



Online Supports for Literacy and Foundational Learning

This document was created primarily for educators who work within the Community Adult Learning Program (CALP) Grant. The resources and information may be useful for anyone working online with Adult Foundational Learners.

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Notes: This is a living document and as with the internet, many links, prices, features, and other information change daily. While we try to keep this info up to date, there may be errors.

Some resources can fit into various categories but are not duplicated. For example, an adult literacy learner may benefit from the self-study websites found in the ELL section.

Please email us at grants@ecala.org with your recommendations and additions. We want this document to be a collaborative product of all ECALA-Funded organizations.

Connecting with Learners

One of the first challenges we have is connecting with learners. While sometimes we need to think outside of the box, other times the resources have been right there all along. The most important thing is for communication to be consistent and present.

Discussion Boards

Facilitators can communicate with classes using a discussion board online, in a Learning Management System such as Moodle or Google Classroom, or a such as Padlet (see more info below in Asynchronous Learning Tools).

Doodle

This site can be used for scheduling classes or meetings with your learners or colleagues.

Email

Your learners might be comfortable with email already. You can send links, apps, videos, text, and more through email.

Fongo

This app gives you a local Edmonton number to use for calling. Many numbers in Canada and US can be reached for free. International calls can be completed for a fee.

Mail

For some learners, technology may be a barrier too daunting. If instructors have access to a printer, they may be able to print out materials and mail them directly home. Learners can fill out the work and take photos and text/email back to instructors for feedback.

Text Now

This app gives you a number to use for calling and texting. Many numbers in Canada and US can be reached for free. International calls can be completed for a fee.

Viber 🤖 🍏

A common international voice over IP and instant messaging App by Japanese company Rakuten. The app uses data or wifi and replaces your phone. You can send messages, videos, and voice memos. The app also supports large group chats, voice calls and video calls.

WeChat 🤖 🍏

A Chinese multi-purpose messaging, social media and mobile payment app by Tencent.

WhatsApp 🤖 🍏

One of the world's most popular instant messaging and voice over IP Apps is used by many learners, especially Newcomers and those who have connections to people outside of Canada. The app uses data or wifi and replaces your phone. You can send messages, videos, and voice memos. The app also supports large group chats (no limit) and voice calls and video calls (up to 4 people).

Tech Basics

COVID-19: How Nonprofits Can Facilitate Inclusive Online Gatherings

<https://www.techsoupcanada.ca/en/community/blog/covid-19-how-nonprofits-can-facilitate-inclusive-online-gatherings>

A great article from Tech Soup with Online Facilitation Principles and Tools.

Microsoft Digital Literacy Courses

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/digitalliteracy/home>

Microsoft has free digital literacy courses in 12 different languages. There are different self-study modules: Work with Computers, Access Information Online, Communicate Online, Participate Safely and Responsibly Online, Create Digital Content, and Collaborate and Manage Content Digitally. Each module is approximately 1 hour in length and learners can print out a certificate of completion. There are also downloadable resources available.

Media Smarts

<https://mediasmarts.ca/>

Canada's Centre for Digital and Media Literacy has tons of resources for self-study and also for instructors.

Digital Literacy 101

<https://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources/digital-literacy-101>

This section includes self-study tutorials as well as short videos with clear explanations.

Proliteracy YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLIqXOSRtnkrvCmqRtFJQle2KVq2P4iWv7>

This channel includes ProLiteracy's video series "Distance Learning Ideas from the Field."

Protect Kids Online

<https://protectkidsonline.ca/app/en/>

This site includes information for parents on risks and emerging issues regarding Internet safety.



Video Conferencing Etiquette: 10 Tips for a Successful Video Conference

<https://www.owlabs.com/blog/video-conferencing-etiquette>

This OWL Labs article highlights the most important tips when using video conference technology.

Community Capacity Building

211 Alberta

<https://www.ab.211.ca/>

From Alberta you can call or text 2-1-1 at any time for free confidential information and referral to a wide range of community, social health, and government information. Their website also has these resources available.

Alberta Health Services

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca>

The site has trustworthy information on various topics from mental health, physical health, Pandemic information, Emergency Room wait times, and more.

Help in Tough Times

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/Page16759.aspx>

This page has links to resources for emergencies, grief, mental health, finding healthcare, social and community support, and more.

COVID-19 Information

There is information overload in the world today, and the newest coronavirus Pandemic is no exception. Here are a few clear, concise resources that may be useful for practitioners and learners.

COVID-19 Info Booklet in 11 Languages

<https://selfadvocacyinfo.org/resource/plain-language-information-on-covid-19/>

Self Advocacy Resource and Technical Assistance Center has created an 8-page plain language booklet in English, Spanish, Bengali, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Mandarin, Russian, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, and Vietnamese.

COVID-19 Terms in Plain Language

<https://www.nala.ie/covid-19-words-explained/>

The National Adult Literacy Agency in Ireland created a great plain language glossary of COVID-19 terms.



COVID-19 Q & A by Dr. Jennifer Robson

<https://www.decoda.ca/resources/online-resources/>

A Carleton University professor created an open-access PDF Google Doc that answers questions with great resources such as “I’m self-employed. What benefits can I get?” or “I need to take sick leave because I’m ill or self-isolating or have to quarantine.”

Kids Help Phone

<https://kidshelpphone.ca>

Available 24/7 by phone at 1-800-668-6868 or by text CONNECT to 686868 to speak with a counsellor. The website has more details.

Techsoup Courses

<https://techsoup.course.tc/catalog?type=microsoft-digital-skills-center>

Includes various courses currently offered for free: Office 365 Bootcamp for Nonprofits, Teams for Nonprofits- Collaboration Tools, Excel for Nonprofits- Data Management and Reporting, Power BI for Nonprofits, Word for Nonprofits- Document Management, PowerPoint for Nonprofits – Creating Powerful Presentations, OneDrive 101 – Storing Smartly, SharePoint 101 – Improving Collaboration, Planner 101 – Effectively Organize Tasks,

Telus Internet for Good / Connecting- Families

<https://www.telus.com/en/about/company-overview/community-investment/how-we-give/cause-campaigns/internet-for-good>

<https://connecting-families.ca/welcome>

This initiative provides low income families with internet for \$9.95/month for 24 months. Connect with school for families with children, or Connecting Families (Federal Govt. Initiative)

The Today Family Violence Help Centre

<https://www.thetodaycentre.ca/>

The organization provides immediate, inclusive, integrated services for those impacted by family violence. Visit their website or call 780-455-6880.

Video Conferencing Tools

When meeting face to face isn't possible, here are some great tools for online audio and video meetings. Some programs offer free trials or simple free accounts with limitations. Please click the link to find the most recent and relevant information for each site.

BigBlueButton

<https://bigbluebutton.org/>

An open-source platform that is free to use. Includes many features such as whiteboard, call-in technology, and more. Used by ELL site Tutela.

Cisco Webex

<https://www.webex.com/training-online.html>

Share presentations, stream webinars, and encourage participation using tools like whiteboard and chat. The free account currently allows up to 100 participants without a time limit.

Google Meet

<https://meet.google.com/>

Video conferencing and video classrooms, free access to extra features during COVID-19 period:
<https://cloud.google.com/blog/products/g-suite/helping-businesses-and-schools-stay-connected-in-response-to-coronavirus>

Microsoft Teams

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-ca/microsoft-365/microsoft-teams/group-chat-software>

Part of the Microsoft 365 Suite, Teams works as a video conferencing tool as well as an LMS. Features include integration into Microsoft forms, OneDrive, and other 365 programs, call-in capabilities, private and group chat, and a simple app.

Zoom

<https://zoom.us/meetings>

Free account for video conferencing and webinars—unlimited meetings between two participants, limited to 40-minute meetings with more than two participants. Paid accounts start at \$20 monthly. Features: breakout rooms, polling, whiteboard.



Zoom Official Tutorial Videos

<https://blog.zoom.us/wordpress/2020/03/18/quick-info-how-to-zoom-new-videos/>

Learn to Zoom! In Clear Language- The Ohio State University

<https://nisonger.osu.edu/learn-to-zoom/>

How To Guide: Zoom (in plain language with images)

<https://www.aceanglia.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/how-to-use-zoom-easyread-3-1.pdf>

Video/Screen Recording Programs

When synchronous options don't fit schedules, these tools can allow you to record camera and screen and some of the programs allow free hosting.

Camtasia

<https://www.techsmith.com/video-editor.html>

Camtasia makes it simple to record and create professional-looking videos on Windows and Mac. You can add quizzes and callouts to the recordings. Free 30-day trial or \$230 CAD one-time fee.

Loom

<https://loom.com>

You can record your screen and/or a circle video of your webcam. The recording is uploaded to Loom, where you can host videos and share a link to learners. Loom will notify you how many views the video has. For the free account, there is a limit of 5 minutes.

Screencast-o-matic

<https://screencast-o-matic.com/>

You can record your screen and camera. There is a watermark on the video and a time limit of 15 minutes. You can add captions and trim the video.

Zoom

<https://zoom.us/>

You can record your screen and a square video of webcam. The recording can be saved directly to your computer.

Learning Management Systems (LMS)

Sometimes you need a platform to host all of the elements of a class. These sites can host links, activities, videos, discussion boards, attendance, and more. Most are free, while some require a monthly fee.

Bublup

<https://www.bublup.com/>

This website allows you to “visually organize anything.” You can add links, text, images, videos, and more to your *Bublup Roll*. This system has been used for ELL Literacy students to access information for classes. See *Tutela.ca*’s webinar on Bublup for the ELL classroom.

Canvas

<https://www.instructure.com/canvas/>

A free system for teachers to sign up and create a course. There is a vast Commons section where you can download already created material to add to your course. Learners can sign up with any email and there are apps for both teachers and students.

Edmodo

<https://www.edmodo.com>

A completely free LMS that visually resembles social media. All announcements, assignments, and other information are created at posts, ordered by date.

Google Classroom

<https://classroom.google.com/h>

A free tool that integrates all that Google has already—slides, calendar, forms, meet, etc. Users must have a Gmail account.

Microsoft Teams

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-ca/microsoft-365/microsoft-teams/group-chat-software>

Part of the Microsoft 365 Suite, Teams works as a video conferencing tool as well as an LMS. Instructors can upload documents, schedule video classes, and more.



Moodle

<https://moodle.org/>

Moodle is a free, online Learning Management system enabling educators to create their own private website filled with dynamic courses that extend learning, anytime, anywhere. If you aren't very tech savvy, you may need to pay to help with some of the back-end hosting.

Padlet

<https://padlet.com/dashboard>

An online platform for compiling ideas and responses. Learners can post from all devices when given a link. Learners do not need an account to participate.

Schoology

<https://www.schoology.com/>

A free site for teachers. It is designed for K-12, but it is very user friendly. Learners create an account with any email and are given a code to join the teacher's class.

Lesson Planning

These are tools that educators can use for lesson planning.

Health Literacy Resources – Calgary Immigrant Women’s Association

<https://ciwaresources.com/ciwahlp/>

This great resource provides a literacy practitioner manual, a healthcare professional manual, and six scenario videos presented in 7 different languages.

Literacy Minnesota Computer Skills, Internet Basics, and MS Word

<https://www.digitalliteracyassessment.org/news/2019/09/curricula-release-and-other-updates>

Each unit has 7-9 2-hour lesson plans for instructors.

Synchronous Learning Tools

These are tools you can use in a face to face or online class via video conferencing tools. They add interaction and learner participation.

Google Jamboard

<https://jamboard.google.com/>

An interactive and collaborative whiteboard to use during a class. Learners can add text and draw. Learners do not need to login.

Kahoot

<https://kahoot.com/schools-u/>

An interactive game to play with students. If using an online class, learners must have a secondary device (such as a smart phone) to be able to see the question and respond.

Mentimeter

<https://www.mentimeter.com>

This is an interactive presentation tool that you can use during an in-person or online video session. Instructors can add surveys, quizzes, word clouds, and more. The free account limits you to 3 slides, but there is a paid version for unlimited content.

Socrative

<https://socrative.com/>

You can create quizzes for free and give the students a link to your “classroom.” Students can easily access the site from a cell phone or other device with internet. The instructor can choose when to launch and activity and the length of time it will be active. Following completion, the results can be downloaded as an Excel document.

Asynchronous Learning Tools

These tools can be given to students to complete on their own time. They require guidance or creation from the instructor.

ABC Life Literacy

<https://abclifeliteracy.ca>

This website includes a collection of different literacy resources. There are a variety of programs from digital literacy to health literacy.

Audacity

<https://www.audacityteam.org/>

A free website to create podcasts. You can download the audio files in various formats to post/send to learners.

Decoda Literacy

<https://www.decoda.ca/resources/online-resources/>

British Columbia's Literacy Organization provides tons of online resources in Adult and Family Literacy.

Edhelper

<https://www.edhelper.com/>

A website with free printable worksheets in math and other topics for K-12 students, but many can be modified.

Edpuzzle

<https://edpuzzle.com/>

One of the hidden gems online. This site allows you to use any video found online and edit it to integrate questions right into the video. Instructors can create a 'class' and have their learners' results sent to them. Teachers can also find a video and record a voiceover to all or part of the video. All of the features are free!

ESL Library

<https://www.esllibrary.com/>

Paid subscription service, with some access to free content. The basic plan is for printable lessons, but if you already have access to a paid Standard account, they are currently offering a free upgrade to Plus during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The extra features allow you to project a class activity live, which students can access on a cell phone, tablet, or computer.

Flipgrid

<https://info.flipgrid.com/>

A social learning platform that allows students to respond to a discussion topic or questions. Learners can then respond to each other in a discussion format.

Google Forms

<https://www.google.ca/forms/about/>

Create surveys or quizzes that are compatible on multiple devices. Easily integrates into Google accounts, and results can be downloaded and compiled.

Hands On! (PDF Document)

<http://en.copian.ca/library/learning/handson/handson.pdf>

This free PDF contains literacy printouts for learners to practice. Could be used to print and mail/drop off packages.

Live Worksheets

<https://www.liveworksheets.com/>

This site allows an educator to share fillable worksheets with their learners. Learners can check their own answers or submit forms to their instructors. There are many worksheets already created that you can freely use, but you also have the option to create your own!

Microsoft Forms

<https://forms.office.com>

Part of Microsoft 365, can be used to create surveys and quizzes. Links to the activities can be sent to anyone, and the data can be downloaded into an Excel sheet.

Padlet

<https://padlet.com/dashboard>

An online platform for compiling ideas and responses. Learners can post from all devices when given a link. Learners do not need an account to participate.

Quill

<https://www.quill.org/>

An interactive grammar and writing activities. Instructors can create a free account and either allow students to join with a code or create accounts for them (without an email address!) Teachers can assign activities and see all of the results of their learners. Activities can be assigned individually so each learner can work at their own pace. Currently, the pro upgrade is free!

Quizlet

<https://quizlet.com>

This site lets you create your own flashcards or study thousands of sets already created. You can play games to help you learn new vocabulary.

TypeForm

<https://www.typeform.com/>

A free trial allows you to create 3 surveys/quizzes for up to 100 participants on the free account. You can start with one of their free templates and send a link to learners (compatible with computer, tablet, and cell phones)

YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/>

The most common free video sharing platform available. YouTube doesn't offer live engagement or live streaming options.

Self-Study Websites

These sites can be recommended to learners to work on their own learning independently.

Adult & Family Literacy

Family Literacy First

<https://familyliteracyfirst.ca/>

This site includes resources in English, French, Chinese, Tagalog, and Arabic. With a free account, learners can download 13 modules with more than 50 activities to do with their families.

Free Rice

<https://freerice.com>

Free rice is a website (and app) with games for learning. There are games with categories such as: English vocabulary, Grammar, Multiplication Table, Basic Math, and Canadian and World Geography. This app/website is created by the UN's World Food Program, and while you're learning, you're supporting the organization.

Merriam-Webster

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/word-games>

This site is a collection of word games and quizzes to strengthen vocabulary and spelling.

Read Theory

<https://readtheory.org/>

*Account Required. This site provides informational texts with questions to practice reading and writing.

Basic Digital Skills

Excel Easy

<https://www.excel-easy.com/>

This site contains easy Excel lessons for learners to focus on one task at a time.

GCF Global

<https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/subjects/tech/>

A great website with self-study modules in various categories: Office, Email, Internet, Computers, Online Safety, Windows, Mac OS, and Linux.

Lyrics Training

<https://lyricstraining.com/>

This website (and app) can be used as ELL listening practice or typing practice. Learners listen to songs and type in all or some of the lyrics (depends on level)

Microsoft Digital Literacy Course

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/digitalliteracy/home>

Microsoft has free digital literacy courses in 12 different languages. There are different self-study modules: Work with Computers, Access Information Online, Communicate Online, Participate Safely and Responsibly Online, Create Digital Content, and Collaborate and Manage Content Digitally. Each module is approximately 1 hour in length and learners can print out a certificate of completion. There are also downloadable resources available.

Typing.com

<https://www.typing.com>

Learners can practice typing with various activities, and educators can create classes and monitor their students' progress.

Typing Club

<https://www.typingclub.com/>

This site includes various typing activities for learners. If learners create an account, they can save their progress.

ELL All Skills

BBC Skillswise English

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/skillswise/english/zjg4scw>

This site includes resources such as videos, games, and activities divided in 6 categories: Reading, Writing, Spelling, Word Grammar, Sentence Grammar, and Speaking and Listening.

CBC Learning English

<https://www.cbc.ca/learning-english>

Here you can find new stories in audio form (CLB 4) or video (CLB 6) with activities and quizzes related to comprehension below.

Eng VID

<https://www.engvid.com/>

A collection of videos with English lessons on various topics.

ESL Flow

<https://eslflow.com/>

A site with tons of free English lessons of various skills divided into 3 levels: Beginner, Pre-Intermediate, and Intermediate.

Learning Chocolate

<https://www.learningchocolate.com/>

This vocabulary building site introduces a set of words by theme and includes activities such as matching and dictation to learn the words.

Many Things

<http://www.manythings.org/>

There are quizzes, word games, word puzzles, proverbs, slang expressions, anagrams, a random-sentence generator and other computer assisted language learning activities.

ELL Listening Specific

English Central

<https://www.englishcentral.com/browse/videos>

*Free account required. A collection of videos edited to contain subtitles with identifiable vocabulary. For free, learners can identify difficult words, see the definitions, and practice watching the video again typing in the new words.

Lyrics Training

<https://lyricstraining.com/>



This website (and app) can be used as ELL listening practice or typing practice. Learners listen to songs and type in all or some of the lyrics (depends on level)

Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab

<https://www.esl-lab.com/>

A great website for listening practice, divided into Easy, Intermediate, and Difficult.

ELL Reading Specific

Bow Valley ESL Literacy Readers

<https://globalaccess.bowvalleycollege.ca/learners/readers.php>

These great online and printable readers come with an audio to follow along with the text. They can be used as self-study or as an asynchronous part of a class.

WestCoast Reader

<https://thewestcoastreader.com/newspapers/>

A Canadian site with 'issues' of the reader on varying topics. Great to use as a part of a lesson or as self-study. This year's digital issues are currently free.

News in Levels

<https://www.newsinlevels.com/>

This site contains international news in 3 different levels. There is also accompanying audio and/or video with each article.

ELL Writing/Grammar Specific

English Grammar Online

<https://www.ego4u.com/en/cram-up/grammar>

A website with grammar, writing, reading, vocabulary, and business-specific English.

Khan Academy Grammar

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/grammar>

This site is mostly known for Math and Science, but they have a great section of Standard American English grammar. The course is divided into sections on Parts of Speech, Punctuation, and Syntax (words and phrases creating sentences), and learners must collect "mastery points" to continue on to the next section.



Numeracy

BBC Skillswise Maths

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/skillswise/maths/zfdymfr>

This free site has videos and games to help learners in 6 main themes: Numbers, Calculation, Percent and fractions, Measuring, Shapes, and Graphs.

GCF Global

<https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/topics/math/>

Great free self-study modules in Addition and Subtraction, Multiplication and Division, Algebra Topics, Decimals, Percents, Fractions, and Good at Math.

Math.com

<http://www.math.com/>

Free practice of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Also includes a section with games.

Khan Academy

<https://www.khanacademy.org/math/arithmetic>

This site includes math practice by grade level as well as by theme. The Arithmetic math is great for foundational learners. There are lots of practice activities with links to videos if the learner gets stuck.

Self-Study Apps

Apps can be downloaded on either Android or Apple smartphones/tablets. The platform is indicated by the small green robot (Android) or black apple (Apple). Most are free, but some require a one-time payment or a subscription.

ELL

Awabe

A free app with over 4000 common words and phrases. There are speaking, listening, and vocabulary lessons.

BBC Learning English

This app has lessons on vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation based on the news.

Beelinguapp

This app uses audiobooks to help you learn the language you want. You can listen to stories in English (or another language that you want to learn) and read the text beside it. There are a few free samples, but some are paid.

Busuu

An app that uses native speakers to create the language courses (English is one option!) The app is also a social media network and you can interact and chat with learners of different languages.

Duolingo

This app is common for English speakers to learn other languages, but it is also very useful for low-level English learners. The app starts at a very basic level and it is ad supported, so the app has a completely free version. If you want to get rid of the ads and download content to learn offline, you have to pay.

ELSA Speak

This app uses speech recognition technology to help learners improve (American English) pronunciation. There are idioms, daily conversations, and slang.

English Speaking Practice (Talk)

This app has recorded conversations of native speakers to practice listening, then record yourself responding to practice pronunciation.

Hello English 🤖🍏

This app helps you learn English through short lessons. There are 22 first languages supported, and the app is completely free. There is a premium version to learn without ads.

Knudge Me 🤖🍏

A free app for English grammar and vocabulary. It includes modules for self-study divided by concept with times of completion between 30 minutes- 8 hours.

Learn English Daily 🤖

This app contains lessons with words and phrases spoken by native speakers. You can set up notifications to practice daily.

Lingbe 🤖🍏

An innovative language exchange app that allows you to practice speaking with a native speaker of the language you want to learn. You earn coins by helping someone who wants to learn your language, and then you can use that currency to call someone to practice the language you want to learn. It is free, as long as you are willing to help someone practice your native-tongue.

Lyrics Training 🤖🍏

This app can be used as ELL listening practice or typing practice. Learners listen to songs and type in all or some of the lyrics (depends on level)

Memrise 🤖🍏

Like Duolingo, this app allows you to learn many different languages. Most of the activities are in game form, and your learning is a mission of discovery!

Preposition Builder Master 🍏

This app includes 3 different levels to practice English prepositions in sentences: Beginner, Professional, and Expert. The app is free, though there is a paid Pro version.

Family Literacy

FLIT, A family Literacy App 🤖🍏

This app created by the Centre for Family Literacy has activities ranging from reading, recipes, rhymes and games specifically designed to build strong reading, writing, and literacy skills in their child and have FUN doing it!



Foundational Life Skills

MagnusCards

This free app teaches life skills through story telling. You can collect Card Decks that teach everyday activities like grocery shopping, taking the bus, and ordering at Tim Hortons. The app is built for anyone who benefits from structured, step-by-step guidance.

Numeracy

Star Dash Studios

This game is created by UK's National Numeracy organization. You must complete math challenges as part of a team.