be at all applicable. Another consideration is that with these families, there may be specific issues that need to be assessed due to immigration and cultural factors. Again, checklists are included to support professionals in gathering information in a culturally responsive manner and with consideration of family and environmental context. Topics such as peer relations, attentional difficulties, internalizing and externalizing behaviors, bullying and social communication difficulties, and response to trauma and stress are discussed.

The chapters on *intellectual* (ability) and *academic* (achievement) testing of students who are CLD are also helpful in laying out guidelines and methods of assessment and more importantly how to interpret collected data. Teachers working with students with CLD backgrounds may choose to focus on the chapter on academic assessment, but should be aware of challenges and factors when requesting an intellectual assessment by a school psychologist.

The *academic* testing chapter covers general issues in assessment such as when to assess, cultural bias, oral language proficiency and previous school experience. Specific academic assessment strategies are also covered as well as how to interpret results. This chapter also discusses the diagnosis of learning disabilities. The authors note, “a combination of standardized achievement tests, curriculum-based measurement, interviews and observational methods can be used in the context of a dynamic assessment of academic achievement of CLD children and adolescents” (p 135). Also included in this chapter is a learning strategies interview, which can be followed step by step to collect information to better understand the student.

One of the best and most authentic ways to learn more about assessment is through examining *case studies*. Included in the book are six case studies with students at a variety of age levels and with various presenting concerns. Reading about the students, the information gathered and recommended next steps, as well as outcomes, reinforces not only how assessment of students with CLD backgrounds is possible, but also how critical it is to have an informed understanding in order to create an effective educational plan. An example of a *student friendly* and *strength-based* report by author Judith Wiener is provided in case study six – Aisha (age 17). This style of report writing is concise and practical and would likely be meaningful and useful to the student and the parents. Often, psychological reports include unfamiliar terms and standardized test scores that may not be meaningful or can actually be quite disappointing and alarming to families. While these technical terms and scores are often required and helpful for school systems and funding, they can be confusing and may not be very

practical to the students, their parents and sometimes even their teachers.

When English is not a student’s first language, it is crucial to focus on the most relevant assessment information and, more importantly, what the student needs in order to improve.

Communicating with parents and students about assessments and student needs can be challenging. I’ve seen situations where too much technical information is given and I’ve also seen situations where critical information is glossed over. Adequate translation should be provided in order to ensure parents without high levels of English proficiency understand the reason and purpose of the assessment. Parents should also be encouraged to share information, ask questions and feel their input is welcomed and well received. Ways parents can support their child should also be discussed when debriefing the assessment and sharing educational plans. In Geva and Wiener’s book, there is a chapter devoted to communication, advocacy and consultation.

Psychological Assessment of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Children and Adolescents: A Practitioner’s Guide is available through Springer Publishing (New York) and Amazon. A copy will be available soon at the ATA Library. If you are interested in learning more about Geva’s research and testing information with students who are CLD, you can check the following websites:

- *The Testing Psychology* podcast episode by Jeremy Sharp, available at www.thetestingpsychologist.com/217-dynamic-assessment-with-second-language-learners-w-dr-esther-geva;
- Geva Lab: Research About Children and Adolescents on Language and Literacy Acquisition at www.oise.utoronto.ca/gevalab/index.html; and
- A recording of Esther Geva’s August 2021 webinar, available for purchase through the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta (2.5-hour webinar, \$67) at <https://buildgreatteams.ca/product/assessment-of-culturally-and-linguistically-diverse-students-webinar-recording>.

What's New in Your ATA Library?

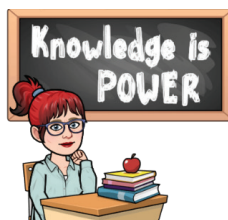
Gaylene Mackay and Nancy Musica

Some of our English as a Second Language Council (ESLC) members teach in the Edmonton area and may have visited the ATA Library located in Barnett House at 11010 142 Street NW, Edmonton AB T5N 2R1. Some of our members may not know that this library serves ATA members across the province and provides a wealth of resources that can help us in our work with English language learners, as well as all the students we work with. We'd like to encourage you to take advantage of what the ATA Library offers, in case you have not had the chance to explore their website!

Gaylene Mackay, incoming ESLC President, did some investigating and provided the following:

- If it is not convenient for you to access the ATA Library in person, you are able to have a resource sent to you—at no cost to you. You have a month to return that resource to the ATA—again, at no cost to you.
- Honestly speaking, it took a few tries to figure out how to access the digital library. However, once I did, it was relatively easy. After confirming my address, I was sent the book I requested and what was needed to return the book with the postage prepaid.
- To begin, you need to log into your ATA account. If you are struggling in accessing the catalogue, you might need to change the web browser you are using. It did not work for me using Chrome, but it did with Internet Explorer. The catalogue is available at <https://library.teachers.ab.ca/Presto/home/home.aspx>.

Nancy, ESLC PD director north (who lives in Edmonton), visited the ATA Library and met with Sandra Anderson, the ATA's *librarian extraordinaire*, who was extremely helpful in providing information on the what the ATA Library offers in the ways of ESL Resources.



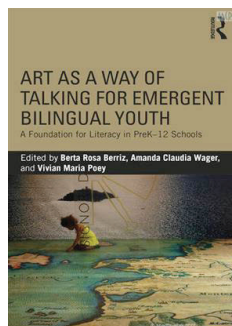
What's New in Your ATA Library?

Sandra Anderson

Did you know that we answer thousands of questions a year in your ATA library? Teachers ask us about all kinds of things: best practice for teaching writing, Indigenous Traditional social organization in Alberta nations, resources on teaching graffiti art techniques, resources for using sock puppets in the classroom, accessing education journals online and so much more!

Ask us and we will find you answers! Just drop us a line at library@ata.ab.ca.

Here are some titles in our library that we thought might interest you:



Art as a Way of Talking for Emergent Bilingual Youth: A Foundation for Literacy in PreK-12 Schools

By Berta Rosa Berriz, Amanda Claudia Wager and Vivian Maria Poey
Routledge, 2019

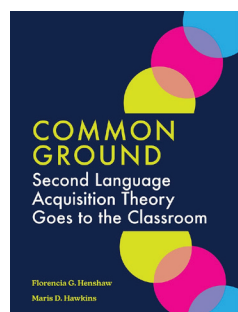
Assessing Language and Literacy with Bilingual Students: Practices to Support English Learners
By Lori Helman, Anne C Ittner and Kristen L McMaster
Guilford Press, 2020

Bridging the Humor Barrier: Humor Competency Training in English Language Teaching
By John Rucynski and Caleb Prichard
Lexington Books, 2020

Building Bridges with Bilingual Books and Multicultural Resources: A Practical Manual of Lesson Plans, Literacy Games, and Fun Activities from Around the World to Celebrate Diversity in the Classroom and at Home
By Anneke Vanmarcke Forzani et al
Language Lizard, 2019

Building Literacy with English Language Learners: Insights from Linguistics
By Kristin Lems, Tenena M Soro and Gareth Charles
Guilford Press, 2017

Coaching Teachers in Bilingual and Dual-Language Classrooms: A Responsive Cycle for Observation and Feedback
By Alexandra Guilamo
Solution Tree Press, 2020



Common Ground: Second Language Acquisition Theory Goes to the Classroom
By Florencia G Henshaw and Maria D Hawkins
Focus, 2022

Culturally Responsive Design for English Learners: The UDL Approach
By Patti Ralabate and Loui Lord Nelson
Cast Professional Publishing, 2017

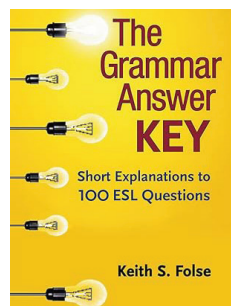
Dispelling Misconceptions About English Language Learners: Research-Based Ways to Improve Instruction
By Barbara Gottschalk
ASCD, 2020

Enlivening Instruction with Drama and Improv: A Guide for Second Language and World Language Teachers
By Melisa Cahnmann-Taylor and Kathleen McGovern
Routledge, 2021

The ELL Teacher's Toolbox: Hundreds of Practical Ideas to Support Your Students
By Larry Ferlazzo and Katie Hull Sypnieski
Jossey-Bass, 2018

The ESL / ELL Teacher's Survival Guide: Ready-to-Use Strategies, Tools, and Activities for Teaching English Language Learners of All Levels
By Larry Ferlazzo and Katie Hull Sypnieski
Jossey-Bass, 2022

ESL Games for the Classroom: 101 Interactive Activities to Engage Your Students with Minimal Prep
By Michael DiGiacomo
Zephyros Press, 2018



The Grammar Answer Key: Short Explanations to 100 ESL Questions
By Keith S Folse
University of Michigan Press, 2018

Identifying and Supporting Gifted English Language Learners: Equitable Programs and Services for ELLs in Gifted Education
By Mary Catharine Campbell
Prufrock Press, 2021

Language Learner Strategies: Contexts, Issues and Applications in Second Language Learning and Teaching
By Michael James Grenfell and Vee Harris
Bloomsbury Academic, 2017

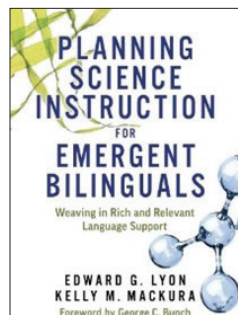
Leading Learning for ELL Students: Strategies for Success
By Catherine Beck and Heidi Pace
Routledge, 2017

Learning in a New Language: A Schoolwide Approach to Support K–8 Emergent Bilinguals
By Lori Helman
ASCD, 2020

Literacy Success for Emergent Bilinguals: Getting It Right in the PreK–2 Classroom
By Theresa A Roberts
Teachers College Press, 2017

Performative Language Teaching in Early Education: Language Learning through Drama and the Arts for Children 3–7

By Joe Winston
Bloomsbury Academic, 2022



Planning Science Instruction for Emergent Bilinguals: Weaving in Rich and Relevant Language Support

By Edward G. Lyon and Kelly M. Mackura
Teachers College Press, 2023

Process Drama for Second Language Teaching and Learning: A Toolkit for Developing Language and Life Skills

By Patrice Baldwin and Alicji Galazka
Bloomsbury Academic, 2022

The Reading Turn-Around with Emergent Bilinguals: A Five-Part Framework for Powerful Teaching and Learning (Grades K–6)

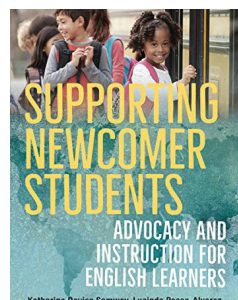
By Amanda Claudia Wager et al
Teachers College Press, 2019

Shadowing Multilingual Learners

By Ivannia Soto
Corwin, 2021

Show, Tell, Build: Twenty Key Instructional Tools and Techniques for Educating English Learners

By Joyce W. Nutta et al
Harvard Education Press, 2019



Supporting Newcomer Students: Advocacy and Instruction for English Learners

By Katharine Davies Samway, Lucinda Pease-Alvarez and Laura Alvarez
W. W. Norton & Company, 2020

Teaching English Language Learners: A Handbook for Elementary Teachers

By Ann Morgan
Rowman & Littlefield, 2019

Teaching Reading to English Learners, Grades 6–12: A Framework for Improving Achievement in the Content Areas

By Margarita Calderon and Shawn Slakk
Corwin Press, 2018

Translanguaging for Emergent Bilinguals: Inclusive Teaching in the Linguistically Diverse Classroom

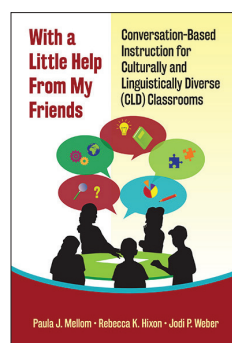
By Danling Fu et al
Teachers College Press, 2019

Understanding and Teaching English Spelling: A Strategic Guide

By Adam Brown
Routledge, 2019

Using Linguistically Appropriate Practice: A Guide for Teaching in Multilingual Classrooms

By Roma Chumak-Horbatsch
Multilingual Matters, 2019



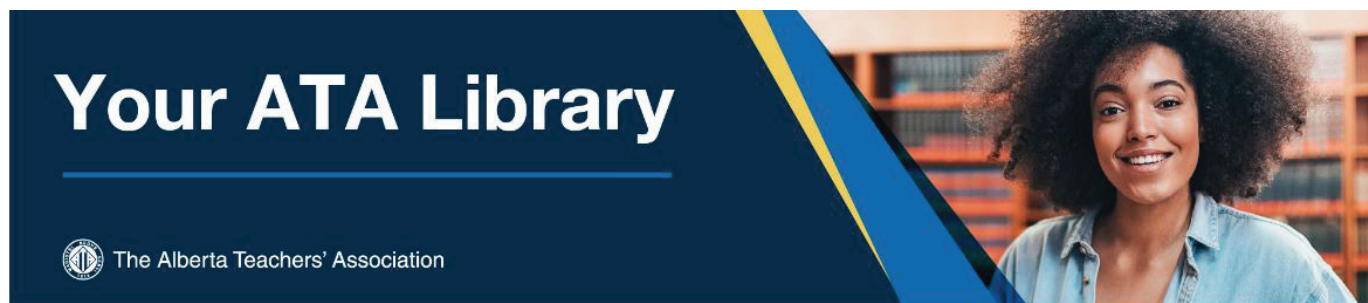
With a Little Help from My Friends: Conversation-Based Instruction for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) Classrooms

By Paula J. Mellom, Rebecca K. Hixon and Jodi P. Weber
Teachers College Press, 2019

Writing across Culture and Language: Inclusive Strategies for Working with ELL Writers in the ELA Classroom

By Christina Ortmeier-Hooper
National Council of Teachers of English, 2017

Amazing Kits for Your Classroom



Have you ever wanted to try out some new tech in your library without having to purchase it? Did you know that your ATA Library made that dream into a reality?

To see a full list of all the kits you can borrow from our library, visit our makerspace guide at <https://teachers-ab.libguides.com/makerspaces>.

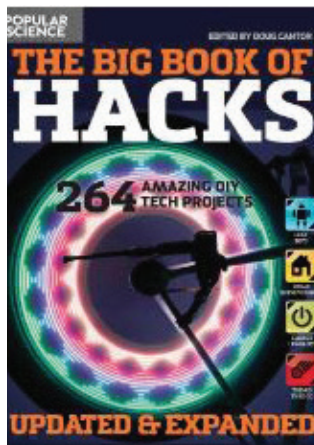
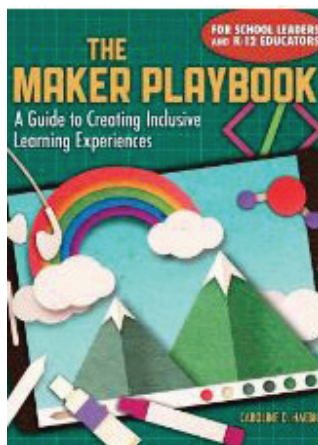
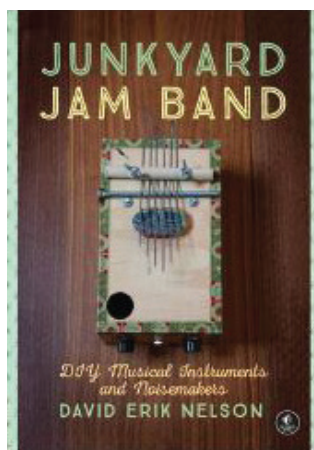


FIGURE 1. Image showing makerspaces available on ATA Library's website

You can also see a list of educational games that you can borrow on our games and gamification guide at <https://teachers-ab.libguides.com/games>.

When you make a request, your ATA Library staff will mail these materials to you and prepay the return shipping! No matter where you are in the province, you get the exact same service as you would if you worked across the street from the library. Loans are for four weeks and can be renewed if the items are not requested by another teacher.

Create your library account by visiting <http://library.teachers.ab.ca> and logging in with your ATA Online account. Once you've logged in, you're good to go and can start requesting materials.

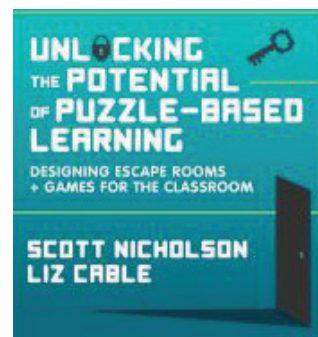
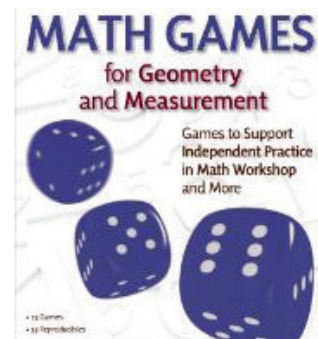
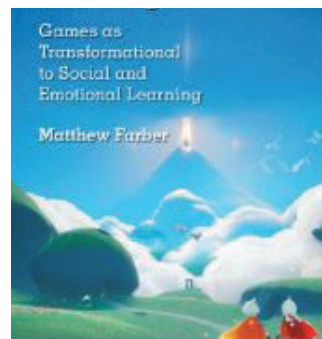


FIGURE 2. Image showing games and gamification available on ATA Library's website

Publishing Under the *Personal Information Protection Act*

The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) requires consent to publish personal information about an individual. Personal information is defined as anything that identifies an individual in the context of the collection: for example, a photograph and/or captions, an audio or video file, and artwork.

Some schools obtain blanket consent under *FOIP*, the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. However, the *Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA)* and *FOIP* are not interchangeable. They fulfill different legislative goals. *PIPA* is the private sector act that governs the Association's collection, use and disclosure of personal information.

If you can use the image or information to identify a person in context (for example, a specific school or a specific event), then it is personal information and you need consent to collect, use or disclose (publish) it.

Minors cannot provide consent and must have a parent or guardian sign a consent form. Consent forms must be provided to the Document Production editorial staff at Barnett House together with the personal information to be published.

Refer all questions regarding the ATA's collection, use and disclosure of personal information to the ATA privacy officer.

Notify the ATA privacy officer immediately of any incident that involves the loss of or unauthorized use or disclosure of personal information, by calling Barnett House at 780-447-9400 or 1-800-232-7208.

Maggie Shane, the ATA's privacy officer, is your resource for privacy compliance support.

780-447-9429 (direct)

780-699-9311 (cell, available any time)

Consent for Collection, Use and Disclosure of Personal Information

Name: _____ (Please print)

☐ I am giving consent for myself.

☐ I am giving consent for my child/children or ward(s), identified below:

Name(s): _____ (Please print)

By signing below, I am consenting to The Alberta Teachers' Association collecting, using and disclosing personal information identifying me or my child/children or ward(s) in print and/or online publications and on websites available to the public, including social media. By way of example, personal information may include, but is not limited to, name, photographs, audio/video recordings, artwork, writings or quotations.

I understand that copies of digital publications may come to be housed on servers outside Canada.

I understand that I may vary or withdraw this consent at any time. I understand that the Association's privacy officer is available to answer any questions I may have regarding the collection, use and disclosure of these records. The privacy officer can be reached at 780-447-9429 or 1-800-232-7208.

Signed: _____

Print name: _____ Today's date: _____

For more information on the ATA's privacy policy, visit www.teachers.ab.ca.



The Alberta Teachers' Association

OP-DP-64 2021 03

ESLC Contacts

President

Joan Miles
Bus 403-817-4000
president@eslcata.com

Publications Director

Annie Fung
Bus 780-716-2515
anniepyfung@gmail.com

ATA Staff Advisor

Terra Kaliszuk
Bus 780-447-9400 or
1-800-232-7208
terra.kaliszuk@ata.ab.ca

Complete contact
information for the ESLC
executive is available at
www.eslcata.com.

JOIN ESLC

Being an ESLC member
has many perks.

- Connection to Alberta Education
- Networking with like-minded professionals
- PD opportunities
- Some meetings held via Skype
- Information to help you with your professional practice
- Opportunity to advocate at a provincial level for our learners
- All expenses covered

We're super-fun!

If you are interested in joining the ESLC, please visit the ESLC website at www.eslcata.com.

Copyright © 2023 by The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA), 11010 142 Street NW, Edmonton T5N 2R1. Unless otherwise indicated in the text, reproduction of the material in *Accent* is authorized for classroom and professional development use, provided that each copy contains full acknowledgement of the source and that no charge is made beyond the cost of reprinting. Any other reproduction in whole or in part without prior written consent of the ATA is prohibited. *Accent* is published by the ATA for the English as a Second Language Council (ESLC). Editor: Annie Fung. Editorial and production services: Document Production staff, ATA. Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the ATA or the Council. ISSN 1201-3412

Individual copies of this newsletter are available at a cost of \$2 per copy plus 5 per cent shipping and handling and 5 per cent GST. Please contact Distribution at Barnett House at distribution@ata.ab.ca to place your order.

Personal information regarding any person named in this document is for the sole purpose of professional consultation between members of the Alberta Teachers' Association.