



Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks

Sample Lesson Plan for Students at CLB Level 5-6

Funded by Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

Target:

Students at **CLB Level 5-6**

Objective:

To familiarize students with the Canadian Language Benchmarks so they can apply them to their own language learning needs and goals.

Time: One hour

Resources:

1. Sample of a CLBA client profile or a CLB-related assessment report that is used in your school.
2. Reading text, *The Canadian Language Benchmarks*, and related activities.

Warm-up:

Discuss what assessment means. Ask students for synonyms.

Ask students to recall and compare their own experiences with assessment in Canada or assessment abroad. Provide a few examples of what a CLB assessment might report in terms of varied scores for different aspects of language. Find out what the students understand about the CLB at this time.

Emphasize the concept of national standards. Why are standards established in education and other areas?

Procedure:

1. Reading: Ask students to read, **The Canadian Language Benchmarks**.
2. Reading/writing: Ask students to answer the following questions and clarify answers with a partner.
3. Speaking/listening: Review the information with the class.
4. Reading/writing/speaking: Ask students to complete the self-evaluation form to provide a focus for personal language-learning needs and goals. Make sure they understand that these are examples of the outcomes for Benchmark 6.

Follow-up:

1. Brainstorm to prepare a list of techniques and strategies people can use to improve English language proficiency. The list can be separated into techniques for use inside and outside the classroom. Ask students to choose the techniques that they use now, or would like to use, to help themselves to learn English.
2. Invite someone who learned ESL to talk to the class about her own successful experiences.
3. Ask students to reflect on their own experiences learning a new language. What has been difficult? What is easy (or difficult) about learning ESL in Canada? What advice would they give to a friend back home who is considering coming to Canada as an immigrant?

The Canadian Language Benchmarks

In Canada now, more and more English as a Second Language (ESL) schools use the **Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB)** for teaching and testing adults who are studying ESL. The **CLB** have been used since 1996 to describe all the steps in learning ESL from the beginning level (Benchmark 1) to a very advanced level (Benchmark 12). Someone at the highest CLB level would use English like a native speaker. In all, there are 12 benchmarks, or 12 levels for each language skill: speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Each benchmark describes what a student can do in English in day-to-day communication at work, school, or in the community. Can you answer questions about your name, address and phone number? Can you understand what you hear on the radio? Can you write a memo to your boss? Can you write an essay for a college course? These are the kinds of activities that people can do at different levels of the **Canadian Language Benchmarks**. An ESL student in Ontario at Benchmark 5 in listening and speaking, Benchmark 4 in reading, and Benchmark 3 in writing can do the same kinds of things in English as someone at the same benchmarks who studies in Manitoba. In other words, the CLB are national standards for all adult ESL students in this country.

Before you started to study ESL, you took a test that determined what your benchmarks were at that time. It was not a grammar test and perhaps was different from tests you have taken in the past. The test was to find out what you could do in English in each skill.

At the end of the test, the assessor gave you a report that showed each of your benchmarks. You probably talked to the assessor about your level of English and the kind of class that would meet your needs. Then, you decided where and when you would study ESL.

In your class, the teacher will use the information from the **CLB** report to find out what you are able to do in English and what you need to improve to make progress in your learning. With the help of the **Canadian Language Benchmarks**, the teacher can plan learning activities that are valuable for your future plans.

You can use the **Canadian Language Benchmarks** to better understand your own strengths and difficulties as you learn ESL. The CLB can tell you what you must be able to do before progressing to the next level. If you plan to study at college or university in the future, experience indicates that students at Benchmark 9 or higher, usually have enough English to manage courses.

Increasingly, employers in Canada are looking to the **CLB** to tell them whether someone has enough English to do a particular job. Professional organizations in the future could look to the **CLB** to provide the same information about foreign-trained professionals who want to become members of professional organizations.

During the time that you are in this class, your teacher will be assessing your progress and will use your **CLB** information to determine when you are ready to move to the next level. You and your teacher will meet to talk about what you are learning and how together you can improve your ability and confidence when using English for communication.

If you have to leave this class before the end of this term to go to another school or to another city, take your benchmarks report with you. It will be accepted wherever you go to study.

THE CANADIAN LANGUAGE BENCHMARKS

Answer the following questions.

1. For whom is this information written? _____

Select examples of text to support your answer.

2. What exactly are the CLB? _____

3. The Canadian government and the provincial governments cooperated to support the development of national language standards. Why do you think the CLB were viewed as being important?

4. How can the CLB help ESL teachers? _____

How can the CLB help ESL students? _____

5. Do you know what your current CLB are? _____

6. In six months, what would you like your benchmarks to be? How do you think this class can help you?

Check your answers with a partner.

Canadian Language Benchmarks

How do the CLB apply to you?

Below is a summary of the kinds of tasks that students should be able to perform to finish Benchmark 6 in each skill. Check what you can do now.

In the space provided, write down other things that are important for you to learn how to do.

WRITING	READING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - can write letters <input type="checkbox"/> - can fill out long detailed application forms <input type="checkbox"/> - can write detailed descriptions <input type="checkbox"/> - can write everyday phone messages <input type="checkbox"/> - can express ideas and opinions in paragraphs <input type="checkbox"/> - can describe how things work <input type="checkbox"/> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - can understand the main idea <input type="checkbox"/> - can find key words, details <input type="checkbox"/> - can find specific information in schedules, charts and texts <input type="checkbox"/> - can understand clear instructions <input type="checkbox"/> - can use an English dictionary <input type="checkbox"/>
LISTENING	SPEAKING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - can follow the main idea in conversations <input type="checkbox"/> - can understand complex detailed information <input type="checkbox"/> - can understand some idioms <input type="checkbox"/> - can understand clear instructions, directions <input type="checkbox"/> - can understand most vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> - can understand short phone calls <input type="checkbox"/> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - can use everyday vocabulary and some idioms <input type="checkbox"/> - can describe situations, tell a story and give a short report <input type="checkbox"/> - can use the phone for everyday purposes <input type="checkbox"/> - can communicate with confidence in informal conversations <input type="checkbox"/> - can give clear instructions, directions <input type="checkbox"/>

How will you help yourself to learn English while you are in this class?
