



**BC Safe Haven Curriculum Project:
Literacy Resource Mapping Report &
A Practical Reference Table for Teachers**

AMSSA

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BC Safe Haven Curriculum Project: Literacy Resource Mapping Report

Introduction and Purpose

The Safe Haven Curriculum Project's literacy mapping of teachers' resources in Canada was conducted to ensure instructional materials effectively meet the diverse literacy needs of learners, particularly refugee claimants in BC. Many refugee learners may have experienced interrupted schooling, trauma, or limited access to formal education, resulting in emerging literacy skills and the need for targeted supports. Mapping resources helps identify whether materials are accessible, culturally responsive, and suitable for multi-level literacy classrooms. It also encourages alignment with the Safe Haven Curriculum Guiding Principles, promoting trauma-informed, inclusive, and learner-centered practices that create supportive learning environments.

Resource Collection and Selection Process

The literacy mapping process involved a systematic review of downloadable and digital instructional resources commonly used in LINC and literacy-focused programs across Canada. Resources were gathered from provincial and national settlement organizations, online educator repositories, and shared program materials on Tutela.ca, the national settlement-focused EAL online community. The resources were selected based on their relevance to the Safe Haven curriculum themes, which research indicated are most needed by refugee claimants.

Alignment with Safe Haven Guiding Principles

Each resource was assessed for alignment with the **six Safe Haven Guiding Principles**. Specifically, materials were reviewed to determine whether they:

- Apply **Universal Design for Learning** (UDL) by offering multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression;
- Adopt **Trauma-Informed Practices** that promote emotional safety and learner choice;
- Provide **relevant, real-life content** connected to refugee claimants' settlement experiences;
- Encourage **community engagement and connection** to local services;
- Ensure **accessibility** in language level, format, and delivery; and
- Foster **inclusivity, diversity, and unity** through respectful and representative content.

Key Findings from the Literacy Mapping

The literacy mapping process revealed clear gaps in the available resources as they relate to the needs of Safe Haven classrooms. While many materials address relevant settlement themes, most are missing one or more of the Safe Haven Guiding Principles required to make them fully effective for refugee claimants. In particular, resources often lack explicit integration of trauma-informed approaches, full alignment with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, and key elements of accessibility and inclusivity. Furthermore, while some materials provide relevant content, they do not consistently encourage meaningful community connection or reflect the diverse lived experiences of refugee claimants.

A significant additional gap was the limited availability of resources specifically tailored to the unique needs of refugee claimants. Many existing materials were designed for broader newcomer or immigrant populations and do not adequately address the distinct legal, social, and emotional realities faced by refugee claimants, such as navigating the refugee determination process, coping with prolonged uncertainty, understanding conditional access to services, and managing heightened vulnerability related to housing, employment, and healthcare.

Moreover, there is limited availability of teaching resources developed within British Columbia that reflect local settlement contexts, services, policies, and community realities. Many materials were created at a national level or in other provinces and therefore do not fully represent the specific systems, supports, and lived experiences that refugee claimants encounter in British Columbia. This lack of locally developed content reduces opportunities for learners to engage with immediately relevant information and to build meaningful community connections.

Finally, the literacy mapping process revealed a lack of clear distinction among different literacy levels within and across resources. Level indicators are often inconsistent, and a level identified in one resource does not always align with the same designation in another. This inconsistency creates challenges for instructors working in multi-level classrooms, particularly in PBLA-aligned programs, making it difficult to accurately select, adapt, and sequence materials that appropriately match learners' literacy development.

Implications and Next Steps

As a result, although many resources are workable and valuable, they require further adaptation to fully align with the Safe Haven Curriculum Guidelines. This highlights the need for intentional revision, enhancement, and targeted resource development to ensure that instructional materials comprehensively reflect all guiding principles and effectively support refugee learners in Safe Haven classrooms.

Recommendations Based on Literacy Mapping Findings

Based on the findings of the literacy mapping process, the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen the development, selection, and implementation of literacy resources for refugee claimants:

1. Develop a Standardized Review Checklist Aligned with the Safe Haven Curriculum Guiding Principles to Support Evaluation of Existing Literacy Resources

Instructors should be supported in evaluating existing resources for alignment with Safe Haven Curriculum Guiding Principles. This includes reviewing resources for:

- Universal Design for Learning (UDL) strategies to support multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression;
- Consistent trauma-informed approaches that prioritize safety, predictability, choice, and empowerment;
- Accessibility through plain language, visual supports, multimodal formats, and culturally responsive design;
- Inclusivity through reflecting diverse identities, lived experiences, and migration journeys; and
- Real-life and community-based content that connects language learning to everyday settlement experiences, community navigation, and practical communication needs to support learners in building confidence and participating more fully in their new communities.

2. Develop Resources Specifically Tailored to Refugee Claimants

New materials should be designed to explicitly address the most significant gaps in materials for Safe Haven programs. These resources need to:

- Address refugee claimants' most urgent needs using clear, accessible language appropriate for learners with emerging literacy skills;
- Provide practical guidance on navigating conditional or limited access to services;
- Acknowledge and normalize experiences of uncertainty, stress, and prolonged waiting periods that many claimants face during the refugee determination process; and
- Include practical, scenario-based learning activities reflecting common claimant experiences.

Meaningful consultation with refugee claimants and frontline settlement workers is strongly recommended to ensure accuracy, relevance, and sensitivity.

3. Prioritize Locally Developed British Columbia-Specific Content

Investment should be directed toward developing literacy materials reflecting British Columbia's settlement landscape. Resources should:

- Reference local services, policies, and community supports;
- Incorporate region-specific examples, forms, and systems; and
- Highlight pathways to community connection within local contexts.

Partnerships with local service providers, community organizations, and educators can help ensure materials remain current and contextually relevant.

4. Adopt the *ESL for ALL* Literacy Levels Framework

There is a need to support instructors, especially those working in multi-level classrooms, in applying a consistent literacy framework across resource use and development. *ESL for ALL* provides:

- Clear descriptors for each literacy level;
- Learning outcomes, tasks, and assessment tools aligned with those descriptors; and
- Explicit level indicators for each resource.

ESL for ALL provides a well-established framework aligned with the Canadian Language Benchmarks and PBLA, which makes it easy for Safe Haven programs to apply in their teaching practices.

5. Support Instructor Capacity and Professional Development

Instructional support materials and professional development opportunities should be offered to help instructors:

- Apply trauma-informed and UDL approaches in practice;
- Adapt non-specialized materials for refugee claimant contexts; and
- Navigate multi-level literacy planning effectively.

Providing adaptable templates, model lesson plans, and sample activities can further reduce instructor workload and improve instructional consistency. In addition, ongoing training and collaborative learning opportunities, such as workshops, peer sharing and mentorship, and a community of practice which includes literacy support, can all strengthen instructors' capacity to implement Safe Haven principles effectively.

6. Create a Centralized, Curated Literacy Resource Repository

A centralized repository, including level-aligned, BC-specific, and refugee claimant-focused literacy resources as well as existing settlement-focused literacy resources, would improve accessibility and reduce duplication of effort. This repository could include:

- Clearly identified literacy or learning levels to support effective lesson planning in multi-level classrooms;
- Indicators showing how resources align with Safe Haven Guiding Principles, including trauma-informed and inclusive practices;
- Guidance notes for instructors outlining suggested implementation strategies and options for adaptation; and
- Searchable and adaptable materials, such as lesson plans, activity templates, and visual supports that instructors can easily modify for their classrooms.

Summary

In conclusion, the literacy mapping process provided valuable insight into the strengths and limitations of currently available instructional materials used in settlement-focused language and literacy programs in Canada.

In addition to making the recommendations above, the Safe Haven Curriculum Project has created **A Practical Reference Table for Teachers** of the literacy resources surveyed in this review process, included with this report. While additional useful resources exist to support literacy teaching and learning in EAL, only those most relevant to Safe Haven curriculum themes were selected for inclusion in the reference table. Teachers can use this table to find and access valuable literacy teaching materials, arranged according to Safe Haven curriculum themes and evaluated on each resource's reflection of the Safe Haven Curriculum's Guiding Principles. The table identifies the kinds of teaching materials included within each resource (*e.g.* lesson plans, modules) and the format of each resource (*i.e.* downloadable .pdfs or online-only access), along with developer credits. Note that several of the links provided in the reference table direct users to national EAL repositories Tutela.ca and Avenue.ca, which require account logins to access the materials. Teachers should consult with their organizations for assistance registering with these.

Overall, the findings from this report highlight both the availability of supportive resources and the need for continued development and contextualization to ensure that literacy materials effectively reflect Safe Haven Guiding Principles and respond to the specific needs of refugee claimant learners in British Columbia.

Mapping Literacy Resources: A Practical Reference Table for Teachers

		Resource:	Developed By:	Format:	Includes:	Safe Haven Guiding Principle(s) Reflected:
E M P L O Y M E N T	Job Search	Educational Curriculum Manual: Employment Training for Low Literacy Immigrant Women	Calgary Immigrant Women's Association	PDF	Modules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Trauma-Informed Practice • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		EMPLOYMENT - Jobs and Meeting a Job Counsellor Module	Archway Community Services	Online & PDF	Resource collection with module plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Community Engagement • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Employment	Pathway to Literacy	PDF	5 Weekly lesson plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Introduction to Employment Centres	Archway Community Services	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Community Engagement • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
	At Work	Saying NO to a Work Shift	Archway Community Services	Online & PDF	Resource collection with module plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Safety at Work	CCLB	PDF	Module with teaching materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Adult ELL Pathway to Literacy: Success at Work	Pathway to Literacy	PDF	5 Weekly lesson plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		WHMIS symbols Module	Archway Community Services	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant Content • Accessibility
		Cashier Module	Archway Community Services	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity

E M P L O Y M E N T	At Work (cont'd)	Work Calendars and Schedules Module	Archway Community Services	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Food Service Worker Module	Archway Community Services	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Taxi/Uber Messages Module	Archway Community Services	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Warehouse Worker Module	Archway Community Services	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Professional Relationships	Regina Open Door Society	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Community Engagement • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
S U R V I V A L E N G L I S H	Financial Literacy	Reporting a Lost, Stolen or Damaged Bank Card	CCLB	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Canadian Currency	Literacy Centre of Expertise	PDF	Collection of skill-building activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Paying Utility Bills	Literacy Centre of Expertise	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Canadian Money	Toronto Catholic District School Board	Online (Avenue account required)	E-Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility
		EAL Literacy Handbook, Unit 3: Money and Shopping	Norquest College	PDF	Lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Trauma-Informed Practice • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity

S U R V I V A L E N G L I S H	Health & Wellness	Staying Healthy	Literacy Centre of Expertise	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
	Going to the Optometrist	Literacy Centre of Expertise	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity 	
	Visiting the Doctor	Literacy Centre of Expertise	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity 	
	At the Doctor's Office Understanding Appointments	Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility 	
	Dealing with Emergencies* (See note below)	CCLB	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility 	
	Reading Food Labels	Ottawa-Carleton District School Board	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility 	
	Eating Fruit	Literacy Centre of Expertise	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility 	
	Physical Activity	Ottawa-Carleton District School Board	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility 	
	Dental Health	Ottawa-Carleton District School Board	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Accessibility • Relevant Content 	
	Going to the Dentist	CCLB	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity 	

* Note: This resource contains some graphic imagery of accidents and injuries that may be disturbing for some students. Teachers are encouraged to use discretion, provide warnings, replace images and apply Trauma-Informed Practices should they decide to use this resource in Safe Haven classes.

S U R V I V A L E N G L I S H	Housing	Rental applications and Speaking to a Landlord	Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility
		Finding a Place to Live	CCLB	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Home	New Language Solutions (Avenue)	Online (Avenue account required)	E-Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Community Engagement
		EAL Literacy Handbook, Unit 2: Housing	Norquest College	PDF	Lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Trauma-Informed Practice • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
	Community	Following Bylaws	Literacy Centre of Expertise	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Community Engagement • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Volunteering at the Food Bank	Archway Community Services	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Community Engagement • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Introduction to Volunteering	Archway Community Services	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Community Engagement • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Accessing a Public Washroom	Ottawa-Carleton District School Board	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility

**Other
(e.g.
Transportation,
Food &
Nutrition etc.)**

Taking the Bus	Regina Open Door Society	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Accessibility • Relevant Content
Going Grocery Shopping	Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Accessibility • Relevant Content
Cleaning the House	Literacy Centre of Expertise	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Accessibility • Relevant Content • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
Types of Transportation	Regina Open Door Society	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Accessibility • Relevant Content
Making Fruit Salad	Literacy Centre of Expertise	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Accessibility • Relevant Content
Starting a New English Class	Literacy Centre of Expertise	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Community Engagement • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
A Child's Education	CCLB	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Accessibility • Relevant Content • Community Engagement • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
Using a Car	CCLB	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Trauma-Informed Practice • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity

E M B E D D E D T H E M E S	Canadian Culture	Sorting Waste	Literacy Centre of Expertise	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Community Engagement • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Understanding Winter Weather	Literacy Centre of Expertise	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Invitations and Hosting	Regina Open Door Society	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Community Engagement • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Going to a Powwow	Literacy Centre of Expertise	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Community Engagement • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Dressing for Winter	Literacy Centre of Expertise	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Greetings and Introductions	CCLB	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Community Engagement • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
	Digital Skills	ISS of BC Digital Literacy	ISSofBC	Online & PDF (Password-protected)	Modules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility
		Using Email	Literacy Centre of Expertise	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity
		Using Email Safely	Literacy Centre of Expertise	Online & PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility • Inclusivity, Diversity, Unity

	Digital Skills (cont'd)	Canada Job Bank App	Regina Open Door Society	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility
		Emails and Passwords	Archway Community Services	PDF	Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Relevant Content • Accessibility