Alberta Reading Benchmarks
for adults

A Starter List of Materials for ARB Levels 1A to 2B

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Introduction

This resource is a practitioners' teaching companion to the Alberta Reading Benchmarks (ARB) for ARB levels 1a to 2b. It was designed to clearly explain each reading material as it's aligned with specific ARB reading skills and includes information on other resources in the ARB project that are useful as teaching strategies and resource referencing. By identifying five or six culturally relevant reading materials per level that could be used in a range of programs (college, community, workplace), this resource aims to:

- provide fundamental ARB background information;
- explain the ARB's limitations and challenges;
- provide information for referencing reading materials to the ARB;
- provide teaching strategies and suggestions for learning activities;
- provide teaching strategies for Indigenous learners; and
- provide a list of reading materials benchmarked to ARB levels 1a to 2b. The higher ARB levels are not addressed in this guide because they are considered to be above the level of basic literacy.

ARB Background and Context

This resource is one part of a project called "Establishing Alberta Adult Literacy Benchmarks." The entire project aims to create:

- a provincial set of literacy reading benchmarks (Alberta Reading Benchmarks) and
- key resources to aid in their implementation.

First published in 2011 and revised in 2014, the Alberta Reading Benchmarks (ARB) are a series of descriptors that are meant to provide a system of standards for identifying reading levels. As the second edition of the *Alberta Reading Benchmarks* puts it, "the Alberta Reading Benchmarks (ARB) are made up of seven levels of benchmarks for adult literacy, upgrading, and essential skills programs to use. Each level describes what developing readers can do and the characteristics of reading material that a reader can manage. There are three categories within each level: text characteristics; reading tasks; and reading vocabulary and decoding skills"(7).

Limitations/Challenges

There are limitations and challenges in benchmarking resources to the ARB.

- The Alberta Reading Benchmarks are for adults and adult reading materials. They are not meant to be used to benchmark children's materials in family literacy programs.
- Alberta Reading Benchmarks are based on IALS and were written for adult native English speakers in Alberta. This means that using the ARB levels with Indigenous and ESL learners will need extra interpretation. When English is not a learner's first language, is their reading difficulty because of their reading skills or their lack of vocabulary or understanding of the subject matter?
- Many existing series have their own assigned levels that may not align with ARB levels.

For example, the Fry Readability formula has been used by many organizations but this formula does not take into account organization and content and the assigned grade levels do not correspond to ARB levels. Developed by Edward Fry, this reading formula calculates the grade reading level by the average number of sentences and syllables per hundred words. For more information about the Fry readability formula please see the website describing it at: http://www.readabilityformulas.com/fry-graph-readability-formula.php

Because the ARB are relatively new, reading materials have not yet been developed according to the ARB levels. Therefore, to date, reading materials that clearly align with the ARB levels are not plentiful.

Referencing Reading Material

When referencing reading material to the ARB, the following points need to be considered:

- the characteristics of the text
    - length
    - visual support (diagrams, photos, pictures)
    - layout/organization (title, table of contents, index, glossary, headings, subheadings, titles, chapters)
    - typography (fonts, bold face, italics, capitalization, colours)
- the contexts/topic/style of the text (familiarity, abstract/concrete, genre)
- the familiarity, simplicity /complexity of the vocabulary and syntax
- distractors: correspondence between visuals and text
- the types of tasks to be completed at each benchmark
- the type of strategies to be used at each benchmark.

While it is possible to provide a range of resources that can be used at a specific benchmark, you will also have to know what tasks, competencies, skills, and strategies a reader will employ at each benchmark. A resource can't be benchmarked at a range of levels but can be used for learners at different levels, depending upon the tasks they are asked to perform. The level of the resource does not change.

In short, benchmarks cannot be based on a text or document alone. They must also take into consideration the skills, strategies, or tasks that are accomplished with a given text.

When benchmarking resources, the "Alberta Reading Benchmarks Quick Reference" chart is a helpful tool providing a quick way to reference and compare the ARB descriptors as you evaluate a text. All of the information is easy to access in one place.

Alberta Reading Benchmarks for adults

Level	Characteristics of Text	Difficulty of Vocabulary	Types of texts	Types of Tasks
1A	Supported by visuals Simple, single words, very common words Example texts: Simple single words: open, exit, name	Single common words	Simple signage, words Picture book	Identify sounds made by some letters of the alphabet Identify a few sight words (sale, name, stop)
1B	Supported by visuals Short lengths of text about something familiar A few words long, can be up to one short simple sentence in length Texts contain only information that is directly related to the task	Concrete nouns and simple action verbs: (house, pencil, run, eat) One and two syllable words: dog, pay, table, walked	Common formats: Phone number, addresses, prices Simple lists Short stories	Recognizing common formats to find required information (phone number on a form, address on an envelope) Finding one piece of information by matching words Can compare two pieces of information
1C	Text supported by formatting or visuals Texts with simple sentences, up to several sentences long Simple forms that require personal information to be written on them Familiar text topics	Limited to common words: parent, wash, tomorrow, please Includes some 3 syllable words: computer, apartment, hamburger Words usually follow common spelling patterns	Coupons, flyers ads, rental listings Sports registration forms Simple lists as in 1b, but longer Simple registration form	Search for information that asks for simple and common words (salt, student, actor, amount) Choose right answer when given several possibilities Choose right answer based on the meaning of a word rather than familiarity with type of format Compare three or more items of information to find first, last, most and least

Alberta Reading Benchmarks for adults

Alberta Reading Benchmarks for adults

Level	Characteristics of Text	Difficulty of Vocabulary	Types of texts	Types of Tasks
2A	Texts supported by visuals or formatting Sentences that are longer and more complex and may contain more than one clause Up to several short paragraphs in length	Reading vocabulary has more complex and longer words, banquet, asthma, transportation, application Irregular spelling patterns	Informal work memos, Simple operating instructions, flyers, health brochures, classified ads on the internet or in a newspaper	Cycle to find multiple pieces of information that are not side-by-side Complex comparison such as comparing product price and make on an ad that lists more than one brand of article
2B	May be up to 500 words in length Texts are not necessarily straight forward. May use synonyms or include more information than needed to complete the task. May state information in the negative. e.g. "Who will not be at the meeting?" Text has organizing features such as headings and subtitles	Vocabulary includes some abstract words: insist, flexibility, convenient, contribute	Workplace documents about familiar topics: e-mails, list of procedures Driving instruction for getting from A to B with distances and highway numbers Nutritional information charts Events listings with descriptions and organizer contact information	Locate up to three or four pieces of information Use text format to find information: headings and subtitles Figure out which information is relevant and which is irrelevant to the task

When benchmarking resources, the following Chart for Benchmarking Materials is a helpful tool that provides a quick way to reference text to the ARB.

ARB Chart for Benchmarking Materials

Title of Text: **Benchmark level:**

Type of Text:

Text	Examples
Characteristics of Text: • Visuals • Formatting • Organizing features (headings, subheadings)	
Vocabulary: • Concrete, common nouns, simple action verbs, one and two syllable words • Complex, longer words • Abstract words	
Decoding Skills: • Easily sounded out • Irregular spelling • Number of syllables affixes	
Sentence Structure: • Length • Simple, complex or compound	
Types of Reading Tasks: • Identification of letters, sounds, sight words • Matching words • Comparisons, simple or complex, number of items • Choosing from several possibilities • Cycling • Using formatting to find information • Sorting relevant and irrelevant information • Answering questions stated in the negative • Search criteria from several parts of a text	

Summary of Teaching Strategies for Indigenous Learners

Patricia Pryce's *Sharing the Journey with Adult Indigenous Learners: A Teaching Reading Strategies Guide* (2013) presents strategies that "honour the whole student in the context of his or her culture" (7). Its general strategies aim to motivate learners and combine reading with orality. While these strategies are intended for use with Indigenous adults, most can be used with non-Indigenous adults. Pryce also employs Roberts's teaching and learning strategies (Roberts 2013) but asks practitioners to be mindful of the fact that these strategies are not specific to working with Indigenous adult learners.

Some practices and principles should be remembered when working with Indigenous adult learners. As Pryce says, "many practitioners in Indigenous literacy programs … emphasize the need to:

- respect, accept, and integrate Indigenous epistemology as a basis for learning. "Situating Indigenous people within epistemological and ontological space is imperative; Indigenous literacies are not necessarily based on the written word. It is a worldview primarily of orality" (Blood and Quinn).
- establish relationships with learners to create a safe environment that reflects respect and a healthy community (Doige 2003).
- encourage authentic learning experiences through open dialogue and the facilitation of "real" experiences not hypothetical or irrelevant experiences.
- maintain an understanding that oral tradition is the foundation of traditions and is woven into the fabric of Indigenous cultures (Blood and Quinn). (Pryce 2013, 10)

What follows is a brief overview of Pryce's teaching strategies for Indigenous learners. For detailed information please go to her guide.

Personal stories help encourage learners to develop their reading skills from a place of strength. Often oral communication is a more comfortable place for learners. How the sharing is done — whether one to one or in groups— should be negotiated with them. Each story should be recorded and scribed, either by a practitioner or volunteer so that the learner has a written visual copy of his or her story.

Readers Theatre has been identified as a motivational exercise for readers of all reading levels. By participating in reading, action, visualization, and character development, readers become more engaged in the content and more willing to take risks and have fun with reading.

Storytelling circles are an excellent way to create an atmosphere of sharing and safety. Although storytelling is not a form of "reading" per se, orality is a very important part of Indigenous culture and serves to establish a sense of community.

Independent projects provide a meaningful point of entry to reading for some learners who are empowered by their interest in a topic or issue that is important to them.

Modelling relates to practitioners showing *how* something is done, perhaps multiple times, in order to prepare learners to try the skill themselves.

Visualization helps learners "see" ideas, themes, and concepts they encounter in the "written" world.

Oral reading is a powerful approach to developing a connection between the written word and meaning-making for the learner. Connecting words on a page to an oral message of some interest to a learner helps learners develop a context for why reading skills are useful.

Community projects can provide an opportunity for students to engage in their community and enhance their reading skills. Projects should focus on benefiting the community at large and can range from organizing a community barbecue to raising awareness of the literacy program to collaborating with other groups to organize a community clean-up project, and larger ideas that involve multilevel support and participation in the community (e.g., organizing the development of a youth, family, or sports program).

Community engagement was strongly suggested by practitioners working with Indigenous adults. Inviting members of the Indigenous community to share knowledge and skills with learners helps make learning relevant. Asking learners for ideas around both what they would like to learn and who they would like to invite opens the doors to an equitable and interactive learning/teaching environment.

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An awareness of teaching and learning strategies will help practitioners become familiar with the ways a reader will use text at each level ((i.e., what tasks and skills they need) thus influencing the type of text used.

Description of Teaching and Learning Strategies

Roberts differentiates between teaching and learning strategies. A practitioner uses teaching strategies during lessons for the purposes of teaching, whereas s/he teaches learning strategies to the learner to use when reading or completing reading tasks (Roberts 2013). In the benchmarked resources that follow, you'll see teaching and learning strategies to consider with each item, from alphabet cards and word rings for beginner readers to clozes, inference making, and summarizing for stronger readers. See Roberts (2013) for greater detail on each strategy.

Teaching Strategies for Alphabet Skills and Sound/Letter Correspondence
Use alphabet cards (store bought or practitioner made) for these activities.

Matching: Scatter cards and the learner then matches the upper- and lower-case cards together.

Letter and Sound Identification: Scatter cards and call out the name or sound of the letter and the learner then finds it.

Alphabetical order: Learners put cards in order.

Teaching Strategies for Vocabulary Building

Word hunt: The learner takes a piece of paper and goes around the building or other designated area looking for individual words on signs.

Word ring: Words are written on small flashcards and put on a ring. Words are chosen based on frequency, importance, and relevance to the learner.

Labelling: Write words on slips of paper and have the learner place them on correct items around the room.

Word banks: A collection of words from lessons that the students are learning.

Learning Strategies for Decoding and Making Meaning

Sound it out: The use of phonics or sound/letter correspondence is essential, but limited by the learner's knowledge of the alphabet and the oddities of English spelling.

Use visual clues: If a word is unknown the learner looks to accompanying pictures or graphics for a hint about what the word is.

Use background knowledge: The learner thinks about and applies what they know from real life to decoding unknown words.

Multiple strategy use: Learners use a combination of strategies.

Part of the word known: Learner looks for something familiar in the word and then uses other strategies to complete decoding of the word.

Ask: Does this make sense? Does it look right? Does it sound right?

Visualize: Good readers make a picture in their head as they read. It helps the learner to construct meaning from what they are reading.

Skip an unknown word: Skipping an unknown word encourages learners to use the rest of the sentence and other strategies to decode a word.

Context clues: The use of context clues is helpful when the learner does not know the meaning of a word in a sentence. Teaching this strategy involves walking the learner through context clues in the text, identifying the known information and then using it to figure out the meaning of the unknown word.

Ask questions: Good readers unconsciously ask themselves questions about what they are reading as they read.

Teaching Strategies for Comprehension

Predicting and activating background knowledge: These strategies are teaching and learning strategies used to encourage the learner to think about what they already know and apply it to thinking about what they are reading.

Pre-teach vocabulary: Before beginning reading, pre-teach vocabulary that is topic specific and key to understanding the text.

Language experience: Language experience involves writing about an experience and then using the writing as reading material. The learner generates sentences and the practitioner acts as a scribe. This strategy builds a bridge between a learner's oral language skills and their reading abilities, so it is particularly appropriate for those from cultures with strong oral traditions such as Indigenous learners.

Cut-up sentences: Cut-up sentences are a good reading practice activity that encourages the learner to attend to print.

Mixed-up forms: This activity encourages the learner to attend to the text rather than using the format of a form to know what to write in each section.

- Cut up form into logical pieces — names, addresses, birth date boxes etc.
- Glue pieces back down in an unconventional order and photocopy the new form.
- Instruct learners to complete the form.
- Once the form is completed correctly the learners cut up the form and paste it on a new piece of paper in conventional order

Retelling: Retelling is a strategy for checking comprehension and for consolidating learning. When retelling the learner should put the text away and tell what the text was about from memory and in their own words.

Clozes: are texts with some words blanked out that can be determined using the meaning of the sentence.

Repeated readings: As the texts the learner is reading grow in length it is important to plan for repeated readings of the same text to increase learner fluency and comprehension. The learner can read to themselves, practitioners, other learners, or someone at home.

Learning Strategies for Task Completion

Scanning: Scanning is the strategy used by good readers to locate information quickly and easily. Instead of reading every word of a text, it involves looking for key words, dates, numbers, or other hints such as capital letters for proper nouns to find the information needed. Example: If I want to know the price of an apple how do I find it quickly in a flyer? Answer: look for a picture of apples, the first letter A, the word *apples*, and then for a dollar amount.

Skimming: Skimming is used to find the topic we are looking for. It is different than scanning in that the focus of scanning is specific details or bits of information, whereas the focus of skimming is to get the topic or idea the text is about.

Inferring: To find information learners may need to make inferences. Inferring involves looking at evidence to reach a conclusion that is not explicitly stated.

Making tracks: Learners reading longer texts may have more information to work with than can be mentally tracked. Many good readers manage information by making margin notes. As an alternative to writing in shared materials, sticky notes can be used for the same purpose.

- Instruct the learner to read the first paragraph of the text.
- Ask the learner what the important information was in the text.
- Work with the learner to decide on three to five key words to write on one sticky note that will help them remember the important information. This can be very challenging because most learners find it very difficult to write so few individual words and often choose words that will not help them to retell.
- Have the learner read the next section of the text writing three to five words on each sticky note — one per paragraph.
- Remove the sticky notes from the text. Lay them out on a blank piece of paper and put away the text.
- Have the learner retell the content of the text using the sticky notes to aid in recall.

Benchmarked Reading Materials 1a —   2b

Criteria for selecting reading materials
When I was selecting reading material to benchmark, I tried to find text that had: Canadian content (preferably Albertan if possible), different formats, and adult-appropriate content. I also aimed for texts that were

- current
- relevant
- a reasonable cost
- accessible
- culturally appropriate (Indigenous and diverse ethnic groups)
- clearly illustrating a specific ARB level.

When referencing reading material to the ARB, the following points need to be considered:

- the characteristics of the text
  - length
  - visual support (diagrams, photos, pictures)
  - layout/organizations (title, table of contents, index, glossary, headings, subheadings, titles, chapters)
  - typography (fonts, boldface, italic, capitalization, colours)
- the contexts/topic/style of the text (familiarity, abstract/concrete, genre)
- the familiarity, simplicity /complexity of the vocabulary and syntax
- distractors: correspondence between visuals and text
- the types of tasks to be completed at each benchmark
- the type of strategies to be used at each benchmark.

There are at least six reading materials for each level. For each item, I examined vocabulary, sentence length and structure, organizing features, and visuals, in order to evaluate and correlate them with a reading benchmark. At least one reading strategy is provided for each item.

Resources at ARB Level 1a

Authentic Materials at ARB Level 1a

Authentic materials	Signage in buildings, road signs, sale flyers, product labels
Teaching strategies for alphabet skills and sound. Letter correspondence	Use alphabet cards (store bought or practitioner made) for these activities. Matching upper- and lower-case cards Letter and sound identification Alphabetical order
Teaching strategies for vocabulary building	Word hunt Word ring Labelling

Learning strategies for decoding	Sound it out
	Use visual clues
	Use context clues
	Use background knowledge
	Multiple strategy use

Other Resources at ARB Level 1a

Title / Series	*How to Kit: Environmental Print Games*
Source	NWT Literacy Council. *How to Kit — Environmental Print Games.* 2003. Available at http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/How%20to%20Kits
Genre / Format	On-line instructional resource; free download
Description	This kit contains many examples of environmental print and includes instructions and templates for a variety of games. The kit includes a community word hunt (word scavenger hunt), matching words to pictures (environmental print memory game); and signs and symbols Bingo.
Comments	Environmental print is the text found in everyday life such as labels on food, traffic signs, or the logo of a restaurant chain. It is usually the first print we recognize and it plays a role in helping us learn that letters and symbols have meaning. Recognizing environmental print makes learners feel successful at reading and motivates them to read more.
Vocabulary	Simple, single, very common words — *stop, exit, closed* Sight words
Sentence length and structure	Not applicable
Organizing features and visuals	Simple signage Supporting visuals
Reading tasks	Identify names and letters of the alphabet. Identify the sounds made by some of the letters. Identify a few sight words: *sale, name, STOP*.
Reading strategy	To develop awareness of print-sound relationship and increase a learner's sight words, walk around the learner's community. Have the learner identify environmental print — signs on buildings, restaurant logos, traffic signs, etc. Have learners indicate which words they can and cannot read. Discuss the words and ask: What letter do you see at the beginning of this word? What sound does the letter make? Are there other words that begin with this letter? Have the learner add the words to the learner's picture dictionary and/or word ring.
Title / Series	*Canadian Skill Builder Flash Cards*.
Source	*Canadian Skill Builder Flash Cards.* Toronto: Canadian Curriculum Press, 2012.
Genre / Format	Nonfiction; flash cards
Description	This boxed set of flash cards includes: alphabet, phonics, 102 sight words, French-English vocabulary, counting, and addition
Comments	These adult-appropriate flash cards — letters, sounds, sight words, word pattern cards — support developing ARB level 1a skills.

Vocabulary	Simple, single, very common words Sight words
Sentence length and structure	Not applicable
Organizing features and visuals	Simple single letters and words supported by visuals
Reading tasks	Identify names and letters of the alphabet. Identify the sounds made by some of the letters. Identify a few sight words.
Reading strategy	Phonemic awareness to build awareness of consonant sounds in the initial position of words. Choose a sound that the learners need to learn: for example, /m/. Point to the card that has a picture of an object that begins with the sound /m/. Say, "This is a moose. Listen to the word: *moose*. The word *moose* begins with the sound /m/." Have learners name objects in the room (magazine, map, etc.) and hold up the card every time the word begins with /m/.
Title / Series	*ABCs of Practical Literacy: Personal Management*[1] "Understanding Signs in the Library." *ABCs of Practical Literacy: Economic Literacy.* "Number Flashcards" *ABCs of Practical Literacy: Employment Literacy.* "Days of the Week Flashcards"
Source	Bow Valley College. 2002. Calgary: Bow Valley College. http://www.esl-literacy.com/sites/default/files/ABC-economic%20literacy.pdf http://www.esl-literacy.com/sites/default/files/ABC-employment%20literacy_0.pdf http://www.esl-literacy.com/sites/default/files/ABC-personal%20management_0.pdf
Genre / Format	On-line instructional resource; free download
Description	This resource contains content-based literacy activities (1a to 1c). This specific reading material is benchmarked to ARB 1a. The on-line instructional resource has three sections, each with a unique URL: personal management, employment literacy, and economic literacy.
Comments	Although the literacy activities are based on *Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000: ESL for Literacy Learners*, most are suitable for native English-speaking literacy learners.
Vocabulary	Simple, single, very common words Sight words
Sentence length and structure	Not applicable
Organizing features and visuals	Simple single words or visuals
Reading tasks	Identify the names of letters of the alphabet. Identify the sounds made by some of the letters. Identify a few sight words.
Reading strategy	Sight words: To develop words that can be instantly recognized, show the learner the flashcards for the days of the week. Ask the learner to copy each word on an index

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[1] These were originally published as one book. They are now available on-line as three separate documents.

	card. Ask the learner to close their eyes and make a mental picture of the word. Have the learner print the letters of the word in the air, eyes closed.
	The days of the week the learner wrote on the index cards are put on a word ring for the learner to practise at home.

Title / Series	*How to Kit: Literacy Games for Adults* "Alphabet Scavenger Hunt"
Source	Deninu Kue. *How to Kit: Literacy Games for Adults.* Yellowknife NT: NWT Literacy Council, N.d. http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/How%20to%20Kits
Genre / Format	On-line instructional resource; free downloadable kit
Description	This resource of games has Indigenous content and offers fun, interactive approaches to developing reading skills in English.
Comments	Suitable for Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners, this resource contains literacy games that are appropriate for ARB levels 1a to 1c. This specific game is ARB level 1a.
Vocabulary	Letters of the alphabet Simple, single, very common words Sight words
Sentence length and structure	Not applicable
Organizing features and visuals	Supporting visuals
Reading tasks	Identify names and letters of the alphabet. Identify the sounds made by some of the letters. Identify a few sight words.
Reading strategy	To develop phonemic awareness of initial sounds. Learners in a group must use all twenty-six letters of the alphabet for the scavenger hunt. In their group, learners try to find something in the room that they can see that begins with each letter. They need only one thing for each letter. The first group to find things for all twenty-six letters reads out their words. If the words are all OK, this group is the winner. You can do this with an individual learner as well. If they are just beginning to learn the alphabet, you could provide them with the twenty-six words: you say each word and then ask the student to repeat them, then have the student try to identify the initial sound of the word.

Title / Series	*How to Kit: Picture and Word Bingos*
Source	NWT Literacy Council. *How to Kit: Picture and Word Bingos.* http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/resources/famlit/howtokit/wpbingo/wpbingo.pdf
Genre / Format	On-line instructional resource; free download
Description	Northern word bingo Northern picture bingo Alphabet bingo Animal bingo
Comments	Indigenous content offers a fun, interactive approach to developing reading skills
Vocabulary	Pictures

	Letters of the alphabet
Sentence length and structure	Not applicable
Organizing features and visuals	Supporting visuals
Reading tasks	Identify the names of letters of the alphabet. Identify the sounds made by some of the letters. Identify a few sight words.
Reading strategy	Phonemic awareness; develop connection between letter and sound Alphabet Bingo
Title / Series	Personal story
Source	The learner
Genre / Format	Learner-generated story — Learner creates with support from a practitioner
Description	The learner generates sentences and creates a story. Each story should be recorded and scribed by a practitioner so that the learner has a written copy of his or her story.
Comments	Suitable for Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners, learner-generated stories build a bridge between a learner's oral language skills and their reading abilities, so they are particularly appropriate for those from cultures with a strong oral tradition (Roberts 2013). "By using words and/or content from these stories as the starting point of vocabulary acquisition, sentence development, or more complex reading, the learning experience becomes relevant for learners" (Pryce 2013, 12).
Vocabulary	Simple vocabulary with support from a practitioner
Sentence length and structure	Simple sentence with support from practitioner
Organizing features and visuals	Supporting visuals
Reading tasks	Identify the names of letters of the alphabet. Identify the sounds made by some of the letters. Identify a few sight words.
Reading strategy	Language experience strategy • Discuss a topic of interest with the learner — family, job, goals, dreams, hobbies, a field trip, etc. The learner's personal photographs or photographs from magazines could be used to generate interesting thoughts and ideas. • After the discussion, ask the learner what to write. • The learner generates the stories verbally. • The scribe writes simple, correct sentences. • Read the writing aloud together. • Learners can use the words from these stories to create a word ring or word bank.

Resources at ARB Level 1b
Authentic Materials

Authentic materials	Posters, announcements, notices, flyers, menus, text messages
Teaching strategies for	Word ring Labelling

vocabulary building	Word banks — At this level it is most appropriate to group words in a word bank by noun categories such as food, clothing, people, animals, etc.; by sounds; or by word families of simple action verbs like *walk, walking, walked.*
Learning strategies for decoding and meaning making	- Sound it out - Use visual clues - Use context clues - Part of the word known - Ask: Does that make sense? Does it look right? Does it sound right? - Multiple strategy use
Learning strategies for task completion	Scanning
Teaching strategies for comprehension	- Predicting and activating background knowledge - Pre-teach vocabulary - Cut up sentences - Language experience

Other Resources at ARB Level 1b

Title / Series	NWT Literacy Council. *Photo Stories for English 110: To Support the NWT Adult Literacy and Basic Education Curriculum.* Yellowknife, NT: NWT Literacy Council, 2009. "A Dog Race" (5-36)
Source	http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/resources/adultlit/en110/en110.pdf
Genre / Format	On-line teaching and learning guide; free download
Description	This guide provides activities for early literacy based on visual prompts and stories on themes from the north. Developed by the NWT Literacy Council, this resource is suitable for Indigenous learners.
Comments	This guide provides different tools for helping students learn letter and word sounds, including pre-reading exercises, vocabulary practice, vowel practice, and extended learning ideas. Stories are combined with visuals that learners can interpret and respond to, as well as a written piece that relates to the picture.
Vocabulary	- Concrete nouns and simple action verbs — *dogs, ran* - one- and two-syllable words
Sentence length and structure	Short simple sentences Short lengths of text about something familiar
Organizing features and visuals	One photo per page that relates directly to the text
Reading tasks	Locate a single piece of information by matching word for word what is written in the text.
Reading strategy	Predicting and activating background knowledge will help develop learner comprehension skills. Ask learners to look at the picture. Ask them these questions before they read the story. - Who is in the picture? - What are they doing?

	• Where do you think this photo takes place?
	• When is this taking place?
	• Why is this happening?
	• How do you know?
	• What are the piles of snow for?
	• What do you know about dog races?

Title / Series	"Sun Dogs" *English Express*
Source	*English Express*, March 2010 http://eae.alberta.ca/englishexpress/articles/pdf/s03_10_11b.pdf
Genre / Format	Nonfiction; free download
Description	One-page photo story. There is an audio to accompany the story.
Comments	The story is accompanied by a photo that learners can interpret and respond to. The photo is directly related to the text.
Vocabulary	• Concrete nouns and simple action verbs: *look, sun, sky* • one- and two-syllable words
Sentence length and structure	• Short simple sentences • Short lengths of text about something familiar
Organizing features and visuals	One photo per page that relates directly to the text
Reading tasks	• Locate a single piece of information by matching word for word what is written in the text.
Reading strategy	Predicting and activating background knowledge will help develop learner comprehension skills. Ask learners to look at the picture. Ask them these questions before they read the story. • Have you ever seen a sun dog? • Where did you see it? • What did it look like? • Did you ever see three at once?

Title / Series	*Inge Cuts Hair* / ESL Literacy Readers
Source	Bow Valley College. *Inge Cuts Hair*. Calgary: Bow Valley College, 2010. http://www.esl-literacy.com/readers/phaseI/initial/inge_cuts_hair.pdf
Genre / Format	Fiction; free download
Description	This is one of a series of theme-based readers that comes with an instructor's guide. The themes are of high interest and relevance to learners.
Comments	While these readers were written for ESL literacy learners, many are appropriate for native English speakers. Although this reader is ARB level1b, the readers in this series range from 1a to 2a.
Vocabulary	• Concrete nouns and simple action verbs: *hair, cuts* • one- and two-syllable words
Sentence length and	• One short simple sentence per page • Short lengths of text about something familiar

structure	
Organizing features and visuals	One photo per page that relates directly to the text
Reading tasks	• Use simple comparisons. • Locate a single piece of information by matching word for word what is written in the text.
Reading strategy	*Previewing* Learners, depending on their ability, may just look at the picture on the front cover or they may be able to read the title to get an idea of what the story is about prior to reading it. *Activating Background Knowledge* Learners already have some experience with the topic of haircuts. Help learners to recall these experiences. This will help them understand the new text. *Predicting* Learners can predict what might happen in the story. Predicting gives learners a purpose for reading and facilitates learners' interaction with the text. Don't assume that learners automatically check their predictions — learners need support to do this as they read. (from *ESL Literacy Readers Guide,* http://www.esl-literacy.com/readers/esl_literacy_readers_guide.pdf)

Title / Series	*How to Clean Green* / How to Series
Source	Linda Kita-Bradley. *How to Clean Green*. Edmonton, AB: Grass Roots Press, 2012.
Genre / Format	Nonfiction; book
Description	Relevant topics and practical instructions are included in each book. An audio is available on-line. Student activities are available as a free download.
Comments	The pictures in the photo story relate directly to the text that consists of simple sentences and vocabulary.
Vocabulary	• Concrete nouns and simple action verbs: *water, cleans* • one- and two-syllable words: *black, baking*
Sentence length and structure	• Short simple sentences • Short lengths of text about something familiar
Organizing features and visuals	One photo per page that relates directly to the text
Reading tasks	Locate a single piece of information by matching word for word what is written in the text.
Reading strategy	To develop comprehension skills and vocabulary, brainstorm with the learner the topic of cleaning products. Ask them what products they use. This will activate their background knowledge and generate vocabulary that may be used in the story. Write these words down for the learner or have them write them. After the story has been read, discuss with the learner what products they are using that are "green" or how they could substitute products they're now using for "green" products. http://www.grassrootsbooks.net/pdf/Activities-Clean-Green.pdf

Title / Series	*The Long Winter*
Source	Elaine Lindy, *The Long Winter* http://www.storiestogrowby.com/script.html Based on a story retold by Elaine Lindy. Adapted as a play script by Lindsay Parker.
Genre / Format	Fiction / Reader's Theatre; free download
Description	*The Long Winter* has been adapted from a First Nations tale to Reader's Theatre format. The story is simple in content and vocabulary. The characters are animals and the theme centres on working as a community.
Comments	The play provides opportunities for learners to get creative with characterization and costumes. There are ten roles in this play plus a narrator role. The website provides vocabulary practice, teaching ideas around plot, theme, and characterization, as well as the play script (Pryce 2013). The NWT Literacy Council has developed a "How to Kit" for Reader's Theatre. This resource provides tips on how to write, direct, and organize Reader's Theatre, as well as some scripts learners can work from. http://www.nald.ca/library/learning/how to kit/theatre/theatre.pdf While this script is based on a First Nations tale, there are many scripts available for native English speakers as well.
Vocabulary	• Concrete nouns and simple action verbs: *bear, swimming* • one- and two-syllable words
Sentence length and structure	• Short lengths of text about something familiar
Organizing features and visuals	• Visuals in the resource section that can accompany the script • Play script organization
Reading tasks	• Find common and concrete words in the text. • Locate a single piece of information by matching word for word what is written in the text.
Reading strategy	To improve learner comprehension, use the predicting and activating background knowledge strategies to encourage learners to think about what they already know and apply it to what they are reading. Tell the learners the title of the story *The Long Winter*. Ask the learners what they expect this story to be about. Pre-teach vocabulary to learners. The new vocabulary can be added to a word ring or word bank.
Title / Series	"Easy Potatoes" *English Express* April 2010
Source	http://eae.alberta.ca/englishexpress/articles/pdf/r04_10_11.pdf
Genre / Format	Nonfiction; free download
Description	An easy recipe for making potatoes.
Comments	Step-by-step instructions supported by photos.
Vocabulary	• Concrete nouns and simple action verbs: *oven, bake*

	• one- and two-syllable words
Sentence length and structure	Short lengths of text about something familiar
Organizing features and visuals	Photos that relate directly to the text
Reading tasks	• Locate a single piece of information by matching word for word what is written in the text. • Find common and concrete words in the text.
Reading strategy	Use visual clues. If the word is unknown ask the learner to look at the accompanying pictures for a hint about what the word is.
Title / Series	*ABCs of Practical Literacy: Personal Management* "Rental Accommodations Advertisement"
Source	Bow Valley College. *ABCs of Practical Literacy: Personal Management.* Calgary: Bow Valley College, 2002. http://www.esl-literacy.com/sites/default/files/ABC-personal%20management_0.pdf
Genre / Format	On-line instructional resource; free download
Description	This resource contains content-based literacy activities (1a to 1c). This specific reading material is benchmarked to ARB 1b. This on-line instructional resource has three sections, each with a unique URL: personal management, employment literacy, and economic literacy.
Comments	Although the literacy activities are based on *Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000: ESL for Literacy Learners,* most are suitable for native English-speaking literacy learners.
Vocabulary	• Simple, single, very common words • Sight words
Sentence length and structure	Not applicable
Organizing features and visuals	Simple single words
Reading tasks	• Focus on words rather than on phrases or sentences. • Recognize common formats. • Find common and concrete words in the text. • Locate a single piece of requested information by matching word for word what is in the text with no distracting information.
Reading strategy	To improve comprehension, pre-teach vocabulary and include abbreviations. Before beginning reading, pre-teach vocabulary that is topic specific and key to understanding the text. For the rental listing, the vocabulary to be pre-taught is *bdrm., apt., nr., mo., and d.d.*

Resources at ARB Level 1c

Authentic Materials

Authentic materials	Coupons, flyers, rental listings, registration forms, application forms, text messages, e-mails
Teaching strategies for vocabulary building	• Word ring • Word banks — At this level words could be grouped either by categories (food, clothing, housing) spelling patterns (*light, night, flight*), or in word families (*talk, talking, talked*).
Learning strategies for decoding and meaning making	• Sound it out • Use visual clues • Use context clues • Visualize • Part of the word known • Ask: Does that make sense? Does it look right? Does it sound right? • Skip an unknown word • Multiple strategy use
Learning strategies for task completion	• Scanning
Teaching strategies for comprehension	• Predicting and activating background knowledge • Pre-teach vocabulary • Language experience • Cut-up sentences • Mixed up forms

Other Resources at ARB Level 1c

Title / Series	*Baker*— Easy Reading Job Profiles
Source	http://alis.alberta.ca/pdf/easyreading/baker.pdf
Genre / Format	Nonfiction; free download
Description	Part of a series, twenty-four job profiles are adapted from existing Alberta occupational profiles. Each job includes a story of someone on the job as well as information about duties, working conditions, personal characteristics, hourly wages, and related jobs.
Comments	The Easy Reading Job Profiles series was developed to help adults with low literacy skills or ESL expand their knowledge of occupations and choose an occupational goal.
Vocabulary	• Familiar, common, everyday words: *baker, bread, cookies, washes, orders, works* • Some common three-syllable words: *restaurant, ingredients, appliance, decorates*
Sentence length and structure	• Simple sentences on familiar topics • Up to several sentences long
Organizing	• Headings and lists

features and visuals	• Supported by visuals
Reading tasks	• Find information that uses simple and common words. • Select from choices given several possibilities. • Rely on understanding meaning rather than relying on text structure to find information. • Use simple comparisons with three or more items.
Reading strategy	Scanning strategy is used to locate information quickly. Instead of reading every word of a text, it involves looking for key words, dates, numbers, or other hints such as capital letters for proper nouns to find the information needed. To find out what education is needed to become a baker, the learner will scan for the key word *education*.
Title / Series	"Income Taxes" *English Express* April 2010
Source	http://eae.alberta.ca/englishexpress/articles/pdf/m04_10_l3.pdf
Genre / Format	Nonfiction; free download
Description	Short article providing helpful information about income tax — deductions, tax credits, free community help,
Comments	Remember to provide the tax deadline for the current year.
Vocabulary	• Familiar, common, everyday words: *money, income tax* • Some common three-syllable words: *deductions, appointment*
Sentence length and structure	• Simple sentences on familiar topics • Up to several sentences in length
Organizing features and visuals	• Headings and lists • Supported by visuals
Reading tasks	• Find information that uses simple and common words. • Select from choices given several possibilities. • Know where to write personal information on a form. • Rely on understanding meaning rather than relying on text structure to find information. • Use simple comparisons with three or more items.
Reading strategy	*K-W-L*: *Know—Want to Know — Learned* K-W-L is an introductory strategy that provides a structure for recalling what learners know about a topic, what they want to know, and what has been learned. • Draw three columns on a piece of paper. • Label column 1 K, column 2 W, column 3 L. • Before reading, learners fill in the *Know* column with everything they already know about the topic — in this case, income tax. This helps generate their background knowledge. • Then have learners look at the title, picture, and headings and predict what they might learn or want to learn about the topic. This helps set their purpose for reading and focuses their attention on key ideas. • After reading, learners should fill in their new knowledge gained from reading the article.

Title / Series	*Terry Fox* / Maple Leaf Series
Source	Terry Barber. *Terry Fox*. Edmonton, AB: Grass Roots Press, 2012.
Genre / Format	Nonfiction; book
Description	Easy-to-read biography
Comments	The text has simple sentences, with several sentences on each page. This book is part of a series of biographies that portray the lives of famous Canadians. It has a free workbook to download to accompany it. http://www.grassrootsbooks.net/pdf/Terry-Fox-Activities.pdf
Vocabulary	• Familiar, common everyday words: *run, warm, family* • Some common three-syllable words: *marathon, artificial*
Sentence length and structure	• Simple sentences on familiar topics • Up to several sentences in length
Organizing features and visuals	• Headings • Visuals to support text
Reading tasks	• Find information that uses simple and common words. • Select from choices given several possibilities. • Rely on understanding meaning rather than relying on text structure to find information. • Use simple comparisons with three or more items.

Reading strategy	*Word families — a decoding skill*
	 Skilled readers recognize patterns in words rather than sounding words out, letter by letter. Recognizing word families is a strategy to help decode unknown words and build vocabulary.
	     Many words have common patterns. The patterns look and sound the same.
	     Word families are letter patterns. In this strategy the learner looks for something familiar in the words and then uses other strategies to complete the word's decoding. For example, the reader encounters the unknown word *pain*. If the word family "ain" is known to them they need to sound out only the first letter to decode the word *pain*. One of the most common word patterns is "ain."
	     If a reader knows the word *pain*, for example, it's likely that they will be able to read other "ain" words such as *brain, chain, drain, gain, grain, main, plain, rain, sprain, stain, strain, train, vain*.
	     In *Terry Fox* there are several words with this word family — *pain, train, rain*.
	     Once the learner recognizes the word family, have them think of more words that contain this word pattern. After the list has been made, have the learner read each word on the list by sounding out the first consonant and then the letter pattern. This activity is from:
	 http://www.grassrootsbooks.net/pdf/Terry-Fox-Activities.pdf

Title / Series	*ABCs of Practical Literacy: Employment Literacy* "Detailed application form — Emp 10.1"
Source	Bow Valley College. *ABCs of Practical Literacy: Employment Literacy*. Calgary: Bow Valley College, 2002. http://www.esl-literacy.com/toolbox?page=1

Genre / Format	Nonfiction; on-line instructional resource
Description	This resource contains content-based literacy activities (1a to 1c). This specific reading material is benchmarked to ARB 1c. This on-line instructional resource has three sections, each with a unique URL: personal management, employment literacy, and economic literacy.
Comments	Although the literacy activities are based on *Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000: ESL for Literacy Learners*, most are suitable for native English-speaking literacy learners.
Vocabulary	• Familiar, common, everyday words: *name, address, phone number* • Some common three-syllable words: *application, insurance, education*
Sentence length and structure	• Simple forms that require personal information to be written on them
Organizing features and visuals	• Headings
Reading tasks	• Know where to write personal information on a form.
Reading strategy	Activate a learner's background knowledge with a discussion on forms that the learner has used or has seen in everyday life. Ask the learner to name common words or directions s/he has seen on forms. Some common words found on forms may include: date of birth, name, surname, maiden name, telephone (home, etc.) address, postal code, signature, emergency contact, title, etc. Practitioner and learner will work together to define common words and practitioner will explain abbreviations and ask learner if they know any common abbreviations on forms. Practitioner will give learner a form to fill out.
Title / Series	*A Terrible Toothache* / ESL Literacy Readers (ESL Literacy Network)
Source	http://www.esl-literacy.com/readers (see under CLB phase II) or http://www.esl-literacy.com/readers/phase2/adequate/a_terrible_toothache.pdf
Genre / Format	Fiction; free download
Description	This is one of a series of theme-based readers that comes with an instructor's guide. The themes are of high interest and relevance to learners.
Comments	While these readers were written for ESL literacy learners, many are appropriate for native English speakers. This reader is at ARB 1c. The readers in this series range from 1a to 2a.
Vocabulary	• Familiar, common, everyday words: *dentist, coffee, teeth, brush, floss* • Some common three-syllable words: *appointment*
Sentence length and structure	• Simple sentences on familiar topics • Up to several sentences in length
Organizing features and visuals	• Heading • Visual to support text
Reading tasks	• Find information that uses simple and common words. • Select from choices given several possibilities. • Use simple comparisons with three or more items.

	• Rely on understanding meaning rather than relying on text structure to find information.
Reading strategy	Comprehension strategies: Predicting and activating background knowledge. • Ask learner to look at the picture and the title, *A Terrible Toothache*. • Ask learner what they think the story is about. • Ask about their experience at the dentist. • What do they think will happen in the story? • After the learner has read the story, cut up a few of the sentences into individual words. Have the learner unscramble the words and put them into the correct order.
Title / Series	"Shock, Grief and Anger in Lac-Megantic" / *The Westcoast Reader*
Source	http://www.thewestcoastreader.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Shock-grief-and-anger-in-Lac-Megantic-PDF.pdf
Genre / Format	Nonfiction; free download
Description	Short article on a current event
Comments	The *Westcoast Reader* adapts current events from newspapers into easy-to-read articles.
Vocabulary	• Familiar, common, everyday words: *train, crashed* • Some common three-syllable words: *beautiful, frustrated, memorial, symbolizes*
Sentence length and structure	• Simple sentences on familiar topics • Up to several sentences in length
Organizing features and visuals	• Visuals to support text
Reading tasks	• Find information that uses simple and common words. • Select from choices given several possibilities. • Use simple comparisons with three or more items. • Rely on understanding meaning rather than relying on text structure to find information.
Reading strategy	Predicting and activating background knowledge and think-out-loud strategies improve comprehension. To encourage the learner to think about what they already know about the story, show them the picture and the title. • Ask them what they think the story is about. • Ask them to describe the picture. • Does the picture remind them of anything? • Ask them to let you know if they are confused by anything in the text.

Resources at ARB Level 2a

Authentic Materials

Authentic materials	Workplace notes, simple operating instructions, flyers, brochures, classified listings, e-mails, text messages
Teaching strategies for vocabulary building	• Word banks — At this level, words could be grouped either by categories (food, clothing, housing), spelling patterns (*light, night, flight*), or in word families (*talk, talking, talked*).
Learning strategies for decoding and meaning making	• Sound it out • Use visual clues • Visualize • Part of the word known • Chunking • Ask: Does that make sense? Does it look right? Does it sound right? • Skip an unknown word • Use context clues • Multiple strategy use
Learning strategies for task completion	• Scanning
Teaching strategies for comprehension	• Predicting and activating background knowledge • Pre-teach vocabulary • Retelling • Language experience • Clozes • Repeated readings

Other resources at ARB Level 2a

Title / Series	*What To Do When Your Child Gets Sick*
Source	Gloria Mayer and Ann Kuklierus. *What To Do When Your Child Gets Sick*. La Habre, CA: Institute for Health Advancement, 2010.
Genre / Format	Nonfiction; book

Description	This book is written for parents and caregivers of young children. The illustrations are simple but explicit and add to understanding of the text. The book contains information for managing more than fifty common childhood illnesses and health problems, including earaches, fever, vomiting, and nosebleeds. The book describes the conditions, what can be done at home, and when to call a healthcare provider.
Comments	Sentences are longer and include simple, compound, and complex sentences. Vocabulary is more complex and there are longer words.
Vocabulary	• Some complex and longer words (root word plus prefixes or suffixes, compound words) and words with unusual spelling: *diarrhea, eczema, constipation, immunization*

Sentence length and structure	• Variability in sentence structure, including
	   ○ short and long sentences
	   ○ simple and complex sentences
	     "Children can go to school if clothes cover the sores and the sores have been treated for more than two days."
	 • Text is up to several short paragraphs in length.

Organizing features and visuals	• Headings and subheadings are used
Reading tasks	• Cycle to find more than one piece of information that is not side by side. • Make more complex comparisons between items mentioned in the text. • Relate information to other information further away in the text. • Find complex information. • Select among choices in a short text.
Reading strategy	Scanning is a very useful strategy to use when a reader needs to find particular information in a text and reading the whole text is not necessary. However, scanning is also a very important reading skill to master in order to effectively deal with increasingly complex texts. Let's say the reader is looking for information on what brand of soap to use if their child has eczema. Locating for this information among 150 pages of information can seem overwhelming. Steps for the learner to find the information: • Look at the layout of the book — the content is organized into numbered sections. • Look at the table of contents and note the headings and subheadings. • Brainstorm ideas for which heading and then subheading best matches the information they are seeking. • Identify the likely best section. • Go to that section and scan the text for keywords — *soap*. The answer is Dove.

Title / Series	*Two Old Women*
Source	Velma Wallis. *Two Old Women: An Alaskan Legend of Betrayal, Courage and Survival.* New York: Harper Collins, 1994.
Genre / Format	Fiction; book
Description	This story is based on an Athabascan legend from the Upper Yukon region of Alaska. The main characters are two old women who are abandoned by their tribe, and rather than give in to the harsh winter, they struggle together to survive. This story is rich in narrative detail and relates to topics of friendship, cooperation, forgiveness, and resilience.
Comments	The book contains many passages where discussions can emerge around hope, strength, compassion, and forgiveness, as well as traditional Indigenous life styles. It is suitable for Indigenous learners. There is a study guide for *Two Old Women* that was developed by the NWT Literacy Council. The guide provides learners with a variety of learning activities and handouts. It includes a pre-reading and post-reading section, and each chapter contains vocabulary lists, comprehension questions with answers, journal writing and reflection ideas, discussion questions, and extended activities. http://www.nald.ca/library/learning/nwt/tow120/en120.pdf
Vocabulary	• Some complex and longer words (root word plus prefixes or suffixes, compound words) and words with unusual spelling: *barricade, overwhelmed*
Sentence length and structure	• Variability in sentence structure, including o short and long sentences o simple and complex sentences "One of the rules they had been taught was that if you set snares for animals you must check them regularly." • Up to several short paragraphs in length
Organizing features and visuals	• Headings and subheadings are used — table of contents with chapter headings • Illustrations
Reading tasks	• Cycle to find more than one piece of information that is not side by side. • Make more complex comparisons between items mentioned in the text. • Relate information to other information further away in the text. • Find complex information. • Select among choices in a short text.
Reading strategy	*Vocabulary development:* Using prefixes and suffixes to find the meaning of new words Many words are made up of two or three parts: a prefix, a root, and a suffix. A prefix is a group of letters added to the beginning of a word. A root word is a basic word from which other words are created and a suffix is attached to the end of a word. Prefixes usually change the meaning of a word and suffixes change the way the word is used. Example: *unavoidable* Root: *avoid* means keep away from Prefix: *un* means not Suffix: *able* means the ability to

	Meaning: Unable to avoid
Title / Series	*Path of the Warrior* / Healthy Aboriginal Network (Vancouver). Comic book series
Source	Richard Van Camp. *Path of the Warrior*. Vancouver: Healthy Aboriginal Network, 2009.
Genre / Format	Fiction; graphic novel
Description	The *Path of the Warrior* is about physical activity and gang prevention.
Comments	Readers must be able to navigate a comic book format. There is a study guide that has been developed by NWT literacy to accompany the book. http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/resources/adultlit/comic_book_study/path_warrior.pdf
Vocabulary	• Some complex and longer words (root word plus prefixes or suffixes, compound words) and words with unusual spelling: *unfortunate, spiritual*

Sentence length and structure	• Variability in sentence structure, including
	  ○ short and long sentences
	  ○ simple and complex sentences
	  "If you come work for us at the Community centre, the courts will release you to us for Circle Sentencing."
	• Up to several short paragraphs in length

Organizing features and visuals	• Supporting visuals for text
Reading tasks	• Cycle to find more than one piece of information that is not side by side. • Make more complex comparisons between items mentioned in the text. • Relate information to other information further away in the text. • Find complex information. • Select among choices in a short text.
Reading strategy	*Retelling* Retelling is a teaching strategy for checking comprehension and consolidating learning. When retelling the learner should put the text away and tell what the text is about from memory and in their own words. (Roberts 2013) *Previewing, activating background knowledge, and predicting* • What is the title? • What do I already know about the topic — gangs? • What do I think I will be reading about? • What do I think will happen? *Visuals* • What can I learn from the graphics? • How do the captions help me better understand the content?
Title / Series	*Simply Health: Dental — Learn About Teeth and Gum Problems* / Vocational and Rehabilitation Research Institute (VRRI) Simply Health series
Source	VRRI. *Simply Health: Dental — Learn About Teeth and Gum*

	Problems. 2009. Available at http://www.nald.ca/library/learning/vrri/dental/dental.pdf
Genre / Format	Nonfiction; newspaper or free download
Description	This is one of a series of booklets prepared by the Calgary-based Vocational and Rehabilitation Research Institute (VRRI), an agency that helps people with disabilities as well as the community at large. The booklets use simple language, provide tips for pronouncing difficult words, and include many illustrations. *Simply Health: Dental — Learn About Teeth and Gum Problems* The authors explain the structure of the tooth, roles of the dentist and dental hygienist, and what happens at a dental check-up. The text provides tips for brushing and flossing, choosing healthy foods, and dealing with fear of the dentist.
Comments	The sentence structure is primarily simple sentences with some compound and complex sentences. The vocabulary has more complex and longer words, and the subjects may not be familiar to the reader.
Vocabulary	• Some complex and longer words (root word plus prefixes or suffixes; compound words) and words with unusual spelling: *enamel, hygienist*
Sentence length and structure	• Variability in sentence structure, including • short and long sentences • simple and complex sentences • up to several short paragraphs in length
Organizing features and visuals	• Headings and subheadings are used • Visuals to support text
Reading tasks	• Cycle to find more than one piece of information that is not side by side. • Make more complex comparisons between items mentioned in the text. • Relate information to other information further away in the text. • Find complex information. • Select among choices in a short text.
Reading strategy	Pre-teach vocabulary Before beginning reading, pre-teach vocabulary that is topic specific and key to understanding the text. This material identifies these words on the back page of the newspaper.
Title / Series	*Trades in Alberta*
Source	Trades in Alberta. Edmonton, AB: Alberta Education and Technology, 2012. http://alis.alberta.ca/pdf/cshop/aaet/tradesinalberta.pdf
Genre / Format	Nonfiction; free download
Description	This easy-to-read guide is for low literacy learners who are interested in learning about the trades or working within the trades as a career choice. Teaching notes are available to accompany the publication.

Comments	Sentences are longer and more complex. The reading vocabulary is more complex and there are longer words. The text involves more complex organization with headings and subheadings.
Vocabulary	• Some complex and longer words (root word plus prefixes or suffixes, compound words) and words with unusual spelling: *apprenticeship, compulsory*
Sentence length and structure	Variability in sentence structure, including • short and long sentences • simple and complex sentences • "You can also enter a program if you write and pass an entrance exam for your trade." • up to several short paragraphs in length
Organizing features and visuals	• Headings and subheadings are used • Visuals to support text
Reading tasks	• Cycle to find more than one piece of information that is not side by side. • Make more complex comparisons between items mentioned in the text. • Relate information to other information further away in the text. • Find complex information. • Select among choices in a short text.
Reading strategy	*Scanning* Scanning is the strategy used by readers to locate information quickly. Instead of reading every word of a text, it involves looking for key words, dates, numbers, or other hints (Roberts 2013). Have learners scan — what does RAP stand for?
Title / Series	*Vocabulary Boosters 1* / Vocabulary Boosters
Source	Susan Rogers. *Vocabulary Boosters 1*. Edmonton, AB: Grass Roots Press, 2005.
Genre / Format	Nonfiction; workbook
Description	This is one of a series of three workbooks. The workbooks help learners develop their vocabulary. Each one is organized around four themes: health, wildlife, the environment, and popular culture. Each lesson presents a nonfiction passage that relates to one of the four themes and a set of activities. The workbook activities can be completed independently, with a tutor, or with a group.
Comments	Sentence structure and vocabulary become more complex with each level. The topics may not be familiar to the learner and vocabulary becomes more abstract.
Vocabulary	• Some complex and longer words (root word plus prefixes or suffixes, compound words) and words with unusual spelling (e.g., from "Back Care" *slouching, exercise*)
Sentence length and structure	Variability in sentence structure, including • short and long sentences • simple and complex sentences • (From "Back Care") "If you have young children, bend down to talk to them rather than bending over." • up to several short paragraphs in length

Organizing features and visuals	• Headings and subheadings are used
Reading tasks	• Cycle to find more than one piece of information that is not side by side. • Make more complex comparisons between items mentioned in the text. • Relate information to other information further away in the text. • Find complex information. • Select among choices in a short text.
Reading strategy	*Context clues* When your learner reads, s/he may come across words s/he doesn't know. Sometimes you can figure out the meaning of a word by reading the rest of the sentence. The other words in the sentence give clues to the meaning of the word they are not sure of. e.g., *adjust* "If you're carrying shopping bags adjust the weight so that both arms carry the same amount." Looking at context clues will provide the learner with another way to figure out meaning rather than looking it up in the dictionary.

Resources at ARB Level 2b

Authentic Materials

Authentic materials	Workplace e-mails, workplace policies and procedures, driving instructions, nutritional information charts, guides, community events listings
Teaching strategies for vocabulary building	Word banks — At this level word banks grouped by synonyms or word families are appropriate. Word banks can be compiled on paper for easy reference in the front or back of a binder or in a separate booklet.
Learning strategies for decoding and meaning making	• Visualize • Part of the word known • Chunking • Ask: Does that make sense? Does it look right? Does it sound right? • Ask questions • Skip an unknown word • Context clues • Multiple strategy use
Teaching strategies for comprehension	• Predicting and activating background knowledge • Pre-teach vocabulary • Retelling • Language experience • Clozes • Repeated readings
Learning strategies for task completion	• Scanning • Skimming • Inferring • Making tracks

Other resources at ARB Level 2b

Title	*Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*
Source	Health Canada. *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide.* Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 2007. http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/alt_formats/hpfb-dgpsa/pdf/food-guide-aliment/view_eatwell_vue_bienmang-eng.pdf
Genre / Format	Nonfiction; pamphlet or free download
Description	*Canada's Food Guide* provides recommendations on how many servings of each food group you should eat each day, including vegetables and fruit, grain products, milk and alternatives, and meat and alternatives.
Comments	Complex organization and vocabulary
Vocabulary	Complex vocabulary: *trans fats, saturated fats, folic acid, nutritious, cholesterol, sodium, carbohydrate, osteoporosis* Some abstract words
Sentence length and structure	Complex sentence structure "When a Nutrition Facts Label is not available, ask for nutrition information to choose foods lower in trans and saturated fats."
Organizing features and visuals	Complex organization with multiple text formats in one text, such as continuous text with lists, charts, graphs, or diagrams
Reading tasks	• Manage distracting information, synonyms, and the presence of extra information not related to the task. • Complete complex searches including combining information from different parts of the text. • Use guiding features in the text to find information; e.g., scan for key words using headings, inset boxes, or bold print to find information without having to read every word. • Cycle to locate up to three or four pieces of information; the number of requested items is specified. • Use information in the text to find further information in the text. • Figure out meaning when it is implicitly or indirectly expressed • Can be stated in the negative. • Read longer and more complex text.
Reading strategy	*Reading information from charts.* • A chart is used to summarize and organize information about a topic. • A chart has three parts: the title, headings at the top of the chart, and row headings at the side of the chart. • Have the learner look at the title, headings, and images with the title. The title tells you what the chart is about. *Activity for your learner* The "Recommended Number of Food Guide Servings" chart shows how much food you need from each of the four food groups every day. Give your learner a copy of the *Canada Food Guide* and have them find their age and sex on the chart to see how much food they need.
Title	*Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide — First Nations, Inuit, and Metis*
Source	Health Canada. *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide — First Nations, Inuit, and Metis.* Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 2007. http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/alt_formats/fnihb-dgspni/pdf/pubs/fnim-

Genre / Format	Nonfiction; pamphlet or free download
Description	*Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide First Nations, Inuit, and Metis* was developed for individuals, families, and communities to learn about and share ways of eating well that include both traditional and store-bought foods. The food guide is now available in four Indigenous languages — Woods Cree, Plains Cree, Ojibwe, and Inuktitut — in addition to English and French.
Comments	Complex vocabulary and organization
Vocabulary	More complex vocabulary: *trans fats, saturated fats, folic acid, nutritious, cholesterol, sodium, carbohydrate, osteoporosis* Some abstract words
Sentence length and structure	Complex sentence structure "Traditional fats that are liquid at room temperature, such as seal and whale oil, or ooligan grease, also contain unsaturated fats."
Organizing features and visuals	Complex organization with multiple text formats in one text, such as continuous text with lists, charts, graphs, or diagrams
Reading tasks	• Manage distracting information, synonyms, and the presence of extra information not related to the task. • Complete complex searches including combining information from different parts of the text. • Use guiding features in the text to find information, e.g., scan for key words using headings, inset boxes, or bold print to find information without having to read every word. • Cycle to locate up to three or four pieces of information; the number of requested items is specified. • Use information in the text to find further information in the text. • Figure out meaning when it is implicitly or indirectly expressed • Can be stated in the negative. • Read longer and more complex text.
Reading strategy	See strategy for *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* *Modelling* Model for your learner how to read a nutrition label. Step 1: How much are you eating? Step 2: How many calories are you consuming? Step 3: Check out the nutrients. Step 4: Which nutrients should contribute most to your diet? Step 5: What are the recommendations?
Title / Series	*Vocabulary Boosters 2* / Vocabulary Boosters
Source	Susan Rogers. *Vocabulary Boosters 2*. Edmonton, AB: Grass Roots Press, 2005.
Genre / Format	Nonfiction; workbook
Description	This is one of a series of three workbooks. This workbook is benchmarked at ARB level 2b. The workbooks help learners develop their vocabulary. Each one is organized around four themes: health, wildlife, the environment, and popular culture. Each lesson presents a nonfiction passage that relates to one of the four themes and a set of activities. The workbook activities can be completed independently, with a tutor, or with a group.
Comments	Sentence structure and vocabulary become more complex with each level. The topics may not be familiar to the learner and vocabulary becomes more abstract.

Vocabulary	• Some abstract words (e.g., from "Stress" *optimistic*) • More complex vocabulary (from "Stress" *adrenaline, conclusion*)
Sentence length and structure	• Complex sentence structure "Your stress level may build up even more if you think you are about to lose your job."
Organizing features and visuals	• Complex organization
Reading tasks	• Manage distracting information, synonyms, and the presence of extra information not related to the task. • Complete complex searches including combining information from different parts of the text. • Use guiding features in the text to find information, e.g., scan for key words using headings, inset boxes, or bold print to find information without having to read every word. • Cycle to locate up to three or four pieces of information; the number of requested items is specified. • Use information in the text to find further information in the text. • Figure out meaning when it is implicitly or indirectly expressed. • Can be stated in the negative. • Read longer and more complex text.
Reading strategy	*Skimming* Skimming means reading quickly to get an overview of the text or the gist of the contents. When you skim you are looking for the general idea of the text. *Tips for skimming* • Read the title • Read first paragraph (the introduction) • Read first sentence of each paragraph • Typographical cues — bold, italics, underlined • Read final paragraph (the conclusion)
Title / Series	*The Life of Helen Betty Osborne*
Source	David Alexander Robertson. *The Life of Helen Betty Osbourne.* Winnipeg, MB: Portage and Main, 2008.
Genre / Format	Fiction (biography); graphic novel
Description	This novel is a mix of fiction and biography. The story of Helen Osborne is based on fact. She was a First Nations woman who was brutally murdered in Manitoba. Her story is told by a fictional character, Daniel, who represents human hope and growth in the face of tragedy (Pryce 2013).
Comments	Content may be disturbing for some learners. The novel does address ideas of redemption and hope through Daniel's character. (Pryce 2013) Portage and Main have developed a useful teacher's guide that is available for free download. http://www.portageandmainpress.com/book_detail.cfm?biD=260
Vocabulary	• More complex vocabulary: *aspiration* • Some abstract words: *racism, sexism*
Sentence length and structure	• Complex sentence structure "It was a vicious act of racism that spawned an inquiry into the justice system's treatment of Aboriginals."
Organizing	• Complex organization, graphic novel format

features and visuals	
Reading tasks	- Manage distracting information, synonyms, and the presence of extra information not related to the task. - Complete complex searches including combining information from different parts of the text. - Use guiding features in the text to find information, e.g., scan for key words using headings, inset boxes, or bold print to find information without having to read every word. - Cycle to locate up to three or four pieces of information; the number of requested items is specified. - Use information in the text to find further information in the text. - Figure out meaning when it is implicitly or indirectly expressed - Can be stated in the negative. - Read longer and more complex text.
Reading strategy	*Retelling* Retelling is a good teaching strategy for checking comprehension and consolidating learning. When retelling, the learner should tell you what the text was about from memory and in their own words (Roberts 2013).
Title / Series	*Touching Spirit Bear*
Source	Ben Mikaelsen. *Touching Spirit Bear*. New York: Harper Collins, 2001.
Genre / Format	Fiction; book
Description	Cole, a troubled and angry youth, is given the choice between juvenile jail or trying circle justice. Thinking he can manipulate the system and get off easy, Cole chooses circle justice. This choice is the start of a difficult and life-altering journey as Cole learns to let his hate and anger go through the guidance of Aboriginal elders (Pryce 2013).
Comments	Although the main character in this book is non-Indigenous, the story revolves around the power of a justice circle in one boy's healing journey. This theme explores West Coast Indigenous values around conflict resolution, self-empowerment, and healing in contrast to western punitive systems of justice (Pryce 2013). These are links to two study guides that could be used with the novel. http://docs.plea.org/pdf/TouchingSpiritBear.pdf http://www.sd74.bc.ca/abed/Touching%20Spirit%20Bear.pdf This novel is suitable for Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners.
Vocabulary	- More complex vocabulary: *redemption, galvanized, writhed* - Includes abstract words: *justice, reverently*
Sentence length and structure	Complex sentence structure "Something terrible has happened to you to make you want to kill a poor small animal."
Organizing features and visuals	Headings
Reading tasks	- Manage distracting information, synonyms, and the presence of extra information not related to the task. - Complete complex searches including combining information from different parts of the text. - Use guiding features in the text to find information, e.g., scan for key words using headings, inset boxes, or bold print to find information without having to read every word.

	- Cycle to locate up to three or four pieces of information; the number of requested items is specific. - Use information in the text to find further information in the text. - Figure out meaning when it is implicitly or indirectly expressed - Can be stated in the negative - Read longer and more complex text.
Reading strategy	*Inferring* To find information, learners at this level may need to make inferences. The writer does not always tell readers everything so readers have to make inferences. You can make an inference by using what you already know and looking for clues in the text or pictures. "Inferring involves looking at evidence to reach a conclusion that is not explicitly stated" (Roberts 2013, 21). Example: Cole gives a threatening look to Peter at the beginning of the circle. Though not explicitly stated, we infer that Cole is not sorry for beating up Peter.
Title / Series	*Aboriginal Success in the Oil Sands* / Learning English with CBC Edmonton
Source	*Aboriginal Success in the Oil Sands* http://www.cbc.ca/edmonton/eal/stories/story_dec03_2012.pdf
Genre / Format	On-line instructional resource; transcript is a free download
Description	This transcript is a monthly feature story originally aired on CBC radio as a podcast. In this story, CBC journalist Tracy Johnson visits a successful Aboriginal company doing business in the Alberta oil sands.
Comments	There are two kinds of podcasts, with accompanying transcripts, featured on this website. The first is a weekly news report featuring three stories, ranging from local, national, and international topics. These stories are under three minutes long and are read by Don Bell, a CBC newscaster. Newscast stories are chosen from the most important news stories for Albertans each week. Monthly stories are longer than newscasts and spoken at the original broadcast pace heard on the radio. Monthly stories have accompanying language learning activities — reading, writing, vocabulary, speaking, and listening skills. Transcripts and websites with further information on the topic are included. While the objective of these materials is to provide access to news stories for immigrant ESL learners, they also provide access to news stories for native English speakers. While the weekly newscasts are written for ESL learners at CLB 4 level and the monthly stories are written for ESL learners at CLB 6+, they are also appropriate for literacy learners who are native English speakers. There is no direct correlation between the ARB levels and the CLB levels because the CLB levels were developed for ESL learners and the ARB levels were developed for native English-speaking learners. There is a teacher's guide to support this resource. http://www.cbc.ca/calgary/features/learning-english/images/TeachersGuide-CBCCalgary.pdf
Vocabulary	- More complex vocabulary: *jurisdiction, demonstrate* - Some abstract words
Sentence length and structure	- Complex sentence structure "Because we're so close, and we live in Fort McKay, you definitely see the energy companies that are close to the community as neighbours, you really, really do and I don't think a lot of people understand that until you live there and you're part of the community."

Organizing features and visuals	• Transcript
Reading tasks	• Manage distracting information, synonyms, and the presence of extra information not related to the task. • Complete complex searches including combining information from different parts of the text. • Use guiding features in the text to find information, e.g., scan for key words using headings, inset boxes, or bold print to find information without having to read every word. • Cycle to locate up to three or four pieces of information; the number of requested items is specified. • Use information in the text to find further information in the text. • Figure out meaning when it is implicitly or indirectly expressed. • Can be stated in the negative. • Read longer and more complex text.
Reading strategy	*Summarize* This skill can help learners understand the text they are reading. A summary should be shorter than the original text and will cut out all details and examples that are not needed. *Steps* 1. Skim the text: read titles and subheadings. 2. Read the entire text. 3. Circle the keywords, or highlight the main idea in each section. 4. Write the main points in your own words. 5. Write a one-paragraph summary in your own words.
Title / Series	*Best Before Dates* / Learning English with CBC Calgary
Source	*Best Before Dates*. Learning English with CBC Calgary. January 2013 http://www.cbc.ca/calgary/features/learning-english/stories/story_jan03_2013.pdf
Genre / Format	On-line instructional resource; transcript is a free download
Description	CBC journalist Karen Moxley interviews a consumer, a scientist, and a food producer about best-before dates and safe food consumption.
Comments	There are two kinds of podcasts, with accompanying transcripts, featured on this website. The first is a weekly news report featuring three stories, ranging from local, national, and international topics. These stories are under three minutes long and are read by Don Bell, a CBC newscaster. Newscast stories are chosen from the most important news stories for Albertans each week. Monthly stories are longer than newscasts and spoken at the original broadcast pace heard on the radio. Monthly stories have accompanying language learning activities — reading, writing, vocabulary, speaking, and listening skills. Transcripts and websites with further information on the topic are included. While the objective of these materials is to provide access to news stories for immigrant ESL learners, they also provide access to news stories for native English speakers. While the weekly newscasts are written for ESL learners at CLB 4 level and the monthly stories are written for ESL learners at CLB 6+, they are also appropriate for literacy learners who are native English speakers. There is no direct correlation between the ARB levels and the CLB levels because the CLB levels were developed for ESL learners and the ARB levels were developed for native English-speaking learners.

	There is a teacher's guide to support this resource. http://www.cbc.ca/calgary/features/learning-english/images/TeachersGuide-CBCCalgary.pdf
Vocabulary	• More complex vocabulary: *carcinogens, decomposing* • Some abstract words
Sentence length and structure	• Complex sentence structure "All of our products have durable shelf life or best before dates of over ninety days, so legally by the regulations we're not required to do it."
Organizing features and visuals	• Transcript
Reading tasks	• Manage distracting information, synonyms, and the presence of extra information not related to the task. • Complete complex searches including combining information from different parts of the text. • Use guiding features in the text to find information, e.g., scan for key words using headings, inset boxes, or bold print to find information without having to read every word. • Cycle to locate up to three or four pieces of information; the number of requested items is specified. • Use information in the text to find further information in the text. • Figure out meaning when it is implicitly or indirectly expressed • Can be stated in the negative. • Read longer and more complex text.
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Title / Series	*Easy Money* / Good Reads
Source	Gail Vas-Oxlade. *Easy Money*. Edmonton: AB; Grass Roots Press, 2010.
Genre / Format	Nonfiction; book
Description	*Easy Money* provides practical information about budgeting, saving, and getting your debt under control.
Comments	There is a reading guide for the book. http://www.grassrootsbooks.net/pdf/reading-guide-easy-money.pdf
Vocabulary	• More complex vocabulary: *emergency* • Some abstract words: *distinguish*
Sentence length and structure	• Complex sentence structure "If you know you have a plan for each pile of money, you're more likely to keep the money available to spend on things you really want."
Organizing features and	• Headings and subheadings

visuals	
Reading tasks	- Manage distracting information, synonyms, and the presence of extra information not related to the task. - Complete complex searches including combining information from different parts of the text. - Use guiding features in the text to find information, e.g., scan for key words using headings, inset boxes, or bold print to find information without having to read every word. - Cycle to locate up to three or four pieces of information; the number of requested items is specified. - Use information in the text to find further information in the text. - Figure out meaning when it is implicitly or indirectly expressed - Can be stated in the negative. - Read longer and more complex text.
Reading strategy	*Making tracks* (Roberts 2013) At this level learners are reading longer texts and may have more information to work with than can be mentally tracked. Many good readers manage information by making margin notes. As an alternative to writing in shared materials, sticky notes can be used for the same purposes. The following activity provides the learner with practice tracking, identifying key information, and retelling. Provide the learner with a pad of mini sticky notes. 1. Instruct the learner to read the first paragraph of the text. Ask the learner what the important information was in the text. 2. Work with the learner to decide on three to five key words to write on one sticky note that will help them remember the important information. 3. Have the learner read the next sections of the text, again writing three to five words on each sticky note — one per paragraph. 4. Have the learner retell the content of the text using the sticky notes to aid in recall.

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