THE ONTARIO CURRICULUM

GRADES 9–12

American Sign Language as a Second Language

2021

Ontario

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PDF versions of a curriculum include the following information from the [Curriculum and Resources website](#):

- the Program Planning and Assessment and Evaluation sections of the Curriculum and Resources website that apply to all Ontario curriculum, Grades 1–12;
- the Curriculum Context that is specific to a discipline;
- the strands of the curriculum; and
- glossaries and appendices as applicable.

The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9–12: American Sign Language as a Second Language, 2021

This is the Ontario curriculum policy for American Sign Language as a Second Language in secondary schools. Beginning in September 2021, American Sign Language as a Second Language programs in secondary schools will be based on the expectations outlined in this curriculum policy.

Version History:

Version Date	Description
March 11, 2021	Curriculum context and LASBO expectations and teacher supports released
August 25, 2022	Glossary and Appendix B added

Program Planning and *Assessment and Evaluation* Content

Last updated: June 2020

This content is part of official issued curriculum providing the most up-to-date information (i.e., front matter). This content is applicable to all curriculum documents, Grades 1 to 12. Educators must consider this information to guide the implementation of curriculum and in creating the environment in which it is taught.

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Introduction

Ontario elementary and secondary schools strive to support high-quality learning and student well-being. Schools give individual students the opportunity to learn in ways that are best suited to their individual strengths and needs. At the secondary level, students' ability to thrive academically and personally is also supported by their ability to choose courses and programs that best suit their skills, interests, and preferred postsecondary destinations.

Educators plan teaching and learning in every subject and discipline so that the various needs of all students are addressed and so that students can see themselves reflected in classroom resources and activities. This section highlights the key strategies and policies that educators and school leaders consider as they plan effective and inclusive programs for all students.

Student Well-Being and Mental Health

Promoting the healthy development of all students, as well as enabling all students to reach their full potential, is a priority for educators across Ontario. Students' health and well-being contribute to their ability to learn in all disciplines, and that learning in turn contributes to their overall well-being. A well-rounded educational experience prioritizes well-being and academic success for all students by promoting physical and mental health, social-emotional learning, and inclusion. Parents, community partners, and educators all play critical roles in creating this educational experience.

Educators support the well-being of children and youth by creating, fostering, and sustaining a learning environment that is healthy, caring, safe, inclusive, and accepting. A learning environment of this kind supports not only students' cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development but also their sense of self and/or spirit, their mental health, their resilience, and their overall state of well-being. All this will help them achieve their full potential in school and in life.

A variety of factors, known as "determinants of health", have been shown to affect a person's overall state of well-being. Some of these are income, education and literacy, gender and culture, physical and social environment, personal health practices and coping skills, and availability of health services. Together, these factors influence not only whether individuals are physically healthy but also the extent to which they will have the physical, social, and personal resources needed to cope and to identify and achieve personal aspirations. These factors also

have an impact on student learning, and it is important to be aware of them as factors contributing to a student's performance and well-being.

An educator's awareness of and responsiveness to students' cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development, and to their sense of self and/or spirit, is critical to their success in school. A number of research-based frameworks, including those described in *Early Learning for Every Child Today: A Framework for Ontario Early Childhood Settings, 2007*, *On My Way: A Guide to Support Middle Years Childhood Development, 2017*, and *Stepping Stones: A Resource on Youth Development, 2012,* identify developmental stages that are common to the majority of students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. At the same time, these frameworks recognize that individual differences, as well as differences in life experiences and exposure to opportunities, can affect development, and that developmental events are not specifically age dependent.

The framework described in *Stepping Stones* is based on a model that illustrates the complexity of human development. Its components – the cognitive, emotional, physical, and social domains – are interrelated and interdependent, and all are subject to the influence of a person's environment or context. At the centre is an "enduring (yet changing) core" – a sense of self, and/or spirit – that connects the different aspects of development and experience (p. 17).

Source: *Stepping Stones: A Resource on Youth Development*, p. 17

Educators who have an awareness of a student's development are taking all of the components into account. They focus on the following elements of each component:

- *cognitive development* – brain development, processing and reasoning skills, use of strategies for learning
- *emotional development* – emotional regulation, empathy, motivation
- *social development* – self-development (self-concept, self-efficacy, self-esteem); identity formation (gender identity, social group identity, spiritual identity); relationships (peer, family, romantic)
- *physical development* – physical activity, sleep patterns, changes that come with puberty, body image, nutritional requirements

The Role of Mental Health and Well-Being

Mental health and well-being touch all components of development. Mental health is much more than the absence of mental illness. Well-being depends not only on the absence of problems and risks but also on the presence of factors that contribute to healthy growth and development. By nurturing and supporting students' strengths and assets, educators help promote positive mental health and well-being in the classroom. At the same time, they can identify students who need additional support and connect them with the appropriate supports and services.

What happens at school can have a significant influence on a student's overall well-being. With a broader awareness of mental health, educators can plan instructional strategies that contribute to a supportive classroom climate for learning in all subject areas, build awareness of mental health, and reduce stigma associated with mental illness. Taking students' well-being, including their mental health, into account when planning instructional approaches helps establish a strong foundation for learning and sets students up for success.

Instructional Approaches

Effective instruction is key to student success. To provide effective instruction, teachers need to consider what they want students to learn, how they will know whether students have learned it, how they will design instruction to promote the learning, and how they will respond to students who are not making progress.

When planning what students will learn, teachers identify the main concepts and skills described in the curriculum expectations, consider the contexts in which students will apply the learning, and determine students' learning goals.

Instructional approaches should be informed by evidence from current research about in-structional practices that are effective in the classroom. For example, research has provided compelling evidence about the benefits of explicitly teaching strategies that can help students develop a deeper understanding of concepts. Strategies such as "compare and contrast" (e.g.,

through Venn diagrams and comparison matrices) and the use of analogy enable students to examine concepts in ways that help them see what the concepts *are* and what they *are not*. Although such strategies are simple to use, teaching them explicitly is important in order to ensure that all students use them effectively.

A well-planned instructional program should always be at the student's level, but it should also push the student towards their optimal level of challenge for learning, while providing support and anticipating and directly teaching skills that are required for success.

A Differentiated Approach to Teaching and Learning

A differentiated approach to teaching and learning is an important part of a framework for effective classroom practice. It involves adapting instruction and assessment to suit individual students' interests, learning preferences, and readiness in order to promote learning.

An understanding of students' strengths and needs, as well as of their backgrounds, life experiences, and possible emotional vulnerabilities, can help teachers identify and address the diverse strengths and needs of their students. Teachers continually build their aware-ness of students' learning strengths and needs by observing and assessing their readiness to learn, their interests, and their learning styles and preferences. As teachers develop and deepen their understanding of individual students, they can respond more effectively to each student's needs by differentiating instructional approaches – for example, by adjusting the method or pace of instruction, using different types of resources, allowing a wider choice of topics, or even adjusting the learning environment, if appropriate, to suit the way the student learns and how the student is best able to demonstrate learning. Differentiation is planned as part of the overall learning design, but it also includes making adaptations during the teaching and learning process based on "assessment for learning". Common classroom strategies that support differentiated instruction include cooperative learning, project-based approaches, problem-based approaches, and explicit instruction. Unless students have an Individual Education Plan with modified expectations, *what* they learn continues to be guided by the curriculum expectations and is the same for all students.

Lesson Design

Effective lesson design involves several important elements. Teachers engage students in a lesson by activating their prior learning and experiences, clarifying the purpose for learning, and making connections to contexts that will help them see the relevance and usefulness of what they are learning. Teachers select instructional strategies to effectively introduce concepts, and consider how they will scaffold instruction in ways that will best meet the needs of their students. At the same time, they consider when and how to check students' understanding and to assess their progress towards achieving their learning goals. Teachers provide multiple

opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills and to consolidate and reflect on their learning. A three-part lesson design (e.g., "Minds On, Action, and Consolidation") is often used to structure these elements. Effective lesson design also incorporates culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy (CRRP), which recognizes that all students learn in ways that are connected to background, language, family structure, and social or cultural identity. CRRP is discussed more fully in the section Equity and Inclusive Education.

Planning for Students with Special Education Needs

Classroom teachers are the key educators of students with special education needs. They have a responsibility to help *all* students learn, and they work collaboratively with special education teachers and educational assistants, where appropriate, to achieve this goal. Classroom teachers commit to assisting every student to prepare for living with the highest degree of independence possible.

Learning for All: A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12, 2013 describes a set of beliefs, based in research, that should guide program planning for students with special education needs. Teachers planning programs or courses in all disciplines need to pay particular attention to these beliefs, which are as follows:

- All students can succeed.
- Each student has their own unique patterns of learning.
- Successful instructional practices are founded on evidence-based research, tempered by experience.
- Universal design[1] and differentiated instruction[2] are effective and interconnected means of meeting the learning or productivity needs of any group of students.
- Classroom teachers are the key educators for a student's literacy and numeracy development.
- Classroom teachers need the support of the larger community to create a learning environment that supports students with special education needs.
- Fairness is not sameness.

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[1] The goal of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is to create a learning environment that is open and accessible to all students, regardless of age, skills, or situation. Instruction based on principles of universal design is flexible and supportive, can be adjusted to meet different student needs, and enables all students to access the curriculum as fully as possible.

[2] Differentiated instruction is effective instruction that shapes each student's learning experience in response to the student's particular learning preferences, interests, and readiness to learn. See the section Instructional Approaches for more information.

In any given classroom, students may demonstrate a wide range of strengths and needs. Teachers plan programs that are attuned to this diversity and use an integrated process of assessment and instruction that responds to the unique strengths and needs of each student. An approach that combines principles of universal design and differentiated instruction enables educators to provide personalized, precise teaching and learning experiences for all students.

In planning programs or courses for students with special education needs, teachers should begin by examining both the curriculum expectations in the grade or course appropriate for the individual student and the student's particular strengths and learning needs to determine which of the following options is appropriate for the student:

- no accommodations[3] or modified expectations; or
- accommodations only; or
- modified expectations, with the possibility of accommodations; or
- alternative expectations, which are not derived from the curriculum expectations for the grade or course and which constitute alternative programs and/or courses.

If the student requires either accommodations or modified expectations, or both, the relevant information, as described in the following paragraphs, must be recorded in their Individual Education Plan (IEP). More detailed information about planning programs for students with special education needs, including students who require alternative programs[4] and/or courses, can be found in *Special Education in Ontario, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Resource Guide, 2017 (Draft)* (referred to hereafter as *Special Education in Ontario, 2017*). For a detailed discussion of the ministry's requirements for IEPs, see Part E of *Special Education in Ontario*.

Students Requiring Accommodations Only

Some students with special education needs are able, with certain "accommodations", to participate in the regular grade or course curriculum and to demonstrate learning independently. Accommodations allow the student with special education needs to access the curriculum without changes to the regular expectations. Any accommodations that are required to facili-tate the student's learning must be identified in the student's IEP (*Special Education in Ontario, 2017,* p. E38). A student's IEP is likely to reflect the same required accommodations for many, or all, subjects or courses.

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[3] "Accommodations" refers to individualized teaching and assessment strategies, human supports, and/or individualized equipment (see *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, First Edition, Covering Grades 1 to 12, 2010*, p. 72).

[4] Alternative programs are identified on the IEP by the term "alternative (ALT)".

Providing accommodations to students with special education needs should be the first option considered in program planning. Instruction based on principles of universal design and differentiated instruction focuses on providing accommodations to meet the diverse needs of learners.

There are three types of accommodations:

- *Instructional accommodations* are changes in teaching strategies, including styles of presentation, methods of organization, or use of technology and multimedia. Some examples include the use of graphic organizers, photocopied notes, adaptive equipment, or assistive software.
- *Environmental accommodations* are changes that the student may require in the classroom and/or school environment, such as preferential seating or special lighting.
- *Assessment accommodations* are changes in assessment procedures that enable the student to demonstrate their learning, such as allowing additional time to complete tests or assignments or permitting oral responses to test questions.

(For more examples, see page E39 of *Special Education in Ontario, 2017*.)

If a student requires "accommodations only", assessment and evaluation of their achievement will be based on the regular grade or course curriculum expectations and the achievement levels outlined for the particular curriculum. The IEP box on the student's Provincial Report Card will not be checked, and no information on the provision of accommodations will be included.

Students Requiring Modified Expectations

Modified expectations for most students with special education needs will be based on the regular grade or course expectations, with changes in the number and/or complexity of the expectations. Modified expectations must represent specific, realistic, observable, and measurable goals, and must describe specific knowledge and/or skills that the student can demonstrate independently, given the appropriate assessment accommodations.

It is important to monitor, and to reflect clearly in the student's IEP, the extent to which expectations have been modified. At the secondary level, the principal will determine whether achievement of the modified expectations constitutes successful completion of the course, and will decide whether the student is eligible to receive a credit for the course. This decision must be communicated to the parents and the student.

Modified expectations must indicate the knowledge and/or skills that the student is expected to demonstrate and that will be assessed in each reporting period (*Special Education in Ontario, 2017,* p. E27). Modified expectations should be expressed in such a way that the student and

parents can understand not only exactly what the student is expected to know or be able to demonstrate independently, but also the basis on which the student's performance will be evaluated, resulting in a grade or mark that is recorded on the Provincial Report Card. The student's learning expectations must be reviewed in relation to the student's progress at least once every reporting period, and must be updated as necessary (*Special Education in Ontario, 2017,* p. E28).

If a student requires modified expectations, assessment and evaluation of their achievement will be based on the learning expectations identified in the IEP and on the achievement levels outlined under [Levels of Achievement](#) in the "Assessment and Evaluation" section.

Elementary: The IEP box on the Elementary Progress Report Card and the Elementary Provincial Report Card must be checked for any subject in which the student requires modified expectations, and, on the Elementary Provincial Report Card, the appropriate statement from *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, First Edition, Covering Grades 1 to 12, 2010,* page 61, must be inserted.

Secondary: If some of the student's learning expectations for a course are modified but the student is working towards a credit for the course, it is sufficient simply to check the IEP box on the Provincial Report Card, Grades 9–12. If, however, the student's learning expectations are modified to such an extent that the principal deems that a credit will not be granted for the course, the IEP box must be checked and the appropriate statement from *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, First Edition, Covering Grades 1 to 12, 2010*, pages 62–63, must be inserted.

In both the elementary and secondary panels, the teacher's comments should include relevant information on the student's demonstrated learning of the modified expectations, as well as next steps for the student's learning in the subject or course.

Planning for English Language Learners

English Language Learners in Ontario Schools

Ontario schools have some of the most multilingual student populations in the world. The first language of approximately 28 per cent of the students in Ontario's English-language schools is a language other than English. In addition, some students use varieties of English – sometimes referred to as dialects – that differ significantly from the English required for success in Ontario schools. Many English language learners were born in Canada and have been raised in families and communities in which languages other than English, or varieties of English that differ from the language used in the classroom, are spoken. Other English language learners arrive in

Ontario as newcomers from other countries; they may have experience of highly sophisticated educational systems, or they may have come from regions where access to formal schooling was limited.

When they start school in Ontario, many of these students are entering a new linguistic and cultural environment. All teachers share in the responsibility for these students' English-language development.

As students who are learning English as a second or additional language in English-language schools, English language learners bring a rich diversity of background knowledge and experience to the classroom. These students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds not only support their learning in their new environment but also become a cultural asset in the classroom community. Effective teachers find positive ways to incorporate this diversity into their instructional programs and into the classroom environment.

Most English language learners in Ontario schools have age-appropriate proficiency in their first language, as well as age-appropriate literacy skills. Although they need frequent opportunities to use English at school, they also derive important educational and social benefits from continuing to develop their first language while they are learning English. Teachers should encourage parents to continue to use their own language at home, both to preserve the language as part of their children's heritage and identity and to provide a foundation for their language and literacy development in English. It is also important for teachers to find opportunities to bring students' languages into the classroom, using parents and community members as a resource.

English as a Second Language and English Literacy Development Programs

During their first few years in Ontario schools, English language learners may receive support through one of two distinct programs designed to meet their language-learning needs:

English as a Second Language (ESL) programs are for students born in Canada or newcomers whose first language is a language other than English, or is a variety of English significantly different from that used for instruction in Ontario schools. Students in these programs have had educational opportunities to develop age-appropriate first-language literacy skills.

English Literacy Development (ELD) programs are primarily for newcomers whose first language is a language other than English, or is a variety of English significantly different from that used for instruction in Ontario schools, and who arrive with significant gaps in their education. These students generally come from countries where access to education is limited or where there are limited opportunities to develop language and literacy skills in any language. Schooling in their countries of origin may have been inconsistent, disrupted, or even completely unavailable throughout the years that these children would otherwise have been in school.

Supportive Learning Environments

In planning programs for students with linguistic backgrounds other than English, teachers need to recognize the importance of the orientation process, understanding that every learner needs to adjust to the new social environment and language in a unique way and at an individual pace. For example, students who are in an early stage of English-language acquisition may go through a "silent period" during which they closely observe the inter-actions and physical surroundings of their new learning environment. They may use body language rather than speech or they may use their first language until they have gained enough proficiency in English to feel confident of their interpretations and responses. Students thrive in a safe, supportive, and welcoming environment that nurtures their self-confidence while they are receiving focused literacy instruction. When they are ready to participate, in paired, small-group, or whole-class activities, some students will begin by using a single word or phrase to communicate a thought, while others will speak quite fluently.

In a supportive learning environment, most students will develop oral language proficiency quite quickly. Teachers can sometimes be misled by the high degree of oral proficiency demonstrated by many English language learners in their use of everyday English and may mistakenly conclude that these students are equally proficient in their use of academic English. Most English language learners who have developed oral proficiency in everyday English will still require instructional scaffolding to meet curriculum expectations. Research has shown that it takes five to seven years for most English language learners to catch up to their English-speaking peers in their ability to use English for academic purposes.

Program Adaptations

Responsibility for students' English-language development is shared by all teachers, including the ESL/ELD teacher (where available), and other school staff. Volunteers and peers may also be helpful in supporting English language learners in the classroom. By adapting the instructional program, teachers facilitate these students' learning. Appropriate adaptations include modifications and accommodations, as follows:

- modification of some or all of the grade or course expectations so that they are challenging but attainable for the learners at their current level of English proficiency, with the necessary support from the teacher;
- use of a variety of instructional strategies;[5]

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[5] Examples include: small-group instruction; extensive use of visual cues, images, diagrams; visual representations of key ideas; graphic organizers; scaffolding; previewing of text; modelling; use of music, movement, and gestures; open-ended activities; pre-teaching of key vocabulary; peer tutoring; strategic use of students' first languages.

- use of a variety of learning resources;[6]
- use of assessment accommodations that support students in demonstrating the full range of their learning.[7]

Teachers need to adapt the program for English language learners as they acquire English proficiency. For English language learners at the early stages of English language acquisition, teachers are required to modify curriculum expectations as needed. Most English language learners require accommodations for an extended period, long after they have achieved proficiency in everyday English.

Assessment and Evaluation

When curriculum expectations are modified in order to meet the language-learning needs of English language learners, assessment and evaluation will be based on the documented modified expectations. Teachers will check the ESL/ELD box on the Provincial Report Card only when modifications have been made to curriculum expectations to address the language needs of English language learners (the box should *not* be checked to indicate simply that they are participating in ESL/ELD programs or if they are only receiving accommodations). There is no requirement for a statement to be added to the "Comments" section of the report cards when the ESL/ELD box is checked.

Although the degree of program adaptation required will decrease over time, students who are no longer receiving ESL or ELD support may still need some program adaptations to be successful.

Related Policy and Resource Documents

For further information on supporting English language learners, refer to the following documents:

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[6] Examples include: visual material; simplified text; bilingual dictionaries; subject-specific glossaries; resources available in languages that students speak at home; concrete materials; learning materials and activities – displays, music, dances, games, and so on – that reflect cultural diversity.

[7] Examples include: provision of additional time; provision of options for students to choose how they will demonstrate their learning, such as portfolios, oral interviews, presentations, oral or visual representations, demonstrations and models, dramatic activities, and songs and chants; use of tasks requiring completion of graphic organizers or cloze sentences instead of essay questions or other assessment tasks that depend heavily on proficiency in English.

- *[Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, First Edition, Covering Grades 1 to 12, 2010](#)*
- *[The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9–12: English as a Second Language and English Literacy Development, 2007](#)*
- *[English Language Learners – ESL and ELD Programs and Services: Policies and Procedures for Ontario Elementary and Secondary Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12, 2007](#)*
- *[Supporting English Language Learners with Limited Prior Schooling: A Practical Guide for Ontario Educators, Grades 3 to 12, 2008](#)*
- *[Supporting English Language Learners: A Practical Guide for Ontario Educators, Grades 1 to 8, 2008](#)*
- *[Many Roots, Many Voices: Supporting English Language Learners in Every Classroom, 2005.](#)*

Healthy Relationships

Every student is entitled to learn in a safe, caring environment, free from discrimination, violence, and harassment. Research has shown that students learn and achieve better in such environments. A safe and supportive social environment in a school is founded on healthy relationships – the relationships between students, between students and adults, and between adults. Healthy relationships are based on respect, caring, empathy, trust, and dignity, and thrive in an environment in which diversity is honoured and accepted. Healthy relationships do not tolerate abusive, controlling, violent, bullying/harassing, or other inappropriate behaviours. To experience themselves as valued and connected members of an inclusive social environment, students need to be involved in healthy relationships with their peers, educators, and other members of the school community.

Several provincial policies, programs, and initiatives, including [Foundations for a Healthy School](#), the [Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy](#), and [Safe Schools](#), are designed to foster caring and safe learning environments in the context of healthy and inclusive schools. These policies and initiatives promote positive learning and teaching environments that support the development of healthy relationships, encourage academic achievement, and help all students reach their full potential.

In its 2008 report, *[Shaping a Culture of Respect in Our Schools: Promoting Safe and Healthy Relationships,](#)* the Safe Schools Action Team confirmed "that the most effective way to enable all students to learn about healthy and respectful relationships is through the school curriculum" (p. 11). Educators can promote this learning in a variety of ways. For example, by giving students opportunities to apply critical thinking and problem-solving strategies and to address issues through group discussions, role play, case study analysis, and other means, they can help them develop and practise the skills they need for building healthy relationships. Co-

curricular activities such as clubs and intramural and interschool sports provide additional opportunities for the kind of interaction that helps students build healthy relationships. Educators can also have a positive influence on students by modelling the behaviours, values, and skills that are needed to develop and sustain healthy relationships, and by taking advantage of "teachable moments" to address immediate relationship issues that may arise among students.

Human Rights, Equity, and Inclusive Education

A positive, inclusive, equitable, and non-discriminatory elementary and secondary school experience is vitally important to a student's personal, social, and academic development, to their future economic security, and to a realization of their full potential. Human rights principles recognize the importance of creating a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of each person, so that each person can contribute fully to the development and well-being of their community. Indeed, human rights law guarantees a person's right to equal treatment in education. It requires educators and school leaders to prevent and respond appropriately to discrimination and harassment, to create an inclusive environment, to remove barriers that limit the ability of students, and to provide accommodations, where necessary.

Ontario's education system, at all levels, must respect diversity, promote inclusive education, and work towards identifying and eliminating barriers to equal treatment in education that limit the ability of students to learn, grow, and contribute to society. Discriminatory biases, harassment, non-inclusive environments, lack of accommodation, systemic barriers, power dynamics, societal poverty, and racism make it difficult for students to acquire the skills they need to be successful, competitive, and productive members of society. Ontario schools aim to improve the academic outcomes and experiences of students who have traditionally not benefited from the promise of public education.

In an environment based on the principles of inclusive education, all students, parents, caregivers, and other members of the school community – regardless of ancestry, culture, ethnicity, sex, disability, race, colour, religion, age, marital or family status, creed, gender identity/expression, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, or other factors – are welcomed, included, treated fairly, and respected. Diversity is valued when all members of the school community feel safe, welcomed, and accepted. Every student is supported and inspired to succeed in a culture of high expectations for learning.

Research has shown that students who do not see themselves reflected in what they are learning, in their classrooms, and in their schools become disengaged and do not experience as great a sense of well-being or as high a level of academic achievement as those who do.

Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy (CRRP)

In an inclusive education system, students must see themselves reflected in the curriculum, their physical surroundings, and the broader environment, so that they can feel engaged in and empowered by their learning experiences. Students need to experience teaching and learning that reflect their needs and who they are. To ensure that this happens, educators in Ontario schools embrace *culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy* (CRRP), which recognizes that all students learn in ways that are connected to background, language, family structure, and social or cultural identity.

CRRP provides a framework for building positive environments, improving student responsibility and success, encouraging parent-school relationships, and building strong community connections. It also emphasizes that it is important for educators and school leaders to examine their own biases and to analyse how their own identities and experiences affect how they view, understand, and interact with all students. This can help to prevent discrimination, harassment, and the creation of poisoned environments. Educators are responsible for meaningful teaching and learning that recognizes and responds to *who is in the classroom and the school*.

By knowing "who our students are", educators and leaders can tailor policies, programs, and practices to better meet the needs of their diverse student populations, to provide accommodation of the needs specified by human rights law, and to ensure that every student has the opportunity to succeed. CRRP involves recognizing that "culture" encompasses various aspects of social and personal identity. It also means acknowledging students' multiple social and personal identities and the social issues that arise where identities intersect. The CRRP approach is designed to spark conversation and support educators and school leaders as they seek to implement effective equity strategies and policies. Educators are encouraged to engage in meaningful inquiry, in collaboration with colleagues, to address equity issues and the particular needs of the students they serve.

Implementing Principles of Inclusive Education

The implementation of inclusive education principles in education influences all aspects of school life. It promotes a school climate that encourages all students to work to high levels of achievement, affirms the worth of all students, and helps students strengthen their sense of identity and develop a positive self-image. It encourages staff and students alike to value and show respect for diversity in the school and the broader society. Inclusive education promotes equity, healthy relationships, and active, responsible citizenship. The absence of inclusive approaches to education can create discriminatory environments, in which certain individuals or groups cannot expect to receive fair treatment or an equitable experience based on aspects of their identity.

Teachers can give students a variety of opportunities to learn about diversity and diverse perspectives. By drawing attention to the contributions and perspectives of historically marginalized groups, and by creating opportunities for their experiences to be affirmed and valued, teachers can enable students from a wide range of backgrounds to see themselves reflected in the curriculum. It is essential that learning activities and materials used to support the curriculum reflect the diversity of Ontario society. In addition, teachers should differentiate instruction and assessment strategies to take into account the background and experiences, as well as the interests, aptitudes, and learning needs, of all students.

Interactions between the school and the community should reflect the diversity of both the local community and the broader society. A variety of strategies can be used to communicate with and engage parents and members of diverse communities, and to encourage their participation in and support for school activities, programs, and events. Family and community members should be invited to take part in teacher interviews, the school council, and the parent involvement committee, and to attend and support activities such as plays, concerts, co-curricular activities and events, and various special events at the school. Schools need to be prepared and ready to welcome families and community members. Schools may consider offering assistance with child care or making alternative scheduling arrangements in order to help caregivers participate. Special outreach strategies and encouragement may be needed to draw in the parents of English language learners and First Nations, Métis, or Inuit students, and to make them feel more welcomed in their interactions with the school.

The Role of the School Library

The school library program can help build and transform students' knowledge in order to support lifelong learning in our information- and knowledge-based society. The school library program supports student success across the curriculum by encouraging students to read widely, teaching them to examine and read many forms of text for understanding and enjoyment, and helping them improve their research skills and effectively use information gathered through research.

The school library program enables students to:

- develop a love of reading for learning and for pleasure;
- develop literacy skills using fiction and non-fiction materials;
- develop the skills to become independent, thoughtful, and critical researchers;
- obtain access to programs, resources, and integrated technologies that support all curriculum areas;
- understand and value the role of public library systems as a resource for lifelong learning.

The school library program plays a key role in the development of information literacy and research skills. Teacher-librarians, where available, collaborate with classroom or content-area teachers to design, teach, and provide students with authentic information and research tasks that foster learning, including the ability to:

- access, select, gather, process, critically evaluate, create, and communicate information;
- use the information obtained to explore and investigate issues, solve problems, make decisions, build knowledge, create personal meaning, and enrich their lives;
- communicate their findings to different audiences, using a variety of formats and technologies;
- use information and research with understanding, responsibility, and imagination.

In addition, teacher-librarians can work with content-area teachers to help students:

- develop digital literacy in using non-print forms, such as the Internet, social media, and blogs, and knowing the best ways to access relevant and reliable information;
- design inquiry questions for research projects;
- create and produce single-medium or multimedia presentations.

Teachers need to discuss with students the concept of ownership of work and the importance of copyright in all forms of media.

The Role of Information and Communications Technology

The variety and range of information and communications technology (ICT) tools available to educators today enables them to significantly extend and enrich their instructional approaches and to create opportunities for students to learn in ways that best suit their interests and strengths. Technology has also enhanced the ability to connect with communities outside the school, making it possible to engage a diversity of community partners in student learning.

Rich opportunities can be tapped to support students in developing digital literacy, an essential transferable skill.

Education and Career/Life Planning

The goals of the Kindergarten to Grade 12 education and career/life planning program are to:

- ensure that all students develop the knowledge and skills they need to make informed education and career/life choices;

- provide classroom and school-wide opportunities for this learning; and
- engage parents and the broader community in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the program, to support students in their learning.

The framework of the program is a four-step inquiry process based on four questions linked to four areas of learning: (1) Knowing Yourself – Who am I?; (2) Exploring Opportunities – What are my opportunities?; (3) Making Decisions and Setting Goals – Who do I want to become?; and (4) Achieving Goals and Making Transitions – What is my plan for achieving my goals?
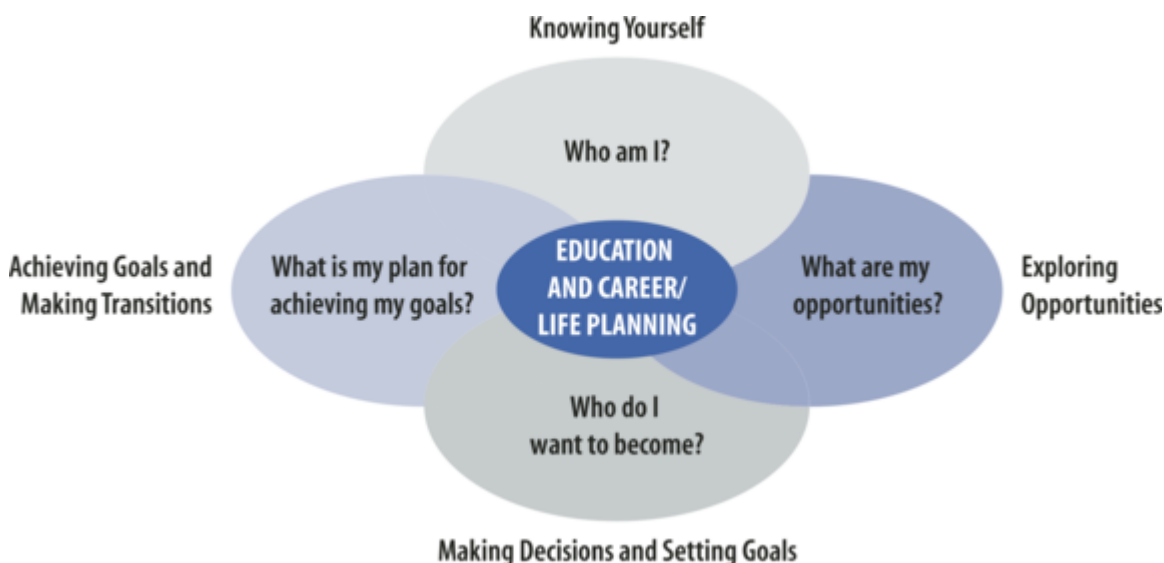
The curriculum expectations in most subjects and disciplines of the Ontario curriculum provide opportunities to relate classroom learning to the education and career/life planning program as outlined in *Creating Pathways to Success: An Education and Career/Life Planning Program for Ontario Schools – Policy and Program Requirements, Kindergarten to Grade 12, 2013.* All classroom teachers support students in education and career/life planning by providing them with learning opportunities, filtered through the lens of the four inquiry questions, that allow them to reflect on and apply subject-specific knowledge and skills; explore subject-related education and career/life options; and become competent, self-directed planners who will be prepared for success in school, life, and work. Education and career/life planning will support students in their transition from secondary school to their initial postsecondary destination, whether it be in apprenticeship training, college, community living, university, or the workplace. For more information on postsecondary pathway choices, see the Education and Training and Skilled Trades pages on the Ontario government website.

Experiential Learning

Experiential learning is hands-on learning that occurs in person or virtually and provides developmentally appropriate opportunities for students of all ages to:

- **participate** in rich experiences connected to the world outside the school;
- **reflect** on the experiences to derive meaning; and
- **apply** the learning to their decisions and actions.

Adapted from David A. Kolb, *Experiential Learning:
Experience as the Source of Learning and Development,
2nd ed.* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Education, 2015)

Planned learning experiences in the community may include outdoor education, project/program-based learning, job shadowing and job twin-ning, field trips, field studies, work experience, and cooperative education. These experiences provide opportunities for students to see the relevance of their classroom learning and its connection to the broader world. They also help them develop transferable and interpersonal skills and work habits that prepare them for their future, and enable them to explore careers of interest as they plan their pathway through school to their postsecondary destination, whether in apprenticeship training, college, community living, university, or the workplace.

Experiential learning opportunities associated with various aspects of the curriculum help broaden students' knowledge of themselves and of a range of career opportunities – two areas of learning outlined in *Creating Pathways to Success: An Education and Career/Life Planning Program for Ontario Schools – Policy and Program Requirements, Kindergarten to Grade 12, 2013.* The key to providing successful experiential learning opportunities is to ensure that the experiential learning cycle (participate, reflect, apply) is a planned part of the experience.

In secondary school, pathways programs that incorporate experiential learning are available to students. They include the following courses and programs:

- cooperative education courses, outlined in *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 11–12: Cooperative Education, 2018*
- Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) (see "Prepare for Apprenticeship" on the Ontario government website)
- Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) program
- Dual credit programs

Pathways to a Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM)

The Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) is a specialized, ministry-approved program that allows students in Grades 11 and 12 to focus their learning on a specific economic sector while meeting the requirements of the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).

The SHSM program assists students in their transition from secondary school to apprenticeship training, college, university, or the workplace.

This program enables students to gain sector-specific skills and knowledge in engaging, career-related learning environments and to prepare in a focused way for graduation and postsecondary education, training, or employment.

Course offerings and program planning should support students who are pursuing specialized programs, including the SHSM program. Bundles of credits provide students with knowledge and skills that are connected with the specific sector of their SHSM program and that are required for success in their chosen destination.

Health and Safety

In Ontario, various laws, including the [Education Act](#), the [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#) (OHSA), [Ryan's Law (Ensuring Asthma Friendly Schools), 2015](#), and [Sabrina's Law, 2005](#), collectively ensure that school boards provide a safe and productive learning and work environment for both students and employees. Under the Education Act, teachers are required to ensure that all reasonable safety procedures are carried out in courses and activities for which they are responsible. Teachers should model safe practices at all times; communicate safety require-ments to students in accordance with school board policies, Ministry of Education policies, and any applicable laws; and encourage students to assume responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others.

Concern for safety should be an integral part of instructional planning and implementa-tion. Teachers are encouraged to review:

- their responsibilities under the [Education Act](#);
- their rights and responsibilities under the [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#);
- their school board's health and safety policy for employees;
- their school board's policies and procedures on student health and safety (e.g., on concussions; on medical conditions such as asthma; with respect to outdoor education excursions);
- relevant provincial subject association guidelines and standards for student health and safety, such as Ophea's [Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education](#) (formerly the Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines);
- any additional mandatory requirements, particularly for higher-risk activities (e.g., field trips that involve water-based activities), including requirements for approvals (e.g., from the Supervisory Officer), permissions (e.g., from parents/guardians), and/or qualifications (e.g., proof of students' successful completion of a swim test).

Wherever possible, potential risks should be identified and procedures developed to prevent or minimize, and respond to, incidents and injuries. School boards provide and maintain safe facilities and equipment, as well as qualified instruction. In safe learning environments, teachers will:

- be aware of up-to-date safety information;
- plan activities with safety as a primary consideration;
- inform students and parents of risks involved in activities;
- observe students to ensure that safe practices are being followed;
- have a plan in case of emergency;
- show foresight;
- act quickly.

Students should be made aware that health and safety is everyone's responsibility – at home, at school, and in the community. Teachers should ensure that students have the knowledge and skills needed for safe participation in all learning activities. Students must be able to dem-onstrate knowledge of the equipment being used and the procedures necessary for its safe use. Health and safety resource guides for [Kindergarten to Grade 8](#) and for [Grades 9 to 12](#) provide the scope and sequence of Ontario curriculum expectations to assist teachers in bringing health and safety education into the classroom in every subject area. The guides identify expectations in the Ontario curriculum that can help students develop knowledge and skills related to health and safety (injury prevention and health protection), safe behaviours, and safe practices.

Learning outside the classroom, such as on field trips or during field studies, can provide a meaningful and authentic dimension to students' learning experiences, but they also take the teacher and students out of the predictable classroom environment and into unfamiliar settings. Teachers must plan these activities carefully in accordance with their school board's relevant policies and procedures and in collaboration with other school board staff (e.g., the principal, outdoor education lead, Supervisory Officer) to ensure students' health and safety.

The information provided in this section is not exhaustive. Teachers are expected to follow school board health and safety policies and procedures.

Ethics

The Ontario curriculum provides varied opportunities for students to learn about ethical issues and to explore the role of ethics in both public and personal decision making. Students may make ethical judgements when evaluating evidence and positions on various issues, and when drawing their own conclusions about issues, developments, and events. Teachers may need to help students determine which factors they should consider when making such judgements. It

is crucial that teachers provide support and supervision to students throughout the research and inquiry process, ensuring that students engaged in an inquiry are aware of potential ethical concerns and that they address such concerns in acceptable ways. Teachers may supervise students' use of surveys and/or interviews, for example, to confirm that their planned activities will respect the dignity, privacy, and confidentiality of their partici-pants. When students' activities involve Indigenous communities and/or individuals, teachers need to ensure the appropriate use and protection of Indigenous knowledge. Teachers also supervise the choice of the research topics to protect students from exposure to information and/or perspectives for which they may not be emo-tionally or intellectually prepared (for example, where a student's investigation might involve personal interviews that could lead to the disclosure of abuse or other sensitive topics).

Teachers must thoroughly address the issues of plagiarism and cultural appropriation with students. In a digital world that provides quick access to abundant informa-tion, it is easy to copy the words, music, or images of others and present them as one's own. Even at the secondary level, students need to be reminded of the ethical issues related to plagiarism and appropriation. Before starting an inquiry, students should have an understanding of the range of forms of plagiarism and appropriation, from blatant to nuanced, as well as of their consequences. Students often struggle to find a balance between creating works in their own voice or style and acknowledging the work of others. It is not enough to tell them not to plagiarize or appropriate others' work, and to admonish those who do. Teachers need to explicitly teach all students how to use their own voice or style while appropriately acknowledging the work of others, using accepted forms of documentation.

Cross-curricular and integrated learning

Introduction

A variety of overarching perspectives, themes, and skills are intentionally incorporated by educators, on an ongoing basis, into teaching and learning across all subjects and disciplines of the curriculum – they are part of "cross-curricular learning". Educators plan programs to include learning in these areas, which are relevant in the context of most curriculum subjects, and are critical to students in navigating their world. They range from environmental education, Indigenous education, and financial literacy to social-emotional learning, critical literacy, mathematical literacy, and STEM education. These various themes, perspectives, and skills are explored in this section.

Another approach to teaching and learning "across subjects" is called "integrated learning". This approach differs from cross-curricular learning because it involves combining curriculum expectations from more than one subject in a single lesson, and evaluating student achievement of the expectations within the respective subjects from which they are drawn.

Scope and Sequence Resource Guides

"Scope and sequence" resource guides are compilations of existing curriculum expectations, from all subjects and disciplines, that relate to specific ministry priorities and initiatives. For example, scope and sequence resource guides have been developed for **environmental education** (elementary and secondary); **financial literacy** (elementary and secondary); **First Nations, Métis, and Inuit connections** (elementary and secondary); and **health and safety** (elementary and secondary).

These documents identify expectations that involve learning about the particular topic, as well as teacher supports that touch on the topic or that describe opportunities for addressing it. The teacher supports include the examples, sample questions, teacher prompts, student responses, and/or instructional tips that accompany the expectations and describe optional ways in which teachers can elicit the learning described in the expectation. Teachers can glean ideas from the teacher supports, based on their professional judgement and taking into account the interests of the students and the local communities represented in their classrooms, for incorporating learning about these topics across subjects. The scope and sequence resource guides can also support divisional/school planning on particular topics or issues across classrooms and grades.

Integrated Learning

Integrated learning engages students in a rich learning experience that helps them make connections across subjects and brings the learning to life. Integrated learning provides students with opportunities to work towards meeting expectations from two or more subjects within a single unit, lesson, or activity. It can be a solution to the problems of fragmented learning and isolated skill instruction, because it provides opportunities for students to learn and apply skills in meaningful contexts across subject boundaries. In such contexts, students have opportunities to develop their ability to think and reason and to transfer knowledge and skills from one subject area to another. Although the learning is integrated, *the specific knowledge and skills from the curriculum for each subject are taught.*

Elementary Curriculum

By linking expectations from different subjects within a single unit, lesson, or activity, elementary teachers can provide students with multiple opportunities to reinforce and demonstrate their knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts. Teachers then evaluate student achievement in terms of the individual expectations, towards assigning a grade for each of the subjects involved.

One example would be a unit linking expectations from the science and technology curriculum and from the social studies curriculum. Connections can be made between these curricula in a number of areas – for example, the use of natural resources, considered from a scientific and an economic perspective; variations in habitat and ecosystems across the regions of Canada, exploring both the biology and the geography of those regions; historical changes in technology; and the impact of science and technology on various peoples and on the environment. In addition, a unit combining science and technology and social studies expectations could teach inquiry/research skills common to the two subjects, while also introducing approaches unique to each.

Secondary Curriculum

Ontario's secondary curriculum is designed to provide opportunities for educators to integrate student learning across disciplines and subjects. Some secondary expectations are written to implicitly connect with and support content learning and skill development outlined in other curricula. For example, the secondary math and science curricula are aligned so that students can apply what they learn in math to what they are learning in the sciences. For instance, in Grade 11 and 12 math courses, students learn the mathematical concepts needed to support learning in chemistry and physics courses in those grades. As another example, expectations in social sciences and humanities are aligned with some of the expectations in the English curriculum.

Financial Literacy

The education system has a vital role to play in preparing young people to take their place as informed, engaged, and knowledgeable citizens in the global economy. Financial literacy education can provide the preparation Ontario students need to make informed decisions and choices in a complex and fast-changing financial world.

Because making informed decisions about economic and financial matters has become an increasingly complex undertaking in the modern world, students need to build knowledge and skills in a wide variety of areas. In addition to learning about the specifics of saving, spending, borrowing, and investing, students need to develop broader skills in problem solving, research and inquiry, decision making, critical thinking, and critical literacy related to financial issues, so that they can analyse and manage the risks that accompany various financial choices. They also need to develop an understanding of world economic forces and the effects of those forces at the local, national, and global level. In order to make wise choices, they will need to understand how such forces affect their own and their families' economic and financial circumstances. Finally, to become responsible citizens in the global economy, they will need to understand the social, environmental, and ethical implications of their own choices as consumers. For all of these reasons, financial literacy is an essential component of the education of Ontario students in a twenty-first century context – one that can help ensure that Ontarians will continue to prosper in the future.

Resource documents – *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 4–8: Financial Literacy Scope and Sequence of Expectations, 2016* and *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9–12: Financial Literacy Scope and Sequence of Expectations, 2016* – have been prepared to assist teachers in bringing financial literacy into the classroom. These documents identify the curriculum expectations and related examples and prompts, in disciplines across the Ontario curriculum, through which students can acquire skills and knowledge related to financial literacy.

STEM Education

K–12 STEM education is the study of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, including cross-curricular and/or integrative study, and the application of those subjects in real-world contexts. As students engage in STEM education, they develop transferable skills that they need to meet the demands of today's global economy and society.

STEM education helps students develop an understanding and appreciation of each of the core subjects of mathematics, science, and technological education. At the same time, it supports a more holistic understanding and application of skills and knowledge related to engineering design and innovation. STEM learning integrates and applies concepts, processes, and ways of thinking associated with these subjects to design solutions to real-world problems.

Engineering design and innovation engages students in *applying* the principles of science, technology, and mathematics to develop economical and sustainable solutions to technical and complex societal problems to meet human needs.

Among the transferable skills developed through STEM education are computational thinking, coding, design thinking, innovating, use of the scientific method, scientific inquiry skills, and engineering design skills. These skills are in high demand in today's globally connected world, with its unprecedented advancements in technology.

Approaches to STEM education may vary across Ontario schools. STEM subjects may be taught separately, but with an effort to make cross-curricular connections a part of student learning. Problem-solving application projects may be designed to combine two or more STEM subjects. Alternatively, content from all four STEM subjects might be fully integrated to reinforce students' understanding of each subject, by enhancing their understanding of the interrelationships among them, and by providing the opportunity to apply a spectrum of knowledge and skills in novel ways in real-world contexts. As STEM education is implemented, it is important to engage diverse perspectives and ways of thinking. including those inherent in the arts and humanities. Diverse perspectives engage students in a variety of creative and critical thinking processes that are essential for developing innovative and effective solutions that impact communities or ecosystems.

A robust K–12 STEM education enables Ontario educators and students to become innovators and leaders of change in society and the workforce, and creates opportunities in our diverse communities to foster integrative thinking and problem solving.

Indigenous Education

To move forward on their learning journey, students must have a solid understanding of where we have been as a province and as a country. Consistent with Ontario's vision for Indigenous education, all students will have knowledge of the rich diversity of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit histories, cultures, perspectives, and contributions, as well as an awareness of the importance of Indigenous ways of knowing in a contemporary context. Ontario is committed to ensuring that First Nations, Métis, and Inuit survivors and communities bring their perspectives to students' learning about our shared history.

It is essential that learning activities and resources used to support Indigenous education are authentic and accurate and do not perpetuate culturally and historically inaccurate ideas and understandings. It is important for educators and schools to select resources that represent the uniqueness of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit histories, perspectives, and world views authentically and respectfully. It is also important to select resources that reflect local Indigenous communities as well as First Nations, Métis, and Inuit individuals and communities

from across Ontario and Canada. Resources that best support Indigenous education feature Indigenous voices and narratives and are developed by, or in collaboration with, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities. Schools can contact their board's Indigenous lead and work with their Indigenous Education Councils for assistance in evaluating and selecting resources.

Cultural Safety

It is important to create a learning environment that is respectful and that makes students feel safe and comfortable not only physically, socially, and emotionally but also in terms of their cultural heritage. A culturally safe learning environment is one in which students feel comfortable about expressing their ideas, opinions, and needs and about responding authentically to topics that may be culturally sensitive. Educators should be aware that some students may experience emotional reactions when learning about issues that have affected their own lives, their family, and/or their community, such as the legacy of the residential school system. Before addressing such topics in the classroom, teachers need to consider how to prepare and debrief students, and they need to ensure that appropriate resources are available to support students both inside and outside the classroom.

Literacy

Literacy is the ability to use language and images in rich and varied forms to read, write, listen, speak, view, represent, discuss, and think critically about ideas. Literacy enables us to share information and to interact with others. Literacy is an essential tool for personal growth and active participation in a democratic society.

Ontario Ministry of Education, *Paying Attention to Literacy: Six Foundations for Improvement in Literacy, K-12*, 2013

The Importance of Literacy

Literacy[8] continues to evolve as the world changes and its demands shift and become more complex. A focus on literacy goes beyond traditional forms of reading and writing. Today's students live with technological innovations that previous generations never experienced. They are accustomed to receiving information quickly, and often in a non-linear format, and they may engage in social interactions using a variety of technologies.

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[8] This page has been adapted from Adolescent Literacy Learning, *Adolescent Literacy Guide: A Professional Learning Resource for Literacy, Grades 7–12. Revised 2016*, pages 4–19, and the *2016 Student Achievement Literacy Planning Resource: Grades 7–12*, page 7.

Literacy skills are embedded in the expectations for all subjects and disciplines of the Ontario curriculum. Each subject provides opportunities for literacy development, often in specialized ways. Literacy needs to be explicitly taught in all subjects. Literacy demands, such as vocabulary acquisition and accessing and managing information, become more complex across subjects and disciplines as students progress through the grades.

The Scope of Literacy

In Ontario schools, all students are equipped with the literacy skills necessary to be critical and creative thinkers, effective meaning-makers and communicators, collaborative co-learners, and innovative problem-solvers. These are the skills that will enable them to achieve personal, career, and societal goals. Students develop literacy skills as they think, express, and reflect.

In every subject, before, during, and after they read, view, listen, speak, or write, students select and use a variety of literacy strategies and subject-specific processes. This helps them comprehend and organize information and ideas, and communicate meaning. Teachers assist students in learning and selecting appropriate literacy strategies based on assessment of their individual needs and learning preferences.

Students learn to think, express, and reflect in discipline-specific ways. Teachers purposefully teach students about the literacy demands of the particular subject area. Students learn the vocabulary and terminology that are unique to a particular subject area and must be able to interpret symbols, charts and diagrams. Cross-curricular and subject-specific literacy skills are essential to students' success in all subjects of the curriculum, and in all areas of their lives.

Critical Thinking and Critical Literacy

Critical thinking is the process of thinking about ideas or situations in order to understand them fully, identify their implications, make a judgement, and/or guide decision making. It is an essential transferable skill that enables students to become independent, informed, and responsible members of society, and so is a focus of learning across all subjects and disciplines. Critical thinking includes skills such as questioning, predicting, analysing, synthesizing, examining opinions, identifying values and issues, detecting bias, and distinguishing between alternatives. Students who are taught these skills become critical thinkers who can move beyond superficial conclusions to a deeper understanding of the issues they are examining. They are able to engage in an inquiry process in which they explore complex and multifaceted issues, and questions for which there may be no clear-cut answers.

Students use critical-thinking skills when they assess, analyse, and/or evaluate the impact of something and when they form an opinion and support that opinion with a rationale. In order to think critically, students need to ask themselves effective questions in order to interpret

information; detect bias in their sources; determine why a source might express a particular bias; examine the opinions, perspec-tives, and values of various groups and individuals; look for implied meaning; and use the information gathered to form a personal opinion or stance, or a personal plan of action with regard to making a difference.

Students approach critical thinking in various ways. Some students find it helpful to discuss their thinking, asking questions and exploring ideas. Other students may take time to observe a situation or consider a text carefully before commenting; they may prefer not to ask questions or express their thoughts orally while they are thinking.

Critical literacy is the term used to refer to a particular aspect of critical thinking. Critical literacy involves looking beyond the literal meaning of a text to determine what is present and what is missing, in order to analyse and evaluate the text's complete meaning and the author's intent. Critical literacy is concerned with issues related to fairness, equity, and social justice. Critically literate students adopt a critical stance, asking what view of the world the text advances and whether they find this view acceptable, who benefits from the text, and how the reader is influenced.

Critically literate students understand that meaning is not found in texts in isolation. People make sense of a text, or determine what a text means, in a variety of ways. Students therefore need to take into account: points of view (e.g., those of people from various cultures); context (e.g., the beliefs and practices of the time and place in which a text was created and those in which it is being read or viewed); the background of the person who is interacting with the text (e.g., upbringing, friends, communities, education, experiences); intertextuality (e.g., information that a reader or viewer brings to a text from other texts experienced previously); gaps in the text (e.g., information that is left out and that the reader or viewer must fill in); and silences in the text (e.g., the absence of the voices of certain people or groups).

Students who are critically literate are able, for example, to actively analyse media messages and determine possible motives and underlying messages. They are able to determine what biases might be contained in texts, media, and resource material and why that might be, how the content of these materials might be determined and by whom, and whose perspectives might have been left out and why. Only then are students equipped to produce their own interpretation of an issue. Opportunities should be provided for students to engage in a critical discussion of "texts", including books and textbooks, television programs, movies, documentaries, web pages, advertising, music, gestures, oral texts, newspaper and magazine articles, letters, cultural text forms, stories, and other forms of expression. Such discussions empower students to understand the impact on members of society that was intended by the text's creators. Language and communication are never neutral: they are used to inform, entertain, persuade, and manipulate.

The literacy skill of *metacognition* supports students' ability to think critically through reflection on their own thought processes. Acquiring and using metacognitive skills has emerged as a powerful approach for promoting a focus on thinking skills in literacy and across all disciplines, and for empowering students with the skills needed to monitor their own learning. As they reflect on their strengths and needs, students are encouraged to advocate for themselves to get the support they need in order to achieve their goals.

Mathematical Literacy

Mathematical literacy is an individual's capacity to formulate, employ, and interpret mathematics in a variety of contexts. It includes reasoning mathematically and using mathematical concepts, procedures, facts, and tools to describe, explain, and predict phenomena. It assists individuals to recognize the role that mathematics plays in the world and to make the well-founded judgments and decisions needed by constructive, engaged, and reflective citizens.

Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC),
Measuring Up: Canadian Results of the OECD PISA Study, 2016, p. 10

The Importance of Mathematical Literacy[9]

Mathematical literacy involves more than executing procedures. It implies a knowledge base and the competence and confidence to apply this knowledge in the practical world. A mathematically literate person can estimate; interpret data; solve day-to-day problems; reason in numerical, graphical, and geometric situations; and communicate using mathematics.

As knowledge expands and the economy evolves, more people are working with technologies or working in settings where mathematics is a cornerstone. Problem solving, the processing of information, and communication are becoming routine job requirements. Outside the workplace, mathematics arises in many everyday situations. Mathematical literacy is necessary both at work and in daily life.

Mathematical literacy is as important as proficiency in reading and writing. Mathematics is so entwined with today's way of life that we cannot fully comprehend the information that surrounds us without a basic understanding of mathematical ideas. Confidence and competence in mathematics lead to productive participation in today's complex information society, and open the door to opportunity.

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[9] Adapted from *Leading Math Success: Mathematical Literacy, Grades 7–12 – The Report of the Expert Panel on Student Success in Ontario,* 2004, pages 10 and 24.

The Scope of Mathematical Literacy

Mathematical literacy encompasses the ability to:

- estimate in numerical or geometric situations
- know and understand mathematical concepts and procedures
- question, reason, and solve problems
- make connections within mathematics and between mathematics and life
- generate, interpret, and compare data
- communicate mathematical reasoning

Mathematical literacy has several dimensions – for example, numerical literacy, spatial literacy, and data literacy – and extends beyond the mathematics classroom to other fields of study.

Teachers should take advantage of the abundant opportunities that exist for fostering mathematical literacy across the curriculum. All teachers have a responsibility to communicate the view that all students can and should do mathematics.

Environmental Education

Environmental education is both the responsibility of the entire education community and a rich opportunity for cross-curricular learning. It can be taught across subjects and grades, providing context that can enrich and enliven learning in all subject areas. It also provides opportunities for critical thinking, learning about citizenship, and developing personal responsibility. It offers students the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of themselves, their role in society, and their dependence on one another and on the Earth's natural systems.

The curriculum provides opportunities for students to learn about environmental processes, issues, and solutions, and to demonstrate their learning as they practise and promote environmental stewardship at school and in their communities.

Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow: A Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools outlines an approach to environmental education that recognizes the need for all Ontario students to learn "in, about and/or for" the environment, and promotes environmental responsibility on the part of students, school staff, and leaders at all levels of the education system.

Resource documents – *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8 and The Kindergarten Program: Environmental Education, Scope and Sequence of Expectations, 2017* and *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9–12: Environmental Education, Scope and Sequence of Expectations, 2017*

– have been prepared to assist teachers in planning lessons that integrate environmental education with other subject areas. They identify curriculum expectations and related examples and prompts in disciplines across the Ontario curriculum that provide opportunities for student learning "in, about, and/or for" the environment. Teachers can use these documents to plan lessons that relate explicitly to the environment, or they can draw on them for opportunities to use the environment as the *context for learning*. These documents can also be used to make curriculum connections to school-wide environmental initiatives.

Social-Emotional Learning Skills

The development of social-emotional learning (SEL) skills helps students foster overall health and well-being, positive mental health, and the ability to learn, build resilience, and thrive.

Students will learn skills to:	So that they can:
• identify and manage emotions	• express their feelings and understand the feelings of others
• recognize sources of stress and cope with challenges	• develop personal resilience
• maintain positive motivation and perseverance	• foster a sense of optimism and hope
• build relationships and communicate effectively	• support healthy relationships and respect diversity
• develop self-awareness and self-confidence	• develop a sense of identity and belonging
• think critically and creatively	• make informed decisions and solve problems

Social-emotional learning skills are an explicit component of learning in the elementary health and physical education curriculum. However, there are opportunities for students to develop SEL skills in connection with their learning in all subjects and disciplines. Skills to support mental health and well-being can be developed across the curriculum, in the context of school activities, at home, and in the community.

It is beneficial for students to make connections between SEL skills, transferable skills, and learning skills and work habits (see *Growing Success,* 2010, Chapter 2). Taken together, these interrelated skills support students' overall health and well-being, positive mental health, and the ability to learn and to become lifelong learners. They enhance students' experience in school and beyond, preparing them to succeed personally and to become economically

productive and actively engaged citizens. [School Mental Health Ontario](#) (SMHO) has resources to support the development of social-emotional learning in Ontario schools.

Transferable skills

Introduction

The Importance of Transferable Skills in the Curriculum

Today's graduates will enter a world that is more competitive, more globally connected, and more technologically engaged than it has been in any other period of history. Over the course of the next decade, millions of young Canadians will enter a workforce that is dramatically different from the one we know today. With the growing automation of jobs, extraordinary technological advancements, and the realities of a global economy, students will need to be prepared for job flexibility, frequent career re-orientation, and work and civic life in a globalized, digital age. Equipping students with transferable skills and a desire for lifelong learning will help to prepare them for these new realities, and to navigate and shape their future successfully.

Transferable skills are the skills and attributes that students need in order to thrive in the modern world. Based on international research, information provided by employers, and its work with jurisdictions across Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Education has defined seven important categories of transferable skills – sometimes referred to as "competencies"[10] – that will help students navigate the world of work and meet with success in the future:

- critical thinking and problem solving
- innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship
- self-directed learning
- communication
- collaboration
- global citizenship and sustainability
- digital literacy

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[10] These categories of transferable skills are aligned with the six "global competencies" developed collaboratively by ministers of education across Canada on the basis of the competencies outlined in *21st Century Competencies: Foundation Document for Discussion* (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016). The global competencies were then published by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) as part of an effort to prepare students across the nation for a complex and unpredictable future with rapidly changing political, social, economic, technological, and environmental landscapes. The new categories of transferable skills outlined here have been updated on the basis of current research, and a seventh category – "digital literacy" – has been added.

These seven broad categories of skills, necessary in today's rapidly changing world, can be seen as a framework encompassing the wide range of discrete transferable skills that students acquire over time. Developing transferable skills essentially means "learning for transfer" – that is, taking what is learned in one situation and applying it to other, new situations. Students in Ontario schools "learn for transfer" in all of the subjects and disciplines of the Ontario curriculum, from Kindergarten to Grade 12. In fact, in every grade and subject, their learning is assessed, in part, in terms of their ability to apply or transfer what they have learned to familiar and new contexts (see the category "Application" in the [Sample Achievement Charts](#)). The curriculum provides opportunities for students to develop transferable skills in age- and grade-appropriate ways throughout their school years. Students develop transferable skills not in isolation but as part of their learning in all subjects of the curriculum. These skills are developed through students' cognitive, social, emotional, and physical engagement in learning. Educators facilitate students' development of transferable skills explicitly through a variety of teaching and learning methods, models, and approaches, and assessment practices, in a safe, inclusive, and equitable learning environment.

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Definition

Critical thinking and problem solving involve locating, processing, analysing, and interpreting relevant and reliable information to address complex issues and problems, make informed judgements and decisions, and take effective action. With critical thinking skills comes an awareness that solving problems can have a positive impact in the world, and this contributes to achieving one's potential as a constructive and reflective citizen. Learning is deepened when it occurs in the context of authentic and meaningful real-world experiences.

Student Descriptors

- Students engage in inquiry processes that include locating, processing, interpreting, synthesizing, and critically analysing information in order to solve problems and make informed decisions. These processes involve critical, digital, and data literacy.
- Students solve meaningful and complex real-life problems by taking concrete steps – identifying and analysing the problem, creating a plan, prioritizing actions to be taken, and acting on the plan – as they address issues and design and manage projects.
- Students detect patterns, make connections, and transfer or apply what they have learned in a given situation to other situations, including real-world situations.
- Students construct knowledge and apply what they learn to all areas of their lives – at school, home, and work; among friends; and in the community – with a focus on making connections and understanding relationships.

- Students analyse social, economic, and ecological systems to understand how they function and how they interrelate.

Innovation, Creativity, and Entrepreneurship

Definition

Innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship support the ability to turn ideas into action in order to meet the needs of a community. These skills include the capacity to develop concepts, ideas, or products for the purpose of contributing innovative solutions to economic, social, and environmental problems. Developing these skills involves a willingness to assume leadership roles, take risks, and engage in independent, unconventional thinking in the context of experimenting, conducting research, and exploring new strategies, techniques, and perspectives. An entrepreneurial mindset understands the importance of building and scaling ideas for sustainable growth.

Student Descriptors

- Students formulate and express insightful questions and opinions to generate novel ideas.
- Students contribute solutions to economic, social, and environmental problems in order to meet a need in a community by: enhancing concepts, ideas, or products through a creative process; taking risks in their creative thinking as they devise solutions; making discoveries through inquiry research, by testing hypotheses and experimenting with new strategies or techniques.
- Students demonstrate leadership, initiative, imagination, creativity, spontaneity, and ingenuity as they engage in a range of creative processes, motivating others with their ethical entrepreneurial spirit.

Self-Directed Learning

Definition

Self-directed learning involves becoming aware of and managing one's own process of learning. It includes developing dispositions that support motivation, self-regulation, perseverance, adaptability, and resilience. It also calls for a growth mindset – a belief in one's ability to learn – combined with the use of strategies for planning, reflecting on, and monitoring progress towards one's goals, and reviewing potential next steps, strategies, and results. Self-reflection and thinking about thinking (metacognition) support lifelong learning, adaptive capacity, well-being, and the ability to transfer learning in an ever-changing world.

Student Descriptors

- Students learn to think about their own thinking and learning (metacognition) and to believe in their ability to learn and grow (growth mindset). They develop their ability to set goals, stay motivated, and work independently.
- Students who regulate their own learning are better prepared to become lifelong learners. They reflect on their thinking, experiences, and values, and respond to critical feedback, to enhance their learning. They also monitor the progress of their learning.
- Students develop a sense of identity in the context of Canada's various and diverse communities.
- Students cultivate emotional intelligence to better understand themselves and others and build healthy relationships.
- Students learn to take the past into account in order to understand the present and approach the future in a more informed way.
- Students develop personal, educational, and career goals and persevere to overcome challenges in order to reach those goals. They learn to adapt to change and become resilient in the face of adversity.
- Students become managers of the various aspects of their lives – cognitive, emotional, social, physical, and spiritual – to enhance their mental health and overall well-being.

Collaboration

Definition

Collaboration involves the interplay of the cognitive (thinking and reasoning), interpersonal, and intrapersonal competencies needed to work with others effectively and ethically. These skills deepen as they are applied, with increasing versatility, to co-construct knowledge, meaning, and content with others in diverse situations, both physical and virtual, that involve a variety of roles, groups, and perspectives.

Student Descriptors

- Students participate successfully in teams by building positive and respectful relationships, developing trust, and acting cooperatively and with integrity.
- Students learn from others and contribute to their learning as they co-construct knowledge, meaning, and content.
- Students assume various roles on the team, respect a diversity of perspectives, and recognize different sources of knowledge, including Indigenous ways of knowing.
- Students address disagreements and manage conflict in a sensitive and constructive manner.

- Students interact with a variety of communities and/or groups and use various technologies appropriately to facilitate working with others.

Communication

Definition

Communication involves receiving and expressing meaning (e.g., through reading and writing, viewing and creating, listening and speaking) in different contexts and with different audiences and purposes. Effective communication increasingly involves understanding local and global perspectives and societal and cultural contexts, and using a variety of media appropriately, responsibly, safely, and with a view to creating a positive digital footprint.

Student Descriptors

- Students communicate effectively in different contexts, orally and in writing, using a variety of media.
- Students communicate using the appropriate digital tools, taking care to create a positive digital footprint.
- Students ask effective questions to acquire knowledge; listen to all points of view and ensure that those views are heard; voice their own opinions; and advocate for ideas.
- Students learn about a variety of languages, including Indigenous languages, and understand the cultural importance of language.

Global Citizenship and Sustainability

Definition

Global citizenship and sustainability involves understanding diverse world views and perspectives in order to effectively address the various political, environmental, social, and economic issues that are central to living sustainably in today's interconnected and interdependent world. It also involves acquiring the knowledge, motivation, dispositions, and skills required for engaged citizenship, along with an appreciation of the diversity of people and perspectives in the world. It calls for the ability to envision and work towards a better and more sustainable future for all.

Student Descriptors

- Students understand the political, environmental, economic, and social forces at play in the world today, how they interconnect, and how they affect individuals, communities, and countries.

- Students make responsible decisions and take actions that support quality of life for all, now and in the future.
- Students recognize discrimination and promote principles of equity, human rights, and democratic participation.
- Students recognize the traditions, knowledge, and histories of Indigenous peoples, appreciate their historical and contemporary contributions to Canada, and recognize the legacy of residential schools.
- Students learn from and with people of diverse cultures and backgrounds and develop cross-cultural understanding.
- Students engage in local, national, and global initiatives to make a positive difference in the world.
- Students contribute to society and to the culture of local, national, and global communities, both physical and virtual, in a responsible, inclusive, sustainable, ethical, and accountable manner.
- Students, as citizens, participate in various groups and online networks in a safe and socially responsible manner.

Digital Literacy

Definition

Digital literacy involves the ability to solve problems using technology in a safe, legal, and ethically responsible manner. With the ever-expanding role of digitalization and big data in the modern world, digital literacy also means having strong data literacy skills and the ability to engage with emerging technologies. Digitally literate students recognize the rights and responsibilities, as well as the opportunities, that come with living, learning, and working in an interconnected digital world.

Student Descriptors

- Students select and use appropriate digital tools to collaborate, communicate, create, innovate, and solve problems.
- Students understand how to manage and regulate their use of technology to support their mental health and well-being.
- Students use digital tools to define and plan data searches, collect data, and identify relevant data sets. They analyse, interpret, and graphically represent, or "visualize", data in various ways to solve problems and inform decisions.
- Students demonstrate a willingness and confidence to explore and use new or unfamiliar digital tools and emerging technologies (e.g., open source software, wikis, robotics,

augmented reality). Students understand how different technologies are connected and recognize their benefits and limitations.

- Students manage their digital footprint by engaging in social media and online communities respectfully, inclusively, safely, legally, and ethically. Students understand their rights with respect to personal data and know how to protect their privacy and security and respect the privacy and security of others.
- Students analyse and understand the impact of technological advancements on society, and society's role in the evolution of technology.

Assessment and evaluation

Introduction

[Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, First Edition, Covering Grades 1 to 12, 2010](#) sets out the Ministry of Education's assessment, evaluation, and reporting policy. The policy aims to maintain high standards, improve student learning, and benefit students, parents, and teachers in elementary and secondary schools across the province. Successful implementation of this policy depends on the professional judgement [11] of educators at all levels as well as on their ability to work together and to build trust and confidence among parents and students.

A brief summary of some major aspects of the current assessment, evaluation, and reporting policy is given below. Teachers should refer to *Growing Success* for more detailed information.

Fundamental Principles

The primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning.

The seven fundamental principles given below (excerpted from *Growing Success,* page 6) lay the foundation for rich and challenging practice. When these principles are fully understood and observed by all teachers, they will guide the collection of meaningful information that will help inform instructional decisions, promote student engagement, and improve student learning.

To ensure that assessment, evaluation, and reporting are valid and reliable, and that they lead to the improvement of learning for all students, teachers use practices and procedures that:

- are fair, transparent, and equitable;
- support all students;
- are carefully planned to relate to the curriculum expectations and learning goals and, as much as possible, to the interests, learning styles and preferences, needs, and experiences of all students;

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[11] "Professional judgement", as defined in *[Growing Success](#)* (p. 152), is "judgement that is informed by professional knowledge of curriculum expectations, context, evidence of learning, methods of instruction and assessment, and the criteria and standards that indicate success in student learning. In professional practice, judgement involves a purposeful and systematic thinking process that evolves in terms of accuracy and insight with ongoing reflection and self-correction".

- are communicated clearly to students and parents at the beginning of the school year or course and at other appropriate points throughout the school year or course;
- are ongoing, varied in nature, and administered over a period of time to provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate the full range of their learning;
- provide ongoing descriptive feedback that is clear, specific, meaningful, and timely to support improved learning and achievement;
- develop students' self-assessment skills to enable them to assess their own learning, set specific goals, and plan next steps for their learning.

Learning Skills and Work Habits

The development of learning skills and work habits is an integral part of a student's learning. To the extent possible, however, the evaluation of learning skills and work habits, apart from any that may be included as part of a curriculum expectation in a course, should *not* be considered in the determination of a student's grades. Assessing, evaluating, and reporting on the achievement of curriculum expectations and on the demonstration of learning skills and work habits *separately* allows teachers to provide information to the parents and student that is specific to each of these two areas.

The six learning skills and work habits are responsibility, organization, independent work, collaboration, initiative, and self-regulation.

Content Standards and Performance Standards

The Ontario curriculum for Grades 1 to 12 comprises *content standards* and *performance standards*. Assessment and evaluation will be based on both the content standards and the performance standards.

The content standards are the overall and specific curriculum expectations given in the curriculum for every subject and discipline.

The performance standards are outlined in the achievement chart, also provided in the curriculum for every subject and discipline (each achievement chart is specific to the subject/discipline; see the [sample charts provided](#)). The achievement chart is a standard province-wide guide and is to be used by all teachers as a framework for assessing and evaluating student achievement of the expectations in the particular subject or discipline. It enables teachers to make consistent judgements about the quality of student learning, based on clear performance standards and on a body of evidence collected over time. It also provides teachers with a foundation for developing clear and specific feedback for students and parents.

The purposes of the achievement chart are to:

- provide a common framework that encompasses all curriculum expectations for all subjects/courses across the grades;
- guide the development of high-quality assessment tasks and tools (including rubrics);
- help teachers plan instruction for learning;
- provide a basis for consistent and meaningful feedback to students in relation to provincial content and performance standards;
- establish categories and criteria for assessing and evaluating students' learning.

Assessment "for Learning" and "as Learning"

Assessment is the process of gathering information that accurately reflects how well a student is achieving the curriculum expectations in a grade or course. The primary purpose of assessment is to improve student learning. Assessment for the purpose of improving student learning is seen as both "assessment *for* learning" and "assessment *as* learning". As part of assessment *for* learning, teachers provide students with descriptive feedback and coaching for improvement. Teachers engage in assessment *as* learning by helping all students develop their capacity to be independent, autonomous learners who are able to set individual goals, monitor their own progress, determine next steps, and reflect on their thinking and learning.

As essential steps in assessment *for* learning and *as* learning, teachers need to:

- plan assessment concurrently and integrate it seamlessly with instruction;
- share learning goals and success criteria with students at the outset of learning to ensure that students and teachers have a common and shared understanding of these goals and criteria as learning progresses;
- gather information about student learning before, during, and at or near the end of a period of instruction, using a variety of assessment strategies and tools;
- use assessment to inform instruction, guide next steps, and help students monitor their progress towards achieving their learning goals;
- analyse and interpret evidence of learning;
- give and receive specific and timely descriptive feedback about student learning;
- help students to develop skills of peer assessment and self-assessment.

Evaluation

Evaluation refers to the process of judging the quality of student learning on the basis of established performance standards, and assigning a value to represent that quality. Evaluation accurately summarizes and communicates to parents, other teachers, employers, institutions of

further education, and students themselves what students know and can do with respect to the overall curriculum expectations. Evaluation is based on assessment *of* learning that provides evidence of student achievement at strategic times throughout the course, often at the end of a period of learning.

All curriculum expectations must be accounted for in instruction and assessment, but *evaluation focuses on students' achievement of the overall expectations*. Each student's achievement of the overall expectations is evaluated on the basis of the student's achievement of related specific expectations. The overall expectations are broad in nature, and the specific expectations define the particular content or scope of the knowledge and skills referred to in the overall expectations. Teachers will use their professional judgement to determine which specific expectations should be used to evaluate achievement of the overall expectations, and which ones will be accounted for in instruction and assessment but not necessarily evaluated.

Determining a report card grade involves the interpretation of evidence collected through observations, conversations, and student products (tests/exams, assignments for evaluation), combined with the teacher's professional judgement and consideration of factors such as the number of tests/exams or assignments for evaluation that were not completed or submitted and the fact that some evidence may carry greater weight than other evidence.

Secondary

Seventy per cent of the final grade (a percentage mark) in a course will be based on evaluation conducted throughout the course. This portion of the grade should reflect the student's most consistent level of achievement, with special consideration given to more recent evidence. Thirty per cent will be based on a final evaluation administered at or towards the end of the course. This evaluation will be based on evidence from one or a combination of the following: an examination, a performance, an essay, and/or another method of evaluation suitable to the course content. The final evaluation allows the student an opportunity to demonstrate comprehensive achievement of the overall expectations for the course.

Reporting Student Achievement

Elementary

Three formal report cards are issued in Ontario's publicly funded elementary schools, as described below.

The Elementary Progress Report Card shows a student's development of learning skills and work habits during the fall of the school year, as well as the student's general progress in

working towards achievement of the curriculum expectations in each subject (reported as "progressing very well", "progressing well", or "progressing with difficulty").

The Elementary Provincial Report Card shows a student's achievement at specific points in the school year. The first Provincial Report Card reflects student achievement of the overall curriculum expectations introduced and developed from September to January/February of the school year, as well as the student's development of learning skills and work habits during that period. The second reflects achievement of curriculum expectations introduced or further developed from January/February to June, as well as further development of learning skills and work habits during that period. The Provincial Report Card for Grades 1–6 uses letter grades; the report card for Grades 7 and 8 uses percentage grades.

Secondary

The Provincial Report Card, Grades 9–12, shows a student's achievement at specific points in the school year or semester. There are two formal reporting periods for a semestered course and three formal reporting periods for a non-semestered course. The reports reflect student achievement of the overall curriculum expectations, as well as development of learning skills and work habits.

Communication with parents and students

Although there are formal reporting periods, communication with parents and students about student achievement should be continuous throughout the year or course, by a variety of means, such as parent-teacher or parent-student-teacher conferences, portfolios of student work, student-led conferences, interviews, phone calls, checklists, and informal reports. Communication about student achievement should be designed to provide detailed information that will encourage students to set goals for learning, help teachers to establish plans for teaching, and assist parents in supporting learning at home.

Categories of Knowledge and Skills

The categories represent four broad areas of knowledge and skills within which the expectations for any given subject or course can be organized. The four categories should be considered as interrelated, reflecting the wholeness and interconnectedness of learning.

The categories help teachers focus not only on students' acquisition of knowledge but also on their development of the skills of thinking, communication, and application.

The categories of knowledge and skills are as follows:

Knowledge and Understanding. Subject-specific content acquired in each grade or course (knowledge), and the comprehension of its meaning and significance (understanding).

Thinking. The use of critical and creative thinking skills and/or processes.

Communication. The conveying of meaning and expression through various forms.

Application. The use of knowledge and skills to make connections within and between various contexts.

In all subjects and courses, students should be given numerous and varied opportunities to demonstrate the full extent of their achievement of the curriculum expectations across all four categories of knowledge and skills.

Teachers will ensure that student learning is assessed and evaluated in a balanced manner with respect to the four categories, and that achievement of particular expectations is considered within the appropriate categories. The emphasis on "balance" reflects the fact that all categories of the achievement chart are important and need to be a part of the process of instruction, learning, assessment, and evaluation. However, it also indicates that for different courses, the *relative* importance of each of the categories may vary. The importance accorded to each of the four categories in assessment and evaluation should reflect the emphasis accorded to them in the curriculum expectations for the subject or course and in instructional practice.

Criteria and Descriptors

To further guide teachers in their assessment and evaluation of student learning, the achievement chart provides "criteria" and "descriptors".

A set of criteria is identified for each category in the achievement chart. The criteria are subsets of the knowledge and skills that define the category. The criteria identify the aspects of student performance that are assessed and/or evaluated, and they serve as a guide to what teachers look for. Each curriculum has subject- or discipline-specific criteria and descriptors. For example, in the English curriculum, in the Knowledge and Understanding category, the criteria are "knowledge of content" and "understanding of content". The former includes examples such as forms of text and elements of style, and the latter includes examples such as relationships among facts. "Descriptors" indicate the characteristics of the student's performance, with respect to a particular criterion, on which assessment or evaluation is focused. *Effectiveness* is the descriptor used for each of the criteria in the Thinking, Communication, and Application categories. What constitutes effectiveness in any given performance task will vary with the particular criterion being considered. Assessment of

effectiveness may therefore focus on a quality such as appropriateness, clarity, accuracy, precision, logic, relevance, significance, fluency, flexibility, depth, or breadth, as appropriate for the particular criterion.

Levels of Achievement

The achievement chart also identifies four levels of achievement, defined as follows:

Level 1 represents achievement that falls much below the provincial standard. The student demonstrates the specified knowledge and skills with limited effectiveness. Students must work at significantly improving in specific areas, as necessary, if they are to be successful in a subject or course in the next grade.

Level 2 represents achievement that approaches the standard. The student demonstrates the specified knowledge and skills with some effectiveness. Students performing at this level need to work on identified learning gaps to ensure future success.

Level 3 represents the provincial standard for achievement. The student demonstrates the specified knowledge and skills with considerable effectiveness. Parents of students achieving at level 3 can be confident that their children will be prepared for work in subsequent grades or courses.

Level 4 identifies achievement that surpasses the provincial standard. The student demonstrates the specified knowledge and skills with a high degree of effectiveness. *However, achievement at level 4 does not mean that the student has achieved expectations beyond those specified for the grade or course.*

Specific "qualifiers" are used with the descriptors in the achievement chart to describe student performance at each of the four levels of achievement – the qualifier *limited* is used for level 1; *some* for level 2; *considerable* for level 3; and *a high degree of* or *thorough* for level 4. Hence, achievement at level 3 in the Thinking category for the criterion "use of planning skills" would be described in the achievement chart as "[The student] uses planning skills with *considerable* effectiveness".

Sample Achievement Charts

Three samples of the achievement chart are provided, from the following subjects/disciplines:

- The Arts, Grades 1–8
- Science and Technology, Grades 1–8
- English, Grades 9–12

These three samples illustrate the consistent characteristics of the performance standards across all subjects and disciplines and across all grades. The samples also illustrate how the achievement chart varies – particularly with respect to the examples provided for the criteria in each category – to reflect the nature of the particular subject or discipline. For instance, the examples for the criterion "Application of knowledge and skills" in the Application category of the achievement chart for the arts include performance skills, composition, and choreography, whereas those for science and technology include investigation skills and safe use of equipment and technology.

As discussed in the preceding sections, the achievement chart identifies four categories of knowledge and skills and four levels of achievement in the particular subject/discipline.

The Achievement Chart for The Arts, Grades 1–8

Knowledge and Understanding – Subject-specific content acquired in each grade (knowledge), and the comprehension of its meaning and significance (understanding)				
Categories	**Level 1**	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Level 4**
	The student:			
Knowledge of content *(e.g., facts, genres, terms, definitions, techniques, elements, principles, forms, structures, conventions)*	demonstrates limited knowledge of content	demonstrates some knowledge of content	demonstrates considerable knowledge of content	demonstrates thorough knowledge of content
Understanding of content *(e.g., concepts, ideas, procedures, processes, themes, relationships among elements, informed opinions)*	demonstrates limited understanding of content	demonstrates some understanding of content	demonstrates considerable understanding of content	demonstrates thorough understanding of content
Thinking – The use of critical and creative thinking skills and/or processes				
Categories	**Level 1**	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Level 4**
	The student:			
Use of planning skills *(e.g., formulating questions, generating ideas, gathering information, focusing research, outlining, organizing an arts*	uses planning skills with limited effectiveness	uses planning skills with some effectiveness	uses planning skills with considerable effectiveness	uses planning skills with a high degree of effectiveness

presentation or project, brainstorming/ bodystorming, blocking, sketching, using visual organizers, listing goals in a rehearsal log, inventing notation)				
Use of skills *(e.g., analysing, evaluating, inferring, interpreting, editing, revising, refining, forming conclusions, detecting bias, synthesizing)*	uses processing skills with limited effectiveness	uses processing skills with some effectiveness	uses processing skills with considerable effectiveness	uses processing skills with a high degree of effectiveness
Use of critical/creative thinking processes *(e.g., creative and analytical processes, design process, exploration of the elements, problem solving, reflection, elaboration, oral discourse, evaluation, critical literacy, metacognition, invention, critiquing, reviewing)*	uses critical/ creative thinking processes with limited effectiveness	uses critical/ creative thinking processes with some effectiveness	uses critical/ creative thinking processes with considerable effectiveness	uses critical/ creative thinking processes with a high degree of effectiveness
Communication – The conveying of meaning through various forms				
Categories	**Level 1**	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Level 4**
	The student:			
Expression and organization of ideas and understandings in art forms (dance, drama, music, and the visual arts), including media/ multimedia forms	expresses and organizes ideas and understandings with limited effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and understandings with some effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and understandings with considerable effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and understandings with a high degree of effectiveness

(e.g., expression of ideas and feelings using visuals, movements, the voice, gestures, phrasing, techniques), **and in oral and written forms** *(e.g., clear expression and logical organization in critical responses to art works and informed opinion pieces)*				
Communication for different audiences *(e.g., peers, adults, younger children)* **and purposes through the arts** *(e.g., drama presentations, visual arts exhibitions, dance and music performances)* **and in oral and written forms** *(e.g., debates, analyses)*	communicates for different audiences and purposes with limited effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with some effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with considerable effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with a high degree of effectiveness
Use of conventions in dance, drama, music, and the visual arts *(e.g., allegory, narrative or symbolic representation, style, articulation, drama conventions, choreographic forms, movement vocabulary)* **and arts vocabulary and terminology in oral and written forms**	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the arts with limited effectiveness	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the arts with some effectiveness	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the arts with considerable effectiveness	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the arts with a high degree of effectiveness

Application – The use of knowledge and skills to make connections within and between various contexts

Categories	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
	The student:			
Application of knowledge and skills *(e.g., performance skills, composition, choreography, elements, principles, processes, technologies, techniques, strategies, conventions)* **in familiar contexts** *(e.g., guided improvisation, performance of a familiar work, use of familiar forms)*	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with limited effectiveness	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with some effectiveness	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with considerable effectiveness	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with a high degree of effectiveness
Transfer of knowledge and skills *(e.g., concepts, strategies, processes, techniques)* **to new contexts** *(e.g., a work requiring stylistic variation, an original composition, student-led choreography, an interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary project)*	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with limited effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with some effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with considerable effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with a high degree of effectiveness
Making connections within and between various contexts *(e.g., between the arts; between the arts and personal experiences and the world outside the school; between cultural and historical,*	makes connections within and between various contexts with limited effectiveness	makes connections within and between various contexts with some effectiveness	makes connections within and between various contexts with considerable effectiveness	makes connections within and between various contexts with a high degree of effectiveness

global, social, and/or environmental contexts; between the arts and other subjects)				

The Achievement Chart for Science and Technology, Grades 1–8

Knowledge and Understanding – Subject-specific content acquired in each grade (knowledge), and the comprehension of its meaning and significance (understanding)				
Categories	**Level 1**	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Level 4**
	The student:			
Knowledge of content (*e.g., facts; terminology; definitions; safe use of tools, equipment, and materials*)	demonstrates limited knowledge of content	demonstrates some knowledge of content	demonstrates considerable knowledge of content	demonstrates thorough knowledge of content
Understanding of content (*e.g., concepts, ideas, theories, principles, procedures, processes*)	demonstrates limited understanding of content	demonstrates some understanding of content	demonstrates considerable understanding of content	demonstrates thorough understanding of content

Thinking and Investigation – The use of critical and creative thinking skills and inquiry and problem-solving skills and/or processes				
Categories	**Level 1**	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Level 4**
	The student:			
Use of initiating and planning skills and strategies (*e.g., formulating questions, identifying the problem, developing hypotheses, scheduling, selecting strategies and resources, developing plans*)	uses initiating and planning skills and strategies with limited effectiveness	uses initiating and planning skills and strategies with some effectiveness	uses initiating and planning skills and strategies with considerable effectiveness	uses initiating and planning skills and strategies with a high degree of effectiveness
Use of processing skills and strategies (*e.g., performing and recording, gathering evidence and data, observing,*	uses processing skills and strategies with limited effectiveness	uses processing skills and strategies with some effectiveness	uses processing skills and strategies with	uses processing skills and strategies with a high degree of effectiveness

			considerable effectiveness	
Use of critical/creative thinking processes, skills, and strategies *(e.g., analysing, interpreting, problem solving, evaluating, forming and justifying conclusions on the basis of evidence)*	uses critical/creative thinking processes, skills, and strategies with limited effectiveness	uses critical/creative thinking processes, skills, and strategies with some effectiveness	uses critical/creative thinking processes, skills, and strategies with considerable effectiveness	uses critical/creative thinking processes, skills, and strategies with a high degree of effectiveness

Communication – The conveying of meaning through various forms

Categories	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
	The student:			
Expression and organization of ideas and information in art forms (dance, drama, music, and the visual arts), including media/multimedia forms *(e.g., clear expression, logical organization)* **in oral, visual, and/or written forms** *(e.g., diagrams, models)*	expresses and organizes ideas and information with limited effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with some effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with considerable effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with a high degree of effectiveness
Communication for different audiences *(e.g., peers, adults)* **and purposes** *(e.g., to inform, to persuade)* **in oral, visual, and/or written forms**	communicates for different audiences and purposes with limited effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with some effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with considerable effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with a high degree of effectiveness
Use of conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline in oral, visual, and/or written forms *(e.g., symbols, formulae, scientific notation, SI units)*	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with a high degree of effectiveness

| | limited effectiveness | some effectiveness | considerable effectiveness | |

Application – The use of knowledge and skills to make connections within and between various contexts

Categories	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
	The student:			
Application of knowledge and skills *(e.g., concepts and processes, safe use of equipment and technology, investigation skills)* **in familiar contexts**	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with limited effectiveness	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with some effectiveness	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with considerable effectiveness	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with a high degree of effectiveness
Transfer of knowledge and skills *(e.g., concepts and processes, safe use of equipment and technology, investigation skills)* **to unfamiliar contexts**	transfers knowledge and skills to unfamiliar contexts with limited effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to unfamiliar contexts with some effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to unfamiliar contexts with considerable effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to unfamiliar contexts with a high degree of effectiveness
Making connections between science, technology, society, and the environment *(e.g., assessing the impact of science and technology on people, other living things, and the environment)*	makes connections between science, technology, society, and the environment with limited effectiveness	makes connections between science, technology, society, and the environment with some effectiveness	makes connections between science, technology, society, and the environment with considerable effectiveness	makes connections between science, technology, society, and the environment with a high degree of effectiveness
Proposing courses of practical action to deal with problems relating to science, technology, society, and the environment	proposes courses of practical action of limited effectiveness	proposes courses of practical action of some effectiveness	proposes courses of practical action of considerable effectiveness	proposes highly effective courses of practical action

The Achievement Chart for English, Grades 9–12

Knowledge and Understanding – Subject-specific content acquired in each course (knowledge), and the comprehension of its meaning and significance (understanding)				
Categories	**50–59% (Level 1)**	**60–69% (Level 2)**	**70–79% (Level 3)**	**80–100% (Level 4)**
	The student:			
Knowledge of content *(e.g., forms of text; strategies used when listening and speaking, reading, writing, and viewing and representing; elements of style; literary terminology, concepts, and theories; language conventions)*	demonstrates limited knowledge of content	demonstrates some knowledge of content	demonstrates considerable knowledge of content	demonstrates thorough knowledge of content
Understanding of content *(e.g.,concepts; ideas; opinions; relationships among facts, ideas, concepts, themes)*	demonstrates limited understanding of content	demonstrates some understanding of content	demonstrates considerable understanding of content	demonstrates thorough understanding of content
Thinking – The use of critical and creative thinking skills and/or processes				
Categories	**50–59% (Level 1)**	**60–69% (Level 2)**	**70–79% (Level 3)**	**80–100% (Level 4)**
	The student:			
Use of planning skills *(e.g., generating ideas, gathering information, focusing research, organizing information)*	uses planning skills with limited effectiveness	uses planning skills with some effectiveness	uses planning skills with considerable effectiveness	uses planning skills with a high degree of effectiveness
Use of processing skills *(e.g., drawing inferences, interpreting, analysing, synthesizing, evaluating)*	uses processing skills with limited effectiveness	uses processing skills with some effectiveness	uses processing skills with considerable effectiveness	uses processing skills with a high degree of effectiveness

Use of critical/creative thinking processes *(e.g., oral discourse, research, critical analysis, critical literacy, metacognition, creative process)*	uses critical/ creative thinking processes with limited effectiveness	uses critical/ creative thinking processes with some effectiveness	uses critical/ creative thinking processes with considerable effectiveness	uses critical/ creative thinking processes with a high degree of effectiveness

Communication – The conveying of meaning through various forms

Categories	50–59% (Level 1)	60–69% (Level 2)	70–79% (Level 3)	80–100% (Level 4)
	The student:			
Expression and organization of ideas and information *(e.g., clear expression, logical organization)* **in oral, graphic, and written forms, including media forms**	expresses and organizes ideas and information with limited effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with some effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with considerable effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with a high degree of effectiveness
Communication for different audiences and purposes *(e.g., use of appropriate style, voice, point of view)* **in oral, graphic, and written forms, including media forms**	communicates for different audiences and purposes with limited effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with some effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with considerable effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with a high degree of effectiveness
Use of conventions *(e.g., grammar, spelling, punctuation, usage)*, **vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline in oral, graphic, and written forms, including media forms**	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with limited effectiveness	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with some effectiveness	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with considerable effectiveness	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with a high degree of effectiveness

Application – The use of knowledge and skills to make connections within and between various contexts

Categories	50–59% (Level 1)	60–69% (Level 2)	70–79% (Level 3)	80–100% (Level 4)
	The student:			
Application of knowledge and skills *(e.g., literacy strategies and processes; literary terminology, concepts, and theories)* **in familiar contexts**	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with limited effectiveness	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with some effectiveness	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with considerable effectiveness	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with a high degree of effectiveness
Transfer of knowledge and skills *(e.g., literacy strategies and processes; literary terminology, concepts, and theories)* **to new contexts**	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with limited effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with some effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with considerable effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with a high degree of effectiveness
Making connections within and between various contexts *(e.g., between the text and personal knowledge and experience, other texts, and the world outside school)*	makes connections within and between various contexts with limited effectiveness	makes connections within and between various contexts with some effectiveness	makes connections within and between various contexts with considerable effectiveness	makes connections within and between various contexts with a high degree of effectiveness

Curriculum context for American Sign Language as a second language

Preface

The American Sign Language (ASL) as a second language curriculum introduces students to a language that has a distinct grammatical and syntactic structure not derived from any other language, either spoken or written. ASL is a complex language that can express the full breadth of human experiences, including the theories and principles that are conveyed in disciplines such as science, education, history, politics, law, culture, sports, and literature. ASL cultural identity is inextricably interwoven with ASL as a language, and ASL is distinct from other sign languages of the world[12] (e.g., langue des signes québécoise [LSQ], Maritime Sign Language [MSL], British Sign Language [BSL], and Indigenous Sign Languages). ASL is recognized in Ontario as a language of instruction as outlined in Regulation 298, "Operation of Schools – General", R.R.O. 1990, Section 32.

Vision and Goals of the American Sign Language as a Second Language Curriculum

Vision

Students of ASL as a second language will develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence to interact in ASL using various forms of ASL conversational discourse and to comprehend and construct ASL literary works and ASL texts. They will acquire knowledge of the historical and current contexts of the ASL community's perspectives and contributions. Reflecting on the language, culture, identity, and history of the ASL community, students will develop skills,

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[12] Heather Gibson and N.T. Blanchard, "The Linguistics and Use of American Sign Language", *The Canadian Journal of Educators of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing* 1, no. 1 (2010): 22-27. "American Sign Language Curriculum: Grades 9 and 10" (manuscript, Ontario Provincial Schools for the Deaf, 2017). William C. Stokoe, "Sign Language Structure: An Outline of the Visual Communication Systems of the American Deaf" (occasional paper 8, Studies in Linguistics, University of Buffalo, 1960). Clayton Valli, Ceil Lucas, Kristin J. Mulrooney, and Miako Villanueva, *Linguistics of American Sign Language: An Introduction*, 5th ed. (Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press, 2011).

strategies, and understanding that will enable them to value equity, effect change, and participate as responsible and socially conscious citizens in local and global communities.

Goals

Through the ASL as a second language curriculum, students will realize the vision for the program as they strive to:

- use ASL effectively in a variety of forms in different contexts that demonstrate the rich, complete, evolving, and relevant nature of the language;
- develop ASL literacy to support and enhance their ASL language skills and ASL cultural knowledge;
- engage with the language, culture, history, perspectives, and contributions of the ASL community through interaction with a variety of ASL people, ASL literary works, and ASL texts, to create meaningful connections between themselves and the world around them;
- use metalinguistic knowledge and metacognitive skills to develop their knowledge of, and skills related to, ASL grammatical structures as they deepen their understanding of ASL discourse;
- use critical literacy skills to build respectful and reciprocal relationships with the ASL community;
- examine inequity and social justice through the lens of ASL literary works and ASL texts, and come to understand how discrimination against individuals and members of the ASL community has led to social and political action, and legislative change.

The Importance of the American Sign Language as a Second Language Curriculum

ASL language learning occupies an important place in the building of academic and social foundations for students so that they are equipped to become responsible members of our global society. The knowledge of and skills associated with ASL are an invaluable asset. While such ASL linguistic abilities benefit the individual, Canadian society also stands to gain from developing a multilingual and culturally sensitive workforce. As one scholar sees it, the "teaching and learning of any one language should be seen in conjunction with the overall objective of promoting plurilingualism and linguistic diversity."[13] Language learning programs

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[13] Enrica Piccardo, "Plurilingualism and Curriculum Design: Toward a Synergic Vision", *TESOL Quarterly* 47 (2013): 603.

provide the "value-added benefit of developing second [or third] language and cross-cultural skills at no cost to other educational goals."[14]

Experience in an ASL program can play a valuable role in students' broader education. As students develop and refine different aspects of their ASL language skills, they also develop their creativity, learn about their own identity, learn to express themselves with confidence, develop their ability to solve problems, and gain insights into the world around them. All of these skills together enable students to analyse and use information and to convey and interact effectively in ASL and beyond.

ASL is a fundamental element of ASL culture and identity. As students learn to decipher-deconstruct, analyse, and reflect upon a rich variety of ASL literary works and ASL texts, including ASL media works, they develop a deeper understanding of the ASL community and culture.

The ASL curriculum naturally involves the exploration of a wide variety of topics related to the study of language and the cultures associated with it, including literature, history, geography, business, tourism, social customs, legends, arts, and world issues. Consequently, the curriculum lends itself to an interdisciplinary approach. For example, by studying ASL through a variety of historical, social, and cultural contexts, students can make connections with other languages, cultures, and time periods. This will enhance their learning in other subject areas such as history, career studies, social sciences, and the humanities.

The ASL curriculum is taught through cultural integration. For example, when students examine the relationship between Deaf View/Image Art (De'VIA) works and the history of the ASL community, it helps them to think more deeply about ASL literary works, ASL texts, and ASL culture. Similarly, when they analyse the impact of legislation on ASL language, culture, and community, while studying ASL literary works and ASL texts by ASL people, they enhance their understanding of the ASL community and the world around them.

Language learners are risk-takers – they thrive in an environment where risk-taking is welcome and errors are viewed as part of a natural learning process. ASL as a second language learners gain valuable transferable skills when they're willing to take risks and use trial-and-error as part of their learning process. In short, the knowledge and skills developed through learning ASL can be applied in many other endeavours and in a wide variety of careers.

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[14] Fred Genesee and Nancy Cloud, "Multingualism *Is* Basic", *Educational Leadership* 55, no. 6 (1998): 63.

American Sign Language as a Language of Study

It is important to note that ASL is similar to other languages in subtlety and complexity. Research on language development of ASL as a first language in Deaf children, or in hearing children of Deaf parents, shows that children can begin to acquire ASL from birth. ASL acquisition is similar to all language acquisition.[15] The acquisition of ASL linguistic features and structures has been shown to develop in the same "language box" in the brain as other languages (e.g., English and langue des signes québécoise [LSQ]), and along the same milestones as other languages.-[16]As with all languages, ASL requires extensive exposure and practice for proficiency beyond a basic level, especially to achieve ease with complexity and subtlety in the language. Consequently, ASL needs to be approached with respect and taught with the understanding that fluency occurs only over time.[17]

The ASL as a second language curriculum promotes ASL culture and ASL community in a diverse, multilingual, plurilingual enriched learning environment so that students develop competency in ASL language and ASL literacy skills. With their learning supported by pedagogy that is informed by research into ASL as a language of study, students begin a process of acculturation into the ASL community. These research theories are reflected in pedagogical and assessment strategies and classroom practices through individual reflection, peer and teacher review, and processes of engagement and collaborative inquiry that support student development of ASL and ASL literacy.

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[15] Karen Emmorey, *Language, Cognition, and the Brain: Insights from Sign Language Research* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2002). Richard P. Meier and Elissa L. Newport, "Out of the Hands of Babes: On a Possible Sign Advantage in Language Acquisition", *Language* 66, no.1 (1990): 1-23. Elissa L. Newport and Richard P. Meier, "The Acquisition of American Sign Language", in *The Crosslinguistic Study of Language Acquisition* (vol. 1), edited by Dan I. Slobin (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1985), 881-938.

[16] Laura Ann Petitto, "'Language' in the Prelinguistic Child," in *The Development of Language and Language Researchers: Essays in Honor of Roger Brown*, edited by F. S. Kessel (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1988), 187-221. Laura Ann Petitto, Marina Katerelos, Bronna G. Levy, Kristine Gauna, Karine Tétreault, and Vittoria Ferraro, "Bilingual Signed and Spoken Language Acquisition from Birth: Implications for the Mechanisms Underlying Early Bilingual Language Acquisition", *Journal of Child Language 28*, no. 2 (2001): 453-496. Virginia Volterra, and M.C. Caselli, "From Gestures and Vocalizations to Signs and Words," in *SLR '83: Proceedings of the Third International Symposium on Sign Language Research,* edited by William C. Stokoe and Virginia Volterra (Silver Spring, MD: Linstok Press, 1985), 1-9.

[17] Mike Kemp, "An Acculturation Model for Learners of ASL", in *Pinky Extension and Eye Gaze: Language Use in Deaf Communities,* edited by Ceil Lucas (Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press, 1998), 213-232.

American Sign Language Literacy

ASL literacy is about sociocultural and language relationships and practices in a variety of social and academic contexts. It is about knowledge and skill in ASL language and respect and appreciation of ASL culture, community, history, and contributions.

ASL literacy is defined as:

> the ability to use the linguistic structure of ASL for [deciphering-deconstructing], organizing, and communicating information, ideas, and thoughts effectively and eloquently in a variety of contexts. It involves the ability to decode, cogitate, reason, assess, and evaluate ASL literary works [and ASL texts, including] ASL media [works] at the social and academic levels. An individual has the ability to construct and present ASL texts, ASL literary works, and ASL media imaginatively and eloquently. ASL literacy includes the ability to acquire extensive knowledge and experience associated with ASL culture, ASL history, ASL literature, ASL media, education, sign language cultures, and other relevant topics. It provides an individual with the ability to effectively lead one's life, to actively contribute to the ASL community and communities at large, and to effectively navigate global society. Full ownership of ASL language, ASL cultural space, and ASL cultural identity is crucial for the development and application of ASL literacy skills.
>
> Andrew P.J. Byrne, "American Sign Language (ASL) Literacy and ASL Literature: A Critical Appraisal" (PhD diss., York University, 2013), 26-27.

ASL literacy development lies at the heart of the ASL as a second language curriculum and is strongly connected with the language and cultural knowledge base of the ASL community. "The ability to understand and recognize the structure and the theme of … stories is part of ASL literacy knowledge".[18] ASL literacy learning is strongly linked to the interrelationships between the student, the home, the school, the ASL community, the community at large, and the global community. These links are shaped through interpersonal interactions, the use of technology, and ASL social media. Holding this interconnectedness at the centre of its vision, the ASL as a second language program ensures that students can continue on a developmental trajectory towards learning ASL as a second language and greater intercultural understanding.

ASL literacy development is central to students' intellectual, cultural, social, mental, and emotional growth and is a key component of the ASL curriculum. When students learn to use ASL, they do more than develop proficiency in ASL skills; they develop an understanding of the power of ASL words and how they can be used for a variety of purposes in a variety of contexts

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[18] Harlan Lane, Robert Hoffmeister, and Ben Bahan, *A Journey into the Deaf-World* (San Diego, CA: DawnSignPress, 1996), 304.
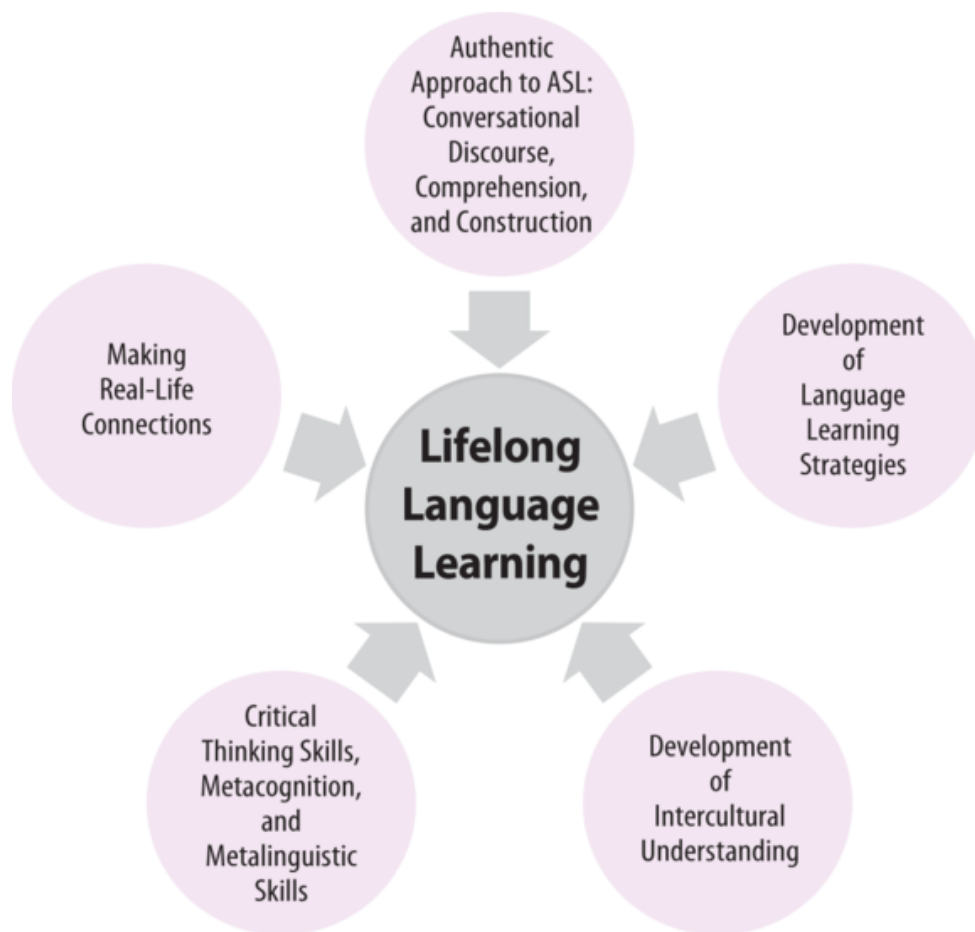
and with different audiences – in other words, how language connects to culture. According to Gibson, "Literary works are intimately tied to the culture from which they spring and have their deepest meaning and strongest impact when the storyteller and audience share a common cultural ground."[19] Building skills in ASL literacy enables students to learn to convey their feelings, opinions, and perspectives and to support their opinions with arguments and, eventually, evidence from research.

Students develop skills in constructing ASL for conversations, dialogues, debates, presentations, and compositions. This range of activities encompasses the ASL narrative language of stories, the figurative language of ASL poetry, the technical language of instructions, and the factual language of ASL texts, and promotes literacy by developing an understanding of how language, in a variety of discourse forms, can be used in different situations and contexts. Students demonstrate this understanding when they actively monitor the development and process of constructing their own ASL literary work or ASL text, including ASL media work. This, in turn, enables students to develop their own style in ASL that is personal, metaphorical, and as complex as it would be in any other language.

Enduring Ideas in the American Sign Language as a Second Language Curriculum

In the ASL as a second language curriculum, certain "enduring ideas" represent the foundation of all student learning in the program. They encompass knowledge, competencies, and habits of mind that are developed in the process of language development and equip students with tools that will enable them to participate effectively in an ever-changing global society. As students learn to exchange information and ideas in another language, they also learn about other ways of thinking, other ways of doing things, and other ways of living. The curriculum strives to foster an interest in language learning that continues not only throughout a student's time in school but also into later in life. Learning about the sociolinguistic and cultural aspects of language allows students to apply their language knowledge in a variety of real-world contexts. The enduring ideas focus on the development of knowledge and skills that are necessary as a basis for lifelong language learning. In the following graphic, the enduring ideas are shown surrounding the central notion of lifelong learning.

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[19] Quoted in Leanne Miller, "Exemplary Teacher: Heather Gibson", *Professionally Speaking: The Magazine of the Ontario College of Teachers,* September 2008, online.

Authentic Approach to ASL: Conversational Discourse, Comprehension, and Construction

Making Real-Life Connections

Development of Language Learning Strategies

Lifelong Language Learning

Critical Thinking Skills, Metacognition, and Metalinguistic Skills

Development of Intercultural Understanding

Lifelong Language Learning

Students in Ontario bring a rich variety of languages and cultures to the language classroom. This prior linguistic and cultural knowledge is part of who each student is. By acknowledging and validating the student's proficiency in the language(s) that they already know, the classroom teacher reflects the belief that all language knowledge is important, and that language learning can be a lifelong endeavour.

Learning another language is an advantage for life. Students who learn a second or additional language develop the skills to learn yet another language in the future. They also develop an appreciation of the similarities and differences among languages and cultures. This awareness broadens as they learn more about other languages and cultures as well as their own, while making connections between their local community and global contexts. They can then seek out opportunities to immerse themselves in language and continue their learning beyond the classroom.

An Authentic Approach to ASL: Conversational Discourse, Comprehension, and Construction

One of the purposes of learning ASL is to interact with people whose native language is ASL (also called ASL people). Learning ASL involves developing *conversational discourse* skills to use in a variety of contexts, *analysis and comprehension* skills (making connections and understanding), and *construction* skills (synthesizing and creating). When using ASL, students focus closely on what it is they are trying to convey; what they need others to understand, and why; how their use of ASL is received and interpreted; and what others are trying to convey to them, and why. They take control of their learning through observing, analysing, reflecting, and rehearsing with others.

One of the key concepts in second-language learning is "comprehensible input" – that is, messages that students receive from the teacher and are able to understand. For input to be effective, it must be not only comprehensible but interesting, relevant, personalized, and meaningful. It must also be slightly challenging in order to provide the scaffolding that students need to be able to begin "producing" language – or *constructing* in ASL – in an authentic way. Equally important in the language classroom is "output": students need multiple opportunities to engage in meaningful language production and interaction, using a variety of ASL discourse forms, through real-life tasks.

The study of language structures can be a very effective way of improving language skills. Another important aspect of ASL language learning is the study of authentic materials and videos such as ASL literary works and ASL texts, which can challenge students to apply their grammatical knowledge and make connections as they explore, internalize, deconstruct, and connect what they are learning to the broader world.

Research indicates that to be effective, language instruction in the use of ASL must provide meaningful feedback from the teacher and peers in ASL in order for students to develop language and cultural proficiency. It is therefore recommended that language educators and their students use ASL as extensively as possible at all levels of instruction during instructional time and, when feasible, beyond the classroom.

Most current second-language teaching philosophies underline the necessity of making language instruction meaningful for the learners. Teaching language as a system of disconnected and isolated components gives learners some knowledge of the language, but does not allow them to use the language effectively. In contrast, communicative and action-oriented approaches to teaching second languages put real communication at the centre of all learning activities. "One goal of language instruction is spontaneous [use of language] which is both fluent and accurate." To attain this, instruction includes "teaching rules for developing spontaneous [use of language] and emphasizes the importance of language use in the

classroom."[20] Students need multiple opportunities to use ASL in authentic and varied social contexts, including personal, academic, community, and workplace contexts, so that they can make real-life connections.

Development of Language Learning Strategies

Language learning strategies are important components of a second or additional language program. Research shows that developing proficiency in such strategies is an essential part of successful language learning. When students apply a range of strategies, they are better able to comprehend information, clarify and negotiate meaning, and use language to convey ideas and information effectively. They begin to see themselves as successful language learners, understand their own learning processes, and take responsibility for their learning. Students should be encouraged to develop and apply a repertoire of strategies as tools to support their use of ASL to convey ideas and information.

Language learning strategies are often categorized as cognitive, metacognitive, and social/affective. In this curriculum, cognitive strategies involve the direct manipulation of ASL itself, such as remembering information and understanding or creating messages in ASL. Metacognitive strategies involve planning, thinking about the learning process as it is taking place, and monitoring and evaluating one's progress. Social and affective strategies enhance cooperation and help students regulate their emotions, motivations, and attitudes as they learn ASL through interacting with others.

Research also shows that effective language learners use some specific strategies to enhance their learning, retention, and application of the language. In the context of this curriculum, these strategies include focusing their attention on learning; planning in advance how they will approach an ASL literary work or an ASL text (e.g., previewing, skimming, scanning, deconstructing for main ideas); reflecting on and summarizing what they have just learned; using specific questioning techniques when explanation or clarification is needed; and making inferences from an ASL literary work or an ASL text. Particularly important in the early stages of language learning are comprehension strategies, which help students make sense of an ASL conversational discourse or other ASL work, and repair strategies, which are applied when students recognize that their understanding is breaking down.

Not all students acquire these strategies on their own. Most will benefit from explicit classroom instruction regarding the use of ASL learning strategies and their application before, during, and

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[20] Joan Netten and Claude Germain, "Pedagogy and Second- Language learning: Lessons Learned from Intensive French", *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics / Revue Canadienne de linguistique appliquée* 8, no. 2 (2005): 196-197.

after a language task in authentic and relevant contexts. It is important for teachers to move gradually from more explicit to less explicit teaching (the "gradual release of responsibility" model). Once students are consciously aware of strategies, have practised using them, can select the most effective ones for a particular task, and can see the link between their own actions and their learning, they will be more able to monitor their use of the strategies, set goals for improvement, become more motivated and effective ASL learners, and continue to apply the strategies that work best for them even after they leave the classroom.

Development of Intercultural Understanding

Intercultural understanding is an essential element of any language learning process. Through the development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes in this area, students gain a vastly deeper understanding of the language they are studying. Students gradually develop an awareness of themselves in relation to others on different levels – first in terms of people and cultures they encounter and learn about locally, then on a national level, and finally, in terms of the world – as well as an understanding of the cultural contexts and ideas being studied, both contemporary and historical.

When language learners increase their intercultural understanding, they learn to apply it more broadly by developing respect for the rich diversity of cultures within Canada and around the world. Fostering this respect will encourage students to explore and appreciate the cultures of diverse groups of people in Canada, including people from the Maritime Sign Language (MSL) communities; people from the LSQ communities; and First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples with their various Indigenous Sign Languages. Ontario's secondary schools are now home to students who use more than 100 different languages, including sign languages, several First Nation languages, many African, Asian, and European languages, and English-based creole languages. Ontario's increasing linguistic and cultural diversity provides students with many opportunities for cultural enrichment, and underscores the importance of intercultural understanding.

Language and culture are intertwined. It is impossible to separate one from the other. Developing cultural knowledge and skills is a lifelong process. When cultural knowledge is incorporated in language learning and related to students' own culture and language, students develop a heightened awareness and knowledge of both the new language and culture and their own. A student who has learned a language from an action-oriented and intercultural perspective is one who can effectively manage communication in both familiar and new contexts with sensitivity and openness. The portrait that emerges of these language learners depicts people who are sensitive to intercultural perspectives and open to the ongoing language and cultural changes that life and work require.

In the ASL curriculum, each of the four interconnected strands includes expectations that develop intercultural understanding. Students learn about and make connections between diverse communities that use ASL, and society as a whole. Intercultural awareness and understanding, from the level of the local school and community to the national level and beyond, are key aspects of becoming a member of the global community. Global citizenship is rooted in this kind of understanding. Studying ASL language in the context of the ASL community, culture, and history can deepen students' understanding of everything from law to science to literature and beyond.

Critical Thinking Skills, Metacognition, and Metalinguistic Skills

To thrive in the knowledge era, people need higher-order thinking skills; the ability to critically analyse and solve problems; the ability to think logically, creatively, and critically; the ability to apply metacognition; and metalinguistic skills.

There is a great deal of evidence to suggest that learning a second or additional language not only improves grammatical skills in one's first language but also enhances one's overall thinking skills and abilities. Language learning increases the ability to conceptualize and think abstractly. It also improves mental flexibility, creativity, the ability to explore multiple solutions to a problem, and the ability to think about the use of language.

Critical and creative thinking skills and problem-solving skills are an integral part of learning and interacting in a second language. Students apply these skills constantly as they make sense of what they are deciphering-deconstructing and decoding and as they try to convey their messages clearly. Their critical thinking abilities develop as they compare their own linguistic and cultural systems with those of ASL. As they learn about the linguistic elements of the new language (e.g., cognates – the connection between ASL and French Sign Language [LSF]; ASL metaphorical expressions; formal and informal forms of language using a variety of registers), students develop hypotheses about the structure and use of languages. As they expand their knowledge of ASL culture, they engage in a reflective process about cultural systems, comparing, contrasting, analysing, and hypothesizing about types of interactions, patterns within ASL cultural protocols, cultural resources, and other relationships between ASL culture and their own.

Critical literacy, discussed in detail in ["American Sign Language Literacy"](#), is another skill developed through the study of a second or additional language. The expectations in the ASL curriculum require students to critically analyse and evaluate the meaning of ASL literary works

and ASL texts as they relate to "issues of equity, power, and social justice to inform a critical stance, response and/or action".[21]

Metacognition is commonly defined as thinking about thinking. The metacognitive process involves the ability to plan, monitor, and assess one's use of thinking processes and learning strategies. Metacognition not only plays an important role in language acquisition and development but it can also increase student engagement, foster confidence, and empower students to be independent and responsible for their learning. As students develop the ability to understand how they learn, recognize areas that need improvement, set goals for improvement, monitor their own learning, and become independent learners, they are acquiring the basic habits and skills needed for lifelong learning.

It is important for ASL teachers to model comprehension and thinking strategies and explicitly demonstrate them by thinking aloud. Teachers can explicitly teach metacognitive strategies in ASL by naming the strategies, discussing their uses, and giving examples. By doing so, they provide students with a common understanding and terminology so they can develop their awareness of how and why they choose certain strategies to accomplish a task and eventually use ASL to convey meaning. It is also important to engage students in conversing about their own thinking and metacognitive strategies in order to increase their self-awareness, as well as to provide ample practice so that their use of these strategies becomes automatic. Students should be given many opportunities for regular self-assessment or peer-assessment of their work throughout the learning process, and opportunities to reflect on and monitor their learning.

Metalinguistic awareness is a type of metacognition used in language learning. It can be defined as bringing into explicit consciousness linguistic form and structure and how they relate to and construct the underlying meaning of productions in ASL. It includes the ability to discuss and think about language as an abstract process. It also includes the ability to analyse and deconstruct how language is used systematically to convey meaning. Metalinguistic awareness recognizes the complexities, dimensions, and forms of language. When students develop metalinguistic awareness, they are able to recognize significant details in other people's use of language for specific purposes in various contexts and recognize the use of appropriate registers connected with discourses and language contexts.

Metalinguistic skills involve the awareness, use, and manipulation of linguistic components of language as well as the ability to go beyond basic ASL vocabulary, ASL word form, classifiers, and grammar skills – they are critical to academic and social success. Higher-level language skills include the use of complex vocabulary, identifying and analysing word relationships,

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[21] Ontario Ministry of Education, *Adolescent Literacy Guide: A Professional Learning Resource for Literacy, Grades 7–12* (2012), 16.

paraphrasing, reasoning, and having the ability to perceive things from another individual's or group's perspective.

Students who use two distinct languages develop metalinguistic awareness and metalinguistic skills as they use two linguistic systems that include constructing meaning. They do so by making relevant cultural and linguistic connections with ASL or another language's works and their own lived experiences. Metalinguistic awareness, as research has shown, is crucial in students because of its documented relationship and positive effects on language ability, symbolic development, and literacy skills.[22]

ASL second language pedagogy encourages students to use the linguistic knowledge and skills they have acquired through interaction with ASL literary works, ASL texts, and real-life cultural experiences with people whose native language is ASL. Students learn to develop literacy skills in a variety of contexts, such as using metalinguistic skills to do comparative analysis of ASL and English grammatical structures using ASL graphemes and ASL gloss. By making cross-linguistic connections between ASL and English, students are able to connect the content and skills they have acquired in one language with knowledge of the other language and develop their ASL language and literacy skills.

Making Real-Life Connections

The learning across all strands of the ASL as a second language curriculum is highly connected and relevant to the lives of students, and helps them identify and articulate the immediate and long-term benefits of learning ASL. Students are more motivated to continue with the study of a second or additional language when they see immediate, real-life applications for the skills they learn. Trends in language learning have changed so that "the focus in language education in the twenty-first century is no longer on grammar, memorization and learning from rote, but rather using language and cultural knowledge as a means to [convey information and ideas to] connect to others around the globe."[23] For example, students can use ASL with a broader range of people and access more sources of entertainment, information, and education (e.g., ASL literature, films related to the ASL community, television programs, and a wide variety of online ASL resources). Learning a new language will also allow students to draw parallels with other languages, including sign languages (e.g., MSL, LSQ, ISL), and increase their own prospects for future education, career, and travel.

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[22] Jill Kerper Mora, "Metalinguistic Awareness as Defined Through Research", *ColegioMicheletEnglish Blog*, 17 July 2009.

[23] Sarah E. Eaton, *Global Trends in Language Learning in the Twenty-first Century* (Calgary: Onate Press, 2010), 5.

When learning another language, students' learning experience can be expanded by making connections with other subject areas, whether formally or informally. The language skills and cultural knowledge that students gain in ASL build upon the knowledge that students acquire in other subject areas, and vice versa. Students also bring to the classroom a wealth of knowledge and experience from the world around them that supports and enriches their learning.

Students will be more successful if they have opportunities to use the language in a broad range of real-life contexts, as discussed in the section "An Authentic Approach to ASL". Meaningful contact with individuals who use ASL in their community enables students to develop their language learning skills in real-life situations. When students are unable to interact with people who are proficient in ASL in their community, teachers can use authentic materials, electronic face-to-face communications, and multimedia resources to support students' language learning. Teachers can also facilitate student participation in exchanges, ASL-language camps or immersion experiences, and field trips or longer excursions. In addition, schools or communities can be twinned, and visitors invited into the school.

Roles and Responsibilities in the American Sign Language as a Second Language Program

Students

Students' responsibilities with respect to their own learning develop gradually and increase over time as they progress through elementary and secondary school. With appropriate ASL instruction, experience, and assessment, students come to see how making an effort can enhance learning and improve their achievement of the ASL as a second language curriculum expectations – and their own well-being. As they mature and develop their ability to persevere, to manage their own impulses, to take responsible risks, and to acquire and synthesize ideas and information, students become better able to engage in their own learning. Teachers' attention, patience, and encouragement are essential to students' success. Learning to take responsibility for their progress and achievement is an important part of every student's education.

Becoming proficient with the information, ideas, knowledge, and skills connected with the ASL curriculum requires ongoing practice, an effort to respond to feedback (to the extent possible), personal reflection, and a commitment from students. Students who actively pursue opportunities outside the classroom will also extend and enrich their understanding – of the process involved in acquiring and responding to ideas and information in various contexts, and of how to use inquiry skills. Involvement in a variety of settings within the ASL community requires a willingness to try new activities and work with peers and community members while being mindful of following context-appropriate safety practices.

Students' understanding of and skills in ASL will develop as they explore their world and engage in tasks that require deciphering-deconstructing, analysing, interpreting, reflecting, constructing, representing, responding, and using interconnected metacognitive and metalinguistic skills. As students seek out various ASL resources and multimedia works that relate to their personal interests and to other subject areas, they develop their ASL literacy skills. As they engage in ASL conversations with peers and teachers and in dialogues with parents,[24] peers, and teachers about what they are learning and how it relates to their daily lives, they further develop their ASL literacy skills.

Students' attitude towards language learning and literacy can have a significant effect on their achievement of the curriculum expectations. Teaching methods, learning tasks, and activities that encourage students to recognize the value and relevance of what they are learning will go a long way towards motivating students to work and learn effectively, and to recognize the interconnectedness of what they are learning in ASL – within the ASL community and in the world at large.

Students who are learning ASL need to realize that refining their skills is important and that real engagement with their studies requires hard work and continual self-assessment. Through practice, consolidation, and revision of the ASL literary works and ASL texts they create, students deepen their understanding of ASL. Students can also extend their learning by participating in related school and community activities. Skills developed in the classroom can be applied in many other endeavours, and in a variety of aspects of their education and careers.

Parents

Parents play an important role in supporting student learning. Studies show that students perform better in school if their parents are involved in their education. Parents who are familiar with the ASL curriculum expectations are aware of what is being taught and what their children are expected to learn. This information enables parents to understand how their children are progressing in school and to work with ASL teachers to enhance their children's learning. Parents can support their children's learning by attending parent-teacher interviews; participating in ASL classes and workshops for parents; getting involved in school council activities (e.g., becoming a school council member); and encouraging their children to complete their assignments at home.

In addition to supporting regular school activities, parents may wish to encourage their children to take an active interest in using ASL for meaningful purposes as a regular part of their

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[24] The word *parent(s)* is used on this website to refer to parent(s) and guardian(s). It may also be taken to include caregivers or close family members who are responsible for raising the child.

activities outside of school. They might encourage their children to decipher-deconstruct and analyse ASL literary works and ASL texts; discuss what they are learning in class; converse in ASL together at home; go to ASL cultural events (such as art exhibits, festivals, or plays); join an ASL club, such as a community group; or participate in an online ASL pal program.

Parents can also support their children's learning in ASL as a second language by:

- demonstrating a positive and encouraging attitude about learning another language;
- demonstrating a positive attitude towards ASL at home and in the community;
- establishing a positive relationship with the ASL teacher;
- getting involved in the school community;
- joining a community group to learn more about ASL resources and cultural opportunities.

Teachers

Teachers and students have complementary responsibilities. Teachers develop appropriate and effective instructional strategies to support students to achieve the ASL curriculum expectations, as well as appropriate methods for assessing and evaluating student learning. Teachers are responsible for ensuring that the classroom is a culturally safe environment that enables students from diverse backgrounds to feel respected and comfortable expressing their opinions, thoughts, and needs. Teachers bring enthusiasm and varied teaching and assessment approaches to the classroom, addressing individual students' needs and ensuring learning opportunities for every student. They reflect on the results of the learning opportunities they provide and make adjustments as necessary to help every student achieve the curriculum expectations to the best of their ability.

Using a variety of instructional, assessment, and evaluation strategies, ASL teachers provide numerous opportunities for students to develop and refine their critical-thinking, problem-solving, and language skills as they investigate topics related to ASL through a variety of engaging, personally relevant projects and explorations. These activities give students opportunities to relate their knowledge and skills in ASL to the social, cultural, environmental, and economic conditions and concerns of the world they live in. Such opportunities will motivate students to participate in their communities as responsible and engaged citizens, and to become lifelong learners.

ASL teachers provide students with frequent opportunities to practise and refine their skills and apply new learning and, through regular and varied assessment, give them the specific, descriptive feedback they need to further their learning. Teachers can also help students understand that the language learning process and sustained communication and interaction often require a considerable expenditure of time and energy and a good deal of perseverance.

ASL teachers can encourage students to take appropriate risks and use appropriate strategies to become successful problem solvers, especially with respect to social justice issues they may encounter. By assigning tasks that promote the development of higher-order thinking skills, teachers help students assess information, develop informed opinions, draw conclusions, and become thoughtful and effective communicators. In addition, teachers encourage students to deepen thinking about their own linguistic choices and support them in developing the language and techniques they need to assess their own learning.

ASL teachers are important role models for students, both linguistically and culturally. Teachers play key roles in modelling ASL use for their students and disseminating information about the cultures in which the language is used. Often teachers are the students' first contact with the language. Teachers endeavour to use ASL as the language of communication in all classroom interactions so that students receive constant exposure to the language in a variety of situations. Teachers provide students with varied opportunities to share and interact in ASL in meaningful activities that simulate real-life situations. Teachers also need to expose students to social and geographical varieties of ASL through a range of authentic materials and examples of the language being used by individuals of different ages and geographical origins and from various sociocultural groups. This exposure will help students develop an understanding and appreciation of the diversity within communities where ASL is used.

Classroom teachers, as well as other educators in the school (e.g., guidance teachers/counsellors), can also inform students about the benefits of learning a second or additional language. For example, they can highlight the merits of learning another language by promoting language studies, exchange programs, and global education and career opportunities.

It is the teacher's responsibility to help students see the connections between the knowledge and skills they develop in the classroom and their lived realities. Learning ASL as a second language can play a key role in shaping students' views about ASL culture. By developing an understanding of the contextualized nature of their ideas, values, and ways of life, students come to appreciate and honour the diversity they encounter. Teachers also encourage students to understand the importance of the transferable skills they develop in an ASL course, and to make use of these skills in other contexts.

As part of effective teaching practice, ASL teachers communicate with parents about what their children are learning. This communication occurs through the sharing of course outlines, ongoing formal and informal conversations, curriculum events, and other means of regular communication, such as newsletters or website postings. Communication enables parents to work in partnership with the school, promoting discussion, follow-up at home, and student learning in a family context. Stronger connections between home and school support student learning, achievement, health, and well-being.

Principals

The principal works in partnership with ASL teachers and parents to ensure that each student has access to the best possible educational experience. The principal is also a community builder who creates an environment that is welcoming to all and ensures that all members of the school community are kept well informed. To support student learning and well-being, principals ensure that the ASL as a second language curriculum is being properly implemented in classrooms and learning environments using a variety of instructional approaches. They also ensure that appropriate resources are made available for teachers and students. To enhance teaching and learning in all subjects, including ASL, principals promote learning teams and work with teachers to facilitate their participation in professional development activities. Principals are also responsible for ensuring that every student who has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is receiving the modifications and/or accommodations described in their plan – in other words, for ensuring that the IEP is properly developed, implemented, and monitored.

Principals are responsible for ensuring that up-to-date copies of the outlines of all courses of study offered at the school are retained on file. These outlines must be available for parents and students to examine. Parents of students under the age of eighteen are entitled to information on course content since they are required to approve their child's choice of courses, and adult students need this information to help them choose their courses.

Community partners

Local ASL Communities

In some areas of the province, the local ASL community provides a variety of academic and social activities and events for its members and members of other nearby communities. People meet to share their ASL language, ideas, world views, and interests with community members and others (e.g., students who are learning ASL as a second language, interpreters, anthropologists, linguists). These gatherings provide opportunities for people to have authentic local experiences within ASL communities. They also promote and ensure the preservation and enhancement of ASL language and culture. There is strong evidence that encouraging students to experience ASL within the local ASL community leads to a broadening of their world view and awareness of different languages. When this happens, students can become more engaged in day-to-day activities in both their own language and ASL; enhance their understanding of ASL; and gain experiences that will enhance the development of metacognitive and metalinguistic knowledge and skills.

Participation in and engagement with the local ASL community (e.g., attending ASL cultural events, using technology and online resources, joining parent groups, taking formal ASL classes) are excellent ways for parents to develop their own ASL language skills and cultural knowledge. Parents who are able to internalize ASL as an authentic language and culture are better prepared to support their children's ASL language development.

The Broader ASL Community

ASL as a second language programs benefit significantly from the support and involvement of the ASL community as a whole. Often, ASL teachers in these programs and people within the ASL community are the only advocates for the acquisition and development of the ASL language and its related culture. In an ASL as a second language program, it is important for parents and teachers to engage with a variety of ASL community members and organizations to demonstrate and reinforce the value of the ASL language, culture, and community.

Members of the ASL community can be encouraged to support the program by acting as resource people in a variety of ways. They can offer to answer student questions, share their experiences and accomplishments, and expand on how ASL language, ASL literary works, and ASL texts are related to ASL culture and community. Other useful resources include online communities, ASL newsletters, and online ASL video works created by ASL community members that explore, for example, the relationships between ASL vocabulary and classifiers.

It is important for students to be exposed to diverse ASL communities to learn about regional ASL vocabulary variations and differing styles, and ASL vocabulary specific to particular communities. This exposure helps students to develop knowledge, skills, understanding, and respect for the ASL language, ASL culture, history, perspectives, and the contributions of the ASL community. Further, it facilitates the development of students' personal connections with the ASL community so that they can engage with the language, history, and culture through interaction with a variety of people and ASL literary works and ASL texts to create meaningful connections between themselves and the world around them.

ASL community partners can model how knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom relate to life beyond school. Relationships with these organizations, community recreation facilities, universities and colleges, businesses, service groups, and others can provide valuable support and enrichment to students. These organizations can provide expertise, skills, materials, and programs that are not available through the school or supplement those that are. Partnerships with such organizations benefit the school, the students, and the life of the community.

Schools and school boards, including Ontario's provincial and demonstration schools, can play a role by coordinating efforts with ASL community partners. They can engage various leaders and organizations within the community by supporting learning related to curriculum expectations and creating opportunities for students to discuss issues affecting the ASL community and

participate in the community's celebrations, both inside and outside of the school community. For example, schools could develop a program for visiting leaders with links to ASL community organizations, such as arts organizations, cultural and language centres, business service networks, and so on. These community partners can also be included in events held in the school, such as skills competitions, information events, career days, and special days of recognition. Where the opportunity presents itself, schools and boards, including the provincial and demonstration schools, may also extend their partnerships with local, provincial, national, or international communities and programs.

Nurturing partnerships with other schools, school boards, and the provincial and demonstration schools can be a valuable way to apply learning within the context of safe, healthy, and accepting school environments. Neighbouring schools and boards may share resources or facilities when developing and sharing professional development opportunities for staff, and they can collaborate in developing special events such as career fairs, community activities, and information evenings. From time to time, opportunities may present themselves for schools, school boards, and the provincial and demonstration schools to work with local researchers to complete studies that will help educators make informed decisions based on solid evidence, local needs, and current best practices.

In choosing community partners, schools can build on existing links with their local communities and create new partnerships in conjunction with ministry and school board policies. These links are especially beneficial when they have direct connections to the curriculum. Teachers may find opportunities for students to participate in community events, especially events that support the students' learning in the classroom, are designed for educational purposes, and provide descriptive feedback to student participants.

The Program in American Sign Language as a Second Language

Overview

The study of ASL is an important part of the secondary school curriculum. ASL is one of the languages of instruction and study in the province of Ontario, and is also widely used around the world.

Knowledge of a second language is valuable for a number of reasons. Through learning a second language, including a sign language, students strengthen their first-language skills, enhance their critical and creative thinking abilities, and increase their understanding of other cultures, including sign-language cultures. In addition, the ability to use another language

provides students with a distinct advantage in a number of careers, both in Canada and internationally.

The primary goal of the ASL as a second language program in Ontario is to increase, within realistic and well-defined parameters, a student's ability to use ASL effectively. The program enables students to better understand the stages of language learning and the use of language learning strategies in order to become proficient second-language learners. The program emphasizes the development of conversation, comprehension, and construction skills through the use of a contextual approach and a variety of authentic ASL resources.

In the ASL as a second language program, the type of course offered is "open".

Open courses are designed to broaden students' knowledge and skills in subjects that reflect their interests and prepare them for active and rewarding participation in society. These courses comprise a set of expectations that are appropriate for all students.

Course Name	Course Type	Course Code	Prerequisite
ASL as a Second Language, Level 1	Open	LASBO	None

Leading Students to Proficiency in ASL

It is necessary to use ASL as the language of instruction in the classroom so that students develop the ability to study and use ASL, and interact effectively with others, including those whose first language is ASL. Also, learning activities must include a balance of skills and strategies associated with all four strands, taught in contexts that reflect students' interests, which allows students to apply their knowledge of, and skills in, ASL in authentic situations and contexts that are meaningful to them.

In an ASL course, students are taught a range of specific language structures and are given opportunities to use these structures in a variety of contexts. The use and re-use of both familiar and newly acquired structures, vocabulary, and classifiers are natural in language use and essential in language study. The more students use ASL, and the more varied the contexts in which they use it, the greater the competence they will develop in the language.

As students study ASL, they gain an appreciation of ASL language, ASL literary works, and ASL texts, including ASL media works. They also gain an understanding of ASL communities in Canada and around the world. Because language and culture are inseparable, the study of ASL culture should be integrated throughout daily instruction rather than presented in an isolated fashion or on an occasional basis. Such an approach will increase students' intercultural awareness – for example, their awareness of the use of regional variations in ASL. As students

move through the ASL curriculum, they will develop the ability to use the language with greater fluency, proficiency, and accuracy in an increased range of situations, and they will apply their language skills in more challenging and complex ways.

Curriculum Expectations

The expectations identified for the course describe the knowledge and skills that students are expected to develop and demonstrate in their class work, on tests, and in various other learning activities on which their achievement in ASL as a second language is assessed and evaluated.

Two sets of expectations – overall expectations and specific expectations – are listed for each *strand*, or broad area of the curriculum. (The strands are numbered A, B, C, and D.) Taken together, the overall and specific expectations represent the mandated curriculum.

The *overall expectations* describe in general terms the knowledge and skills that students are expected to demonstrate by the end of each course.

The *specific expectations* describe the expected knowledge and skills in greater detail. The specific expectations are grouped under numbered headings, each of which indicates the strand, and the overall expectation to which the group of specific expectations corresponds (e.g., "B2" indicates that the group relates to overall expectation 2 in strand B). This organization is not meant to imply that the expectations in any one group are achieved independently of the expectations in the other groups. The numbered headings are used merely to help teachers focus on particular aspects of knowledge and skills as they develop various lessons and plan learning activities for their students.

Most specific expectations are accompanied by examples, teacher prompts, and instructional tips, as requested by educators. The examples are meant to clarify the requirement specified in the expectation, illustrating the kind of knowledge or skill, the specific area of learning, the depth of learning, and/or the level of complexity that the expectation entails. The teacher prompts are meant to illustrate the kinds of questions ASL teachers might pose in relation to the requirement specified in the expectation. The instructional tips suggest instructional strategies and authentic contexts for the effective modelling, practice, and application of language in real-world situations.

The examples, teacher prompts, and instructional tips have been developed to model appropriate practice for the grade and are meant to serve as illustrations for ASL teachers. They are intended as suggestions for ASL teachers rather than as exhaustive or mandatory lists. ASL teachers can choose to use the examples, prompts, and tips that are appropriate for their classrooms, or they may develop their own approaches that reflect a similar level of complexity. Whatever the specific ways in which the requirements outlined in the expectations are

implemented in the classroom, they must, wherever possible, be inclusive and reflect the diversity of the student population and the population of the province.

Strands in the American Sign Language as a Second Language Curriculum

The course American Sign Language as a Second Language, Level 1, Open (LASBO) is organized into four distinct but interrelated strands:

- A. ASL Conversational Discourse
- B. Comprehending ASL Construction and Content
- C. Constructing ASL Content and Usage of ASL Grammatical Structures
- D. Understanding the Connections Between ASL Language, Culture, Identity, and Community

This framework includes overall and specific expectations in which learning related to ASL as a language is interwoven with learning related to ASL culture.

The curriculum is designed to develop a range of essential skills in the four interrelated areas. It has a culture-based foundation that encompasses knowledge of ASL cultural protocols and perspectives. The development of analytical, critical, and metacognitive thinking skills is also emphasized. Students learn best when they are encouraged to consciously monitor their thinking as they learn, and each strand includes expectations that encourage such reflection. The knowledge and skills that students develop in the course will enable them to engage in conversations in ASL; comprehend, reflect upon, respond to, and construct a range of ASL literary works and ASL texts, including ASL media works; and enhance their understanding of ASL culture.

When teachers plan an ASL program, they focus on the ASL as a second language curriculum expectations and ensure that resources and program approaches directly support the achievement of the Ontario curriculum expectations and reflect the assessment, evaluation, and reporting policy. Teachers may provide ASL dictionaries and other ASL educational resources. These ASL-specific resources support comprehension and construction of various ASL discourse structures and help build students' ASL vocabulary and classifier usage.

ASL teachers plan activities that integrate expectations from the four strands in order to provide students with experiences that promote meaningful learning and help them recognize how ASL cultural and literacy skills, in the four areas, reinforce and strengthen one another.

Strand A – ASL Conversational Discourse

This strand provides opportunities for students to develop the knowledge and skills essential for conversational discourse in ASL. Students learn how to use a variety of grammatical structures and interactive strategies, and become familiar with ASL cultural protocols. They learn how to understand, analyse, interpret, reflect upon, and respond to ideas and information when interacting with others in a variety of ASL conversational discourse contexts (e.g., conversation, dialogue, discussion). When they converse in a variety of contexts, they make connections and convey their thoughts, feelings, ideas, and opinions, using ASL conventions and structures coherently and cohesively.

As students work towards achieving the expectations for this strand, they will develop the skills required to explore and convey ideas and information in the classroom, outside the classroom, and in other contexts.

Strand B – Comprehending ASL Construction and Content

In this strand, students develop the knowledge and skills essential to understanding basic ASL content. They learn how to identify different ASL forms and styles used in a variety of contexts. Students begin to extract meaning from ASL literary works and ASL texts, including ASL media works, that reflect ASL culture and community. As students develop their comprehension skills, they can identify what interests them most, and can begin to seek out ASL works that reflect their own interests.

ASL, like all languages, is full, rich, and complex, and comprehending ASL requires cognitive work. Students will benefit from a using a variety of comprehension strategies in the *deciphering-deconstructing process* (see below for a definition and more discussion). Examples of comprehension strategies include activating prior knowledge, re-deciphering-re-deconstructing, making connections, predicting, visualizing, making inferences, questioning, summarizing, synthesizing, and reflecting. Decoding is another example of a comprehension strategy, and students can decode unfamiliar ASL words and classifiers to determine the meaning of content in order to analyse and/or interpret ASL literary works or ASL texts.

The term *deciphering-deconstructing* refers to the act and process of "message-getting and problem solving"[25] in ASL. It involves analysing ASL literary works, such as prose, poetry, and other genres, that are experienced live or in video format, without the use of an orthographic system. It also includes analysing ASL texts. The process involves decoding ASL words and

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[25] Marie Clay, *Becoming Literate: The Construction of Inner Control* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1991).

classifiers and language structure, thinking about the meaning of the content, and extracting meaning from the work.[26] Examples of deciphering-deconstructing strategies include skimming ASL literary works and ASL texts for information or details; analysing parameters of ASL words; substituting unfamiliar ASL words and classifiers with familiar ASL words and classifiers; and breaking down the content of ASL literary works into strophes, stanzas, and lines.[27] During the deciphering-deconstructing process, students may use cueing systems – that is, semantic, syntactic, and/or pragmatic clues from the context or from their understanding of ASL structures and/or ASL parameter relationships – to help them understand unfamiliar ASL words and classifiers. They may also use a variety of comprehension strategies to help them construct meaning and eventually demonstrate their understanding of an ASL literary work or ASL text.

> The term *deciphering-deconstructing* more closely represents the nature of American Sign Language than other terms, including *reading*, which is typically associated with the act of taking in the printed word. More accurately than other terms, deciphering-deconstructing describes the actual thought processes that an ASL person goes through when perusing ASL literary works or ASL texts that are shown live or on video. It describes what the eyes and mind do in the act of decoding ASL words, thinking about the meaning of the content, and extracting meaning from the content.
>
> Adapted from Linda A. Wall, "From the Hands into the Eyes:
> An Analysis of Children's American Sign Language Story Comprehension"
> (master's thesis, University of Toronto, 2014).

The ASL course should include a wide variety of ASL forms and genres that engage students' interest and imagination. For more information on ASL literary genres, see the chart in Appendix A.

ASL teachers routinely provide authentic ASL resources created by ASL people who reflect the diversity of Ontario and of Canada. Students use techniques and strategies of critical literacy to enhance their understanding of ASL literary works and ASL texts, including ASL media works.

As a creative representation of life and experience, ASL literary works and ASL texts raise important questions about the human condition within contemporary and historical sign language communities and the world. As students study these ASL works, they deepen their understanding of the dimensions of human thought and human experience as individuals and

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[26] Linda A. Wall, "From the Hands into the Eyes: An Analysis of Children's American Sign Language Story Comprehension (master's thesis, University of Toronto, 2014).

[27] Ben Bahan, "ASL Literature: Inside the story", in *Deaf Studies: What's Up? 1991 Conference Proceedings,* edited by J. Cebe (Washington, DC: Gallaudet University, College for Continuing Education, 1992), 153-164. Samuel Supalla and Ben Bahan, *ASL Literature Series: Bird of a Different Feather & for a Decent Living: Teacher's Guide* (San Diego, CA: DawnSignPress, 1994).

as a collective. Students learn to decipher-deconstruct critically, to become familiar with various ASL forms and their characteristic elements, and to identify and analyse the purposes and uses of figurative language and other stylistic devices in ASL.

Strand C – Constructing ASL Content and Usage of ASL Grammatical Structures

This strand provides opportunities for students to develop the knowledge and skills essential to creating ASL literary works and ASL texts for different purposes and audiences, using a variety of ASL forms and language conventions, and knowledge of ASL culture. With support from their teachers, students will construct a variety of ASL literary works and ASL texts to convey ideas and information.

The ASL constructing process is best learned in the context of meaningful and creative constructing tasks that allow students to develop the necessary skills to think and construct coherently, cohesively, and effectively.

The ASL Constructing Process

The constructing process for ASL literary works and ASL texts takes place in stages that require the skills of planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing, respectively, as follows:

- **Planning:** This stage involves brainstorming and developing ideas, gathering information, including information about ASL culture, and determining a form that suits the purpose and audience. It may also include considering register, style, and point of view.
- **Drafting:** The drafting stage involves selecting and using ASL discourse structures and markers and registers, as well as ASL language structures, ASL parameters, ASL conventions, ASL vocabulary, classifier construction, spatial construction, and non-manual markers to organize content in a form and style appropriate for the purpose and audience.
- **Revising:** This stage involves critically examining the draft version of the ASL literary work or ASL text by using a variety of strategies to refine and improve the content, flow, and structure (e.g., to ensure cohesion, coherence, clarity, and accuracy).
- **Editing:** The editing stage involves checking the correctness of the ASL discourse structures and markers and registers, as well as the ASL language structures, ASL parameters, ASL conventions, ASL vocabulary, classifier construction, spatial construction, and non-manual markers.

- **Publishing:** This stage involves using elements of effective delivery, such as graphics, layout, and hyperlinks, to finalize an ASL work that meets the criteria identified by the teacher.

Constructing ASL literary works and ASL texts from the draft stage to the publishing stage involves a range of complementary thinking and composing skills, as well as other processes. As part of the constructing process, students are expected to use a variety of strategies and tools to synthesize the information they have gathered, including digital literacy tools. For example, students may use video-text applications, documents, photo editing applications, and websites, or a combination of these.[28]

Students need to first consider their purpose and audience, then select the appropriate form and style to organize their content and apply their knowledge of ASL language features and structures and ASL culture. To develop these competencies, students need supportive and collaborative classroom environments. ASL teachers model and teach effective ASL language-learning strategies and skills, and ASL cultural knowledge. They provide scaffolding where needed and encourage students to work individually as well as collaboratively. They give students diverse opportunities to apply these skills and to construct content in a variety of ASL forms, and for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Strand D – Understanding the Connections Between ASL Language, Culture, Identity, and Community

In this strand, students develop the knowledge and skills essential to understanding ASL as a language, and its connection to ASL culture, identity, history, and community, as well as its role in significant events and its contributions to Canadian and global societies. An understanding of historical and current issues that have affected ASL communities will enhance students' ability to participate effectively as members of Canadian and global societies.

Students will apply their knowledge of ASL vocabulary, classifiers, and grammatical structures to extend their understanding of their first language, ASL as a second language, and other languages. In addition, they will apply their critical thinking skills and knowledge of the ASL community, its culture, and literature. Through their study of ASL as a language and ASL culture, students will deepen their understanding and appreciation of the interconnectedness of people and communities throughout history, both in Canada and around the world. This strand also

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[28] Heather Gibson, Shelley Potma, and Linda A. Wall, *ASL Constructing Process* (unpublished, 2015).

focuses on the importance of building positive relationships and creating equitable environments for all members of Canadian and global societies.

Culturally diverse learning opportunities in the curriculum will allow students to develop an appreciation of the diverse cultural perspectives, values, and beliefs of ASL people who live in Ontario and in other parts of the country, as well as in other parts of the world.

Some Considerations for Program Planning in American Sign Language as a Second Language

The language and language learning skills laid out in the four strands overlap and strengthen one another. Effective instructional activities, including those that use ASL media works, often integrate expectations from two or more strands to provide students with the kinds of experiences that promote meaningful learning. This approach allows students to develop skills from several strands by engaging in rich, integrated tasks such as participating in a debate on a current issue, discussing strategies for organizing ideas using the constructing process in an assignment, or offering constructive and descriptive feedback about an ASL work created by their peers. A high-quality ASL course provides daily opportunities for students to engage in various language activities in connection with the expectations of all four strands. Teachers plan instructional activities that integrate expectations across the strands. They also continually highlight the interconnectedness of language and culture in the development of literacy skills. For this reason, language structures and conventions are taught along with cultural concepts so that students are exposed to the key elements of language through contextualized approaches. (See the section "The Program in American Sign Language as a Second Language" for a description of each strand.)

Integrating ASL Media Works

When planning what students will learn, it is important for teachers to support students in understanding how and why ASL media works are constructed and how they relate to the ASL community and culture. This knowledge equips them to respond to ASL media works coherently and critically. Students need to develop the skills to differentiate between fact and opinion; evaluate the credibility of sources; analyse, reflect upon, and respond to bias (e.g., audism, racism, sexism, classism); and recognize and develop sensitivity to discriminatory portrayals of individuals and groups. Therefore, students' repertoire of language and digital literacy skills should include critically interpreting and reflecting upon the messages they receive from various ASL media works, and the ability to use media technology and strategies to convey their own ideas and information effectively. Skills related to the use of digital media such as the Internet, social media, film, and television are particularly important because of the

power to persuade and the pervasive influence that media wields in our lives and in society at large.

To develop students' media literacy skills, teachers need to ensure that students have opportunities to study ASL language and culture and their relationship to style, form, and meaning in ASL media works. Students can analyse media works to distinguish the different messages of each medium and how the choice of ASL language structures and illustrations can affect their audiences. Students can decipher-deconstruct, synthesize, reflect on, and discuss a wide variety of ASL media works and relate them to their own experiences. They can also benefit from opportunities to use various technologies to create media works of different types (e.g., cartoons, short ASL videos, web pages related to ASL language and culture) using a variety of graphic designs and layouts. As students explore the use of ASL conventions, language features, techniques, and forms in ASL media works, they analyse the roles of the producer and the intended audience when constructing meaning. They also apply the knowledge and skills gained through this analysis of ASL media works to create their own works.

The Value of Conversation

To develop literacy in any language, it is critical for students to develop skills in using a variety of conversational discourse forms in that language. When given frequent opportunities to converse with their peers, students develop an overall sense of the language and its structure. Through conversation, students are able to convey their thinking and learning to others. Conversation skills thus enable students to express themselves, develop healthy relationships with peers, and define their thoughts about themselves, others, and the world.

Interactions with both the teacher and peers in the language being studied are essential to the development of all language skills. Having a conversation is a way to construct meaning. It develops, clarifies, and extends thinking. This is true not only of the prepared, formal dialogues in interviews, discussions, debates, and presentations but also of the informal dialogues that occur, for example, when students work together and ask questions, make connections, and respond to ASL literary works and/or ASL texts, share their learning experiences, or when a teacher models a think-aloud. These forms of interaction through the use of language are important to consider when planning lessons in an ASL program:

- *Informal dialogue* is used in conversations throughout the school day for a wide range of purposes, such as asking questions, recounting experiences, brainstorming, problem solving, and exchanging opinions on an impromptu or casual basis.
- *Discussion* involves a purposeful and extended exchange of ideas that provides a focus for inquiry or problem solving, often leading to new understanding. Discussions may involve,

for example, responding to ideas in an ASL story or other piece of fiction, or exchanging opinions about current events or issues in the classroom or community.

- *Formal dialogue* involves the delivery of prepared or rehearsed presentations to an audience. Some examples are ASL storytelling, ASL poetry, role plays, ASL reports, academic conversations about ASL video works, interviews, debates, and multimedia presentations.

Instructional Strategies in ASL as a Second Language Programs

ASL teachers use a variety of instructional approaches and strategies in ASL to support students in deciphering-deconstructing, interpreting, constructing, representing, responding, reflecting, and using interconnected metacognitive and metalinguistic skills. This is accomplished through the gradual release of responsibility model. Initially, the ASL teacher demonstrates the use of comprehension strategies to decipher-deconstruct ASL literary works and ASL texts through modelling and sharing them with students in the classroom or in smaller-group contexts. Students then use inquiry-based collaborative strategies to work with peers to understand ASL literary works and ASL texts. Eventually, students are able to use comprehension strategies independently to understand ASL literary works and ASL texts. The same process is used to construct conversational discourse in ASL, ASL literary works, and ASL texts, as well as for the use of metacognitive and metalinguistic skills throughout the program.

ASL teachers need to provide daily opportunities for students to converse and interact in ASL. Teachers set up learning situations based on authentic communicative tasks, such as requesting information or conveying messages. Learning activities that are based on students' interests, needs, and desire to converse will achieve the best results in the classroom. As facilitators, ASL teachers select communicative situations, model the effective use of language, and plan activities to enable students to continually develop their ASL language skills in various contexts.

By providing guidance to students as they carry out practice activities and work on tasks and projects, ASL teachers also assume the role of coach. Teachers coach, for example, when they guide a group in a discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of learning another language, or when they model sentence structure and fluency while conversing with students.

Well-designed lessons include a variety of instructional strategies, such as structured simulations, guided inquiry, cooperative learning, and open-ended questions. Teachers can conduct frequent comprehension checks to ensure that students understand the information being conveyed, including both general concepts and specific ASL vocabulary and classifiers. Teachers can use various tools and strategies to support student comprehension, and can encourage students to develop their self-expression in and spontaneous use of ASL by eliciting conversation that increases in fluency, accuracy, and complexity over time. Teachers can also

model a variety of strategies that students can use to request clarification and assistance when they have difficulty understanding.

It is essential that ASL be the language of instruction in class so that students have constant exposure to correct models of the language and many opportunities to use ASL. To help students improve their ability to interact in class, teachers can:

- use ASL at an appropriate and deliberate pace to ensure maximum understanding;
- explain concepts explicitly and in a variety of ways to address the needs of all learners;
- give clear instructions that meet individual students' needs (e.g., numbering the steps in an activity);
- present information in small, manageable pieces;
- check often for comprehension, using a variety of tools and strategies;
- allow sufficient response time when students are interacting in ASL;
- use a variety of strategies to selectively correct students' errors in conversing and constructing;
- offer ongoing descriptive feedback so that students are aware of which areas need improvement;
- scaffold learning and observe independent practice to support all students in using ASL in both familiar and new contexts.

ASL teachers can use a variety of instructional strategies to support language learners in the acquisition and development of ASL. For example, teachers can:

- design meaningful lessons and activities that are achievable by students and that take into account their background knowledge and experiences;
- provide frequent opportunities for collaboration and practice in pairs, small groups, and large groups;
- provide targeted instruction for students during shared or guided practice to lead them to explore ASL texts or concepts;
- use a variety of teaching strategies when demonstrating how to decipher-deconstruct, interpret, construct, respond, and interact;
- contextualize new ASL vocabulary and classifiers through visuals, ASL literary works, and ASL texts;
- allow students to demonstrate their understanding of a concept in alternative ways (e.g., De'VIA, drama);
- value and acknowledge the importance of students' cultural knowledge, and literacy skills in other languages;
- encourage students to share information about their own languages and cultures with each other in the classroom.

ASL teachers can also make use of a variety of classroom and school resources to enrich students' learning. For example, teachers can:

- introduce ASL vocabulary and classifiers and illustrate concepts using pictures, visuals, age-appropriate ASL literary works, ASL texts including media, and real objects;
- reinforce ASL vocabulary and classifiers in various ways (e.g., using ASL word walls, visuals, or anchor charts) to increase students' understanding and enhance their ability to convey ideas and information;
- use technology to support ASL language and literacy development;
- demonstrate the use of a variety of graphic organizers, including video graphic organizers.

Considerations for ASL as a Second Language Program for Students Requiring Enriched Language Environments

Schools in Ontario serve a diverse student population, both linguistically and culturally. Because students' previous linguistic experiences vary greatly from one home to another and from one community to another, their skills in using their first language in academic contexts and in second-language acquisition may be at considerably different levels. Some students may already comprehend and use ASL well, others may have used ASL outside of school without formal instruction, while still others have not acquired or developed ASL as a first or second language for a variety of reasons. With this in mind, understanding the different stages of language development and implementing appropriate pedagogical and assessment strategies for students are priorities for teachers in an ASL as a second language program.

Regardless of their language skills, all students bring a rich diversity of background knowledge and experience to the classroom. Students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds support their learning and also become a cultural asset in the classroom community, whether their backgrounds are in ASL or another linguistic and cultural community. Teachers will find positive ways to incorporate this diversity into their instructional programs and into the classroom environment.

The Sociocultural Awareness Approach in an ASL as a Second Language Program

Sociocultural awareness is addressed in the ASL as a second language curriculum through the use of pedagogical approaches that convey the understanding that the study of ASL language, ASL literary works, and ASL texts, including ASL media works, can be taught only with strong

references to the ASL community. Language and culture are inseparable. This principle can be applied to any language and the culture that nourishes it. French and francophone culture are inseparable; Cree and Cree culture are inseparable; ASL and ASL culture are inseparable.[29]

Studying a variety of original ASL literary works and ASL texts, including ASL media works created by ASL people, challenges students to become receptive to new and widely varying ideas, information, and perspectives, and to develop the ability to think independently, collaboratively, and critically using an ASL cultural lens. ASL language and culture can build students' awareness of all aspects of ASL identity – emotional, moral, cognitive, experiential, perceptual, spiritual, physical, mental, and social. Linda Wall states that "original ASL stories and poetry convey the experiences and emotions of ASL culture".[30] ASL works created by ASL people are crucial to developing a deeper appreciation of how ASL language and ASL culture are interwoven with a person's identity. They allow both individuals and a community to transmit their view of reality: their thoughts, feelings, treasured values, beliefs, and priorities. Gaining this insight enables students to enact social change, take ownership of their school culture and school community, and provide support for the ASL community.

Students also learn about cultural references that relate to the ASL community, such as the everyday life of ASL people, ASL community calendars, historical research, and linguistic research. Collectively, this learning enhances their understanding of the ASL community – provincial, national, or global – and reflects how language, values, beliefs, ways of life, customs, and symbols are interwoven.

Human Rights, Equity, and Inclusive Education in ASL as a Second Language

Cultural, linguistic, racial, and religious diversity is a defining characteristic of Canadian society, and schools can help prepare all students to live harmoniously as responsible, compassionate citizens in a multicultural, plurilingual society in the twenty-first century. Learning resources that reflect the broad range of students' interests, backgrounds, cultures, and experiences are an important aspect of an ASL program. In an inclusive program, learning materials involve protagonists of all genders from a wide variety of backgrounds and intersectionalities. ASL teachers routinely use materials that reflect the diversity of Canadian and world cultures, including those of contemporary sign language cultures (e.g., *langue des signes québécoise*

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[29] H. Gibson and N.T. Blanchard, "The Linguistics and Use of American Sign Language". The Canadian Journal of Educators of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing 1, no. 1 (2010): 22-27.

[30] Quoted in Leanne Miller, "Exemplary Teacher: Heather Gibson", *Professionally Speaking: The Magazine of the Ontario College of Teachers,* September 2008, online.

[LSQ] culture) and of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, and make such materials available to students. Short ASL stories, ASL epics, television programs, and films provide opportunities for students to explore issues relating to the cultural identity of an ASL community.

In an inclusive and intersectional ASL program, students are made aware of the historical, cultural, and political contexts of both the traditional and non-traditional gender and social roles represented in the materials they are studying. ASL literary works and ASL texts, including ASL media works, relating to immigrant experiences provide rich material for study, as well as the opportunity for students new to Canada to share their knowledge and experiences with others. In addition, in the context of the ASL program, both students and teachers will become aware of aspects of intercultural communication and discourse – for example, by exploring how different cultures interpret the use of eye contact in conversation.

Teachers can choose ASL resources that reflect diversity and intersectionality. They also need to keep in mind that students often deconstruct materials found outside the classroom (e.g., web articles, online videos, and material on social media platforms). It is imperative for the ASL program to create and sustain safe, healthy, equitable, and audism-free learning environments that honour and respect diversity and intersectionality for every student.

The development of critical thinking skills is integral to the ASL curriculum, as discussed in the section "Critical Thinking Skills, Metacognition, and Metalinguistic Skills". In the context of critical literacy, these skills include identifying and analysing perspectives, values, and issues; detecting bias; and deciphering-deconstructing for implicit as well as explicit meaning. In the ASL program, students develop the ability to detect bias and stereotypes in ASL literary works and ASL texts. When using biased ASL literary works, ASL texts, or non-ASL works containing stereotypes for the express purpose of critical analysis, ASL teachers take into account the potential impact of bias on students and use appropriate strategies to address students' responses. Critical literacy also involves asking questions and challenging the status quo, leading students to examine issues of power and justice in society related to ASL and the ASL community. Through critical literacy, students can present and argue their perspectives when discussing issues that strongly affect them. ASL literary works and ASL texts, including ASL media works, also afford both ASL teachers and students a unique opportunity to explore the social and emotional impact of different forms of oppression related to audism, racism, sexism, or homophobia on individuals and families, communities, and society.

Assessment and Evaluation of Student Achievement

Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, First Edition, Covering Grades 1 to 12, 2010 sets out the Ministry of Education's assessment, evaluation, and reporting policy. The policy aims to maintain high standards, improve student learning, and benefit students, parents, and teachers in elementary and secondary schools across the

province. Successful implementation of this policy depends on the professional judgement[31] of educators at all levels as well as on their ability to work together and to build trust and confidence among parents and students.

Major aspects of assessment, evaluation, and reporting policy are summarized in the main Assessment and Evaluation section. The key tool for assessment and evaluation in ASL as a second language – the achievement chart – is provided below.

The Achievement Chart for ASL as a Second Language

The achievement chart identifies four categories of knowledge and skills and four levels of achievement in ASL as a second language. (For important background, see "Content Standards and Performance Standards" in the main Assessment and Evaluation section.)

Knowledge and Understanding — Knowledge of subject-specific content of the course, and understanding of its meaning and significance				
Categories	**50–59%** **(Level 1)**	**60–69%** **(Level 2)**	**70–79%** **(Level 3)**	**80–100%** **(Level 4)**
	The student:			
Knowledge of content *(e.g., ASL parameters; ASL vocabulary; classifiers; ASL discourse markers; spatial orientation; non-manual markers; registers; ASL language conventions; ASL culture)*	demonstrates limited knowledge of content	demonstrates some knowledge of content	demonstrates considerable knowledge of content	demonstrates thorough knowledge of content
Understanding of content *(e.g., facts, ideas, and opinions; ASL language structures and strategies; forms and characteristics of ASL literary works and ASL texts; relationships*	demonstrates limited understanding of content	demonstrates some understanding of content	demonstrates considerable understanding of content	demonstrates thorough understanding of content

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[31] "Professional judgement", as defined in *Growing Success* (p. 152), is "judgement that is informed by professional knowledge of curriculum expectations, context, evidence of learning, methods of instruction and assessment, and the criteria and standards that indicate success in student learning. In professional practice, judgement involves a purposeful and systematic thinking process that evolves in terms of accuracy and insight with ongoing reflection and self-correction".

between language and culture)				
Thinking — The use of critical and creative thinking skills and/or processes				
Categories	**50–59% (Level 1)**	**60–69% (Level 2)**	**70–79% (Level 3)**	**80–100% (Level 4)**
	The student:			
Use of planning skills *(e.g., using the ASL constructing process; generating, gathering, and organizing ideas and information; formulating questions; contextualizing and elaborating on facts and ideas; selecting and using strategies and resources)*	uses planning skills with limited effectiveness	uses planning skills with some effectiveness	uses planning skills with considerable effectiveness	uses planning skills with a high degree of effectiveness
Use of processing skills *(e.g., inferring; deconstructing; predicting; classifying; interpreting; analysing; summarizing; revising; restructuring; constructing; evaluating; synthesizing; reflecting; detecting bias)*	uses processing skills with limited effectiveness	uses processing skills with some effectiveness	uses processing skills with considerable effectiveness	uses processing skills with a high degree of effectiveness
Use of critical/creative thinking processes *(e.g., using critical literacy; using language learning, research and inquiry, problem-solving, and decision-making processes; reasoning, and critiquing; using metacognitive and metalinguistic skills)*	uses critical/ creative thinking processes with limited effectiveness	uses critical/ creative thinking processes with some effectiveness	uses critical/ creative thinking processes with considerable effectiveness	uses critical/ creative thinking processes with a high degree of effectiveness

Communication — The conveying of meaning through various forms				
Categories	**50–59%** **(Level 1)**	**60–69%** **(Level 2)**	**70–79%** **(Level 3)**	**80–100%** **(Level 4)**
	The student:			
Expression and organization of ideas and information *(e.g., clear expression; logical organization)* **in a variety of discourse forms**	expresses and organizes ideas and information with limited effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with some effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with considerable effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with a high degree of effectiveness
Communication for different audiences *(e.g., convey ideas and information to peers, teachers, ASL community members, non-ASL community members)* **and purposes** *(e.g., to interact, collaborate; to inform, instruct; to entertain, perform; to persuade; to discuss feelings and ideas; to solve problems)* **in a variety of discourse forms**	communicates for different audiences and purposes with limited effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with some effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with considerable effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with a high degree of effectiveness
Use of conventions *(e.g., ASL parameters, ASL language structures, non-manual markers, style and usage, registers),* **vocabulary, terminology and classifiers of the discipline in a variety of discourse forms** *(e.g., forms appropriate to contextualized situations)*	uses conventions, vocabulary, terminology and classifiers of the discipline with limited effectiveness	uses conventions, vocabulary, terminology and classifiers of the discipline with some effectiveness	uses conventions, vocabulary, terminology and classifiers of the discipline with considerable effectiveness	uses conventions, vocabulary, terminology and classifiers of the discipline with a high degree of effectiveness

Application — The use of knowledge and skills to make connections within and between various contexts

Categories	50–59% (Level 1)	60–69% (Level 2)	70–79% (Level 3)	80–100% (Level 4)
	The student:			
Application of knowledge and skills *(e.g., language learning strategies, translation skills, derivative identification skills, cultural understanding)* **in familiar contexts**	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with limited effectiveness	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with some effectiveness	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with considerable effectiveness	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with a high degree of effectiveness
Transfer of knowledge and skills *(e.g., language learning strategies, cultural understanding)* **to new contexts** *(e.g., authentic classroom scenarios; real-life scenarios beyond the classroom)*	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with limited effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with some effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with considerable effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with a high degree of effectiveness
Making connections within and between various contexts *(e.g., between personal, social, cultural, historical, global, and/or environmental contexts; between ASL and other languages; between languages and other subjects)*	makes connections within and between various contexts with limited effectiveness	makes connections within and between various contexts with some effectiveness	makes connections within and between various contexts with considerable effectiveness	makes connections within and between various contexts with a high degree of effectiveness

LASBO – American Sign Language as a Second Language, Level 1

Open

This course provides opportunities for students to begin to develop foundational language skills and cultural competencies in American Sign Language (ASL). Students will begin to engage in basic ASL conversational discourses in guided and interactive settings. Using a variety of strategies, they will develop skills to comprehend, construct, and present various basic ASL literary works and ASL texts, and begin to develop an understanding of the connections between ASL language, culture, and community. They will also develop the knowledge and skills necessary for lifelong language learning.

Prerequisite: None

Expectations by strand

A. ASL Conversational Discourse

Overall expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

A1. Understanding Ideas and Information in ASL Conversational Discourse

determine meaning, and demonstrate a basic knowledge of ASL culture, using comprehension strategies and interactive strategies, in a variety of basic ASL conversational discourse contexts

Specific expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

A1.1 Demonstrating Understanding of ASL Language Features

demonstrate a basic understanding of ASL language features and a basic knowledge of ASL cultural protocols in a variety of basic ASL conversational discourse contexts

Teacher supports

Example(s)

ASL language features: timing; stress; intonation; eye aperture; rhythm

Teacher Prompt(s)

- In the conversation that you observed, what did you notice about the hand movements, timing, and eye aperture of the person apologizing, and why do you think the person chose to use these language features?
- What ASL language features and cultural protocols indicate turn-taking in the video text you have been studying?
- What language features indicate that a person is exaggerating an ASL word?

Instructional Tip(s)

Teachers can encourage students to:

- practise using pinky extension to add emphasis when disagreeing with a point of view during a conversation;
- identify how facial intonation might be incorporated when using the ASL word AWESOME in a conversation with a peer;
- construct questions in response to a peer's presentation and use pre-selected language features (e.g., timing, stress) in a follow-up discussion.

A1.2 Using Comprehension Strategies in ASL

use comprehension strategies and a basic knowledge of ASL cultural protocols before, during, and after engaging in a variety of basic ASL conversational discourses

Teacher supports

Example(s)

Comprehension strategies: identifying the ASL words for people, objects, and places that are used in a conversational discourse; making predictions based on knowledge of familiar ASL conversations; identifying and using structural cues to anticipate the next part of a conversational sequence; making connections between a discourse and personal experiences; asking one of the participants in a conversation about an event to share the key points of the conversation; asking questions to check understanding, to obtain additional information, or for clarification

Teacher Prompt(s)

- In the context of a conversation, how can non-manual markers be used to determine when a question or statement is being made?

Instructional Tip(s)

- Teachers can ask students to:

  - identify ASL pronouns in conversations and then distinguish between the singular and plural forms;
  - infer the meaning of unfamiliar ASL words based on their knowledge of ASL sentence structure and the context.

- Teachers can develop a classroom routine that allows for multiple opportunities for students to learn different types of questions and to give answers using basic ASL verb tenses and ASL syntax, such as IX=2 FINISH BUY BOOK? to indicate the past tense.

A1.3 Using ASL Interactive Strategies to Acquire Ideas and Information

use a variety of ASL interactive strategies that reflect a basic knowledge of ASL cultural protocols to determine meaning in a variety of basic ASL conversational discourse contexts

Teacher supports

ASL interactive strategies: frowning to indicate that clarification is necessary; twitching the nose to indicate agreement or acknowledgement; stomping on the floor or tapping on the table to gain attention

- In ASL group conversations, what interactive strategies can be used to indicate continued engagement or agreement, while not interrupting anyone?
- Maintaining eye gaze is an important cultural protocol and an ASL interactive strategy. If, during a conversation, your attention is interrupted, what is a polite way to resume the interaction and address any offence that might have been taken?

- Teachers can encourage students to practise using ASL interactive strategies and cultural protocols for turn-taking as they gather information about each other's favourite sports and create a chart compiling the information, such as IX=1 PLAY SOCCER.; IX=1 GO SWIMMING.

A2. Responding to Ideas and Information in ASL Conversational Discourse

respond with ideas and information appropriate to the purpose and audience while demonstrating a basic knowledge of ASL culture, using a range of strategies, in a variety of basic ASL conversational discourse contexts

Specific expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

A2.1 Applying Knowledge of Language Structures in ASL Conversational Discourse

use basic ASL conventions and ASL grammatical structures to create responses that are suited to the purpose and audience

Teacher supports

Example(s)

ASL grammatical structures: inflection; verb agreement; classifier construction; word order; sentence structure; non-manual markers

Teacher Prompt(s)

- How can you indicate the distinction between questions and statements by using non-manual grammatical markers?
- What do you notice about the structure of the following ASL sentences?

    - STUDENT WANT POS=1 BOOK. [*statement*]
    - MOUSE FINISH EAT CHEESE. [*topicalization*]
    - IF RAIN, CANCEL BASEBALL. [*conditional sentence*]
    - IX=2 LIKE SCHOOL? *[yes/no question]*

- How is the ASL number system for counting (1, 2, 3, …) different from the ASL ordinal number system (FIRST, SECOND, THIRD, …)?

Instructional Tip(s)

Teachers can encourage students to:

- explain how to identify whether someone or something is near or far away;
- use a variety of ASL adjectives to describe their favourite character from a movie in a short ASL conversation. Students can use visual aids such as props, images, or other manipulatives to support their description;
- practise the movements that are required for using pronominalized terms such as "two of you".

A2.2 ASL Cultural Knowledge, Purpose, and Audience

use knowledge of ASL culture when selecting language structures for responses suited to the purpose and audience

Teacher supports

ASL cultural knowledge: surveying a social setting and audience to determine the appropriate register for a response; using hand waving or tapping on a person's shoulder to get their attention during a conversation; making eye contact to engage in a conversation; head nodding to indicate understanding during a conversation

Teacher Prompt(s)

- How can you tell if an ASL person is presenting in a more formal register, and how would you construct your response to them so that it is culturally appropriate?
- What should you consider when selecting the appropriate ASL convention for an informal apology?

Instructional Tip(s)

Teachers can:

- encourage students to consider the cultural context when choosing ASL vocabulary and registers to create ASL dialogue that would be appropriate for ordering food in a fast-food restaurant;
- invite a member of an Indigenous Sign Language community to share information and answer questions (e.g., about the significance of using a circle in group conversations);
- encourage students to observe a variety of ASL conversational discourses to determine when backchannelling is appropriate to use.

A2.3 Using ASL Interactive Strategies to Respond with Ideas and Information

use a variety of ASL interactive strategies to respond with ideas and information suited to the purpose and audience

Teacher supports

Example(s)

ASL interactive strategies: if arriving late for class, waiting for the ASL teacher to indicate permission to enter the classroom with eye contact and a brief head nod; making positive comments such as THAT AMAZING, AWESOME, COOL to show interest in a classmate they are interviewing; twisting one's wrists rapidly to indicate praise

- When setting up an ASL space, how can the seating be arranged to facilitate engagement?
- What strategies might an ASL person use to gain your attention in order to ask for your assistance?
- How do ASL conversation regulators indicate a greeting or the end of a conversational discourse?

Instructional Tip(s)

- ASL teachers can develop students' interactive skills and responding skills through the use of total physical response.
- Students can practise using real-world indexing when responding to a request to identify a person who is present in the classroom.

A3. Reflecting on ASL Conversational Discourse

reflect on and describe the strategies, skills, and ASL cultural knowledge they found most helpful in both acquiring and responding to ideas and information, and plan next steps to improve their conversational discourse

Specific expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

A3.1 Metacognition

describe the strategies they found most helpful in acquiring and responding in a variety of basic ASL conversational discourse contexts, and identify steps they can take to refine their use of these strategies

Teacher supports

Example(s)

Strategies: examining their ASL video log or journal to determine preferred conversational forms and discussing next steps with their teacher to refine their syntax; restating a conversation in their choice of words in recorded form; creating a video or a poster featuring images of themselves in an ASL conversation, pictures of the items they are discussing, and pictures of the ASL words for those items; conversing about real-life experiences they have had within the ASL community, such as meeting an ASL person at an ASL cultural event

- How did your review of ASL sentence structure prior to examining the ASL video text help you understand the content, even though the topic of the discourse was unfamiliar?
- How did practising turn-taking with a peer help you in your role as host for a panel discussion with ASL guests?
- How can recording and then reviewing your work help you identify areas for improvement?

Instructional Tip(s)

- Teachers can encourage students to:

  - use repetition to improve their constructing skills for effective conversational discourse. Ask students to repeat their constructions several times, and encourage them to ask their peers to observe and provide feedback on their work;
  - select ideas from their peers' feedback related to the use of real-world indexing and apply them in a discussion (e.g., IX=2 NEED DOCTOR.).

- Teachers can also provide students with information on:

  - specific individuals in the ASL community who are interested in helping students practise their conversational skills;
  - where materials and/or resources can be found to support their efforts to improve their ASL conversations.

A3.2 Interconnected Skills

identify deciphering-deconstructing, representing, and responding skills and ASL cultural knowledge used while acquiring and responding to ideas and information in a variety of basic ASL conversational discourse contexts

Teacher supports

Example(s)

Skills: subject-verb agreement; topicalization; incorporation of non-manual markers in yes/no questions; understanding ASL cultural cues such as eye contact that signifies turn-taking

Teacher Prompt(s)

- How do you use ASL inflection to denote colour, size, or shape?

- You have improved your ASL vocabulary so that you are now able to describe the technology you use at school or home. What skills are needed to engage in a conversation about how that technology is used?
- What cultural protocols should you follow when you interrupt and resume conversations with a guest in your classroom?

Teachers can:

- encourage students to use self-reflection to identify skills they used to acquire and respond to ideas and information in ASL;
- use ASL diagnostic assessments to ascertain students' skill levels in comprehending classifier construction in conversations;
- ask students to work in pairs to create a simple scene, using visual aids as a tool to establish reference points for a person and an object. Then, the students can remove the visual aids, but use these reference points and ASL grammatical structures to create a video text that incorporates eye gaze and referential shifting to indicate a non-present object and person;
- provide students with a list of ASL organizations where they can find additional resources to further develop topicalization skills in ASL conversation.

B. Comprehending ASL Construction and Content

Overall expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

B1. Demonstrating Understanding of ASL Content

identify various ASL genres, cultural elements, and ASL words and classifiers to determine meaning in a variety of basic ASL literary works and ASL texts, using a range of comprehension strategies

Specific expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

B1.1 Genres and Characteristics

identify basic characteristics and related cultural aspects of a variety of ASL genres to determine meaning in basic ASL literary works and ASL texts

Teacher supports

Example(s)

Genres, characteristics, and related cultural aspects: repetition to create rhythm in ASL protest chants; imagery in ASL narratives to reflect the lives and experiences of the ASL community – for example, a rope in a keyhole to convey that there is someone at the door; handshape patterning in simple one-handshape ASL poems

Teacher Prompt(s)

- What are the features of carnivalesque discourse, and why did the ASL storyteller we are studying use a carnivalesque discourse form?
- How do you know if a story has been created by a member of the ASL community? What are some of the characteristics of ASL narrative?
- How might the set-up of a room help you predict what type of ASL genre is going to be featured in an event?

Instructional Tip(s)

Teachers can encourage students to:

- use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast two different types of ASL genres;

- use a variety of teacher-recommended websites to find original ASL works created by ASL people that are examples of different types of ASL genres;
- identify the use of specific classifier handshapes as important characteristics of the ASL classifier story "The Flight" by Samuel Supalla.

B1.2 ASL Literary and Cultural Elements

identify a variety of ASL literary and cultural elements in basic ASL literary works and ASL texts, and demonstrate an understanding of their use

Teacher supports

Example(s)

ASL literary elements: characters; events; setting; plot; conflict; theme

ASL cultural elements: imagery and symbols – for example, the artist's use of colour and contrast in their De'VIA works; the particular orientation of ASL actors and use of space in an ASL theatrical production

Teacher Prompt(s)

- Can you identify characters, events, and setting in a short ASL story? How do you know which elements are which?
- What do the interactions between the two characters in the ASL poem "Cow and Rooster" tell you about the themes of this poem?
- Can you name a familiar ASL literary work that incorporates ASL cultural traditions? What elements of the work helped you understand ASL identity?

Instructional Tip(s)

Teachers can encourage students to:

- use graphic organizers, such as concept maps, to discuss the theme or plot of an ASL literary work;
- create an illustration depicting the main conflict in a short ASL story;
- deconstruct the ASL folklore "Timber", and then explore the interconnectedness between ASL folklore and ASL culture.

B1.3 Using Comprehension Strategies to Understand ASL Literary Works and ASL Texts

use a range of comprehension strategies before, during, and after deciphering-deconstructing ideas and information in basic ASL literary works and ASL texts to determine meaning

Teacher supports

Comprehension strategies: activating prior knowledge; questioning; breaking down the content of ASL literary works into lines; repeating the process of deciphering-deconstructing; previewing an ASL poem's characteristics to make predictions

- What comprehension strategies can help you to ascertain the most important message in a short ASL news announcement?
- What questions can you ask to help you understand the meaning of an ASL story or ASL text?
- Samuel Thomas Greene is an important historical figure in Ontario's ASL community. What do you know about him? How did his image in the video we've been studying support your understanding of the text? How is his tombstone significant?

Teachers can:

- use video clips to focus on specific movements of people and animals, and ask students to reflect on how these specific movements are employed in ASL classifiers;
- ask students to examine the first stanza of the ASL poem "Cow and Rooster", and then ask them to predict what will happen in the following stanza based on their understanding of the poem's structure;
- guide a discussion on the symbolism of the characters' specific movements in "Cow and Rooster". Students can identify the movements and their meaning, and then make connections among the social justice issues presented in this poem and in other ASL works that focus on these issues.

B1.4 Using Comprehension Strategies to Understand ASL Words and Classifiers

use a range of comprehension strategies to determine or confirm the meaning of new, unfamiliar, or recently learned ASL words and classifiers in basic ASL literary works and ASL texts

Teacher supports

Example(s)

Comprehension strategies: identify high-frequency, familiar ASL words in order to begin to determine meaning in unfamiliar ASL texts; identify cognates to make connections between ASL words and words from other languages, such as French Sign Language; use context and knowledge of familiar ASL words and classifiers to infer the meaning of unfamiliar ASL words and classifiers; identify unfamiliar ASL words and substitute them with familiar ASL words

Teacher Prompt(s)

- When the ASL classifier is pluralized, how does the meaning of the ASL word for BICYCLE change?
- What mnemonic techniques would you use to recall newly learned ASL words?
- Why did the person use the ASL number system to indicate a hockey player in their ASL media work – for example, number 27 for Mark Couture?
- What decoding strategies did you use to understand unfamiliar ASL words in the video clip of the short story "Leaves"?
- How can knowledge of ASL sociolinguistic conventions, such as the existence of regional variations of the word BIRTHDAY, help provide information about an ASL person?

Instructional Tip(s)

Teachers can encourage students to:

- research clothing from the Samuel Greene era to develop ASL vocabulary that enhances their comprehension of the Samuel Greene ASL video text;
- use their knowledge of ASL synonyms, such as ELEPHANT using the B handshape and ELEPHANT using the C handshape, to decode ASL parameters and to deduce the meaning of unfamiliar ASL words;
- identify noun-verb pairs such as CHAIR and SIT, and compare movement in each pair to determine meaning;
- use cueing systems as a strategy for decoding unfamiliar words in an ASL text;
- identify the classifier and depicting verb that describe the motion of a vehicle – for example, in an ASL sentence such as:

CAR V, –STOP>SUDDEN.

B2. Purpose, ASL Form, and Style

identify the purposes, characteristics, and aspects of style of a variety of ASL forms, and demonstrate a basic knowledge of ASL grammatical structures, ASL culture, and critical literacy skills in ASL

Specific expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

B2.1 Purposes and Characteristics of ASL Forms

identify the purposes and characteristics of a variety of ASL forms, and explain how the characteristics convey meaning and ASL cultural information

Teacher supports

Example(s)

Purposes: a digital flyer to promote ASL video works or products; an announcement for an ASL literary night; a poster using the ASL number system for money to market an upcoming fundraising event

Characteristics: rhyming or non-rhyming patterns; imagery and ASL words that convey emotion; distinctive use of handshapes to indicate colours and symbols

Teacher Prompt(s)

- What key ASL words and cultural references help you identify the purpose of an ASL flyer? Explain how this ASL form might potentially attract people to an ASL event.
- What are key ASL words to use when introducing a guest speaker? How is this different from introducing a friend?
- What ASL grammar structures and key ASL words can you identify in a congratulatory ASL letter to a business owned by an ASL person?

Instructional Tip(s)

The teacher can:

- ask students to identify storytelling characteristics that convey information about ASL culture;
- invite a person from an ASL advocacy group to give a presentation on marketing or advocacy strategies, and then ask students to create an advertisement to promote an event.

B2.2 Style in ASL Forms

identify stylistic devices used in a variety of ASL forms, and explain how they convey meaning

Teacher supports

ASL stylistic devices: embedding temporal aspects in the action of ASL verbs; indicating the sequence in a story or in instructions

- What ASL handshapes are repeated in the ASL poem "Rabbit"? Why do you think the poet used various ASL handshapes in their poem?
- How did the media techniques and shifting perspective help you determine the meaning of Ian Sanborn's ASL literary work "The Trout"?

- Teachers can encourage students to examine an ASL literary work such as "The Caterpillar", and discuss how ASL adverbs are used as a stylistic device.

B2.3 ASL Grammatical Structures and Conventions

demonstrate a basic knowledge of ASL grammatical structures and conventions used in a variety of ASL forms

Teacher supports

ASL grammatical structures and conventions: parameters; inflections; nouns; pronouns; verbs; adjectives; adverbs; classifier constructions; relative clauses; negations; question forms; syntax; non-manual markers

- What happens when a specific parameter of an ASL word is changed?
- What non-manual grammatical markers can be used to indicate a wh-q for WHO?
- What ASL classifiers could be used to make a short story more comical?

Teachers can:

- introduce ASL grammatical structures used in ASL map orientation to encourage students to identify a few locations, such as one city's relation to another city;
- demonstrate how unconventional ASL grammatical structures may be used for specific purposes in ASL stories, such as handshape to denote "tail" in the ASL poem "Cow and Rooster";
- encourage students, with teacher support, to decipher-deconstruct the use of possessive pronouns in a short presentation.

B2.4 Critical Literacy in ASL

develop the critical literacy skills required to identify perspectives, values, and biases in historical and contemporary ASL literary works and ASL texts and in non-ASL texts

Teacher supports

Example(s)

Perspectives: ASL and non-ASL people

Values: absence of ASL people hired to advise, coach, and act in television and other media productions; the ongoing struggle to ensure that ASL is used in formal education systems

Biases: stereotypes in cartoons of ASL interpreters and their use of language

Teacher Prompt(s)

- Identify terms that demonstrate whether a non-ASL theatre critic has accurate knowledge of ASL theatre. How might members of the ASL community react to the critic's review?
- How did you determine the main character's cultural values in the ASL story "David's Snowman"? How is the character's cultural identity made evident?
- Can you list some words used in social media that indicate a bias against members of the ASL community, and suggest alternatives that would be more respectful?

Instructional Tip(s)

Teachers can encourage students to:

- identify perspectives and/or biases in ASL literary works and discuss their findings;

- search online to explore how ASL people across Canada are portrayed in different texts, and consider the impact these texts have on ASL communities.

B3. Reflecting on Comprehension in ASL

reflect on and describe the strategies, skills, and ASL cultural knowledge they found most helpful in determining meaning in ASL literary works and ASL texts, and plan next steps to improve their comprehension

Specific expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

B3.1 Metacognition

describe strategies they found most helpful before, during, and after deciphering-deconstructing basic ASL literary works and ASL texts to determine meaning, and identify next steps to improve their comprehension

Teacher supports

Example(s)

Strategies: use an ASL graphic organizer to brainstorm and develop questions with their peers about what they notice in a pictorial text previewed in class; update their ASL log to track their effective use of strategies to decipher-deconstruct familiar short ASL works; determine whether skimming is a useful strategy for deconstructing digital ASL flyers; examine their ASL journals to note preferred strategies for previewing simple ASL works to find specific information

Teacher Prompt(s)

- What types of ASL words would you preview to better understand a particular passage of a new ASL literary work that you are studying?
- What is an effective strategy that you have used to divide or chunk your learning? How do chunking strategies differ depending on the content, form, or format of the ASL work?
- What strategies might help you to comprehend the meaning of new ASL words as you repeat the process of deciphering-deconstructing?

Instructional Tip(s)

Teachers can:

- encourage students to work in small groups to review an ASL text that includes ASL words about feelings. The students can then say what they notice about these ASL words;
- model how to use a graphic organizer as students decipher-deconstruct a simple ASL media work.

B3.2 Interconnected Skills

identify deciphering-deconstructing, interpreting, constructing, representing, and responding skills and ASL cultural knowledge that build comprehension, and explain how these skills help them to understand basic ASL literary works and ASL texts

Teacher supports

Skills: examining and retelling a short ASL text that includes an online image about the first ASL female teacher; examining the adjectives and adverbs used to describe a character in an ASL story to identify their age; exploring ASL grammar to create an ASL chant such as an "opposites" patterned chant, alternating ASL students IX=1 SIT. IX=2 STAND. IX=1 WAKE UP. IX=2 FALL ASLEEP.; constructing a brief description, or composing an introduction of their family members, including their name and some background information, and discussing a restaurant experience the family shared IX=3 NOT>LIKE BURGER. IX=3 FINISH EAT BEFORE.; referring to video texts to build descriptive vocabulary; practising with peers to improve clarity and accuracy when using the handshapes for the ASL ordinal number system (e.g., FIRST, SECOND, THIRD, FOURTH, FIFTH)

Teacher Prompt(s)

- How can working with a partner deepen your understanding of ASL modifiers used in adjectives in an ASL text?
- How does deconstructing the main character of the familiar ASL story "David's Snowman" help you to understand the story overall?
- What skills did you use when you were studying the literary work "Leaves"? How did the skills support your understanding of the explicit and implicit themes of the story?

Instructional Tip(s)

- Teachers can encourage students to self-assess their comprehension skills, and co-develop learning goals, including goals related to cultural knowledge, with their teacher.

C. Constructing ASL Content and Usage of ASL Grammatical Structures

Overall expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

C1. Purpose, Audience, and ASL Forms

construct a variety of basic ASL literary works and ASL texts for different purposes and audiences, using different ASL forms and a basic knowledge of ASL culture

Specific expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

C1.1 Identifying Purpose and Audience

determine purposes and audiences for a variety of basic ASL literary works and ASL texts that they plan to construct

Teacher supports

Example(s)

Purposes and audiences: to provide background information about a well-known ASL actor to a theatre audience; to invite classmates to an online ASL cultural event; to inform the school community about an issue of importance to the ASL community; to thank a guest speaker at an event; to inform parent council about the highlights of a sporting event

Teacher Prompt(s)

- If the purpose of your ASL announcement is to provide information about a field trip to younger students, what details need to be included in it?
- What type of ASL text could you create to inform the school community about a bake-sale fundraising campaign? Who is your audience?

Instructional Tip(s)

- Teachers can encourage students to: compare an ASL literary work and an ASL text, such as a children's poem and a video of a safety procedure; determine each work's purpose and audience; and then identify some of the characteristics of each work.

- Teachers may also organize students into small groups to discuss specific ASL literary works and ASL texts, and then ask them to identify the purpose of each ASL work and its form.

C1.2 ASL Forms

use knowledge of a variety of ASL forms to construct basic ASL literary works and ASL texts for different purposes and audiences

Teacher supports

Example(s)

Forms and purposes: instructions to conduct a basic experiment; an advertising campaign to increase awareness and understanding of Indigenous Sign Language people; a basic ASL presentation that celebrates the diversity of the 2SLGBTQIA+ ASL community; a video with explanatory text and images to recognize the past and present contributions of Black ASL Ontarians

Teacher Prompt(s)

- What form would be best for engaging your audience's interest in an event, such as a celebration of the International Day of Sign Languages, hosted by an ASL community organization?
- What particular media techniques or images could help you to choose an appropriate form of ASL text, given your purpose?

Instructional Tip(s)

Teachers can support students by:

- modelling how to use an ASL journal entry so that students can recount their experience of a visit (in person or virtual) to a significant historical site, such as the tombstone of Samuel Greene in Belleville, Ontario;
- encouraging them to use a few different ASL forms, such as giving brief instructions, providing simple directions, or conducting a short interview.

C1.3 ASL Grammatical Structures and Conventions

use knowledge of ASL grammatical structures and conventions, and a basic knowledge of ASL culture, to construct basic ASL literary works and ASL texts for different purposes and audiences

Teacher supports

ASL grammatical structures and conventions: use ASL adjectives when describing an ASL sporting event to their peers, including the venue, players, and attendees; use ASL pronouns when asking questions of their teacher; use ASL inflection with non-manual modifiers for BLUE: IX=1 WANT LIGHT>BLUE. IX=3 WANT DARK>BLUE

- If you wanted to make a statement, such as IX=1 WANT MILK., a question, how would you change the construction?
- How can you use non-manual markers to indicate negation in an ASL sentence such as IX=3 DISLIKE PARTY?
- How can you use ASL depicting verbs to enhance your public service announcement to students about bicycle safety?

Teachers can ask students to:

- create a short ASL story about birds that come to help a character in a story, using ASL ordinal numbers (e.g., FIRST BIRD BLUE, SECOND BIRD RED, THIRD BIRD YELLOW);
- select ASL non-manual grammatical markers for wh-questions (e.g., INDIGENOUS PEOPLE GATHERING, WHEN?) when conducting a short interview;
- create simple scenes involving one or two characters using ASL syntax;
- use pictures posted in the classroom, such as two pictures of cats, as props, and create ASL sentences that incorporate eye gaze and referential shifts to establish references to cats that are not present.

C1.4 ASL Words and Classifiers

use a variety of strategies to build knowledge of ASL words and classifiers, and apply these strategies when constructing basic ASL literary works and ASL texts for different purposes and audiences

Teacher supports

Strategies: create a list of ASL words encountered in online ASL literary works, and identify the context in which the words are used; consult a classroom ASL word wall to find synonyms;

consult a glossary for ASL lexicalized word meanings; create and maintain a shared digital file containing a list of new classifiers learned in class

- How can knowing one ASL word help you to figure out the meaning of another? For example, how can knowing the noun form of the ASL word PAINT help you to figure out the meaning of other ASL words related to PAINT?
- How many ASL words can you think of that use the C handshape such as the ASL word LOOK?

Instructional Tip(s)

Teachers can:

- ask students to use the context of a new ASL word to infer its meaning, and then include the new word in an ASL work they are constructing;
- construct a cloze procedure using a short ASL work and ask the class for classifiers to "fill in the blanks";
- encourage students to use ASL language resources to increase their repertoire of synonyms;
- ask students to choose an area of interest, such as social media, and acquire technical language related to that area;
- model how to research new ASL words, and then encourage students to explore the etymology of ASL words to expand their understanding of groups of related ASL words.

C2. Using the ASL Constructing Process

use the ASL constructing process to plan, draft, revise, edit, and publish a variety of basic ASL literary works and ASL texts

Specific expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

C2.1 Generating, Developing, and Organizing Content

generate, develop, and organize ideas and content, with teacher support, before constructing basic ASL literary works and ASL texts

Teacher supports

Generating, developing, and organizing: activate prior knowledge through group discussion; refer to their ASL video "notebook" to draw upon previous learning and experiences; sort ideas and information using graphic organizers; pose questions to their teachers and peers to stimulate creative thinking

- How did brainstorming using the video graphic organizer help you to prepare your ASL work?
- How can reviewing basic ASL poems help you to generate and organize ideas for the ASL poem you are creating?
- You have been assigned to do a short ASL report on your visit to an ASL program at a postsecondary institution. What strategies will you use to easily gather and organize the information you need for your report?

Teachers can:

- use a storyboard with the class to generate ideas for creating a short documentary about the "Gallaudet Football Huddle" that illustrates how the technique originated with Gallaudet University and influenced the game of football;
- ask students to draw images representing their first impressions of ASL, and then create a class collage. Next, they can gather students in small groups, and ask them to discuss the collage and compile their thoughts in a short ASL presentation;
- ask students to find an ASL story such as "Rooster" that contains a possible topic for a related ASL informational text that they might create.

C2.2 Drafting and Revising Content

draft basic ASL literary works and ASL texts and revise for content, organization, and style, using a basic knowledge of ASL grammatical structures and conventions, with teacher support

Teacher supports

Drafting and revising: revise ASL content to provide more detail or clarity; check their use of ASL grammatical structures to ensure consistent subject-verb agreement; check for ASL verb inflections in the ASL temporal aspect for eating

- How does reviewing the spatial positioning and sequencing of ASL time-order words in your short story ensure that the sequence of events is clear and accurate?
- What revisions did you make after you reviewed your use of inflection in your ASL work?

Teachers can:

- ask students to experiment with combining two ASL sentences into one to make a more interesting ASL sentence;
- ask students to work in small groups to review their drafts and ensure that they are using the correct classifiers – for example, classifiers to describe a person's shirt;
- encourage students to use a drum to create vibrations that set the mood in an ASL work such as an ASL chant – for example, using the rhythms of one and two, and one, two, three.

C2.3 Editing, Finalizing, and Publishing ASL Literary Works and ASL Texts

use a basic knowledge of ASL grammatical structures, conventions, and culture to edit, finalize, and publish basic ASL literary works and ASL texts, with teacher support

Teacher supports

Editing: place images appropriately in an ASL documentary; ensure the images and ASL words support the message of an ASL flyer; add descriptive ASL words to enhance ASL informational text; review their ASL story with a partner to determine if it is necessary to add or restructure the information to improve the story's cohesion

- What strategies can you use to detect run-on ASL sentences in a short ASL monologue?
- What strategies can you use to detect irregularities in your use of ASL verbs in your ASL work about two students sharing their plans for the weekend?
- How can you organize the visual aids in your ASL slide deck to help the parent council understand important information about the school timetable?
- What strategies can you use to ascertain the coherence of your short ASL children's story?

Teachers can:

- provide frequent opportunities for peer editing and student-teacher conferences;
- offer students a list of guiding questions in ASL anchor charts as a strategy for checking the accuracy and relevance of information, as well as its coherence and clarity;
- co-create a checklist with students to ensure that their ASL work is grammatically correct before it is published;
- lead students in a "gallery walk" to gather their feedback on their ASL works.

C2.4 Applying Critical Literacy Skills

describe how they used their knowledge of ASL culture at various stages of the ASL constructing process to ensure that the basic ASL literary works and ASL texts they created demonstrate respect for a variety of ASL communities

Teacher supports

Example(s)

Demonstrating respect: research and use the appropriate ASL words when drafting an introduction for a respected member of the ASL community; check for appropriate ASL name signs when developing an ASL text about an individual's contribution to the community; ask for feedback from members of the ASL community when revising and editing a short ASL poem

Teacher Prompt(s)

- Which ASL grammatical structure in the ASL text you are constructing needs to be edited in order to be more respectful?
- What part of your ASL text about the De'VIA work "Color" reflects your research of ASL cultural practices?
- How have ASL literary works and ASL texts had an impact on you? How has your life experience influenced your use of ASL words?
- What kinds of questions do you need to ask yourself as you construct your ASL literary works and ASL texts?
- How does your ASL literary work reflect intersectionality in ASL communities?

Instructional Tip(s)

Teachers can ask students to:

- explain how ASL literary works have influenced their perspective so that they can create bias-free ASL works that demonstrate respect;
- examine their use of language in the ASL online newsletter they have created – for example, when advertising an upcoming visit from an ASL artist, ensure that their profile of the artist is respectful;
- work in a small group to create a short ASL review to discuss the lack of respect and the power imbalance in the ASL work "Cow and Rooster".

C3. Reflecting on the ASL Constructing Process

reflect on and describe the strategies, skills, and ASL cultural knowledge they found most helpful throughout the ASL constructing process; identify the ASL works they created that demonstrate a progression in their learning; and plan next steps to improve their construction of ASL literary works and ASL texts

Specific expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

C3.1 Metacognition

describe strategies they found most helpful before, during, and after using the ASL constructing process to create basic ASL literary works and ASL texts, and identify next steps to improve their ASL constructing skills

Teacher supports

Example(s)

Strategies: work in small groups to generate and share ideas; refer to visual aids when learning new ASL words; use an ASL notebook and an ASL word wall to build vocabulary; observe ASL words and ASL works from multiple perspectives to refine constructing skills; use repetition to refine and practise their ASL works

Teacher Prompt(s)

- As you prepared for your interview with the president of an ASL organization, you made a list of ASL words that you thought you might need. Where did you research the ASL words? What did you do with the information you found?
- What visual aids were helpful when you were learning non-manual markers for questions?

- After a presentation on different kinds of technologies that members of the ASL community use, what types of questions can you ask to help determine the effectiveness of the various forms? How can the answers help you prepare a follow-up presentation?

Teachers can ask students to:

- discuss the purpose and audience for their ASL work with their classmates before they begin constructing;
- explain how a mind map helped them plan and develop ideas for their ASL chant. This might take place in a video-based student/teacher conference;
- describe during a constructing process session how the use of peer feedback helped them to revise their ASL slogan;
- identify different feedback they received about ASL relative clauses in their draft presentation.

C3.2 Interconnected Skills

identify deciphering-deconstructing, interpreting, representing, and responding skills, and ASL cultural knowledge they used to construct basic ASL literary works and ASL texts, and explain how these skills helped them in the constructing process

Teacher supports

Skills: present and examine the short ASL story "Friend", and then build on it to create an interesting ending; announce in ASL: IX=1 FIND BIRD., then repeat the announcement using different ASL words; using a simple map of the community, create a short video giving simple directions to go from the school to a destination of their choice; after presenting the ASL classifier story "The Flight", work in a group to construct their own ASL classifier story

- You have practised presenting your short ASL story. How does practice and repetition help you to clarify your ASL sentences?
- You have asked a peer for their interpretation of your ASL work. How does their feedback on the clarity of your grammatical structures help you to refine your constructing skills?

Teachers can ask students to:

- record their reflections on how taking the time to review their work helps to improve it;
- compare their experiences of using the ASL constructing process individually, and as part of a group. Which experience produced a more refined ASL work? Which experience did they prefer, and why?

C3.3 Developing a Portfolio

select a few of the ASL literary works and ASL texts they have constructed that demonstrate a progression in their learning, and explain the reasons for their selection

Teacher supports

Example(s)

Progression in their learning: expanded ASL vocabulary; better awareness of subject-verb agreement; improved use of basic ASL classifiers; use of more complex ASL sentence structures

Teacher Prompt(s)

- In the first ASL works you created, you used the present tense to simplify the subject-verb agreement. How did you use the past tense in a later work you completed?

Instructional Tip(s)

Teachers can ask students to:

- compare their use of ASL classifiers in their first draft of an ASL work to their use of classifiers in their final draft;
- use a digital portfolio tool to document their progress in the creation of ASL work, within the classroom or beyond.

D. Understanding the Connections Between ASL Language, Culture, Identity, and Community

Overall expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

D1. ASL Language, Culture, Identity, and Community

demonstrate a basic understanding of how ASL language and culture build identity and have contributed to the evolution and preservation of ASL communities

Specific expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

D1.1 Elements of ASL Language and Culture That Build Identity and Community

describe various elements of ASL language and culture that contribute to ASL identity and are reflected in diverse ASL communities

Teacher supports

Example(s)

Elements of ASL language and culture: beliefs and values; social norms; literary works and texts; traditions; history; art; community organizations

Teacher Prompt(s)

- What is the significance of ASL name signs? How are they given?
- How have ASL community members in the past contributed to current ASL culture and identity?
- How does your understanding of your own culture and identity help you to understand ASL culture and its connection to identity?
- What elements of your own culture and identity do you see reflected in the ASL works you've studied?

Instructional Tip(s)

Teachers can:

- encourage students to use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast elements of their own culture with elements of ASL culture;
- invite a member of the Oneida Sign Language community to visit the classroom, and then ask students to work in small groups to create a presentation to showcase their basic understanding of the elements of Oneida Sign Language culture;
- attend an LGBTQ2S ASL presentation with the class, and then ask students to reflect on the terminology they were introduced to;
- encourage students to research communities that might exist within the broader ASL community, such as the Muslim ASL community, the Chinese-Canadian ASL community, and the Black ASL community.

D1.2 The ASL Community's Evolution

explain how a variety of past and present issues, events, and people have contributed to the evolution of the ASL community

Teacher supports

Example(s)

Issues, events, and people: British Sign Language (BSL) settlers in Saskatchewan at the turn of the twentieth century and how their language and culture evolved as they established their settlements; linguistic research by William C. Stokoe Jr. in the 1950s that established that ASL is a complete language; De'VIA art by Helen McNicoll that represents Canadian ASL identity and celebrates life and pride in the ASL community; the invention of technology that has created more opportunities for social engagement and information sharing within the ASL community and between the ASL community and other communities; increased resource development related to ASL literary works; Dr. Samuel Supalla's mid-1990s research in ASL graphemes; the creation of buildings and public areas with ASL spaces that affirm the culture; the development of more theatres dedicated to ASL audiences

Teacher Prompt(s)

- How have depictions of ASL people in artworks changed over time to reflect the pride of those who are part of the ASL community?
- How did BSL, and other elements of BSL culture, evolve among BSL settlers and have an impact on a few small settlements in Saskatchewan in the early twentieth century?
- What elements of contemporary society, such as technological developments, have influenced the evolution of ASL?
- As a class, we have examined an artwork that depicts Samuel Greene. What do you notice about the colours that the ASL artist chose?

Teachers can ask students:

- how art works from the De'VIA movement demonstrate an evolution in the ASL community;
- to create a presentation about the evolution of technologies used by the ASL community.

D1.3 Preservation of the ASL Community

describe how ASL language, culture, and identity help to maintain and preserve the ASL community

Teacher supports

Teacher Prompt(s)

- How do members of the ASL community receive their name signs?
- What did Linda Wall mean when she said, "Original ASL stories and poetry convey the experiences and emotions of ASL culture"?
- How does the incorporation of ASL cultural practices into the field of sports – for example, the use of the football huddle, the use of lights in hockey goal nets, and the use William Hoy's baseball hand signals – contribute to preserving ASL culture? What impacts might there be on the ASL community as a result of incorporating these practices?

Instructional Tip(s)

Teachers can:

- ask students to consider how ASL websites are important to maintaining ASL culture, and then ask them to determine the authenticity of specific websites;
- ask students to examine how offering first- and second-language courses in ASL helps to preserve the ASL community;
- introduce a De'VIA artwork, and have students identify elements of the art that have significance for the ASL community;
- encourage students to examine, with support from their teacher, how Inuit Sign Language, which has probably been used for the past 5,000 years in Nunavut, is being preserved through research and documentation, and how that work is revitalizing people's use of the language.

D2. Equity and Social Justice Issues

demonstrate a basic understanding of a range of historical and contemporary equity and social justice issues that have affected the ASL community and other sign language communities in Canada, and describe how the ASL community has worked towards equity and social justice objectives

Specific expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

D2.1 Inequity, Social Injustice, and the ASL Community

describe a variety of historical and contemporary examples of inequity and social injustice regarding the ASL community and other sign language communities in Canada

Teacher supports

Example(s)

Inequity and social injustice: audism, including the use of discriminatory or offensive expressions, and stereotyping; linguistic imperialism; omitting ASL as a requirement in a job posting for a position in an organization that serves the ASL community; spaces and buildings that do not reflect how ASL people usually interact, such as narrow sidewalks that are not conducive to ASL discourse

Teacher Prompt(s)

- What prejudiced beliefs, such as audism, have influenced the ASL community's use of their own language in the past and present? How has audism affected the well-being and identity of ASL people?
- What is cultural humility? How can cultural humility inform an individual's responses when encountering an unfamiliar culture? How can cultural humility inform policies and practices to address inequity and injustice related to ASL and ASL culture?
- What are the responsibilities of those in positions of power or privilege towards those who are less powerful or privileged?

Instructional Tip(s)

Teachers can:

- invite an ASL guest speaker, with supports such as visual aids, to discuss their specific ASL community's historical and/or contemporary relationship to social injustice. Teachers can

support students by having pre-visit lessons focused on the topic of social injustice so that students can prepare questions in advance of the ASL guest speaker's visit;

- identify examples of cultural humility that are evident in legislation such as section 32 of Regulation 298, "Operation of Schools – General", R.R.O. 1990, made under the Education Act;
- ask students to describe something they can do to demonstrate cultural humility.

D2.2 Practices, Processes, and Coalitions to Advance Equity

describe how the ASL community has developed practices, processes, and coalitions to work towards equity and social justice objectives

Teacher supports

Example(s)

Practices, processes, and coalitions: efforts to revitalize Indigenous Sign Languages; protests leading to ASL and LSQ becoming languages of instruction in the Ontario education system; ongoing activism to ensure that public information is available to the ASL community in their language; the implementation of bilingual/bicultural education and anti-audism policies; the development of organizations that advocate for the ASL community; the creation of architecture that is more conducive to ASL conversations and culture

Teacher Prompt(s)

- What was the significance of the Ontario Deaf Movement for the education of ASL students in Ontario?
- How did the ASL community respond when the rock group KISS attempted to trademark the ASL word ILY?
- How have specific ASL people advocated against audism and rallied the ASL community to collectively address inequities?

Instructional Tip(s)

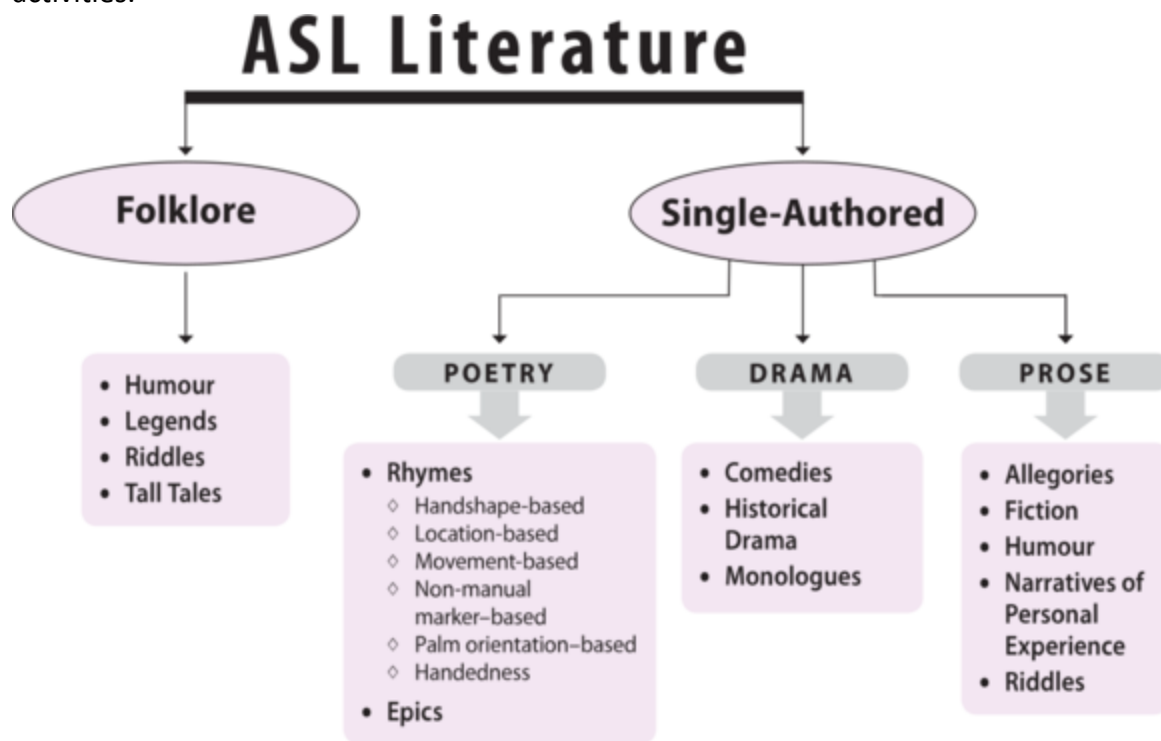Teachers can:

- lead a discussion about the 1989 Deaf Ontario Now movement and consider how frustration and feelings of powerlessness, along with pride in ASL language and cultural identity, led to the protests;
- ask students to investigate how various racial or cultural groups within the ASL community have been formed to address intersectional issues of racism and audism in the ASL community.

Appendix A: American Sign Language Literary Genres

The following chart illustrates the wide variety of genres in ASL literature. Teachers are encouraged to include as many of these genres as possible in their teaching and learning activities.

ASL Literature

Folklore
- Humour
- Legends
- Riddles
- Tall Tales

Single-Authored

POETRY
- Rhymes
  ◦ Handshape-based
  ◦ Location-based
  ◦ Movement-based
  ◦ Non-manual marker–based
  ◦ Palm orientation–based
  ◦ Handedness
- Epics

DRAMA
- Comedies
- Historical Drama
- Monologues

PROSE
- Allegories
- Fiction
- Humour
- Narratives of Personal Experience
- Riddles

Source: Adapted from Andrew P. J. Byrne, "American Sign Language Literature: Some Considerations for Legitimacy and Quality Issues", *Society for American Sign Language Journal* 1, no. 1 (2017): 56–77.

Appendix B: Useful Terms for Understanding American Sign Language

The definitions provided in this appendix are for terms that are not used in the curriculum but that are important for understanding ASL. Definitions for terms that are used in the curriculum are provided in the glossary.

alliteration. A literary device that uses deliberate repetition of handshape, location, or movement and hold for stylistic effect (e.g., the Y handshape in the ASL poem "Cow and Rooster" by Clayton Valli).

allusion. A brief reference, explicit or implicit, to a place, person, or event related to the ASL community that reflects the perspective of the ASL community. It may be historical, cultural, literary, religious, mythological, political, or societal (e.g., in Clayton Valli's ASL poem "Hands" an allusion is made to freedom and ASL pride).

anglicism. A word, phrase, idiom, or sentence structure borrowed from the English language. Using anglicisms such as apostrophes, English patterns of subject-verb agreement, or pronouns while constructing content in ASL is inappropriate.

animation. A series of images created in ASL to give the illusion of movement. The images can be created and manipulated digitally, allowing for two- and three-dimensional animation.

anti-discriminatory language. Language that is inclusive and respectful of all, regardless of ancestry, culture, ethnicity, sex, disability, race, colour, religion, age, marital or family status, creed, gender identity/expression, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, or other factors.

arbitrary word. An ASL word with a structure that does not reflect the characteristics of the concept, object, or activity it represents (e.g., CONFIRM). *See also* **iconic word**.

ASL academic discourse. A form of ASL discourse that explores a way of thinking about or discussing information in an educational or scholarly way; for example, conversations, questions, statements, exclamations, instructions, directions, anecdotes, announcements, news broadcasts, interviews, presentations, lectures, recitations, debates, reports, role plays, and drama, in an academic context. *In the glossary, see also* **ASL discourse**, **ASL discourse forms, ASL discourse structure***.*

ASL as an academic language. A formal form of ASL used in exposition, debate, presentation, and literature. ASL as an academic language can convey complex, abstract content. It is necessary to develop proficiency in ASL as an academic language in order to learn the skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. *See also* **level of ASL, technical language**.

ASL compound. An ASL word formed by combining two ASL free morphemes (e.g., the word hotel comprises HOME^SLEEP, bruise comprises BLUE^SPOT).

ASL conditional sentence. An ASL sentence that conveys, contains, or implies a supposition, and is part of the topic structure in ASL. The ASL words #IF and SUPPOSE can be used to express the conditional. Non-manual markers also convey the conditional and can be made without the use of #IF and SUPPOSE (e.g., with raised eyebrows, a head tilt, a short pause, and an eye-gaze shift).

ASL discourse marker. An ASL word or short lexicalized phrase that creates coherence by establishing a relationship between the various ideas presented within an ASL literary work, ASL text, or conversation.

ASL-English biliteracy. The ability to decode, comprehend, assess, and evaluate both ASL and English literary works and texts. To become biliterate, students use their first-language skills to develop their second-language skills in a variety of contexts and learn to make cross-linguistic connections between ASL and English, while developing their metalinguistic and metacognitive skills.

ASL grammatical patterns. Patterns that can be identified in all aspects of ASL (e.g., inflection, auxiliary verbs, pronominalization, classifier structures, and word order).

ASL humour. The expression of something amusing or comical in ASL. ASL humour reflects common experiences unique to the ASL community and is based on ASL narratives, word play, irony, and other comedic devices.

ASL lexicon. The collection of words that make up the language of ASL, or a repertoire of ASL words within a specific lexical field. The individual ASL words in a collection are called "lexical items". *In the glossary, see also* **ASL vocabulary, ASL word**.

ASL locative verb. A verb that indicates location and relationship by showing how people or objects are spatially related to each other.

ASL name sign. A sign that functions as a person's ASL name. There are two types of name signs: "arbitrary" (ANS) and "descriptive" (DNS). The majority of contemporary name signs are arbitrary and are based on the first letter of a person's legal name. Other name signs are descriptive and are based on the physical characteristics of a person. Name signs are rule-governed and are assigned by members of the ASL community to people who are or become part of the ASL community. *See also* **Classic Ontario ASL (CO ASL)**.

ASL-phabet. The specific system of graphemes developed for writing words in ASL. It consists of thirty-two graphemes: twenty-two for the handshape parameter, five for the location parameter, and five for the movement parameter. All ASL words are written in a sequence of graphemes with the relevant handshape, location, and movement information. *See also* **ASL-phabetic order;** *in the glossary, see also* **ASL graphemes**.

ASL-phabetic order. The basic order for writing words in ASL. When writing an ASL word, its graphemes are written in the order of, first, the relevant handshape (H) information, second, the location (L) information, and third, the movement (M) information. *See also* **ASL-phabet;** *in the glossary, see also* **ASL graphemes**.

ASL phonemic awareness. The ability to identify and manipulate phonemes – the smallest units of ASL words, including handshape, location, and movement, which contain no meaning in and of themselves.

ASL phonetics. The relationship between graphemes of ASL, which function like letters in English, and the individual parameters of ASL. *In the glossary, see also* **ASL graphemes**.

ASL poet. A person who creates ASL poetry and who may also study, analyse, and experiment with it.

ASL proficiency assessment. An evaluation or analysis that measures an individual's ASL proficiency against a standard set of ASL competencies.

ASLSL. An acronym that stands for "American Sign Language as a Second Language". It is used to refer to second-language learners who aim to develop an awareness and understanding of ASL language and culture.

ASL referent. The subject being referred to in ASL. Indicating a referent involves "indexing" or pointing with the index finger at a person, object, or place that may be physically present ("real-world indexing") or that may not be physically present ("abstract indexing"). The person names a referent and then locates it by pointing to a specific location in the signing space. The person may repeatedly point to the same location to refer to the non-present referent, as needed, (e.g., when conveying a narrative with two or more characters). *In the glossary, see also* **indexing**.

ASL storyteller. A person who creates, constructs, and/or delivers stories in ASL that incorporate a variety of ASL conventions and literary and stylistic devices.

ASL trickster. A mischievous figure in an ASL story who mediates between characters and audiences, challenges boundaries and social norms, and comments critically on the narrative. A trickster usually has magical powers and usually appears in a human form, depending on the specific ASL community and the purpose of the story. *See also* **ASL trickster tale**.

ASL trickster tale. An ASL story featuring a trickster-hero protagonist. Trickster tales are told both for amusement and education. *See also* **ASL trickster**.

ASL word play. A literary technique in which the ASL parameters of ASL words are manipulated for an intended effect (e.g., humour, wit, emphasis).

asset-based language. Language that values what a person or a group of people contributes to society; for example, language that focuses on the strengths of ASL people and other Sign Language Peoples and that views their perspectives and their cultures as positive assets. *See also* **inclusive language.**

assimilate. To absorb and integrate an individual or group into the culture of another.

basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS). Language skills that language learners acquire through everyday conversation and interaction. BICS are typically developed before academic proficiency can be acquired. *See also* **cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP).**

canon. A collection of related ASL literary works that have been regarded over a period of time to reflect a sophisticated and complex use of ASL language and structure as well as humanistic values. Works that are considered part of the canon include "For a Decent Living", "Dandelions", and "Cow and Rooster".

carnivalesque discourse. A type of aesthetic language that is found in some literary works. Carnivalesque discourse contests and tests authority and traditional social hierarchies through the use of parody, travesty, and farce. Examples can be found in ASL dramatic works such as "My Third Eye" by D. Hays and "Circus of Signs" by A. Blue.

Classic Ontario ASL (CO ASL). The dialect used today by members of the ASL community in Ontario. It originated at the Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf (formerly called the Ontario School for the Deaf) in Belleville, Ontario. *See also* **ASL name sign**.

cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). The language ability required in the classroom for academic work. Unlike conversational language proficiency, CALP requires the ability to analyse, synthesize, and evaluate complex and conceptual language. Students need at least five years to develop cognitive academic language proficiency in a second language. *See also* **basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS).**

colloquialism in ASL. The linguistic style used in everyday conversation, but not in formal ASL discourse. It is considered an informal ASL register. *In the glossary, see also* **register**.

commonly confused ASL words. ASL words often mistaken for other words that are constructed in a similar parameter (e.g., DEER and MOOSE; RABBIT and HORSE).

compose. To create an ASL work (e.g., an ASL poem, an ASL report, or an ASL story) using the ASL constructing process.

cultural minority group. A group of people that is culturally and/or linguistically distinct from the majority.

culture shock. A sense of confusion or uncertainty that an individual may experience when encountering another culture that is unfamiliar or unknown to them.

dialect in ASL. A variation of ASL particular to a geographical area or cultural-social group. An ASL dialect is distinguished from mainstream ASL by differences in articulation, ASL conventions, ASL vocabulary, and ASL grammatical structures.

facial expression. Movement in the face that can be combined with posture to denote an attitude and/or emotion. This is distinct from non-manual markers.

fingerspelling. A system made up of twenty-six specific handshapes that represent the twenty-six letters of the English alphabet. Fingerspelled words are produced in a fixed position in the signing space in front of an ASL person with each letter produced in sequence (e.g., T-A-X-I).

foreshadowing. A literary device that gives the audience hints about future events. For example, it is used in Samuel Supalla's literary work "For a Decent Living".

fossilization. In second-language acquisition, the process by which incorrect language gradually becomes ingrained and the individual has more and more difficulty developing fluency in the language.

free verse. A style of ASL poem that is constructed without a regular metrical pattern. Free verse may be rhymed or unrhymed. *In the glossary, see also* **ASL poetry**.

frozen ASL word. An image representing an ASL word in a still picture or video frame that does not capture the parameter of movement in ASL. Particular frozen ASL words are sometimes selected for flyers, brochures, or e-booklets.

Gallaudet University. The world's only accredited liberal arts university where students can study in both ASL and English. It is located in Washington, DC.

hyperbole. A literary device in which exaggeration is used deliberately for effect or emphasis (e.g., a flood of tears, piles of money). For example, it can be found in Mary Beth Miller's ASL literary work "New York, New York".

hypernym. In linguistics, a word with a broad meaning that more specific words fall under. For example, FRUIT is a hypernym of APPLE, GRAPE, and ORANGE. *See also* **hyponym**.

hyponym. In linguistics, a word of more specific meaning than that of the general word applicable to it. For example, GREEN is a hyponym of COLOUR. *See also* **hypernym**.

iconic word. An ASL word with a structure that reflects the characteristics of the concept, object, or activity that it represents (e.g., HOUSE). *See also* **arbitrary word**.

idiom in ASL. A group of ASL words that has taken on, through usage, a special meaning different from its literal meaning (e.g., TRAIN GONE SORRY).

inclusive language. Language that uses equitable vocabulary when referring to individuals and groups of people, thereby avoiding stereotypes and discriminatory assumptions. Inclusive language helps people to feel valued, welcomed, included, and respected. *See also* **asset-based language**.

intercultural competence. A combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enables individuals to communicate and interact across cultural boundaries. It includes the skills of finding information about a culture; interpreting this information to understand the beliefs, meanings, and behaviours of members of that culture; relating one's own culture to the target culture; and interacting with members of that culture. In the process of developing these skills, language learners acquire knowledge of the other culture, a heightened awareness of their own, as well as knowledge of the processes of interaction

between two cultures. A precondition for successful intercultural interaction is an attitude of openness and curiosity, as well as a willingness to look at the world from the other culture's point of view.

interlanguage. A transitional linguistic system that is entirely different from both the learner's first language and the targeted second language. Interlanguage has linguistic elements of both the first and second languages. The concept was defined by Larry Selinker in "Interlanguage", *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching,* 10, 3 (1972): 209–241.

irony. A literary device or rhetorical technique used in both everyday conversation and literature to convey meaning that differs from, and is often the opposite of, words' literal meaning.

language contact. The phenomenon that occurs when words or phrases from one language are introduced into the context of another language, therefore affecting each other (e.g., two sign languages or a sign language and a spoken language). *Lexical borrowing, code switching, foreigner talk, interference, pidgins, creoles,* and *mixed systems* are terms that refer to one language's influence upon another.

legend. A folklore narrative sometimes regarded as historical fact though it is unauthenticated. Legends are often alluded to in ASL literary works and shared in ASL community gatherings. Examples are "The Deaf Spies of the Civil War" and "The Statue of Abraham Lincoln".

level of ASL. The degree of one's proficiency in ASL. A person's ASL level refers to their ability to select the appropriate ASL conventions, vocabulary, classifiers, and grammatical structures to convey content for specific purposes, audiences, and contexts (e.g., knowing how to tell the same ASL story to suit different audiences, such as a child, an adult, or a professional mentor). *See also* **ASL as an academic language**, **technical language**.

lexical borrowing. Words borrowed or adopted from another language. Just as English has borrowed many words from different languages, ASL has adopted some words from other sign languages (e.g., the word AUSTRALIA from Auslan, the word BAD from British Sign Language).

linguistic discrimination. Unfair treatment and violation of an individual's dignity based solely on their use of language. For example, although ASL and LSQ are recognized as languages of instruction as outlined in Regulation 298, "Operation of Schools – General", R.R.O. 1990, Section 32, many ASL and LSQ people still experience linguistic discrimination.

literary criticism. The systematic analysis, judgement, and interpretation of ASL literary works.

LSQ culture. The values, beliefs, norms, heritage, identity, and institutions of a community predominantly found in Quebec and in parts of Ontario that uses LSQ as its language. *In the glossary, see also* **langue des signes québécoise (LSQ)***.

marked handshape. One of a number of handshapes, such as X, 7, R, T, E, and 8, that are more difficult to construct than others. They are used less frequently than unmarked handshapes in ASL. *See also* **unmarked handshape**.

mnemonic device in ASL. A learning device to help students retain large amounts of information through a meaningful visual or lyrical approach. Students can use a variety of devices, such as spatial location, acronyms, phrases, rhymes, and diagrams, to help them memorize ASL vocabulary, plots, dates, facts, figures, and points of view. Other examples of mnemonic devices include ASL grapheme mnemonics (e.g., ASL vocabulary flashcards), name mnemonics (e.g., colour in order: ROY), ASL rhyme mnemonics (e.g., repetitive handshapes in ASL poems), and ASL word mnemonics (e.g., 5, Y, 3 handshapes in Clayton Valli's "Cow and Rooster").

mood. A literary element that evokes atmosphere or feelings in an ASL literary work or ASL text. Mood is created by the particular words and style used to describe characters, objects, or surroundings. For example, an ASL literary work may create a frightening, chilly, intimidating, or jubilant mood, depending on the author's choice of words and style.

moral. A lesson, especially one concerning what is right or prudent, that can be derived from a story or text, a piece of information, or an experience.

morpheme. The smallest unit(s) of meaning in an ASL word (e.g., free morpheme: LOUSY, bound morpheme: THREE-WEEK).

multiple roles. One person portraying more than one character in a play (e.g., Bruce Hlibok playing Albert Ballin, Alexander Graham Bell, and his wife, Mabel, in the "The Deaf Mute Howls").

onomatopoeia. The use of a word that makes a sound suggesting its meaning. In ASL, onomatopoeia refers to the mouth movements that characterize the sound an object or event makes in the context of an ASL narrative. For example, the production of the ASL word TUMBLE involves making a falling movement with the hands and the mouth movements BLA BA BA at the same time.

pause in ASL. A brief stop or interruption in an ASL sentence that incorporates non-manual markers. A pause is used to achieve an intended meaning or effect.

personification. A literary device in which human qualities, such as emotions and behaviours, are attributed to something non-human. Personification is commonly used in ASL literary works (e.g., objects and ideas are personified to make them more relatable).

pragmatics in ASL. The study of what people choose to convey and how they convey it from the range of possibilities available in ASL – and the effect of those choices upon audiences. Pragmatics involves understanding how the context influences the way an individual chooses to convey information in ASL (e.g., depending on the audience, a poet/storyteller/producer's choice of the form of an ASL work, ASL content features, use of ASL conventions, and presentation style) and how those choices affect the audience's understanding.

referential meaning. The meaning conveyed when a person, object, idea, or state of affairs is represented by a lexical word or sentence for that targeted subject. For example, the ASL word CANADA is the country that has the Atlantic Ocean to the east, the United States to the south, the Pacific Ocean to the west, and the Arctic Ocean to the north: the country is the referent of the ASL word CANADA.

rhetorical device in ASL. Element of style used in ASL works to achieve special effects or emphasis, usually in order to persuade, interest, or impress an audience (e.g., rhythm, repetition, rhetorical questions, emphasis, balance, or dramatic pauses).

rhetorical question in ASL. A question embedded in a sentence not to obtain information but to connect related comments. ASL words used in the construction of rhetorical questions are WHY, WHEN, WHERE, REASON, WHO, WHAT, and FOR-FOR. The WH non-manual markers are also used to render a rhetorical question (e.g., eyebrows raised, and head tilted or shaking slightly). The label used to gloss rhetorical questions in writing is *rh.*

role playing. A dramatic technique in which a participant acts the part of another character, usually in order to explore the character's thoughts, feelings, and values. It is not to be confused with referential shift (also known as role shifting) in ASL linguistics.

run-on ASL sentence. An ASL sentence consisting of two or more sentences or clauses that are improperly combined, without using the correct conjunction(s) and inflection.

semantics in ASL. The study of meaning in ASL: how words and sentence structures relate to the persons and/or objects they refer to and the situations they describe.

simile. An explicit comparison in which one object is likened to something different by the use of ASL words such as SAME-AS, SIMILAR (e.g., IX=1 BRAVE SAME-AS LION.).

social meaning. The meaning conveyed by ASL words or sentences that reveal information about the social identity of an ASL person – for example, ASL words such as TEST (regional differences) and sentences such as CAR ACCELERATE (adult and child differences in ASL word construction).

sociolinguistic competence. The ability to interpret the social meaning of language and linguistic variation, which enables the person to participate and interact successfully in a variety of contexts.

sociolinguistics. The study of language in relation to cultural and social factors. For example, the study of appropriate language conventions in particular social and cultural contexts or of linguistic variations.

syntax error in ASL. A violation of the grammatical rules of ASL.

synthesis. A new ASL literary work or ASL text that is formed when ideas and information are linked, combined, and/or integrated.

target language. A language that a person is learning, other than their native language. For example, ASL is the target language for an English-language person who is studying ASL as a second language.

technical language. The terminology used and understood by a discipline, trade, or profession (e.g., CLOSE-UP or FADE-OUT in the film industry). *See also* **ASL as an academic language, level of ASL**.

technique (media). A means of producing a particular effect by the use of ASL narration, animation, simulation, camera angles (high, normal, low), close-up shots, fade-in, fade-out, superimposition or juxtaposition of images, time-lapse photography, juxtaposition of colour and black-and-white

photography, live-action, special effects, vibration, speed, motion, flashbacks, collages, and dialogue using an ASL lens.

unmarked handshape. One of a number of frequently used handshapes in ASL, such as A, S, B, 5, 1, O, and C. ASL children of ASL parents tend to learn these handshapes first because they are the most common. *See also* **marked handshape**.

word root in ASL. A primary handshape with an encoded lexical meaning that is used to construct ASL words that share a similar denotation (e.g., the 1 handshape used to construct the ASL word FIRST-PLACE; the 2 handshape to construct the ASL word SECOND-PLACE).

Glossary

The definitions provided in this glossary are specific to the curriculum context in which the terms are used. Definitions for terms that are important for understanding American Sign Language but that are not used in the curriculum can be found in Appendix B.

ASL adjective

An ASL word that modifies or describes an ASL noun. Adjectives are typically placed before or after a noun.

ASL adverb

An ASL word that modifies or qualifies an ASL verb in relation to place, time, circumstance, manner, cause, or degree.

ASL aspect

A linguistic category that indicates whether the action or state denoted by a verb is completed or in progress, momentary or habitual, and extending to all members of a group or to specific individuals. In ASL, aspect is conveyed by varying the size, shape, rate, and rhythm of a verb, as well as the number of times its movement is repeated. There are several subcategories of aspect: temporal, distributional, grammatical, and completive.

ASL clause

A unit of grammatical organization inserted into declarative statements, yes/no questions, rhetorical questions, wh-questions, imperative sentences, and active or passive voice sentences, preceded by a pause. *See also* **complex ASL sentence**.

ASL community

A group of people who use ASL as a common language and who have a shared identity, including shared attitudes, values, norms, traditions, and institutions.

ASL construction

The process of creating an ASL work. Specific knowledge and skills are essential to creating ASL works that incorporate content and forms effectively in a variety of contexts and for a variety of purposes. During this process, a student will apply their knowledge of ASL conventions, ASL grammatical structures, non-manual markers, ASL usage, and registers correctly.

ASL conventions

Accepted practices or rules in the use of ASL language. ASL conventions help convey meaning (e.g., inflection).

ASL conversation regulators

Cultural and social rules that ASL community members follow when participating in conversations**.** The two types of ASL conversation regulators are conversational openers and correcting information. There are three ways to begin a conversation with an ASL person: (1) gain attention by extending your arm and waving your hand in the direction of the person; (2) make eye contact with the person; and (3) introduce oneself and ask questions such as what their ASL name sign is and where they are from. The regulator for correcting information involves the use of visual cues to indicate "no" with head shaking followed by a correction.

ASL dictionary

A resource produced for a specific audience (e.g., academics, ASL as a first language learners, ASL as a second language learners) that lists ASL words and their meaning. Some ASL dictionaries have additional features such as illustrative sentences and information about the grammatical features and language styles associated with ASL words and classifiers, as well as their etymologies. An ASL dictionary may be in either video or print format.

ASL discourse

A grammatically structured arrangement of ASL words and classifiers, including non-manual markers, that includes patterns, styles, and scripts, as appropriate for various genres. Discourse mapping helps people identify cohesive structures in ASL works (e.g., in conversation, dialogue, narrative, poetry, or presentations). It also helps people to cognitively map messages in a given ASL work. *See also* **ASL discourse forms, ASL discourse structure**; *in Appendix B, see also* **ASL academic discourse***.*

ASL discourse forms

Types of ASL discourse classified by their function. These classifications include exposition, persuasion, argument, description, and narration. *See also* **ASL discourse, ASL discourse structure;** *in Appendix B, see also* **ASL academic discourse**.

ASL discourse structure

The order of information in ASL discourse. ASL tends to structure discourse using the diamond model, whereas English tends to use the funnel model. In ASL, the "point" of the information (e.g., the thesis or argument, the summary statement) is presented at the beginning of the ASL work so that the audiences know what to expect. The body of the presentation elaborates support for the point, which is also repeated as a "summary" statement in the concluding text. ASL discourse structure also varies depending upon the type of interactions. ASL discourse structures include features such as discourse markers, non-manual markers, and varied registers. *See also* **ASL discourse**, **ASL discourse forms;** *in Appendix B, see also* **ASL academic discourse**.

ASL etymology

The study of the origin and history of an ASL word's meaning and form.

ASL figurative language

ASL words, classifiers, or phrases used in non-literal ways to create a desired effect (e.g., ASL metaphors, ASL similes, ASL personification, ASL hyperbole).

ASL folklore

A collection of ASL humour, legends, riddles, and tall tales collectively created by ASL people and passed down from one generation to the next.

ASL gloss

A convention of linguistic symbols, including English words in all capital letters, used to represent the meaning of ASL words. For example, CAT is the ASL gloss for *cat*.

ASL grammar

A set of rules that govern ASL's grammatical system independent of other languages. ASL has its own rules for phonology, prosody, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics.

ASL graphemes

A convention of written symbols used to represent words in ASL. Graphemes typically cover the three phonological parameters of handshape, location, and movement. *In Appendix B, see also* **ASL-phabet, ASL-phabetic order**.

ASL group narrative

A story shared by a group of ASL storytellers who assume the roles of different characters through the use of eye gaze or role shifting conveyed through body tension, facial transformation, and shoulder movement. *See also* **ASL narrative**.

ASL history

A record of ASL heritage, milestones, and linguistic development often using a sociocultural approach.

ASL identity

For ASL people, a self-image or self-concept based on connection to the ASL family and community using the community's native language. ASL identity also has a strong connection with other cultural values, beliefs, and traditions. For example, an ASL person might identify with the Black ASL community, the Indigenous ASL community, the Asian ASL community, or another ASL community.

ASL inflection

A modulation of an ASL word that changes or adds to the meaning of that word. Inflection creates forms of words, not entirely new words. In ASL, inflection usually involves changes in the movement of an ASL word that indicates the subject and the object of the verb, the adjective or adverb modifying the ASL word, or the frequency or duration of an event. *See also* **temporal aspect**.

ASL language features

Elements of the language that support meaning (e.g., intonation, stress, pace, rhythm, figurative language). The selection of language features in ASL varies according to the purpose, audience, and context.

ASL language structures

Grammatically accurate structures that convey meaning in ASL.

ASL literary device

A specific pattern of ASL words, classifier structures, phrases, and/or techniques used in ASL literary works, texts, and expositions to create a specific effect. Examples include analogy, comparison, contrast, irony, foreshadowing, simile, metaphor, personification, pun, oxymoron, and symbolism. *See also* **ASL stylistic device**.

ASL literary work

An original composition in ASL that is a cohesive artistic expression, created in any form, with a literary style, point of view, and effect. ASL literary works are artistic explorations of ideas and experiences – for example, to inform, describe, and convey thoughts, feelings, and opinions that connect the audience to an ASL world view. *See also* **ASL literature**, **ASL media work**, **ASL text, ASL work**.

ASL literature

A body of ASL literary works that has been passed down from generation to generation by the ASL community. Published in video format or presented in person, ASL literature has unique stylistic elements, forms, content, and functions. *See also* **ASL literary work, ASL work**.

ASL media work

An ASL composition that is conveyed through electronic media. Forms of ASL media have various ASL genres, including news reports, documentaries, sport programs, comedies, cartoons, advertisements, and interviews. *See also* **ASL literary work**, **ASL text**, **ASL work**.

ASL narrative

An ASL account of connected events. It may take many forms, including that of an ASL anecdote, a news story, a short story, or a poem narrated according to ASL conventions. *See also* **ASL group narrative***.*

ASL noun

An ASL word that identifies a person, object, place, or idea.

ASL number systems

Ways of representing different types of numbers using handshapes based on clearly defined ASL parameters. There are four ASL number systems: cardinal numbers (e.g., numbers that indicate quantity or the measurement of time, as in "five apples" or "twenty-two hours"), ordinal numbers (e.g., numbers that indicate relative position or place, as in "first place" or "third in line"), incorporation numbers (e.g., numbers that are incorporated into ASL words, as in the number 27 on the upper part of the sleeve of an ASL hockey player's jersey), and unique numbers (e.g., numbers that are used within a specific set of ASL parameters when discussing time, age, decimals, fractions, or scores).

ASL parameters

Basic parts of an ASL word: handshape, location, movement, and palm orientation. Parameters are part of ASL phonology, which refers to the study of how ASL words are structured and organized (e.g., for the ASL word MOTHER, the handshape is "5", the location is on the side of the chin, the movement is tapping the thumb on the side of the chin twice, and the palm orientation is toward the non-dominant side).

ASL poetry

An ASL literary genre that uses ASL poetic devices, rhyme, rhythm, and metre to create cohesive works of artistic expression. Handshapes, location, movement paths, non-manual markers, assimilation, handedness, and stress (e.g., eye gaze; eyebrow movement; use of one, both, or alternate hands; and body movement) can be used to demonstrate irony, create metaphor, and other forms of figurative language, and/or represent the transition of time. *In Appendix B, see also* **free verse**.

ASL pronoun

An ASL word that acts as a substitute for a noun and designates a person, place, or object that has already been specified or is understood from the context.

ASL stylistic device

The repetition and/or rearrangement of ASL words and/or phrases, or the use of ASL words, classifiers, and/or phrases with a specialized meaning not based on the literal meaning of the word, classifier, and/or phrase. In ASL poetry, stylistic devices are frequently used to emphasize thematic units and to provide specific semantic connotations. They can also be analysed as a form of discourse-related ASL words, classifiers, and/or phrases (e.g., the ASL poem "Cow and Rooster" by Clayton Valli demonstrates how the handshapes "Y" and "3", derived from the ASL words COW and ROOSTER, are used to construct a symmetrical pattern format). *See also* **ASL literary device**.

ASL text

A discourse form used for non-literary information sharing and knowledge acquisition. ASL texts convey content or provide information in a continuous, organized, and coherent flow (e.g., ASL video texts, instructions, news, scientific references, historical and contemporary documentaries about ASL people and/or ASL organizations). *See also* **ASL literary work**, **ASL media work**, **ASL work**.

ASL verb agreement

Directionality in ASL verbs that indicates a subject and object in a sentence. Examples of directional verbs include HELP, SHOW, and LOOK. Directional verbs show agreement in person (first person versus non-first person) and number with subject and object. *See also* **ASL verbs**.

ASL verb inflection

The frequency or duration of the action that can indicate quantity, manner, or degree.

ASL verbs

Action words of various types in ASL. They include:

- **plain verbs.** Verbs that lack inflection for person or temporal aspect (e.g., PLAY, EAT, REMEMBER). They do not have information about the subject or object of an ASL sentence.
- **indicating verbs.** Verbs that use a movement path in three-dimensional space for subject-verb agreement (e.g., INFORM, TEASE, or SEND). Indicating verbs inflect through a change of the movement path. The specific movement path the person chooses signifies the designated subject or object.

- **spatial verbs.** Verbs that use space as a morpheme (e.g., THROW, PUT, and DRIVE-TO). They contain encoded information that indicates the direction of the action taking place between the source and the target.
- **depicting verbs**. Verbs that involve using specific handshapes to "depict" specific aspects (e.g., the action, location, or state) of the noun. For example, to indicate the motion of a car, the classifier handshape (a 3 handshape for vehicle) DRIVE-BY is used. This type of verb uses space to convey semantic and grammatical information. Also called *polycomponential verbs*.

See also **ASL verb agreement**.

ASL vocabulary

The range of ASL words*.* It is important to know how to use ASL words appropriately in different contexts or genres. This learning process requires metacognition and metalinguistic skills. *See also* **ASL word;** *in Appendix B, see also* **ASL lexicon***.*

ASL word

A meaningful linguistic element that cannot be divided into smaller units of meaning. The preferred equivalent to the word "sign". *See also* **ASL vocabulary;** *in Appendix B, see also* **ASL lexicon**.

ASL word wall

A list of ASL words that is grouped ASL-phabetically and is prominently displayed in the classroom. ASL word walls may also be created in video text format. Teachers use this high-yield learning strategy for students to master ASL vocabulary that ranges from the vernacular to the academic.

ASL work

Any ASL genre, such as an ASL literary work, ASL text, ASL exposition, or ASL media work. *See also* **ASL literary work, ASL literature, ASL media work, ASL text**.

authentic materials

Items that have been created to fulfil a social purpose in the ASL community, as opposed to artificial materials (typically developed by people who have no connection with the ASL community). Authentic materials should be created by and for ASL people and contain language structures at the level of the first language, such as news programs, short stories, poems, and television programs. Students develop ASL second-language competency in the context of authentic materials.

backchannel

A type of conversational response in ASL. A backchannel occurs when one person is sharing information and the other person is indicating engagement with responses such as nodding. Backchannelling in ASL serves a meta-conversational purpose. It assures the person who is sharing information that they have the receiver's attention. Backchannel responses enable meaningful person-to-person interaction.

classifier

Any morpheme that functions to represent nouns and verbs with descriptive information such as location, type of action, size, shape, and manner. Classifier handshapes represent specific categories (people, places, objects) or classes of objects.

cognate

A word that shares a common root with a word in another language. For example, there are a number of ASL and LSF (langue des signes française) cognates such as SEE (ASL)/VOIR (LSF) and LAUGH (ASL)/RIRE (LSF).

coherence

The underlying quality of being logical and consistent and making sense. An ASL exposition, text, story, poem, or any other form of ASL work is coherent if the ASL grammatical structures and non-manual markers are connected logically and if the sentences are semantically accurate. *See also* **cohesion**.

cohesion

The connection of ideas that form a united whole. ASL linguistic devices, including grammatical structures and non-manual markers, are used to scaffold relations within and between sentences in any ASL work, literary or non-literary. For example, Clayton Valli, an ASL poet, uses phonological and syntactic features (specific handshapes, locations, and movement paths) to create cohesion in his ASL poem "Snowflake". *See also* **coherence**.

complex ASL sentence

A sentence containing a main clause and one or more subordinate clauses joined by a subordinating conjunction(s). *See also* **ASL clause**.

comprehensible input

Language that is made comprehensible to the learner through the use of visual aids, familiar content, rephrasing, repetition, and other means.

cultural protocols

The practices that guide behaviour when one respectfully engages with an individual or group, acknowledging and following the distinct traditions, customs, and world views of that individual/group. *See also* **culture**.

culture

The language, literature, identity, values, beliefs, norms, heritage, expectations, and institutions of a specific community of people. *See also* **cultural protocols**.

eye gaze in ASL

A form of eye contact in ASL that serves a variety of functions. Eye gaze is a way of regulating turn-taking, of signalling a "role shift" (used with head and body positioning), of establishing agreement between subject and object (used with head tilt), of distinguishing definite and indefinite forms, and of requiring the "listener" to maintain eye contact while the "speaker" breaks eye contact for a short time before resuming eye contact. It is also a way of constructing linguistic contrasts, including agreement marking, in ASL. Group-indicating eye gaze is used to tell the group (as small as two potential addressees) that the person is treating the group as a unit and not singling out an individual in the group. *See also* **referential shift in ASL**.

graphic organizer in a video format

A type of graphic organizer (e.g., a Venn diagram, web chart, or flow chart) that includes ASL video text. Graphic organizers help students organize, analyse, synthesize, and assess information and ideas.

imagery

Descriptions and figures of "speech" used in ASL to create vivid mental pictures in the mind of the audience (e.g., metaphors, similes, and other types of figurative language).

indexing

The act of referring to a person, object, or location with the index finger. *In Appendix B, see also* **ASL referent**.

Indigenous Sign Languages

The sign languages used by Indigenous people in Canada. Indigenous people often use ASL in addition to an Indigenous Sign Language.

inferring

Drawing meaning from or reaching a conclusion about an ASL literary work or ASL text by using reasoning and evidence based on what the author states and implies and on what the individual brings to the ASL work from their own prior knowledge and experience.

Inuit Sign Language (ISL)

One of the Indigenous Sign Languages; it is used predominantly in Nunavut.

language learning strategies

Techniques that learners can use to assist in the acquisition of a second language. Examples for learning ASL include memorizing, visualizing, organizing, and categorizing vocabulary and classifiers; analysing grammatical structures; and seeking opportunities to practise, develop, and acquire ASL.

langue des signes québécoise (LSQ)

A sign language used predominantly in Quebec and in parts of Ontario. It is recognized in Ontario as a language of instruction as outlined in Regulation 298, "Operation of Schools – General", R.R.O. 1990, Section 32. *In Appendix B, see also* **LSQ culture**.

Maritime Sign Language (MSL)

A sign language used in the Atlantic provinces and descended from British Sign Language. MSL is gradually being replaced by ASL, which is the language being used by the younger generation living in the region. MSL is considered an endangered language so efforts are being made to preserve it.

metaphor in ASL

An implied comparison in which an ASL word or phrase normally applied to a person, animal, or object is used to describe someone or something else. ASL metaphors are constructed to link the concrete domain to the abstract domain.

negation in ASL

he use of specific non-manual markers, which include head shaking from side to side, frowning, or squinting. Negation is conveyed by the use of one or more of these non-manual markers. The word NOT is not required in negations but may be used for emphasis.

non-manual marker (NMM)

A syntactic device that serves to differentiate specific types of ASL sentences (e.g., wh-questions are indicated by lowered eyebrows, head tilted forward, and a direct eye gaze). NMMs are also used to convey adjectival and adverbial information (e.g., *intense* – a baring of the teeth – co-occurs with WALK) and to mark the topic of a sentence.

noun-verb pairs

Two ASL words that share a common handshape, location, and palm orientation and for which a difference in movement renders as either a noun or a verb. The segmental structure of the verb (the movement [M] and hold [H] segments of an ASL word) is repeated to construct the noun.

pluralization in ASL

Expressing in or forming the plural in ASL. Pluralization can occur in several ways: by adding a plural modulation to a singular classifier or by using a plural classifier; by using a plural modulation of a pronoun; by using numbers (e.g., TWO, FOUR); by using indefinite number words (FEW, SOME, MANY); or by repeating a noun. In the same sentence, plurality may be indicated in several ways depending on which ASL words occur and the form of those ASL words.

plurilingualism

The ability, regardless of proficiency, to use a number of different languages to comprehend and convey ideas and information (e.g., an individual might use ASL, LSQ, MSL, and English).

point of view

The position of the narrator, character, or object in relation to context and content; thus, the vantage point from which events are seen (e.g., the omniscient, the third-person, or the first-person point of view).

pronominalization

The act of referring to a person, object, or location by using a pronoun.

referential shift in ASL

The use of eye gaze, head shift, body shift (which includes the head and shoulders), and ASL words to indicate a person (other than oneself) or an object. Referential shifting is very common in storytelling. For example, an ASL person may employ referential shifting during a "reported speech" to indicate a shift in point of view. The ASL person adjusts their eye gaze and shifts their head away from the audience when taking on one character's role and then breaks eye contact, shifts eye gaze, and shifts the body again to indicate when they are returning to the narrator role. In situations where there are two or more spatial referents (persons or objects) in the ASL space, this is referred to as a "multi-referential shift".

register

The degree of informality or formality. Each register requires the appropriate selection and use of ASL conventions, ASL vocabulary, ASL language structures, and non-manual markers suitable for the specific audience and context. *In Appendix B, see also* **colloquialism in ASL**.

sentence types in ASL

Categories of sentences. Basic sentence types in ASL consist of yes/no questions, wh-questions (Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?), rhetorical questions, negation, commands, topicalization, and conditionals. Non-manual markers are required to formulate each sentence type.

short ASL narrative

A brief ASL story using familiar ASL conventions, ASL vocabulary, classifiers, phrases, grammatical structures, and non-manual markers.

spatial mapping

An essential ASL discourse feature that involves using spatial structuring to construct coherent and cohesive segments of language. For example, in referential mapping, ASL individuals structure or map concepts in ASL signing space, evoking conceptual referents in the minds of an audience (e.g., using the diagonal movement – rightward and leftward – that establishes the relationship between geographical locations, such as Canada and England). In ASL poetry, the prosodic use of space also constructs patterns that bind the utterance to the more rhythmic, flowing patterns of poetry.

stanza in ASL

In ASL stories and poetry, structural units that divide a narrative into segments based on prosodic features.

style

Distinctive ASL figurative language, ASL word choices, ASL sentence structures, ASL literary devices, and ASL language patterns that work together to establish mood, images, and meaning in an ASL literary work.

symbol in ASL

Something that stands for or represents an abstract idea. Symbols are an integral part of ASL literature. Figurative language and symbolic meaning are connected because they both remove language from its regular use to create new meaning. ASL literature involves the manipulation of handshapes and space for aesthetic and symbolic effects.

synonym in ASL

An ASL word that has the same or similar meaning as another ASL word.

syntax in ASL

The way in which ASL words are arranged to form grammatical structures (e.g., ASL phrases, ASL clauses, ASL sentences).

temporal aspect

A type of ASL inflection that indicates the action of the verb with reference to time. *See also* **ASL inflection**.

tense in ASL

A grammatical category to indicate the time of an action. *See also* **time in ASL**.

time in ASL

Using specific ASL words to indicate time or duration. Time is conveyed via "time words in ASL", modulations of these time words in ASL, and time-related modulations of verbs that are accompanied by non-manual markers. Events are usually described in the order that they occur or will occur. For example, an ASL time word such as FINISH means "in the past" or it means that something that must be done first before other events occur (e.g., IX=1 PLAY FINISH PICK-UP TOY GO-OUT SHOP FOOD.). ASL grammatical structure also has a way of representing habitual time such as EVERY>MONDAY (H M H) or EVERY>NIGHT (H M H). In the example, EVERY>MONDAY, the handshape and palm orientation are the same, but the segmental structure and the location are different. *See also* **time line in ASL**.

time line in ASL

A way of indicating time in ASL. A "time line" is produced in relation to the person's body (e.g., distant past, past, recent present, present, near future, future, distant future). Morphemes are used to specify the time of the event. Some examples are NOW, TODAY, YESTERDAY, TOMORROW, MIDNIGHT, MORNING, AFTERNOON, NOT-YET, RECENT, LATER, LONG-TIME-AGO, and FUTURE. *See also* **tense in ASL, time in ASL**.

topicalization in ASL

The placement of the subject or the object at the beginning of a sentence as the topic and introducing it by using non-manual markers (e.g., raised eyebrows, slight forward head tilt, and sometimes a short pause) followed by one or more comments, statements, questions, or opinions. Here is an example of a topicalization in ASL: $\underline{\text{DOG}}$ FINISH EAT CHEESE.

variation in ASL

Among ASL people, there are differences in pronunciation and production, vocabulary, and grammar. Factors that affect these differences include age, gender, ethnicity, education, geographical area, and context.