

Essential Skills

Developing learners' Essential Skills is an important element of the *ELSA 6/7 Curriculum Guidelines*. Instructors should ensure that activities to develop learners' Essential Skills are included regularly in the classroom within each unit. The following chart is provided as a tool whereby instructors can determine which Essential Skills to include in their lesson planning and also to track the skills development as the class moves through the units of the curriculum.

Essential Skill	Typical Applications
Reading Understanding materials written in sentences or paragraphs (e.g. letters, manuals).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scan for information or overall meaning. • Read to understand, learn, critique or evaluate. • Analyze and synthesize information from multiple sources or from complex and lengthy texts.
Document Use Finding, understanding or entering information (e.g. text, symbols, numbers) in various types of documents, such as tables or forms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read signs, labels or lists. • Understand information on graphs or charts. • Enter information in forms. • Create or read schematic drawings.
Numeracy Using numbers and thinking in quantitative terms to complete tasks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make calculations. • Take measurements. • Perform scheduling, budgeting or accounting activities. • Analyze data. • Make estimations.
Writing Communicating by arranging words, numbers and symbols on paper or a computer screen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write to organize or record information. • Write to inform or persuade. • Write to request information or justify a request. • Write an analysis or a comparison.
Oral Communication Using speech to exchange thoughts and information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide or obtain information. • Greet, reassure or persuade people. • Resolve conflicts. • Lead discussions.

Essential Skill	Typical Applications
Working with Others Interacting with others to complete tasks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work independently, alongside others. • Work jointly with a partner or helper. • Work as a member of a team. • Participate in supervisory or leadership activities.
Thinking Finding and evaluating information to make rational decisions or to organize work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and resolve problems. • Make decisions. • Find information. • Plan and organize job tasks. • Use critical thinking. • Use memory.
Computer Use Using computers and other forms of technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use different forms of technology, such as cash registers or fax machines. • Use work processing software. • Send and receive emails. • Create and modify spreadsheets. • Navigate the internet.
Continuous Learning Participating in an ongoing process of improving skills and knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn on the job. • Learn through formal training. • Learn through self-study. • Understand your own learning style. • Know where to find learning resources.

Source: From the publication "What are Essential Skills?" from Human Resources and Social Development Canada