



KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 12  
CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR  
EAL/LAL PROGRAMMING

Section 5: Domains of LAL Learning

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## 5.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE DOMAINS OF LITERACY, ACADEMICS, AND LANGUAGE (LAL)

As indicated earlier, the LAL phases are intended for students with limited or no prior schooling who enter the school system in the Middle and Senior Years. These learners are not exclusively from war-affected/refugee backgrounds; they may come from regions where access to education is limited by poverty or gender, or from school settings that were limited to one or two hours a day or that taught a very narrow curriculum focused on rote skills. Regardless of their previous educational experiences, the key to their identification as LAL learners is **their absence of or significantly limited primary language literacy**.

These learners face multiple challenges in adapting to the Manitoba school environment and in succeeding academically. As a consequence of their lack of schooling, they are also likely to have very limited numeracy and academic skills in any language. It is recognized that younger students may arrive who have also missed some or all of the early years of schooling; when younger EAL students are significantly behind age-/grade-appropriate literacy and content-area outcomes, specialized planning drawn from the LAL domains will also be needed. Unlike EAL learners, who have age-/grade-appropriate education and are already literate in at least one language, LAL learners have less knowledge and fewer skills that they can transfer to the learning of English and other academic subjects. Therefore, in addition to learning English, students will need to develop **foundational literacy, numeracy, and academic/subject-area knowledge and skills** at the same time that they are acquiring foundational English language competency. The complexity and difficulty of this process means that these learners often feel overwhelmed. Typically, they will need intensive learning opportunities and more time if they are to be successful in a variety of subject areas. When considering the progress of such students, teachers must always take into account the student's language and literacy learning background and any initial levels of literacy in the first language. At the same time, it is important to recognize that although these learners may be at pre-literate or emergent literacy stages of language learning, they are often mature, motivated, and resilient learners who bring with them a variety of life experiences.

The linguistic and academic knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are developed through the Early Years curriculum and school experiences are intended to be the foundation for personal and social development and lifelong learning. In many ways, the curricula in the Middle Years and Senior Years expand, deepen, and enable a more complex and abstract application of the foundational knowledge and skills. Therefore, students who have missed all or part of their early schooling need to develop these same linguistic and academic foundations before they can be expected to be successful in age-/grade-appropriate educational and literacy contexts. Newcomer learners in the Middle Years and Senior Years who have both EAL needs and limited schooling will require programming that enables them to develop their English language and foundational academic learning in a concurrent and accelerated manner, while respecting the needs

and characteristics of adolescent or young adult learners. This programming needs to be specialized, intensive, extended, integrated, and focused on the most essential aspects of the Early Years subject-area curricula and of language development.

## Middle and Senior Years LAL: Two Phases: LAL 1 & 2

Learners who are just entering LAL Phase 1 are beginning EAL learners who have had no prior formal schooling even though they are adolescents or young adults. They are pre-literate or have very limited literacy skills in any language, and limited numeracy skills. The goal of LAL Phase 1 instruction is to help students

- be welcomed to the school and adapt to the classroom and school environment
- develop beginning interpersonal communication skills in English
- develop emergent literacy skills
- develop foundational numeracy and subject-area skills
- develop “survival” life skills required for everyday living in Manitoba

Learners who are entering LAL Phase 2 typically are students who have completed LAL Phase 1 or are new students who have had some prior schooling but are well below what may be expected for their age/grade. They will have developed some level of foundational literacy skills in at least one language and will have had some limited numeracy and other subject-area learning skills. Their prior learning experiences mean that they have some language, literacy, and academic skills they can transfer and build upon to aid them in their English language and academic development. Learners need to solidify and expand their literacy skills while also developing foundational, compulsory subject knowledge and skills that they will need for continued opportunities for learning. The goal of LAL Phase 2 instruction is to

- develop good interpersonal communication and foundational academic English language skills
- develop strong basic literacy skills that can be applied across different subject areas
- develop foundational knowledge, skills, and attitudes in all compulsory and elective subjects that are essential for success or of interest to the student in the Middle and Senior Years courses
- explore and develop a long- and short-term learning and career plan

## Transitioning to Middle and Senior Years EAL Programming

As stated earlier, LAL Phases 1 and 2 are intended to develop foundational linguistic and subject-area competency. Therefore, the end of LAL Phase 2 is not the end of the students’ linguistic and academic development. It is expected that students will transition to EAL programming appropriate for stages MY 2-3 or SY 2-3 to continue

their education and linguistic development. However, LAL students can be expected to develop English language aural skills at a similar rate as students who have not experienced disruptions in their education. As students have limited literacy and academic knowledge and skills to transfer, **LAL programming will be more intensive and of a longer duration. Furthermore, their literacy and academic learning will continue to require additional support and time as they transition to and continue in EAL and academic programming. It is important for LAL learners to develop the skills needed for future learning and work opportunities beyond high school, so it is acceptable to provide them with more than four years in their high school setting.**

## Domains of LAL Learning

The four general domains of LAL learning are parallel to those for EAL and thus include the knowledge, skills, strategies, and attitudes that students are expected to demonstrate from Grade 4 to Grade 12. The specific clusters identify the component knowledge, skills, strategies, and attitudes that contribute to the LAL domains that students are expected to demonstrate by the end of a stage. For a thorough understanding of the EAL/LAL domains, please read the discussion in Section 3.

However, the EAL domains assume students have close to age-appropriate education and literacy skills, whereas the LAL domains have been adapted to meet the needs of students with limited prior formal education or literacy skills in any language. Since the EAL and LAL outcomes are meant to be viewed as components of parallel programming rather than consecutive programming, overlap is evident between the early EAL stages and the LAL phases. The primary difference is that students at the end of LAL Phase 2 **are not expected to have achieved full linguistic competency or age-/grade-level-appropriate academic development.** The emphasis in LAL programming is on literacy, numeracy, and foundational subject-area knowledge and skills.

The four LAL domains are the following:

- Foundational Linguistic Competence
- Foundational Competence in Contextual Applications
- Foundational Intercultural Competence and Global Citizenship
- Foundational Strategic Competence

## 5.2 DOMAIN DEFINITIONS AND EXIT DESCRIPTIONS FOR LITERACY, ACADEMICS, AND LANGUAGE (LAL) LEARNERS

### LAL Domain 1: Linguistic Competency

All EAL learners must become competent in the lexicon, grammar structures, text forms, and social conventions that allow them to interpret and produce meaningful communication in English. The domain title Linguistic Competence is a broad term that includes all of these elements.

Students who already have literacy skills in another language can transfer many understandings about the relationship of oral and written language (e.g., the function of sound-symbol systems and punctuation) and lexical knowledge associated with schooling. They can use their established literacy skills to support oral language development (e.g., acquire new vocabulary through reading). However, older students who have no or very limited literacy skills in any language will need to encounter the written form of the language and develop essential literacy skills even as they are learning the oral aspects of the language. LAL learners will develop the linguistic elements of oral language much like EAL students, although the instructional approaches may differ somewhat, but the LAL description of the Domain Linguistic Competence emphasizes developing foundational linguistic competence in reading and writing and developing new a lexicon associated with academic studies.

Reading and writing instruction for LAL learners will have many similarities to that which young students would experience at the early stages of language and literacy development, but the content and presentation must be age-appropriate and relevant to adolescent and young adult learners (e.g., reading signs around the school, the cafeteria menu, or the bus schedule).

As students meet the Phase 2 learning goals in this domain, they will be aware that print conveys meaning and that there is a connection between oral language, print, and communication. They will recognize and use the basic sound-letter (phonemic) and sound-spelling (phonic) relationships to read and write a growing number of familiar words. They will interpret and produce simple texts required for everyday communication and foundational numeracy and subject-area learning. They will begin to organize, structure, and sequence simple texts and simple grammatical structures with common recognized text/organizational patterns. They will begin to recognize the difference between more formal and informal language and behaviours for different audiences.

Students who have met the Phase 2 learning goals will still require intensive support to continue their literacy development to a grade-appropriate level, especially in the development of formal and precise academic language forms.

## LAL Domain 2: Contextual Applications

One significant difference between most adult EAL programming and EAL programming for K-12 students is the expectation that younger learners are developing the academic and cognitive skills and knowledge that are needed for adult life. In the K-12 system, EAL students are learning a new language and, at the same time, are using this new language as the medium of instruction for various subject areas. The English language becomes the object and a medium of instruction.

The domain Contextual Applications recognizes that EAL learners need to develop language skills and understandings that will allow them to function effectively in a range of non-academic and academic settings and for a variety of purposes. It also reflects the interrelatedness of EAL and subject-area learning that is essential for educational success. This domain is about “getting things done” as an individual and with others, both informally and in more formal contexts.

Although EAL students who have age-/grade-level-appropriate education will initially experience a delay in academic development as they learn the language of instruction and become familiar with the Canadian school culture, they are able to transfer and build on previously acquired knowledge, skills, and attitudes. However, students with limited experience with formal schooling in any language face multiple challenges as they develop for the first time the knowledge, skills, and behaviours required to succeed in academic settings. LAL students differ from EAL students in that they have not had the opportunity to develop literacy skills in their first language, so they must develop them simultaneously as they learn English.

For these LAL students, the domain Contextual Applications includes a strong emphasis on increasing their understanding of the schooling process. As students meet the Phase 2 learning goals within this domain, they will have acquired and will be able to use English for essential everyday communication for personal and social purposes, for various functions in school, and for foundational academic learning. They will begin to be able to use the language to meet their individual needs or interests and to socialize and work with others. As well, they will acquire foundational numeracy and subject-area knowledge and skills required for their continued learning.

## LAL Domain 3: Intercultural Competency and Global Citizenship

K-12 EAL students in Manitoba schools come from very diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Sometimes they have had limited experience with cultures other than their own or they have lived as members of a displaced minority within a different dominant group. The connection between language and culture has been long contested in the language teaching profession, but it is generally agreed that communicative competence includes understanding and using cultural aspects of language. Historically, learning the dominant language and culture often was connected with the deliberate suppression of the students’ home languages and cultures. However, the modern



Canadian context recognizes individuals' rights to maintain their linguistic and cultural heritage as well as the role of home culture in the formation of positive self-identity. Furthermore, to live successfully in Canada, individuals will need the skills and knowledge to interact and communicate with the many cultures represented here and in the English-speaking world. Thus, the domain Intercultural Competence and Global Citizenship reflects the development of students' positive self-identity as multilingual/multicultural learners within the Canadian educational system/society and the development of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will enable them to participate effectively as local and global citizens. Intercultural competency suggests that the communicators have general cultural knowledge as well as specific knowledge of cultures that they can apply to ensure effective communication. The progression of intercultural communication skills reflected in this domain follows from the idea of stages of intercultural sensitivity as described by M.J. Bennett. The concept of global citizenship encompasses citizenship at all levels, from the local school and community to Canada and the world. A thorough discussion of this domain is found in Section 3: Domains of EAL Learning.

The application of this domain to LAL learners is very similar, with the understanding that because of the students' limited literacy, background knowledge about geography and history, and the language needed to discuss more abstract concepts, the learning goals emphasize **foundational** knowledge of cultural aspects of identity and knowledge of Canada's peoples and heritage. As students meet the Phase 2 learning goals for this domain, they will demonstrate a growing awareness of cultural and linguistic diversity in a Canadian and global context. They will be more aware of how they and others are shaped by their cultures, faiths, and languages and how these influence learning and social relationships. They will begin to recognize and appreciate differences and similarities between cultures and languages, and they will demonstrate foundational knowledge of and appreciation for Canada's peoples, history, geography, and cultural heritage.

### LAL Domain 3: LAL Strategies

Within the Strategies domain are strands that will help students learn and communicate more effectively. Strategic competence has long been recognized as an important component of communicative competence. The strands and learning goals within this domain deal not only with compensation and repair strategies, which are important in the early stages of language learning when proficiency is low, but with strategies for language learning, language use in a broader sense, as well as general learning strategies that help students acquire content. Although people may use strategies unconsciously, the learning goals deal only with the conscious use of strategies. The strategies are grouped under three cluster headings (see the illustration on the preceding page). Under each of these headings there are several strands that show the development of awareness and skill in using strategies from Phase 1 to Phase 2. Each strand, identified by a strand heading at the left end of the row, deals with a specific category of strategy. Language learning and general learning strategies are categorized



as cognitive, metacognitive, and social/affective. The language use strategies are organized by communicative mode: receptive, productive, and interactive.

The strategies that students choose depend on the task they are engaged in as well as on other factors, such as their preferred learning style, personality, age, attitude, and cultural background. Strategies that work well for one person may not be effective for another person, or may not be suitable in a different situation. For this reason, it is not particularly useful to say that students should be aware of, or be able to use, a specific strategy at a particular grade level. Consequently, the stage learning goals describe the students' knowledge of, and ability to use, general types of strategies. More specific strategies for each general category or type are included in a list of strategies at the end of the domain chart. The specific strategies provided in the sample list are not prescriptive but are provided as an illustration of how the general strategies in the specific clusters might be developed.

Teachers need to know and be able to demonstrate a broad range of strategies from which students are then able to choose in order to communicate effectively. Strategies of all kinds are best taught in the context of learning activities, where students can apply them immediately and then reflect on their use.

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